Masculinity and Access to Basic Education in Nigeria

Ndubuisi Chidi Ezegwu

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Department of Educational Research,

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Declaration and Word Count

This thesis results entirely from my work and has not been offered previously for any other degree or diploma.

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Signature: 

Name: Ndubuisi Chidi Ezegwu

Abstract

Nigeria currently has some of the worst and persistent poor access to education, social inequality and the highest number of out-of-school children in the world. In the literature, some of the identified reasons for these include poverty, early marriage, religious and cultural values (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Save the Children, 2016; UNESCO, 2019). While there has been a multiplicity of interventions to address these and promote access to basic education in the past two decades, the number of out-of-school children has continued to escalate, having both gender and regional dimensions. In 2006, the number of out-of-school children stood at around 7.4 million, which increased to about 10.5 million in 2010 and 13.2 million in 2016. These suggest a need to look beyond the mainstream approaches to interrogate gender constructions in the dominant ethnocultural domains in Nigeria. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, the study, therefore, examined possible influences of social constructions of maleness (masculinity) on access and completion of basic education in the three dominant ethnocultural groups (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba) in Nigeria. Qualitative data were collected, using a semi-structured interview guide, from 30 (15 female and 15 male) adult respondents that had experiences of dropping out of basic education in Anambra (southeast), Sokoto (northwest) and Oyo (southwest) states in Nigeria. Findings indicate that colonialism (and its aftermaths) contributed to the shaping of the postcolonial males' character, dominant position and subordination of females in ways that affect an individual's educational development. Masculinity is directly and indirectly implicated in the state of access and completion of basic education in all the three ethnocultural zones for creating and exacerbating conditions that push and pull both females and males out of school. The study recommends exploration of homegrown initiatives and effective ways for addressing barriers to education that emanate from the social construction of masculine

characters. The study also highlights the inappropriateness of the Western liberal feminist approach to the study of masculinity in a non-Western society.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to God, who created us differently for us to discover and cherish the usefulness and complementariness of our differing nature, which this study seeks to contribute to discovering.

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I give glory to God in whose power I find strength.

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I am very much indebted to my big family: my wife, Mrs Chioma Ezegwu, whose support and prayers strengthened me; my elder brother, Clifford Ezegwu, who decided to send me back to school after my four years of being out of school, (when the opportunity seemed to have been lost, and I have forgotten about education beyond primary school), and the rest of the family members who encouraged and prayed for me from the time the decision was made to give education a second chance till this day!

Lastly, I am very thankful to Mrs Ijeoma Ireh, who proofread the work, my friends and loved ones for their countless encouragements and support that continually motivated and energised me throughout the time of the study.

May God bless and reward you all abundantly!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Social justice in education demands that everyone has equal and uninhibited access to quality education. Nigeria currently has some of the worst and persistent poor access to education and social inequality in the world (UNESCO, 2013, 2014, 2015; Save the Children, 2016; Awosiyan, 2017). Access to Universal Basic Education (UBE) in the country is hindered by various gender-based socio-cultural and economic factors such as early marriage, religious and cultural values, poverty and households' economic quests (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018; UNESCO, 2019). The UBE in Nigeria, herein refers to basic education, is expected to provide free, compulsory and uninterrupted nine-year basic education (six years of primary and three years of junior secondary education) for all school-age children in Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004) but this has not been achieved. Save the Children (2016, p.3) reports that “Nigeria has an estimated 13.2 million school-age children (6–14 years old) not in school– the largest out-of-school population in the world”, of which “fully 12.6 million (95 per cent) are in the north of the country, reflecting a clear north/south divide”. It is noteworthy that being out-of-school in Nigeria has both regional and gender dimensions: gender disparity in basic education enrolment has historically been in favour of girls in the southeast and favour of boys in the northern Nigeria (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al. 2016; Unterhalter et al. 2018).

In relation to gender, while issues around female access to basic education in Nigeria have been extensively researched – following an extensive intervention on girls education

across Nigeria by both international and national organisations (e.g. Erulkar and Bello, 2007; Akunga and Attfield, 2010; Unterhalter and Heslop, 2011; Dunne et al. 2014; Unterhalter et al. 2018), a review of the literature suggests a dearth of evidence on the possible role of masculinity on both females and males' access and completion of basic education in the country. Connell (2001) explains masculinities as patterns of social practice that are associated with positions of men in society and males' position in society's gender relations. Literature search and review suggest that the existing body of literature on masculinity in Nigeria does not directly focus on education (see Christian Aid, 2015; Okoro et al. 2016; Pasura and Christou, 2018).

This study, therefore, examined the influence of social construction of maleness (masculinity) on both females and males' access and completion of basic education in three major ethnic and cultural (ethnocultural) zones in Nigeria. It particularly seeks to present an insider[1] perspective of masculinity and dropping out of school[2] in Nigeria by exploring the contribution of masculinity on both gender and regional dimensions of the phenomenon from the perspectives of people that dropped out of school. While the emphasis is placed on masculinity, factors surrounding both females and males' basic education access and completion have been considered because influences of masculinity are not limited to any gender. For example, the social value that upholds males as breadwinners tends to influence both males and females behaviours and opportunities (Christian Aid, 2015). In this thesis, the research background, rationale,

[1] It is an insider perspective because both the researcher and respondent experienced the state of being out of school in Nigeria and understand various factors that kept them and others away from school.

[2] In this thesis, out-of-school refers to people that experience dropping out of school while out of school represents a phenomenon or processes as used in different parts of this work

overarching questions, theoretical framework, methodology, findings and key recommendations are summarised. The proceeding subsection summarises the study motivation.

1.2 Motivation and Rationale

Three primary factors inspired this study. Firstly, my personal life story and experience continue to motivate me to lead a study on gender and out-of-school children in Nigeria. I dropped out of school after my primary education and was able to go back to school after four years with the help of my elder brother who suggested I went back to school, and personally enrolled me in a night school to enable me to continue trading and equally going to school. Within the four years of being out-of-school, I served as an apprentice in patient medicine and automobile spare parts markets. The night school operated between seven pm and nine pm (two hours) every school day and constituted my secondary education for six years. At the end of my secondary education, I was also able to gain admission as a part-time student at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka for another seven years (inclusive of one-year strike action by university lecturers). Towards the end of the first degree, I had an opportunity of being selected, trained and supported to lead a network of youth organisations on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and population and development issues in Anambra State by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). During this time, I received diverse kinds of exposure and training on gender theories and causes that enabled me to lead advocacies on gender and reproductive health issues; these also inspired me to reflect on why I was out of school in the first place. My reflections led me to conclude that while poverty was a major cause that led to my withdrawal from school, if every boy in my community was going to school at that time, I could have

engaged in different kinds of jobs on people's farm to earn money and sponsor my education. At that time, it was in vogue for boys to leave school after primary education to serve as apprentices and begin to make money early than to spend many years in school without an assurance of a job at the end of additional ten years of education. My postgraduate studies thus provided opportunities for me to explore these reflections from an academic angle and generate evidence for promoting relevant interventions that would create opportunities for everyone to access and complete basic education in Nigeria.

During my second Master's Degree study at the University College London Institute of Education, I took the challenge to investigate how masculinity contributes to pushing people out of school in Anambra state. Findings of the study inspired further and deeper investigations. Hence, this PhD study has been motivated by (and represents a furthering of) my second Master's level qualitative study, which from both postcolonial and hegemonic masculinity perspectives, critically examined how local construction of masculinity and males' social expectations influence males' aspirations and preferences in manners that generally lead to low male secondary school enrolment (Ezegwu, 2012). The Master's Degree study was conducted in only one state, Anambra State, in Nigeria. It involved ten male respondents that did not enrol in or complete secondary education before they went into full-time business activities, just like me. The study observes that "while economic factors are central to low male enrolment in the state, they may not be effective without household and social pressures that are associated with social constructions of masculinities and expectations on males" to qualify as 'ideal men' and achieve *nma nwoke* ('man's beauty') (Ezegwu, 2012, p.1). Boys leave schools to seek *nma nwoke* (the local colloquial name for money) that would make it easy for them to

marry females of their choices, while females seek more education to get husbands of their choices. The study recommends additional in-depth studies to examine how historical factors and current socioeconomic structure possibly contribute to shaping masculine identity (Ezegwu, 2012).

Within Nigeria, the need to examine the influences of masculinities on access and completion of basic education is considered to be very crucial because of the increasing number of out-of-school children in the country. In 2006, the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria stood at about 7.4 million, which increased to about 10.5 million in 2010 and 13.2 million in 2016 (UNICEF, 2012a; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Save the Children, 2016; Awosiyan, 2017). The existing data is not adequately disaggregated by age and gender, but it still inspires a need to explore the socio-cultural background to this trend, particularly the gender-based influences (such as the social construction of masculinity) that might have led to differential access and completion of basic education for females and males in different locations of the country (on differential access, see chapter 2.3.2). This observed need is the third motivation for this study. The next subsection summarises the study objective and research questions.

1.3 Study Objective and Research Questions

The main objective of this study is to, from a postcolonial feminist perspective, examine the Nigerian Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba[3] culturally idealised forms of masculine characters and how these contribute to shaping access and completion of basic education among

[3] See section 1.5 for details on these ethnocultural groups

females and males in three ethnocultural groups. Table 1 summarises the overarching research questions.

Table 1: Research questions	
1	How are culturally idealised forms of masculine characters and power in Nigeria contributing to influence access and completion of basic education in Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba ethnocultural groups?
2	How are the social constructions of masculinities in Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba cultures interacting with socioeconomic factors to influence basic education enrolment and completion?

1.4 Relevance of the Study

The relevance of this study is summed up in the following four areas: an exposition of people's lived experiences; closing the existing gap in the literature on masculinity and education in Nigeria; contribution to theory development and, contribution towards evidence-based education and gender policies and interventions.

1.5.1. Exposition of people's lived experiences

The need to understand how people living in postcolonial societies are experiencing postcoloniality is widely underscored in the literature (Radhakrishnan, 1993; Abrahamsen, 2003; Owczarzak, 2009; Gomba, 2015). Both feminists and postcolonial scholars continue to highlight a need to understand the experience of marginalisation, underdevelopment and underprivileged conditions from the lived experiences of, (and directly from those) that experienced it (Olsen, 1994; Harding, 2000; Ardovini-Brooker,

2002; Laurol, 2016). Such understanding is very crucial for effective policy and programmatic intervention in ways that address both the people's need and root causes of social inequality. This study has given specific attention to the understanding of the condition of being out of school from the experiences of people who dropped out of school in postcolonial Nigeria. It highlights how masculinities interact with various postcolonial socioeconomic, political and cultural push and pull factors to keep both females and males out of school. The research also amplifies the voices of people that experienced being out of school and how masculinity contributed to impact on their experiences. Thus, it provides an insider's account of being out-of-school, lived experiences of postcoloniality and masculinity-underpinned social conditions in Nigerian society.

1.5.2 Closing Existing Gap in the Literature on Masculinity and Education in Nigeria

Also, a review of the literature (e.g. Odimegwu and Adedini, 2013; Obiyan, 2015; Okoro et al. 2016; Voices 4 Change[4], 2015; Pasura and Christou, 2018 – see details in chapter two) highlights dominant areas of scholarly interest (what scholars are inquiring about) in the field of masculinity in Nigeria. The review suggests an extant scarcity of evidence on the link between the social construction of masculinity and education in Nigeria and points to a need for a multiplicity of studies on the nature and influences of masculinities across Nigerian (and African) cultures on access and completion of basic education. Possibly, a study like this that focuses on the three dominant ethnocultural groups in the country might inspire diverse responses and other kinds of inquiries on other groups.

[4] Voices 4 Change was a UK Aid-funded programme (2013-2017) on gender equality in Nigeria. Its research sought to provide evidence on various ways gender-based discriminatory conditions and practices affect people differently.

The study also contributes to enriching the stock of knowledge on gendered dimensions of being out of school in Nigeria, by exploring the experiences of people that were out of school and meanings they attached to their experiences. It also reveals existing trends, practices and meanings that may not have been highlighted in many research literature on Nigerian education. By doing this, the study provides rich accounts and descriptions of impacts of masculinity on access to basic education, aiding and providing an improved understanding of the phenomenon as experienced by people who dropped out of school.

1.5.3 Enhancing Theory Development

The fusion of postcolonialism and masculinity contributes to providing a novel approach in the explanation of different constructions of masculinities and their influences on people's behaviour and education in Nigeria. The study examined masculinity (particularly the social construction of maleness) from the postcolonial perspectives of subalterniety and otherness as advanced by Spivak, (1995, 1988) and Fanon (1963); intersectionality by Crenshaw's (1989) and; insiders' account of historical underpinnings of masculinities and postcolonial experiences (McLaughlin, 2001). Also, the study consciously takes a historical perspective, exploring how history has contributed to shaping masculinity and how masculinity, in turn, has contributed to influence access and completion of basic education in postcolonial Nigeria. This amalgam, which has been explored and applied throughout the study, provides an opportunity to apply these theoretical perspectives in different socio-cultural contexts.

This study also contributes to close an existential and relational gap in the understanding of masculinity and its impact in both Nigerian cultural contexts and educational development. Masculinity is one of the relative concepts that demand multiple studies to

understand its nature and influences in each cultural setting and on diverse social issues: leading masculinities theorists and scholars have emphasised its tendency to vary in definitions and characterisation, and the need to understand masculinities based on context, culture, and environment (Kimmel, 2001; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Some scholars also identify geography as an essential element in the masculinity discourse, which includes spatial and social spheres, and note that the nature of masculinity is mostly influenced and constructed at the local culture and traditional levels (Curtin and Linehan, 2002; Brown, Sorrell and Raffaelli, 2005; Hopkins, 2007; Oluwole, 2010). The distinctions of masculinities in different environment and culture contributes to creating a scarcity of information on its nature, construction and influence among different cultures and people of divergent backgrounds, which constitutes a considerable gap in the existing body of evidence on gender and power relations. More studies, like this, are needed to increase the stock of existing evidence that could help to improve the understanding of the applications and implications of these theories.

1.5.4 Providing Evidence for Education and Gender Policies and Interventions

The UNESCO's (2019, p.3) Global Education Monitoring (GEM) report notes that "achieving gender equality will not occur without strong political commitment", which indicates that strong policy and practical interventions need to be put in place by governments and their partners. An understanding of males and masculinities in different socio-cultural settings in Nigeria is an important step towards developing effective and result-oriented gender-based policies and interventions in education. Evidence from this study provides useful information for developing such context-specific policies and interventions.

Essentially, over a decade, there has been advocacies around roles of men in the promotion of gender equality in education (see UNESCO, 2004), which requires requisite evidence to support policy and programmes in this direction. Also, available evidence suggests that leaving men and maleness behind in the promotion of gender equality may be counterproductive (Christian Aid, 2015). A literature search suggests that limited evidence exists on interventions that focus on masculinity as a critical element in gender equality promotion in Nigeria education (see Humpreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Christian Aid, 2015; Gersberg et al. 2016, see also chapter 2.3d). This study contributes to the closing of the observed gap.

Moreover, while there is an agreement in the literature about the pervasive gender disparity in school enrolment and completion of basic and secondary education in Nigeria, attention of the majority of the existing gender-based interventions and studies in Nigeria is largely focused on females and do not adequately include males (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al. 2016). Various evaluations of major gender in basic education programmes in Nigeria, such as the DFID/UNICEF's Girls Education Project (GEP), indicate that prevailing gender in education approaches do not adequately engage males in redressing various norms and attitudes that cause and perpetuate gender inequality (UNICEF, 2012b; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014). More male-focused studies, such as this, may catalyse interest in male-engaging interventions and research, which could help to emphasise the nature and impact of masculinity and provide evidence for future gender-based interventions in Nigeria's education system. Besides, a recent study on the promotion of gender equality in Turkey reveals a need for a comprehensive

understanding of gender equality issues for effective policy-making and interventions (Cin, Karlidag-Dennis and Temiz, 2020). This study also contributes in this direction.

The following subsection presents the thesis outline and structure.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The **first chapter**, which constitutes an introduction to this work, presents the background to the study, its motivation and rationale, objectives and research questions, as well as the contributions the study has made to knowledge and practice.

The **second chapter** summarises key arguments and findings from a review of the literature that was conducted as part of the study on issues around key themes embodied in the research questions.

Chapter three summarises the study's theoretical framework, which is a postcolonial approach, highlighting various elements of the postcolonial approach, rationale for choosing it and aspects that have been employed in the study.

The methodology of the research is discussed in **chapter four**. The design and approach to the study, as well as pilot, field data collection and analysis activities, are summarised here.

Chapter five presents and discusses data on social constructions of masculinity and direct influences of masculinity on access and completion of basic education.

Chapter six continues with the data presentation analysis but focuses on the interaction of masculinity with various factors that are identified in the literature as some of the key barriers to access to education.

The final chapter summarises key conclusions, contributions and recommendations of the study.

Having summarised the background, motivation, objective, research questions and relevance of the study, the following chapter, chapter two, summarises key findings made during the literature review activities.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, various gaps (such as interventions that focus on masculinity and investigation of issues around masculinity and education) arising from the review of the literature and key justifications for the study were mentioned. This literature review chapter discusses the literature reviewed and highlights debates, evidence and areas such gaps exist. The chapter particularly gives attention to key issues around themes that are summed up in the research objectives and research questions, which include social justice in education, masculinities, recent trends in Nigeria's basic education and statistics on access to basic education.

The following subsection discusses broader issues around social justice in education literature.

2.2 The Research setting - Nigeria

Nigeria is a West African country of 201 million people (United Nations Population Fund, 2019). The country has over 250 ethnic and cultural (ethnocultural) groups and 510 languages (Dooga, 2012; Morakinyo, 2015). Administratively, Nigeria is made up of 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). These states are further grouped into six geopolitical zones: northeast, northwest, north-central, southeast, south-south and southwest. The Federal Capital Territory is located in the north-central. Hausa and Fulani are dominant ethnic groups in the north while Igbo and Yoruba ethnic groups respectively dominate southeast and southwest geopolitical zones.

The country called Nigeria today used to be a group of differing cultural and ethnic groups that were merged into one entity by British colonial administration in 1914 with the amalgamation of the northern and southern regions as a result of administrative expediency (not in the interest of the people). The country got its independence in 1960. Since then, it has moved from one political challenge to another, including a 30-month civil war (1967 – 1970) that claimed between one and three million lives (Iweriebor, 1982; Nnaemeka, 1997; Ukeje, 1999; Ojukwu, 2009a, 2009b; Chiriyankandath, 2011; Mayowa, 2014).

Two major forms of education existed in Nigeria before the arrival of Western formal education and colonialism: the traditional system and Islamic education. The traditional system of education that existed in most parts of Nigeria before the people's contact with Europeans was diffused and less formalised (Fafunwa, 1974; Ohadike, 1996; Amaele, 2006). Islamic education was introduced along with Islam in the country, especially in the northern parts of the country around the eleventh century AD (Ajidagba, 1998). Islam spread its religious values, educational system and transformed local cultures along with its religious beliefs (Adeleye, 1971; Martin, 1976). It is important to note that Islamic religion is dominant in the north while Christianity is the dominant religion in the south: a total of 46.3% of Nigerians are Christians, 46% are Muslims and, 7.4% practise traditional religions while 0.3% hold other forms of beliefs (Grim et al. 2017). The Western education advanced largely in the Christian dominated southern parts with limited success in the Muslim dominated north.

While the establishment of Western formal schools was pioneered by Christian missionaries in 1842, which previously arrived the area in early 16th century, its

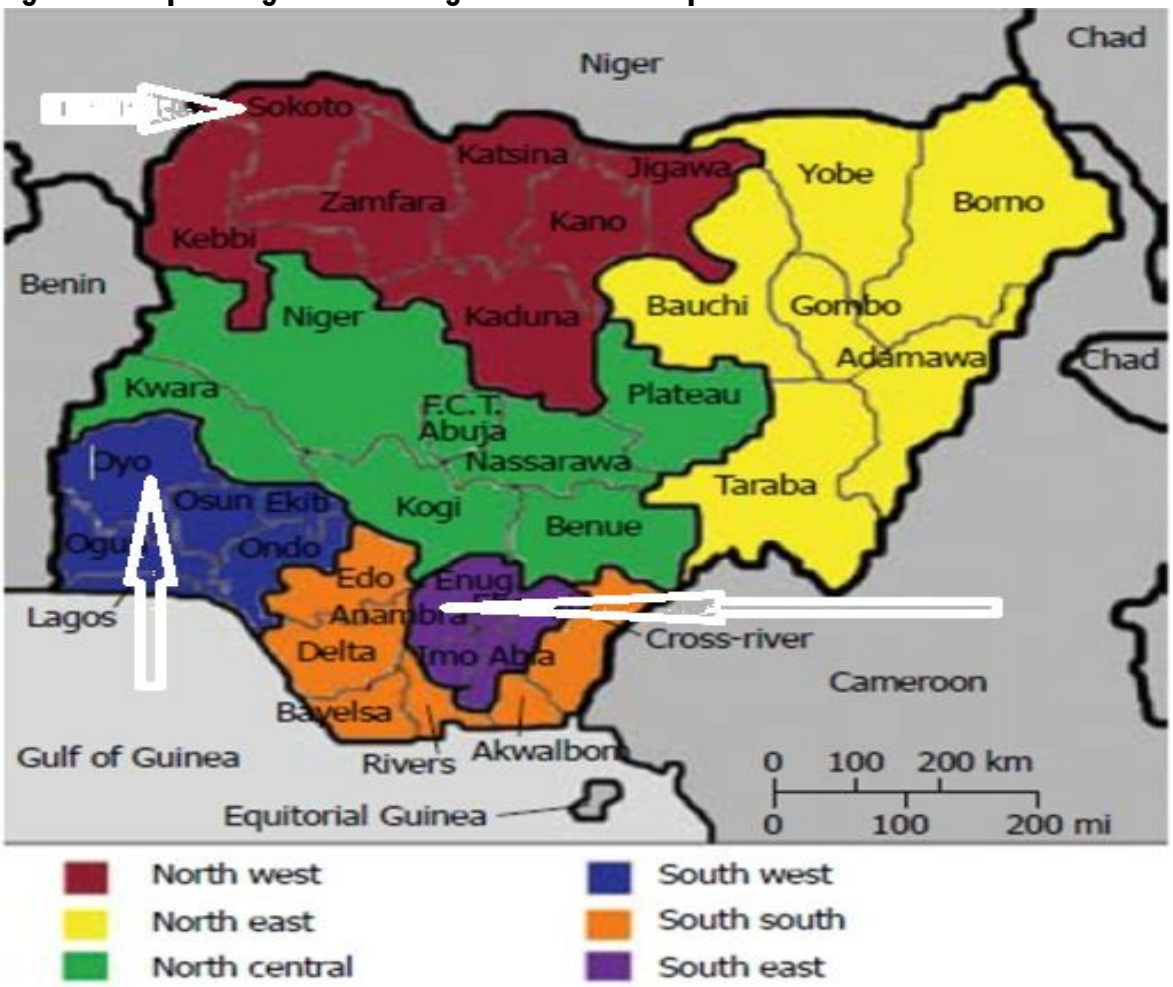
introduction and expansion across the country are inextricably tied to three different historical factors: European exploration, Christian missionary activities and colonialism (Fafunwa, 1974; Bassey, 1991; Ajidagba, 1998; Amaele, 2006; Ezegwu, 2012). One thing they shared in common was the promotion of education as a means of promoting their respective businesses and particularly to produce educated persons that served as middlemen for effective communication with the local people, which was necessary for business promotion, evangelism and political administration (Fafunwa, 1974; Akani, 1990; Ajidagba, 1998; Nzekwe, 2007; Sulaiman, 2012). In these regards, early schools in Nigeria were established to produce clerical staff, messengers, English teachers and translators (Fajana, 1972; Derrick, 1983).

This study focuses on the three major ethnocultural and linguistic groups in the country: Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. It is important to provide a brief background of these three regions and particularly the states where data were collected. Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba (their ethnic names and languages they speak are same) are chosen for this study because they are the three dominant ethnocultural and linguistic groups in the country. They also represent the north-south divide in education, religion, and development. The Igbo and Yoruba are located in southern Nigeria where Christianity is a dominant religion, while Hausa is the dominant ethnic group in the north where Islam is a dominant religion. The World Atlas[5] estimates that Hausa constitute 25.1% of Nigeria's total population of 201 million while Yoruba and Igbo have total shares of 21% and 18% respectively. The three ethnocultural groups thus constitute over 64% of the country's population.

[5] https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-nigeria.html

Considering that these three ethnocultural groups constitute more than half of the country's population, understanding of their construction of masculinities would give a close view of Nigerian masculinities. Besides, the ethnocultural composition of the study respondents provides an opportunity to compare findings from different locations, ethnic, cultural and religious perspectives. More about each of the study location is discussed below. Specifically, data was collected in Anambra State (Igbo in the southeast), Sokoto State (Hausa/Fulani in the northwest) and Oyo State (Yoruba in the southwest) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Map of Nigeria showing States and Geopolitical Zones



Source: https://openi.nlm.nih.gov/imgs/512/75/4603956/PMC4603956_pone.0140021.g001.png
Note: locations of the states pointed by the white arrow.

2.2.1 Anambra

Anambra is one of the five states in the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The state is considered a cradle of Igbo civilisation and has some of the oldest Igbo settlements in Nigeria. The state produced the earliest known documented bronze sculptures in Sub-Saharan Africa that are dated around 800 AD. Scholars are in agreement that Nri Civilization in Anambra State existed as at 900 AD (Nzimiro, 1972; Onwuejeogwu, 1981; Oliver and Anthony, 1994; Okpoko, 1998; Chambers, 2005; Arowolo, 2010). Currently, the state is the second-most densely populated state in Nigeria with a total population of 5,846,198 (2,981,561 males and 2,864,637 females)[6]. The population is mostly Christians and involved in trading, agriculture and other forms of professional jobs. Anambra State has 21 Local Government Areas (LGAs). Onitsha Main Market, located in the state, is considered to be the largest market in West Africa (Premium Times, 2013).

Anambra has an exceptional education record in Nigeria. On the one hand, it is usually among the top five states with the best records in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) results – first in Nigeria in 2014, second in 2016 and 2018 (Daily Post, 2014; NBS, 2016; Punch, 2016). On the other hand, it has maintained a historical low male (in relation to females) secondary enrolment. Although this trend is widespread in the Southeast, Anambra has over the years recorded the lowest male secondary school enrolment rate in the southeast geopolitical zone (UNESCO, 2000; National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2005, 200; Osuigwe, Udeze and Anunobi, 2011; Ezegwu, 2012; NPC

[6] This based on March 2019 information on the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission website: https://nipc.gov.ng/nigeria-states/anambra-state/ see also https://www.britannica.com/place/Anambra

and RTI, 2015). Information from the 2016 Nigeria Education Indicator shows that primary school (aged 6 to 11 years) Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for 2016 stood at 109.28 (105.53 for males and 113.14 for females) while completion rate was 105.38 (100.76 for males and 110.14 for females) (Federal Ministry of Education (FME), 2016). These indicate that even at the primary school level, females are more likely to complete primary education than males. At the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level (aged 12 to 14 years), GER stood at 23.50 (22.57 for males and 24.46 for females) while transition rate to JSS1 was 23.69 (24.03 for males and 23.36 for females).

2.2.2 Oyo

Oyo is one of the six southwestern states. Oyo was the capital of ancient Oyo Empire and the seat of the *Alaafin* of Oyo (the then Yoruba political head). Besides migrants, it is a typical Yoruba state with a dominant Yoruba population. The people primarily engage in agriculture and handicrafts and are very skilled in traditional weaving and dyeing with locally grown indigo. Its capital city of Ibadan is considered to be sub-Saharan Africa's largest indigenous city[7]. Ibadan was the political and administrative headquarters of the old Western Region right from the British colonial era. Oyo State currently has 33 Local Government Areas and a total population of 8,392,588 (male – 4,280,220 and female – 4,112,368)[8]. The Yoruba Anglican Mission that was established in Oyo in the 1860s set up St. Andrew's College in 1897, which is the oldest teacher-training institutes in Nigeria (Encyclopædia Britannica (2019a). The first and one of the finest universities in Nigeria,

[7] See http://placng.org/situation_room/sr/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/OYO.pdf
[8] This based on March 2019 information on the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission website: https://nipc.gov.ng/nigeria-states/oyo-state/

the University of Ibadan is located in Ibadan. It was established in 1948 as a college of the University of London and became an Autonomous University in 1962.

As regards education, the information from the 2016 Nigeria Education Indicators shows that primary school (aged 6-11) GER was 89.04 (91 for males and 88.54 for females). The completion rate was 132.98 (128.39 for males and 137.60 for females). At the JSS level (12-14), GER was 54.55 (53.93 for males and 55.17 for females). Transition to JSS1 was 47.29 (47.39 for males and 47.91 for females) while the completion rate was 52.02 (51.14 for males and 52.91 for females) (FME, 2016).

2.2.3 Sokoto

Sokoto State, the Seat of Islamic Caliphate in Nigeria, is located in north-western Nigeria and consists of largely two ethnic groups: Hausa and Fulani. The state has a total of 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The 2016 estimated population of the state was 5,307,154 (Male- 2,706,649 and Female- 2,600,506)[9]. A greater percentage of the state population is rural dwellers, with only 20% living in urban areas. Majority of the state population are Muslims (Unterhalter et al. 2014). The Encyclopædia Britannica (2019b) notes that Sokoto, which is the capital of Sokoto state, used to be a small village before its emergence as the military headquarters in 1804/1805 for the Fulani Jihad led by Sheikh Usman dan Fodio.

[9] This based on March 2019 information on the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission website: https://nipc.gov.ng/nigeria-states/sokoto-state/ . See also https://www.britannica.com/place/Sokoto-Nigeria

Sokoto State is included in the list of educationally challenged states in Nigeria (National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF International, 2014). Information from the 2016 Nigeria Education Indicators indicates that primary school (6-11) GER stood at 78.40 (95.46 for males and 61.11 for females). The completion rate was 45.34 (55.79 for males and 34.75 for females). At the JSS level (12-14 years), GER was 31.48 (39.66 for males and 23.19 for females). Transition rate to JSS1 was 91.02 (92.25 for males and 88.91 for females). Completion rate stood at 49.96 (64.82 for males and 34.91 for females) (FME, 2016).

