

1 Women's Education in Postcolonial Nigeria Since 1960s

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5

6 **Abstract**

7 This paper examines the quality and orientation of education acquired by women.
8 Colonialism, no doubt raised the platform for women's education, at least by access to formal
9 education, but the impact of relevant education for women has been characterised by inclusion
10 and exclusion profound in the postcolonial realities of development in Third World countries.
11 It interrogates the extent of dysfunctionality in the type of education women receive and its
12 implication on their socio-economic being in postcolonial Nigeria. The dysfunctionality
13 examined in women's education is a trend of neo-colonial tradition tied to the forces of
14 globalisation. The dysfunctionality analyses the advantages and disadvantages offered by
15 structures and institutions of education. Array of factors account for imbalances in the
16 quality, orientation and access to education of women and girls. Also, the types of education
17 affected the qualification for wage employment. However, even with requisite qualification,
18 gender discrimination to an extent reduce the chances of employment in certain jobs, political
19 participation and so on. Furthermore, various class connotations associated with marriage,
20 ethnicity, religion has created a defensive perspective to differentiate and perceive women's
21 education. From a historical perspective, primary and secondary sources such as archival
22 records, biographies, books and journals were used.

23

24 *Index terms—*

25 **1 Introduction**

26 Education is a parameter in development, but its growth is subject to multivariate factors. In developing countries,
27 indigenous education has been and its part of sustainable livelihood in rural societies, especially as used by
28 women in agriculture. The importance of women's agricultural work was obvious in Ester Boserup's book on
29 Women Role in Economic Development. ?? The role of women in agricultural work was emphasised and the
30 limitations therein is what women lacked for modernized development. Thus, the post independence era engaged
31 development planning and education being an indices of modernized development was a focal points but in
32 reality it is characterised by dysfunctionality. In 1985, a report from OECD criticised the approach to women's
33 development as home-economic oriented, therefore a futuristic intervention was to focus on income-generating
34 activities. ?? The home economist approach was an outcome of the monotypic emphasis on teacher education and
35 domestic science education women were exposed to. Hence, emphasis on incomegenerating approach was in line
36 with the findings Boserup covered in her book. The recurring phenomenon from the 1980s remains the mismatch
37 and or dysfunctionality in education and economic empowerment for women. In contemporary times, women's
38 education is a developmental challenge, bearing the 2012 Gender in Nigeria Report where Nigeria ranked 118 th
39 of 134 countries in the Gender Equality Index. By implication, disconnect in policy and practice is evident. In
40 Nigeria's policy system, initiatives from 1980s indicated an all-inclusive education system, in fact with specifics
41 for the education of women and girls. ?? The take-off point here is hinged on Martha Nussbaum's description of
42 the realities of women's education experiences. Her conception of women's education is profound in the objectives
43 of education itself and what it takes to actually have the right education for women. ?? The traditional Yoruba

3 IV. REALITIES OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

44 family can be described as non-gendered because kinship roles and categories are not gender -differentiated. The
45 fundamental organising principle within this family is seniority based on relative age and not gender. This work
46 analysed the orientation of women's education; inclusion and exclusion factors that accounted for educational
47 development or underdevelopment. encompassing and a lifelong learning system not really gender specific. ??
48 As women therefore, the first thing of importance is to be content to be inferior in mental power, in the same
49 proportion that you are in bodily strength.

50 The idea of women's education in post-colonial Nigeria was a model of colonial legacies constructed on Victorian
51 ideals. The societal perceptions about women's education was rooted in the British system, by this, Ellis wrote
52 in 1842 that: 7 This view prejudiced the outlook of colonial education systems to actually exclude girls from
53 formal education before series of interventions that included school plans for girls. ?? Globally, Philip Coombs
54 regarded the prejudices as a cross national problem, where sex disparities were inherent in most societies. ??
55 The perspective expressed buttress the kind of acceptance given to female education of girls in the 1920s, when
56 the colonial administration emphasised domestic sciences as the ideal. 10 II.

57 2 Conceptual Framework

58 Invariably, even with domestic science education, there was no plan for utilisation of women for visibly productive
59 efforts in public sphere. Being the disadvantaged legacy from the colonial order, the post-colonial era characterised
60 variants of dysfunctionality. The nuances of the postcolonial order created verdict of penalties in women's
61 education. From missionary adventures to colonialism, the understanding of a women's education is monotypic.
62 From the postcolonial era, the effects of agitations or before then manifested from 1960s.

63 The logical perspective adopted here is that there is education-career disconnect in the lives of women in
64 post-colonial Nigeria. Thus, the theoretical frame assigns the Feminist Education Theory that ascribes the fact
65 that oppressive and suppressive situations are a disadvantage to allow relevant education. Therefore, the feminist
66 education theory profiles the way women's education create power and powerlessness. The conceptual frame is tied
67 to the discourse and the phenomenology adopted to analyse the historical trajectories in women's education reflect
68 the disconnect. Thus, the problems of women's education and its dysfunctionality was a function of restricted
69 access which was paramount in the colonial era and in the post-colonial era, the presence of educational facilities
70 already addressed the question of access, however, the challenges of relevant education was of the post-colonial
71 era, where there are less motivations for women to aspire and of course patriarchal connotations that impedes
72 career advancement for married women. Therefore, the nuances of relevant education are predicated on the
73 way education is used for economic advancement. Much as opinion of women's education in Africa, Nigeria
74 inclusive seemed to be that of disparity to men, 11 the question is of what education really guarantees desired
75 development for women. Invariably, that is educational access rarely translate to sustainable career. 12 III.

