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# Research Project

Name



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# 1.0 Executive Summary

This research project was conducted to measure people's perception of going for further studies. The study got the view and opinion of thirty individuals during the last one month. The participant's demographics and the score variations were used to make statistical conclusions regarding the relationship between the current education level and the perception to further their studies.

The participants' thoughts, opinion, and feelings in the past one month were the basis of the questions. The questionnaires were administered to them, and they were required to answer the questions fairly and honestly. The data collected was coded, and the analysis was done using Microsoft Excel.

The study indicated that there was a relationship between the desire or plan to further the studies and current education level. However, the study recommends the future studies to use a larger sample to enable them to explain more variations. It acknowledges that big samples can provide more accurate information and a concrete conclusion.

## 2.0 Introduction

The study was conducted to assess the relationship between the level of education and the perception or opinion about the need to further one's study. The researcher interviewed thirty respondents on a voluntary basis where the questionnaire was presented to them to answer. A scorecard was also shown where necessary to aid the respondents in making the decision on the right answer. The objectives that the study intended to cover were:

People's perception of higher education,

The motivating factor behind decision to pursue further education and

Influence of employment on the desire to go for further studies.

## 3.0 Background

Education is a determining factor in the kind of life one lives. Our expectation is that the higher the level of education, the better the job and the good the lifestyle. According to research, most people would like to further their studies given the opportunity. Most people believe that an advanced degree is vital for long-term success. With the competitive world, we are in today, only those with at least a master degree are considered competitive in the job market. Further, it is believed to be a step towards higher earnings. As such, private firms and governmental agencies sometimes organize further studies for their employees to capitalize extra knowledge and skills (Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung, 1983).

The number of colleges offering further online education is on the increase. The increased number of colleges is associated with the number of people going for further studies. In fact, according to the report by Bill Rammell to the committee, 10 % of the people pursuing their degree are doing through further education program (Great Britain, 2006). The majority of the people who register for further education were those already working. Apart from the need to raise the living standard, some people go for further education for pride. The need to belong to a social class is another contributing factor. The number of enrollment for further studies is also found to be high among people living around the learning institutions than those living far from the learning institutions. Some people also go for further education to

compensate for the opportunities they missed during their initial face (Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung, 1983).

There are several benefits associated with going back to school to further education. These reasons form the motivating factor as to why some people go back to school. Some people go back to school to add to their skills. People who are working in the field that is not in line with their profession are likely to go for further education. Another reason for going for further study may be to change the current career. However, some people also further their education in anticipation of promotion. The most obvious but uncommon reason among those going for further studies is to add knowledge. Funny enough, there are those who go for further studies to find connections.

There are also people who desire to further their education but lack the capability. Financial problems are the major obstacle to achieving the goal of further education (Porter, et. al., 2015). Irrespective of the ability or the desire to further one's education, the idea of going for further studies is growing more and more. Due to this reason, this study investigated the real motive behind people going for further education. The study sought to get the first-hand information from the people themselves.

Until today, there is no study that has tried to get the people's perception of the whole idea of going for higher education. The study also investigated the influence the employment status has on the perception of higher education. Finally, the study sought to identify other motivating factors for perception on higher education apart from those already identified.

## 4.0 Research Methods and Data Collection

### 4.1 Methodology and Sampling

The study was conducted using face to face interview where the questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Thirty participants were involved in the study. The study involved answering ten questions related to higher education. The demographic information of the respondent was also recorded and added to the analysis. The questionnaire used was a quantitative one.

The questionnaire had two sections i.e. the demographic data part and the research question section. The demographic section aimed at measuring and obtaining the information about the respondent. The research question section was used to get the respondents' opinion and perception. The variables include in the study were meant to help measure the perception of the people on higher education. The questions were designed such that each had values on a scale of 1-5. The values were as defined as shown below:

Never

Almost never

Sometimes

Fairly often

Almost often

In the study, the total score obtained from the set of ten questions was considered as the Perceived Higher Education Score (PHES). The score

ranged from ten to fifty. The respondent with the higher score is taken to have the higher likelihood of going for higher education given the opportunity. Data collection was based on the person's experience for the past thirty days. However, the question 7 and 10 were asked for the past one year.

The sample size of thirty was chosen as it is sufficiently large enough to make a statistical inference about a population phenomenon. The study employed convenient sampling method technique. The method involved selecting the respondents based on their ease of access or availability. Most of those who were interviewed were those who reside close to the researcher's residential area. The questions were expected to provide numerical values corresponding to their response. The other set of questions included demographic survey question.

