

# Out of School Children: Enhancing Factors and Consequences for Sustainable Development in North Central Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

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**Abstract** Education is a key to development and sustainable development. Children out of school deter development and sustainable development. The purpose of the study is an investigation on Out of school children: enhancing factors and consequences for sustainable development in North Central Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria. The design of the study was a survey research design which involves the retrieving of data from selected respondents representing the entire population comprising of teachers and parents in the North Central Geo-Political zone of Nigeria. The sample size of 800 respondents was selected from the 2 sample states drawn through simple random sampling techniques. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research strategies in analyzing the data. Data was gathered through questionnaire titled 'Out of School Children Questionnaire' (OSCQ). The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation scores and independent t test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The finding of the study revealed that poverty, child labour, teenage pregnancy and distance to school are the major causes of children out of school in the North Central Geo Political zone. Also menial jobs were major implication of out of school children. Based on the findings of the study the recommendations made were that punishment should be prescribed for parents whose children are out of school and there should be poverty reduction strategies in the development of appropriate policies and intervention strategies to help poor people improve their living standard.

**Keywords:** *enhancing factors, consequences, sustainable development, out of school children, north central zone*

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## 1. Introduction

Human capacity is the foundation of all developments. It is the stock of habits, knowledge, social and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform so as to produce some economic value. Human capital is unique and differs from any other capital. It is needed to achieve goals, develop and remain innovative. Development of human capital is possible through education and training and by so doing levels of quality and productivity are enhanced. Every nation directly or indirectly invest heavily on human capital because it is the foundation for development.

Development is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components. The purpose of development is to increase the level and quality of life of the population, the creation or expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities, without

damaging the resources of the environment. Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, also includes an aspect of quality change and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change. All other development hinges upon human development.

Development is positively driven in favour of the human person. According to [1], human development has been defined as the process of enlarging people's choices and improving human capabilities, freedoms, guaranteed human rights and self-respect so they can live a long, and healthy life, have access to education and a decent standard of living, participate in their community and the decisions that affect their lives. Also, [2] underlined that there are two main approaches and justification towards human development which first look at the constitutive requirements of a good life and another one concerns primarily with the necessary requirements of such a life. Due to these variations of position, it is expected that the existing indicators used to measure human development will vary based on how each define human development and the dimensions. Whereas some scholars only focused

on the physical aspects of human beings in measuring development, some others also included the spiritual concerns of human being in their measurement. The foundation of human development is laid on childhood development.

Childhood development is the key to a full and productive life of the child and for the progress of the nation. Childhood is a critical stage of development that forms the foundation for children's future well-being, development and learning. Research has shown that half of a person intellectual capacity is developed before age of six and early interventions can have a lasting effect on intellectual capacity, personality and social behaviour. Biologically, a child according to [3] is generally anyone between birth and puberty. The type of future a child would get is most often laid during the childhood period. The veracity of this fact prompted the EFA declaration of 1990, MDGs of 2000, WEF of 2005 and SDGs of 2015- that place premium on education as inevitable tool for equipping the child for a meaningful future, [4]. This is due to the fact that, education which is a global vehicle that catapults every nation into development cannot realise the dreams of countries if the number of children out of school were much in those countries.

The desire for meaningful life increased school enrolment, but the net attendance to school of pupils is only about 70 per cent. According to statistics provided by UNESCO, there are about 10.5 million Nigerian children that are out of school. This is the largest population of such OSC anywhere on earth. In fact, Nigeria accounts for 47 percent of the world's population of OSC. Nigeria's growth in population has put immense pressure on the country's resources and on already overstretched public services and infrastructure. Forty per cent of Nigerian children aged 6-11 do not attend any school, with the Northern region recording the lowest school attendance rate in the country. The term "out-of-school children" is an inclusive concept and include:

- Out of schooling of school age children: This is non- attendance of school of school age children for some established factors.
- Children dropping out from school: These are children who dropout from school before completion of any school programmes: primary, junior secondary, senior secondary or others.
- De-schooling: is another form of out of school. It is seen as leaving western education for Qu'ranic education or vice versa. Many children in northern Nigeria attend only Qu'ranic schools, where they are taught to memorize and recite the Qu'ran, but not the numeracy, literacy and life skills needed to function effectively in today's world.

