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VOL. 2 NO. 1 2016



ISSN - 2536-7358

IJAD

ILORIN JOURNAL OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT



JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, NIGERIA.

VOL. 2 NO. 1, 2016



ISSN - 2536-7358

IJAD

ILORIN JOURNAL OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT



**JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, NIGERIA.**

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Printed By:
Oluwole Printing Co. Ilorin, Nigeria,
+2347066235883; +2348056613563

ILORIN JOURNAL OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (IJAD)		VOLUME 2 NO. 1, 2016	VOLUME 2 NO. 1, 2016	ILORIN JOURNAL OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (IJAD)								
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EDITORIAL COMMENTS We are delighted to introduce to you the second issue of our journal for 2016. This edition is a true reflection of the central focus of the journal, in that, it captures articles which address critical existing and emerging issues with policy implications for administration and development. In the first article, Women and Governance in the Nigerian University System, Moti, Ukertor Gabriel examines women involvement in leadership positions in selected Nigerian within a period of five years (2009-2013) and reveals that although obstacles to women involvement in the University decision-making positions still persist, there has been improvement in the involvement of women in University leadership and governance in recent years. Aremu Fatai, Isiaq Atanda and Aluko Opeyemi in their article, Managing Democratic Structures in Africa: The Way Forward, seek to interrogate democracy in Africa and the existing institutions in the face of administrative letdown with the adoption of the afro barometer database round six 2015 in the analysis of level of democracy in four selected states in Africa with selected institutions: the executive, the legislature, the judiciary and the security sector. In the article, Women Educational Empowerment as Panacea for Nation-Building, Abdullahi Muhammad, Lawan Ibrahim and Umar Abubakar x-ray the current educational status of women in Nigeria against the notion that women constitute almost 50% of the country's population but contribute very little in the nation-building, and conclude that despite the current wave of globalisation, women especially in the North are still lagging behind in education due to poverty, religious and socio-cultural beliefs. Samuel Oyedele explores Communication Management for Effective Local Government Administration in Nigeria; arguing that local government administration in Nigeria has not been efficient enough to contribute meaningfully to national development and submits that a major factor influencing the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments in Nigeria is organizational communication which, if effectively carried out, will ensure greater efficiency and development in local government administration. In the article, Evaluation of Planning Strategies for Development Administration in Nigeria, Alabi Abdullahi, Ameen Abdullateef and Arinze Okpala seek to know why efforts made by both military and civilian governments to achieve national development in Nigeria since 1960 have yielded little or no results. They conclude that lack of political will, corruption, lack of data bank, insufficient machinery and technology were responsible for failure of development programmes in the country. Osezua Ehiyamen, and Nkogbu, Godfrey Oshilim in their article, Managing Changes in Organizational External Environment: The Role of Human Resource Managers contends that, given the fast pace of changes in the external environment facing organizations, human resource managers must keep with the pace if they are to succeed and remain relevant. The paper concluded that changes are inevitable in organizations and the human resource management field is not exempted from such changes. Olaniyan, Samson Olajide examines Governance and Food Security in Nigeria between 1996 and 2014 using Principal Component Analysis and Generalized Method of Moments. The result showed that governance has a positive and significant relationship with food security and agricultural production in Nigeria. The study concluded by emphasizing the importance of management and governance in Nigeria in order to achieve food security and high agricultural production. In the article, E-Government in Nigeria: Progress and Prospects, Abdulkareem Abdulrazaq, and Ishola Abdulrasaq investigate the level of progress and the drawbacks that have inhibited the fast development of E-Government in Nigeria after sixteen years of introduction in the country, and conclude that performance has been a mix of failure and success over the period. Lastly, Ebenezer Ejalonibu Lawal and Opeyemi Idowu Aluko in their article, Election Management and Democratisation Process in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, adopt the system and decision making theories in analysing the extent of stability in the polity at post election years, and conclude that good governance and the use of constitutional provisions are instrumental in resolving electoral disputes. Osezua Ehiyamen Mediayanose., Ph.D Editor-in-Chief Ag. 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WOMEN EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT AS PANACEA FOR NATION-BUILDING

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Abstract

Over the years, the issue of women empowerment has been attracting discussions in both spheres of academia and governance as to why women have been left under empowered and been labelled as illiterates when compared to men. Nigerian women constitute almost 50% of the country's population, but contribute very little in the nation-building. Despite the current wave of globalisation, Nigerian women, especially northern women, remain at disadvantaged in education. This paper gives an overview of the current educational status of women in Nigeria, revealing that Nigerian women, especially in the north are still lagging behind in education because of poverty, religious and socio-cultural beliefs. The study uses documentary analysis to arrive at conclusion that the education of women is not only necessary but compulsory in the nation-building. The study therefore recommends more involvement of women in political and administrative system, as well as giving them more priority to education.