The following section summarises gender theories and statistics in education, including information on out-of-school children and gender in education in Nigeria.

2.3 Gender in Education

Gender has historically been an important factor that contributes to the impact on people's educational opportunities (Longlands, 2008; Unterhalter et al. 2017; UNESCO, 2019). According to Cin (2017, p.1), "gender affects a broad range of inequalities in our world, particularly in relation to education and schooling". Hence, gender equality remains a global priority and an important factor in the achievement of the right to education for everyone (UNESCO, 2016, 2019). In this section, theoretical issues and trend in gendered access and completion of basic education are summarised.

2.3.1 Gender in Education Frameworks

In their search for effective approaches for the promotion of gender equality in education, feminists and gender scholars in education have advanced diverse perspectives and approaches. Unterhalter (2005) attempted a summary of four major perspectives: Women

in Development (WID), Gender and Development (GAD), Poststructuralism and Human Development frameworks.

According to Unlterhalter (2005), Women in Development (WID) is associated with modernisation, human capital theory and Western liberal feminism. It seeks to promote women and girls inclusion, equality of resources and gender parity. WID emerged in the early 1970s with an "emphasis on bringing women into development, and thus girls and women into school…. It stresses the importance of including women in development planning to improve efficiency, but not necessarily challenging the multiple sources of women's subordination" (Unlterhalter, 2005, p.17). WID is criticised for its bias towards women, equating gender with women and girls (Unlterhalter, 2005). In locations like Southeastern Nigeria and some upper-middle-income countries where UNESCO (2019) GEM report observed that boys are more disadvantaged in education, WID could be a less effective gender in education planning framework but could be useful for addressing gender inequality in education in northern Nigeria and many countries where more girls are educationally disadvantaged, some of which are worsened by poverty and harmful social norms (see Nigerian Population Commission (NPC) and RTI International, 2016; UNESCO, 2019). Also, WID's emphasis on parity, such as seeking mainly to get more females into school, tends to ignore diverse situations and social processes that affect women's representation and participation in different cultural settings, which are actually the root causes of gender inequalities in education and wider society (Taylor, 1999).

The emergence of Gender and Development (GAD) framework has been linked to the failure of WID to promote gender equality effectively. It emerged with a goal of removing "social, economic and political disparities between men and women in more holistic and pragmatic ways" (UNESCO, 2015, p.22). GAD recognises that equal treatment may not lead to equal participation and outcomes for men and women and, "improving the status of women is not a separate, isolated issue but needs to be addressed by taking into account the status of both men and women, their differing life courses" (Taylor, 1999, p.7). GAD, which emerged in the late 1980s, gives attention to gender as a component of complex and dynamic social relations and emphasises the importance of gendered power structures of the society that underpin inequality; it interrogates social processes rather than merely addressing its outcomes (Unterhalter, 2005). GADs theorists are interested in developing approaches that bring about significant transformation and redistribution of power in the society, women empowerment and increasing women's agency (Unterhalter, 2005; Kanyangarara, 2012). GAD has been criticised for giving limited attention to education as a key area of development and for emphasising social dissimilarities between men and women while disregarding the significant and manifold bonds that exist between them and how these could affect interventions that target women (Unterhalter, 2005; Olabisi, 2015). As much as GAD has given attention to education, it largely focuses on power structures, how to remove extant structural barriers and lays emphasis on the education policies designs and revamping of institutions processes to enhance effective gender mainstreaming (Unterhalter, 2005; Cin, 2017).

The post-structuralist approach to gender interrogates the stability of definitions of gender, giving “attention to fluid processes of gendered identification and shifting forms of action” (Unterhalter, 2005, p.17). It seeks to disrupt the status quo, traditional power structures and social relations that reinforce and sustain the status quo, and "systematically accord power and privilege to certain groups of men at the expense of women and other men" (Shaw and Frisby, 2006, p.485-486). Post-structuralism has been associated with postcolonialism (see Gikandi, 2004; Unterhalter, 2007), especially in the effort to undermine hegemonic discourses and draws attention to how language has been used to conceptualise "cultural otherness that is the 'supplement' to the (neo-) imperialist West" (Hiddleston, 2010, p.1). Unterhalter (2005, p.26) notes that while WID and GAD emerged out of development politics and practice, post-structuralism (and related ideas, loosely grouped together as 'postcolonial theory'), was primarily an approach located in universities or among groups of highly educated critics". Post-structural scholars also highlight the problems that are inherent in the universalisation of third-world women experiences and unequal global power structures and relations (Mohanty, 1988; Spivak 1999; Unterhalter, 2005). In the field of education, "post-structuralism's claim that all truths are textual, that the way we see the world is 'always already' infected by language" (Mason and Clarke, 2010, p.176). Critics point to its rigid ahistorical and reductionist approach to social phenomena (Mason and Clarke, 2010).

The human development approach to education is relatively recent and sees development as freedom and right. Cin (2017, p.3) notes that “until very recently, traditional human development approaches have remained at a macro perspective

throughout the years, being concerned solely with measuring economic growth as an important indication for assessing development". It perceives human development (which includes education) as a right, freedom and basic capability that contributes to enhancing other capabilities (Nussbaum, 2004; Walker 2005; Unterhalter, 2005). Capability Approach (CA) is one of the major approaches within the human development perspective. Amatya Sen (1999) advanced the concept of CA, which holds that social arrangements should be assessed in relation to the extent they promote people's freedom, live the life and achieve functionings they have reasons value (Alkire, 2002; Comim, Qizilbash and Alkire, 2008). Both education and gender equality are conceived as central to human development, empowerment, functioning and flourishing by CA scholars (Cin, 2017). The approach has been employed to evaluate people's rights to education and how education could help to advance people's capabilities and opportunities (Saito, 2003; Mbati, 2019). CA is criticised for its failure to interrogate injustices of recognition, failure to accommodate group-based social mobilisation, and tendency to universalise; in ways that tend to ignore particular contexts (Unterhalter, 2005)

The above frameworks have contributed to shaping diverse global interventions on gender in education. For example, WID-linked analysis contributed to influence the UNESCO's *Delors Commission Report and* World Bank's *Priorities and Strategies in Education* in the 1990s while some of the GAD-linked research contributed to influence development approach to sexual violence in school and gender-sensitive school management and school improvement programmes (Unterhalter, 2005). The Capability

Approach also underpins the UNDP's human development index, which includes education issues (Osmani, 2016). Notwithstanding, the historical effort by gender theorists and their frameworks to ensure equal access to education for all has not completely addressed the challenge of being out of school as further discussed below.

2.3.2 Gender in Gendered Access to Basic Education

There is no doubt about some progress been made in reducing the number of out-of-school children and youths globally; however, the progress has been limited (UNESCO, 2019; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). The 2018 global out-of-school data indicate that up to 263 million primary and secondary school age young persons were out of school, which constituted nearly one-fifth of the total global population of the age group; 61 million of the out-of-school young people were within primary school age and 62 million were of lower secondary school age (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018; UNICEF, 2018). Boys and girls of primary-school-age respectively constituted 8.1% and 9.7% of out-of-school children, indicating that there were more 5 million girls than boys that were out of school (UNICEF, 2018). In sub-Saharan Africa, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2019) reports that while 81% of children are in school, only 63% of them were completing primary education and lesser percentage were completing lower secondary education. Up to 33.3 million girls within primary and junior secondary school age in sub-Saharan Africa are out of school (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018). The 2019 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Gender Reports reveals that many countries are still far from achieving gender parity in education and “a quarter of countries have a large disparity against boys in upper secondary education, with no change since 2000 (UNESCO, 2019 p.3).

The Global Education Monitoring report included gender, poverty, ethnicity and location in the list of identified push and pull factors that underpin the out-of-school phenomenon (UNESCO, 2019). Across the world, gender in education scholars also list structural inequalities, fairness and discrimination, harmful tradition, early marriage, reproductive health and sanitation concerns, insecurity and religion among factors that contribute to hinder equal access to education (Erulkar and Bello, 2007; Qiang et al. 2008; Karlsson, 2009; Myers and Harvey, 2011; Pells, 2011; Delprato et al. 2015; Ezegwu et al., 2017)

In Nigeria, gender gaps in education have a regional image. In the northern geopolitical zones, there has been a history of pervasive low basic education access and completion rates, which are particularly lowest among females. Many southern states have long closed gender gaps and are now recording low male enrolment. In southern states like Anambra, the gender gap was closed and progressed in favour of girls by the year 2000 (UNICEF, 2003; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2017) report shows that while Gender Parity Index (GPI) in all states in southern Nigeria stood at 1.0 at both primary and secondary school levels, the northeast and northwest respectively had the primary school GPI of 0.9 (and 0.8 and 0.9 respectively at the secondary level).

The 2015 Nigeria Education Data Survey (NEDS) shows that the net attendance ratio (NAR) for Nigeria, which is the percentage of primary school-aged children (6–11 years old), attending primary school in a particular year, was 68% - 68% for males and 67% for females (NPC and RTI International, 2016). Across the geopolitical zones, southeast recorded 85.6 (85.2 male and 86 female), followed by southwest that had 82.3 (82.8 male

and 81.8 female) and south-south that recorded 82.6 (82.1 male and 83.2 female). These suggest that female NAR exceeded male's in southeast and south-south while more males attended primary school in the southwest than females. In northern parts of the country, north-central recorded 73.4 (74.2 male and 72.6 female) while northeast and northwest respectively recorded 42.8 (44.1 male and 42.2 female) and 50.4 (53.5 male and 47.1 female) indicating that more males attended primary schools in the north than female. Across the three major ethnic groups under study, the NBS (2017) data shows that the Igbo and Yoruba primary school completion rates were 73.9% and 63.9% respectively while Hausa recorded 54.9% completion rate (NBS, 2017).

At the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level, NEDS data shows the southwest had the highest NAR with 55.2 (52.8 male and 57.7 female) followed by south-south that had 54.8 (53.2 male and 56.5 female) and southeast with 50.5 (49.6 male and 51.2 female) (NBS, 2017). One remarkable observation in all the southern zones is that there were more females than males that attended junior secondary schools. In northern zones, northeast with 20.2 (20.5 male and 19.9 female) and northwest with 24.4 (25.8 male and 22.9) female maintained the lowest NAR rates across the six geopolitical zones of the country. The north-central, which includes the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) recorded 39.7 (41.4 male and 37.9 female).

Factors identified in the literature that contribute to exacerbating gender inequality in school enrolment, retention and completion in Nigeria's education include in-school factors (e,g, availability of female teachers, health and sanitary facilities, school distance and the poor state of other important school facilities) and out of school factors such as early marriage, poverty, traditional attitude to girls' education, home chores, pregnancy

and gender violence (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018). The 2015 NEDS summarised top reasons that contributed to influence Nigerian children to never attend school. These include school distance (23%), labour needed in the household (21%), monetary cost to the household (18%), poor school facility and quality (14%) and lack of interest (10%) (NPC & RTI, 2016).

The inability of various gender frameworks to adequately address issues around gender inequality in education and the continued existence of a high number of out of school children in many countries point to a need to expand the scope of investigations and theorisations to include additional factors that may not have been given adequate attention in the past. This should include the roles of males and masculinity in different socio-cultural settings. The following section further focuses on issues around masculinities to highlight both trends and gaps that demand significant attention.

2.4 Masculinities

In this section, issues and perspectives around masculinity, masculinity in education, masculinity in Africa and Nigeria are examined. This is considered important because of some important links that connect masculinity, education and social justice: masculinity could affect access to quality education; at the same time, schools are spaces for both enactment and adjustment of masculinities and, these are important factors in the promotion of equal and just society (see Farrell, 2014). The discussion begins with theories and perspectives on masculinities.

2.4.1 Theories and Perspectives on masculinities

An attempt to capture a postcolonial definition and position on masculinities has been very tricky because, as observed in the literature, masculinity as currently conceived in academic literature is widely a Western construct from Western context (see Connell, 2005). As discussed in Chapter 3.1, some of the existing attempts to explain masculinities in the study of African and postcolonial societies (e.g. Van Boheemen-Saaf, 2001; Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005; Morrell and Swart, 2005; Stanovsky, 2007; Newell, 2009; Kabesh, 2013) largely borrowed the existing Western perspective to explain postcolonial situations. Newell (2009) explains that masculinities have largely remained hidden from postcolonial discussions until recently. In order to understand the concept and its theorisation, this subsection presents a summary of non-postcolonial theories and perspectives on masculinities (defining it from a Western perspective before critically examining it (later) from a postcolonial angle).

Nonetheless, masculinity is a fluid concept that has not been fully characterised or defined. Kirby and Kirby (2017) explains that despite over 30 years of studying how to define what constitutes masculinity, a single definition continues to elude the concept; the most prevailing one flows from Western cultures that often define it in hegemonic forms. Although modern studies and theories on masculinities were noticed in the early twentieth century (O'shea 1909; Tyack and Hansot, 1988) and gathered momentum in the late 1970s (Pleck, 1975; David and Brannon, 1976; Morin and Garfinkle, 1978), the discussion on masculinity has generally remained quite polarised leading to the failure of scholarly discourses and theories to adequately describe its complex structure (Imms, 2000; Owen, 2012; Kirby and Kirby, 2017; Wasylkiw and Clairo, 2018).

Connell (1995, p.71) explains that to the extent 'masculinity' may be defined (if it may be defined at all), "is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture". Notwithstanding, some issues (as discussed below) are reasonably clear in the literature about masculinities, which have become a point of departure for further investigation and theorisation about masculinity. Roy and Srivastava (2011, p.1) attempt presents masculinity as "the socially produced but embodied ways of being male", which manifests in forms of behaviour, spoken and unspoken gestures, diverse forms of social interaction and perceptions, roles division between men and women, and narrative patterns that allocate superior positions to (some) men over women (and other men). Roy and Srivastava also differentiate 'patriarchy' from 'masculinity', noting that while patriarchy is a system of organisation in the society that is organised to reflect males' superiority over females while masculinity presents the ideal male character and image that help to sustain the males' social position. They note that simple definitions of 'patriarchy' and 'masculinity' may be difficult and elusive but go on to suggest that "patriarchy refers to the systemic relationship of power between men and women, whereas masculinity concerns both inter and intra-gender relationships" (Roy and Srivastava, 2011, p.2).

Also, in the literature, masculinity(ies) relates to social construction studies, theories and practices that relate to men's position and power in the society, as well as how these contribute to influencing human relations, the position of women (and other men) and

societal development (Connell, 1995, Roy and Srivastava, 2011). Imms (2000, p.153) notes that some scholars believe that masculinity is a "generalised construct, applying characteristics specific to individuals to men generally". I do not quite agree with Imms generalisation and particularly the use of 'men generally'. Imms does not adequately specify but, (based on the research literature) it may be assumed that the 'general' may be related to in-culture attributes and may not be cross-cultural. A cross-cultural study of manhood in relation to achieved status conducted by Gilmore (1992) more than two decades ago (and within a decade when Imms made the observation) made a similar conclusion and claimed that the key cultural elements of manliness which include aggressiveness, toughness, stoicism and sexuality are almost universal. Gilmore also stated that these features are deeply ingrained in males' consciousness across societies and ages despite their differences. Gilmore's claim is limited (and does not fall within the period under review but may explain the kind of evidence that influenced Imms' observation). Besides, Gilmore's study did not include West African cultures and may not make a claim about masculinities in West Africa based on ethnographic studies conducted elsewhere. It also does not clearly explain elements of manliness in matrilineal, matrilocal and matriarchal societies. Lease et al. (2013) report on a cross-cultural study of masculinity and relationships in Turkey, Norway, and the United States that reveals different levels of masculinity ideology in different locations; male role interpersonal relationship and norms indicators had significant associations within the countries but differed across the countries. A literature search reveals a scarcity of comparative studies that examined West Africa alongside other cultures across the world's continents; it also

reveals a narrow range of research literature on a comparative study of masculinities in Africa (this is further taken up in the next subsection).

Like other gender issues, masculinity is believed to be constructed within each culture (Connell, 2005a; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005; Olavarria, 2006; Swain, 2006; Roy and Srivastava, 2011). Many scholars observe that in each society, a hegemonic masculinity model is constructed through which every man measures, locates and defines himself as a standard man (Kimmel, 2004; Raimundo, 2008). Raimundo (2008) explains that the construction and definition of hegemonic masculinities are made in relation to women's socioeconomic aspects, positions and conditions, of which failure to measure up makes a man to be seen as inferior, incomplete and unworthy. Scholars also note that masculinity is not constant but mobile and adaptable to social, political and economic dynamics (Raimundo, 2008).

The division observed in the study of masculinity is particularly evident in the shift from the mainstream Western approach by post-colonialist gender scholars. For post-colonialists, defining masculinities goes beyond explaining the behaviour of men in relation to women or other men because gender (a category study in which it belongs) has both cultural and lived modes, raising a question about whose culture should be used to define masculinity and femininity (Jordan-Young, Sonksen and Karkazis, 2014; Henne, 2015). Like many other social, economic and political issues, non-Western scholars have over the years echoed their observation about the Western domination in the definition of masculinity and femininity (Yee, 1992; Lindley, 1996; Patton, 2000; Schloesser, 2002;

Keister, 2011). Cooky et al. (2013, p.34) contend that "for the Global South, Western scientific classifications of raced and gendered bodies are viewed as products of colonialism, European expansionism, and racism, not simply "objective" or "value-free" accounts". Yet, from the review of the literature, it is not very clear what may be presented as non-Western definition and characterisation of masculinity. Nandi and Chatterjee (2012, p.122), explain that there exist some "genuine plurality of lived postcolonial masculinities from different national contexts" as well as "contradictory ideas of exceedingly plural male identities that are reconciled in the formation of a postcolonial 'masculine". As much as the postcolonial masculinity may be explained, it is masculinities that are observable in postcolonial societies, which may have been shaped by colonial and neocolonial influences. Uchendu (2008) explains that many features of contemporary masculinities in Africa developed in the colonial and postcolonial periods.

A very important element of masculinities research and theorisation is 'hegemonic' version of the concept, which has inspired a generous range of discussions, studies, and debates on masculinity across the world. The concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' was advanced by Connell's (1990). By 2005, it was observed that more than 200 papers were returned on a database search that already used exactly 'hegemonic masculinity' term as part of paper titles or abstracts (Connell and Messerschmid, 2005). Connell's idea of masculinities is associated with the culturally infused gender-based dominance and tends towards persistent male dominance (Connell, 1987, 2005). Connell (1990, 1995) advanced the perspective of hegemonic masculinity, which according to him, thrives through dominance. Connell (1990, p.83) explains hegemonic masculinity as "the

culturally idealised form of masculine character". Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985, p.92) summarised hegemonic masculinity as "a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimatise and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance". Hanke (1990, p.232) defines hegemonic masculinity as:

> *The social ascendancy of a particular version or model of masculinity that, operating on the terrain of "common sense" and conventional morality, defines "what it means to be a man." It thereby secures the dominance of some men (and the subordination of women) within the sex /gender system.*

Kimmel (2001, p.23) construes masculinity as "the gender order that expresses men's power over women (male dominance) and the power of some men over other men (by race, sexuality, ethnicity, age, able-bodiedness)".

Before leaving the discussion on masculinities perspectives, there is a need to reproduce an important observation about the prevailing trend in the theorisation, research, and discussions about men. In a World Bank publication, the *Other Half of Gender,* Jacobsen (2006, p.5) focused on the "concept of alpha and beta males" to explain two differing positionalities in development discourses. On the one side are beta males, which include the imprisoned, homeless, socially inept, disabled and mentally-ill men that tend to be systematically overlooked in the discussion of masculinities, especially in the prevailing version of hegemonic masculinity discourse. On the other side is the alpha, or "winner" males, which are often at the centre of the discussion in and comparison with women's situation. Jacobsen (2006, p.5) concedes that gender earnings ratio across the world has

historically been skewed in men's favour; however, she argues that "many of the male-dominated jobs women aspire tend to be society's high-earning jobs" while other male-dominated occupations like garbage collection, mining, butchering and preoccupation of men that are derisively categorised as BAFC (below average frustrated chump) rarely get attention. This categorisation is particularly important to this study because some males and females that dropped out of basic education I met during the fieldwork and some other times belong to the BAFC. Jacobsen (2006, p.5) also contends that "this potentially systematic invisibility of marginalised men is worrisome because it can lead to the systematic omission of these men from published statistics (statistics that are often not disaggregated by various demographic subgroups)".

One important observation made by Jacobsen is that the mainstream perspective tends to focus on alpha men, which possibly inspired the Hegemonic Masculinity perspective as well as a need to seek ways to ensure inclusiveness. An inclusive theorisation of masculinity needs to fully incorporate both beta and alpha conditions, else, scholarly emphasis and theorisation may be based on the idealised normative masculinity model which men in each society may attempt to conform, which some are able to reach and are classified as winning males (Jacobsen, 2006). Such a tendency may miss an opportunity for an all-inclusive understanding of males, masculine ideologies, male behaviours under diverse kinds of conditions and underpinning influences of such behaviours. In the subsequent subsection, an attempt is made to discuss masculinities in the African context.

2.4.2 African Masculinities

An increasing number of studies on African masculinities were observed during the literature search, but the review shows that, while there have been efforts to explain masculinities in an African context, very limited attention has been given to their influence and impact on access and completion of education (see Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005; Barker and Ricardo, 2006; Morrell, Jewkes, and Lindegger, 2012; Pasura and Christou, 2018). For example, Pasura and Christou (2018) examined the pattern of black African men's negotiation and performances of their masculinities in their families, workplaces and the community in a transnational setting. The study by Mfencane (2018) sought to understand men and masculinities in South Africa in relation to intervention programmes and Global North's theories of gender. The study notes the inadequacy of these for the study of African situations. Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) discuss hegemonic masculinity issues in South African culture, power, and gender politics while Ouzgane and Morrell's (2005) edited volume explores what may be considered as African masculinity, and how cultures are shaped by males' identity (the publication includes topics on violence HIV/AIDS, history, identities and sexualities). The work by Barker and Ricardo (2006), published by the World Bank, is based on an extensive literature review on programs employing gender perspective in their works with young men as well as some informant interviews and focused group discussions with people working with young men in Botswana, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda. Barker and Ricardo (2006, p.v) make an interesting observation, noting that meaningful "gendered analysis of young men must take into account the plurality of masculinities in Africa. Versions of manhood in Africa are socially constructed, fluid over time and in different settings, and plural".

A wider and increasing range of literature has actually focused on gender and education, some of which mentioned masculinities in education studies or education in masculinity studies but do not focus on both as a central focus of the studies (e.g. Harris, 2008; Bhana, Morrell and Pattman, 2009; Greene, Robles and Pawlak, 2012; Broqua and Doquet, 2013; Voices 4 Change, 2015). In World Development Report (2012) background paper, Greene, Robles and Pawlak (2012) note that one of the five core domains of masculinities is schooling and education, including educational experiences and relevance education for employment but my literature search and review, suggest that these do not appear to be among core domains of masculinities research in Africa. Greene, Robles and Pawlak's report gave exceptional attention to the link between masculinity and access to education, which is explained in relation to economic purposes and gender roles using global education data, including African countries but the report does not provide a detailed explanation of any country it listed, including those of Africa.

What constitutes African masculinity may not be easily defined because of the multiplicity of cultures, values, and varied colonial experience; versions of masculinities are divergent in Africa and are variedly constructed in their respective social settings (Barker and Ricardo, 2006). However, Barker and Ricardo (2006) made some relevant observation that contains attributes that are observed in other studies on masculinities in Africa. They note that while there is no typical generalisable man in Africa, achieving a reasonable level of financial independence (including employment and income) and successively establishing a family are widely accepted ideal for young men (see UNESCO, 2000; Lindsay and Miescher, 2003; Barker and Ricardo, 2006; Nzekwe, 2007; Voices 4 Change,

2015). In some African countries, Namibia for example, studies observe that the concept of 'big man' emphasises the power of certain men over others, how privileged ambitious men (and some women) take advantage of their opportunities to enlarge their wealth, political and economic connections that enable them to influence power and value allocation in the society and also control various institutions (Lindsay and Miescher, 2003; Barker and Ricardo, 2006).

An attempt to understand issues of masculinities in Africa using critical men's perspective was made in an edited book by Ouzgane and Morrell (2005), *African Masculinities: Men in Africa from the Late Nineteenth Century to Present.* The book sought to summarise men's characters in Africa under four broad themes: interpreting masculinities, presenting masculinities, constructing masculinities and contesting masculinities. However, the contents are highly skewed in favour of South African territory and gay men in Africa. It also does not contain reasonably representative documentation of the majority of African men. Out of the four articles contained in the first theme, three focus on gay/homosexuality and nine of the seventeen chapters of the book focus on South African men. While Ouzgane and Morrell's (2005) book seems to have covered much (geographically and thematically), the book fails to provide a reasonably representative image of African masculinities. There is no denial of the existence of gay and lesbian communities across Africa (and there is a need to represent sexual minorities in the discussion of African masculinity), but their actual population size is still difficult to determine because they exist in clandestine conditions due to existing cultures and laws against sexual minorities in many African countries. Open expression of homosexuality is

outlawed in over 38 African countries; only 16 African countries do not treat homosexuality as a crime (Nord and Luckscheiter, 2010; Amnesty International, 2013; Law Library of Congress, 2014; Hagopian et al. 2017). While these may be necessary for understanding homosexuality issues in Africa, its presentation as mainstream (or dominant) African men's feature (as both the title and introduction of the book indicate) makes the work somewhat doubtful. Also, the book seems to emphasise "Southern Africa's 'academic hegemony" (Aderinto, 2008, p.144); nine of seventeen chapters of the book focus on Southern Africa men's studies (Egypt has three while Nigeria, Guinea, Kenya and Tanzania respectively have only one chapter). Nigeria alone constitutes about a quarter of the total African population, with over 250 ethnocultural groups and 510 living languages recorded in the country (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2012; Dooga, 2012; Amao and Okeke-Uzodike, 2015; Morakinyo, 2015; Talibu and Ahmed, 2016). A single chapter that focuses on homosexual men in only one ethnic group in Nigeria cannot claim to represent Nigeria. Barker and Ricardo (2006) caution that gendered analysis of African men must take the plurality of masculinities into account because masculinities as socially constructed in Africa are both divergent in different setting and fluid over time. These suggest an extant gap in the literature on masculinity in Africa.

2.4.3 Nigerian Masculinities

Literature search (including search on masculinity and education literature) suggests that the range of studies on masculinities and men in Nigeria is relatively narrow but developing. This study observed that literature on masculinity in Nigeria appear to be

largely concentrated on five broad fields. One is sexuality and reproductive health (e.g. Gaudio, 1995; Social Sciences and Reproductive Health Research Network, 1999; Olawoye et al. 2004; Odimegwu and Okemgbo, 2005; Odimegwu and Adedini, 2013; Okoro et al. 2016). This genre of literature focuses on such issues as sexual rights, masculine risk behaviours and attendant implications on health. The second is media, literature, and arts (e.g. Osei-Nyame, 1999; Irele, 2000; Adetunji and Adesida, 2008; Maduagwu, 2011; Voices 4 Change, 2015). This category of literature attempt to draw out masculine tendencies in the work of arts, media and literature, including the dominance of male characters and depiction of macho-men in the literature and arts. The third is migration (Raimundo, 2008; Pasura and Christou, 2018). Although this genre appears to be developing, it attempts to capture the influence of masculinities on migrations. The fourth category includes issues around religion, socialisation, and perceptions of masculinity (e.g. Izugbara, 2004; Odimegwu and Okemgbo, 2005; Odimegwu, Okemgbo and Pallikadavath, 2005; Uchendu, 2008; Christian Aid, 2015; Obiyan, 2015). Quite an interesting number of research literature were noticed in this category, which focuses on the impact of masculinities on children socialisation, socialisation of children into masculine and feminine categories and how religion has contributed to reinforcing existing masculine dominance. The last category, conflict and violence literature, (e.g. Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme, 2,016) seek to explain influences of masculinities on violence tendencies and proliferation of conflicts at various levels of the society.

These highlight a growing number but limited range of literature on masculinity in Nigeria as well as a need for broadening the thematic scope of investigations, which will also

include education-related themes. Nevertheless, it is recognised that while the range of study may have not adequately covered both spatial and topical gaps, they constitute steps forward. Ezegwu (2012) and Voices 4 Change (2015b) observe a noticeable scarcity of reliable studies that document masculinities and men's perspectives of gender dynamics across Nigerian ethnic and cultural groups. Contrarily, as noted in the introductory chapter, there is a generous range of literature on diverse areas of gender in Nigeria (Erulkar and Bello, 2007; Akunga, 2008; Unterhalter and Heslop, 2011; ActionAid, 2012; British Council 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Unterhalter et al., 2018;) but, during the reviews, specific attention was given to studies that specifically focused on masculinity. Broadly and across the world, Sudhakar and Kuehnast (2011) explain that gender has increasingly been used synonymously with women in research, a tendency that constitutes a narrow approach that ignores the existential and relational quality of gender and also fails to grasp important issues around masculinity in research. Narasaiah (2003, p. 80) also notes that besides few remarkable exceptions, "men are rarely explicitly mentioned in gender policy documents. Where men do appear, they are generally seen as obstacles to women's development: men must surrender their positions of dominance for women to become empowered". A similar observation was made in Nigeria by Gersberg et al. (2016) and Ezegwu (2015) about Nigeria's Gender in Basic Education Policy, which was developed in the context of girls' education and gave marginal attention to males.

Voices 4 Change attempted to examine Nigerian masculinities based on contemporary practices to understand their current dynamics. Publications resulting from its research, (Voices 4 Change, 2015a, 2015b, 2016) did not trace the history of masculinities, but they

largely observed a gradual shift in Nigerian perception of masculinity and related gender behaviours. Although the study did not centre on masculinity and education, it observed that masculinities appear to be affecting schooling choices. An earlier study in Kaduna, northern Nigeria by Barker and Ricardo (2006) observed a significant impact of the social construction of masculinities and noted that it has the capacity to create, recreate or reinforce versions of masculinities. However, the study did not explain how masculinities create, recreate or hinder educational opportunities. As regards masculine characteristics, Voices 4 Change (2015b, p.6) found that "toughness, sexual performance, and income were central to notions of masculinity". The study involved using qualitative and quantitative data collected from a total of 1532 men and 504 women within the ages of 18 and 65 that were drawn from the country's six geopolitical regions and particularly in Bauchi, Benue, Enugu, Kano, Lagos, and Rivers. Another Voices 4 Change (2015c) report focused on the influence of media on the people's perceptions and attitudes around masculinity and how the media possibly promote unequal gender power relations. Its findings suggest that “local media outlets promote representations that convey male dominance and leadership in Nigeria” and their “portrayal of masculinity reflects and promotes unequal power relations between men and women” (Voices 4 Change, 2015c, p.5).

