



Journal Homepage: <https://ssarpublishers.com/ssarjahss/>
Abbreviated Key Title: SSAR J Arts Humanit Soc Sci
ISSN: 3049-0340 (Online)
Volume 1, Issue 1 (Jul–Aug) 2024, Page 44-49 (Total PP.6)
Frequency: Bimonthly



Article History

Received: 20/07/2024 - Accepted: 29/07/2024 - Published: 02/08/2024

COUNTERING GENDER CHALLENGES IN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN WEST AFRICA

By

Corresponding author: Morenike Folabalogun, PhD

Department of Fine and Applied Arts(History of Art) Faculty of Arts Kwara State University, Malete

Abstract: This paper titled countering gender challenges in knowledge production in Nigeria, West Africa, x-rays the challenges militating against gender educational production in Nigeria, West Africa. The study adopted qualitative methodology of research; which includes;non-participant observation, oral interview, literary materials on gender equality. Gender feminist theory was adopted for the theoretical framework, using Charlotte Whitton in Christ quote which maintains that, “whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good, luckily this is not difficult”. The author mentioned more than twenty-one factors militating against gender knowledge production and discussed about five in details. Five recommendations is given for possible adaptation. The author concluded with Robbins quote which says ‘Women, do two thirds of the work, however receive ten percent of the world’s income and own one per cent of the means of production, which implies the huge gap in gender equality all over the world, Nigeria inclusive.

Keywords: Challenges, Education, Gender, Knowledge, Production

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the most populated black African countries in the world with a population of about 200 million and 36 states. The country is huge and massive with diverse culture which is the sum total of human activities and expressions, like arts and crafts, religion, dance, music, costume, myths, values, norms, architecture, language, food, customs, costumes, beliefs, musical instruments and musical diversities. Education is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life(Education Defination..dictionary.com).As a researcher my definition of education is ‘what happens to us as humans, from the day we are born to the day we

die’. There are still numerous challenges in Nigeria obstructing or countering gender equality in knowledge production. The author’s pioneer gender related research study was carried out at the University of Ibadan and it attracted a grant from Women Documentation and Research Centre (WODOC) headed then by the late Professor Bolanle Awe. The pioneer research motivated the author to carry out a gender related study again this time at the Ahmadu Bello University on the study on the works of Female Hausa cap embroiderers in Paki village, Zaria, Kaduna state, Nigeria, for her Ph.D.

Literature Review

The phrase gender has to do with socially constructed aspects of differences between men and women (John and Gordon, 2005). While gender can also be defined as the distinction created by societies between human beings on the basis of masculinity and femininity in relation to their expected roles in the society (Akinmade, 2000). Gender studies are one of the interesting areas of research in many parts of the world including Nigeria. It is multi-disciplinary that is concerned with the socio-cultural construction of roles of male and female in the society and how such construction brings about changes in the socio-economic and political conditions of each sex ((Boyi, 2013) Gender equality is a political concept that emphasizes equality between genders. Gender and equality is typically defined as women and men enjoying the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities within all areas of life (Gender equality, 2014). Many women have accepted as divine and immutable the prejudices, limitations and inequalities entrenched in society concerning them (Nkom, 2014). There are currently 258 universities in Nigeria; 50 federal universities, 60 state universities and 148 private universities (Suleiman, 2023). Establishments of universities, polytechnics and colleges for tertiary education, training skilled academically graduates in different specializations has been on an experiential increase in Nigeria over the years. Statistically the ratio of the female in some disciplines surpasses that of the males. Currently, Nigeria possesses the largest population of out-of-school learning youths in the world (Abdullahi & Abdullahi, 2014). Women can be seen in various high profile careers (Nussbaum, 2003), but the representation of women in high profile careers can still be improved on.