Keywords: Gender, Empowerment, Education, Nation-building

INTRODUCTION

Attention and actions have increased over the years as per the concern of women globally. The issues of consciousness raising, skills acquisition, poverty reduction, politics and education are some areas of concern by scholars, government and non-governmental organisations about women empowerment. The underlying assumption is that if women understood their conditions, knew their rights and learned various skills traditionally denied to them, empowerment would follow. Many years have passed now and the issue is still attracting concerns because it is not changing the way it ought to. Reasonable numbers of women are still suffering from illiteracy and poverty. Fapohunda (2012) observed that the 2006 National Census puts Nigeria's population at about 150 million, about 50% of which are females. Many of them largely living in poverty.

The current wave of globalization has greatly

improved the living standard of women worldwide, particularly the lives of women in the developing world. Nevertheless, women remain disadvantaged in many areas of life, including education, employment, health, and civil rights. According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank, 57 percent of the 72 million primary school aged children who do not attend school are females. Additionally, girls are four percent less likely than boys to complete primary schools (Gender statistics, 2010). Gender inequality in education is high. Girls are less likely to access school, to remain in school or to achieve in education.

Despite almost 30 years of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and 20 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), today girls make up around 56 per cent of the 77 million children not in school, and women make up two thirds of the adults who are illiterate. Even girls who do enroll in school may have irregular attendance due to other demands on them, and the fact that their education may not be

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prioritized (Aja-Okorie, 2013). Girl Child has been suffering discrimination from secular education right from ancient days due to culture and tradition especially in the northern part of Nigeria. The issue is yet unresolved and continued to obtain attention in the academics and governance. Girl Children have not been enjoying the cherish, love and protection by parents and the society at large compared to male child due to certain traditional, cultural, religious and stereotypical beliefs that are still not completely eradicated. As such, they lagged behind in the developmental processes of the country despite their population explosion. The world has witness a number of developments instigated and accomplished by women. The population explosion of women worldwide necessitates their contribution in the nation-building.

Literature Review

Education is the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically (Offorma (2008). It is an important means through which the society reproduces itself, passes its main characteristics to the next generation as well as a dynamic instrument of change and development (World Bank, 1994). It is therefore not for the purpose of white – collar jobs alone, but for the individual and societal development, hence it is desirable that everyone should have it including the female (Abbagana, 2013).

Considering the trend of the world today where female gender's population is increasing rapidly, it becomes so obvious and convincing that female child education is paramount to nation-building. UNESCO (1991) in Abdul (2003) says that the education of a girl is vital for the effective preparation of today's girls into tomorrow's responsible adult women. The female child, just like the male child is entitled to all the citizenship rights, one of which is access to compulsory basic education and opportunity for higher education depending on her ability. The World Declaration on Education For All (1990) report emphasizes that learning opportunity shall be expanded for all so that every individual will participate in the process of national building. To include, everybody in the process of education therefore, suitable programmes should be provided according to the needs of the people in the curriculum. Nigerian women constitute a diverse group which despite differences in culture and class are bound together by a commonality of issues and experiences that are rooted in the discrimination they

face at all levels and stages of their lives (UNDP, 2000).

Education is the instrument through which every nation's development can be quantified. Development of all sectors of every economy necessitates for enough application of knowledge, by implication, education. Nigerian society is not an exception. With the prevailing differences in child education, the situation will only persist.

Need for Women Educational Empowerment in Nigeria

In 2000, 189 countries including Nigeria adopted Education For All (EFA) first launched in 1990 and led by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the aim of meeting the learning needs of all children, youth and adults globally by 2015 (Oweh, n.d). The EFA has seriously given a greater concern on the educational empowerment of women. The following are the goals of EFA.

- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs.
- Achieve a 50 per cent improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure the excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The EFA goals also contribute to the global pursuit of

the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially Goal 2 on Universal Primary Education and Goal 3 on Gender Equality in Education, by 2015. However, despite the financial support Nigeria got from international partners like the World Bank to help her achieve this goal and the country's strong economy, it is saddening that as at 2015 which is the EFA deadline approaches, Nigeria is far from reaching the Education for All goal (Oweh, n.d). This

Table 1: **Nigeria's Estimated Population**

Age (years)	Percentage (%)	Male	Female
0-14	43.2%	39,151,304	37,353,737
15-24	19.3%	17,486,117	16,732,533
25-54	30.5%	27,697,644	26,285,816
55-64	3.9%	3,393,631	3,571,301
65 years and over	3%	2,621,845	2,861,826
Total	100%	90,350,541 (51.1%)	86,805,213 (48.9%)
Whole Total		177,155,754	

Source: CIA, (2014 estimate)

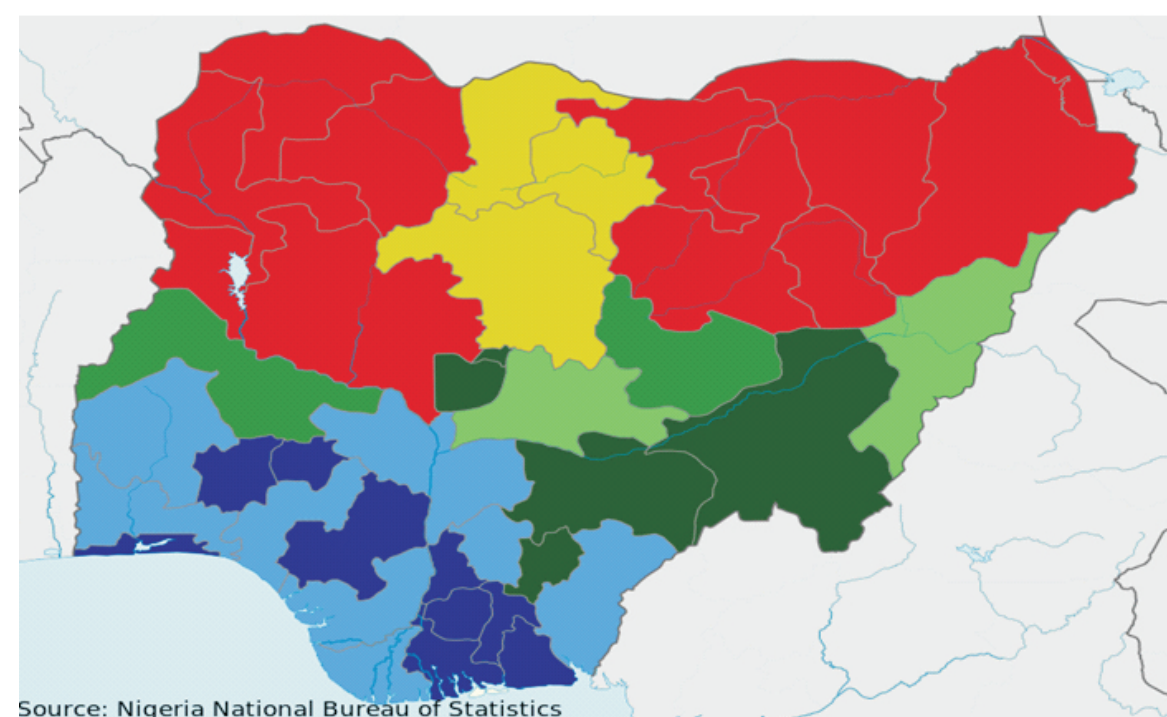
From the above statistics, it is obvious that female population in the country is so high almost equals the population of men. The figure also indicates that female population is increasing with a very high

is the same with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that failed to meet up with its first target, 2015.

The Nigeria's population according to UNFPA (2014), which equals the figure of CIA's World Factbook (2015), reveals Nigeria's 2014 estimated population to be **177,155,754** at the population growth rate of 2.47% as tabulated below:

number and the number of youngsters is the highest. This is an indication that the country has an option of catching-them-young so as to avert all other ills brought about by inadequate education.

Fig. 1: **Female Literacy Rate in Nigeria by States**



Source: Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics, 2013

Key:

- 90%	-80-90%	-70-80%	-60-70%
-50-60%	-35-50%	- 35%	

Fig 1.1 above indicates that 90% of the learned females in the country based in the southern part of the country. They occupy Osun, Ekiti, Lagos, Edo, Anambra, Imo, Rivers, Abia and Akwa-Ibom states. 80-90% of them still occupy more southern states viz; Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Cross River, Enugu, Delta, Bayelsa and Kogi States. 70-80% are more of north central states, viz; Abuja, Benue, Ebonyi, Taraba, Plateau and Kwara States. 50-60% occupied Adamawa and Nasarawa states, 35-50% occupied Katsina, Kano and Kaduna states of the north and only 35% occupied the typical northern states, viz; Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Niger, Bauchi, Gombe, Yobe and Borno states.