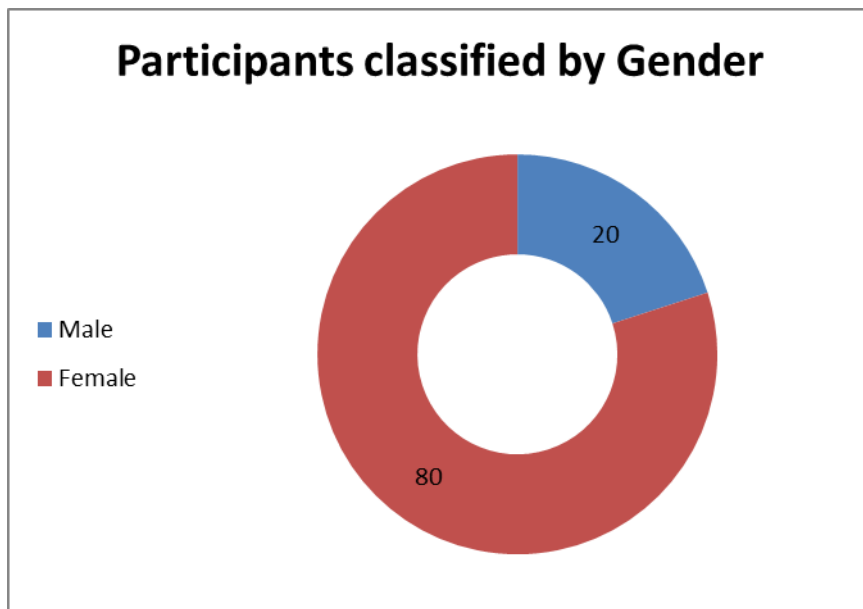
## 5.0 Findings

### 5.1 Sample Demographics

#### 5.1.1 Gender

The majority of the respondents were females. A large number of females was important regarding the impact on the study findings especially for the assumption of representativeness of a sample.



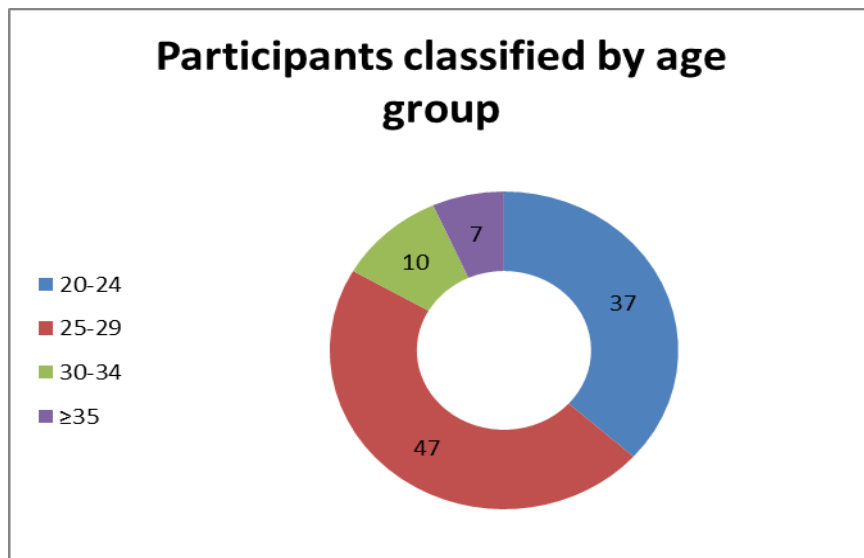


**Figure 1**

Figure 1 above represents the percentage of the people by gender who took part in the study. 20% of the people who took part in the study were men whereas the remaining 80% were female. This means that the study will gather its response from more female than male. The study was based on the availability of the respondents thus; it means more women were available last month than men.

### 5.1.2 Age

The sample collected for the interview composed of people from various ages. The ages were categorized into four age groups for ease of analysis and comparison. The data sample had various age groups. The study considered only those whose ages ranged from 20 to 38 years. The information obtained is represented in the figure below.

