

# WOMEN EDUCATION AND VALUE RE-ORIENTATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

TAMUNODIENYE N. MBA, Ph.D

*Department of Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology,  
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education,  
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt,  
Rivers State, Nigeria*

## Abstract

*The disadvantageous placement of women in decisions that have to do with their education was based on the primitive assumptions that women who were educated returned less to their biological families since they were married off to other families. Women education in Nigeria can be effectively achieved through designing and implementing organized educational programmes. They need access to educational opportunities, skills acquisition and positions of authority for them to be empowered. All these are designed to improve their living conditions and allow them to participate in programmes that will enhance their development at home, in their communities and the nation at large. When this is done then can we talk about value-reorientation in Nigeria and categorically say that women in Nigeria can compare and compete favourably with other women globally.*

**Keywords:** Women Education, Value System, Re-orientation in Nigeria

## Introduction

Onyemerekeya in Victor-Ishikaku (2015) looked at education as a process, product, system and as an academic discipline. By this education is looked at both from the individual and societal point of view. Education is seen as both building up the individual and the society at large. Fafunwa (1974) defines education as... “what each generation gives to its younger ones which makes them develop attitudes, abilities, skills and other behaviours which are positive values to the society in which they live”.

The re-orientation process in the educational system in Nigeria can lead to redemption and salvaging of Nigeria's national character and image. Maheshwari (2009) is of the opinion that the concept of education in human values requires direct and indirect techniques through the schooling process.

Njoku (2015) states that education is a life-long formal and informal process of equipping individuals to be aware of their environment and to exploit, manage and dominate same for their benefits. Re-orientation of values is a conscious development of human resources through ideological appeals, planning, training, productivity and efficiency in achieving through cooperative culture.

Every society has a distinguishing factor from other ones. In Nigeria the value system is all about the standards and principles which involve the right and wrong in the society. The value shows the choices and behaviour of every man in the society. The value system in any human society is determined by the level of development e.g. in the aspect of culture, it is non-material which varies according to societies over time.

### **Value Re-Orientation**

The traditional society in Nigeria before the colonial era was controlled by norms in which sanctions were enforced to maintain order in the society. Asika (2010) opines that African countries are linked by shared values that are fundamentally features of African identity and culture. 'Values' were passed from one generation to the other through verbal and non-verbal communication. These value structures were used to ensure order of morality in the Nigerian society. The Nigerian traditional value system was highlighted by Ajoku and Mba (2015) stating that respect for elders, dignity of labour and being patriotic, courageous and self-reliant cut across traditional values in any community.

When we talk about value re-orientation, it means the principles of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or societal groups (Wordnet 2012). Value re-orientation is attempting to change the direction in which beliefs and attitudes in Nigeria are currently orientated (Osisoma 2012). Njoku (2015) sees value re-orientation as imbibing good values that can help Nigeria out of her many predicament and refocus the nation to greatness. Nigeria can be transformed quickly if she embraces good moral values which have the ability to re-orient the behaviours of her citizens and to significantly reduce corruption, terrorism and immorality.

**Women Education the Key to Value Re-Orientation in Nigeria**

In an African society, women are seen as properties or pleasure objects owned by men and also as “baby factories”. This situation has brought about unfair treatment of women especially with regard to preference in educating a male child instead of a female child. In a patriarchal society women are seen as second class citizens. This avers that gender inequality is promoted by religious and communal customs in Nigeria. Women in the Northern part of Nigeria are denied the benefits of education. Denying women access to education indicates that she is dysfunctional to the society.

Women are naturally given the responsibility of educating their children from birth. This task places them in a position where they are meant to have wisdom, knowledge, and skills to move the world forward. They cannot carry out the duties as women, mothers, teachers, workers and partners in change and innovation without being educated. Value re-orientation can only take place if they can attain literacy, numeracy, communication and skill. All over the world, education is recognized as the cornerstone for nation building (Ojitsa&Olomukoro 2012).

Michael (2011) opines that education is the most important aspect of human development and a key to successful living, especially women education. Empowering women can effectively be achieved by designing and implementing organized educational programmes, women need access to educational opportunities, skills acquisition and positions of authority for them to be fully empowered (Okojie 2011). Developmental programmes are designed to improve living conditions of women and allow them to participate in programmes that will enhance their development at home and in their communities.

In Nigeria today, women have come a long way in businesses, politics, education spots and in other professions. They have made an indelible mark in the efforts to conquer the limitations of the past which sought to place them permanently in the kitchen and the bedroom. Majority of Nigerian women have not been fully mobilized and empowered to contribute to national development. Women education include areas of gender equality, access to education and its connection to the alleviation from poverty, good governance which are major ingredients in averting crime against women. Women

education is the education that would make a woman become aware of herself and her capacity to exploit her environment which involves literacy training and vocational skills to enable her become functional in the society.

In Nigeria, there are different programmes that were embarked upon to improve the welfare and economic development of women. The National Commission for Women was established to formulate and promote the welfare of women in general, promote responsible motherhood and maternal health of women and formulate moral values within the family unit and establish programmes with organizations to inculcate moral education in women working to eliminate all social and cultural practices tending to discriminate against and dehumanize womanhood.