The development and its sustainability rely on the quality and quantity of education. According to the [5] in the National Policy on Education, no nation can rise above its education. Despite the expected role and relevance of education to the sustainability of development, one is so disturbed when on daily basis children of school age troupe out like swarms of bees to every other place but not to school.

The enhancing factors of children out of school include among others: changes in family structure and income, relationship with parents due to changes in family structure, teacher support, motivation, school performance, drugs usage and abuse, and finally distance of school

location. The education deprivation in northern Nigeria according to [6] is driven by various factors, including economic barriers and socio-cultural norms and practices that discourage attendance in formal education, especially for girls.

The consequences of any form of out of school are obvious for children and the society. Children who are out of school are exposed to social stigma, fewer job opportunities, lower salaries, and higher probability of involvement in criminal activities. The following were identified as the consequences of OSC:

- Out of school impels pupils' self-esteem and psychological well-being, faced with the reality that they lack skills and knowledge to fulfill their desires.
- Earnings for young men and women who quit school steadily declined over the past three decades as they settle for meager jobs.
- School dropouts were more unemployed compared to those who complete school.
- Dropouts are substantially more likely to rely on public welfare and health services.
- Dropouts are more likely to be incarcerated during their lifetime.

Above all out of school children (OSC) hinders individual development and sustainable development which as a multidimensional concept of development includes economic, social and environmental dimensions being considered and integrated [7]. The Federal Government believes that no nation can achieve economic prosperity without a sound inclusive and functional education system. It is against this backdrop that the study tends to examine out of school children: enhancing factors and consequences for sustainable development of North Central Geopolitical zone, Nigeria.

## 1.1. Statement of the Problem

The rate of out of school children is on the increase daily. This situation is more worrisome as the world is emphasizing the sustainability of the gains of the EFA and MDGs. Invariably it is impossible to sustain the already height attained if many children are out of school today. Rather than herding towards the school gate for learning, many children are seen during school hours either with their bowls for begging, hoes for farm or even aimlessly loitering around.

[1] describes the three essentials of development to include the ability to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge, and to have a decent standard of life. These are tenable only through education. Closed monitored observation unveils brink future for many families and communities in the North as they pay little attention to education.

Although the population is on the increase, but the number of children who go to school are so few. Under development in the North will continue to have its way as the numbers of ignorant children take over in the nearest future. Development is the bye product of education that is laid during the childhood stage. Hence the problem of this study therefore is: what are the enhancing factors of children out of school and consequences of children out of school for sustainable development of North Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria?

## 1.2. Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Examine factors enhancing children out of school.
2. Examine the implications of out of school of children on sustainable development in North Central Nigeria.
3. Examine the consequences of out of school of children on sustainable development in North Central Geo-Political zone, Nigeria.
4. Proffer possible solution to reduce the number of out of school children in the North central Nigeria.

## 1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the the study:

1. What are the enhancing factors influencing children out of school?
2. What are the implications of out of school children on sustainable development on North Central?
3. What are the consequences of out of school of children on sustainable development in North central Geo-Political zone, Nigeria?
4. What are the possible solutions to reduce the number of out of school children in the North central Nigeria?

## 1.4. Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to direct the study

1. There is no significant difference on the mean response of respondents between marriage type on the enhancing factors for children out of school in the North Central
2. There is no significant difference on the mean response of parents between the number of children in the family and enhancing factors of children out of school in the North Central.
3. There is no significant difference of the mean response of family location on the implications of children out of school on sustainable development in the North Central.
4. There is no significant difference of the mean response of parents gender on the consequences of children out of school on sustainable development in the North Central.

## 2. Research Method

### 2.1. Research Design, Area and Population of the Study

The research design of the study was descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research, according to

[8] is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The area of study was the North Central Geo-Political zone of Nigeria. The population of the study was made up of parents and teachers and the sample size of 800 respondents was selected from the 2 sample states drawn through simple random sampling techniques.

### 2.2. Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was researchers' developed instrument titled: "Out of school children questionnaire" (OSCQ). The instrument was made up of two parts: Part I was meant to gather demographic information from the respondents on gender, location, family type, and parent type. Part II sought for information on the problem under study and was divided into 3 sections. A 4 point Linkert format was adopted as responses options for the respondents and a mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as accepted while 2.49 and below was rejected for each of the item. The instrument was face validated by three experts from Measurement and Evaluation departments and two experts from Early Childhood and Primary Education. The reliability of the instrument was 0.81 established using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient formula indicating that the instrument was reliable for carrying out the study.