Scope of study

This study is directed towards examining factors countering gender challenges in knowledge production in Nigeria in West Africa. The author listed twenty-one factors and discussed about five in the study,

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this paper is to examine some of the factors countering gender knowledge production in

Nigeria. Objectives include the following;

- i. to highlight factors countering gender knowledge productivity in Nigeria
- ii. examine influence of the five agency of education
- iii. identify the characteristics

Research Methodology

To examine countering gender challenges in knowledge production in West Africa. The methodology of research is based on qualitative, exploring direct and indirect observation, descriptive, thematic, narrative analysis and consulting internet resources, literary texts materials, oral interviews, and internet. Observation provides a direct procedure for studying various aspects of human behavior, which may be the only effective way to gather data in a particular situation (Lokesh, 2009).

Theoretical Frame Work

This paper's theoretical framework on countering gender challenges in knowledge production in Nigeria West Africa is mirrored through Charlotte Whitton in Christ (2005) quote which maintains that, "whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good, luckily this is not difficult". Statement of Whitton in the countering gender challenges in knowledge production in West Africa cannot be underplayed in Nigeria. Females should be encouraged and given equal opportunities as their male counterparts. Therefore, this paper is directed upon the tenets of Whitton in (Christ, 2005), which states the struggles and perfection that females need to go through in order to be accepted and to work extremely harder in a world perceived as patriarchal.

Statement of the Problem:

The problem of this study is that factors militating against Gender are an issue in female's history; most female embroiderers do not have equal opportunity with their male embroiderers as counterparts in their society. Women have talent and intelligence but, due to social constraints and prejudices, it is still a long distance away from the goal of gender equality (Pratibha, 2001)

Different Types of Education

The author is of the opinion that, the importance of education in any society or culture cannot be underplayed. Education can be social or spiritual. Education can be formal, informal and non-formal. Non-formal normally takes place within a community or society, while formal is always given in schools like; primary, secondary, colleges, universities with different years allocation before the person can qualify for a certificate or degree. Non-formal defines the type of learning that that's place in an extracurricular activity.

Benefits of Education to a Female(gender)

Olajire (2022) asserts that,

- Empathy is needed for the success of some profession. So educating females in line with these practically bring significant improvement
- Multitask describes the performance of a set of different tasks in a short period of time, this requires greater cognitive demand, so educating a female child will be more helpful.
- Discipline; lack of discipline has given rise to fraud, unrest, embezzlement, corruption amongst others. A disciplined female will participate in activities that will bring about community development.
- Economic growth of a female will bring about more resourcefulness and knowledge of management of scarce resources, countries with high literacy levels tend to be in better economic situations.
- Co-Creators; females have the ability to jointly create of high benefits with another person's so given the right education will improve families and the world at large.
- The author observed that, benefits of education since time immemorial can also include Spiritual, Physical, Cultural, Social, Economic and Political development. Cultural benefits include the expression of attitudes, norms, values and beliefs of a particular culture and what is deposited in a culture is what the education of a people exhibits.

Some Countering Gender Challenges in Knowledge Production in Nigeria, West Africa

- Household inequality

- Female Vagina Mutilation(FVM)
- Vesico-vaginal Fistula (VVF)
- Abusive Drugs
- Sex for marks/Rape.
- Insecurity
- Negative effects of technology
- Negative Peer group pressure
- Weak home foundation
- Home pressure Demand
- Professional inequality
- Impact of economic inequality
- Inequality on scholarly research work, thus female are underrepresented in research
- Biological issues and labor affects
- Economic inequality,
- Imbalance of Power,
- Lack of access to technological exposure
- Educational gap between urban and rural areas
- Major female activities were made invisible by their disproportionate seclusion within the family household
- Cultural issues and expectation syndrome affect
- Men take the commendation for work done by women at the background at times.

