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Marital Responsibilities and Academic Productivity among Female Lecturers in Colleges of Education, Delta State

By

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of marital responsibilities on academic productivity among female lecturers in Colleges of Education. The paper reviews the concept of academic staff and their responsibilities among which are imparting knowledge to the students, counseling the students, preparation and organization of subject matter. The roles of women were also reviewed which include: provision of security and affection, teaching social relationship, teaching of basic habits and procreations. Also discussed were the effects of single parenthood on academic productivity. The paper also reviewed that one of the causes of low productivity among women academics is formally obligations, conclusion and recommendations are made among which were, female lecturers should be motivated, they should be encouraged to be involve in staff development.

Education industry is a very important one which has been patronized by both males and females, each contributing to the actualization of the overall goals. The successful attainment of these goals relies on the important contributions, inducement and professionalization of the teachers (academic staff).

Academic staff are lectures who make vital contributions to research, teaching, outreach and administration. They are charged with the following responsibilities.

1. Ensuring that the contents of the courses they teach are consistent with course descriptions approved by the university/college committee on curriculum and the academic council.
2. Instructors are responsible for informing students in their classes of the methods to be used in determining final course, grades and of any special requirements of attendance which differ from the attendance policy of the university.
3. Instructors are expected to meet their classes regularly and at scheduled times

4. Instructors are expected to schedule and keep a reasonable number of office hours for student's conferences
5. Instructors are responsible for academic advising and are expected to be in their offices at appropriate hours during advising and enrollment periods.
6. They are to pursue and disseminate knowledge and understanding through teaching, research, scholarly activities, and creative artistic activity.
7. Be thorough in the preparation and organization of lecturers subject matter.,
8. Evaluation of students academic performance by means of academic criteria only
9. Instructors shall encourage a free exchange of ideas between themselves of their students in the classroom
10. Academic staff should keep confidential all information gained in confidence about students.
11. Academic staff shall respect every students right to dignified treatment.
12. The academic unit shall periodically review and update all courses that the materials are to be presented (a) is current and appropriate (b) conforms to national and international norms
13. Members of the academic shall review descriptions periods call to ensure that the current content of each course is dearly and accurately described (Bishops University, 2001).

In addition to the above listed responsibilities, female lecturers are also saddled with many parental responsibilities. Gehrendhin (2005) in his article titled "The critical role of mothers in the lives of children" states that mother are involved in the task of raising their children, meeting the demands of their spousal and even becoming the bread-winner in single family household. Other roles of the mother are;

1. Role Model Teacher
2. Nutritionist
3. Nurse (Raven, 2012)

Odor (2011) Expanciated the roles of the mother as regards the provision of security and affection, teaching of Basic attitude, teaching of Basic habits, procreation, provision of Basic necessities, transmission of culture, child's development, discipline of the child etc.

1. Provision of security and affection: A child needs adequate security and affection for his proper physical, emotions and social development, which arte achieved in a warm atmosphere; A feeling of warmth in the family makes a child to feel secured and develop adequately in other aspects of life. It makes him confident to venture into the wide world and meet his mates without fear of knowing that when he gets home, he will get security and affection. The absence of security and love creates a state of insecurity in the mind of a child or develops tears in him to venture into the wide world.

2. Teaching of social relationship: A child gets his first social relationship from his family. Generally, the child is usually influenced by the family's ideas about himself, his social standing, his potentials and the lack of them. In order to achieve these objectives, there should be paternal relationship between parents and their help justly and kindly because this will influence the social relationship of their children with the under privileged once in the society.
3. The teaching of basic attitude: A child's basic attitude to authority, moral, values, religion and sympathy are to a large extent determined by the roles and attitudes of the parents at home. Therefore parents must act as responsible adults, and provide responsible and worthy things and work for the good of others. It is asserted that a child's idea of right and wrong is copied from what he sees the members of the family do. So the idea of "do as I say and not as I do is not good for the teaching of basic habits to the child.
4. Teaching of Basic Habits: Habits concerned with food, cleanliness, greetings, dressing etc are taught usually at home for example, a whole some attitude towards food and eating is likely to be found in homes where food is sufficient, prepared early and well cooked. With regard to cleanliness, it is a matter of habit and little to do with wealth or poverty.
5. Child's development: Fathers and mothers have great roles to play in every developmental stage of their children. God who in His infinite knowledge ordained the bringing forth of a child into a family setting, designed that for a balanced development of every child, the roles of the father and mother must be present. These two roles, through complements are different. Absence of one or the other in the development of a child often leads to distorted, jaundiced or imbalanced development.
6. Discipline of the child: In the area of child discipline, there must be agreement. There should be no discordant tunes. Fathers and mother, should present a common front. Co – operation between both parents will help the children to grow up to become responsible fathers and mothers in their respective houses in their own time; however, discipline in the Christian home must not be overdone, so as to avoid harming the children or leading them to revolting against parental control.(Ephesians 6.4).

Further more, educating the child is one of the numerous functions of the mother. A child's first words and his/her pattern of speech are usually learned form his/her mother. Hence Federal Government of Nigeria in its National Polliy on

Education (2004) emphasises the use of mother tongue in nursery and primary institutions. Generally, mothers spend more time with their children than their fathers. So mothers could be regarded as chief teachers as well as principal disciplinarians. Jibowu (1979) opines that a school child spends about six (6) hours in school and about eighteen (18) hours at home. Mothers have great influence during the formative years. A mother with a good general education can help a growing child tremendously. Thus, many women are responsible for the education of their children.

