
RE-ENGINEERING GENDER EDUCATION FOR OVERCOMING NIGERIA'S OVER-POPULATION CRISIS: A BOOM FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Our Nigerian women are still subjected to the vicious circles of gender-stereotyping and gender discrimination. These predicaments are largely designed to keep these groups of individuals in disadvantageous positions in the quest for employing formal education and or gender education in the task of achieving effective human resource development. This paper considers that there prevails a variety of constraints militating against the effective realization of the endorsements and resolutions of the decisions taken at both national and international conferences, which are all geared at improving and enhancing the human resource development indices of our women through education. This unfortunate and ugly development has meant, among other things, that the level of awareness amongst the Nigerian populace and our womenfolk, in particular, about the dangers and dangerous consequences of overpopulation and the adverse effects of unplanned increases in human numbers is dismally low. This scenario has contributed adversely in aggravating the present overpopulation crisis in this country. This paper posits that the provision of re-engineered gender education programmed could provide plausible reasons for employing the curriculum designs established in them for coping with and possibly overcoming some of the challenges posed by the present Nigerian overpopulation crisis. It is entertained that this thought could contribute in putting checks on our population's growth and improve the quality of human life amongst our women-folk; this development could also contribute towards putting in-place a number of human resource structures that are designed to contribute effectively and productively in committing these individuals to the virtues intrinsic in self-employment and sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Okeke (1999) portrayed “gender” as a broad analytic concept, which highlights women’s role and responsibilities in relations to those of men. It is regarded as a national term used in complementing the emphasis on women. It is also indicative of a growing concern with the broader implication between men and women’s economic roles. “Gender”, like socio-economic status, is an aspect of social organization that both reflects and is circumscribed by the surrounding culture. Okeke (1999) expatiated further that “gender”, often times, is used interchangeably with “sex”, but the two concepts do not mean exactly the same thing. Thus sex is either female or male; this is to say that “sex” is biologically determined while “gender” is culturally determined. In this circumstance, Okeke (1999) argued that as society assigns and, in fact, imposes certain behavioural characteristics in either sex, they begin to think, feel or act in ways expected of the society. Thus, certain behaviour characteristics and attributes have been imposed by society on either sex and these behavioural attributes have now been constituted into stereo-types. Okeke (1999) observed that these stereo-typed “sex” roles and functions imposed by culture from one generation to another become accepted without question, internalized and erroneously interpreted and applied as if they are biological characteristics. Thus, Okeke (1999) emerged with a very relevant thesis to this exposition that, although females and males can never be identical, but gender differences tend to be exaggerated to a point such that it limits the development and utilization of one’s potentials.

In the Nigerian society, our women-folk have become victims of gender stereotyping of roles and behaviour attributes such that these have heavily militated against their overall development. The problems and issues deriving from this gender stereotyping, according to Boserup (1970), have largely been instrumental for the marginalization of women in every aspect of development. In Nigeria, this circumstance has contributed its own quota in the present over-population crises of the country.

Some Negative Consequences of Gender Stereotyping with Reference to the Role-Behaviour and Status of Nigerian Women

Nwagbara (1995) revealed that as a result of the “negative” gender stereotyping construed in reference to their role-behaviour, Nigerian women have not effectively participated in the nation’s development. At present, a variety of social and cultural barriers which impinge on such gender issues as “early marriages”, “high bride price”, “domestic and rural drudgery”, “discriminatory family treatment”, and “old age insecurity” are some of the social injustices that afflict Nigerian womanhood. Nwagbara (1995) further considered that “low social and economic status”, “marital instability” and “insecurity and old age are some of the causes of high fertility amongst Nigerian women. She endorses that the large-scale exclusion of Nigerian women in the nation’s development has fostered and enhanced fertility rates amongst them.

Inspite of the foregoing gender problems and issues, which largely derive from the stereotyping of women’s role-behaviour and status, women make up a substantial proportion of the population of Nigeria. In some communities, they constitute more

than half of the total population (Nwagbara, 1995). In spite of their numbers, this section of the Nigerian population is characterized, to a very large extent, by widespread illiteracy especially in the rural area where women are mostly petty traders and farmers.