Based on the review, little is known of studies that focused on masculinity and basic education or sought to explain possible roles of masculinity on educational access in Nigeria. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) believe that the construction of masculinities may be effectively understood when approached from a people’s history and cultural perspective because masculinity is shaped by history. It may be argued that if

masculinities are constructed and need to be understood through the society's history and culture, then limited scholarly information may exist on Nigerian masculinities and, underpinnings of gender and power relations across Nigerian ethnic groups.

Specific issues around masculinity and education are further discussed in the following subsection. This is considered important because if masculinities encompass the nature, character and influence of being a male, masculinities could also affect what males are able to be and do in education and, what they become. Manifestations of masculinities can also affect both females and males' educational development.

2.4.4 Masculinity and Education

The review of the literature indicates that some complex and tricky relationships exist between masculinity and education, and these have been increasingly examined in the past two decades, but significant gaps still exist. Scholars are increasingly examining the diverse spectrum of the gender binary in education, and many are particularly examining some interesting topics around masculinities and education, but there are many areas where scholars appear to have given very little or no attention. Literature search suggests that scholarly attention has been largely given to a number of fields, which are areas where literature on existing studies on masculinity and education are largely concentrated. These include masculinity and gender equality in school (Longland, 2008; Coffey and James, 2014; Jacobson, 2018); curriculum, teaching and learning about men (Connell, 2005a; Holz, 2008; Pérez-Samaniego and Santamaría-García, 2008; Imms, 2012; Tischler and McCaughtry, 2014) and; masculinity and educational outcomes (Lucher, 2011). There are also others that focus on masculinity, norms and school practices (Swain, 2005; Renold, 2007; Smith, 2007; Dalley-Trim, 2009); theories and

perspectives on masculinities in school and among students and teachers (Pringle, 2008; Swain, 2006a; Davison and Frank, 2006; Mills and Lingard, 2010; Marine, 2013; Coffey and James, 2014; Pishghadam et al. 2016); development of masculinities in schools (Imms, 2000) and; boys' bodies in school (Gard and Meyenn, 2000; Light and Kirk, 2000; Swain, 2003). Other fields that connect to some mainstream teams but within the confine of school environments include such themes as masculinity and sports in schools (Gard and Meyenn, 2000; Light and Kirk, 2000; Bramham, 2003; Coffey and James, 2014) and; construction of masculinity in schools (Renold, 2004, 2010; Connell, 2005a; Swain, 2006b).

While a comprehensive list of trend in the masculinity and education is not claimed, the above trends suggest that significant attention has been given to binary categorisation of boys and girls in education, but important questions may not have been asked about how masculinities equally influence boys and girls alike as regards interest in education, school choice, progression, completion, and transition. Also, while the above fields are important and provide relevant information about boys and girls experiences in school, they leave out the important question as regards access and retention of boys and girls equally, in the context of masculinities and its interaction with socioeconomic and political factors. Additionally, a focus in school factors and practices (e.g. Longland, 2008; Coffey and James, 2014; Jacobson, 2018) tend to divorce in-school masculinities from the mainstream masculinities in the society. Examining boys' bodies in school, development of masculinities in schools and construction of masculinity in schools are very important, but caution needs to be exercised to avoid analysing the boys outside the socioeconomic,

political, community and household beliefs and practices that produced and bore the in-school masculinities.

Few studies that examined masculinity and access (including retention and completion) in education were observed, many of which are from Latin America countries (e.g. Plummer, 2007; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2013; Bailey; 2014) but limited information exists on studies that focus on Africa and particularly Nigeria where males access has become a critical issue in some parts of the country. Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2013) attempted an examination of masculinity and education based largely on the social organisation of masculinity in relation to modern schooling and a class analysis of masculinity in education. The authors discussed the cultural dynamics of masculinity, but the discussion is largely a theoretical perspective that is not based on practical interaction with people in a particular cultural setting. In some Latin American countries, while the English-speaking Caribbean girls' access, retention, completion, and attainment in education have significantly improved, boys' tend to be slipping (Plummer, 2007). While this seems an interesting finding, information used for the study were largely drawn from studies conducted in the late 1990s and early 2000; it did not collect fresh primary data to provide recent evidence on the gendered experience of access, retention, completion, and performances. Bailey (2014) examined masculinity and boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education data in Caribbean countries and argued that boys' education challenge is largely an issue of under-participation than underachievement. Data for the study were of 2004 and 2007 periods. It is not clear how the data was collected and analysed or exact locations where the data was collected.

While limited information is available on masculinity and access to basic education in Nigeria, an attempt has been made to present some gender-disaggregated statistics on basic education attendance in Nigeria in the following section.

2.5 Chapter Summary and Gaps in the Existing Literature

The review of the literature highlights subsisting issues around gender in education, including theoretical issues and gender-disaggregated statistics on basic education attendance in Nigeria. The review also reveals a number of gaps, which this study makes some contribution towards their closing. Firstly, the review observed that meaningful and widely acceptable explanations of social justice and human rights have largely been abstract rather than concrete and based on practical experience. This study did not attempt to provide a theory but provided information on practical experiences of people that dropped out of school, which could contribute to helping theorists in their search for a meaningful and widely acceptable proposition.

As further explained in the following chapter, while the application of Western perspective of masculinities to the analysis of non-Western societies has inherent weaknesses, postcolonial perspective also lacks a concrete approach to masculinity in terms of definition, attributes and study approach, and highlights a need to explore deeper what may be explained as postcolonial masculinities and how they could be studied as attempted in this study.

I conceded that what constitutes African and particularly Nigerian masculinity may not be easily defined; however, the review of the literature suggests that there has been a limited

attempt to explore them from non-Western perspectives. Hence, I consider the attempt to conduct a study such as this a major step forward.

Severe scarcity of literature on studies that focused on masculinity and basic education or sought to explain possible roles of masculinity on educational access in Nigeria demands urgent attention as part of the effort to address conditions that are contributing to weakening access and completion of basic education for all. As noted in the introductory chapter, this study may perhaps contribute to triggering further and multi-dimensional studies around these. They may help to raise questions or inspire important questions being asked about how masculinities equally influence boys and girls alike in Nigeria and Africa at large.

In the following chapter, I attempt a summary of the theoretical framework for the study that seeks to take into account the historical and cultural aspects in the discussion of masculinity and education.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter summarises the theoretical framework adopted for this study, which is the postcolonial framework. It presents a summary of key elements of the framework, rationale for its choice and how it is used in the study. These are presented under seven sub-sections: a rejection of Western perspective of masculinities that summarises my concerns over the perspectives; a summary of the postcolonial theory; relevance of the postcolonial approach to the study; postcolonial feminist perspectives; postcolonial perspectives on gender and social justice in education; postcolonial perspective on education and; my postcolonial approach to the study. I begin with my concerns over the inclination of the prevailing Western masculinity perspectives in the mainstream literature.

3.1 A Rejection of Western Perspective of Masculinity

This study seeks to examine how masculinity contributes to influencing access and completion of basic education in Nigeria, but the discussion and analysis are not taken from masculinity perspective. Instead, the analysis and discussions have been undertaken from a postcolonial perspective of projecting the voice of the *other* (see Fanon, 1963; Spivak, 1995; Sharp, 2009) – I will return to this perspective in the next subsection. This shift from masculinity perspective towards a postcolonial perspective has been influenced by an inherent shortcoming in the masculinity perspective. For studies like this, its major weakness relates to concern over some Western bias and possible misrepresentation that might occur if the perspective is applied to the discussion of non-Western societies. Discussions on masculinities are currently dominated by Western perceptions, values and theorisations that derived their influences from Western cultures (Kirby and Kirby, 2017). Connell (2005, p.289) explains that "all societies have

cultural accounts of gender, but not all have the concept 'masculinity'" and, the existing explanations, characterisations, definitions and theories on masculinities are largely "built on the conception of individuality that developed in early-modern Europe with the growth of colonial empires and capitalist economic relations".

My first contention is that the above Western inclination renders masculinity perspective unsuitable for studying non-Western societies because, as Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) explain, construction of masculinities can be better understood from the societies' history and culture. Extant disagreements between Western gender definitions and West African history are widely documented, which specifically underscore the unsuitability of such Western approach to the study of gender in West African societies (Yankah, 1995; Oyewumi, 2002; Ratele, 2008; Aboluwodi, 2014; Toit, 2017; MFencane, 2018). Oyewumi (2002, p.4) argues that "the difficulty of applying feminist concepts to express and analyse African realities is the central challenge of African gender studies" because, the Western gender categories that constructed and operated “on a dichotomous, binarily opposed male/female, man/woman duality in which the male is assumed to be superior and therefore the defining category” are alien to many African cultures. As Oyewumi explains, interpretation of African realities based on Western definitions leads to distortions and obfuscations and makes it difficult to appreciate the West African way of life. For example, the Yoruba culture was not originally gendered; emphasis on gender classification followed colonial restructuring and wider contact with Europeans (this is summarised in chapter 5 – see also Oyewumi, 2002; Toit, 2017). In Igbo cultures, there were diversities of gender relations: there were matrilineal, matrilocal, female husbands and *nhachi* (which covers a category of women who remained in their parents' houses and raised children

like their brothers – this may not be the proper equivalent of the Western concept of single mothers) – these were also accepted as bonafide members of the society with equal status as any other person (Nsugbe, 1974; Amadiume, 1987; Okafor, 2011). Ifi Amadiume's (1987) work on "Male Daughters, Female Husbands, and The Institution of Woman Marriage in Igbo Society" may find no place in Western feminist frameworks for analysis because as Oyewumi explains, "these conceptions confound the Western mind and therefore should not be imprisoned by the [Western] feminist framework" (Oyewumi, 2002, p.4).

Also, the Irigwe people in Northern Nigeria had a practice that traditionally allowed women to acquire numerous co-husbands. The Irigwe people did not practise divorce but allowed women to freely move from one partner to another while maintaining previous ones concurrently. A postcolonial law terminated the practice in 1968 (Sangree 1980; Benedict, 2017; Akinyoad, 2019). Tsitsi Dangarembga (1989) showcased women who had male status in Zimbabwe and would not do female's work while Miescher's (2007, p.2540) study in Akan society in Ghana, notes that women could become 'ritual men', have 'female masculinity' and thereby attaining males' social positions and both males and females' gender positions may change in the course of their lives (see also Ratele, 2008). According to Kwesi Yankah (1995, p.89) "in cases where the chief is female, and her Okyeame [husband] is male, the akyeame [husband] is still a wife and the chief a husband". In a Zimbabwean story, Sekai Nzenza-Shand (1997) shows that women could achieve the status of ‘an honorary man' and have the same command as men. These cultural values also, as Oyewumi (2002) contends, clearly confound the Western pattern of gendered understanding of wife and husband. Such observations have led many

scholars to conclude that there is a need to understand masculinities (maleness in diverse cultures) from their respective settings (culture and location) because masculinities are largely context-specific, bearing both cultural and historical imprints (Cornwall, Edström and Greig 2011; Hearn et al. 2012; Jewkes et al. 2015). This study aligns with this view.

My second contention (in relation to this study) is that if masculinities need to be understood from the context of their respective settings, then prevailing historical and cultural issues around masculinity and education in Nigeria may be better explained from (post)colonial lenses. For this study, in Nigerian context where current issues around gender and education advanced during colonialism (see Ekeh, 1975; Ake, 1979; Osaghae, 2003; Okoduwa, 2008; Igboin, 2011), postcolonialism, therefore, remains a more appealing approach. For example, while both Christianity and Islamic religion have largely influenced gender practices and the demand for Western education in Nigeria, scholars have noted that colonial regimes promoted their religious and cultural values above the local values (such as male breadwinner and bifurcated gender definition – this is discussed in chapter 5.2), which greatly influenced religious and cultural values, beliefs and practices of the colonised (Oyewumi, 2002; Okoduwa, 2008; Igboin, 2011; Aboluwodi, 2014; Toit, 2017). Colonial administrations also manipulated Islamic positions to advance colonial interests in ways that negatively affected the development of gender quality in access to education in northern Nigeria (Fabunmi, 2005; Umar, 2005; Azuma, 2014 – see further discussion in chapter 5.4b). Through colonial fiats, Nigeria's sociopolitical and economic structures, including long pre-existing practices, values and norms, were replaced with those of the colonialists (Imhonopi, 2013; Aboluwodi, 2014). In the post-colonial era, people continue to perform colonial transformation as their own

practice. Using gender constructions and how they become entrenched in the cultural pattern, Judith Butler contends in her performative theory that gender is a social and commonplace construction through performances, speeches, acts and other nonverbal communication that contribute to define and sustain social identities (Butler, 1993; 1999). For such reasons, MFencane (2018, p.291) contends that Western gender theories tend to offer inadequate explanations of African masculinities variations "because of their being embedded in Western epistemologies".

Particularly, the inappropriateness of the Western perspective of masculinity is exemplified by Connell's (1990) concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', which has become a dominant version of the masculinity perspective that has influenced studies on masculinity across the world (see Swain, 2000, 2006; Renold, 2001; Morris, 2011). Jewkes and Morrell (2012, p.40) explain hegemonic masculinity as:

> *…a set of values, established by men in power that functions to include and exclude, and to organise society in gender unequal ways. It combines several features: a hierarchy of masculinities, differential access among men to power (over women and other men), and the interplay between men's identity, men's ideals, interactions, power, and patriarchy.*

Several questions arise from the above summation of hegemonic masculinity. In societies where women share power with men, in situations where women become the chief, and their husbands become the wife (since in traditional Western context there ought to be a husband and a wife in a family relationship), or in situations where males are daughters and females are husbands or where women have become ritual and honorary men and

sharing authority with men, who can be said to be establishing and sustaining the hegemonic masculinity value - male or female? What form of hegemonic masculinity can be said to exist in such situations? If we follow the traditional European culture that gave birth to the theory of hegemonic masculinity perspective, under what hierarchy of males should women that occupy man's position be categorised? Can the gender-based differential access to power still be claimed in contexts where females are husbands and males become wives and daughters? When females become males and males become females positionally, how do we analyse what the Western feminists may regard as males' ideal? What pattern might patriarchy take in each of these contexts? Similarly, Jewkes et al. (2015) observe that masculinities are dynamic, multiple and fluid - hegemonic versions are not the only masculinities that may be available in a particular society. Concerning the multiplicity of masculinities observed by Jewkes et al. (2015), how might we categorise hegemonic versions in non-Western societies? If the perspective is such a fluid concept, how can we decisively ascribe any form to any society or condition/structure or a social institution? And what parameters should be used to analyse gender relations? Again, in relation to the fluidity of the concept, does it imply that each analyst is free to evolve any set of indicators for the analysis of masculinity – if this happens, will there not be a form of confusion and disorder in the application of the theory? These questions are begging for answers.

A database searches in 2005 by Connell and Masserchmid (2005), reveal over 200 papers already used the term ‘hegemonic masculinity’ as part of their titles or abstracts and, by 2005, at least one conference has employed the term in the wording of its theme. According to Connell and Masserchmid (2005, p.830), hegemonic masculinity was initially

suggested in field study reports on “social inequality in Australian high schools” (by Kessler, Ashenden, Connell and Dowsett in 1982) in a linked discussion in “debate over the role of men in Australian labour politics” by Connell (1982), and "making of masculinities and the experience of men's bodies", also by Connell (1983). Connell (2002, p.90) explains that the notion of 'hegemonic masculinity' emerged in the 1980s as a fusion of three different perspectives: "women's political experience and research on gender hierarchy; gay men's political experience and theorising of oppression; and empirical research with boys and men in locales such as schools and workplaces". While many studies on African men have also adopted the perspective (e.g. Uchendu, 2007; Groes-Green, 2009; Chiweshe and Bhatasara, 2013), my literature search suggests that, besides its use in analyses, no conscious effort has been made to confirm or investigate its relatedness to West African histories and culture the way it was drawn from the study of the Australian society.

The Western feminist approach (which contributed to influence the hegemonic masculinity perspectives), has been criticised for its failure to confirm the appropriateness of their claims about postcolonial societies' situations. Hooks (1994, p.3) notes that "white women who dominate feminist discourse today rarely question whether or not their perspective on women's reality is true to the lived experiences of women as a collective group". Oyewumi (2002, p.5) explains that feminist researchers have unwaveringly used gender as their key explanatory framework to account for women's experiences, oppression and subordination across the world but "in one fell swoop, they assume both the category "woman" and her subordination as universals. But gender is first and foremost a socio-cultural construct". Similarly, "in much feminist analysis, men as a group

largely have been undifferentiated, even universal. What has been critiqued as essentialist when considering women as a group has been accepted with respect to men" (Dowd, 2008, p.204). For men, while theorists (e.g. Connell, 1983, 1992; Imms, 2000; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Olavarria, 2006; Hearn et al. 2012; Nandi and Chatterjee, 2012; Jewkes et al. 2015) recognise that there is no single masculinity, many scholars (e.g. Ashong and Batta, 2011; Izugbara, 2004; Adegbite, 2016) have tended to universalise their application of the Western masculinity framework as evidenced in their application of Connell's hegemonic masculinity perspective in non-Western societies. Dowd's (2008) observation points to the universalised approach to the study of men despite the repeated need to study masculinities from their historical and cultural planes (see Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Cornwall, Edström and Greig, 2011; Hearn et al. 2012; Jewkes et al. 2015). To me, these suggest a contradiction between Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) suggestion on how masculinities should be studied (in their historical and cultural contexts) and how hegemonic masculinity perspective has been employed in the study of men in Africa.

Having explained the major reasons for rejecting a Western-oriented masculinities perspective for this study, I will go on to briefly explain the postcolonial theory before returning to the importance of the postcolonial approach to the study.

3.2 A Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory is currently both broad and complex and encompasses discourses in the fields of anthropology, architecture, feminism, history, literature, arts, philosophy, religion and politics (Quayson, 2000; McEwan, 2001; Radcliffe, 2005). The framework

has been employed to study issues around marginalisation, violence, control and domination of postcolonial societies' politics, economy, language, art and knowledge acquisition processes by former colonial powers and wider Western society. Scholarly conception and application of postcolonialism also loosely incorporate post-structuralism and post-modernism (Unterhalter, 2005).

Many sub-divisions of the postcolonial theory, which have contributed to enrich the social sciences, include some (a) dependency school perspective that focuses on the economic domination on the postcolonial states by developed Western nations (Fanon, 1961; Rodney, 1972); (b) Orientalism, that is based on Edward Said's (1978) view of a binary of social relations and emphasises that Western European influences divide the world into the Occident and the Orient; (c) the Location of Culture by Homi Bhabha (1994), which contends that the unequal classification of different cultures (some as superior and others as inferior) contribute to perpetuating inequality and; (d) subalternity - a perspective advanced by Gayatri Spivak (1988). Another important and closely related perspective (which greatly benefited from Marxism) is the World System Theory (WST), which conceives the global system as a structured class that is constantly engaged in international class struggles: north and south, representing economically developed and less developed regions of the world (Gunder, 1969, 1978; Wallerstein, 1974, 1976, 2004). From the economic perspective, WST contends that there is an unequal global division of labour (Fröbel, Heinrichs and Kreye, 1980) between the dependent nations that constitute the periphery states (the periphery), and developed nations that constitute the centre (Dicken, 2003; Fortwengel, 2011). The key concepts of the WST, which are also relevant in the postcolonial analysis is the unequal relationship that exists between the

centre and the periphery, as well as hegemonic influences of the centre over the periphery that is continually reproduced through the global political and economic domination of the periphery. These are employed by postcolonial scholars to explain the global system as it exists today (Noah and Eckstein, 1988). Relatedly, the postcolonial theory generally seeks to highlight the cultural and psychological relations that exist between the formerly colonised and colonisers, usually generalised to the broader Western society and makes conscious effort to re-interpret the histories and nature of the postcolonial societies and present insiders' account (Ondaatje, 1992; Hilger, 2004; Darian-Smith, 2015; Pallua, 2015). These ‘sub-perspectives’ are just some examples of postcolonial contentions.

I will focus on the perspective of the ‘otherness’ and subalternity, from which this study has benefited. The notion of ‘*Other*' has been used in postcolonial studies to refer to unrepresented or under-represented categories of people in society. It provides a basis for advocating the projection of their voices (Fanon, 1963; Neimneh, 2013; Al-Saidi, 2014). In this regard, and for the analysis of local realities, this study considers definitions of masculinities as perceived and experienced by the local people. The role of the postcolonial ‘other’, is to re-interpret the world as it is today from the perspective and experience of the postcolonial-dependent-periphery. Subaltern, which means 'of inferior rank' is a term borrowed from Antonio Gramsci's (1971) discussion of Soviet working class in relation to the ruling class they are subjected to (see also Guha, 1982; Spivak, 1987). The notion was advanced by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak (1982; Spivak, 1987; Smith, 2010; Reed, 2013; Mendoza, 2016). Benedict (2015, p.207) explains that “the subaltern classes are those individuals or groups that are subjugated by hegemony, subordinated by the dominant world-view, and excluded from having any meaningful

position from which to speak". In her work, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak (1988) used the term to advance a postcolonial position in relation to colonial domination and represent the unrepresented group in society. The term has become associated with individuals or groups that are dominated or oppressed. Fanon (1990, p.40) articulated the subaltern position in the colonised society while introducing the concept of '*the other*':

> *In the colonies, the foreigner coming from another country imposed his rule by means of guns and machines. In defiance of his successful transplantation, in spite of his appropriation, the settler still remains a foreigner. It is neither the act of owning factories, nor estates, nor a bank balance which distinguishes the governing classes. The governing race is first and foremost those who come from elsewhere, those who are unlike the original inhabitants, "the others".*

One of the key strategies of the foreigner, the colonial master, according to Fanon (1963), is the demonisation of the native, which the foreigner mischievously labelled insensible to ethics and, representing both an absence of values and a negation of values. This representation seeks to pave the way for the exploitation of the native. Fanon shows that, on the contrary, it is the foreigner that is the enemy of values and represents an anti-development.

In Nigeria and most of the African states, colonialism succeeded in altering the social system along with the political and economic perspective of the foreigner and became a major historical factor and a defining moment in the people's history. Scholars highlight some features of many postcolonial African states, which Nigeria currently exhibits. These

include ethnic politics, division and rivalry (Alemazung, 2010); disoriented ideologies and values (Ekeh, 1975); crises of governance (Mamdani, 2005); nepotism and corruption (Osaghae, 2003) and; material and intellectual dependency (Nkrumah, 1963; Altbach and Kelly, 1978; Ake, 1979). Ekeh (1975) paints a picture of how postcolonial African states historically developed two different publics (primordial and civic publics) that characterise people's behaviours at both private and institutional realms. While it is acknowledged that the postcolonial Nigerian characters are not a product of colonialism, key cultural and behaviour-influencing features developed as a result of it (Okolie, 2010). Sharma-Brymer (2009, p.657) opines that "postcolonial analysis no longer need to be restricted only to exploitation and powerlessness, rather it needs to unravel how economic, political, social and cultural processes of exploitation are perpetuated alongside efforts striving to dismantle colonialism". From the neoliberal perspective, education is seen as human rights, social justice and (individual and societal) development tool (see World Bank, 2018), the following subsection continues with the discussion on the postcolonial perspective of it.

In the above context, the concept of subalterneity in the postcolonial studies provides an avenue for the identification of the subalterns – the subjugated and subordinated people – and for “an oppressed minority groups whose presence was crucial to the self-definition of the majority groups… to subvert the authority of those who had hegemonic power"; subaltern could work to counter-hegemonic practices and lead struggles against known social exclusions (Benedict, 2015, p.207). Benedict (2015, p.207) further explains that “the subaltern theory takes the perspective of the “other” as one who has had no voice

because of race, class or gender. It establishes the fact that norms are established by those in power and imposed on the “other".

The subaltern/other concept is particularly relevant in discussions on representation and voice. In her social justice theorisation, Fraser (2007) observes that recognition and representation relate to cultural and symbolic interests and injustice may occur when international values such as the Western-influenced human rights standards construe a society's value as requiring lesser respects than others. Considering that representation is usually made by the privileged people or class in the society, Benedict (2015, p.208) believes that "effective representation of the subaltern subject can be a futile venture. This will always keep the subaltern in the terrain of margin, the silent centre, the centre of voicelessness". When Subaltern speaks, s/he moves away from being a subaltern, who is without a voice, but become their own representatives and project their own voices for wider recognition (Spivak, 1988; Benedict, 2015) and this, is what this study seeks to contribute to. This requires a conscious effort to reject some existing views. In an effort to project the postcolonial voices, postcolonial approaches tend to reject the Eurocentric orientations in the explanation of postcolonial societies and give attention to the re-description and re-interpretation of developments and events in postcolonial societies as they relate to colonialism and its aftermath (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1985; McLaughlin, 2001). The postcolonial perspectives represent some epistemological shift in the discussion, interpretation and analysis of development in the postcolonial societies, which tend to differ from the way they have been interpreted and narrativised by the colonialists and their Western sympathisers (McLaughlin, 2001). Similarly, speaking the voice of voiceless

out-of-schools, to some extent, removes the voicelessness, increases representation and recognition.

Another important concept in the postcolonial literature is intersectionality. In postcolonial feminist scholarship, intersectionality is a key concept that gives attention to hierarchies of discrimination and oppression, and how gender interacts with other social groups, such as caste, race and economic class (Shields, 2008; Hardy-Fanta, 2013; Hankivsky, 2014; Hancock, 2016). Intersectionality refers to overlapping social identities and is often examined in relation to their associated structures for domination, oppression and discrimination. It represents the notion that multiple characters and identities overlap, intersect and interact to influence people's experiences, opportunities and status and also mark them out from other component identities (Hardy-Fanta, 2013). The term, intersectionality, was originally coined by an African-American scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). She coined the "concept of intersectionality to denote the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences", and to illustrate "the experiences Black women face are not subsumed within the traditional boundaries of race or gender discrimination" (Crenshaw (1991, p1244). Yuval-Davis (2006, p.196) explains intersectionality as "what occurs when a woman from a minority group tries to navigate the main crossing in the city… the main highway is 'racism road.' One cross street can be Colonialism, then Patriarchy Street" and women in the postcolonial environment have "to deal not only with one form of oppression but with all forms, which link together to make a double, a triple, multiple, a many-layered blanket of oppression". Hankivsky (2014, p.2) notes that intersectionality

as an analytical framework seeks to promote "understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., 'race'/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion)". Intersectionality is used here as an element of the postcolonial feminist approach. Intersectionality has also been considered very important in this thesis to recognise the intersectionalities of out-of-schools' positionalities and how their different socioeconomic positions contribute to influencing their experiences. For a study like this, as Hill and Bilge (2016) observe, the concept constitutes a tool for understanding and analysing social complexity, differing people's experiences as well as a broad spectrum of factors that underpin and exacerbate social inequality, structure of power relations and people's lived experiences.

In the following subsection, I will further highlight the importance of the postcolonial perspective of this study. This will then be followed by closer attention to gender issues in postcolonial theory and particularly, the perspectives of postcolonial feminism.

3.6 Relevance of the Postcolonial Approach to this Study

The postcolonial framework (benefiting from postcolonial feminist views) is particularly relevant to the study of masculinity in Nigeria for several reasons. The first is the earlier observed need to avoid possible misrepresentations that may occur if Western-influenced masculinity perspective is adopted. There is also a need to avoid the discussion of men as an undifferentiated whole. In Nigeria, Unterhalter et al. (2017) observe that there is no homogenous northern Nigeria in relation to gender practices, and adding north to the south, it would be wrong to conclude that there is homogenous Nigerian masculinity as this will mean falling into the already mentioned pitfall. The postcolonial approach

provides an opportunity to explain gender situations in relation to their socio-cultural contexts.

Secondly, postcolonialism provides an opportunity to present insiders' accounts of postcoloniality (Said, 1979; Spivak, 1985; McLaughlin, 2001). The postcolonial approach places responsibility on researchers to provide insiders' and indigenous perspective of experiences of postcoloniality (McLaughlin, 2001). It also demands on postcolonial researchers to reveal appropriate local situations and realities, challenge external stories and interpretations of local situations and make an effort towards addressing unsettled beliefs. This study makes a conscious effort to present the voice of people who dropped out of school in postcolonial Nigeria. I am one of the relatively known few that dropped out of basic education that got an opportunity to advance in education up to a PhD level and we owe the rest of our colleagues a duty to evolve into a set of "organic intellectual who can speak for the subaltern" (Mendoza, 2016, p.12) and represent their voices in the intellectual marketplace. I am conscious that we cannot fully appreciate various factors that work together to produce differing educational challenges and obstacles to people living in postcolonial societies "without recognising the continuing legacies of colonialism and imperialism that shape us and the landscapes we inhabit" (Park and Herr, 2017, p.279). Our past is ever-present with us; we face dynamic and ever-evolving localised and internationalised injustices; we also face past-in-present socio-cultural formations that refuse to go away despite the historical, social changes (Collins, 2004; Park and Herr, 2017). Hence, this study seeks to ensure that the voices of the 'other' should be heard and represented by those who experienced it (people like me in this context) because, in the contemporary society, that is marked by an increasing "eurocentric, patriarchal,

neoliberal and secular international political culture', as well as by ascendant notions of white supremacy, the voices of all those who cannot or refuse to articulate their experience through that prism, risk being lost" (Bertrand, 2018, p.285). Those of us who had the opportunity to return to school and have been able to advance owe others a duty to make our collective voice heard and to showcase how history contributed to creating conditions that push and pull people out of school. While doing so, I am also conscious that adopting a postcolonial methodological approach does not automatically emancipate and empower the research participants (see McLaughlin, 2001). However, the postcolonial perspective employed in this study helps to highlight any existing contradictions and ambiguities embedded within (post)colonial relationships.

