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## Editorial

Indeed, *Gender Equality is an opportunity and not a threat.* – Justin Trudeau. Here is another spectacular edition of our Gender and Behaviour Journal – Volume 16, Number 3. Despite the apparent truth behind the above quote and other efforts to eliminate gender inequalities and advocate against gender-related oppression, one can not deny a global culture of discrimination against women in one form or another. Women are still far more likely to shy away from career opportunities they feel unqualified for, not necessarily because they are. Also, both men and women, especially in developing countries, are likely to be rigid towards gender roles. It is important that we use the informative submissions in this edition to make room for reflection into the reasons why women are constantly in these precarious positions and as a foundation for more inquiries into gender-related issues. This publication continues to present eye-opening juxtapositions and further lends its support to discussions around women empowerment and how cultural predisposition influences health, politics, entrepreneurship etc among women in societies. Once again, we express our gratitude for your formidable support and hope that we can continue to count on you.

Happy reading!

Yours Sincerely,

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## WOMEN EDUCATION: A MECHANISM FOR NATION BUILDING

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### Abstract

*This paper looked in to women education and its importance as one of the vital tools for nation building. Education for nation building requires human resources of which women are included. However, various reasons why it became necessary to solidify and prioritize women education for sustainable development were discussed among which were economic status, political awareness, national growth and development among others. Despite non-rested actions from womenfolk to contribute their quota in nation building, there were many challenges facing the education of women standing as stumbling blocks to attain their educational pursuit which were also glimpsed at in this study among the challenges are poverty, poor self-perception, too many responsibilities and the likes. Hence, womenfolk are indispensable in growth and development of a nation, the study therefore recommended that women should be allowed access to quality education so as to be adequately empowered.*

**Keywords:** women, Education, Mechanism, Nation Building.

### Introduction

As women education is one of the key development objectives in the nineties. It is crucial to examine the assumptions under which policies, programmes, and projects are formulated towards this goal. More recently, the concept of women education has been tied to the range of activities undertaken by and for women in different forms, education included being the major aspect (Carolyñ 2005). However, Education is generally believed to be the bedrock of any nation and if a nation is to be strongly built, there is need to make education available for women at all levels. Education Plays a vital role in the growth and development of a nation with adequate inclusive women education. Oyisito and Olumukoro (2012) documented their opinions that education is recognized as the cornerstone for sustainable national development, all over the world. Some years back, women were victims of all kind of traditions and beliefs that determine how they should behave and what they are expected to do. (Okupon & Oronsaye (2016). They further said that women were relegated to the background, discriminated against and denied their rights in socio-economic, cultural and political activities despite their non-rested actions in protesting against discrimination. They kept on clamoring for concessions and strategies that would improve their emancipation towards contributing their quota in the nation. Education is seen everywhere as the quickest and most effective means of transforming women. The most important role women have to play towards contributing to the building of nation is a theme that is currently in vogue and a lot of emerge and activities are channeled towards women in the country through the federal states and local government programmes

The need to integrate women into development process of any nation has been discussed both at national and international workshop, seminars and conferences. Olaloye (2008), buttressed this statement that the problems of women opportunities for education looms larger at the turn of the twenty-first century in Africa. The author further said that women represent two-thirds of the world illiterate adults which thus needs imperative actions to stem the ugly trend and enable women to



gain access to educational facilities provided for their development alongside with the development of the community they represent.

UNESCO (2012) reported that women form a high percentage of the population, and as such they need quality literacy education to be able to contribute their quota to the development of the nation. It has been widely believed that, building a stronger nation can be narrowly achieved if half of human race particularly womenfolk remains ignorant, marginalized and discriminated against. Provision of quality educational facilities to women will greatly have impact in the actions directed towards a nation building. Few investments have as large a payoff as women education. Household surveys in developing countries have consistently shown that women with more education have smaller exposure to risk, they are healthier and have better educated families.

The education of women was earlier limited to informal system of education that is acquired in the family which is more domestic in nature, because of the common belief of people that women end up their career in the kitchen. That is, the informal method of education was the major system of imparting knowledge on women for a very long time and in this contemporary days, whereas the education of women has gone beyond the task of being home managers alone. Particularly, social and economic activities in modern day society bestowed on them a disposition for a lifelong acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, competence and skills. According to Wikipedia (2017) women education entails provision of primary, secondary, tertiary and health education specifically designed for females. It is equally referred to all forms of education organized to provide women with equal opportunity and access to formal education as it is given to their male counterpart. Since women are now endowed to have access to formal education as compared to their male counterparts, they can now contribute meaningfully and equally to the advancement and building of the nation. On this note, women education should be designed in such a way that meets the societal and health needs of the society.

Over the years, women and children in most countries around the world, Nigeria for instance, have remained the most neglected in the programmes of government in providing socio-economic benefits (Emmanuel et'al 2014). In other words, despite the fact that women constitute a large percentage of the society they have not been given adequate opportunity to discover, harness and contribute to the development of their society. The next section discusses the importance of educating women for nation building.