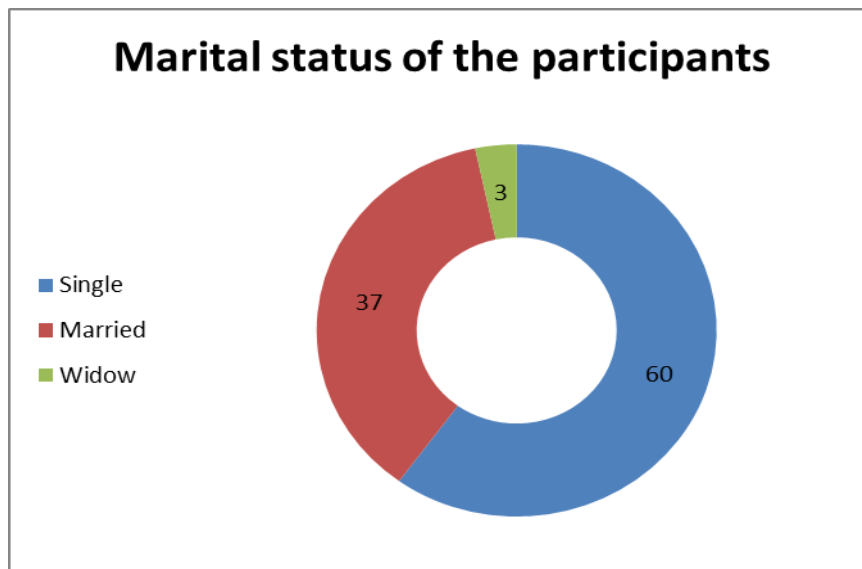


**Figure 2**

Figure 2 above represents the classification of the participants according to age. The figure reveals that majority (49%) of the respondents were of age 25-29. The second and third groups with the majority after the 25-29 group were those from the group of 20-24 and 30-34 being 37% and 10% respectively. Those older than thirty-five years formed the least group comprising of less than 10% of the total sample.

### **5.1.3 Marital status**

For this study, marital status was very crucial as previous studies had indicated that majority of those who go for further studies are married. Marital status might not necessarily be a factor in the decision to go for higher studies, but it might be a co-factor. Among the status covered by the study were; married, single and widowed. The majority of those involve in the study were single.

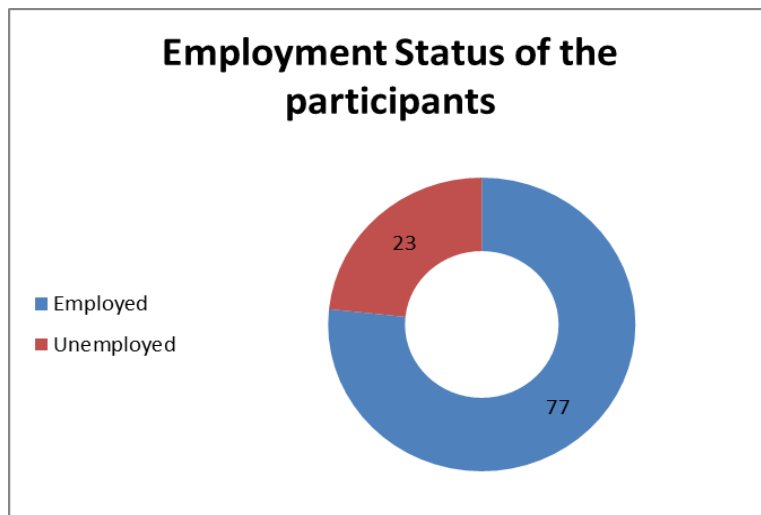


**Figure 3**

Figure 3 above shows the percentages of individuals by marital status. The pie chart indicates that most of those involved in the study were singles as they recorded the highest percentage of 60%. They were closely followed by the married individuals at 37%. The widowed were way the fewest at only 3%. The findings in this study best represent the singles as they form the majority of those sampled for investigation.

#### **5.1.4 Employment Status**

The study also categorized its sample according to their employment status. This implies that the study gathered its information from both the employed and unemployed. Employment status is very influential as far as going back for higher education is concerned. There are job opportunities that require their employees to keep increasing their skills. The majority of the respondents were found to be the employed as can be seen in the chart below. The possibility of a given company to allow its employees to pursue higher education is a factor to the employee having hope of furthering his/her studies.

