

CrossRef DOI of original article:

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3 *Received: 1 January 1970 Accepted: 1 January 1970 Published: 1 January 1970*

4

5 **Abstract**

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8 *Index terms—*

9 **1 I. INTRODUCTION**

10 Benin is a country in West Africa with about 12 million inhabitants. Like most countries, Benin is in line with the
11 Sustainable Development Goals. According to the fifth Demographic and health survey data set ??Benin DHS
12 5, 2017 ??2018), the gross attendance rate in primary school is 89%, with a gap between girls and boys (94%
13 for boys and 84% for girls) and the net rate is 65%, again with a gender gap to the disadvantage of girls. Thus,
14 it should be noted that efforts still need to be made to achieve full enrollment of children in school. Concerning
15 decision-making within the household, the fifth Demographic and health survey data reveal that in relation
16 with women's health, only 11.5% of women decide alone, in 34.8% of cases, the decision is joint (both parents)
17 and in 53.1% of cases, it is the man alone who decides on behalf of woman. Regarding essential household
18 purchases, 8.8% of women decide alone; in 38.4% of cases, the decision is joint and in 52.1% of cases, it is the
19 man alone. What about decision-making for child school enrollment? Universal quality education is part of
20 the 17 th Sustainable Development Goals to be reached by 2030. This work examines the relationship between
21 household characteristics and school enrollment of children aged 6-11 in Benin. We are interested in the age
22 group of children likely to be enrolled in primary school. The official age of entry into primary school in Benin
23 is 5 years. But not all 5-year-olds are likely to be enrolled in primary school, so to have statistics of children
24 actually in the education system, we considered 6-year-olds. In addition, primary education consists of six years
25 of study. For these reasons, we considered the 6-11 age group.

26 The general hypothesis underlying this study is that household characteristics influence children's school
27 enrollment.

28 **2 Literature Review**

29 Education is a crucial element in the life of every individual in society. According to UNESCO, it is a set of
30 means allowing the development of the physical, moral, and intellectual faculties of a human being. The right
31 to education is unique and necessary because it empowers individuals to exercise all their other rights ??civic,
32 political, economic, social, or cultural), giving them the opportunity to live a dignified life, while ensuring a
33 better future for all. Education is also a means of empowering children and even adolescents to become active
34 participants in the transformation of the societies in which they live ??INSAE, 2018). . In Togo, for example,
35 more than 60% of children from wealthy households are enrolled in school, while only 15% of children from poor
36 households are schoolarised. Children from poor households are engaged in paid work to support their families
37 ??Vissého Adjwanou, 2005). In studying the effect of household standard of living on school completion in twenty-
38 five countries, Filmer D. and Pritchett L., ??1999) found that in Benin, with data from the 1993 demographic
39 and health survey, the completion gap in primary school is 41.1%; 39.5% and 19.3% respectively for poor, middle
40 and wealthy households. In Burkina Faso, for example, Dramane Boly (2017) found that the standard of living
41 is a determining factor in children's schooling. These studies, therefore show that the household's standard of
42 living has a significant influence on children's school enrollment and completion. Okurut, F.N. and D.O. Yinusa,
43 (2010) also found that in Botswana, children living in female-headed households are more likely to be enrolled in
44 school.

45 3 Age Range Effect and Social Network

46 Analyzing household characteristics, Chabi M. and Attanasso O. ??2015) found that the presence of children
47 under 6 years old in a household puts pressure on the household's resources, and therefore, influences the schooling
48 of the household's children. This age range (6-11 years) corresponds to the official age for being in primary school.
49 In a situation of limited resources, the presence of this age range puts pressure on the household's resources, and
50 therefore affects the chance that all children to attend school. On the other hand, ??oussa B. et al (2014)
51 assessed the combined effect of family networks and sibling size on children's schooling and concluded that there
52 is a positive relationship between an increased number of children and the use of family mutual aid for children's
53 education. This is due to the fact that parents with a high number of children depends on social networks to
54 send their childrens to school more than those with fewer children.