Discussion

The researcher make bold to say that so many factors are responsible for the countering of gender challenges in knowledge production in Nigeria in West Africa. The impact of the five basic agency of education in life; the home, religion, Peer group, society, school are responsible for the negatively or positively in character formation, philosophies and ideologies of in a child directly or indirectly in the society. These agencies have great impact in the formal or informal education systems and have been key players in impacting gender inequality in life. There are so many factors socially, economically, financially, psychologically also responsible for gender inequality in Nigeria. Nigeria females' drop out of school due to biological issues and labor, several factors after managing to finish school some challenges like female vagina mutilation (FVM), Vesicovaginal fistula(VVF), internal and external factors like, the negative impact of internet and technology, misuse of ICT plays major negative influence if used or imbibed

negatively. Globalization is said to have created a window and a gazing effect that allows young people to observe, imbibe, learn as well as sample (Nwabueze, 2016). Females sample things seen on the internet without the direction or guidance of an adult. Nigeria under the colonization for about sixty(60) years witnessed some negative residual effects of Eurocentric and colonial legacy, which is seen in any country once under colonization, the leftover of over stressed influences can be seen on the youth's female dressings. Culture is the sum total of a human being which includes; norms, values, customs, costumes, religion, art, crafts, music, musical instruments, food, myths, dance, architecture, language, oral history, and our geographical location. Any culture that is static dies, but culture can adopt important aspects of another culture to blend with his own culture without discarding important aspects of his own culture. Nigeria females especially should learn to imbibe the positive rather the negative impact or traits of residual effects of Eurocentric and Colonial legacy, Internet incursion, Modernism, urbanization and even the use of abusive substances (Drugs).

In an oral interview conducted with Demilade Ramon on September 5, 2023, she states that, some female students from secondary to university levels are influenced negatively by the use of different types of substances like, *Tramadol* and *Aspirin tablets*, Marijuana, Cocaine, Valium and Codeine Cocaine, Codeine, Heroin, Methand local stuff (mixtures) like *Skushi*, *Gutter Water*, *Canfor*, *Monkey Tail*, *Hypo*, *Chips of Cement Blocks*, *Kayar Mata*(women traditional mischievous enhancers) and *Gum Solution*, *hypo mixed with malt drink*, *Coca-Cola diluted with Maggi cubes* in order to enhance their performance socially amongst their peer groups. The level of drug abuse among youths is very high and worrisome (Abulude, 2018).The use of hard drugs have destroyed the potentials of so many females not to be able to attain the expected heights to even have the opportunity of competing with their male counterparts. Females on drugs cannot perform well in school, they then repeat or carry over courses and in some cases withdraw or become junkies.

A True life 151 minutes Nigerian movie released by NETFLEX coined 'CITATION'with Temi

Otedola playing the lead role released in 2020 with a seventeen(17) member cast, shot in three locations namely Nigeria, Cape Verde and Senegal tells the story of an attempted rape case in a Nigerian university involving a female. This movie is more explicit to describe sex for grades, rape, insecurity faced by females in the 21st century A.D in Nigeria. Rape cases demoralize and leave a female traumatized psychologically, emotionally, physically and socially for life and can cause a mental breakdown and self-hate syndrome for life.

Charlotte Whitton in Christ (2005) quote which maintains that, "whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good, luckily this is not difficult". In Nigeria for a female to excel in any area of life, to be known or announced in the same field as male counterparts, females must be determined to work twice as hard as the males, strong mentally, sound in mind, must not have self-pity, be confident and stylish, intelligent, bold, be able to work alone and be a group leader by example and be able to stand criticism without cracking, expect challenges and don't be a crying baby. Advantages of women in work places include; they get along with others, communicate effectively and work collaboratively for the benefit of the workplace, their roles at home environment, females tend to have a better work life balance, they favor flexible work schedules, work share programs and work from home opportunities(Stahi, undated).Even with all qualities mentioned, to breach the gap of gender inequality professionally in Nigeria we still have a long way to go. Women, do two thirds of the work, however receive ten percent of the world's income and own one per cent of the means of production (Robbins, 1999).Aronson (1991) posits that, "scholars of Africa have been unusually slow to consider theoretical issues of gender. While many have studied women in Nigeria, few have been able to grapple with gender related issues or attempt to interpret the data from a gender theoretical perspective.