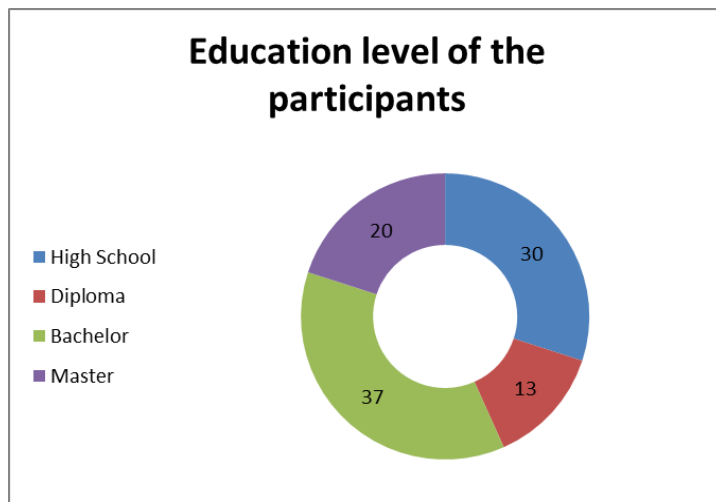


**Figure 4**

Figure 4 above shows employment status percentages. The study observed that of those who took part in the study, the majority were not employed in the formal sector. The number of individual employed in the formal sector who took part in the survey was more than those in the informal sector. From the chart above, 77% of those interviewed worked in the formal sector whereas the remaining 23% worked in the informal sector. Further, the 23% included those without any form of employment. Given that the majority of those involved in the study were employed, the statistics made therefore mostly reflected the view of the employed group.

### 5.1.5 Education level

Someone's current education level determines whether or not he/she need to go for higher education. The study aimed at knowing the association between the level of education and people's perception on furthering their education

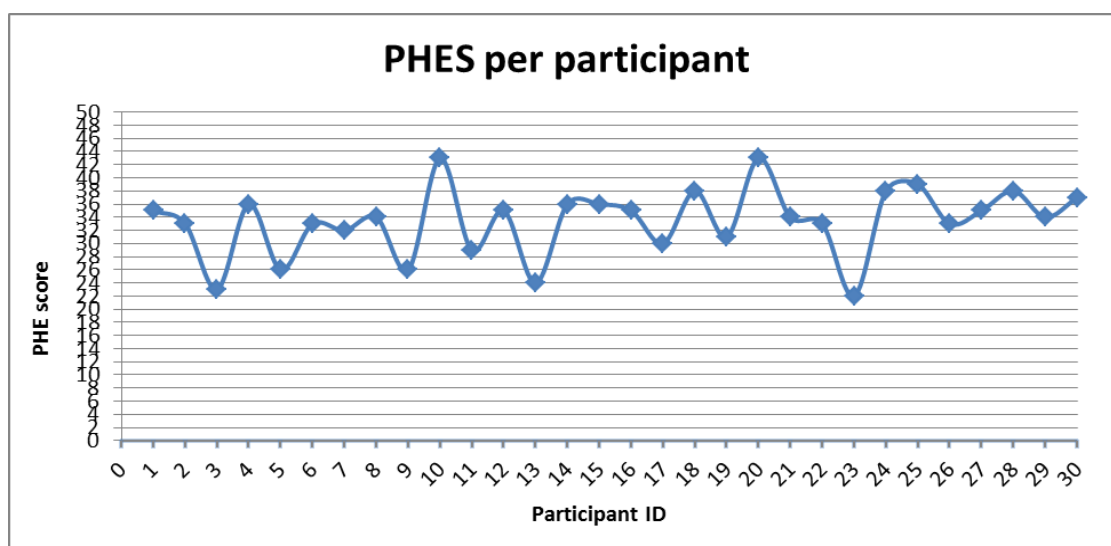


**Figure 5**

From figure 5 above, it can be seen that the study covered people mostly with university level of education. 37% of the respondents had a bachelor's degree forming the majority. They were followed closely by high school leavers at 30%.

## 5.2 Data, Results, and Analysis

### 5.2.1 General finding



**Figure 6**

From the graph, only two participants had a perceived higher education score above 40. The above 40 scores were reported for participants with ID 10 and 20 both having scores of 44. The level of 44 can be considered high and thus generalized to be more likely to go for higher education. The lowest score from the graph is 21. Statistically, this is an outlier. The number of individuals who scored below thirty was six. The mean perceived higher education score is 35.

### 5.2.2 Perceived higher education analysis.

This section analyzed the perception by fetching the responses to each of the ten questions. It helped get a deeper insight on the perception and opinion in higher education.