The United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) with financial support from the Nigerian government was put in place to promote women's status. Women development can be enhanced through active contribution to literacy programmes and application of skills acquired to improve their livelihood and well-being. Adekola&Abianum (2010) stated that development cannot take place without women education. Bolwa (2010) opines that investing in women's education brings about high returns, it improves livelihood, leads to better maternal health and gives women access to education. When women are educated, it is the society that gains. Women can help the government to achieve its goals and objectives through national mobilization campaigns and public enlightenment. Women education imparts skills and knowledge to participants and makes them more productive to self-employment or employment by others (UNESCO 2006).

Women education can be interpreted into political participation and can contribute to public policies and democracy. Andrew &Agahui (2016) are of the opinion that literate women have been known to contribute to the political stability and peace of a nation. Their education renders traditional beliefs ineffective.

### **Empowerment of Women in Nigeria**

Women represent the formation of a significant social group called the family. Andrew &Aganui (2016) opines that women are now engaging in jobs that are exclusive for men. Right from when women became aware of their rights, they

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have continued to compete with men in all areas of human endeavours. Women could be empowered through skills acquisition and vocational education. The rights of women to be self-reliant and employed can be achieved through acquisition of skills related to their environment.

Women in Nigeria have a basic human right to be educated and this might has been recognized since 1948 adoption of the universal declaration on human rights. Women education has an important input on the development of a stable, prosperous and healthy nation resulting in active productive and empowered citizens in the likes of women who are educated and have played important roles in the nation.

#### **Politics**

- Amina J. Mohammed - Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations
- GbemisolaRugayyahSaraki - Politician and Philanthropist
- Florence ItaGiwa - Politician
- FumilayoRansomeKuti - Activist
- NgoziOkonjo-Iweala - Economist and First Female Minister of Finance
- Dora Akuyili - Former Minister of Information and Communication, Former Director General, NAFDAC of Nigeria
- KemiAdeosun - Minister of Finance (November, 2015-2018)
- Benilar, Member of Nigeria's House of Representative and Women's advocate

#### **Business**

- BilikissAdebajiAbiolaWecycleos CEO
- FolorunshoAlakija - Business woman
- Hajia Bola Shagaya - Business and Fashion enthusiast
- Sola David - Borha, Chief executive (African Region) Standard Bank

#### **Entertainment**

- AgbaniDerego - Model and Beauty Queen

Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche	-	Writer
Chioma Akpotha	-	Actress and Film maker
Folake Coker	-	Fashion Designer, Creative Director of Tiffany Amber
Mercy Chinwo	-	Singer, Song Writer and Actress
Aisha Salaudeen	-	Multimedia Journalist

### **Science**

Stella Ifeanyi Smith	-	Ph.D Microbiology
Prof. Grace Alele Williams	-	Mathematician
Folasade Ogunsola	-	Medical Scientist
Adenke Osifisan	-	Computer Scientist (Leading Ladies Africa. "Nigeria 100 most inspiring women in 2019", The Guardian Nigeria and World News 2019-03-16, Retrieved 2020-05-24).

### **Challenges of Women Education**

Despite the remarkable achievements recorded by women, Nigerian women are constrained in their efforts to play a major role in the socio-political and economic development of the nation. Andrew and Agahui (2016) asserts that Nigerian women like in other developing countries of the world who suffer discrimination, marginalization and exploitation by men through the implementation of their culture, religious and traditional beliefs places men as super human beings.

Globally women are generally disadvantaged in terms of economic stability and independence. Yomi (2007) stated that another challenge women face is the patrilineal system of descent in which generations are identified through the male offspring. The responsibility of the continuity of the family tree rests on the male children. The complacency of several aspects of life reduces their capacity in a male dominated society but helps in perpetuating the culture of reducing women to positions and roles of second fiddle.

In business, most women do not involve themselves in high profile venture, they prefer to engage in petty trading. Oniye (2010) believes that gender disparity is a powerful economic and social rationale for investing in the education of sons rather than daughters who are perceived to be less valuable once educated. Because of societal stereotype and stigmatization on certain

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professions and subjects, most Nigerian women have been forced into less paid jobs.

In most societies the public and private sectors continue to be dominated by men, leading parents to think of not bothering about educating their daughters. Murkhtar (2011) stated that cultural practices, poverty, early marriage, illiteracy, inadequate school infrastructure are some of the challenges women face in the Northern part of Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of women education to any nation cannot be overemphasized particularly in the creation of skills acquisition and vocational training for them to contribute to the overall development of the nation. Education is the right of every woman and it is the key to changing her life and making her a responsible member of her society. Without education women are not given the full opportunity to develop their potential and be productive.

### **Recommendations**

Women education should be given more attention because when women are educated, they will contribute to the economic development of the nation.

Women organizations have important roles to play in protecting the interest of their fellow women thereby making sure there are no hindrances or constraints on the part of women.

Government should work to support the effective implementation of women education programmes in the nation.

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