55 4 Gender and Family Relationship

56 Individual characteristics of children are also elements that influence their enrollment. Some authors have shown
57 in their work that being female is negatively associated with the probability of enrollment and attainment of a
58 high level of education. Girls are a cheaper source of labor for agricultural, household, and commercial activities,
59 so mothers cannot do without their contribution. As a result, parents choose to keep girls at home and give
60 priority to boys ??Lokonon P., 2018). Further on, Dramane B. ??2017) shows that in Burkina Faso, girls who
61 are not related to the head of the household are less likely to attend school due to their use in domestic work. In
62 Mali, Kuepie M. and Misangumukini N. (2012) found that permanent resource constraints have a more significant
63 impact on girls' schooling than on boys'. Similarly, these authors find that girls' school success is sensitive to
64 the educational capital of the adults in the household. ??Gouda and Sekher, 2014) found that the dropout rate
65 among children of illiterate parents is four times higher than among literate parents. Similarly, the likelihood
66 of dropping out is high among children whose parents do not work. In Burkina Faso, for example, research on
67 women's participation in household expenses and women's decision-making role in children's schooling has shown
68 that mothers' education is a determining factor in their children's schooling ??Madeleine Wayack-Pambé, 2007).

69 5 Decision-Making

70 The relationship between spouses, particularly the possibility for each of them to participate in household
71 decisions, is an important indicator of gender relations in society and contributes to the well-being of the
72 entire family. Thus, some gender studies have been conducted to determine the factors contributing to women's
73 participation in household decision-making. For example, it is known that women's participation in the modern
74 labor market or paid work, older age, urban residence, type of union, and access to the media are factors that
75 positively influence their participation in decision-making within their households ??Thionbiano, 2014; ??mpale,
76 2015). The International Food Policy Research Institute (UNICEF 2007), reveals that if men and women had
77 equal influence in household decision-making, the incidence of underweight children under three years of age in
78 South Asia could be reduced by 13 percent, resulting in 13.4 million fewer malnourished children in the region.
79 Similarly, in sub-Saharan Africa, 1.7 million more children would be adequately nourished based upon gender
80 balance in decision-making. One would expect this gender equality to be a factor in getting children into school.

81 6 II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

82 7 Sampling

83 The data used are from the Benin Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2017-2018. Our base consists of
84 women aged 15-49, men aged 15-64, and children aged 6-11. In total, we have 13,958 children and 4,035 couples.

85 The dependent variable in this study is the school enrollment of children aged 6-11 at the time of the survey.
86 It is a binary variable taking the value 1 when the child is enrolled in school and 0 otherwise.

87 The independent variables are: for the household (standard of living, area of residence, type of union); for
88 the child (sex); for the mother/ caregiver of the child (participation in decision making on health and household
89 priority expenditures, education level, age, current occupation); for the father/guardian of the child (participation
90 in decision-making on health, household priority expenditures, education level, age, current occupation) The
91 "participation in decision-making" variable is a composite. It was designed by considering cases where the
92 woman/man decides alone, jointly with her/his partner and does not participate in the decision on health and
93 priority household expenses.

94 8 Data Analysis

95 The analysis has two components: descriptive (univariate, bivariate) and explanatory (binomial logistic regression
96 and prioritization). The bivariate analysis measures the association between the dependent variable and the
97 independent variables and is verified by a Chi2 test at the 5% threshold.

98 The explanatory component through binomial logistic regression allows us to measure the net effect of each
99 of the independent variables on children's school enrolment. The choice of this analysis model is justified by the
100 qualitative and dichotomous nature of the dependent variable.

101 As for prioritization, it allows us to see the level of contribution of each factor to the explanation of children's
102 school enrolment. The process consists London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences of taking
103 the difference between the Chi-square of the final model, including all the variables, and the Chi-square obtained
104 from the model without the variable, and relating the result to the final Chi-square to obtain the contribution of
105 the variable in explaining the phenomenon.

106 **9 III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

107 **10 Women Characteristics**

108 The majority of women have no education (68.8%). Respectively 16,6% and 14,6% have a primary and secondary
109 level or more. Very few women (4,2%) decide alone when it comes to their health care and significant household
110 purchases.

111 **11 Men Characteristics**

112 One in two fathers/guardians has no education (50%). For those who are schoolarised, 24% have reached primary
113 school and 26% secondary school or higher.

114 **12 Bivariate**

115 The results of the bi-variate analysis showed that, with the exception of participation in decisionmaking from
116 men's statements and the gender of the head of household, all variables are significantly associated with school
117 enrollment of 6-11-year-olds at the 5% threshold.

118 **13 Logistic Regression**

119 **14 Household's characteristics**

120 The type of union that links parents influences the schooling of children aged 6-11. Children living in a polygamous
121 household are 0.76 times less likely to be enrolled than those in a monogamous household. Household's standard
122 of living was found to be highly significantly associated with London Journal of Research in Humanities and
123 Social Sciences

124 **15 Children's characteristics**

125 The results show that, at the 5% level, the gender of the child has a significant association with school enrollment.
126 Thus, the results show that girls are 0.81 times less likely to be enrolled than boys.