3.3 Postcolonial Feminism

A feminist version of postcolonial theories advances gender perspectives using the postcolonial discourses, such as intersectionality of gender, racism, and class. Postcolonial feminists' struggle is not limited to gender, which is not the only important source of oppression; the struggle extends to class, race and postcolonial structures that are equally the sources of and frameworks for oppression (Salem, 2019). The perspectives attempt to explain the recurrent impact of socioeconomic, political and cultural colonisation of the non-Western societies from gender perspectives and the lived experiences of non-Western women (Walker, 1983; Collins, 1990, 1998). Salem (2019) summarises postcolonial feminism as one of the bodies of scholarship that emerged in the mid-late twentieth century, which takes power as a serious issue in relation to gender inequality questions. Postcolonial feminists tend to "argue that colonial legacies across the Global South are central to the forms of gendered oppression or privilege women experience today. Central to this was their focus on capitalism", which remains a key

feature of colonialism with a meaningful impact on the postcolonial societies (Salem, 2019, p.3). They also contend, contrary to Western feminists' belief, that gender inequality is not just a matter of culture, religion and legal or political rights but stems from the impacts of capitalism and colonialism.

While postcolonial theorists generally contend against the colonial and neocolonial[10] misrepresentation of people in postcolonial societies as weak and inferior, postcolonial feminists have relatively more complicated responsibilities and contentions. Tyagi (2014, p.45) explains that postcolonial women "suffer from 'double colonisation' (a term coined by Kirsten Holst Peterson and Anna Rutherford and refers to the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy)", which has given the postcolonial feminist additional responsibility of resisting "the control of colonial power not only as a colonised subject but also as a woman". In this oppression, her colonised brother is no longer her accomplice, but her oppressor". Also, on the one hand, in the mainstream male-dominated struggle against the coloniser, the postcolonial females are exploited by their misrepresentation in the nationalist literature while on the other hand, they suffer misrepresentation at the hands of white Western feminists that present them as colonised counterparts, collectively oppressed and a handicapped group of people (Tyagi, 2014). They also criticise some Western radical and liberal feminist views for their universalising analytical approaches that tend to distort the actual experiences of non-Western women (Weedon, 2002). Postcolonial feminists challenge

[10] This refers to new forms of colonialism that targets minds and economies of relatively new states.

Western radical feminists' assumption of Third World women as evenly constituted group of powerless, weak, exploited, poor, frail, violated, dependent, unassertive, and sexually harassed (Mohanty, 1988). It is important to note, Salem (2019) observes, that while postcolonial feminists criticisms are largely aimed at Western liberal feminists, Western feminists tend to be used to indicate that it is not only liberal feminists that misrepresent non-Western women, other branches of Western feminists have not fully rejected the scholarly oppression of non-Western women by the liberals.

Postcolonial feminist analysis operates with an "assumption that multiple structures impact the way a woman experiences life and that these structures are not universal; instead, they depend on the particularities of a given time and context" (Salem, 2019, p.4). As I have discussed in chapter five, and particularly, in furtherance of the postcolonial feminists' rejection of the homogenisation of women's experiences (Mohanty, 1984; Narayan, 1998; McEwan, 2001; Ampofo, Beoku-Betts and Osirim, 2008; Mishra, 2013), I argue that a tendency towards ‘overall subordination of women in the postcolonial state (such as Nigeria) advanced under colonial and postcolonial structures. Scholars have demonstrated how colonialism played critical roles in the emergence of prevailing male-breadwinner practices, new forms of masculinities and male dominance in Nigeria by the colonial political-economy (Allen, 1982; Lindsay, 1999, 2007; Van Allen, 1982; Korieh, 2001; Karubi, 2006; Christian Aid, 2015). According to Sheldon (2018), European missionaries, traders, and colonial activities intensified between the 16th and 19th centuries, resulting in women losing their position, power and economic autonomy. The arrival of cash crops pushed many women out of their economic base while colonial political structures displaced women's formal political positions, and they lost hold to

colonial legal systems. Prior to the arrival of Europeans in Africa, women in many parts of the continent had significant influences over the public decision making structures which became eroded under colonial influences (see Hafkin and Bay, 1976; Robertson, 1988; Johnson-Odim, 2004; Sheldon, 2018). While religion has been presented in contemporary time as an instrument for reinforcing male dominance over women (Crane-Seeber and Crane, 2010; Hooks, 2013; Maskens, 2015), in many pre-colonial African societies, such as Igbo societies, women actually wielded greater spiritual well-being that enabled them to head many traditional religious cults and maintain the shrines (see Achebe, 1958; Ohadike, 1996). In Igbo societies, women age-sets, headed by female functionaries, functioned as regulatory institutions, sanctioned men and had the power to reprove their brothers in their natal *umunna* (clan) on corruption and moral issues. Women age-sets particularly functioned as "check and balances, resolving disputes that [were] too difficult for the male leaders" and their rebukes of men were powerful and dreaded; when it happened, it brought unimaginable shame to men (Uwazie, 1994, p.92). Van Allen (1982, p.170) describes how 'sitting on a man', which inter alia included boycotts and strikes were the women's main weapon for sanctioning a man for such offences as mistreating his wife, violating women's rules or allowing his animal eat a woman's crop. Women's 'sitting on' or 'make war on' any male or female defaulter was somewhat a complicated approach that worked to regulate male ascendancy and hegemonic power over women. With the colonial dislocation of women's position, the patriarchal dividend was advanced. Colonialism created a condition in which male dominance thrived.

Additionally, some of the Western radical and liberal feminist approaches that tend to generalise all non-Western women as pitiable and oppressed and males as having hegemonic characters and benefitting therefrom are not only an extension of Modernisation school; they tend to promote the school's thought pattern that also powered colonialism. The modernisation school strongly holds that a wide-ranging transformation of non-Western (particularly the developing) countries' traditional states are very crucial for their development and this requires them to adapt and follow the same developmental pathway followed by the Western societies (McClelland, 1961; Moore, 1963; Agbo, 2003). According to Banuri (1987, p.6), after the Second World War, the developing countries witnessed an influx of massive and unprecedented social engineering projects "variously termed industrialisation, modernisation, or development and justified on the basis of a supposed superiority of Western economic and political institutions and (initially at least) of Western values over non-Western ones". Such modernisation, according to (Banuri, 1987, p.7), involved many "forms of institutional and structural change… and the inculcation of a particular set of development-enhancing "modern" (i.e., of course, "Western") values and habits among the people of traditional societies". As an offshoot of modernisation school, some Western radical feminist approaches like Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) tend to view non-Western "traditional societies as authoritarian and male-dominated and modern societies as democratic" (Ndimande, 2001, p.1) and thus challenges male dominance, of which the theory of hegemonic masculinity advances. Colonialism that operated with a similar view (of backwardness of non-Western traditional societies) exacerbated and created possibly worst gender inequality situations in many parts of

Nigeria than what previously existed in the traditional society. This calls for caution in ways Western liberal, and radical feminist values that benefit from the same modernisation school are accepted and advanced in non-Western societies.

While all that pertain to colonial and radical Western feminists may not be viewed as negative, I emphasise a need to treat values coming from them with caution; they need to be critically evaluated, and relevant ones need to be adequately adapted to suit local situations. For example, the outright introduction of the colonial socio-political and economic system and restructuring of the pre-existing Nigerian systems significantly altered the pre-existing women power positions through radical replacement of traditional systems with new ones that did not progressively evolve from the people or topped up on their pre-existing approach to gender fairness. This contributed to exacerbating gender disparity and the superiority of men over women (see Van Allen, 1982; Karubi, 2006; Ezegwu, 2012b). Karubi (2006, p.38) explains that "colonial-era ushered in a defined vocational outline, tailored along with sexism and gender roles, with the notion of men as the 'breadwinner' and women as 'the homemaker'". Hegemonic masculinity, for example, also draws from this trend. Donaldson (1993) suggests that the major difference between hegemonic masculinity and other forms of masculinities is not located in the control of women; it is rather represented in a cultural penchant for men's dominance – and this dominance was exacerbated by values that emanated from the same cultural locations and ideologies that also gave birth to the theory.

In the following subsection, social justice issues relating to gender and education are further discussed from the postcolonial perspective.

3.4 Postcolonial Perspective on Gender and Social Justice in Education

Further to the postcolonial feminists' perspectives, some discussions of gender dimensions of social justice in education in the research literature tend towards explanations of locations of power in the society, how such powers determine females and males opportunities, equality and differences in access, learning and outcomes of education (see Stromquist, 1995; Ndimande, 2001; Unterhalter, 2005). Challenging noticeable negative influences of powers and promotion of equal access to educational opportunities and outcomes are also concerns of postcolonialists; studies and discussion papers that draw on this postcolonial perspective to advance gender equality and social justice in education largely do so from postcolonial feminist perspectives (Stromquist, 1995; Rathgeber, 1995; Tembon and Fort, 2008; Okali, 2011; Dillabough, 2016).

As in the mainstream social justice discussion (see Rawls 1999; Nussbaum, 2002; Sen, 2002; Pagden, 2003; Fraser, 2007; Donnelly, 2013; Xu and Hong, 2015), Stromquist (1995) picks state as an important factor in the determination of the state of gender equality and gender justice in education. She weaves together a Marxian view of the state (as both an arena for and product of class struggle), feminist's views of state as no neutral agency, and a postcolonialist suspicion of the postcolonial state as a biased institution against the weak and vulnerable in the society. Stromquist locates women's position at the weaker plane in relation to state law and policies and contends that the mainstream democratic decentralisation deprives women equal participation opportunity and citizenship contrary to the neutral party the states purport to be. Her key argument on

state and gender dimensions of social justice in education is summed up in her view that state education policies concentrate on its need for improved productivity through education, which is assumed to also address women's needs without addressing their psycho-social dependent status and pattern of knowledge transfer that perpetuate ideologies and views of women as inferior to men. She, therefore, concludes that schooling is a state apparatus for making women useful instruments for the market society and its capitalist lords. Stromquist also concludes that feminists who continue to mount pressure on the state find themselves in a conundrum because women are already relatively disempowered by political institutions and may not be able to reclaim their rights and power, or cut down male power and privileges using same institutions (Stromquist, 1995).

It appears that both Western and non-Western feminists share some views in the promotion of social justice in education through state apparatuses. Like Stromquist, many feminist (Western and postcolonial) approaches for promoting gender dimensions of social justice in education have extensively targeted state and social structures. For example, the Gender and Development (GAD) framework has been linked to both social structuralism and Marxism and particularly targets constructed social relations and power; GAD specifically challenges inequality and seeks to promote education through conscientisation and demand for redistribution (Boserup, 1970; Jaquette, 1990; Rathgeber, 1995; Reid, 2004; Tembon and Fort, 2008; Okali, 2011). GAD approach contributed to influence UNESCO's Gender Equality Action Plan 2008-2013 and Food and Agricultural Organisation's (FAO) Gender and Development Plan of Action 2002-2007 (FAO, 2003; UNESCO, 2008). The postcolonial feminist approach also seeks to

engage men through some international institutions that directly engage individual state structures; this approach contributed to influence UNESCO Bangkok's advocacy brief on the role of men and boys in promoting gender equality (Ndimande, 2001; Unterhalter, 2005). With these brief highlights on the postcolonial perspective on gender in education, I move on to further explain the postcolonial view of education and then the postcolonial approach to this study.

3.5 Postcolonialists Perspectives on education

In relation to education, and broader academic fields, a major approach observed in the postcolonial discourse is a tendency towards criticisms of Western ideologies, knowledge framework, propositions and political economy; the critics emphasise that knowledge cannot be apolitical and knowledge processes are the product of their sociopolitical contexts (Said, 1979; Ake, 1979; 1982; Radcliffe, 2005). For instance, in Nigeria, Western education advanced in the colonial era, and initial education policies were drafted and given to the country by colonial governments, which accommodated their values, political-economic interests and pushed Western knowledge acquisition system into the policies. Consequently, postcolonial theorists do not hide their suspicion of the Western education system that has been foisted upon the non-Western societies, which advances their intellectualism and culture and eventually reproduces colonial ideologies and objectives in the supposedly independent states (Fanon, 1961; Said, 1979; Ake, 1982; Radcliffe, 2005).

The suspicion of colonial education that laid the foundation for the current educational system in Nigeria is underpinned by such understanding as Steve Biko (a postcolonial writer) promoted, which holds that "the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor

is the mind of the oppressed" (Biko, 1978, p.6). This emphasises the postcolonial conviction that imperial and postcolonial manipulation of the non-Western societies continues through the knowledge reproduction processes. Ngugi Wa, Thiong'o (1981), a Kenyan novelist, suggested a need to decolonise the mind after political decolonisation has been achieved. In this regard, the social sciences, which largely benefited from the Western patterns of thoughts has been described as imperialism in Africa in relation to its theory of development, highlighting the suspicion of the education system advanced by the Western society (Ake, 1979; Milberg, 2006; Agozino, 2009; Amusan, 2016). The postcolonial scholars, therefore, seek to project the alternative ways of knowledge production and development, which are constructed as the '*Other'* (Spivak, 1995) and make a conscious effort to represent non-Western perspectives on knowledge production and utilisation. Young (2009, p. 15) explains that postcolonialism introduces "its own counter-knowledge, and from the diversity of its cultural experiences", which are premised on the notion "that those in the West, particularly, both within and outside the academy, should relinquish their monopoly on knowledge, and take other knowledge, other perspectives, as seriously as those of the West". Young also argues that postcolonial scholars are radically introducing perspectives that differ from the Western's into the academy and breaking the hitherto dominant sphere of knowledge formations by the West (Young, 2009). This is where a study as this becomes very crucial. The story of African poverty, masculine oppression of women and culture, as a reason for low and unequal access to education in many African countries, need to be re-examined by Africans from a non-Western perspective because, "Western knowledge was organised philosophically

through binary oppositions which had the effect of demonising or denigrating what western people often term the other" (Young, 2009, p.16).

3.7 A Postcolonial Approach to the Study

This study construes postcolonialism as outcomes of colonialism (Sharma-Brymer, 2009). Important elements of the postcolonial feminist approach that relate to gender and education that have prominently featured in postcolonial researches in education include elevation of subalternity; participation and representation; reflexivity; identity questions; dimensions of intersectionality and intersectional factors; language constructions; gender roles analysis and; analysis of power relations (Unterhalter, 2005; Maruska, 2010; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2012; Schurr and Segebart, 2012).

For this study, the following elements of postcolonialism, and particularly postcolonial feminist perspectives, are employed in the discussion and analysis of the literature and field data: subalterniety and otherness; intersectionality; reflexivity (discussed in section 4.10); and historical underpinnings of masculinities and postcolonial experiences, especially in relation to the impact of colonialism and postcolonial sociopolitical environment (Morrell and Swart (2005; Unterhalter, 2005, 2009; Bauchspies, 2007; Maruska, 2010; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2012; Schurr and Segebart, 2012). In relation to its postcolonial association, references to masculinity, gender, education, and culture in the study relate to histories, trends and practices in societies that emerged from colonialism and are struggling to establish their own socio-political and economic systems (Unterhalter, 2009). These have been directed towards the explanation of how past and present social conditions (in relation to the construction of masculinity) created and

exacerbated the state of being out of school and how this is (or has been) experienced, understood, perceived and interpreted by the *Other* (Spivak, 1995).

In the review of the literature and the discussions of the study data, many features of the postcolonial society (such as poverty, historical values, and culture) and experiences of individuals living in postcolonial society are taken into consideration in the discussion of the influences of the social construction of masculinity on the males and females' access and completion of basic education. Data analysis and discussion (in chapters five and six) also tilt towards an explanation of the influence of masculinity that developed in postcolonial context on access to education within postcolonial cultural contests. This is particularly important because socio-cultural values (including religious values) are among key reasons listed in the literature (see research setting below) that contributed to influence the north-south divide in educational access advanced during the colonial era (see also Okobia, 2002; Usman, 2006, 2008; Imam, 2012; Hoechner, 2013; Gersberg et al. 2014; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018). Male dominance in both private and public spheres is supported by both cultural and religious values that stipulate how males and females should conduct themselves (Christian Aid, 2015). These contribute to producing different forms of masculinities that need to be adequately explained to provide evidence for gender-based interventions in education.

Particular attention has been given to the employment of postcolonial perspective towards the projection of the voice of the *Other* (Fanon, 1963; Spivak, 1995; Sharp, 2009). The postcolonial approach to the study provides space for projecting “subaltern voices, with invisibilities and with silence and the ways in which the experience of postcoloniality may or may not be known” (Unterhalter, 2009, p.653). The study specifically amplifies the

voice of a definite category (those that could not initially complete or never completed basic education), which the researcher and respondents shared in common. These relate to indigenous knowledge and experiences noted by Morrell and Swart (2005) and Bauchspies (2007).

While postcolonial approach, including its feminist version (postcolonial feminism), has been adopted in this study, it is pertinent to acknowledge an inherent weakness that I carefully considered. As Mendoza (2016) notes, while postcolonial scholars have emphasised the subaltern struggles against external stories about them, a growing concern has been raised about the subaltern's capacity to overthrow conditions imposed on it by the colonial forces. In the context of this study, contrarily to Mendoza's (2016, p.12) claim, that "the subaltern has been hegemonised to accept its wretchedness as normal"; most of this study's respondents did not accept their being out of school as normal, but, in line with the claim, many accepted the socio-cultural conditions that underpin their being out of school as normal. Many respondents mentioned their desire to go back to school and the challenges they faced with their limited education, but only a very tiny few saw a need to challenge the socio-cultural, religious and economic order that contributed to exacerbating the condition of being out of school (their views are presented in chapter five). While postcolonialists' criticisms of the prevailing global social justice system (or human rights standards) remain germane (e.g. Ibhawoh, 2002; Ozoke, 2014; Okpalike, 2014), the perspective has largely been criticising the West and colonialism for various dimensions of development failures in the non-Western societies, and at the same time and has not adequately exposed local contributions to the developing societies' underdevelopment. Postcolonialists' have become more of an

alarmist's framework (with perpetual suspicion of Western perspectives) than reformists that proffer and catalyse workable solutions for identified weaknesses. Mendoza, B. (2016, p.12) argues that "claims concerning the subaltern's resignation to wretchedness reveal the social distance that separates the postcolonial feminist scholar from the subaltern"; they also denote a departure from a belief that "the intellectual is irremediably implicated in power/knowledge constellations". Although a formal education-related and intellectual gap exist between my respondents (and my friends that did not go back to school) and I, I continue to maintain some degree of affinity with my old friends based on our shared previous position of being out-of-school and socioeconomic engagements we jointly engaged in as apprentices. Thus, the irredeemability claim remains somewhat unsubstantiated either in our case or in the literature.

Before I conclude this chapter, I want to briefly and diagrammatically summarise key issues I raised above and how they reflect in this thesis. Figure 2 below summaries how Feminist Postcolonial perspective has been employed in this work, including the rationale for adopting it. Many masculinities scholars (e.g. Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Cornwall, Edström and Greig 2011; Hearn et al. 2012; Jewkes et al. 2015) recommend how masculinity research should be approached - from historical and cultural perspectives. Feminist Postcolonial perspective provides for these two approaches, hence, adopted in this work (see Oyěwùmí, 1997; Chakrabarty, 2000; Mirza, 2009; Shenmugasundaram, 2017). By adopting the Feminist Postcolonial perspective, some of its key elements (particularly insider perspectives, historical and cultural approach, reflexivity, intersectionality, and a critique of western perspectives on gender in

postcolonial societies) were employed in the analysis and discussion that produced the conclusion I arrived at in the final chapter.

Figure 2: Reflection of Feminist Postcolonial perspective in this work

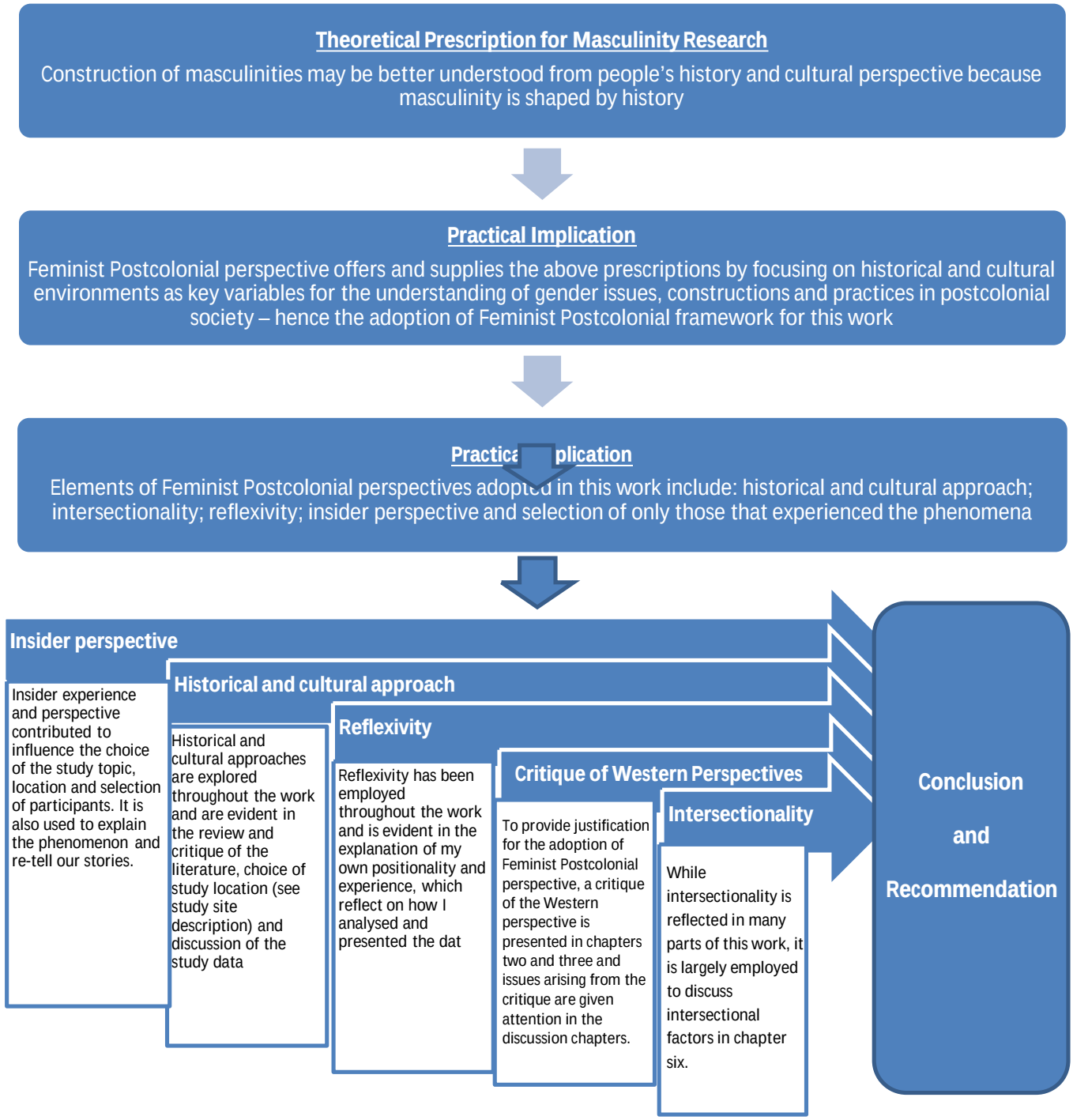
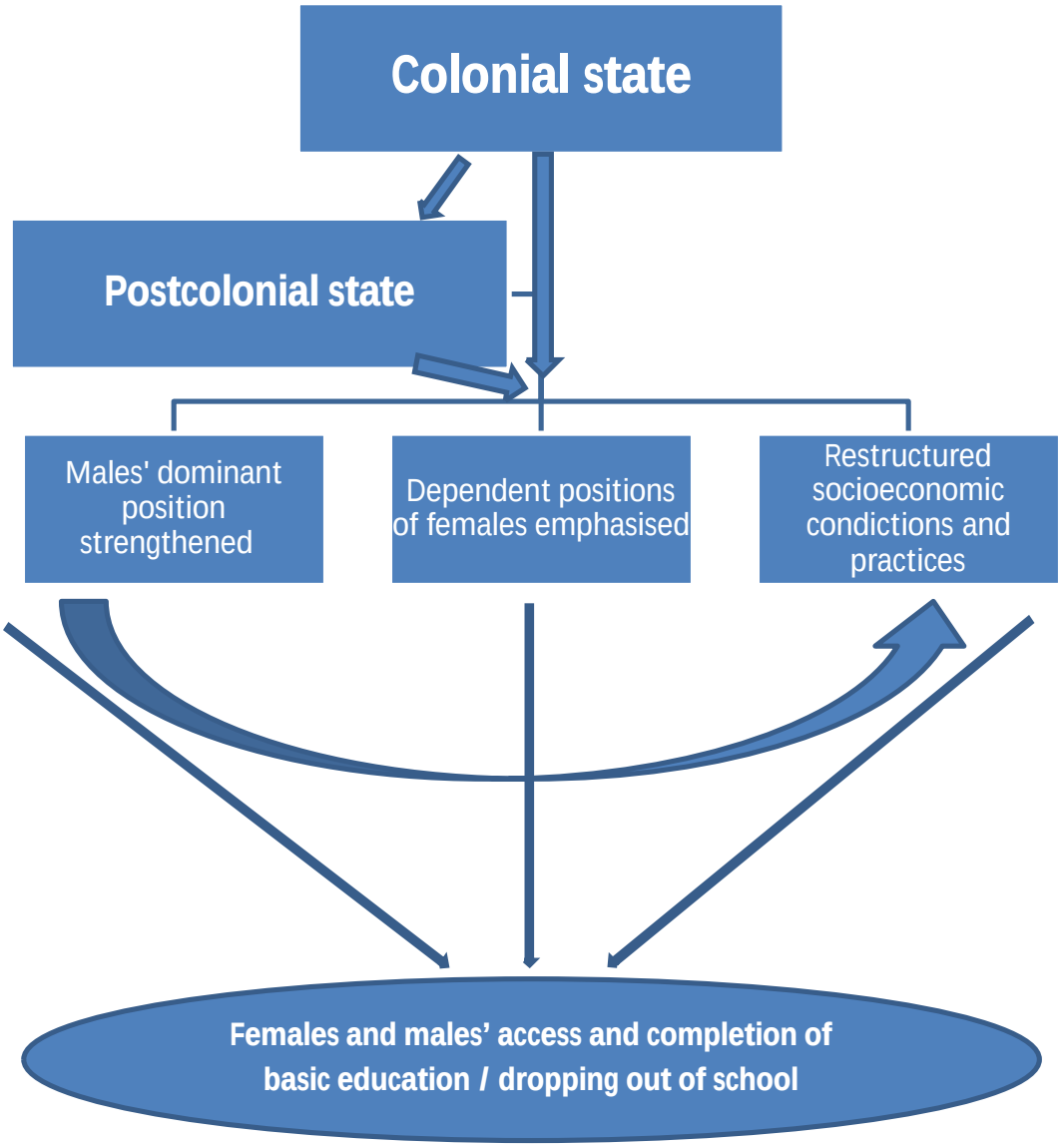


Figure 3 below summarises how colonial construction of the post-colonial Nigerian state and transformation of masculinity, femininity and socioeconomic processes in the country contributed to influencing the state of access and completion of basic education (and dropping out of school) in Nigeria. It also shows how the masculinity that has been impacted by the colonial/postcolonial state directly and indirectly (dominantly interacting with the postcolonial socioeconomic conditions) influence basic education access and completion.

Figure 3: Colonial Influence on Access to Basic Education in Postcolonial Nigeria



The following chapter summarizes the methodology and processes of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

This chapter summarises both the methodological choices and actions taken in the course of this study as well as underlying reasons for making such choices. These are presented as ontological and epistemological positions, the research design and the method, data collection and what were collected (content), piloting of the study, sampling and fieldwork processes, data analysis processes, ethical considerations for the study, steps taken to ensure high-quality research processes and outcome and statement of limitations. I begin the discussion with the explanation of my ontological and epistemological positions.

4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Positions

The study is a postcolonial research with a design that flows from a social constructivist perspective, which facilitates understanding of why and how a particular social phenomenon occurs while remaining sensitive to the research contexts, lived experiences and special features of the people studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Mason, 1996; Creswell, 1998; de Gialdino, 2011). Ontology relates to how the social world is ordered and what may be known about things that exist in it (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2011).

As a gender study, the study tilts towards a postmodernist approach to gender, which considers that what we may know and believe about gender is continually constructed by culture such as languages (Crotty, 1998; Grix, 2004; Gray, 2013). It also, to some extent, draws from some elements of feminist epistemology (which seeks to integrate women's knowledge and experiences) and particularly tends to focus on women's experiences and ways of knowing- giving attention to the multiplicity of women's voices (Alcoff and Potter, 1993; Ardovini-Brooker, 2002). In this regard, the study maintains alertness and

consciousness over the existence of power relations in the knowledge production and therefore, integrates reflexivity (see chapter 4.10 below). Within the feminist epistemology, the study – as much as it benefits from it - somewhat agrees with Feminist Standpoint, but largely aligns to Post Modern Feminist epistemology. Feminist Standpoint contends that "partial and historically situated knowledge has passed as ahistorical and universal truths" (Gouws, 1996, p.65) and therefore, views the society's underprivileged and marginalised to be in an appropriate position to provide an adequate description of the sociopolitical and economic structures and practices that negatively affect them (Harding, 2000; Laurol, 2016). It agrees with Feminists standpoint on this and considers people who have been out of school to be in a better position to explain what happened, and how they experienced and perceived it. Post-Modern Feminists studies seek to unravel culturally constructed meanings, lived experiences of the marginalised and less privileged groups and, understand the lived cultures from their experiences (Olsen, 1994; Ardovini-Brooker, 2002). They give attention to both what researchers study and how they study them – that is the researcher's methodology (Ardovini-Brooker, 2002). Thus, feminist epistemology draws scholars' attention "to how knowledge is generated, how it is reported, and how it is used, through a focus on the research process in its entirety" from research questions formulation to gaining access to the research participants, conducting interviews, data analysis and the report writing process (Starfield, 2013, p.2).

In summary, both the postcolonial and feminists epistemological orientations of the study are located within the social constructionist epistemological paradigm and employed in this study to draw out and present subaltern voices (it is important to note that feminist research does not only research women but can also be applied to other studies that work

with subaltern voices such as this). The social constructivists' belief that social definitions (like masculinity) are subject to diverse forms of social construction and interpretations inspired the qualitative approach of the study, in order to effectively draw out socially constructed issues of masculinity in an appropriate socio-cultural context (Crotty, 1998; Courtenay, 2000; Kahn, 2009; Murnen, 2015). For this study, such understandings are derived from the lived experiences and perspectives of the people studied.