### 2.3. Method of Data Analysis

Percentage and frequency scores were used in describing the demographic data, while Mean and Standard Deviation scores were used in answering the research questions and Independent t test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## 3. Presentation of Result

Table 1 presents the demographical data. Kogi and Nasarawa states in the North central geo political zone were used for the study. Fifty percent was the percentage for each state. 60.75% are teachers, while 39.25% are parents. Polygamous family with 59.75% according to the study is more than monogamous family with 40.25 % as regard the family type. 67.5 % of the respondents are female while 32.5 % are male and 60% of the respondents reside in the rural areas, while 40 % live in the urban. Also according to the finding families that have 3-4 children are the highest with 40% whereas the least families that had 1-2 children with 6.25 % were the least family in the two states.

Table 1. State \* Designation \* Family Type \* Location \* Number of Children \*Gender Crosstabulations

State	Designation		Family Type		Location		Number of Children				Gender	
	Teacher	Parent	Monogamy	Polygamy	Rural	Urban	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 above	Male	Female
Kogi	234	166	84	316	264	136	4	212	112	72	34	366
%	60	40	21	79	66	34	1	53	28	18	8.5	91.5
Nasarawa	246	154	238	162	216	184	46	108	156	90	226	174
%	61.5	38.5	59.5	40.5	54	46	11.5	27	39	22.5	56.5	43.5
Total	480	320	322	488	480	320	50	320	268	162	260	540
%	60.75	39.25	40.25	59.75	60	40	6.25	40	33.5	20.25	32.5	67.5

**Research Question 1: What are the enhancing factors influencing children out of school?****Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of respondents on the enhancing factors of Out of School Children (N= 800)**

S/N	Item Statements	x	SD
1	Parents low income status is reason for children not going to school	2.1450	.71432
2	Illiterate Parents do not see the value of education	2.2125	.74749
3	The number of children is too many to enroll them in school at the same time	2.2125	.65069
4	Child labour to assist the family instead of going to school	2.3300	.70523
5	Mother's death disrupt child's schooling	2.0100	.72885
6	Children are out of school due to constant migration of parents	2.4700	.49972
7	Prefer children to learn a craft or business than school	2.3900	.71707
8	Male child should attend school while female child should wait at home	2.3925	.88623
9	Female child should be occupied at home with the home chores	2.5975	.61354
10	Early marriage disrupt female child education	2.5425	.49881
11	Schooling is meant for only lazy people	2.7275	.44580
12	Schooling is meant only for the rich	2.2000	.54382
13	Female educated child find it difficult to get married early	2.0125	.63114
14	Physically challenged are not to attend school	2.4750	.71810
15	Influence of peers who are not in school	2.5975	.49102
16	The location to of the nearest school in or /children trek to long to school	2.1850	.83817
17	Teachers attitude to children at school	2.4775	.50012
18	Repeated academic failure of the child	2.3350	.47258
19	Bullying at school discourages pupils to attend school	1.7900	.64958
20	Lack of facilities, like toilets and other convenience discourages children from attending school	2.5400	.61997
21	Fear of insecurity of lives in the school	2.2750	.67492
22	Inability to cope with class activities	2.0625	.57395
23	Continuous falling sick at school keeps children out of school	2.6000	.49051
24	Schooling is not meant for over aged children	2.6000	.49051
25	Little children should stay at home rather than attend school	2.3950	.71432
26	Islam frowns at Western education	2.2575	.57622
27	Children attend Koranic schools in place for western school	2.2675	.76969
28	Western education corrupt the child	2.1975	.83079

The findings of [Table 2](#) revealed that health condition can keep children away from schools. The respondents mean of 2.6 indicate that children are out of school for health reasons. Also another important factor was peer influence. The respondents mean of 2.54 agree that children peers can remove them from school.