127 **16 Mother's Characteristics**

128 Concerning the mother's characteristics, the results show that the woman's involvement in decision-making is
129 significantly associated with children's school enrollment at the 1% level. Thus, children whose mothers or
130 guardians make decisions alone or jointly are respectively 1.94 and 1.44 times more likely to be enrolled than
131 their counterparts whose mothers or guardians are not involved in decision-making.

132 **17 Parent's education and literacy**

133 At the 1% level, maternal education is positively associated with children's school enrollment. Thus, children
134 whose mothers or guardians have primary and secondary education or more are 1.64 and 2.68 times more likely
135 to be enrolled than children whose mothers have no education.

136 **18 Parent's Age Range**

137 Children whose mothers or janitors are between the ages of 30-39 and 40-49 are, respectively 1.59 times and 1.83
138 times more likely to be enrolled in school than their counterparts whose mothers are between the ages of 15-29
139 at the 1% threshold.

140 **19 Parent's occupation**

141 In contrast to the previous woman's characteristics, her current occupation is not significantly associated with
142 children's school enrollment.

143 **20 Spouse/Guardian's Characteristics**

144 When analyzing the results according to the characteristics of the spouse or guardian, the results show a negative
145 (non-significant) association between the spouse's participation in decision-making and the children's school
146 enrollment. Like the woman's level of education, the spouse's level of education shows a positive association with
147 children's school enrollment at the 1% threshold.

148 **21 Father/Guardian's Characteristics**

149 Children in households where the father/guardian has a primary and secondary level or higher education
150 are respectively 6.12 and 3.40 times more likely to be enrolled than those living in a household where the
151 father/guardian has no education. The results show that the age of the father/guardian and his current occupation
152 are not significantly associated with children's school enrollment.

153 **22 Prioritization of Factors**

154 Table 2 below shows factors that influence children's school enrollment, classified according to their importance
155 : the spouse's level of education, the household's standard of living, the woman's level of education, the women's
156 participation in decision-making, the woman's age, the child's sex and the type of union.

157 **23 IV. DISCUSSIONS**

158 This study aimed to analyzing the influence of household characteristics on school enrollment of 6-11-year-olds
159 in Benin. Similar works generated the same findings focusing on the impact factors.

160 **24 Spouse's Level of Education**

161 About the characteristics of the spouse, the latter's level of education is a factor that is significantly associated
162 with children's schooling. We can thus say that the more educated the parents are, the better they understand the
163 importance of sending their children to school. Mabrooka Altaf, Tusawar Iftikhar Ahmad, Muhammad Azhar
164 Bhatti, (2022) highlighted maternal education as the most influential and decisive factor in enhancing school
165 enrollments of male children and female children in Pakistan.

166 **25 Household Standard of Living and Socio-Cultural Patterns**

167 Similar to studies carried out by ??djiwanou (2005) and Bambara and Wayack-Pambè (2019), we reached findings
168 showing that the household's standard of living is determining children's school enrollment. Thus, children in
169 wealthy households are more likely to be enrolled than those in poor families. These results also confirm the
170 study by ??ilmer and Pritchett (1999), who found that in Benin, with data from 1993 Demographic and Health
171 Survey, the primary school completion gap is 41.1%, 39.5% and 19.3%

172 for the poor, middle and rich households respectively. This could be explained by the fact that wealthy
173 households can meet the costs of sending their children to school, which is not always the case for poor families.
174 In the Beninese context, the low enrollment rate of girls in school could be explained by the fact that girls
175 constitute an essential workforce for mothers. They help their mothers on the one hand to take care of their
176 younger brothers, on the other hand, to help mothers in their activities. In a socio-cultural context, parents
177 consider the girl as the property of another person from the moment she gets married. So sending her to school
178 would be an additional expense for them with no benefits.

179 In addition, using data from the 1968-2013 October Current Population Survey to document trends in 3-
180 and 4-year-old children's enrollment in center-based early childhood education, Katherine Magnuson and Jane
181 Waldfogel (??016) have tried to focus on gaps in enrollment among children from low-, middle-, and high-income
182 families. They found that income-related gaps in enrollment widened in the 1970s and 1980s but appear to have
183 plateaued or narrowed for succeeding cohorts. These patterns are consistent with recent trends in income-related
184 gaps in school achievement.

185 **26 Woman's Level of Education**

186 The level of education of mothers was found to be significantly associated with children's schooling. ??an, 2021;
187 ??ouda and Sekher, 2014), which led to the results that the dropout rate among children of illiterate parents is
188 four times higher than that of literate parents.