In the following subsection, how trustworthiness, objectivity, and generalizability of the study have been ensured are discussed.

4.2 The Research Design

A research design is an overall plan of a study that explains the study type, including data collection framework and, constituting an implementation strategy for exploring the research question and achieving the research goals (Ragin, 1994; Creswell, 2003; Toledo-Pereyra, 2012; Vogt, Gardner, and Haeffele, 2012). The study is a qualitative one, which means that it examines the phenomenon and people that experienced it in their natural settings, in an attempt to make sense of it in relation to the meanings it brings to the people. Its qualitative orientation help to make the phenomenon visible through diverse techniques like "field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3). Like many qualitative postcolonial gender studies (e.g. Collins, 1989; Edwards, 1990; Borbasi, Jackson and Wilkes, 2005; Soni-Sinha, 2008), the study is interested in bringing together information from both males and females that experienced the phenomenon of dropping out of school.

As a postcolonial and qualitative, the study seeks to understand the subjective reasons (the whys and hows), underlying the out of school phenomenon in relation to masculinities in the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba socio-cultural settings, including their shared and lived experiences from the perspective of the people that experienced it. This study has been designed to expose underlying gender (masculinity in this context) influence on being out of school phenomena in Nigeria, unearthing previously unobserved issues around masculinity that affect both males and females' access and completion of basic education. For example, scholars are aware that poverty, early marriage and school distance tend to affect access to education in Nigeria, (e.g. Hunt, 2008; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al. 2016) but they appear to be unaware or have limited information (as there is limited literature around this) on how masculinity interact with these factors to cause or exacerbate the situation of being out of school.

4.3 The Research Method

A research method refers to "the various specific tools or ways data can be collected and analysed, e.g. a questionnaire; interview checklist; data analysis software etc." (Neville, 2007, p.5) while a research approach is simply a plan and procedure adopted to collect, analyse and interpret data (Creswell, 2014). The study adopted a qualitative method, using an interview technique that was specifically adopted to qualitatively learn the lived experiences of the people and meanings they attached to it. Sacchi (2015, p.1) explains that formal interviews take place in situations where the "interviewee is seated or stands at a specific location for the entire duration of the interview. The background is carefully chosen to put the interviewee at ease and to provide a context for the story". Boyce and Neale (2006) define in-depth interviews as a technique of qualitative research that

involves intensive individual interactions with a small number of participants, to explore their individual views, experiences and perspectives on a particular issue or situation.

The interviews were in-depth and semi-structured, which provide an opportunity to interact with one person at a time, to gain personal information and learn about individual experiences, some of which may be sensitive, as opposed to a focused group discussion that creates space for interacting with many interviewees at a time, to gain information on community norms and practices (Murray and Andrasik, 2014). Semi-structured interviews contain both structured and unstructured set of questions with standardised as well as open type questions (Walliman, 2011). It was also chosen because the interviewees were unique and differed in both gender and experiences and, potential study participants are unlikely to give such information needed for the study in a group of people they do not already have an existing personal relationship with (see Boyce and Neale, 2006; Murray and Andrasik, 2014). Boyce and Neale (2006, p.4) note that in-depth interviews are useful when detailed information is being requested from individuals on their thoughts, experiences and behaviours. In-depth interviews are often possible with a limited number of people who are willing to share their experiences and opinions; they are also useful in gaining knowledge of people's experiences in their languages, but they tend to be time-consuming (Murray and Andrasik, 2014). It is argued that the interview technique could be fraught with possible research bias and information gained from it may not be generalisable (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Section 4.10 summarises strategies employed to reduce bias. Boyce and Neale recommend in-depth interviews instead of focus groups when the potential respondents may not be comfortable sharing their information openly in a group or may not want to be distinguished as individuals with their opinions. For

respondents who dropped out of school, many may not be comfortable with their situation and may not be willing to share their experiences and opinions openly.

The following subsection explains the contents of the interviews and the instrument.

4.4 Data Content and the Research Instrument

This study employed both primary and secondary data to examine issues around masculinity and access (and completion of basic education) in Nigeria. The secondary data comes from an extensive review of the literature that is relevant for addressing key issues around the research questions, particularly the social justice issues in education, gender issues in Nigeria education, theories of masculinity and masculinity in Nigeria (some of the secondary data were quantitative – definition of this study as qualitative is largely based on the nature of the primary data). The rest of this section discusses the primary data and the collection instrument.

Only primary (qualitative) data were collected. The semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 2) that was piloted was used to collect data through in-depth interviews. The instrument was initially developed and reviewed with the study supervisor after which it was piloted and reviewed again before it was used to collect data in the field. The interview guide had a total of 19 questions that are grouped into four sections: background and experiences with basic education; socio-cultural construction of masculinity/femininity and education; social justice and; general opinion. Interview guide broke down the research questions into simple sub-questions. Interviews asked questions about their experiences of being out of school and their accounts of postcoloniality (Said,

1979; Spivak, 1985; McLaughlin, 2001), including their lived experiences, opinions and observations on the conditions that create and sustain out-of-school conditions, as well as how they personally experienced it and their interpretations of these experiences. It also asked about their education histories and stories, issues that led to their withdrawal from school and, the socioeconomic background that possibly underpinned their experiences. Interview questions also included socio-cultural construction of masculinity, femininity and education (such as how ideal man and woman have been conceived overtime, social expectations of females and males and how these contribute to influencing individual's opportunities, and also, positions and power men and women hold in the family and society and how they contribute to influencing opportunities given to boys and girls to go to school or engage in diverse kinds of socioeconomic activities).

It is noteworthy that asking questions about gender in northern Nigeria could be tricky and somewhat risky because it touches on religious concerns and incessant religious-related violence take place in the region. Caution was therefore exercised in the wording of the interview guide questions (issues relating to religious influence and authority were not explicit).

4.5 Pilot

A pilot study refers to a small version of a particular full-scale study and, as an important stage of good research design, it is implemented to identify areas possible of problems and deficiencies that may exist in the research protocol and instruments before the actual conduct of the full study (Baker, 1994; Lancaster et al. 2004; Hassan et al. 2006; Kraemer et al. 2006; Kim, 2011; Simon, 2011; Janghorban et al. 2014; Majid et al. 2017). The pilot

was conducted in Abuja in December 2018 as part of the general preparation for the main study. The pilot study was conducted with two males and two females. Three of them could not complete basic education while one completed and enrolled into Senior Secondary class one (SS1) before dropping out. The interviews lasted between 20 and 46 minutes (two were between 30 and 32 minutes).

Four areas of pilot studies that play specific roles in qualitative studies include identification of potential problems and barriers that may be associated with participants' recruitment, practical engagement and learning processes as a qualitative researcher, evaluating the usefulness of the interview protocol and, determination of the epistemology and methodology of the research (Janghorban et al. 2014). The pilot for this study revealed various weaknesses in the draft interview guide, which led to its revision: some questions were rephrased and asked again while interviewing the third respondent; the respondents did not understand some questions, I therefore rephrased and used them again towards the end of the third interview, and he answered them without any difficulty. I updated the instrument and used it to interview the last volunteer who easily answered the questions the previous three respondents could not answer and easily provided his responses, which suggests that the questions have been made clearer. At this point, the pilot was ended.

The pilot also revealed possible challenges that may be experienced in the field: it was difficult to identify and recruit persons that met the inclusion criteria. I visited some poor urban locations and spoke to some friends to help me identify people with my listed characteristics. For more than a week, no willing participant was identified, especially females that did not complete basic education. It was in the second week that I identified

two females through my friendship network; males were easier to identify because many of them are artisans and traders. This highlighted a need to seek the assistance of people living in each of the study sites to help in the identification of potential participants ahead of the field visit.

Another challenge related to language. Some of the respondents could not effectively communicate in English or Pidgin English despite that the pilot was conducted in Abuja (a multicultural Capital City where English and Pidgin English are major languages of communication). While the challenge was not widespread during the pilot, it was a sign of possible challenges that may be faced in the field. These made me consider a possibility of using interpreters if the need arises in the field (details about this and measures employed to ensure respondents' comfort, confidentiality and other ethical issues are discussed in the fieldwork section).

Further, despite my explanations about the purpose of study, some of the potential pilot respondents did not want to be interviewed, possibly because they may have been cautious about revealing their identities and backgrounds. This observation made me avoid asking about respondents' details (their names, age and family background) during the main interview to create a relaxed environment for the interviews. However, some elements of the family background were somehow reflected in questions about factors that led to their withdrawal from school.

It is acknowledged that while the pilot is very crucial, it does not guarantee that the main study would be a success but it could contribute in the identification of possible problems

in the main study (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001; Simon, 2011). Section 4.6 provides information on my experiences in the field.

4.6 Sampling and Study Participants

Sampling involves "the selection of specific data sources from which data are collected to address the research objectives", and in phenomenological studies, only people are selected as the study sample and are considered as informants (Gentles et al. 2015, p.1775). The sampling technique adopted was purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is a strategy used in qualitative research (Patton, 2002, 2015; Gentles et al. 2015) and is defined as a process of "selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry", and are very useful for gaining in-depth insights and understanding of the phenomenon that is studied (Patton, 2015, p. 264).

It is important to note that there is a multiplicity of purposeful sampling techniques (see Patton, 2002, 2015) but purposeful criterion sampling, which seeks to identify and select relevant cases that meet the study's predetermined selection criterion (Palinkas et al. 2013), has been adopted. Attention was given to the generation of in-depth contextual understandings (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The respondents were purposefully selected based on the following criteria:

a. People that did not complete basic education;
b. Residents in the study state;
c. Five males and five females in each state and;
d. More than 18 years old.

The sample size of the study is thirty (five females and five males, totalling ten from each of the three locations): a total of thirty (15 females and 15 males) adult respondents that did not complete basic education were selected and only qualitative data was collected from them. In the research methodology literature, the sample size in phenomenological research is often smaller to allow intensity, richness and in-depth considerations (Cohen, Kahn and Steeves, 2000; Kahn, 2000; Gentles et al. 2015). The number of participants that are necessary for gaining in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon has been considered in this study. Attention was given to people that can potentially provide information on lived experiences of males and females in relation to gender and dropping out of basic education. Besides providing information on their experiences, the adult respondents were considered to have the capacity to provide information on cultural practices and perspectives on masculinity, education and overall gender relation in the society, including power relations within the households.

To address the recruitment barrier observed during the pilot and early stage of the fieldwork (before visiting each study location), I discussed with my professional colleagues in Oyo and Sokoto to help me identify people who met the study inclusion criteria (see chapter 4.5 above). Up to two persons were contacted in each of the study locations and requested to identify ten females and ten males within the specified category. I asked them to help me identify people that met my sample criteria before my arrival. I did this to ensure that I have a list of about 20 females and 20 males from which I could select only five females and five males in each state. This helped to reduce the possibility of my contacts having any influence on who is finally chosen and also ensured that there were enough potential respondents available for interview at the scheduled

fieldwork period. This helped to reduce the challenge of identifying eligible participants as available volunteers were easily recruited among them for the study. When I arrived Sokoto and Oyo, these colleagues were contacted, and they led me to people they pre-identified; not all of them were available, but because I already planned for 20 when I actually needed ten, we were still able to identify up to ten persons I interviewed.

While interviews were conducted in Anambra State (Igbo in the Southeast), Oyo (Yoruba in the Southwest) and Sokoto (Hausa in the Northwest), I desired to include people from other states that have lived in the state for some time (besides the natives), in order to: (a) learn from outsiders' living in a particular ethnocultural group or state (people from other states) who shared their experiences in their home states, in relation to their hosts' socio-cultural values, (b) possibly gain insight into practices of other ethnocultural groups or in other states and (c) gain possible access to a diversity of opinions within each state. In Sokoto, I could get one person from the south-south region of the country. In Oyo, I was able to get someone from the north-central region. Besides these, many of the respondents were either native of the states or nearby states within the same geopolitical zone, sharing a similar culture and speaking the same language. While Table 2 summarises respondents' pseudo names and their locations, general issues relating to fieldwork and my experiences are summarised below.

Table 2: Study Participants

Participant		State
1.	ADA AF[11]	Anambra (Southeast)
2.	IFY AF	Anambra (Southeast)
3.	AMAKA AF	Anambra (Southeast)
4.	NGOZI AF	Anambra (Southeast)

[11] These are pseudonyms with state initials and gender (e.g. AF – Anambra Female - A for Anambra and F for females).

5.	CHINWE AF	Anambra (Southeast)
6.	OKEY AM	Anambra (Southeast)
7.	IBEH AM	Anambra (Southeast)
8.	NONSO AM	Anambra (Southeast)
9.	OBI AM	Anambra (Southeast)
10.	IKE AM	Anambra (Southeast)
11.	RONKE OF	Oyo (Southwest)
12.	BUNMI OF	Oyo (Southwest)
13.	BOSE OF	Oyo (Southwest)
14.	LOLA OF	Oyo (Southwest)
15.	PEJU OF	Oyo (Southwest)
16.	ADE OM	Oyo (Southwest)
17.	SOLA OM	Oyo (Southwest)
18.	AJAYI OM	Oyo (Southwest)
19.	KUNLE OM	Oyo (Southwest)
20.	BUSAYO OM	Oyo (Southwest)
21.	TIJJANI SM	Sokoto (Northwest)
22.	USMAN SM	Sokoto (Northwest)
23.	AMINU SM	Sokoto (Northwest)
24.	UMARU SM	Sokoto (Northwest)
25.	YUSUF SM	Sokoto (Northwest)
26.	MULIKAT SF	Sokoto (Northwest)
27.	AISHA SF	Sokoto Northwest)
28.	HAUWA SF	Sokoto (Northwest)
29.	FATIMA SF	Sokoto (Northwest)
30.	ZUWAIRA SF	Sokoto (Northwest)

4.7 Field Work and Data Collection Process

The fieldwork activities (including field preparations, follow-ups, contacts and visits) began in early December 2018 and ended in last week of February 2019. Data were collected from a total of 30 persons. This involved face to face in-depth interviews with five females and five males that did not complete basic education in Anambra, Oyo and Sokoto states respectively. Firstly, I flew to Sokoto State and collected data in the state, moved to Oyo State and then to Anambra State. The interviews lasted about 30 minutes, with some extending more than 40 minutes. Apart from the 30 (ten in each state) respondents, I had extensive interactions with three other individuals that have not been

included here as the study respondents; relevant information from them are included among general field observations.

In order to address language barriers observed during the pilot, I initially discussed with local contacts about the possibility of them playing roles of interpreters (Confidentiality Agreement Form was signed). During the interview, I envisaged that this could create some forms of uneasiness to some respondents. Firstly, while the local contact introduced me to the study respondents for the interviews, I was conscious of the body language of the respondents and checked if they flowed easily without distractions or feeling of discomfort. For example, in Sokoto, out of the ten interviewees, only four (two males and two females) could interact reasonably in either English or Pidgin English. My main contact is a Hausa lady who has worked with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for many years and was also a member of my research team that collected data in Sokoto during a two-year study I coordinated for the British Council and University College London; along with other field research team members, she was trained on ethical issues and working with diverse categories of research audience, including confidentiality in research and they successfully collected data from both children and adults, teachers and students (this was a key basis for my choosing her as the local contact for this study). She showed professionalism while introducing me to the first potential respondent; I allowed her to make the interpretation (but I reminded her of some ethical principles) and watched the respondents for any sign of discomfort and was convinced that there was no ethical problem or discomfort on the side of the respondent (some of the interviews were conducted in the respondent's business premises while others were invited at a space provided by the local contact). Meanwhile, before the interview, I still asked if the

respondents were happy for me to continue the interview even when the verbal and non-verbal clues indicated there was no problem (or discomfort or challenge). Many of the respondents for which she interpreted were happy and laughing while granting the interviews, and this gave me further assurance that they were at home with the middle person. A similar procedure was followed in Oyo, where interpreters were used only on two occasions. In Anambra, there was no need for an interpreter: I freely used English, Pidgin English and Igbo (I am a native Igbo speaker) depending on the one my respondents chose to use (most of them were able to interact in either English or Pidgin English). In all, there was an exception (that was in Sokoto): MULIKAT SF, she was not so fluent in her English and expressed occasional shyness; effort to use the contact as interpreter made the situation trickier, as I noticed she was not very comfortable. I asked my contact to leave, and I continued the interview with her alone. When I noticed some discomfort I asked if she wanted to end the interview at that point, she signalled yes, then I ended the interview, but she did not indicate that the information she already gave be withdrawn. Her interview was the shortest, lasting only about 12 minutes. There was no issue with the rest of the interviews - both the assisted (interpreted) and unassisted.

My field research diary contains some observations, such as observation of people's behaviour in the markets, schools, on the road and home environments. I freely observed gender practices, female and male's power and authority in the society but this is not considered a major method of the study; it was largely a spontaneous action that began during the fieldwork in Sokoto (the first state visited) and was used to compare information shared by the study respondents and how people lived in their normal environment. Walliman (2011) explains observation as an act of recording of events or situations via

senses or with an instrument; observation notes, along with literary texts and interview transcripts, constitute elements of qualitative data. Bechhofer & Lindsay (2000, p.70) note that research questions that relate to culture often require some elements of observational research because cultural features (including shared beliefs and practices, values and norms of behaviour of the study populations) are quite a slippery concept and "observing culture as it is enacted and experienced in natural social contexts tends to suggest ideas for further study, in order to establish it as a phenomenon". Besides the interviews, as much as possible, I tried to observe people interact in their normal ways, uninterruptedly following the daily courses and also engaged with locals in different kinds of conversation that may help me gain more information about the phenomena I was studying. I consciously initiated discussions while in public transports around gender practices and education (without revealing my intention or letting anyone know I was conducting a study) and engaged in actual field observations in some locations such as markets, hospitals, streets, churches and schools to observe people interact in their normal environment. The information gained from these activities, including my conversations with local people, has been included in the study as notes from the field rather than actual interview respondents' views. They were not analysed alongside the study data but played important roles: (a) they helped to remember what happened in different locations, so that interpretation of data was made in relation to the study context (b), they helped me to understand and make sense of my data and (c) in some situations, I made direct reference to it (where this happened in the discussion, I made it explicitly clear that such information came from the notes and was not part of the main study data). Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) explain that analysis takes place in all phases of the research

processes, and researchers continue to document their observations, which they record in their fieldnotes and finally develop them; reading such fieldnotes encourages recognition of patterns and help in making comparisons. For me, I compared what the respondents said with what I saw or observed in the field.

In the following subsection, information that was sought during the interview and details of the interview guide, as well as the nature of the overall data used in the study, are discussed.

4.8 Data Analysis

The analysis of interview data was directly aimed at answering the research questions and explaining how masculinity possibly influences access and completion of basic education in Nigeria. Specific attention was given to the amplification of respondents' voices, views and experiences; thus, lots of direct quotes from the interviews have been included in the report. The process of analysis involved coding of data, thematic categorisation of data and reflexive discussion of the data (reflexivity is discussed in the next chapter).

The interviews were manually transcribed and collated – which began with coding. The information was recorded in Pidgin and English. Those involving local languages were interpreted from local language to English during the interviews, as explained earlier, while I translated interviews that were in Igbo. Back translation was not done. Instead, after transcribing the interviews, I reviewed the transcripts individually and in contexts of the interviews - my research diary was useful in relating to the contexts.

Coding is an important element of data analysis and is particularly considered as a method of organising data to highlight the underlying messages they bear (Charmaz, 2006). A simple version of coding was employed in the collation of interview data. "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attributes for a portion of language-based or visual data" while coding consists of linking the codes to generate meanings that are relevant to the study (Saldaña, 2009, p.3). As summarised in Table 3, my simple coding is a process that helped in the categorisation of data to establish a thematic pattern of understanding of the information contained in the data (Gibbs, 2007). For example, during data collation, I identified related keywords, searched other related words from the overall dataset and pulled together information around them and subsequently used them to develop storylines that were later categorised according to their respective themes. Focusing on the respective themes of the interview guide, in relation to the keywords of the research questions, various codes were used to link similar and differing views from the data. For example, in relation to who decides, such codes as ‘man’, ‘woman’, ‘grandmother’, ‘aunty’ were used to link similar and dissimilar responses.

Table 3: Sample code Table

Data Sample	Code	Association	Theme
God placed men above women and said women should follow them. No matter what happens,	Religion Gender/ Position	Gender + religion + Position (God placed men above women)	• Interaction of masculinity with other factors: **Religious influence** on men

men are always in the front. If a woman refuses to follow, there will be quarrelling every day, and it is not good for people to be hearing their voice like that **- AISHA SF**	Social expectation		and women's social position
		Gender + Position (determinant of people's opportunity)	• Direct influence: **Male dominant position**
		Position + Social expectation (performing assigned gender roles to meet social expectations)	• Culturally idealised behaviours (for **ideal man and ideal woman)**

Table three, diagrammatically shows how codes were used to identify information in the dataset, how they were linked to related issues and used to generate themes and construct the ideas. With the aid of the codes, the data were thematically arranged and analysed using textual analysis, local knowledge and discussions in relation to information obtained from the existing literature. Following a postcolonial approach, a conscious effort has been made to provide an insider's account and experiences of masculinity (as it influences the access, completion, and value of education) by "re-describing and re-interpreting developments and events related to colonisation and its aftermath" (McLaughlin, 2001, p.5). Such developments include masculine identity and values that evolved in such a postcolonial environment and their impact on educational access and completion. Coding included conscious search and identification of postcolonial themes in the data that were further used to identify and link related relevant

postcolonial narratives. Some of the postcolonial gender themes that emerged from the codes include male dominance, male breadwinner, colonialism and political independence (some respondents made reference to this to explain situations when they were young), poverty, religion and cultural belief.

4.9 Ethics

The study, including its interview guides, was designed to conform to the ethical standards of the British Education Research Association (BERA). The Lancaster University research ethics process was followed, which provided guidelines and approval for the study. Through the study supervisor, ethics approval was received accordingly for the study from the Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, as provided by the ethics approval guideline of the university before the commencement of the fieldwork. These were considered necessary because the study had to collect primary data from human subjects who may be considered as a vulnerable category if the study were to be undertaken by an outsider. Their level of education could create some form of power relations that needs adequate management. In my situation, I consider myself as an insider (although I have advanced in education) because I share a similar history of being out of school with them. To address any possible power relation issue, I began my interactions with the respondents with my personal story and experience of how I stopped going to school and explained how I went back to school and was able to advance. This created 'same class' atmosphere: class of people who could not initially complete basic education; my contacts also introduced me as "someone who dropped out of school, later

got an opportunity to go back and now seeking to talk to people who also dropped out of school like him".

It is pertinent to note that the respondents were adults (above 18 years of age); other vulnerable groups like prisoners and mentally impaired were not included. Also, interview questions did not ask personal questions in ways that might cause harm or emotional distress. During the field study, it was planned that respondents would be provided with a brief research protocol in English (which was to be further explained to them in Pidgin English and local languages) to ensure they understood the purpose of the study and their participation, after which they would be issued consent forms to sign, after agreeing to participate in the study. However, field experience shows that many of them could not read and write well in English. In this regard, I spent some time to explain the study orally to the participants and then sought their consent. Since the explanation was orally made and was the mode through which they understood the purpose of the study, I took voice consent largely in place of written consent forms (it made no sense to me to give them paper consent form when they could not read and understand contents of both the research protocol and consent form). After explaining the study to the respondents, I switched on the recorder at the point I was seeking their consent to the interview and recorded the interview so that I could capture the verbal consent. It is important to mention that participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and no incentive was either promised or offered. It is also important to note that while the interviews were recorded (with respondents' consent), pseudonyms have been used, and no respondents' identifiable information has been included in the transcription, analysis and reporting processes.

Both the interview records and transcription are securely stored away in my University-provided online storage space and to be deleted at the end of the PhD programme.

4.10 Quality Issues in the Study

Social research is perceived as a dialogue between evidence and idea that is aimed at depicting and representing the actual social life (Ragin, 1994; Ten, 2004) of which quality remains a major issue. Flick (2008, p.62) explains that quality "is closely linked to standardisation and control of the research situation and over influences on it" and suggest that quality control requires exclusion of disturbing influences that emanate from outside and researchers' bias. Standardisation is one of the major ways to reduce bias. However, Flick contends that in qualitative research, quality does not as much lie with standardisation and control but how it is managed, which is linked to methodological rigour and research soundness that can be located within the research processes (Flick, 2008). As regards rigour, Flick (2008, p.64) defines it as being "strict and consequent in applying a method, that you will keep to your sampling scheme and that you analyse your data without being awkward at different points". For this study, the first step taken to ensure quality has been the development of a clear and explicit research method, a qualitative method, which was consistently followed and implemented.

The second step is to key into known qualitative trustworthy standards in research (see Hadi and Closs, 2016). Outright objectivity in qualitative research may be doubtful, but transparency, methodological soundness and relevance and, researcher capacity may contribute to increasing the acceptability of a study. Hadi and Closs (2016) list major strategies for ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research and suggest that at

least, two of the strategies ought to be employed in qualitative research to be deemed to have reasonable objectivity. These strategies include triangulation, reflexivity, member checking or validation, audit train, thick description, prolonged engagement and, peer debriefing or analytic triangulation. While at least two has been recommended, up to three have been implemented in this study to increase the quality, validity and, reliability of the study. These include:

a. **Triangulation:** this is credibility and conformability instrument that ensures that at least two closely related data sources are employed to evaluate the validity of inferences drawn; multiple sources are more likely to be credible and confirmable than a single source. Leun (2015, p.246) suggests that “as data were extracted from the original sources, researchers must verify their accuracy in terms of form and context with constant comparison, either alone or with peers (a form of triangulation)”. For this study, reliability has been enhanced by a multi-level comparison of the data. Three levels of comparison were involved: (a) comparison of information provided by respondents within the same location (b) comparison of information provided by respondents across different locations and, (c) comparison of the meaning and pattern observed among the responses with information and evidence in the literature to check for consistency. Besides, the theoretical framework served as a guide in the analysis and providing a framework for ensuring consistency with the body of existing literature in the related fields.
b. **Self-description/Reflexivity**: this is a mechanism that seeks to acknowledge and possibly reduce researcher bias by declaring the researcher's position and relationship with the research (including the participants) and how these may

contribute to influencing the research outcome. Reflexivity refers to "the process of continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome" (Berger, 2013, p.2). Reflexivity is an attempt to locate answers to the following questions in the process of executing qualitative research: "What do I know?" and "How do I know it?" and are aimed at drawing "out the richness of this inter-subjectivity by making it central to the research process" (Pantnaik, 2013, p.100). While there may be diverse classifications of reflexivity (see Dowling, 2006; Pantnaik, 2013), I have focused on the aspects that are relevant to this study. First is introspective reflexivity, which involves some level of self-consciousness on the part of the researcher as regards how the researcher's personal experiences and knowledge may contribute to influencing the choice of methodology, subject and themes (Pantnaik, 2013; Palaganas et al. 2017). In practice, it drew my attention to my own background and experience of being out of school, which, to a large extent, shaped my perspectives and interest in dropping out of school. My diversity of training on gender mainstreaming and leadership also contributed to influencing my gender perspective, which got embedded in my educational background and perspective to influence my distinctions and interests. The second aspect of reflexivity is methodological reflexivity. This aspect of reflexivity works to ensure that irrespective of the recognised researchers' relationality with the research, standardised procedures must be followed throughout the research processes (Finlay, 1998; Dowling, 2006; Rogers et al., 2005; Pantnaik, 2013). For me, I did

not only chose and stuck to appropriate methodology, but I also submitted my approach and processes for an in-depth review at various stages (as explained below), which contributed to exposing possible areas of bias, misconception and methodological error. Meanwhile, it should not be assumed that reflexivity solves every problem of bias, but it helps to reduce it.

c. **Thick description**: this instrument is used to increase the external validity and transferability of qualitative studies by providing enormous details about the study to enable readers to evaluate the study, and its results and how much the conclusion is drawn may be applied to other settings. As could be observed throughout the report, especially in the methodology and analysis chapters, an extensive description of the situation being studied, what has been done, why certain actions were chosen above others and outcomes of various actions are extensively reported to enable the reader to objectively evaluate the validity and reliability of the study, its findings and recommendations.

Besides, McLaughlin (2001) contends that it may be difficult to sustain reliability and validity in qualitative research like this but acknowledges the need to replace internal and external validity with trustworthiness and authenticity as recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1989). McLaughlin (2001) also notes that authenticity should rather be advanced as it is more closely aligned with the constructivist epistemology. This raises questions about how authenticity could be measured. For Guba and Lincoln (1989) believe that authenticity is suitable for evaluating qualitative studies that originate from a constructivist epistemology and particularly emphasise accommodation and representation of perspectives of different stakeholders that are directly concerned and affected by the

phenomenon being studied (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; McLaughlin, 2001). This has been particularly taken into consideration by ensuring ample inclusion of the respondents' perspectives and appropriate analysis of these perspectives in context. Diversity of perspectives have been ensured by including different categories of respondents: respondents from different ethnic groups, respondents that dropped out at different times across the Nigerian postcolonial years, female and male respondents and respondents living outside their ethno-geographical locations. These choices are particularly based on the conviction that no particular group holds the whole truth about dropping out of school. Engaging different perspectives would help to accommodate and compare different views and experiences (McLaughlin, 2001). This also links to fairness, which McLaughlin (2001, p.9) identifies as an element of authenticity that relates to "the extent to which the participants' different constructions and underlying values are solicited and represented in a balanced, even-handed way by the researcher".

While these efforts have been made to ensure high-quality research output, some limitations were experienced, and these are acknowledged in the following section.

4.11 Limitations

An effort has been made to conduct a robust investigation, but it is also important to note some limitations of the study. Firstly, I acknowledge that masculinity may not fully explain all the contributing factors that underpin the out-of-school phenomenon in Nigeria. In the literature, there are diverse issues that impact on access and completion rates in Nigeria such as poverty, state of the infrastructural facility, teacher availability, school distance, violent conflict, and natural disaster (Amnesty International, 2013; Jones and Naylor, 2014; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al. 2016).

Also, the findings of the study may not claim to fully represent Nigerian masculinity because of the ethnocultural and linguistic diversity of the country as earlier summarised in the introductory section. Similarly, the sample size (and also focusing on only one state in each ethnocultural zone) may not fully represent the totality of the ethnocultural groups due to their internal diversities, such as linguistic and ascent variation, differences in the traditions of various communities and subgroups within the selected group. However, the study represents a step towards closing the earlier observed gap in the literature.