**Table 1**

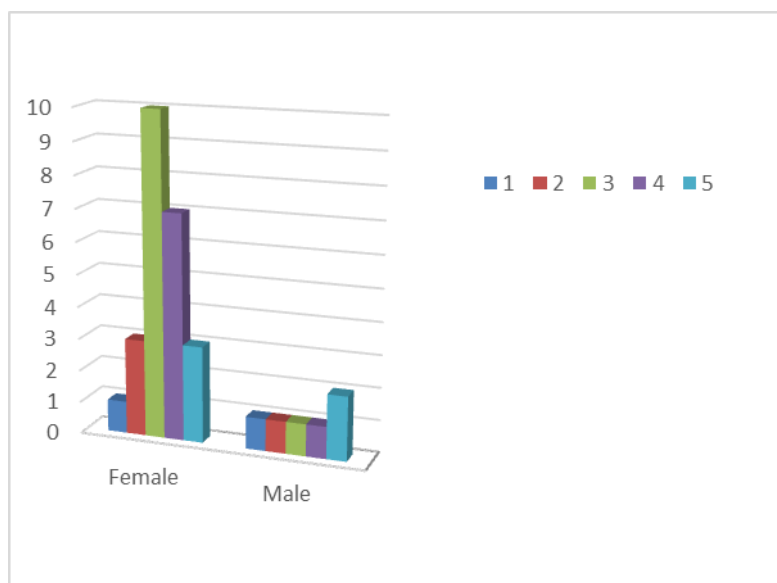
Percentage										
Scale	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Never	10%	10%	7%	0%	0%	7%	27%	13%	3%	10%
Almost never	10%	13%	7%	10%	30%	13%	13%	10%	10%	3%
Sometimes	17%	20%	20%	47%	23%	37%	33%	33%	43%	47%
Fairly often	40%	33%	37%	27%	20%	17%	17%	43%	37%	40%
Very often	23%	23%	30%	17%	27%	27%	10%	0%	7%	0%

The majority (40%) of the respondents said they felt the need for furthering their education in the last thirty days fairly often. Also, most of the respondents fairly often think about furthering their education. They feel that having academic certificate would help in accessing more opportunities. As a result, 43% of the respondents said they fairly often seek

advice specifically with an aim of seeking for the best higher education.

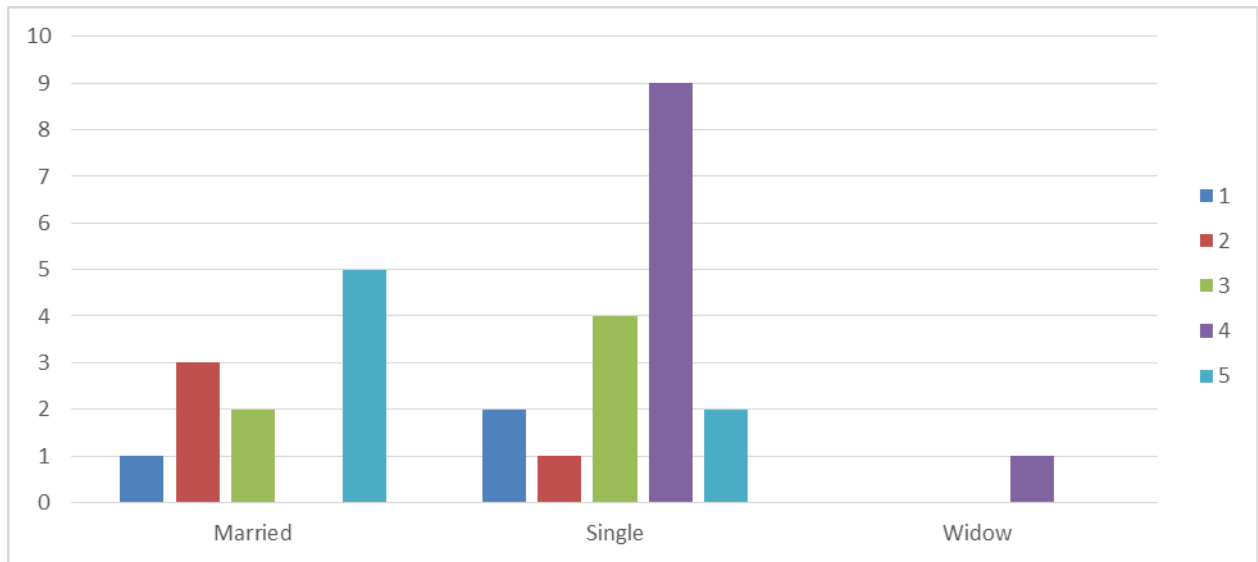
Quite some people sometimes develop an interest in holding higher education certificate, and also admire people with higher education. Some respondents, however, think that the cost of education is higher than the benefit accrued. This has led to the respondents sometimes having negative thoughts about furthering their studies.