In addition, home environment has great influence on the growth and development of the child. Children have positive attitude towards life when the environment is made conducive. Therefore one of the main functions of the mother is to lay solid foundation on which the child is to build later in life. Egbule (2000) states that all forms of learning and socialization start from the family unit. Gradually, the child learns the customs of his tribe to make him a loyal member. So the first friend a child makes is the mother who eventually becomes her first teacher. Mothers are home maker, they are obliged to make home favourable for the members of the family.

Single Parenthood

Singleparent abound among the academic staff. A single parent is one who is saddled with the responsibility of training her children all alone. They face high levels of stress as they try to meet the needs of their families. Getting up early to prepare breakfast, dressing children and dropping them off at school, rushing to be at work on time and then dealing with the demands, of a job may leave a single parent physically and emotionally exhausted. And when a mother's work day is done, another cycle of stress is set in motion as she hurries off to pick up her children from school, fix dinner, and care for household chores. A single parent can compare her life to a pressure cooker, the pressure can build up so much that she feels as though she will explode. Noi – Okwei (2010) States that depression is among the leading causes of disability with sociological and economic implication. It brings about a loss of productivity as well as high cost of medical bills. Also wold-wende (2004) in Baker (2008) found out that married academics are more productive than single ones. Academic women with children at home are more likely than academic fathers to complain that working long hours, attending distant conferences and writing papers place stress on their parenting activities mothers are likely to complain about the lack of career related networking opportunities as they find it more difficult to travel and spend informal time with colleagues (fox, 2005). Thoter and Colleagues (1996) in Sandberg, Yorgason, miller, and Hill (2012) reported that marital distress was positively associated with work loss, particularly for women in the first ten years of marriage. Appelberg, Heikkiba, Honkasalo and Koskenvuo (1996) also reported that women in conflict relationships with their spouses were at an increased risk for incapability. Therefore conflict in marriage relationships will increase the marital burden of the couple.

Zainab (1999) carried out a study on Married and unmarried women academics. He posited that married women are likely to be more productive than unmarried women. In support of his finding, Simon, Uark and Galway (1967) opined that married women with Ph.D, holding fulltime positions published more on average than either single women or men. Cole and Zuckerman (1987) carried out a longitudinal study of American natural and social scientists and showed that married female researchers with children published more per year during the course of their career than the Unmarried female researcher. Married female academic are also more productive than their single counter parts (Luukkonen – Gro now and stolte-Heiskanen, 1983). But contrary to their opinion, Hamovitch and Morgenstern (1977) found that married American Academics with children are not significantly more productive than those unmarried and found that productivity differences are least in the natural sciences while Kyvik (1990) found that

- (a) Married and divorced persons are more productive than single persons Capplies to both men and women)
- (b) Women with children are more productive than those without children (1) Women with more than two children are less productive than those with only one etc. The possible explanation for the above situation include; (a) married women may have more energy and stamina than women without children, (b) they get support from their spouses (c) experience a more stable social life (d) family life increases their self – respect (e) and being married neutralized that effect of sex since married women co-operate more with their male colleagues than unmarried women.

Causes of Low Productivity

Among women academics many reasons have been put forward to explain why women appear to less productive than their male colleagues. Family obligations prevented women from spending as much time on research and other academic works (cole and Zuckerman, 1984). They opined that work for men and women academics are not the same as women have less opportunity than men to utilize more time to academic work.

In addition, stress accruing from marital responsibilities can lead to low productivity among female academics. Many studies find that pregnancy and infant care interfere with publishing and job searches more for mothers than fathers who are academics (Bassett 2005, Bracken, Jeanie and Diane 2006, Mason, Marc and Nicholas, 2006) thus Academic women have greater involvement in child care and household tasks which will eventually affect their academic responsibilities. fox (2005) supported this idea when he states that academic women with children at home are more likely

than academic fathers to report that working long hours, attending distant conferences and writing papers placed stress on their parenting activities. Mothers are also more likely to complain about the lack of career – related networking opportunities, as they find it more difficult to travel and spend informal time with colleagues.

There is no gain saying that female academics are always saddled with both marital responsibilities and academic responsibilities and this will no doubt affect their productivity in the school.

Conclusion

Due to the increased participation of women in education, they are now endowed with the responsibilities of procreation, home making, selfless services, and they are also actively participate in the productivity of economic activities that are capable of promoting national development. As women strive to perform the dual roles, one is bound to have effect on each other. Thus, married and single parent female lecturers are saddled with the responsibilities of performing the domestic chores and the academic responsibilities.

Recommendations

Based on the discourse, the following recommendations are made.

1. Women academic perform dual roles of maintaining their home and performing their official tasks, therefore they need to be motivated to effectively carry the dual roles.
2. Staff development is inevitable as for as productivity is concern, thus women academics should be given opportunity to be involve in staff development which will increase their productivity.
3. Academic conducive environment is mandatory for the women to carry their obligations diligently.
4. A lot of sacrifices are expected from women academics to balance family roles and office responsibilities
5. There should be legislative reform and enforcement of laws for the production and the protection of women's right to reproductive health choices and informed consent including promotion of women's awareness of laws, regulations and policies that affect their rights and responsibilities in family life and academics.

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