Language barriers were experienced across the states, as most respondents could not express themselves in English or Pidgin English. This led to the use of interpreters in Sokoto and Oyo for respondents that could not express in English or Pidgin English at all. The language barrier, which was mitigated by the use of interpreters, may have somewhat affected the nature of the information collected. The use of interpreters, including my role as translator, could limit the understanding of what the respondents had in mind. However, an effort was made to compare information that came from respondents that could interact in English with those that corresponded through interpreters as a way of checking the consistency. Also, while questions were asked in different ways and interpreters encouraged to repeat what were said the way they were said, it is acknowledged that some of the information may have been missed or poorly interpreted in relation to the respondents' actual views. Throughout this processes, I made an effort to use the little local knowledge I had to assess the interpretations while in the field (I grew up in the southeast, studied in the southwest and currently living in northern Nigeria but my Hausa and Yoruba languages are still poor).

4.12 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have summarised the methodology and method of this study, including various conscious efforts I particularly made to ensure objectivity, rigour, validity and reliability of the study. The following chapter summarises the data collected and analysed thematically, highlighting the meanings that have been drawn from the information and pattern observed, in relation to the influence of masculinity and access to basic education.

CHAPTER FIVE: MASCULINITY AND ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, kinds of data collected and information about the study location and study respondents have been summarised. In this chapter, various themes arising from the data are presented and discussed, which include diverse issues around culturally idealised masculinity, how masculinity interact with various factors to push or pull people out of school and influence of masculinity on males and females education. It may be argued that some of the features identified below are elements of patriarchal society; patriarchy is not the focus of the study but issues relating to maleness in (post)colonial society and their influence on access to basic education.

Before proceeding with the discussion of the analysis, it is important to note that respondents' description of school attendance for females and males are similar to information in the literature. As summarised in Sections 1.5 and 2.4, gender inequality is historically marked in Nigeria's basic education system. In Anambra, it was observed that while household would prefer training males than females, in practice, females have more opportunity to go to school. Boys tend to leave school for markets and business apprenticeship. In Sokoto, most respondents confirmed (as in the literature) that more males go to school, and there is a tendency for households to support males' education. Some of the respondents mentioned that girls are now also given opportunity compared to when they dropped out of school. In Oyo, respondents were divided over which gender is preferred by households for education beyond primary school. Some Oyo respondents

mentioned that females go to schools more than males, while others believe otherwise. These trends in the three states confirm the information in the literature on gender variation in school enrolment at basic education level (see section 1.5 and 2.4; see also UNICEF, 2003; Ezegwu, 2012; Gersberg et al. 2016; NPC and RTI International, 2016; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018).

5.2 Culturally Idealised Forms of Masculine and Feminine Characters

Understanding of the local construction and characterisation of feminine and masculine genders is very important and has been particularly linked to access to education in some parts of Nigeria (Harris, 2008; Voice 4 Change, 2015). In this section, issues around characterisation and perspectives of femininities and masculinities in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba cultures are presented and discussed under two subsections: ideal man and ideal woman.

5.2.1 Ideal man

The interviews explored respondents' perspectives on the culturally idealised character of males (physical attributes were not given attention). In all the three states, the attributes used to define ideal man were similar and relate to gender roles and socioeconomic expectations of males. The respondents used such attributes as ‘wealthy’, ‘educated’, ‘strong’, ‘defender’, ‘honest’, ‘caring’, ‘married’, ‘providing for his family members’; ‘doing hard job’, ‘feared’, ‘contributing to societal development’, ‘playing leadership roles’, ‘representing the family and society’, ‘problem solving’, ‘brave’, ‘has freedom of thought’,

'hardworking' and, 'doing something' (employed). Some of these also relate to gender roles:

> *Man's role is to go out and get money for feeding the family. In the family, the man's role is to go out and struggle to get money and feed the woman and children, cloth them and if he has not built a house, he makes an effort to build a house and buy a car. These are males' roles and efforts* - **AMAKA AF**[12]

> *The responsibility of a man is to cater to the needs of his family such as hospital bills, education, clothing and food* – **USMAN SM.**

> *Where there are difficult and hard jobs, males are looked for… With little education, males are able to do different kinds of work and trading and even travel abroad, but a female cannot travel like that unless she travels with her husband... women who may be able to travel like that alone without their husbands are educated one… but an uneducated man can do so and succeed* - **CHINWE AF**

Features listed by respondents suggest that males maintain dominant positions in the households and other levels of social formation (such as traditional, political and religious

[12] Each respondent has been assigned a code for both anonymity and identification purposes. The following are the codes used for each gender and state:
i. AF – Anambra Female
ii. AM – Anambra Male
iii. OF – Oyo Female
iv. OM – Oyo Male
v. SF – Sokoto Female
vi. SM – Sokoto Male
For example, OKEY AM represents OKEY (pseudonym for the respondent), a male interviewed in Anambra.

institutions). Males' aspirations and efforts to achieve such positions, maintain control and exhibit strong-man image influence the nature of gender and power relations in the society. Males' quest for these is also accompanied by the readiness and ability to take necessary risks to achieve these qualities or meet these characterisations. Dowd (2008, p.30) explains that men truly "pay a price for privilege… Yet uncovering the price paid might be a way into undermining privilege or the appeal of seeking or having it". While this calls for caution, I chose to recognise both the privilege and the price. In theorising about men, there is a need to balance these sides in order to arrive at an inclusive theory of masculinity (more about the balancing sides later). For example, leaving school by males (as observed in Ezegwu, 2012), to make money in order to marry females of their choice is the educational price they have to pay for their position.

From the interviews, economic status is observed to be playing an important role in the characterisation of an ideal man. An ideal man may be said to be a wealthy married man who provides, leads and protects his family, and also promoting societal development through leadership and financial contributions. During the interview, some of them mentioned:

> *An ideal man is hardworking and intelligent* – **FATIMA SF**
>
> *When I was growing up, the person that was regarded as an ideal man was someone that is wealthy and has money that provides for himself, family and does what he wants to do. In the eastern part of Nigeria currently, an ideal man is a man that can take proper care of the family without any external*

assistance and protects the family and, maintains integrity in business and family – **IBEH AM**.

Man rules everybody in the house – **UMARU SM.**

An educated man, a man that can be consulted whenever there is a problem, and he can address such problem and also willing to help people; a man that takes care of and provides for the family. Any man that is unable to fulfil these are taken as a useless man – **SOLA OM.**

IBEH's observation (about when he was growing up and linking it to current eastern Nigeria) suggests that this is true of both the past and the present. Another way to sum up the economic view of the ideal man is that he is brave, honest, gainfully engaged and capable of protecting and representing the family and society. Within these characterisations are seen the social acceptance of males' dominant position and pointing to the world of power in which males operate. Kaufman (1999, p.59) observes that "in a world dominated by men, the world of men is, by definition, a world of power", and this power constitutes the structured part of the existing sociopolitical, economic and social organisation, including religion, family and education system. Kaufman (1994) associates the power on an individual level to masculinity and men's capacity to exercise such power and control.

This realm of power, dominance and control reflected in the respondents' characterisation of an ideal man is sustained by economic position, individual abilities, religious and cultural values that help to sustain the system. For example, both religion and colonialism-influenced cultural values that strongly uphold males as family head and breadwinners

(providers for their family) – whether every male can fit into this effectively or not is not expected to be discussed (Lindsay, 2007; Ratele, 2008). Instead, as AMINU SM notes:

> *A man that failed to meet up to societal expectations, people see him as a lazy bone that has wasted his years, but they also have patience with him, hoping that someday he will get something* – **AMINU SM**.

In her work on how the breadwinner ideal emerged in colonial southwest of Nigeria, Lindsay (2007, p. 242) notes that breadwinner ideal was introduced in Nigeria by colonialism, but Nigerian males and their wives "were active agents in the process" – indicating that it became a tradition after some period of ritualised performativity. Judith Butler (1993; 1999) theorised about gender performativity and explains that gender is continually performed, constituted and reconstituted by means of gender norms and ritualised performances. In the southeast, Ezegwu (2012) reveals how the belief that men are households' breadwinners causes boys to drop out of school to go into business apprenticeship to acquire wealth before they marry. In the northern Nigeria where early marriage is prevalent, scholarly reports have highlighted how each additional year of education may make it difficult for girls to marry because of males' interests in underage girls and the belief that females are not expected to provide for the males (see Erulkar and Bello, 2007; Akunga and Attfield, 2010; Dunne et al. 2014). Also, a well-educated woman or ‘breadwinning' woman may not appeal to some men as ‘ideal wife material’ because they are expected to submit and serve their husbands obediently (Okoli, 2007; Danfulani, 2013). These also relate to males' power over women at the household level (Kimmel, 2001) and more broadly, the social construction of masculinity.

Some postcolonial feminists (e.g. McClintock 1995; Oyewumi, 2002; Shenmugasundaram, 2017; Toit, 2017) have chronicled some evidence of colonial alteration of both gender constructions and gender relations, which implicate colonialism in the development of the pattern of social construction and characterisation of maleness highlighted above by the respondents. In Yoruba culture, Oyewumi (2002, p.3) argues that:

> *The traditional Yoruba family can be described as a non-gendered family. It is non-gendered because kinship roles and categories are not gender-differentiated. Significantly then, power centres within the family are diffused and are not gender-specific. Because the fundamental organising principle within the family is seniority based on relative age and not gender, kinship categories encode seniority, not gender. Seniority is the social ranking of persons based on their chronological ages…Seniority principle is dynamic and fluid; unlike gender, it is not rigid or static".*

A similar observation has also been made in Igbo culture by Van Allen (1982), Uwazie (1994) and Ohadike (1996) as discussed in chapter 3.2. While due to scarcity of information, I may not generalise this claim to all other Nigerian cultures, including Hausa culture, these examples highlight the magnitude and impact of colonialism on gender and power relations in Nigeria. Igbelina-Igbokwe (2013) explains that the positions of women in pre-colonial Nigeria varied across the country's ethnic groups, but women were largely viewed as complementary and not subordinate to men.

The foregoing should not be taken as a denial of the existence of patriarchal structures in pre-colonial southern Nigeria, despite the prevailing male nationalists' view that claims

colonialism, together with its capitalist drives, “has been women’s ruin, with patriarchy merely a nasty second cousin destined to wither away when the real villain expires” (McClintock 1995, p.386). As Morrell and Swart (2005, p.104) note, some aspects of masculinity “have their roots in the precolonial period and are still valued” - such as the expected roles of a respected good man, taking care of his family, having a wife that does not roam about, being good to his people and helping to solve community problems (see also Silberschmidt, 2001). However, the dominant version benefited from the colonial transformation, and the colonialists defined themselves "not only as superior but also as masculine, keeping in mind that masculinity characterised colonialist action" (Hamadi, 2014, p.43). In many African societies, the history of masculinities is marked by colonial conquests, alterations and destabilisation of the existing power relation structure and weakening of the sociopolitical power of the elders (Broqua and Doquet, 2013). The colonialists and colonial literature were highly biased and depicted the 'Order' "as irrational, strange, weak, feminised "Other", contrasted with the rational, familiar, strong, masculine West" (Hamadi, 2014, p. 40-41).

Besides, while respondents across the three states were in agreement on such features as ‘strong’, ‘defender’, ‘providing for his family’, ‘contributing to societal development’, ‘playing leadership roles’, and ‘hardworking’ as features of an ideal man, there are also few areas of slight difference across the three states. In Anambra and Oyo, most respondents explained ideal man based on wealth and social position: more respondents in Anambra, followed by Oyo, discussed ideal man in relation to individual’s wealth, public image and capacity to represent the family and society, while more respondents in Sokoto

related ideal man as the sole ruler of the house, and has the capacity and freedom to be in professions like police, military and medical practices. LOLA OF explained that a man that is mature and qualified to marry ought to be able to take care of the family and should have a house. Similarly, OBI AM stated that “ideal man is a rich man”. AMINU SM describes an ideal man as a “powerful man of the house” who controls every other person in the house. AMINU’s claim was backed up with religious maxims, such as “God placed men above women” (MULIKAT SF) and “man rules everybody” (UMARU SM). These underscore a strongly held notion of male superiority over female (again, while this is widespread in the three states, it is extremely strong in Sokoto). Whether all males can be above every woman or whether they can rule everybody is not expected to be debated in the society and households – but to be accepted and obeyed. This may particularly relate to what Western feminists described as accruing benefits of being a man and "patriarchal dividend". Connell explains "patriarchal dividend" as "the advantage men in general gain from the overall subordination of women" (Connell, 1987, p.79).

5.2.2 Ideal Woman

Characterisation of an ideal woman in the three states slightly differed. The main areas of agreement include the ability to ‘take good care of children', ‘cooking for the family' (and particularly the husband), ‘submissive to the husband', ‘weaker', ‘caring attributes', ‘gentle' and ‘obedient'. Across the states, the respondents also mentioned ‘hardworking’, ‘married’, ‘committed to her children and husband’s care at home’, and ‘takes care of the house’. These characters directly relate to roles and performances women are expected to assume. Apart from ‘weaker' (which is largely a gender-adjective in this context), the rest are action words – what women are expected to perform – another reflection of

performativity. The most reoccurring characteristics and specifications for an ideal woman in the three states largely include such characters like a commitment to family welfare, taking care of the children and husband at home – which are culturally idealised females' roles as opposed to their natural attributes. However, in Anambra and Oyo, many respondents added 'educated', 'intelligent', 'affluence' and 'resourcefulness' – which are attributes and quality of their being as opposed to the quality of their actions. During my interaction with members of the society (not study respondents) in Oyo, one male mentioned that ideal woman is "a responsible woman, who can think of how her family can live better despite existing pressure and not selfish". During the interviews, the respondents said:

> *Hardworking woman, rich and one that can help; the one that can take care of the family, assist the children and husband; prepare food for the family* – **SOLA OM.**
>
> *The woman that knows how to train her children well and respect the husband and his relatives is the kind of woman that the society values and respects* – **TIJJANI SM***.*
>
> *Females roles are to take care of the children and husband in the house* - BUNMI **OF.**

These statements also reflect the prevailing historically characterisation of the woman in relation to the man (husband) by early Western societies, as well as how “spaces and places that men and women inhabit and work on a daily basis are remarkably different” (Dowd, 2008, p.244). Historically, in many Western societies, women have borne demeaning characterisation and in the literature measured against the male’s norm. Their

biological deviation from what has been classified as masculine standard characterises the woman, usually as biologically inferior that is bestowed with natural defectiveness for which the woman is seen as an imperfect man, misbegotten male and male's other half, which is useful for reproduction (de Beauvoir, 1988; Bailey 1993; Balsamo, 1996; Kings, 2004). They have also come to be seen as "the opposite against which the male can compare himself favourably" and the 'one' that "requires the category of the 'other' to be the 'one'" (Kings, 2004, p. 31). Colonialism contributed to transfer these to Africa (which interacted with the pristine practices to produce a new normal). Colonial practices located African females "within the domestic and public spheres of the African society, as 'jural minors' living under the tutelage first of fathers, then of husbands'" (Oloruntoba-Oju and Oloruntoba-Oju, 2013, p.6).

In Sokoto (where the majority of the population are Muslims), the ideal woman's characterisation was directly opposites of the man's characterisation. While males ruled the house, the females were expected to submit absolutely to the males and stay at home to serve the husbands and children. Females in Sokoto were seen largely as people that should stay at home – not working outside the home (considering the level of education of the respondents that aired this view, it is not clear if this is also the position of the educated and elite women). Most Muslim respondents talked about females remaining in their husbands' houses, cooking for the males and taking care of the children. Christian respondents in Sokoto talked more freely about females' opportunity to work. While this appears to be a religious factor, it seems that religion possibly interacts with a culture that has been historically influenced by colonial experiences of women subjugation because, in a Muslim dominated country like Turkey, women experiences appear to differ. A study

conducted with Women in Turkey shows that while the family was very important to women, they worked outside their homes and contributed to providing for their family members by working on self-owned farms and engaging in various works requiring hard physical labour (Cin and Walker, 2013). It is important to note that the weaker-home-maker gender narrative was also noted in Anambra and Oyo but was not as strong in Sokoto. In Anambra and Oyo, females were also perceived as being capable of working outside their homes and contributing to the family income, become resourceful and wealthy just like the males, (but not expected to be hard and doing difficult things like males). In Sokoto, they were expected to remain at home and not to work outside the home (the exceptions are mentioned in section 6.3).

Similarly, both interview data and information from the literature indicate that marriage and children have been used as markers of an ideal woman. During the interview, some of the respondents mentioned that:

> *A married woman is recognised whether she went to school or not. An unmarried woman is suspected as ashawo [prostitute]* – **ZUWAIRA SF.**

> *The society wants a female to marry, nothing more than that. If she marries and her husband is taking care of her that is okay* – **AMINU SM.**

Such characterisation of ideal woman, (not only in Sokoto but more pronounced by respondents from the state) emphasises the prevailing perception that takes marriage as a social index of female status and for measuring their success (Mohan, 2015). A study by Callaghan, Gambo and Fellin (2015, p. 506) in Sokoto concluded that "the identity of 'woman' is bound up in values and practices around marriage and motherhood", which

according to them, "are bound up in culturally overdetermined ideas of femininity that function explicitly to silence and constrain the spaces in which women can speak". This may be true of all the three cultures, but it is strongest in Sokoto than the two other states, and this is largely done, as AMINU SM noted, to preserve them pure for their husband (this is further discussed below).

In the literature, the pattern of socialisation has been implicated in the making of gender (Oloruntoba-Oju and Oloruntoba-Oju, 2013; Mohan, 2015). Mohan (2015, p.116) discusses how gender performativity in Nigeria flows from the way women have been culturally educated to believe that "children made a woman, and that marriage and family are the ultimate things a woman should vie for. A childless woman is scorned and ridiculed by society. Her inability to reproduce will label her a man". The implication is that females could give attention to marriage, more than education (see chapter 5.4d), to meet up with the ideal status criteria. In Ezegwu (2012), it was noted that even female education was linked to the need to get the husbands of their choices in Anambra, but in northern Nigeria, females are persuaded to leave school to achieve this status. From the perspective of Butler's (1993, 1999) performative theory, it could be argued that as more women accept marriage as a marker of an ideal woman, the practice became a norm (normalised) and tend to threaten other important issues that border on females' development (such as education), that may not directly contribute to (or tend to impede or delay) the achievement of the normalised ideal – marriage. Using an example of how people were trained, AMAKA AF and TIJJANI SM highlighted how the performance is transferred from generation to generation and becomes ritualised:

Then, when our mothers trained us, the woman's role was, when you are married, you would be looking after the family and ensuring that the children are well taken care of, they eat, take bath, and ensure that the environment is neat. These were women's roles – **AMAKA AF.**

…those jobs [military jobs] are not for females. They did not see their mothers, who are their roles models, doing such jobs - **TIJJANI SM.**

In the southeast, education is important because it enhances the ideal woman performances but, in the north, where early marriage is prevalent, education impedes it and could be shoved aside in pursuit of the marker of an ideal woman – marriage. Thus, such practice is consolidated through constant performances (see Oloruntoba-Oju and Oloruntoba-Oju, 2013).

5.2.3 Transformation in the social perception of males and females' position and education

While the study did not directly investigate changes in gender constructions, the study data indicate that there are noticeable changes in the gender practices and perception about females and males' education. The social expectation of gender and education, which has been observed to be rooted in colonial perspectives and structures contribute to influencing males and females' education in Nigeria, but this has been changing. Oladejo (2017, p.6) explains that "the idea of women's education in postcolonial Nigeria was a model of colonial legacies constructed on Victorian ideals. The societal perceptions about women's education were rooted in the British system". Following a review of the literature, Oladejo (2017, p.6) reveals that "as women, therefore, the first thing of importance is to be content to be inferior in mental power, in the same proportion that you

are in bodily strength". This view exposes the prejudiced outlook of the colonial education system, that was designed to exclude females from formal education (Oladejo, 2017).

Interview data shows that while the colonial-era practice, especially the relatively low value of girl child persists, some noticeable changes are taking place. Many of the respondents mentioned that females were seen as "another man's community" as AMAKA AF described it, implying that women would be married into another person's family. Some of the respondents (e.g. IFY AF; AMAKA AF; RONKE OF; SOLA OM) emphasised that females would marry and go to their husband's house while the males would remain in the house. In relation to education, this view interacted with other traditional beliefs about female (such as the fear that they would be spoiled if they go out which was largely mentioned by Sokoto respondents), and the perceived low value of the female child contributed to influence how females were perceived and the level of educational support they received. Here are some of what they said:

> *They say a woman is another person's community… even now some still say that a woman is another person's community* – **IFY AF***.*
>
> *Then, the society did not value female education because they said a woman is another person's belongings, even if she gains anything she may not bring it to her father's house, when she grows up, she will not remain in the family, but the male would remain in the family… Girls' education was seen as not holding much value. After all her education (at whatever level), she will be under a man. That was what my mother was telling me at that time…but now I have seen*

that without education, even if you have the money, you are not going anywhere – **AMAKA AF***.*

In those days, even if one had seven girls and three boys, one may not want to send the three girls to school because they are girls, whatever property the family has, the females will have nothing to do with it unless the boys are not able to look after and monitor such properties – **ADE OM.**

The addition of "even now" in IFY AF's statement shows that it used to be prevalent, but now some remnant of the belief is what remains, and the view is no longer strongly held as it used to be. These changes were not generally observed in relation to the individual respondents' ages and time of dropping out, but the observed changes were largely reported by respondents who dropped out before the year 2000 and largely used such words as "then", "when we were in school" and "during our time" to indicate that there have been changes between what they experienced during their time in school and now. A study by Voices 4 Change (2015a), which explored perceptions of masculinity, notes that changes are taking place. While some of the respondents that dropped out of school before the year 2000 (e.g. IFY AF, ADE OM, OKEY AM, BOSE OF, AMINU SM, YUSUF SM)[13] largely mentioned that female education was not seriously considered, especially in time past, they also add that it is now being taken serious. While some of them emphasised that females belong to another family, not her parents' family, they also emphasised that there has been an increased understanding of the value of females'

[13] See Appendix 2 for their profiles and years of withdrawal from school (some of them did not state or remember the year they dropped, but some of the things the mentioned during their interviews indicate they dropped before the year 2000s).

education leading to an increasing interest in it as well as a willingness on the part of households to send females to school:

> *Before girls' education was not valued at all, but now both males and females are now sent to school. Unlike before people did not understand the value of female education* – **SOLA OM**

> *During our time in school, female education was not given a priority, but this has been changing. Before, if you are sending your female child to school, it was like you were sending her to go out to become promiscuous, but now things are changing… It was initially believed that an educated female would become a promiscuous one or something like that. Now the world is changing, and they have imbibed a change of attitude, yet many are still finding it difficult to agree to send their children to school...once a female child reaches a certain age, they will say go and marry, and some of them will drop out of school* - **AISHA SF***.*

> *Females tend to look after their parents, and their husbands support them. But a male may not see his parents for about three months but would be visiting the wife's parents. This is what is happening in our area now.* – **ADE OM.**

AISHA SF also corroborates both the change and resistance to change that currently exists in the society as regards supporting females' education, which IFY AF noted above. ADE OM stressed the changing perspective and support to girls' education with the emphasis "this is what is happening in our area now". SOLA OM believed that the change

results from improved understanding people are gaining about females' education, which possibly comes from the understanding of the benefit ADE OM emphasised. ADA AF also explains that before now, whatever level of education a woman acquires while with her parents, the society believed that “it was the husband that would benefit from her education, but now it benefits everyone, including the father, mother and the society at large, everyone benefits from it [female’s education]”.

AMAKA AF represented a good example of the change in perspective about females' position and value in society. In an excerpt quoted earlier, she contrasted her perspective and experiences with her mother's perspective with such explanation as “then, when our mothers trained us, the woman’s role is when you are married, you would be looking after the family…. but now, people understand that women can do great things. IBEH AM highlighted the shifting change in the social position of women:

> *Earlier, they use to say that a woman's education ends in the kitchen, but now, things have changed. Currently, an ideal woman is no longer known as one that cooks and serves the husband alone. She is one that has developed herself and contributing substantially to the family and not leaving the man to bear all the burdens alone… Earlier, they use to say that a woman's education ends in the kitchen, but now things have changed. Currently, an ideal woman is no longer known as one that cooks and serves the husband alone. She is one that has developed herself and contributing substantially to the family and not leaving the man to bear all the burdens alone* **– IBEH AM**.

It is important to note that the changes (as quotations from respondents show) were observed in all the three ethnocultural groups. However, they did not indicate a significant change in masculinity. According to AMINU SM:

> *Then [when he was in school] they said that if a female goes to school, she will be spoilt, it is better for her to go and marry. For males, the only thing they said is that males could become lazy but doesn't spoil. Males do not go out and get pregnant, so they do not think of that, but for females, they think of it. Males were allowed to go to school more, but now, more females are allowed to go to school because, with the education, they become very wise and train their children and may get a job. Males like educated females because she knows how to dress* – **AMINU SM.**

AMINU SM's statement reveals a modification of approach to allow females' education to serve males' interests. It seems to suggest that despite social changes, whether females are allowed to go to school or not by their families, they still operate within males' circles of interests and power. Whether it is restriction based on the fear of females getting spoilt in school (so his would-be husband would marry her untouched and unspoiled – irrespective of how much spoilt the man might have been) or freedom to go to school (so they can become better wives that know how to train the children and satisfy the man), they still serve males' interests. This kind of subordination of females for males' interest may as well be explained (to some extent) by postcolonial feminists as a condition of double colonisation (Tyagi, 2014): while postcolonial conditions may be provided as reasons for the general backwardness, her own "brother is no longer her accomplice, but her oppressor" and coloniser (Tyagi, 2014, p.45).

To conclude this subsection, a major trend that needs to be emphasised relates to how the society's perception of females and males' positions and roles contribute to influencing opportunities that are given to each individual to access or complete basic education. Thus, the cultural idealisation of maleness and femaleness tend to influence opportunities and (dis)advantages individuals have.

5.3 Direct Influence of Masculinity on Females and Males Education

Data collected from the three states reveal diverse ways masculinity tend to directly affect both males and females' education. Many of these issues, as observed during the interviews, relate to social practices, expectations and males behaviours and, tend to affect both females and males in different ways. In this section, these direct influences are presented and discussed, beginning with males' domination of households' decision making and children's education.

5.3.1 Males Domination of Households' Decision Making and Children's Education

Postcolonial scholars have contended that in many African societies, the concept of gender may be considered historically inappropriate because precolonial social relationships were marked by generational criterion (Oyěwùmí, 1997; Shenmugasundaram, 2017). However, following the colonial disruption of the pre-existing social relation structures, power and decision-making structures are currently defined according to Western traditional gender binaries rather than seniority that previously determined who held power to decide in the pre-colonial Igbo and Yoruba societies (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2007; Mengisteab, 2019). What may be considered as the history of masculinities has a direct link to and has been marked by the colonial conquests that transformed their forms (Hodgson 1999; Broqua and Doquet,

2013). This was achieved by destabilising the existing power structures as well as weakening the sociopolitical power held by the elders (Rich, 2009; McCullers, 2011; Broqua and Doquet, 2013). Thus, man and masculinity have emerged as the ruler to everybody.

One of the direct and prevalent ways masculinity influence both females and males' access and completion of basic education relates to who makes the decision and how decisions are made at the household level. In all the states (but more pronounced in Sokoto followed by Anambra), the fathers decided who should be allowed to enrol or remain in school. Interview responses indicate that fathers' position played important roles in the determination of who is sent to school and who the family is more willing to sponsor:

> *The father takes the decision and would say it is this son that I want to send to school. The wife will support the husband for them to train the boy so that if he becomes somebody, he will benefit the family… The father is the pillar that holds the house and the one that says what will happen in the family because he is the owner and what he says is what will happen. The father is the one that went and married the woman to come and be with him as his helper; so if the father decides, if it is not good, the woman can tell the man, no, what you said is not good, but it is the father that will talk first before others will look at it* - **IKE AM***.*
>
> *Men have the opportunity of being the head of the family because they are men. They are the ones that give instructions on how the family should be ordered while the woman follows the instruction* – **PEJU OF.**

Both male and female respondents (e.g. OKEY AM, ADA AF; NONSO AM; SOLA OM; YUSUF SM) mentioned that their fathers took critical decisions on their education. Some of the female respondents also experienced situations where their fathers chose not to support their female children's education because they were females. ADA AF said that:

> *My teacher made efforts to ensure I continued with my education. He called my parent, my dad, and explained to him and pleaded to train me but my dad asked him, 'will you marry her after training her?' The man told him 'no, I only see this girl is intelligent'. He said 'no, leave my daughter for me, do not train her, or will you marry her after training her?'* – **ADA AF.**

The decision-making power in the households is also underpinned by the economic power, which males control. In ADA AF's case, her father was not willing to finance her education and was only willing to allow her to continue her education under the teacher's sponsorship if the teacher agreed to marry her (taking over the overseeing power from the father). Hence the father and the teacher, both males, had the fund and power to decide if she would go to school or not. Her intelligence, interest and future career were not determining factors; it was rather her father's authority and potentially her teacher's willingness to take her as a wife. According to her, the teacher explained that if "he undertakes my sponsorship, my father may throw me out of his [father's] house. The teacher was already married and would have taken it up to train me and marry me after training me" (ADA AF). She had to resign to her fate and told the teacher "there is no problem" (ADA AF). Her challenge reflects men's control and dominance through economic power, which is an area that overlaps in both western feminists and postcolonial feminists' contentions. Whether in the West or the postcolonial society, oppression,

control and domination of women and their bodies' through economic control is documented in the feminist's literature (see Bouilly, Rillon, and Cross, 2016).

Like fathers, husbands also retain the power to decide if the wife could continue her education after marriage. YUSUF SM mentioned that he was training his daughters to a limited level in education and would not go much far. He emphasised that when they marry if their husbands want, they can allow them to continue their education in their husbands' houses. UMARU SM noted that not all men have the heart to allow their wives to go out because of fear of possible infidelity. Possibly due to this fear, while government and some religious groups and schools introduced second chance education programmes, some husbands still did not allow their wives to attend such classes. ZUWAIRA SF mentioned that she did not have any option (between education and marriage) and had to marry, yet sometime after her marriage, a member of her religious group who was a vice principal in one secondary school where they lived encouraged women during religious meetings to enrol in the programme and brought forms for them to fill but her husband refused to grant her permission to take advantage of the opportunity. While the husband’s rejection of wife’s effort to return to school was reported in Sokoto, it could happen in other places in Nigeria, including Anambra and Oyo.