Nwagbara (1995) conceded that it is not an understatement to say that about 90% of women in Nigeria are uneducated, yet it is these women who are central to the issues that have bearing on the Nigerian population crisis. It is only if these women are well-educated and well-informed can they, on their own, understand the implications of large populations and/or over-population. Ajaegbu (2005) observed that in some rural locations in Nigeria, many women still breed children without due consideration of the implications on their health and the well-being of their families. Sometimes this development, according to Ajaegbu (2005), is due to cultural bases in which child-bearing is construed as God-sent and should not be tampered with:

Some Examples of Stereo-Typed Human Behaviours and Roles Intrinsic in the Social Demography of Nigeria: Issues Contributory to Her Over-Population Crises.

Many Nigerians tend to demonstrate a deep sense of love and/or addiction to the production of children. Large families are often desired in many Nigerian communities because the off-springs from this settlement are designed to provide a huge labour force, which is usually of high demand. Within the framework of many Nigerian homes, infertility is usually regarded with abhorrence and could constitute adequate grounds for divorce among couples. Thus a barren woman is usually regarded with open contempt and her infertility is often considered a punishment for her transgressions.

In particular, women's love for having many children, among other things, largely derives from their cultural propensity in committing these young persons to a variety of family chores including cooking and house-keeping, fetching of water and wood-fuel and rearing of domestic animals. Thus Bolarinwa (1987) endorsed that there is little wonder that many Nigerian women welcome the labour-force and assistance provided and rendered by children. Thus the supposedly social and economic well-being derivable from the labour force and assistance provided by children largely explain the reasons offered by individuals for the support exhibited for the maintenance of high fertility regimes amongst many Nigerians, particularly the women-folk.

It is culturally considered in most Nigerian societies that the primary role of a woman is essentially her function as a wife and mother (Goliber 1989:25). In this perspective, child-bearing represents a major function. However, this all-important status of women could be weakened or jeopardized if they are pushed to reduce their child-bearing. Goliber (1985) equally considered the view that since most of the social and economic burdens of child-birth devolve on wives; this development could ostensibly afford them the motivation to employ the use of birth-control measures to

cut down on the number of children. On the other hand, the social and economic vulnerability deriving from this cultural thought-pattern might render these women to loath any engagements designed to bring down the number of children they intended to have.

Goliber (1985) further revealed that in many Nigerian societies, children are expected to contribute substantially to their parents' well-being. Children are obliged to make contributions so as to sustain the pleasures and appeasements of their parents and members of their lineages. Any demonstration of failure by these children to fulfill these obligations might not only earn them ostracism from the affairs of members of the extended family but also could bring serious sanctions placed against them. Goliber (1985) has also observed that in many Nigerian societies, it is mandatory for individuals to be committed in contributing "service quotas" for the sustenance and maintenance of the "immortality of the lineage" through the instrument of having or putting large families in place.

Ajaegbu (2005) records that within the last two decades, a variety of cultural factors have contributed in bolstering a preference for high fertility propensity amongst many Nigerians. This development has led to the recent large increase in the population of the country inspite of the Federal Government's efforts geared at countering the problem of unplanned increase in human numbers amongst young couples.

The Nigerian Over-population Crisis in Focus

The question of unplanned increases in human numbers has led to an escalated growth and expansion in the population of Nigeria – a problem which has negatively entrenched itself into the socio-political fabrics of the country. The overpopulation problem of Nigeria has brought about imbalances between her population numbers and the available economic resources for maintaining and sustaining this growing population. This unrestricted population growth has tended to militate, very negatively, on socio-economic development in all ramifications in the country. The circumstance of solving and overcoming her over-population question constitutes a major overriding concern for Nigeria, as can be gleaned from her different National Development Plans instituted since independence in 1960. The growth rate of Nigeria's population which stands at about 3.5% has culminated into severe economic pressures vis-à-vis the ailing and dwindling economy of the country. This development has been translated into such problems as follows: foreign indebtedness; unmanaged rate of urban migration; widespread unemployment syndromes' economic disparity between her various populations; severe food shortages and a prevalence of substandard living conditions for most people in the country. In fact, Nigeria's per capita income stands at about 260 United States dollars – this is rated one of the lowest in the world.

Thus, Nigeria's over-population problems had severely handicapped and militated against her efforts at putting in place a better and improved quality of life for her teeming population. In her present predicament, her population is dominated by

children and youths who are generally less than 15 years of age – a development which constitutes a burden to the working population. This circumstance puts the decency ratio in the country at 940:1000. In fact, this dependency ration is aggravated to 1007:1000 if Nigeria's old-age populations (65 years) which constitute about 2% of her population are featured. Thus, Bolarinwa (1987:7) is convinced that the present economic resources that are at the disposal of Nigeria may not bring about a better and improved quality for Nigeria's population which stands at about 150,000,000. Thus Onokerhoroye (1984) remarked that the population-resources equation in Nigeria remains in a situation of disequilibrium since the resources-base of the country have not expanded significantly to cope with the escalated population-base of the country.