189 Throughout Ghana Living Standard Survey round 6 (GLSS 6) data, Abdul Malik Iddrisu, Michael Danquah
190 and Peter Quartey (2017) demonstrated that parental education, household income and the gender of the head
191 of the household are significant factors in households' children's schooling decisions. Educated parents are more
192 likely to enroll their children in primary school and keep them until they complete primary education. The
193 authors observed that educated parents do not promote a gender-biased investment in the schooling of children
194 at the primary level. In addition, household welfare has a positive impact on children's completion of primary
195 school.

196 **27 Women's Participation in Decision-Making**

197 Concerning factors related to parents, the results showed that women's participation in household decision-
198 making is a factor positively associated with children's schooling. We can therefore affirm that a more egalitarian
199 gender relations within couples that gives women the right to intervene in decision-making is, in turn, a factor
200 that promotes children's education. Thus, women have a positive influence on children's education when they
201 intervene in household decisions.

202 **28 Age of the Woman**

203 An advanced age of mothers is a favorable factor for the schooling of children. We can thus say that an advanced
204 age confers more maturity, and respect to women and consequently, they can positively influence the education
205 of their children. At slightly older generations, women become aware of the importance of sending their children
206 to school.

207 **29 Sex of the Child**

208 The results showed that girls are more likely to be less educated than boys. Thus, the female gender is negatively
209 associated with being in school. This reality was revealed by the DHS-V data ??2017) ??2018). According to
210 this survey, despite all the policies put in place by the authorities to encourage the enrollment of girls in school,
211 there is a gap (10 percentage points) to be filled between boys' gross enrollment rate (94%) and girl's gross
212 enrollment rate (84%). Uzma Naz, Zainab Ejaz and Naveed Khan (2019) analyzed major factors responsible
213 for high dropouts in rural areas in Islamabad (Pakistan). Besides the distance from school to home, financial
214 constraints is the most crucial reason for dropping out. Moreover, the education of the father, the age of the
215 child, and the gender of the child are also highly significant variables that determine the probability of a child
216 dropout.

217 **30 Type of Union**

218 The results of the explanatory analysis showed that the type of union in which a child lives influences their
219 schooling to the extent that a child in a polygamous household is likely not to be enrolled in school. This could
220 be explained by the fact that in a polygamous family there are several children, which increases the burden of
221 schooling on parents, so they tend to enroll some children at the expense of others. This result is similar to work
222 done by Attanasso M.O. and Chabi M. (2015), who found that the number of children under the age of 5 and
223 the number of children in the 6-11 age group are variables that negatively affect school enrollment or level. That
224 implies in a polygamous household, there would be many children in these age groups.

225 **31 V. CONCLUSIONS**

226 The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of household characteristics on the school enrollment of
227 6-11-year-olds. After presenting the context of the study, and the empirical work done by other researchers, we
228 found that several factors directly influence children's school enrollment. The data used in this study came from
229 the fifth Benin Demographic and Health Survey ??DHSB 5, 2017 ??DHSB 5, -2018)). Our target population was
230 women aged 15-49 and men aged 15-64 who were in a union or living with a partner at the time of the survey, as
231 well as children aged 6-11 living in households. Both descriptive and explanatory methods of analysis were used
232 in this study.

233 The descriptive analysis method allowed us to test the relationship between children's school enrollment and
234 all the variables in the study at the bivariate level. An explanatory analysis based on binomial logistic regression
235 allowed us to determine the factors that, in addition to the joint participation of couples in household decisions,
236 influence children's schooling.

237 We found that the spouse's level of education, the household's standard of living, the woman's level of
238 education, the women's participation in household decision-making, the woman's age, the child's sex, and the
239 type of union are the factors that influence children's school enrollment in order of importance.

240 Despite the findings, this study does not claim to have covered all aspects of couples' joint participation in
241 household decisions and all factors that might influence children's school enrollment. Thus, it should be noted
242 that this study has some limitations. Not all variables related to household decision-making were included. It
243 should also be noted that there is no specific question in the database on decision-making regarding children's
244 education. However, this could more easily help to identify the parent who contributes most through their
245 decision to the enrollment of children in the household. Nevertheless, these limitations do not alterate the results
246 of our study. This study is very important for drawing a streamline to design better policy actions in favor of
247 children's schooling.

248 Given the findings of our study, we recommend that schooling policies be perpetuated. Because today's children
249 will be tomorrow's parents, the education of their offspring will be impacted by their literacy or education level.
250 It's also recommended to carry out more policies to strengthen the economic capacities of households.