#### **Importance of Women Education for Nation Building**

**National Growth and Development:** All-inclusive forms of education acquired by women provide them the opportunity to contribute significantly to national development as they would have been exposed to participating actively in social and civic responsibilities. Educating women also enable them to be independent and develop improved relationship with their spouses and in dealing with problems confronting their families tactically.

**Economic Empowerment:** Education is important to women's livelihood, it gives them the advantage of securing gainful employment or doing businesses in a more civilized manner. In buttressing this assertion, Saliu (2016), remarks that education of women reduces over reliance of women on their male counterparts too.

**Proper home and Family Management:** Education leads to exposure and as far as women are concerned, education enable them to take good care of their family, and give maximum attention to their children and not undermining the health issues and sanitary care of their family.



**Political Awareness:** Education enables women to be aware of political development of the community they belong. It also helps them to be actively involved and possibly hold political offices at all levels ranging from grassroots up to the federal level.

**Social Recognition:** Education enhances women's status by enabling them to partake in all social activities. Educated women also earn with respect as compared with their male counterpart. An adage to buttress this, is to say that, whatever a man can do a woman can also do it better.

**Competency:** Education enables women to be more competent in their chosen occupations as well as duties assigned to them which make them to have feelings of satisfaction, success and achievement.

### **Role of Women in Nation Building**

Women by their nature are scheduled with many responsibility and this is the more reasons why their role in building the nation cannot be over emphasized. Omoruyi and Oransaye (2015), buttressed this assertion by documented that a vintage position must be accorded to women, as they constitute a larger proportion of the population. They however said that, women education is their empowerment which will not allow them to be left out in the issue of decision making that bothers on their lives as a people. In link to the above, Lantara (2015), also documented that women in her life has more responsibilities than men. Double play of a woman today has not only responsibilities at home as a house-wife but also outdoor as career woman. The roles of women are however suggested by him as follows:

- (a) Being a mother in a family and wife in the husband- wife house hold which is referred to as internal function.
- (b) Being member of a country in regard to civil rights and politics it includes fair deal to female labor force participation, this refer to as external function of women in the society.

### **Challenges to Women Education**

Women education is unduly influenced by negative impressions in the society as this has led many women to regard themselves as incapable of meeting the world's demand in this contemporary era. Therefore, women have become agent of hindering their own development pursuit. However, some other challenges to women education are explored in the following section.

**Traditional Beliefs and Cultural Taboos:** One of the hindrance to the growth of women education is traditional beliefs and cultural taboos that men alone will perpetuate the family name that women will bear their spouses 'names which is still lingering in some part of the country till today. Therefore, females don't need to be sent to school.

**Poor Academic Status:** This is also among the challenges to women education, poor academic status leads to low social status of women in the society which deprive them of securing highly paid jobs and so, relegate them to the background.

**Too Many Responsibilities:** Women are known to have many social and domestic responsibilities such as washing, cooking, fetching of water, caring for children and lots more, which often take judicious part of their time. accordingly, they have little or no time for education. Besides, they may lack strength and energy for schooling.

**Poverty:** Poverty literally means living on less than one U.S. dollar per day. Many more women are poor than the men. This lack of economic power to meet the essentials of life prevents them from

participating in school. Also, it explains why these women could not exist in sending the girl-children to school.

**Poor Self Perception:** Women have a very discouraging perception about themselves, they are unduly influenced by negative impressions of the society about them. Therefore, their morale and urge to learn are lowered.

#### **Strategic Ways of Integrating Women in Nation Building**

**Inclusive Education:** Among the ways of integrating women in nation building is to design appropriate educational programmes that meet the needs of women and the society at large in all educational settings. Also, the time for learning should be drawn in such a way that favors the women because of their domestic and other social responsibilities.

**Active Participation in Civic Responsibilities:** Women should be given a chance to have the right to vote and be voted for. This will give them the opportunity to occupy political offices and to contribute their quota to the development of the nation by having the freedom of choosing the leader of their choice. By this, women will not be dominated socially and politically if they are fully engaged in civic responsibilities.

**Advocacy:** Advocacy is also another means of integrating women in nation building so that they can have a change of mentality by not underrating themselves in the society. Therefore, programmes should be established in such a way that improves women's participation in the affairs of the society. In view of this, Shitu (2016), suggests advocacy which involves the process of coming up with an agenda that finds solution to problems which confront women especially as it relates to their education.

**Workshop and Seminar:** Organizing workshops and seminars that encourages women education should be planned as this will in turn assist women to develop the spirit of good will for their immediate environment and thus promoting the trait of patriotism.

#### **Conclusion**

Education for nation building requires human resources including women. That is women are therefore indispensable in growth and development of a nation. Accordingly, obstacles that are standing as stumbling blocks to their personal and educational development must be dismantled if the nation would develop. On this note, women should be allowed access to education and they should be adequately empowered. If the country will be built up as expected.

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