Some Negative Implications which Underscore the Need for Re-engineering Gender Education in Order to Counter and Overcome Discrimination of the Human Development Indices of Nigerian Womanhood

Bolarin (1995) considered that Nigerian women, unlike the male counterparts, have not made any significant contribution in terms of the socio-economic development of Nigeria. She reflects that the possibility of making this contribution is very much in doubt when one takes cognizance of very high level of illiteracy prevailing amongst Nigerian women. She expatriates further that non-formal education programmes for women can only be effective if the recipients are involved in the formulation of objectives, planning and execution of such programmes based on their needs, aspirations, interests, abilities and competencies; she regrets that this development is quite far from being the case.

A number of research studies on the literacy level of Nigerian women (Abe, 1987; Awolesi, 1989; Bolarin, 1992; Odu, 1987; Adamu, 1988; Nwagbara, 1995; and Okeke 1999) have shown that women are lagging behind their male counterparts in every level of formal education. The same pattern of low representation of Nigerian women has been discussed in several research studies on career aspirations amongst these womenfolk (Bolarin, 1995; Durojaiye, 1975; Okpala and Onocha, 1985; and Osuji 1976). These studies generally endorse that Nigerian women have been grossly under-represented in the various sciences and science based courses and careers. It is considered that as serious as these issues are, one realizes that it is erroneous and unrealistic to think that the problem of Nigerian women lagging behind their male counterparts is a problem that can be solved within a short period of time as the slogan "Education for ALL in the year 2000 tends to point out. In her research studies on "functional women education", Bolarin (1995) posited that UNESCO endorsed that 62% of the adult illiterates in Nigeria have been found to be women. This posture discusses that serious work needs to be done in the area of "Women Literacy Programmes" if the situation is to improve. It is endorsed in this exposition that one will not expect much from illiterate women-folks who definitely lack the basic functional education and training which will lead to their effective participation in the socio-economic development of this country.

Etuk (2004) disclosed that gender discrimination has had very serious negative consequences on the human resources development of the women-folks in Nigeria. Thus, Olayinka (1973), Osuji (1976), and Abiri (1977) found from their research studies that vocational aspirations and choice are influenced by certain variables including gender and family background. These researchers revealed that males chose male-stereotyped occupations while female chose female-stereotyped occupations. Thus sex-roles and sex stereotyped concepts, as sanctioned by the Nigerian cultural values, have traditionally insisted that the place of women is the home. This cultural expectation, according to these researchers, is responsible for the domination of males in some job areas and female in other areas. In these perspectives, Ehindero (1986) disclosed that such professions and courses as Home Economics, Nursing, Stewardship, and other feminine-related courses have traditionally been regarded as aspects of the school curriculum reserved for females.

Etuk (2004) submitted that the endorsement of gender-stereotyping and gender discrimination in the Nigerian socio-cultural patterns have had pronounced negative effects on the human resources development and availability, quantitatively and qualitatively in Nigeria. Etuk (2004) recounted that the negative effects of these gender-stereotyping in Nigeria have weighted more against our women-folk. He enumerates these effects thus: (a) overwhelming domination of males in such a job area as the auto-mechanic profession; (b) shortage of manpower in certain professional fields as the carpentry field because it is believed to be a special reserved-field for men; (c) more number of unemployed women who have resorted to becoming complete house-wives because of lack of job opportunities which largely emanate from the problems intrinsic in gender-stereotyping; (d) very few number of job areas available for women due to gender discrimination; (e) little concern for women education which limits the quality of their innate capabilities for human resource development; (f) under-utilization of the potentials of women in a number of professional fields because of the negative effects of gender stereotyping associated with these professions; (g) general shortage of women skilled manpower in the labour market due to the neglect that women education have suffered at all levels of education; and (h) uneven distribution of the entire labour force due to gender discrimination that our women-folk have been a victim of.

Nwagbara (1995) revealed that as a result of the negative” gender-stereotyping construed in reference to their role-behaviour, Nigerian women have not effectively participated in the nation’s development. She reveals that, at present, a variety of social and cultural barriers which impinge on such gender issues as “early marriages”, “high bride price”, “domestic and rural drudgery”, “discriminatory family treatment” and “old age insecurity” are some of the social injustices that afflict Nigerian womanhood. Nwagbara (1995) further considered that “low social and economic status” “marital instability”, and “insecurity at old age” are some of the causes of high fertility amongst Nigerian women. She endorses that the large-scale exclusion of Nigerian women in the nation’s development has fostered and enhanced fertility rates amongst them.