**Research Question 2: what are the implications of OSC on sustainable development on North Central?****Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation scores or respondents on the implications of OSC on Sustainable Development (N = 800)**

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD
29	Lack of manpower in the future in some areas	2.8650	.77218
30	The standard of living will decline	2.2625	.57395
31	Increase of crime in the society will be rampart	2.6000	.49051
32	The number of illiterates will be on the increase	2.6250	.60023
33	There will be many infant mothers that cannot raise children properly	2.9375	.49922
34	There will several cases of infant mortality	2.1975	.83079
35	There will be reduction in enrolment at schools	2.7625	.68173
36	The number of pupils who complete schools will decrease	2.8375	.59538

The result presented on the above [Table 3](#) revealed that children being out of school have implications for development. The descriptive statistics using mean scores showed with many children out of school many areas will lack manpower in the future. With 2.87 mean scores,

respondents agreed that manpower will be lacking in some areas in the future. Also the respondents with the mean score of 2.94 agree that these will affect child upbringing as many baby mothers will lack the knowledge to raise their children.

### Research Question 3: What are the consequences of out of school of children on sustainable development in North central geopolitical zone, Nigeria?

**Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation scores of respondents on the Consequences of Out of School Children on Sustainable Development (N = 800)**

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD
37	Lack of people with academic certificate to fill some position	2.7675	.62041
38	There will be menial jobs with low or small income to cater for the family	2.6650	.47258
39	Early teenage marriage for the female child will be on the increase	2.8950	.61638
40	Children out of school are used to perpetrate crimes and violence	2.8100	.80075
41	Out of school children constitute hazards in the society	2.7675	.62041
42	Breaking of law and order	2.6575	.47514
43	Ready tools in the hands of mischief makers	2.7700	.47430

The result as presented on the above [Table 4](#) revealed that all the respondents agree on the consequences of children out of school on development. Also the study revealed that the respondents with the mean score of 2.90 accept that early teenage marriage and pregnancy for the female children will increase. Also the finding of the study showed that children who are out of school are often used to perpetuate crime and other ills in the society, The respondents with the mean score of 2.81 agree that children who are out of school are used to commit some crimes.

### Research Question 4: What are the possible solutions to reduce the number of out of school children in the North central Nigeria?

**Table 5. Mean and Standard Deviation scores of respondents on the Remedies of Out of School Children on Sustainable Development (N = 800)**

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD
44	Increase in parents economic status	2.6200	.71152
45	Reduction of birth rate of fathers	3.1875	.65835
46	Eliminating the idea of educating the male child than female child	2.5225	.80381
47	Provision of facilities needed for both girl and boy child in school	2.2050	.74791
48	Eliminating violence and bullying at school	2.5600	.57726
49	Counseling services available to parents and children	2.3700	.62053
50	Recruitment of professional teachers	1.4650	.81267
51	Free education to all children	2.5975	.54243
52	Eliminating political crises or violence	3.6000	.71152
53	Migration policy to ensure that parents remain at a place for some years	2.6575	.47514
54	Punishment by law to parents whose child is not in school	2.7200	.59875
55	Catching all children loitering around during school hours and prosecuting them	2.6625	.62013
56	Incentives for children who attend school regularly	2.5325	.49957

With the aid of descriptive statistics, [Table 5](#) presented the results of responses on the remedies for out of school children. With the mean score of 3.19, 3.6, 2.72, respondents agreed that birth rate according to fathers should be reduced, violence in the school should be reduced and punishment should be given to parents whose children are out of school for whatever reasons. On the other hand, respondents with mean scores of 2.37 and 1.46 do not agree that neither making counseling services available to parents and children, nor recruitment of professional teachers could remedy children being out of school.

### 3.1. Hypotheses Testing

The results of the hypotheses testing are presented below:  
**Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference on the mean response of respondents between marriage type on the enhancing factors for children out of school in the North Central**

The independent variable in this hypothesis is family type categorized into monogamy and polygamy family while the dependent variable is enhancing factors of OSC. To test this hypothesis, Family type was compared with factors enhancing OSC and the result is presented in [Table 6](#).

**Table 6. Independent t test analysis of family type and Factors enhancing OSC**

Family Type	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Df.	t. value	t. crit.	Decision
Monogamy	320	65.0124	2.33449	798	0.159	1.96	Rejected
Polygamy	480	65.4644	3.05375				



It is clear that from Table 6 that monogamous family were 320 with 65.01 mean and 2.33 standard deviation score, while polygamous families were 480 with 65.46 mean and 3.05 standard deviation score respectively. The calculated t-value was 0.18 which is lesser than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. This implies that polygamous family differ significantly from monogamous family in terms children who are out of school. Predominantly, polygamous families has more out of school children than children from monogamous families.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference of the mean scores of respondents based on location on the implications of children out of school on sustainable development in the North Central.**