251 **32 ANNEXES**

252 1 2 3 4

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Aged 6 to 11 in Benin

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⁴ to 11 in Benin



Figure 1: Figure 1 :

Figure 2:



Figure 3: Figure 4 :

Despite the importance of education and the policies put in place by governments, we note that not all children are enrolled in school, and inequalities are observed across countries, and within each country. Several factors certainly describe this observation. There has been considerable discussion of the factors that explain children's schooling, as well as the factors that influence women's participation in household decision-making. But, to date, relatively little work has examined the influence of couples' joint participation in household decision making on children's schooling. Empirical studies that determine the factors influencing children's education have yielded multiple and diverse results depending on the context.

1.1.1 Impact of Living Standards

Studies in the West African sub-region have shown that in wealthy and female-headed households, children are more likely to attend

school

Wayack-Pambè, 2019

(AIBambara

Figure 4:

Explanatory variables	Final chi-square	Chi-square without the variable	Contribution (%)	Rank
Spouse's level of education	759,20	702,22	11,13	1 ier
Household standard of living	790,20	709,20	10,25	2 ème
Woman's level of education	759,20	772,05	2,29	3 ème
Women's participation in decision-making	790,20	773,59	2,10	4 ème
Age of the woman	759,20	775,54	1,85	5 ème
Sex of the child	759,20	785,59	0,58	6 ème
Type of union	790,20	789,19	0,12	7 ème

Source: Benin DHS 5, 2017-2018

Figure 5: Table 2 :

1

Variable	Terms and conditions	Workforce	Percentage
Gender of children	Boy	7093	50,8
	Girl	6860	49,2
	Non-registered	4453	31,9
School registration	Registered	9500	68,1
School attendance by gender	Boys enrolled	5058	53,24
	Girls enrolled	4442	46,76

Source: Benin DHS 5, 2017-2018

Figure 6: Table 1 :

2

Variable	Terms and conditions	Workforce	Percentage
Gender of head of household	Male	3895	96,5
	Woman	140	3,5

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Figure 7: Table 2 :

3

Variable	Terms and conditions	Workforce	Percentage
Participation in decision making	Decides alone	171	4,2
	Jointly	1893	46,9
	Other	1971	48,8
	No level	2775	68,8
Woman's level of education	Primary	669	16,6
	Secondary or higher	591	14,6
	Inactive	645	16,2
	Executive/administration	126	3,2
Woman's current occupation	Shopkeeper	1280	32,2
	Farmer	1052	26,5
	Worker/service	870	21,9
	15-29 years old	1942	48,1
Age of the woman	30-39 years old	1376	34,1
	40-49 years old	717	17,8

Source: Benin DHS 5, 2017-2018

Figure 8: Table 3 :

4

Variable	Terms and conditions	Workforce	Percentage
Decision making	Decides alone	2231	55,3
	Jointly	1744	43,2
	Other	60	1,5
	No level	2029	50,3
Spouse's level of education	Primary	952	23,6
	Secondary or higher	1054	26,1
Spouse's current occupation	Inactive	45	1,1

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Figure 9: Table 4 :

VARIABLES AND MODALITY	NET EFFECT
PARTICIPATION OF THE WOMAN IN DECISION	***
MAKING (statement from the woman)	
Only	1,94***
Jointly	1,44***
someone else	Ref
SPOUSE PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING	ns
(declaration from the spouse)	
Only	Ref
Jointly	0.84ns
someone else	1.15 ns
RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENT	***
Urban	1.20 ns
Rural	Ref
GENDER OF THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	Ns
Male	Ref
Woman	1,66
Type of union	***
Monogame	Ref
Polygamist	0,76*
LEVEL OF LIVING	***
Poor	Ref
Medium	1,86***
Rich	3,72***
GENDER OF THE CHILD	**
Boy	Ref

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Figure 10: Table 5 :

253 .1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

254 We thank all those who have contributed to the improvement of the quality of this paper. Special thanks to all
255 reviewers.

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283 .3 Data Availability Statement

284 The data used in this paper is fully available and can be accessed upon request.

285 .4 Funding

286 The writing of this paper has not been funded or sponsored. It was done at the author's expense.

287 .5 Conflict of Interest Statement

288 The authors state that there is no conflict of interest.

289 .6 Ethical Approval

290 The data used for the estimates do not include confidential information about individuals or animals that may
291 raise ethical concerns.

292 .7 Consent for Publication

293 The authors grant his consent for publication of this paper.