Okam and Umeh (2004) warned that the current overpopulation and unemployment crises in Nigeria are largely traceable to the incidence of high fertility rates amongst the women-folk. It is conceded that in spite of the gender issues and problems which largely derive from the stereotyping of women's role-behaviour and status, women make up about 50% of Nigeria's population (Adamu, 1987; Nwagbara, 1995; Okam and Umeh, 2004). Again, in spite of their numbers, this section of the Nigerian population is characterized, to a very large extent, by widespread illiteracy, especially in the rural areas. Thus, Nwagbara (1995) expatiates further that it is not an understatement to say that about 90% of the women in Nigeria are uneducated, yet, it is these women who are central to the issues that bear on the Nigerian overpopulation crises. She reflects that only if these women are well educated and well-informed can they, on their own, understand the implications of large populations and/or the problems of over population and unemployment. Ajaegbu (2005) observed that in some rural locations of Nigeria, many women breed children without due consideration of the implication on their health and on the well-being of their families. Sometimes, this development, according to Ajaegbu (2005), is due to cultural basis in which child bearing is construed as god's sent and should not be tampered with.

Employing a Re-Engineered Gender Education as a Human Resource for Committing Women into a Development of their Gender Potentialities and Attributes in Addressing the Nigerian Population Crisis

The theoretical basis of this exposition largely derives from an exploration of the gender potentialities, attributes and issues intrinsic in women in addressing and overcoming the Nigerian population crisis. It has become recognized that women must necessarily occupy a central pivot in terms of Nigeria's efforts towards a successful implementation of any policy or policies that have a bearing on population control measures and management within her social framework (Nwagbara, 1995; Etim, 1997; Ikegulu, 1997; Okeke, 1999). In her submission for the integration of women in national development, Okeke (1999) endorsed that it is in attempt to involve women as much as men in development that gender issues have come up to the fore-front. In the same vein, she argues that since education has been identified as a key factor in achieving gender equity, it is worth employing its curricular offerings in exploring the gender attributes and potentialities in women for the purpose of human resources development designed for our national growth and survival. She is convinced that such gender attributes and characteristics as "feelings of warmth", "nurturing", "kindness", "patience", "power of expression", "gentleness", "tactfulness", "prone to submission", and "awareness of the feelings of others" could be explored and capitalized upon through a re-engineered gender education process for the purpose of their overall human resources development.

Thus, Okeke (1999) is emphatic on the view that gender issues in education have assumed great dimensions. She reports that cross-national studies in women regarding "Development Synthesis" revealed a high positive correlation between "mother's education" and variables such as "fertility" "infant mortality", "children's

nutritional status” and “children’s educational attainment” as well as “high productivity in agriculture”. Okeke (1999) maintained that these findings cannot be glossed over considering that the many persistent problems of under-development such as “over-population”, “high infant mortality rate”, “poor nutritional status and family health care”, “low family income”, “children’s under-achievement in education” and “low gross national productivity”, can find their solution in the education of women.

Thus, Nwagbara (1995) emerged with the view that since a majority of Nigerian women are uneducated, no matter how good and well-meaning the government’s intentions are in relation to the issue of putting – in – place population control measures and management in the country, the goals and objectives associated with the design may not be fully achieved.

In her attempt at addressing the Nigerian population crisis, Etim (1997) warned that our educational planners must, of necessity, recognize the interrelationship prevailing between education and fertility. Like Carleton (1975), Etim, (1995) endorses that education is taught to influence fertility indirectly because, in addition to delaying marriage, it exposes individuals to family planning information, a patient use of the methods are information on the advantages of the small family norm.

In his research, study of the rural area of Ekiti and Ibadan, Orubuloye (1981) noted that “the overall fertility of those who had been to school was lower than those of women who had not”. On the other hand, Semi Bajiwe (1981) who studied Ibadan city pointed out that “fertility rises and then declined as education increases”. Udoh (1985) also emerged with the view that an educated man or woman is in a better position than an unlearned person to take a rational decision in respect of family size, family planning and adoption of direct methods of fertility control.