In the Igbo and Yoruba cultures, the decision power varied; some respondents said women had little or no say, while some said both husband and wife decide if children would go to school or not. IBEH AM noted that in Igbo culture, even though the father may have the decision-making power, the mothers often influence the father's decision. He adds that:

It varies, but in most families, it is the woman because the woman is always close to the children and understands the capacity and capability of each child. If she knows the one that can do well in school, that is the one she will be influencing the husband to send to school. The ones that are disobedient to her may be denied the opportunity to go to school. The ones that are disobedient to her may not have the privilege or may not have her protection in the husband's decision… While the father is the head, the woman is the neck, and it is where the neck turns the head that it goes **– IBEH AM.**

NONSO AM also said:

In my family, I am the one that decided that all my children would be given an equal educational opportunity, and my wife supported me. If I decided otherwise, my wife would not agree. If a husband refuses and the wife agrees, there would be confusion and chaos – **NONSO AM.**

Only in the Hausa/Fulani culture that most respondents emphasised the man is the sole determinant of who goes to school. In situations where females were mentioned to have had some influence (e.g. AISHA SF), it was the grandmother that was mentioned. Despite experiencing negative grandmother's influence on her education, AISHA confirms that:

Man is supposed to be the one to decide whether children should go to school or not since he is the head of the family. In decision making the man has the final say because the man is already placed above the woman and because of that whatever he says is the final - AISHA SF

Whatever male decision-making power is (in its strongest form or its weakest form), it flows from the postcolonial masculinities that have been produced and structured by persisting performative citation and also by the pre-existing cultural scripts repetition (Butler, 1993; Stanovsky, 2007).

The following subsection summarises how males' decisions work against their educational development.

5.5.2 Males Marriage Preferences and Early Marriage

Closely related to males' social position and freedom of choice is males' marriage preferences and its implications for females' early marriage. Early (or child) marriage refers to marriage before the age of 18 years (UNICEF, 2005). Masculinity interacts with early marriage practices, which appears at the surface as simply a cultural practice. Males' marriage preferences, which include a desire for younger females, directly dictate who goes to school or not. As observed in Sokoto State and mentioned about Edo State, mothers and relations tend to encourage girls (e.g. AISHA SF and ZUWAIRA SF) to marry 'once they are mature' while they are still within the age range being sought by males. ZUWAIRA SF narrated her story:

> *When my grandmother died, and I have completed primary school, at that time, my friends were marrying, my aunty insisted that I should marry so that they can have peace of mind. She said my father is a tough man, and it would not be in her hand that I would spoil, it is better I marry so that she should have peace of mind. They did not want me to get pregnant while at home* - **ZUWAIRA SF**

The practice of pushing young girls into marriage serves males' interest. On the one hand, as in the case of ZUWAIRA SF, attempts are made to satisfy the father's pride. On the other hand, households play into males' hand by their desire to ensure that their daughters neither get spoilt at home nor want a spoilt girl married into their homes. AISHA SF said the practice is that "at the age of 15, a female is considered a mature lady and should be in her husband's house". Yet, 'the spoiling' the families are concerned about is done by males (as UMARU SM and YUSUF SM noted) and males want to have their wives young and 'untainted'. In line with these values, right from her primary five, AISHA SF's grandmother began to complain that she was too big to go to school. For HAUWA SF, she was supported to go to school up to Junior Secondary School class two (JSS2) during which her parents withdrew her from school and married her off because both parents were eager to get her married. Her sister was also withdrawn from school likewise and married off while the males were allowed to complete their education.

The roles played by households, especially the women (grandmothers and aunties in the above cases) in the promotion of early marriage, which undermines females' education looks as if women are the leading champions of the practice, but underneath their agencies lie a historical silencing system that produced the observed trend. Some scholars (e.g. Hornsby and Langton, 1993; Langton, 1993; Bertrand, 2018) have, from a postcolonial perspective, emphasised how colonialism silenced women, destroyed their confidence and also robbed them a voice. Bertrand (2018, p. 281) drew on postcolonial and feminist writings to highlight a 'silence-problem' that characterised "colonial relationship whereby certain voices cannot be heard, while other voices try to speak for those who are silenced". According to TIJJANI SM:

The father is the one that makes decisions most of the time. Once he sees the girl's peers marrying and his daughter is still at home, he would also withdraw his own daughter and give her in marriage… Most times the mothers would solicit for more time and request for the girl to be allowed to continue so that she can use the time to prepare herself, you know when they are getting them ready for marriage, they usually get some things for them, but the fathers do not listen to the suggestions.

The silencing system became entrenched in postcolonial societies' cultures through the colonial sociopolitical and economic fiats, which advanced the European culture that elevates men as superior gender to women (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2016). A deeply ingrained ideology, philosophy or other powerful culturally-backed narratives can become a very strong disabling frame (Bertrand, 2018). Onor (2017, p.24) explains that Nigerian women are still "viewed from the perspective of the "Colonial mind," with which they are "adjudged weak, oppressed and peripheral to developments in their respective societies". Such carryover from the colonial era, in which, as Bertrand (2018) explains, the silenced cannot speak up for themselves still plagues gender relationship in the postcolonial era. The silenced cannot speak for themselves or for others because, on the one hand, they are structurally excluded from the channel of communication, (which characterised the (post)colonial sociopolitical and economic systems), and on the other hand, they cannot speak up for themselves because they are already silenced and are expected to remain silent. For women, who have been silenced over time, they have acquiesced to their relegated situation, which has also been sealed with religious doctrinal 'plasters' (such as "that is

how our religion says" as AMINU SM declared) and closing any remaining opportunity for them to speak up. Over the years of this silence performance, they appeared to have developed a form of 'invasive agency' – a condition in which the oppressed and silenced accept and openly support the perpetuation of their oppressed and silenced position rather than voicing their true feeling and opposing such conditions (Bertrand, 2018).

Further, while the possible agency of the older women in the above regard may be acknowledged, which they may exercise to protect the younger ones, a concern for me here is they play into the domain of males' desires. On the one hand, a study by Voices 4 Change (2015, p.10) notes that while the notion of gender equality is gaining acceptance in Nigeria, "one-third of respondents agreed that early marriage is important and should remain, with women more likely to hold this view than men". On the other hand, it may be claimed that females prefer early marriage as a protection against abuse (which is another social problem that is outside the scope of this study). Hoodfar (1997) reports how the use of veils by Egyptian women has been widely construed in gender discourses as both oppression and unfavourable to women, but Hoodfar explains how it has been both protection for the women and an opportunity to retain control over their lives. Hoodfar (1997) thus introduces a differing narrative of how cultural and traditional values may be conceptualised and interpreted in different ways. While early marriage in this context favours man and negatively affects women's education and general development, Kandiyoti (1988) suggests that women in male-dominated societies tend to evolve different self-protection strategies (see also Mernissi, 1995; Tyagi, 2014).

In the southeast, males' marriage preference tends to have a positive influence on female education, as noted earlier. Males' desire to marry educated females pushes females to

get more education, which is still a desire to satisfy males' marriage preferences. During the pilot in Abuja, the second male I interviewed (an Igbo male from Anambra state) stated that "people do not marry their daughters and no one is interested in marrying uneducated woman these days". He added that when it comes to who should be sent to school, "people tend to do all they can to train the females up to tertiary level because the males can go into apprenticeship and may still have the opportunity to get education later". Getting education later suits my own experience. IBEH AM explained that:

> *Most males no longer look for females that are not educated; they go for already made females, those that have graduated [from the university]... Ninety per cent of guys looking for wives now are looking for [university] graduates; this is why most families now are thinking twice about which child they send to school. Depending on the family, if they consider that if they do not train a female in school and males will not come to seek her hand in marriage, they will definitely send the female to school in the hope that before she graduates, males looking for already-made products would come and grab her and get married to her.*

The southeast experiences indicate that males are the ones leaving school to meet up with both their marriage expectations and those of the society. While this works in favour of females' education, it still reflects the masculine influence and females (and their households) working to satisfy males' taste for educated females even when they are not educated themselves. This trend is considered normal in society.

Further, masculinity has both direct and indirect influences on early marriage that ultimately affect young females' education. It is direct because the males' preference constitutes a pull factor. As a push factor (indirect), males' preference interacts with early marriage value; and this varies across Nigeria's geopolitical zones (Erulkar and Bello, 2007). Greene et al. (2015, p.2) observe that masculinity contributes to create and sustain early marriage practice because, on the one hand, "girls' labour and virginity are commodities valued and purchased by men" and on the other hand, males are socialised as both dominant and assertive society's decision-makers. FATIMA SF was asked to go and marry after her primary school. She explained that people believe that females should marry early because they will eventually marry, and not all males would allow their wives to go out and work. This implies that the interest and position of the future husband are being considered to determine whether a female should go to school or not.

Another issue observed around early marriage in Sokoto is the competition between females' education and wedding trousseau: both compete for the meagre resources available to poor households. In the case of AISHA SF, the grandmother insisted that it would be financially difficult to be buying things for her marriage and at the same time paying for her school fees. In the earlier excerpts from TIJJANI SM, he maintained that part of the preparation for girls' marriages includes getting them some trousseau:

> *.., you know when they are getting them ready for marriage, they usually get some things for them.*

In many parts of northern Nigeria, there exists a tradition of providing household utensils to a marrying female among Muslim Hausa-Fulani (locally called kayan daki), as wedding trousseau. This has been observed to be putting pressure on girls from poor households

(and their families) and remains one example of how local traditions contribute to pulling girls out of schools (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014).

To conclude this subsection, I argue that masculinity is implicated in the determination and sustenance of what constitutes an acceptable social expectation (such as the need for females to marry early, marry to escape being spoilt or continue education to attract right kinds of men) and pressure to conform to them. In the following chapter, I would focus on indirect influences.

5.3.3 Corrupt Male-dominated National and Regional Political Leadership

> *If all the monies the people in the government are spending on themselves are wisely spent, things would not be worst like this, but they do not care about anybody except themselves and their close associates* – **SOLA OM.**

The above excerpt from SOLA OM highlights how corruption and bad political leadership contribute to affect people's welfare and opportunities, including an opportunity to go to school. It is pertinent to note that one of the important themes in postcolonial literature is the impact of colonialism on sociopolitical leadership and corruption. Before explaining this, it is important to mention that most political leaders are males, taking a decision about education policies and programmes at both federal and state levels. For example, based on the National Bureau of Statistics data, Oluyemi (2016, p.1) observes that "the national average of women's political participation in Nigeria has remained 6.7 per cent in elective and appointive positions, which is far below the Global Average of 22.5 per cent". Oluyemi also notes that out of the 36 ministerial appointments made by the Federal Government at the time of the report, only six were women and women constituted 5.6%

and 6.5% of members of the Federal House of Representatives and Senators respectively (Oluyemi, 2016). These indicate that the government wore the face of a man.

In relation to how the male-dominated postcolonial government affects education and how colonialism contributed to exacerbating corruption that contributes to weakening governments' capacity to provide free education, literature is replete with narratives on how colonial administration ensured that either corrupt leaders were sustained or imposed on the people, to ensure the continuity of (post)colonial domination (Ekeh, 1975; Njoku, 2005; Cheeseman and Fisher, 2019). AMAKA AF observed that women were often excluded from sociopolitical leadership:

> *Women were often underrated and viewed as unworthy to hold leadership positions that time but now, thank God that people now understand that what males do females can also do* – **AMAKA AF.**

Cheeseman and Fisher (2019) contend that colonial authorities made conscious effort to strengthen the power of corrupt local leaders (who were usually males) over and against their communities, which worked to undermine the pre-existing structures that ensured checks and balances in the society. This contributed to institutionalising corrupt and repressive forms of government during and after independence. They also observed that initial electoral (and census) frauds were hatched and executed by the colonial masters, in order to keep their preferred collaborators in power right from the time of independence and into the most part of the postcolonial era. In the discussion of a history of falsification of census data in Nigeria, Ahonsi (1988, p.554) observes that "the thirteen attempts made between 1866 and 1973 have been far from successful. All the colonial censuses were technically deficient while the 1962 and 1973 counts were dropped due to the intense

political tensions they provoked". Van den Bersselaar (2004, p.71) also notes that "the long time it took Talbot to come to a publication of the census results [for Nigeria] already indicates how problematic colonial census data are".

The implications of the above are corrupt people that colluded with the colonial and postcolonial powers were empowered with corrupt census data to influence elections and continue the indirect oppression of the people. Even after independence, Frederick Forsyth, a former BBC war correspondent that covered the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970, reported in the UK Guardian about huge British covert interference even at the cost of millions of lives and queried (in relation to the consequential war):

> *What is truly shameful is that this was not done by savages but aided and assisted at every stage by Oxbridge-educated British mandarins. Why? Did they love the corruption-riven, dictator-prone Nigeria? No. From start to finish, it was to cover up that the UK's assessment of the Nigerian situation was an enormous judgmental screw-up. And, worse: with neutrality and diplomacy from London it could all have been avoided* (Forsyth, 2020[14]).

One major evidence of this impact on access to education is that immediately after the civil war, the historical low male enrolment in secondary school began in southeast Nigeria and became entrenched as males began to stop at primary education and leave school in search of wealth, to take care of their families early enough as one of the post-war coping mechanism, in the face of humongous devastation from the war and post-war

[14] See https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/21/buried-50-years-britain-shamesful-role-biafran-war-frederick-forsyth

Federal Government policy of deprivation of their properties across the country (Nnaemeka,1997; Ukaegbu, 1999; Meagher, 2009; Ojukwu, 2009; Unegbu, 2010). Using Anambra State's Ministry of Education data, Ezegwu (2012) reveals that as of 1975/76 academic year, males' share of secondary school enrolment was 57.92%, after the war, it began to drop, sliding to 46.64% in 1980 and 31.42% in 1987. By the year 2000, a UNESCO (2000, p.36) report confirmes that the trend in Southeast Nigeria was a situation "where once boys tended to drop out at the secondary school level, they now do so at the primary level". Ukaegbu, who was a military administrator in the southeast particularly noted that the Nigerian civil war had a direct impact on the out-of-school syndrome in the region (Ukaegbu, 1999) while Obioma Nnaemeka (a postcolonial feminist) observes that the war contributed to shifting gender roles, power and masculinity (Nnaemeka, 1997). Besides the impact of the war, another key argument here is that foreign assisted corrupt politicians have little or no responsibility to their people – they are responsible to their foreign backers, and this has been a major barrier to the enthronement of a just political system and responsible government in Nigeria and Africa.

Another example is that the universal basic education, which is designed to be free and compulsory for children within the ages of five and fifteen is in reality not free or compulsory as the UBE Act stipulates (see FME, 2004). There are other financial burdens poor families bear that weaken their capacity to send children to school. During the interview, some of the respondents stated that:

> *It is easy to encourage everyone to go to school, but I have not seen anyone being supported. I cannot say the government is not doing anything, but before it gets to the beneficiaries, the supposed help from the government would have*

disappeared. It may only get to one or two persons and will fade away – **AISHA SF.**

Most scholarship schemes available are not accessible to the poor masses. Most of the scholarships are often hijacked by the elites and wealthy people because they have access to the internet and to the people that are providing the scholarship – **IBEH AM.**

The last sentence by AISHA SF and SOLA OM relates to the impact of corruption and bad politics. For example, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is financed from the Federal Government's Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF), from which 2% is allocated to the UBE (FME, 2004). While the education budget is generally inadequate, it has been observed that the management of the UBE fund remains very opaque and at the same time bedraggled by corruption, embezzlement and misappropriation (World Bank, 2003; Bennel et al., 2007; Anibueze and Okwo, 2013; Gersberg et al., 2016). Available evidence suggests that the fund largely serves the political interests of governors (Schiffer et al., 2013; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Jones et al., 2014; Gersberg et al., 2016).

In Peter Ekeh's "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa", Ekeh (1975) notes that colonialism created two publics: primordial and civic publics that promote corruption. People can steal from the civic public (then represented by the colonial structure and now public institutions), which was considered as no man's land and provided an opportunity to steal from the colonial government while they were not morally free to do so in the primordial public (traditional structure), which relates to their own people. This trend has been transferred to postcolonial public institutional practices, and people brazenly steal

public fund as a continuation of the ways of the past (Ekeh, 1975). Similarly, Njoku (2005, p.104), notes that the indirect rules and divide and rule system introduced in Nigeria as colonial administrative strategy produced authorities that served only the colonial masters' interests and did not work for the people, creating “a culture of non-commitment to the common good, where public affairs mean nobody's affair". The colonial regimes were themselves oppressive and served only colonial interests. A number of authors described various scenarios where the colonial officers plainly told the people that they did not invite the colonial masters, they came by themselves to serve their interests and were not in the colony to do the people’s bidding – emphasising they were not there to serve the people’s interest but colonial interests. Some colonial officer plainly informed the natives that the colonial government was their master, which operated to control the natives whether they like it or not and did not care about how they felt (Isichei, 1976; Afigbo, 1981; Falola, 1998; Njoku, 2005). This servant-master relationship was carried over to the postcolonial era and largely influenced the nature, structure and outcome of the postcolonial government in Nigeria, including the policy development and planning for an improved education system (Ekeh, 1975; Okoduwa, 2008; Obanya and Binns, 2009; Imhonopi, 2013).

One of the impacts of corruption is that rich politicians and government officials tend to abandon public schools, which the poor attend, to deteriorate. Largely, the free education remains ‘not free’. OKEY AM notes that:

> *…many times they tell you free education. How free is free? At the Federal Government College […], they will tell you it is free; if you go there, you will pay more than they pay in private schools. I sent my youngest brother there...*

And most time the teachers and headteachers would hijack resources coming from the government. Other organisations that encourage people to go to school will say it with the mouth without financial support. After the encouragement, where there are about 1000, they will take only ten persons, is that an encouragement?

A recent example of 'not free' basic education is a viral video of about six-year-old primary school girl named Success that flooded the social media in Nigeria in March 2019. The girl was sent out of school for failure to pay the examination fee. She was furious at the school decision and insisted that she would rather subject herself to flogging than leaving the school. Her case represents the prevailing situation of the "not free" basic education in Nigeria. Some of the major newspapers that bore the story (after its Youtube video had gone viral) raised questions about the 'free' in the basic education, using such headline as "Success Adegor – what happened to free education in Nigeria"[15] and “Success of Sapele and the Case of a Not So Free Education”[16]. The main opportunity for everyone, both children and adult, to complete basic education lies in the UBE, which must be made to work for everyone for the ‘opportunity for everyone’ to become a reality. During the interviews, some respondents (e.g. Aminu SM, Okey AM) maintained that while there seems to be some effort to encourage people to go back to school, in reality, these initiatives are not sincerely pursued and the government does not care about the people's welfare.

[15] See the Daily Post: https://dailypost.ng/2019/04/16/johnson-amusan-success-adegor-happened-free-education-nigeria/
[16] See Leadership: https://leadership.ng/2019/03/22/success-of-sapele-and-the-case-of-a-not-so-free-education/

Before I conclude this section, I wish to move a little away and draw from the UK scholars' contention (in relatively more friendly UK's education system), to emphasise the postcolonial education quagmire in Nigeria. According to AMINU SM:

> *If they say they are giving free, they should take care of the school, feeding pupils, take care of school materials, teachers, you will see that people would be motivated to go to school. These private schools springing up may stop getting students. Before there were no private schools, it was the only government school, and both children of rich and poor were attending the same school, that was why the school at that time did not spoil. They were given the same education, but now poor people have their school, the middle class have their own, and rich class have their own, they have these private schools where they are paying huge amount of money, some take their children outside the country to study, not even in Nigeria that does not have an education. They are not taking care of education. The education they are giving to children in government schools [which the poor attends] does not equal to the level delivered at private schools. Nursery one of private schools performs better than the primary one in a government school.*

AMINU SM's observation and suggestions particularly relate to Tawney's (1943) and Reay's (2012) revolutionary perspectives on a need to transform education system from a hierarchical, competitive, neo-liberal system to an egalitarian system as part of the effort to promote and establish inclusive and educational equality. Reay (2012) contends that a system of socially just education ought to be based on the equal right of all and the removal of barriers and hierarchical structures. She argued that hierarchies in the

education system based on class and various factors that sustain them need to be eradicated. She canvasses for the abolition of private and elitist schools that fundamentally undermine equality and perpetuate advantages of middle and upper classes over others. While Tawney and Reay focused on the UK, this philosophy also needs to be applied in Nigeria, to not only ensure equal access but also improve the quality of education, because the political and economic elites may be encouraged to work hard to improve the quality of education if their children attend same schools with the poor. AMINU SM explains that the political and economic elites are already aware of the poor quality of education in the public schools, arguing that "they know it because if you tell the governor to take his children to the public school, he will not agree because he knows that they are not doing better and even though he is the governor" and understand the quality of education in the private schools.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The discussion of the interview data in this chapter tends to suggest that the definition, characterisation and perspectives on males and females' nature in the society tend to contribute to influencing socially assigned females and males roles, as well as opportunities (including educational opportunities) they have in the society, which in turn influences who is supported to go to school. The following section continues with how these social gender constructions interact with other social conditions and factors to influence access to basic education.

CHAPTER SIX: INTERACTION OF MASCULINITY WITH OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING ACCESS AND COMPLETION OF BASIC EDUCATION

6*.1 Introduction*

This chapter presents some factors masculinity interacts with to influence access and completion of basic education. An analysis of gender issues in the UNESCO (2019) Global Education Monitoring Report suggests that an intersection of gender, location and poverty contributes to reducing educational opportunities of females and males, especially those from the poorest families. The chapter particularly highlights how masculinity specifically underpins and intersect with poverty, religion and polygamy to influence females' and males' opportunities and actual access to basic education. The following subsection discusses the interaction of poverty with masculinity and how they work together to influence access and completion of basic education.

6.2 Poverty

A summary of the respondents' background (see Table 2) indicates that many of them were affected by their households' poverty. Some examples of how poverty forced some of the respondents out of school were reported by IFY AF and PEJU OF:

> *During my school days, the major problem I had was that the money to pay school fees was not there. You go to school this term and next term you will not go. When they ask for school fees, you stay back at home. Before the school fees are paid, your mates have passed you... When it is paid for this one and that one, the other one may be asked to wait and not to go because the school fees are not there...You know at a point everyone became tired and when my father died, everyone had to rest* – **IFY AF.**

We are six children of same parents, and all of us were staying with people and whatever those people we were staying with said were what we did, since our parents did not have the financial capacity to take care of us – **PEJU OF**

Evidence from the literature and national statistics indicate that school attendance has a strong association with poverty (NPC and RTI International, 2011; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al., 2016). While basic education is free, the UBE programme does not meet the indirect costs of education such as transport, school uniforms and materials which contribute to inhibit access and completion of basic education (Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018). Information from the 2015 National Education Digest (NEDS) by the National [Nigeria] Population Commission (NPC), suggests that proximity tops the list of factors that prevent poor households and rural residents' access to basic education. The data shows that 79.7% of the poorest households were confined to choose their children's primary school and 58.7% chose children's junior secondary based on proximity and available space, possibly due to the lack of households' automobile means of transport (NPC and RTI, 2016; Ezegwu and Ansadulla, 2018). The 2010 NEDS data shows that children from the poorest households had only 30% net attendance ratio, while those from the richest households recorded up to 82% net attendance ratio (NPC and RTI International 2011).

Research and development approaches of WID would largely focus on poor females and how to bring them into education while leaving out males who may also be affected by the same poverty factor. GAD oriented analysis and interventions may move a bit further to target factors that underpin female poverty but may not employ holistic approaches to

address poverty issues that affect both females and males equally (See Unterhalter, 2005; UNESCO, 2015). While poverty factors have been observed to affect females more, it could affect both males and females and, how it affects each gender may depend on the structure of the society (British Council, 2012). Spivak (1988, p.296) sums up the impact of the intersectionality of gender and poverty this way: "if you are poor, black, and female, you get it in three ways". A similar summary, in relation to education across the three dominant Nigerian ethnocultural groups, was summarised by the British Council (2012, p.iv):

> *Nearly half of all children under five are malnourished in the North-East, compared to 22% in the South-East. Hausa girls, for example, are 35% less likely to go to school than Yoruba boys. The impact of inequality on the lives of girls and women is reflected starkly in health and education outcomes, nationally and between North and South.*

Being a poor Hausa female in the northeast creates greater obstacles to access education, compared to being an Igbo or Yoruba boy in southern Nigeria. During the interview, AISHA SF explained that in situations of poverty, keeping a female child in the house is considered as a liability because parents are afraid she may bring shame to the household if she becomes pregnant or is seen with boys outside the home or if she is of age and refuses to marry. "If one does not have money to train her in school, it is better if she finds a man to marry; let her marry and go to her husband's house" (AISHA SF). Such perceptions are among reasons for early marriage.

Generally, interview data reveals both overt and covert ways masculinity and poverty interact to affect both male and female's education. One of the direct connections relates to the males' position as breadwinners. The poverty or death of a father, whom the society views as the head of and breadwinner of the family could automatically create a situation of poverty for the family members. This may be more pronounced in locations where females are not expected or allowed to work outside the home, as seen in the Muslim north of Nigeria, such as Sokoto. Even in most parts of southern Nigeria where women are free to work outside the homes, the absence of the father was observed to put pressure on the family income and sometimes led to children's withdrawal from school. In households where the father died (or incapable of providing for the household), and the mother is incapable of funding children's education, both males and females could be affected. I share in this experience with some of the respondents. My mother could not finance my education and was particularly advised against training me in school by a male secondary school teacher, who told her she would not be able to bear the financial burden of my education (she was already making diverse efforts to ensure I received secondary education). IFY AF and MULIKAT SF were in JSS 3 when their fathers died, and their education abruptly ended. For Ngozi AF, when her father died, her mother began to experience very sore pressure and challenges to the extent that she became hostile to her children and drove NGOZI AF away from home. IFY AM said:

> *After my father died, my sister stopped at SS2, so she did not go further. My brother went to some extent because he is the last. He chose to stop because there was no one to help him. He saw that there was no money and stopped*

by himself. No one asked me to stop. Mine was similar after our father died, no one was to help then all of us stopped.

While such intersection of poverty and gender contribute to depriving boys and girls' education, girls have limited option of going to serve as house-helps or to marry, while boys could receive help (from relations) to start a business or go into apprenticeship (like YUSUF SM, IKE AM). CHINWE AF particularly mentioned that "If I were a male, there was nothing else I could have done other than becoming an apprentice if there was anyone to take me…"

Suggesting ways to address thorny intersectional issues of gender and poverty, Unterhalter (2012, p. 269) notes that "in order to get things done one must either address poverty first and then gender or the other way round". Unfortunately, the above situation is exacerbated by the prevailing structure of society. In the pre-colonial era, there were diversities of social organisations that included matrilineal, matrilocal and other amorphous systems that gave both females and males opportunities to pursue the kinds of life they have reason to value. On the contrary, postcolonial Nigeria is largely patrilineal and patriarchal. The British Council (2012, p.6) observes that many Nigerian ethnocultural groups "have a patrilineal system of kinship, tracing descent, identity and inheritance through the male line", which has "important social and economic implications for the position of Nigerian women and girls". The role of religion in sustaining this structure and other related intersectional issues are continued below.

6.3 Religion

During the interviews, many of the interviewees frequently referred to 'God' and 'religion' as important determinants of human affairs, including how people are expected to behave, gender roles, gender positions and reasons for enduring many social phenomena. Below are some of what they said:

> *Women cannot do hard work or things that demand enormous physical strength, but men can do them. That is how God created us [women]* – **AMAKA AF**

> *If a man and a woman are looking for a job, the female will get it before the man. If you [the male interviewer] and I are looking for a job, I will get a job first because I am a woman. [The interviewer asked why]. I do not know, maybe that is how God made it* - **RONKE OF**

Similarly, religion contributes to play an important role in the access and completion of basic education, as discussed in this section. Meanwhile, throughout the history of Western education in Nigeria, religion, along with culture, plays critical roles in how Western formal education is accepted, promoted and accessed in different parts of Nigeria. Besides the colonial transformation of pristine cultures, colonial administrations have been directly implicated for using religious reasons to undermine equal educational development. It has been argued that the colonial and early post-colonial governments did not give much attention to the expansion of Western formal education in northern Nigeria (Sanderson, 1975; Ajidagba, 1998). On the one hand, the Western formal education was organised largely for male children of the elite class in the north, (laying

the foundation for male dominance in education and entrenching male dominance masculinity in the culture that was already dominated by males). On the other hand, the British colonial administration in the country appeared to have favoured limitation of its spread to avoid any radical changes, that might be interpreted as an affront to the principles of the Islamic religion and those of the elite, that contributed to aid the functioning of the indirect rule policy of the colonial administrations. These worked to preserve the structure that bore the colonial indirect rule system and avoided possible conflict with the prevailing Islamic culture of northern Nigeria. This contributed to creating sustained regional inequality in education between the north and southern Nigeria (Fabunmi, 2005; Umar, 2005; UNICEF and UIS, 2012; Azuma, 2014). In relation to gender, elsewhere (such as Turkey), Western colonial masculinities largely constituted a threat to the honour, preservation and power of the colonised Muslim masculinities (Gerami, 2003, 2005; Vojdik, 2014). Contrarily, in northern Nigeria, colonial masculinities seemingly honoured the power structure of the colonised and seemed to have worked to preserve it because it found in it an opportunity to advance its objective – submission of the colonised community to the colonisers.

The religious influence on the resistance to education in contemporary northern Nigeria is widely documented in the literature (see Usman, 2006; Humphreys and Crawfurd, 2014; Gersberg et al. 2016; Ezegwu et al., 2017). It is feared that Western education might interfere in people's religious commitments and corrupt their way of life; in a study by Hoechner (2013, p.56), it was observed that "proper focus on the memorisation of the Qur'an is only possible if a student has no access to other materials that may confuse or

distract". Interview analysis also pointed to the religion-linked suspicion and rejection of Western education. Religion was particularly pointed out as a major factor in Sokoto that hindered children's education.