### 5.2.3 Discussion



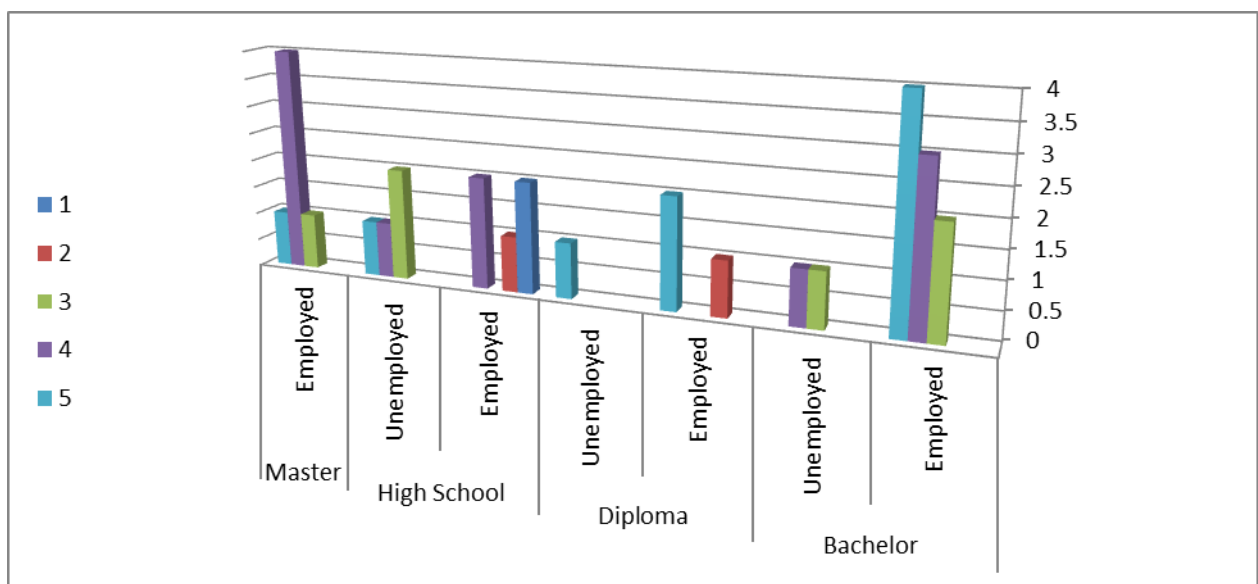
**Figure 7**

From the bar graph above, it can be seen that the perception has a relationship with the gender of the respondent. The study shows that more female think of higher education as compared to men.



**Figure 8**

The general perception and idea of going for higher education are most common among the single group. The study, therefore, indicates that the marital status has an effect on the perception of the people towards higher education. The probable reason for this is that the married are occupied by family matters.



**Figure 9**



In all levels of education, the employed group has a higher perception of going for higher education. The employment rate also increases with the level of education. The graph also indicates that those with bachelors and masters degree have the highest perception of higher education.

## 6.0 Conclusion and recommendation

We can conclude that there are high perception and interest in pursuing higher education among the people residing around the author of the study. The study managed to prove that perceived higher education is associated with factors such as age, education level, marital status and gender. The study revealed that age influences people's perception and opinion of higher education. Gender and marital status have a contributing effect on the perception of female and single groups being the leading factors in the perception. Finally, the study established that employment influences one's perception about higher education.

Although the study achieved its objective, it faces a risk of rejection by scholars as the sample collected was not representative. For example, the number of male and female was not representative. There is no tool that can directly measure somebody's perception. The questions that were used to estimate this measure could not provide sufficient information about it. Having faced the above challenges, the study, therefore, recommends that future studies should take into consideration the representativeness of the data. Future studies should also expand their study to a period longer than one month as some people might have had other commitments within the one month.