Etim (2005) has also shown that fertility at young age is lower amongst women who are in school and that women with education marry later. In Gyepi-Garbrah’s (1985) survey, in the 20-24 age groups, 96% of women without schooling had already been married, while 63% of those with secondary education had not yet married. She also revealed that contraceptive use rates in Nigeria tend to increase as the level of education increases. She further disclosed that 4.5% of women with no formal education use family planning techniques as population and birth control measures compared with 9% of those with primary or middle level education. She equally concludes that there is a tendency of an educated woman to opt for a smaller family.

The National Population Policy Vis-à-vis Nigeria’s Overpopulation Crisis: An Appraisal of the Scheme Considered in Terms of the Prevalent Gender Issues and Problems.

In the midst of Nigeria’s overpopulation crisis which erupted in the early 1980s, the Federal Government instituted and emerged with a National Population Policy in 1988. The decreasing mortality and sustained high fertility rates coupled with

the diminishing resources to match the rapid population growth rate (between 2.8% to 3.5%) which have prevailed since the 1980s made the Federal Government to enunciate the National Population Policy to provide appropriate guidelines for solving Nigeria's overpopulation problems. The policy states that it is possible for us as a nation to control our fertility and control our excessive rate of population growth and thereby minimize or reduce their adverse effects on our lives and progress. On a general note, the National Population Policy objectives (1988:12:13) are designed at achieving the following:

- (a) Promoting awareness among the citizens of this country about overpopulation issues and problems;
- (b) A provision of every Nigerian with the necessary information and function on the value of reasonable family size;
- (c) Educating all young people on population matters, sexual relationships, fertility regulation and family planning;
- (d) Making family planning means and devices a service to all couples and individuals easily accessible at affordable cost;
- (e) A provision of fertility management programmes that will respond to the needs of sterile or sub-fertile couples to achieve reasonable self-fulfillment;
- (f) Improving demographic data collection and analysis on regular basis and to use such data for social and economic development planning; and
- (g) Enhancement of integrated rural and urban development in order to improve the living conditions of the rural areas and to slow down the rate of migration from rural areas to the cities.

In particular, it is very worth endorsing, regarding the circumstance of this exposition, that the goals and objectives intrinsic in the National Population Policy for Development (1988) covertly advocate improved quality of life for women. This entails all the facets that make for national development; improved healthcare services, education and necessary information. Indeed the "Target" of the Policy overtly emphasizes women as central to the implementation, especially in the area of healthcare for mother and child, and prevention of unwanted pregnancies through family planning services. The Policy endorses that as women of child-bearing age constitute an important proportion of the population and a great national reserve for development, it entertains the need for putting in place special and favourable social and economic programmes designed for addressing and solving the issues and problems associated with the Nigerian overpopulation crisis. The Policy (1988:29:21) entertains the hopes of effectively putting in place the following strategies for women in order to meet the above need namely:

- (a) That the role of women as mothers and workers shall be recognized in all sectors of the economy and day-care centres for nursing mothers shall be provided on a voluntary basis
- (b) Establishment of programmes for reducing the heavy burden of work of rural women.
- (c) Strengthening of programmes designed to foster women's economic independence especially the establishment of domestic and village crafts, agro-allied and small scale industries;
- (d) Introducing programmes to guarantee equal opportunity between the sexes in education, employment, housing and business;
- (e) Establishment of intensive action programme aimed at improving and protecting the legal rights and status of women;
- (f) Provision of equal education for women; and provision of special population education and information programmes in the areas of fertility, regulation of high-risk pregnancies and health promotion;
- (g) That all employers of labour shall limit paid maternity benefits to four pregnancies that have at least a two-year interval; and
- (h) Employers of labour shall actively promote family planning as a labour code and voluntary social contracts.

Although the foregoing National Population Policy goals and objectives are a reflection of our times, Nwagbara (1995) observed that there have prevailed laissez-faire attitudes on the part of policy-makers in exploring ways and means of implementing them. Fasuyi, (1997) has also emerged with the view that our developmental programmes designed at countering the problems of overpopulation and bringing about better and improved quality of human life have suffered because of general non-challant and laissez-faire approach to population issues and problems. He advocates that this development and state of affairs have eventually and indirectly favoured rapid population growth with adverse consequences on the welfare of the citizens and the socio-economic development of the country.

Etim (1997) lamented that the large population of Nigeria has become a liability rather than an asset in quality terms. She discloses that the impact of rapid population increase in Nigeria has not only become severe but has also thwarted and hindered developments in all its ramifications.