The independent variable in this hypothesis is location categorized into urban and rural while the dependent variable is implications of OSC on sustainable development. To test this hypothesis, location was compared with OSC and the result is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. Independent t test analysis of location on the Implication of OSC on sustainable Development**

Location	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Df.	t. value	t. crit.	Decision
Urban	480	19.8917	7.37552	798	.180	1.96	Rejected
Rural	320	20.0250	7.11624				

The result presented in Table 7 unveiled that with 800 respondents sampled based on location, respondents from urban area were 480 with 19.89 mean score and 7.38 standard deviation score, while 320 respondents from rural area with mean and standard deviation scores of 20.03 and 7.12 respectively. The t-value calculated is 0.180 which is less than the table of critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This means there is a significant difference in the mean response of respondents in urban and rural areas on the implications of OSC on sustainable development.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference of the mean scores of respondents based on gender on the consequences of children out of school on sustainable development in the North Central.**

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Gender categorized into male and female while the dependent variable is consequences of OSC on sustainable development. To test this hypothesis, gender was compared with consequences of OSC and the result is presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. Independent t test analysis of gender on the Consequence OSC on Sustainable development**

Gender	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Df.	t. value	t. crit.	Decision
Male	260	17.6000	0.66589	798	2.29	1.96	Accepted
Female	540	17.4667	1.19625				

The finding of the result on Table 8 showed that with 800 respondents sampled on the basis of consequences of OSC, 260 were male with 17.60 mean and 0.66 standard deviation scores, while female respondents were 540 with mean and standard deviation scores of 17.47 and 1.20

respectively. The calculated t-value is 2.29 which is greater than the critical t-value at the chosen 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a significant difference in the responses based on gender on the consequences of OSC on sustainable development.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>: There is no significant difference mean scores of respondents' designation and the remedies of children out of school on sustainable development in the North Central**

The independent variable in this hypothesis is respondent Designation categorized into Teacher and parent while the dependent variable is Remedies of OSC on sustainable development. To test this hypothesis, gender was compared with OSC and the result is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Independent t Test Remedies for OSC**

Designation	Number	Mean	St. Dev.	Df.	t. value	t. crit.	Decision
Teacher	480	31.0667	3.26	398	1.98	1.96	Accepted
Parents	320	30.7875	3.18				

The result presented in Table 9 revealed that with 800 respondents sampled based on designation, respondents who are teachers were 480 with 31.07 mean score and 3.26 standard deviation score, while 320 respondents who are parents with mean and standard deviation scores of 30.79 and 3.18 respectively. The t-value calculated is 1.98 which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate hypothesis rejected. This means there is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents' designation on the proffered remedies of OSC on sustainable development.

## 4. Discussion of Results

The findings of this study were discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses formulated to guide the study.

### 4.1. The Enhancing Factors Influencing Children Out of School

The factors enhancing children out of school are multifactorial according to the findings of the study. These according to the study include among others poverty, parents education attainment, child health condition, academic failure and peer influence. The finding of the study is in agreement with the study of [9] and [10] in a multilevel analysis discovered that most of the strong determinants of primary school non-attendance was due to household factors, with parental education and wealth being the most important. The results also showed that distance to school has more influence on primary school non-attendance.

The study is in tandem with [11] that identified major factors that influence basic school dropout in rural Ghana into non-school related factor which include poverty and child labour and school related factor which include low academic performance, distance to school and sometimes

school environment, punishment by teachers, children dislike of school, dilapidated school block among others. This is supported by [12] that states teachers' attitude, school environment and infrastructure, students' interest or disinterest influence school dropout.

#### **4.2. Implications of Out of School Children on Sustainable Development**

The study showed with many children out of school in years to come, there will be lack of adequate and appropriate manpower in the future. This deficiency will affect all aspect of human life as there will be vacancies in several areas that demand skills acquired through education at school. The study is in an agreement with studies that have illustrated the impact of training and development on job satisfaction. [13] found that training participation enhanced levels of self-efficacy and mediated and moderated the relation between training participation and satisfaction. Also the study by [14] found that there exists a relation between participation in required training courses, work based development activities and job satisfaction. Children who do not attend school are often exposed to violence and menial jobs.