> *Our [Muslim] parents did not like our going to school. They said boko boko (school) is bad for religion and spoils children. That was why we did not continue; they did not sponsor us. If they liked education, some opportunities would have been used to sponsor us a little above what we had. They did not like it, so they did not sponsor us* – **AMINU SM** (a Muslim).

Intersectionality perspective reveals how "inequities are never the result of single, distinct factors. Rather, they are the outcome of intersections of different social locations, power relations and experiences" (Hankivsky, 2014, p.2). In the context of religion, it contributes to shaping people's gender experiences, and various religious teachings and values have become justifications for marginalisation and oppression of some social categories in the society (Crane-Seeber and Crane, 2010; Hooks, 2013). In the discussion of religious expectations, AMINU SM stated that house chores are women's responsibilities because "that is how our religion says". This suggests a significant impact of religion on gender roles and positions, which worked to keep females at home and allow males to work outside the home. Working outside the home and being engaged in paid employment outside the home are more than monetary issues. The view of future work outside the home could motivate parents to send a child they hope will work outside the home to school and keep the one that is not expected to work outside the home. It generally influences how people are treated and placed in society, as reflected in the following statement:

> *Men are responsible for providing for the family that is why they are highly placed and respected than women because whatever a woman gets, if she is working, will be for her personal use but whatever a man gets, he will still use that to bear the woman's responsibilities. Because of this, society has different places for males and females* - **HAUWA SF***.*

Also, according to Ratele (2008, p.529) both paid employment and material wealth "may be used to perpetuate the subordination of women to men, and often are" and having a job or getting money through other means tend to be mainly recognised as social functions for adult males that have become "key components of men's identities". This way, religion particularly influences the direction of gendered education and economic development of individuals. Where many Muslim respondents pointed to support for females' education, they linked it to a need to fill some jobs (such as doctor and police posts), so they can attend to females only as religion stipulates. Religious justifications are thus, reasons to discourage females' intellectual adventures and ambitions as Hauwa SF noted. It was also noted as a reason to discourage females from seeking higher positions and compete with males as Chinwe AF notes. Females are expected to remain in the house and not seek a career outside the home (as Aminu SM mentioned) while males (not females) are expected to show strength and take up energy-demanding roles (as AMAKA mentioned).

As far as access to education and motivations for education is concerned, the observed religious influence appears to be misrepresented. Some Christians said that *Men have glory (*CHINWE AF)*…that is how God created females" (*CHINWE AF; AMAKA AF). Many

Muslim females and males claimed that "*God placed men above women and said women should follow them" (*AISHA SF*) and* it is enough "if *God gives a woman a house to stay as a housewife" (*HAUWA SF) and, it is particularly a woman's role to undertake house chores because "*That is how our religion says"* (AMINU SM). A cursory examination of both Biblical text and Islamic history suggests that some misrepresentation of some genuine scriptural positions may have occurred over time. I have a reason to believe that the story of God's creation of females as dependent and weak people who ought not to inherit properties in their fathers' houses because they would be married-out, might have been advanced in the colonial time. Firstly, the Igbo ethnic group, which Amaka and Chinwe belong used to have pre-colonial matrilineal and matrilocal societies like Ohafia and Afikpo and postcolonial Nigeria have little or no traces of these cultures, which possibly made them conclude that only the males have the glory (Nsugbe, 1974; Amadiume, 1987; Okafor, 2011; Ezegwu, 2012). Secondly, while male-breadwinner practices advanced in the colonial era, that exacerbated the male-only heir practice, the Bible contains a contrary record, even in its Old Testament, where male dominance was emphasised. According to Numbers 27:1-7 (New International Version):

> *The daughters of Zelophehad... came forward and stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders and the whole assembly at the entrance to the tent of meeting and said…" Give us property among our father's relatives." So, Moses brought their case before the LORD, and the LORD said to him, "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and give their father's inheritance to them.*

Contrary to this example, many respondents from the Christian dominated South, emphasised that "a woman is another person's community" (IFY AF), "males would stay at home while females would marry out of the home" (PEJU OF) and, "boys would remain in the family while the ladies would go outside" (OKEY AM). Many of the southern respondents (e.g. OKEY AM; ADE OM; BUNMI OF) emphasised that these are reasons males are and should be sent to school more than females. According to BUNMI OF “Males are sent to school more by parents because they are boys, if females marry, they will leave the house. ADE OM stated that “males will inherit the family inheritance and answer their father's name while the females will marry and answer their husband's name”. Similar reason was also given in the Muslim dominated north. However, the Zelophehad example provides evidence that the perspective of denying females their fathers’ properties may not adequately represent the Biblical perspective.

Also, the Muslim suspicion and negative view of females’ education and religious influence on gendered education, (see chapter 5.4c) appear to contradict a recorded practice of early Muslim leaders in Nigeria. The religious tradition that is commonly presented as a basis for the relegated status of women and girls, and an excuse for withdrawing them from schools (e.g. Sanderson, 1975; Lewis and Lockheed, 2006; Zakaria, 2001), may have been distorted from the original principles of Islam. While Sanderson (1975, p.430) claims that “Muslim traditions set limits upon the possible development of girls' education in Northern Nigeria”, Bergstrom (2002) contends that Usman Dan Fodio, who played a critical role in the promotion of Islam in the region,

supported women's education and represented this through his own daughter's education. Usman Dan Fodio led a jihad that spread Islam and subdued other local religious values and practices in northern Nigeria between 1804 and 1812, which led to the transformation of the cultural, political and educational structures of the region (Martin, 1976; Adeleye, 1971). Also, Kantiok and Chiang (2007) corroborate that Islam does not openly oppose women's education; rather, it is the cultural misapprehensions that have done so. Zakaria (2001) believes that Hausa-land remains one key area in Africa, that maintains a strict practice of female seclusion. Related to this practice is polygamy, which is subsequently discussed.

A major postcolonial feminists' criticism of religion relates to its appeal as a strong justification for gender inequality in society. It provides the basis for the sustenance of masculine domination, through the promotion of some hierarchical structures, ideological support and values that advance male leadership and female's subordination (Crane-Seeber and Crane, 2010; hooks, 2013). Interview data shows that the social expectations and the approved life-styles for females and males are largely dictated by the people's religion. Comments below, from the study respondents, relate to gender and power relations in the family and society, and highlight the expansive influence of religion on people's way of life, including their conviction on how society should be ordered:

> *God placed men above women and said women should follow them. No matter what happens, men are always in the front. If a woman refuses to follow, there will be quarrelling every day, and it is not good for people to be hearing their voice like that* **- AISHA SF***.*

Activities in the house such as cleaning the house, cooking and other things are women's responsibilities, but farming and getting the food whatever it is outside are the responsibility of the man to go out and get them. That is how our religion says - **AMINU SM.**

Females are not respected like men. Men have glory, and there is no way to compare women and men. That is how God created female, if not like that, females could live alone and not be under a man – **CHINWE AF**.

In northern Nigeria (as reflected in AISHA SF and AMINU SM's statements), the prevailing elucidation of the Islamic values tends to confine women to their father or husbands' homes, except in situations where the males are incapable of providing for household needs (Igbelina-Igbokwe, 2013). CHINWE AF highlights two major issues: first relates to females' lower status in the society, while the second relates to the prevailing duality in Igbo culture. The males leading and females following is an entrenched pattern of dualism among Nigerian Igbos that is represented by a widely used Igbo expression: *Ihe kwuru, ihe akwudebe ya,* which may be translated "when something stands, something stands beside it". A power relation issue here is that it is males that often stand for females to stand by them. AMAKA AF also stated that:

Males are the one to come out if anything is happening in the community, fight for it strongly…A *male is seen as being strong enough to do hard work mostly. They are the ones that are expected and seen as capable of doing*

works that require physical strength at home or in society. They have the heart and mind to do such jobs – **AMAKA AF.**

The above kind of authority and headship allocated to males in the society have also contributed to males' freedom to marry as many wives as they want, which also have serious implications for children's education as discussed in the following section. Meanwhile, interconnected cultural, religious, and gender factors constitute both obstacles and pressures for females' education, especially in northern Nigeria.

6.4 Polygamy

Polygyny is a practice of one man marrying more than one woman (Powell, 2008). The Nigeria Multiple Cluster Indicator Survey (MICS) data indicate that the rate of polygamy in the southeast was 2.5% while it stood at 12.4% and 25% in southwest and northwest, respectively. State variations were noted. Anambra is in the southeast recorded 1.0%, Oyo is in the southwest had 13.0% while Sokoto is in the northwest recorded 24.8% (NBS and UNICEF, 2017). From the backgrounds of the respondents and their stories, polygamous family backgrounds contribute to pushing children out of school. Some respondents from polygamous family (e.g. OBI AM; LOLA OF; BUSAYO OM) mentioned that they dropped out of school due to their family background-related challenges. My research diary contains a story of a man I met during the fieldwork who passionately narrated his experiences as follows:

It was God through my mother, who insisted that I must complete my education. Where a man has many wives… my father had five wives, and I am the last

child and the only boy from my mother. The first wife did not have a son, and the rest had one male child each. You do not expect her [first wife] to wish others achieve anything. That is the problem of a polygamous family – **[from my research diary - a conversation with a male in Ibadan]**

Children born into a polygamous family find themselves in diverse and intersectional factors that hinder their education and underpin their experiences of other social and economic inequality (Cole, 2009). This was widely mentioned in the Oyo (followed by Anambra) – e.g. LOLA OF, BOSE OF and OBI AM.

Postcolonial feminist scholars are divided over the place of polygamy in gender equality and social discourse. Firstly, limited information exists on studies around polygamy and gender justice from a postcolonial feminist perspective. Secondly, while some stand in its defence, (but not in support of females' oppression), others outrightly reject it. For those in defence of polygamy, the nuclear family remains Euro/American culture (and not universal). According to Oyewumi (2002, p.2), "the nuclear family remains an alien form in Africa despite its promotion by both the colonial and neocolonial state, international development agencies, feminist organisations, contemporary non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among others". On the other hand, polygamy is seen as a form of discrimination and a violation of gender equality values that are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Van Wichelen, 2009). It is also perceived as a version of domestic violence that inflicts physical, psychological and economic harm on women and children born into such unions, and also constituting some form of sexual violence of the women involved (Van Wichelen, 2009).

In Anambra and Oyo, family feud, competition and rivalry among co-wives were reported to have inspired some of them to employ various forms of charms, manipulative juju and poisons against their co-wives and their children. This increased children's suffering and sometimes, death. It also caused rival women's child to lose interest in education, and dropping out of school was one of the less diabolical experiences of children in such households. OBI AM suspected that the second wife used charms to draw his father's attention from him so that while the woman's children were given adequate educational support, he was neglected and forced to stop going to school in anger (he still believed that if his father had financed him, he would have had better career opportunities). While the father was both educated (he was a nursing superintendent in a federal hospital) and affluent enough to finance his education as he did for the children of the second woman, he did not sponsor his education. OBI AM attributed his inability to complete basic education to (as he summed it) " the bad woman my father married". The man I met in Ibadan, whose story I reproduced above, mentioned to me that rivalry among his father's wives forced him out of school. LOLA OF's education also suffered the impact of rivalry among co-wives, who competed over whose child may become more popular and affluent than others. She said:

> *I thought my mother's co-wife was doing me good by saying they should not send me to school. Right from the time my mother was pregnant with me, the co-wife employed the spell effected by juju to utter that 'your father helps to deliver other women during childbirth [as a birth attendant] when it is your time to be delivered, they will take you to someone else'; my father could not deliver my mother. The co-wife used to carry me and give me a knock on the*

head and say 'you would not grow'. It was a prophetess that revealed these and asked me to go and ask my mother. When I went to ask my mother, she told me that they wanted to kill her during the pregnancy; she went somewhere and delivered me there. They knew what I could become when I grew up and get educated and did not want me to become that – **LOLA OF.**

Although Muslims in northern Nigeria tend to marry many wives (see Erulkar, and Bello, 2007; Munro et al. 2010; Naksomboon and Mondain, 2013), the impact of polygamy on education was not directly mentioned by the respondents (but the early marriage was widely mentioned).

In summary, looking at polygamy from a postcolonial feminist perspective, masculinity may be implicated directly or indirectly over the impact of polygamy on gender equality in education. Firstly, Powell (2008, p.170) portrays women in polygamous families as being in the state of double colonisation (Peterson and Rutherford, 1988) and argued that "these women are subordinated, not only to the colonising powers but also to their own men". Powell also notes that (post)colonial conditions also contribute to intensifying conflicts among women in polygamous unions, leading to continuous rivalries (Powell, 2008). The second dimension of masculine implication relates to the social construction of masculinity. The males have the freedom to choose whether to marry second wives or not; also, their inability to manage the attendant conflicts and outcomes among the competing co-wives put everyone in the family under one form of pressure or the other. LOLA summarised men's complicity this way:

When men marry many wives, some men would no more care about the children while some care. The uncaring ones will leave them in the hand of the women [their wives] – **LOLA OF.**

6.6 Chapter Summary

The discussion of the interview data in this chapter tends to suggest that masculinities could interact with diverse socioeconomic factors to affect people's opportunities. It could also create some conditions (as in polygamous situations) that can create new problems and exacerbate the old ones in ways that affect children's education. In the next chapter, attempts are made to highlight key opportunities for addressing some of the challenges observed earlier.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examines two key research questions. The first largely centres on how culturally idealised forms of masculine characters and power contribute to influencing access and completion of basic education in the three dominant ethnocultural groups in Nigeria (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba). The second question focuses on how the social constructions of masculinities in these cultures interact with various factors to influence access and completion at the basic education level. In search of answers to these questions, the study interrogates the local constructions of masculinity (and femininity - focusing on their characterisations) and their possible influences on access, and completion of basic education in Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba cultures in Nigeria.

The following sections summarise key conclusions and recommendations of the study.

7.1 Key Conclusions

Following extensive analysis and discussion of issues arising from the literature and interview data, several conclusions have been reached. The conclusions are summarised below along major themes that are reflected in the literature, as well as emerging issues from the literature and data analysis.

7.1.1 Impact of colonialism

The colonial (and postcolonial) alterations of Nigeria's pristine cultures and traditions and its attendant sociopolitical and economic changes, make it challenging to truly make claims about the original and true nature of masculinities in Nigeria. The nature of current masculinities observed in the study is largely a product of colonial and postcolonial dynamics. We cannot therefore easily talk about masculinities that are purely Nigerian or

as pristine masculinities in Nigeria (at least in the three geopolitical regions studied). What exists today reflect a hybrid of local tradition and colonial gender practices that exacerbate male ascendancy in ways that deviate from what historically existed.

Colonialism (and its aftermath) contributed to the shaping of the postcolonial males' character, dominant position and subordination of females, as well as cultural situations and experiences of people living in postcolonial Nigeria, in ways that affect the educational development of the poor (most respondents dropped out of school due to poverty). Colonialism contributed to this through the elevation of male-dominant positions in socioeconomic and political spheres as breadwinners and rulers.

7.1.2 Culturally idealised masculine and feminine characters

While there is reasonable evidence that points to the colonial influence on local masculinities, I make some attempts to capture what is currently observable, but would not make an overarching claim about Nigerian masculinities (as opposed to masculinities in Nigeria) due to the country's diversity and colonial history. Hence, I have limited key conclusions drawn to masculine characterisation across the three cultures studied. The study observes that local constructions of masculinities and femininities are (to some extent) similar across Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa cultures and also (to some extent) differ between the northern (Hausa) and southern (Igbo and Yoruba) regions of the country. There are similarities across the socio-cultural groups in the characterisation and social expectation of ideal man as a strong protector of the relatively weaker female gender. An Ideal man ought to undertake a hard and risky job, provide for the family and lead the women and children in major decision-making processes. In return, women and children are his protectorates and are expected to support and obey him. There were also slight

differences in relation to the level of masculine dominance: in Igbo and Yoruba cultures, an ideal man needs to be wealthy and possibly educated to be able to meet the social expectations of an ideal man. In the Muslim dominated north, the man is an unquestionable lord of the house on whose head lies the right to go out at will, including the right to work outside the home, while the woman and children only have right to go out at his discretion – for so the religion and culture dictates.

In all the three cultures, colonialism has been particularly implicated in the way it created and/or exacerbated dominant forms of masculinities by elevating males (and males' opportunities) above females in both the society and households. In relation to education, the dominant position enjoyed by males creates additional opportunities for males to be sent to school in a situation of scarcity. For females, marriage is a determinant factor: education is seen as a hindrance (or at least delaying marriage) and should, therefore, be sacrificed in the Muslim north and sometimes in the south. Majorly, in southern parts, especially in Igbo cultures, education is an important determinant of females' marriage opportunities and thus encourages families to send females to schools while males could pursue personal and economic development in some other ways like trading.

7.1.3 The Role of Religion

While masculinity is implicated as a major force in the dropping out of school phenomenon, religion underpins some of the observed masculine positions, characters and influences. Religion is a major reason some parents in northern Nigeria do not want to send their children to school. Through Islamic doctrines, religion empowers fathers and

husbands, who are custodians of the household authority to enforce decisions that have been influenced by religion and encourages women and children to submit. Religion strengthens males' position and direction of decisions taken by males, which sometimes ultimately influences how people access and complete basic education.

7.1.4 Gender and Tradition/Location Interact to Exacerbate Inequality in Access and Completion of Basic Education

The study observes some interactions between gender and tradition across locations (especially social expectations) in ways that influence how females and males are valued, which contributes to influencing their access and completion of basic education. Entrenched gender norms and social expectations in various locations contribute to hinder gender equality in education. Females in Sokoto (northern Nigeria) have less opportunity to go to school than females in southern Nigeria because of socio-cultural expectations that they marry early. Males in Anambra (southeast Nigeria) tend to drop out of school early than males in Oyo and Sokoto because social expectations push them to join the labour force early in life.

7.1.5 Influences of Masculinity on Females and Males Access to Basic Education

The nature of the influences of masculinities on access and completion of basic education across the three cultural groups diverge. While masculinities in Igbo and Yoruba cultures give relatively more space for females and males' development and also tends to favour females education, in the Hausa culture, (where Islamic religion is predominant), it tends to support largely males' development and do not as much support females' educational development as in Igbo and Yoruba cultures. Among the Igbos, in the southeast, males'

desire for educated wives pushes females towards acquiring more education, while males' desire for younger and 'unspoiled' wives draws females out of school among Hausas, in the north. Hence, masculinities are implicated in the lower females' access to basic education in the north and lower males' access in the southeast. Among the Yorubas, in the southwest, it appears to be neither here nor there, but males' inclination towards polygamy and resulting negligence of both wives and children constitute a significant weakness as well, which impacts on children's access and completion of basic education.

Also, the influences of masculinity on access and completion of basic education in all the three ethnocultural zones are both direct and indirect. Directly, masculine influences manifest in leading roles males play in decisions making processes through their dominant positions, financial support or withdrawal of support to any particular gender in households. Masculinities also influence access to education indirectly through interaction with other factors that are known in the literature, that push or pull people out of school. Masculinity interacts with postcolonial (conditions created or exacerbated by colonialism) such as poverty, religion and socio-cultural values to exacerbate social inequality and create educational opportunity along the lines of the social expectations of males and females within each ethnocultural group.

7.1.6 Theoretical Issues

In relation to theory, the study has shown that postcolonial feminist approach to gender promises to be a better alternative to Western Feminist, (especially liberal feminist) perspective that does not appear to fully appreciate and accommodate diverse

postcolonial histories, traditional structures, conditions and experiences. It particularly observes that Western perspectives on masculinity remain inadequate for the analysis of non-Western masculinities, as explained in chapter three. However, I also observed that while postcolonial feminist perspective has been useful for the study, it lacks a unified position on some issues such as polygamy. There is also a very narrow range of discussion of masculinities from the postcolonial perspective in the literature, especially in relation to education.

7.1.7 Polygamy

There is a need to emphasise the observed role of polygamy in the exacerbation of out-of-school phenomenon, which is largely missed in scholarly literature. The social freedom to choose who, when and how they marry, enjoyed by males and their marriage preferences contribute to underpinning the phenomenon of polygamy, which tends to work against children's education.

7.1.8 Observed Changes

Another important issue that emerged from the field data and mentioned in different subsections of chapter five and six relates to historical changes on the social perception of females and males' positions in the society. Before summarising this, it is important to note that the study respondents dropped out of school between 1959 and 2014. This created a need to explore changes in the construction and impact of masculinity over the years, but this only came to my attention during data analysis; since adequate information was not collected on it, I am unable to make claims about this. However, information from the interviews (based on respondents' experiences and stories) suggests that females' positions across the three ethnocultural groups may have significantly improved as the

respondents' expressed in their stories. Also, females' access to education appears to have improved across the three locations over the 54 years period (between the time the oldest respondent dropped out and when the newest dropped).

7.2 Contribution to Knowledge

In this subsection, various areas the study has made a direct contribution to knowledge, theory and practice are summarised. They include some criticism of Western perspectives on masculinity and re-telling the story of dropping out of school in postcolonial society.

7.2.1 A critique of Western feminists

While interrogating influences of masculinity on access and completion of basic education, this study also critiques Western feminists' concept of masculinity that is prevalent in the discussion of non-Western men, non-western masculinities and non-Western societies, which tend to give limited attention to peculiarities of non-Western social formations, traditions and cultures. Using West African socio-cultural and political formations as examples, I highlighted how the application of Western concepts of masculinity is inappropriate for the examination of these societies.

7.2.2 Re-telling a postcolonial story of dropping out of school

By rejecting the Western feminist perspectives, I attempted a reconstruction of narratives about some of our histories and experiences from a postcolonial perspective, by re-telling our stories and re-interpreting our experiences. Particularly, I attempted to reconstruct our experiences of dropping out of school.

7.2.3 Exposition of Subtle influences of masculinities on dropping out of school

As part of the effort to re-tell our stories, the study highlights some of the subtle influences of masculinities on dropping out of school in Nigeria, that are either missed in the mainstream gender in education literature (such as how masculinities affect the education of children in polygamous families) or lumped together as an influence of patriarchy, which contributes to becloud the underpinning social construction and expectations that were either created or exacerbated by the colonial restructuring of the pristine cultures. The study has also highlighted key areas policy-makers and development agencies need to give attention by providing evidence on hidden and subtle ways masculinities underpin various known factors that undermine gender equality in education and wider social processes.

7.2.4 Exposition of how masculinity interact with other factors to pull and push people out of school

Scholars are aware that diverse factors, such as poverty, early marriage and religion, contribute to push or pull people out of school but a review of scholarly literature suggests that limited information exists on how masculinity interact with these factors to keep people away from school in Nigeria. This study has made a significant contribution in this direction.

Based on the conclusions made from the findings and contributions to knowledge emerging from this study, the following section summarises major recommendations of the study.

7.3 Recommendations

In this section, key recommendations are presented, which are divided into three important categories: recommendation for further investigation; recommendation for further theory development and; recommendation for improved policy interventions and practices.

7.3.1 Recommendation for further studies

There is a need to further explore the roles of polygamy on males and females' education in different socioeconomic contexts. The study observed that males and female's marriage choices could affect their children's education, but this study marginally highlighted the masculine perspectives without in-depth investigation (as it was one of the emerging issues from the study that were not originally envisaged). An in-depth investigation is required to understand various dimensions of polygamy and how they affect children's education with extensive focus on positions, practices, perspectives and experiences of both male and female adults and children in their households.

As noted above, during data collection, it was observed that respondents' period of dropping out of school spanned through most of the country's independent years, but how masculinity (and femininity) changed overtime was not investigated, as the study was not originally designed to investigate issues around this. Hence, there is a need to investigate possible changes in the social construction of masculinity over time, for a clearer understanding of the evolutions of current gender practices in Nigeria.

The social construction of femininity was explored but how it possibly affects access and completion of basic education was not a focus of this study. This is where the next investigation might need to begin.

7.3.2 Recommendations for theory development

Culturally idealised masculine characters as observed in this study vary across Nigeria, (to some extent and in some respects) but share some basic elements such as the headship of the man and associated male dominance. The observable differences open up a need to investigate each frame further, in relation to other perspectives on masculinity (besides postcolonial perspective). Also, while there may not be single Nigerian masculinity, how it works in different contexts (not just in education) need to be engaged in academic discussions and theorisation to fully grasp its diversified manifestations and be able to arrive at a reasonable conclusion on Nigerian masculinities.

Further, females' education in northern Nigeria suffers more in household poverty contexts and negatively affected by various socio-cultural values such as early marriage – because they are females. While Western feminists may rightly point to this social injustice and erroneously generalise females' experiences as a group of oppressed people, caution is particularly advised on the acceptance of and application of Western feminist views on how to remedy females' situations because some of the problems of male dominance they contend against through some perspectives (like WID and GAD) were created or strengthened by Western (post)colonial ideas that developed from same modernisation school's theoretical and philosophical bedrocks as these perspectives. Instead, postcolonial feminist scholars need to intensify research and engagement of postcolonial theories for the study and explanation of diversified and peculiar postcolonial

contexts, in order to develop comprehensive frameworks for studying postcolonial situations.

Additionally, it may be useful to intensify studies on postcolonial masculinities using grounded theory methodology to unearth new issues and theories on masculinities in postcolonial societies to generate a multiplicity and comparative perspectives on postcolonial masculinities, in relation to the diversities of non-Western societies (as noted earlier, a narrow range of literature focused on postcolonial masculinities).

7.3.3 Recommendation for Improved policy Intervention and Practices in Education

The study has particularly observed that masculinity interacts with diverse factors to hinder access and completion of basic education in Nigeria and therefore recommends that Nigeria's Gender in Basic Education Policy (GBEP) be reviewed to include specific policy and programmatic interventions for addressing underpinning masculine influences at the household level. It also needs to outline initiatives that would empower women to play proactive roles in decision making about going to school, reduce the dependence on males as breadwinners and improve females' choices and voices in decisions about marriages. The study also recommends that both national and donor-funded development interventions on basic education in Nigeria needs to target these factors in ways that help promote positive males' contribution towards females and males' educational development.

Considering that households tend to determine who is sent to (or withdrawn from) school and given into marriage or sent into apprenticeship (which also depends on the family resources), creation of a functional and effective system of economic empowerment that

reduces females' dependent on males would contribute to addressing children's educational needs and encourage households to allow everyone to go to school.

Also, there is a need to further explore appropriate home-grown initiatives (locally evolved strategies) for encouraging equal participation of females' in households decision making, especially in locations where whatever the man says, whether it is good or bad, should be obeyed and the woman needs to submit without question, even if she has a concern over such decision. I argued elsewhere, in "Home-grown initiatives for local challenges on gender inequality in basic education in Nigeria" (Ezegwu, 2015) that local initiatives and strategies may be more effective for addressing local problems and some scholars already hold a view that local people are in a better position to combat their local problems (Kelly, 2001; Ménard, 2013; Agupusi, 2016).

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Appendix 1: The Study Instrument Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study and signing the ethics form. As already mentioned in the participants' information sheet, any information you provide throughout this interview would be for the purpose of the study, reported in pseudonym and in a manner that would not reveal your identity in any way. Moreover, you are at liberty not to answer any questions you are not comfortable with. Let me know at any point, should you decide to withdraw from the interview, wish that the recording be turned off or the interview process paused; any of these decisions will not be a problem for me.

Is it OK by you to continue with the interview and to record the interaction?

Background and Experiences with Basic Education

1. Could you briefly tell me about your education (including where you went to school, when you began schooling and when (at what level) you stopped)?

    a. Tell me about the community where you grew up and went to school? Describe how developed it was (what kind of infrastructural facilities)?

    b. What about the quality of what was learned and kinds of school facilities that were in the community at the time you withdrew?

2. OK, tell me why you stopped going to school. **Probe who made the decision, how, why and at what point?**

    a. …do you consider your parent affluent enough to have been able to support furthering of your education at the time you stopped going to school?

    b. …how much education did your parent/s have?

3. Did you experience any difficulty before you withdrew from school? Were there interruptions in your schooling before you finally withdrew? What was the greatest difficulty you experienced before you withdrew?

4. Were your siblings able to complete basic education? **Probe who went and who did not and why?**

Sociocultural Construction of Masculinity/Femininity and Education

5. When you were growing up, what kind of person did you consider to be an ideal (correct) man (and woman)? Could you describe to me the quality and characteristics (*wetin we go take know am*) of a "correct" (ideal) man (and woman) in the village where you went to school? **Probe peculiar characters, attitude, influence and power**. Can you recall how these were then (when you dropped out) and possibly if they have changed now?

    a. What/how did these expectations influence what your mates wanted to do or aspired to be when they grow up? **(if yes, how) How did it influence your interests and motivation to go to school?**

    b. How do these our belief about correct man or woman influence opportunities and encouragement families give girls to go to school? What of boys?

    c. If a man or woman fails to live up to the correct man's standard, what will be the society's reaction? **Will such person lose or miss anything from the society?**

6. What were things your family and society expected you to do or be doing (or how you should behave) because you were a boy /girl (and now)? W**hy. Have these values changed now?**

    a. How did (and do) the roles and expectations influence (create) better opportunities for girls more than boys? (….boys more than girls?) **probe in relation to who goes to school.**

7. Tell me positions and power women hold in the family and society? **Probe roles, character, authority and influence.** Tell me positions men hold in the family and society? **Probe roles, character, authority and influence.**

8. Are there benefits men have in the society because they are men? What about women?

9. How is decision taken in families about who will go to school or not?

10. Tell me how your community members see girls' education (**what of boys')?**

11. Could you identify major factors that stop girls from going to school? **Probe when s/he dropped and how (what of boys?)**
12. Are there particular issues that give girls opportunity to go to school more than boys (**why)**? What of boys? **(why)**
13. Can you tell me benefits girls have when they are educated? How are they motivating people to make effort to go to school? **What of boys?**

Social Justice

14. Between boys and girls, who were going to school more than the other when you stopped going to school? **What about now? Probe reason for any change.**
15. Do you know of any current effort (at household, community and government levels) to give males and females opportunities to go to school? Compare how it was when you dropped and now. **Check also institutions involved.**
16. How has education helped to give men and women similar opportunities?
17. From your experience, how has education impacted on your life?
18. If you have an opportunity to help, what would you change in the society to ensure that everybody completes secondary school? **Probe households and gender-based barriers.**

General Opinion

19. I am done with my questions, is there anything you would like to add? Do you have any question/s for me?

I would like to confirm that you are satisfied with the interview and would permit me to use the information for the study in a pseudonymous manner?

Thank you very much for your time, contribution and patience.