

WOMEN EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC REHABILITATION AND SELF-RELIANCE

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Abstract

Women are denied the privilege of education because of various reasons which are traditional, social and religious. Their fundamental human rights are totally infringed upon. It is common saying that women are often regarded as second-class citizens because they are not able to contribute evenly as their male counterparts to the socio-economic and technological development of the nation. There is this popular adage educate a boy you educate an individual but when you educate a girl, you educate a nation. Therefore, this paper establishes that the educated woman will inculcate in her children the willingness to be educated too. She would be gainfully employed and earn money or be self-employed. The educated woman can become an employer of labour. By [the exposure of formal education] [the woman has received] she will be able to manage her family. When a woman is educated, she will be resourceful, resilient and play roles that are priceless in the family.

Introduction

The concept of woman is not restricted to adults only but human females in general in this paper. The UNESCO (1975) defines education as, comprising organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning. This means that education is a planned transfer of information with established aims and curricula on a continuous basis to bring about required change in behaviour, knowledge, understanding, skills or capabilities which the learner retains and utilizes. Education can be formal, non-formal or informal. Formal education refers to the education imparted through the school system while non-formal education concerns knowledge acquired out of the formal school system. In Nigeria, formal education is available at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Primary education is the foundation on which the rest of the educational system is built and constitutes the key to the success or failure of the entire system.

Women Education

Education is a basic entitlement and a major enabling factor in the development process of any nation (Ogburn, 1998). The educated woman is a woman who has received some formal education from an institution. By nature of the exposure, the educated woman has received some information about how best to improve on the quality of life of her family. Women education exposes them to the available information that can aid them economically and rehabilitate them for self-reliance. According to Eboh, (1995), education is a sure pathway to liberation of the mind and the improvement of their socio-economic status. When a woman is educated she will be resourceful, resilient and play roles that are priceless in the family. A woman is an important member of the family, because she plays the role of a prime-mover in the family. Therefore, countries of the world including Nigeria see education as a way of catching up with the developed world by producing not only literate persons but also skilled high-level manpower.

Women Education and Economic Empowerment

In all parts of the world, women are responsible for reproduction and nurturing life. Women render the first social (emotional and spiritual) contact that children receive. There is this popular adage educate a boy, you educate tin individual but when you educate a girl, you educate a nation. The educated woman is empowered with knowledge and skills lo enable her gain employment and assist her family financially. By this she possesses bargaining power to acquire all she knows will be of vital benefit to her family economically. Her family members will be well cared for because she is able to supplement the family purse as the need arises, Knowledge is power, because education truly empowers women to live with greater competence in an increasingly technological world. In a country like ours where the major objective is technological development for reliance, it is essential that women be given access to technological education if they are to participate fully in the economic growth of the nation. It is worthy to note that investing in education empowers women lo have greater control over their lives and is the single highest yielding investment that a developing nation can make, Economic empowerments are both processes and results that cannot be achieved by an individual or organisation for someone else. Rather, only women can empower themselves because their human rights are inherent. Although communities, organisations and agencies around the world can play a role in supporting the process. Women can begin to work and contribute meaningfully to the economic rehabilitation of society to become self-reliant. According to Ogwo (2003) a constitution that guarantees fundamental equal rights to all Nigerians, male and female: that guarantees equal protection before and under the law, and equal benefit of the law without discrimination based on ethnic origin, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability should be adopted in our nation.

Justification For Women Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment of womenfolk creates comfortable rehabilitation for their family members and eliminates destitute from the society and the roaming of unkempt children from our major streets. Education is directly linked to economic empowerment because it opens up opportunities to acquire the required professional training for greater productivity. Women through education are empowered economically through various jobs to earn income, which they utilize for the upkeep of their families. When there is any increase in a woman's income, it will definitely reflect on the nutrition and health status of her family members. The average life expectancy of Nigerians' is likely to rise with the economic improvement of womenfolk.

The Challenges of Family Headship by Women

According to a demographic and health survey, carried out by National Planning Commission (1996), female headed house-holds constituted 23% in South-East Nigeria, 19% in South-West Nigeria, 06% in North-East and 05% in North-West. This indicates that many Nigerian women are the sole bread-winners of their homes. This is as result of ill-health, divorce, single parent or death of husband. This calibre of women bear the burden of caring for their children, relations and in some cases husbands. But if this class of women are educated they will be able to manage the situation better for the good of the home. This class of women are responsible for initiating and executing numerous economic and rehabilitation programmes in order to ensure the survival of their families.

Recommendations

The economic rehabilitation of women can be strengthened through the following suggestions:

- (a) income generation operations and activities like the award of contracts, execution of jobs should also be extended to women to prove their abilities.
- (b) Women should have access to credit facilities, e.g. securing bank loans without asking for collateral.
- (c) Financial assistance should he extended 10 low income women lo give respite lo deprived womenfolk.

Conclusion

Women are important members of any family. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), adopted unanimously at the Fourth World Conference on Women the rights, responsibilities and opportunities for participation of women in development both as beneficiaries as well as benefactresses' in order to promote and empower women education and economic rehabilitation and reliance there must be sustainable development, whether at the local or national level. This brings to mind the word of God from the Holy Bible in Genesis chapter 1 verse 27 & 28 slates that:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them. And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and **have** dominion over the fish of the sea, and over *the* fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

God created women for a purpose, so women should be gleaned of their own innate potentials and dreams because the ability to be fruitful and the potentials to multiply and replenish and subdue the earth are inherent, waiting to be lapped, activated and released, therefore, let women be given freedom of living their lives to the full, In realizing their potentials and thereby, dominate the earth, they should not allow themselves, to be discouraged by (he opinion of others. Women must also go beyond the cultures of the world and rediscover intrinsic truths about their nature for the economic rehabilitation and total reliance of our nation.

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