The statistics also indicates that the illiteracy rate of female population in the country is more pronounced in the northern part of the country, particularly the Hausa/Fulani speaking states of the northeast, northwest and the north central states.

UNICEF's research (2015) revealed thus: Forty percent (40%) of Nigerian children aged 6-11 do not attend any primary school with the northern region recording the lowest school attendance rate in the country particularly girls. Despite a significant increase in recent years, it is estimated that about 4.7 million children of primary school age are still not in school. In the north particularly, the gender gap between remains particularly wide and the proportion of girls to boys in school ranges from 1 girl to 2 boys to 1 to 3 in some states. Many of these girls do not attend school because their labour is needed to either help at home or to bring additional income into the family. Most parents do not send their children, especially girls, to school and prefer to send them to Qur'anic schools rather than formal schools. Even when children enroll in schools, many do not complete the primary cycle. According to current data, 30% of pupils drop out of primary school and 54% transit to Junior Secondary Schools. Reason for this low completion rate include child labour, economic hardship and early marriage.

Recent decades have seen a greater awareness of the importance of women's empowerment, but much remains to be done. For example, despite significant progress toward universal primary education, only 87 out of 100 children in developing countries complete primary school and more than half of those not in schools are girls. More than a half-billion women joined the global labor force between 1980 and 2008; now four in ten of the world's workers are women. But, on average, women still earn one-third less than men. Women are disproportionately affected by environmental impacts such as climate

change-induced drought, sea-level rise or severe storm damage. Yet they are severely under-represented in debating, negotiating and environmental decision-making at all levels. At past meetings on the global environment, women led only 10% of delegations, and some 40% of delegations were comprised of men only, a number which has actually risen in recent years. More women have access to family planning and reproductive health services: contraceptive use in the developing countries has grown from less than 10% in the 1960s to 60% today. But too many still lack access: around the world, 215 million women want to prevent pregnancy but are not using an effective method of contraception (CEP, n.d).

Education is regarded as the key factor in overcoming the barriers that women face and the basic tool for empowering women and bringing them into the mainstream of development. Education not only provides knowledge and skills to improve health and livelihoods, but it empowers women to take their right place in society and the development process. Education gives status and confidence in decision making (Murtaza, 2012). *One of our greatest needs is to spread education among our women. As a matter of fact there is room for the extension of education even among men. The condition of women's education is, however, such that any attempt as its spread deserves help and encouragement from all quarters* (Sharma and Sharma, 2004).

Empowerment of women in education is a fundamental tool that will strengthen their rights and enable them have control over their lives, exerts influence in the society and contribute their quota in the nation building. This proves that the situation of women as opined by Bill Clinton (2009) can be changed. He says in an address that:

Women perform 66 percent of the world's work, and produce 50 percent of the food, yet earn only 10 percent of the income and own 1 percent of the property. Whether the issue is improving education in the developing world, or fighting global climate change, or addressing nearly any other challenge we face, empowering women is a critical part of the equation.

Barriers to Female Education in Nigeria

UNICEF observed the following as barriers to female education in Nigeria:

- Poverty and economic issues:** With 70% of the population living below the poverty line, girls are often sent to generate income for families by selling wares in the market or on

the street.

ii) Early Marriage and Teenage

Pregnancy: These have also militated against girls' attendance, retention and achievement in schools. About 30% of school-age girls drop out of school having already begun childbearing before the age of 18.

iii) Inadequate School Infrastructure:

Classroom space, furniture, and equipment are lacking; many schools are in a rugged and unsafe physical condition; water, health and sanitation facilities are inadequate; and pupil teacher ratios are high, with as many as 100 students in one class, especially in schools in urban slums.

iv) Cultural and Religious Biases: Many Nigerian parents, especially in large families with limited resources, enroll boys in school instead of or before girls. Some parents also keep their daughters out of school due to misinterpretation of the tenets of Islamic religion.

v) Gender Bias in Content and Teaching and Learning Processes. Boys are given more opportunities to ask and answer questions, to use learning materials, and to lead groups. Girls are given less time on task than boys in primary and secondary school science classes. Teachers' use corporal punishment and create an intimidating classroom environment.

Women Education and Nation Building

The general awareness created on the condition of women as the result of the International Women's Year (1975) and the decade that followed (The United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985) (Aina, 1993:1) as well as subsequent UN Conferences like the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, the 1993 Vienna Human Rights Conference, the 1995 Copenhagen Summit on Social Development and the Beijing World Conference (which Nigeria effectively participated and signed its legal instruments) did not only set new priorities, but also produced a blueprint for sustainable role of women in development. Thus, in the last three decades, the role of women in national development has assumed a centre stage in public debates in Nigeria (Luka, 2012).