Recommendations

- Societies should take more seriously rape cases and domestic violence cases reported.
- Strong monitoring drug evaluation and detention centres should be established in

schools across all levels, to detect and control the use of hard drugs.

- Guidance and counselling should be revived strongly not to be an arm chair profession in schools and in the society
- Female orientation from the home must change in the 21st century A.D. Nigeria.
- Males and Females education must be looked into in Nigeria, the youths have recently coined a slang that 'Education is a Scam' their minds must be disabused by the government by doing the necessary.

Conclusion

The implication of this study is that, this research examines the inexhaustible circumstances and factors militating against gender knowledge production. The researcher further summarizes Household inequality, Female Vagina Mutilation(FVM), Vesicovaginal Fistula (VVF), Abusive Drugs, Sex for marks/Rape, Insecurity, Negative effects of technology, Negative

Peer group pressure, Weak home foundation, Home pressure Demand, Professional inequality, Impact of economic inequality, Inequality on scholarly research work, thus female are underrepresented in research, Biological issues and labor affects, Economic inequality, Imbalance of Power, Lack of access to technological exposure, Educational gap between urban and rural areas, Major female activities were made invisible by their disproportionate seclusion within the family household Cultural issues and expectation syndrome affect, Men take the commendation for work done by women at the background at times. Some factors responsible for gender disparity includes; economic inequality, education and health, biological issues and labor, imbalance of power and more. Males and females should be given equal opportunities and respect in life and in the society. Male's educational production should also be encouraged, so many are losing interest in education because of societal pressure and domestic provisions.

References

1. Abdullahi, D., & Abdullahi, J. (2014). The Political Will and Quality Basic Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Power, Politics, and Governance*, 2(2):75-100.
2. Akinmade, O. (2000). *Teaching Education in the 21st Century Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies*. University of Jos: Nigeria Pp.148. University of Jos: Nigeria.
3. Boyi, A. A. (2013). Gender Studies and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*. Vol. 3 No.10, Pp31-34., Pp31-34.
4. Christ, S. (2005). *30 Most Inspirational Quotes by Highly Successful Women Around the World*. Retrieved September 7th, 2023, from lite.www.lifeback.org.
5. *Education Defination..dictionary.com*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Dictionary.com.
6. John, S. (2005). *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*, London. Oxford University Press Pp.204.
7. Lokesh, K. (2009). *Methodology of Educational Research*. Fourth Edition. Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD India.
8. Nkom, R. (2014). The African Woman and Art Propagation. *Abrakaa Humanities Review*, Vol6, Issues3, Pp 168.
9. Nussbaum, M. (2003). Women's Education: A Global Challenge' Sign:. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* vol 29, no.2, Pp325-355.
10. Nwabueze, N. .. (2016). *Hip-hop Culture*. Retrieved June 29, 2018
11. Olajire, B. (2022, September 15). *7 Reasons Why Female Education is Better Than Male Education*. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from servantboy.com.
12. Pratibha, P. (2001). Retrieved January 24, 2019

13. Robbins, R. (1999). *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. Boston Allyn and Bacon.
14. Stahi, A. (undated). *3 Advantages of Being a Woman in the Workplace*. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from <https://www.ashleystahi.com>adv...>
15. Suleiman, Q. (2023, May 16). *Private Universities in Nigeria now 148 as government approves additional 37*. Retrieved September 1st, 2023

Oral Interview

1. Ramon, D. (2023, September 5th). *Countering gender challenges in knowledge production in West Africa*. (M. Folabalogun, Interviewer)
2. Tolani, R. (2023 September 5th). *Countering gender challenges in knowledge production in West Africa*. (M. Folabalogun, Interviewer)

THE END