In her appraisal of the National Population Policy vis-à-vis Nigeria's overpopulation crisis and with reference to the prevalent gender issues and problems in the country, Nwagbara (1995) considered that Nigeria's population has continued to grow in leaps and bounds and nobody seems to take note even if it is affecting every facet of our life – health, energy resources, education, agricultural development, labour and employment and worse still, our economy. She endorses that not enough has been done in the area of educating the populace for the purpose of implementing the Nigerian Population Policy. Nwagbara (1995) was prompted to assert that although the role and

status of women in Nigeria have been demonstrated to occupy a central position in our attempt at battling with our overpopulation crisis, widespread literacy still prevails amongst these women particularly in the rural areas. She considers that as a result of the widespread ignorance prevailing amongst most Nigerian women, they are largely not convinced about implementing the tenets of the Nigerian National Policy. Nwagbara (1995) considered that only adequate information and proper education can solve the problem.

Towards Effective Exploration of Re-Engineered Gender Education as a Vital Human Resource for Enabling Nigerian Women Contribute in Overcoming Nigeria's Overpopulation Crisis

Gender education enthusiasts and authorities (Ajaegbu, 2005; Nwagbara, (1995; Ikegulu, 1997; Etim, 1997 and Fasuyi, 1997) conceded that the subject area represents a major human resources base for enabling our women-folk achieve meaningful developments in their quest for improving their status with particular reference to addressing and overcoming Nigeria's present overpopulation crisis. In their various dimensions, these authorities endorse that the Government's efforts at solving our overpopulation crisis by introducing gender education programmes in schools and colleges represents an effective way of tackling the issue. However, they emerge with the reservation that these programmes are only available mostly to young school-goers. They endorse that girls and women in the secondary and tertiary levels of education will, however, directly benefit from the re-engineered gender education scheme. They have equally raised pertinent question in this regard namely:

“What about the Majority of the Female-Folk That Do Not Have Access to Formal Education (Nwagbara, 1995)?”

In regard to above question, a plausible reply to it might suggest that these female-folk could easily obtain access into informal schools including adult education facilities. However, in these perspectives, the issues of problem of “focus” crops up again; Thus, other pertinent questions could be raised such as:

- (a) Are these female-folk to be taught just to read and write?
- (b) Are population issues and problems to be made central in their informal training?
- (c) Are there enough adult education centers to cater for the interests of these female-folk?

The foregoing issues and problems are some of the succinct questions to be raised and overcome if a re-engineered gender education scheme must be made a necessary and vital resource-base for enhancing human developments amongst our women-folk. It is envisaged that an exposure of these women to the thought-pattern and resources-instruments intrinsic in the scheme would effectively arm them with the requisite where-with-all, as resource persons, for tackling and resolving issues impinging on our overpopulation crisis.

Conclusion

A number of scholars (Okeke, 1999; Nwagbara, 1995; Bolarin, 1999, Anyikwa, 1998; Etuk, 1998; Umoh, 2004 and Okam and Umeh, 2004) are opposed to the idea or ideals in gender-stereotyping because they could constitute impediments to effective human resource development, particularly in respect of our women-folk. These researchers and academics generally endorse that individuals possess innate characteristics and potentials which when properly developed, through education, enable them assume full responsibilities that can contribute meaningfully and productively to national development. Thus, effective family education could be employed in exploring gender differences amongst young persons (males or females) so as to enable them cultivate the ideals intrinsic in embracing human development structures that constitute necessary prerequisites for making good career choices. The above-named researchers generally concede that sex-stereotyping is responsible for shortage of manpower resource in certain professional fields and this development has been allowed to weigh adversely against our women. It is considered in this exposition that sex-stereotyping should not constitute a prominent issue in deciding life in Nigeria; it is also entertained that women have not been given equitable education and employment opportunities necessary for effective human resource development in Nigeria.

We need to employ a re-engineered gender education for the purpose of exploring gender issues and matters to enhance and improve the psyche of our womenfolk. We also need to explore all the necessary and a variety of pedagogical processes and avenues in order to expose our womenfolk to the curriculum resource base of human resource development so as to enable them contribute their own quota in addressing and solving such national development problems as the “over-population crisis in which Nigeria is currently wallowing in. Through meaningful exposures to a re-engineered gender education, our womenfolk could be made to occupy central and strategic positions in our socio-economic framework such that they could put checks and restrictions in our population growth. It is vital that all women be exposed meaningfully to formal or non-formal form of education programmes in order to tap into the knowledge resource base of human development as a curriculum design. Through this emphasis, these women could become human resource – assets and experts on issues and matters which bear on sustainable national development in the context of Nigeria.

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