The role women can play towards the educational development in this country cannot be

overemphasized. Aja-Okorie (2013) observed that improving access to and the quality of education is the most rewarding investment a country can make. Investing in female education will accelerate Nigeria's economic and social development by enhancing human capital, slowing population growth, and alleviating poverty.

Prominent women played leading roles in national building dating back to the pre-colonial era. The likes of Gambo Sawaba who waged a fierce battle for the political and cultural emancipation of women in the North, the exploits of Iyalode (women leader) of the old Oyo Empire has remained the reference point on how political involvement women can engender a free society, among others. In the modern setting, we see the likes of Genevieve Nnaji, Funke Akindele, Zainab Indo Mie, etc (Entertainment); Prof. Maimuna Waziri, Prof. Francisca Okeke, Dr. Akindele (Education); Nadu Denloye, Adenike 'Nike' Oshinowo-Soleye (Business); Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Zulu Sofola (Literature); Deola Sagoe (Fashion) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Aisha Alhassan (Politics), etc. These are examples of women who contributed towards the nation-building. Therefore, the steady educational advancement of women will undoubtedly contribute to the socio-economic development of Nigeria.

Boliva (2010) states that investing in women's literacy carries very high returns; it improves livelihood, leads to better child and maternal health, and favours girls' access to education. He further emphasized that when women are literate, it is the society that gains. Education is seen as a powerful agent of socialization in that it plays a tremendous role in preparing an individual to render active and useful service both to the family and society in general (Okemakinde, 2014).

Women can also help government to achieve its laudable goals and objectives through public enlightenment and national mobilization campaigns. In general, education wipes away ignorance, political apathy and encourages mutual understanding and cooperation among the various strata of society.

Ogungbemi, (2013) observed that if women are given the task of the developing the country, they will surprise us and definitely perform wonder. He believes that an average woman is more dedicated, more hardworking, more prudent, more God fearing, more sincere, more devoted, less tribalistic and more focused.

Conclusion

It is obvious that education is key to nation-building. Nigeria despite having documented National Gender

Policy and adopted Education For All 2015 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), there is no much improvement in female child education. Nigerian women, northern Nigeria specifically, need to be educated to be able to contribute like women in the developed world. The days of leaving women idle, at home or in labour is already gone.

Decades of empirical evidence and practical experience support the strong associations between women's educational attainment and positive development outcomes. It is now conventional wisdom in development discourse that where education levels are higher among women, there is low infant and maternal mortalities, reduced family size and women's health and economic status are stronger. There is even evidence to suggest that in settings where education is more gender equitable, economic growth is more robust. It is the healthier, safer transition of adolescent girls to adulthood and their empowerment during this process that are, in fact, the linchpins between education and improved outcomes at the individual, community and societal levels.

Nation-building cannot be attained without education. It requires educated and enlightened populace. Today, it is so clear that the difference between the developed and underdeveloped countries of the world is related to the level of literacy among the populace, especially the female populace. The clamour of globalisation has informed the world, third world countries specifically that girl child is paramount to nation building. Women empowerment is thus, a necessity. More so, educational empowerment is the best form of empowerment that can ease all other forms of empowerments. The turn of the new millennium has altered the focus, nation-building, to include women and this can only be attained if such women are literate enough.

Recommendations

This paper recommends the following ways which will in the short run pave way for more educational empowerment of women:

- Nigerian government should ensure a reasonable percentage towards the attainment of Education For All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which gives reasonable emphasis to women educational empowerment.
- More women should be involved in decision making though policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This could be through occupying more

political and administrative offices, and other regular appointments.

- The womenfolk should form a formidable group to motivate and create interest and awareness among females to improve female education for women (Ogungbemi, 2013).
- Educated women should work hard to ensure that they raise social awareness of large number of women in the rural area, through effective educative programmes, and mass communication as these will help to improve their self-confidence (Ekemakinde, 2014).
- More priority in access to education should be given to female child. This could be in seeking for an admission into schools, when giving scholarship grants, etc.
- Parents should give equal priority to education for both male and female child.
- Religious leaders, especially Islamic clerics in the northern Nigeria should educate their followers and clarify the misinterpretations of Islam about gender education to the larger society.
- Traditional leaders who are regarded as fathers and mentors should be part of this campaign by enforcing it on parents to allow their girl children to study and seek for the support of the wealthy people, government and NGOs to assist in the cause.

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