Also the finding unveiled that this will affect child upbringing as many baby mothers will lack the knowledge to raise their children. Teenage mothers due to lack of knowledge, exposure and experience has a lot of influence on the upbringing of the child, mother relationship to the community and society at large. This would imply that both the child and the mother would suffer a lot. The finding of the study agreed with the finding of [15] and [16] discovered that teenage mothers have lower levels of psychosocial maturity than their older and more developed counterparts – they are more likely to be depressed and more likely to report greater levels of stress both of which have been linked to deficits in parenting behaviors.

#### **4.3. Consequences of Out of School Children on Sustainable Development**

The finding of the study showed that early teenage marriage and pregnancy for the female children will increase. This finding is in agreement with [17,18] finding that early marriage as result of the girl child being out of school has significant effect on the girls child education suggesting that early marriage curtails girl child schooling. This study support the finding of [19] previous finding on the impact of teen parenting on maternal education and income finds small long-term effects once selection has been considered, but with the negative effects on income declining over time As such, teen parents may be more resource constrained during their children's earliest years, a period critical for child development [20] Further, teen birth may also be associated with lower paternal quality. As such, this can result in worse outcomes for affected children through either genetic inheritance or fewer and lower quality paternal inputs.

Also study showed that children who are out of school are often used to perpetuate crime and other ills in the society, the finding of the study agrees with the previous finding of [21] that the 'out-of-school' children and youth

are more likely to engage themselves in illegal and risky activities, such as drug and sex-related problems, violence, and gambling.

#### **4.4. Possible Solutions to Reduce the Number of Out of School Children**

The finding of the study proffered that birth rate according to fathers should be reduced. This finding is in agreement with the finding that too much birth in the family may be as a result of polygamy, may lead to inability of the parents to send their children to school or even take good care of them. This is due to the minimum resources available to take care of large number of children. In addition improvement of the living standard of parents is inevitable to reduce the number of children who are out of school. At times some of these children indulge in child labour to assist in the family up keep.

Also the finding revealed that violence should be reduced in the school as one solution to reduce children out of school. This study supports the opinion that children especially the girl child does not thrive in unfriendly environment, the school should be another home for the child to learn and exercise. Unfriendly environment in every aspect is detested and avoided by the child.

The finding of the study also proffer punishment to be given to parents whose children are out of school for whatever reasons. This finding is supported by the views that passing into law compulsory basic education must be accompanied by punishments for defaulters. Any child who should be in school but is not in school for no reason is breaking the law of compulsory universal basic education in Nigeria. The finding of the study do not agree that neither making counseling services available to parents and children, nor recruitment of professional teachers could remedy children being out of school. This finding seems to be in contrast with the views that counseling and recruitment of professional teachers as important factors to reduce children being out of school.

### **5. Conclusion**

This study investigates Out of school children: enhancing factors and consequences for sustainable development in North Central Geo-political Zone, Nigeria. The study reveals that despite the spectacular increase in enrollment at basic education, yet there are still a lot of children who are out of school. The study identified the enhancing factors for out of school children to include out of school related factors as early marriage, teenage pregnancy and child labour, customs, traditions, sickness and parents death and also school related factors as direct costs of education, child lack of interest in school, school proximity, unattractive school environment and poor academic performance as significant enhancing factors for OOSC. The implications and consequences of children out of school on development and sustainable development are enormous; Hence, possible solutions were preferred to curb the menace of out of school children in the North Central Geo Political zone.

And parents death and also school related factors as direct costs of education, child lack of interest in school, school proximity, unattractive school environment and poor academic performance as significant enhancing factors for OOSC. The implications and consequences of children out of school on development and sustainable development are enormous; Hence, possible solutions were preferred to curb the menace of out of school children in the North Central Geo Political zone.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should ensure that basic education is free and compulsory in all aspects by reducing the cost of education.
2. The law of child marriage should be enforced and also enabling laws for defaulters prohibiting them for being partners for children out of school.
3. Enlightenment of parents, guardians and children on the relevance of education on human growth, development and sustainable development. Education campaigns should be intensified throughout the geo political zone. Public sensitization about the value and importance of education should be strengthened.
4. Government should treat the school dropout issue seriously and make plans to assist children from poor families to go school. Interventions by educational policy makers, the Government, NGOs, etc. to reduce dropout rate should be focused on all children-male and female.
5. Evening schools for baby mothers who could not attend school because of early marriage.
6. There should be poverty reduction strategies through the development of appropriate policies and intervention strategies to help poor people improve their livelihood.

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