76 Women in Development: The Theory in Practice

77 Women in Development approach emerged in the 1970s and it is framed on the fact that education leads to
78 employment and ultimately empowerment. From the 1970s, WID was a determinant in educational planning
79 to an extent that it increased the motivation for girl -child enrolment for primary education in Africa. In a
80 statistics used in Claire Robertson's article. ??3 The enrolment figure for Nigeria indicated an increase in girl's
81 education till the 1980s. ??4 During the military regime of the 1970s, the oil boom aided expansion of educational
82 facilities. According to Modupe Faseke, the attitude of parents to girl-child education increased. ??5 The most
83 sought path to civilisation in post-independence years was education. There was aspiration for this and mostly,
84 Christianity especially the Pentecostal waves aided the need for education. A robust middle class made up by
85 working in the civil service increased the enrolment of girls in primary education and beyond that, religion played
86 less impact. Given Christianity in Southern Nigeria, education is of priority of course the veracity of this fact
87 is evident in the narratives of E.A. Ayandele. In northern Nigeria, enrollment of girls is relative but at least,
88 the wholistic provisions of educational facilities across the polity was an advantage to motivate aspiration was
89 mitigated because the establishment of educational facilities was valued as desired development.

90 The increase lends credence to the fact that parental interest to educate female children surged in the 1970s
91 and the WID theory actually worked then, because it created empowerment. The kind of empowerment projected
92 a social change and it created a generation of women in professions such as teaching and nursing.

93 3 IV. Realities of Educational Planning

94 for Girls in the 1960s

95 Planning and provisioning for girls' spaces in missionary schools was difficult. Initially, in some parts of
96 Yoruba land, girls were not considered for schooling. After the 1960s, spaces were created for girls in boy's
97 schools and separately the missionaries established girls' schools. ??7 The school established found it uneasy
98 gendered schooling system. In Ekiti for instance, this problem gradually led to the integration of boys and girls.
99 ??8 We were guests and so had very little voice in school affairs, we often ran into difficulties on where to have
100 our evening studies ... in Christ's school, when the principal made announcements, he forgot to say anything
101 about the girls, since they were such a tiny minority (fifteen girls in a students' population of four hundred and
102 fifteen.)

103 This was conveniently done to ease the burden of management of girls' interest in planning. In the 1960s,
104 the girls lamented that: 19 Gradually, girls' education became imperative and was a trend in the 1960s. The
105 integration of girls was fostered by the structure of the education system of 6-3-3-4. The policy was not gendered
106 because it was an equal ground. In fact, in planning the curriculum, about three women were involved. The
107 outlook of the curriculum lacked gender discrimination, but most women had the challenge to access relevant
108 education due to cultural values and in some climes, religion. At the first instance, majority of the Muslim
109 dominated areas in northern Nigeria tend to be non -chalant about girls education, this view is in consonance
110 with Annan -Yao's explanation that: The IFUW and NAUW nexus was directed to the education of women. The
111 first attempt to development was a conference organized to infuse Lagos and Ibada? branches to discuss Nigerian
112 Development Plans. In 1963, the multi-involved stakeholder conference entailed international collaborations from
113 IFUW, UNESCO and The Federal Ministry of Education to discuss the growth of women's education, in which
114 the research survey conducted already identified low enrolment of girls in the Free Primary Education Scheme
115 introduced in 1955. NAUW survey on girls education in western Nigeria under the Free Education Scheme
116 and discovered that the enrolment of girls in the primary education was considerable with tuition free system;
117 however, the In patrilineal communities, girls are considered transitory members of their families because the
118 ultimate aim of their parents is to marry them off obligatorily into other families. Male family members exploit
119 the transient of girls in their birth-homes to argue that they are not valuable to their birth families of this attitude
120 hamper right to protection and reinforces gender discrimination. ??1 enrolment was not at par with boys. ??4
121 Therefore, NAUW became an advocacy frontier to campaign for girls' education in Western Nigeria, through A
122 stay-in-school campaign and scholarship scheme for girls. ??5 Subsequently, the funds raised were used to sponsor
123 girls' secondary education and tertiary education. ??6 By 1966, NAUW Newsletter indicated the role university
124 played in improving women the curriculum of secondary and modern schools for girls. ??7 The challenges of
125 women's education were visibly of the immediate post-colonial era when educated women in Nigerian University
126 aggregated the education need of women as a necessity in primary schools, secondary modern schools, secondary
127 grammar schools and university education. ??8 VI.V.

128 **4 Nuances of Relevant Education**

129 Relevant education is a type of learning that is applicable to the development of skills to enhance vocations,
130 professions and industrial work. The perception of relevant education, at least in the postindependence era was
131 gendered. Relevance was subjective to the understanding of religion and patriarchy because it was strongly
132 guided. Basically, teacher and nursing education were considered by men and even women to be most suitable
133 for women's public engagement. For instance, until recently, nursing was regarded as a female profession. In
134 Nigerian parlance, the occupational titles of nurses were regarded as feminine. A matron was a woman and
135 therefore absurd to regard a man. Also, the title of nursing superintendent was feminised to mean Nursing sister.
136 These perceptions lend credence to the way the society tend to define the career path for women and even by
137 women.

138 The kind of education women had access to though qualitative but lacks relevance due to contemporary
139 realities which was an offshoot of the politicisation of education and economic systems since the 1960s. The fact
140 that Nigeria is a product of manipulated identities created dysfunctional political economy that de-prioritised
141 educational needs for national development. Inadequate or lack of female interest in certain fields that required
142 technical and industrial education. From 1960s, the kind of education women received was under the banner
143 of neocolonialism. Hegemonic demands for resources marred the impossible which could aid inequality are in
144 the style of which constitute education for women. ??4 As above p. 13; See also NAUW, 1963 In the 6-3-3-4,
145 education system, the general perception about education and possibly the integration of girls was aimed at
146 gender integration and nation building. Most families were interested in their daughter's education. At least
147 within the middle-class family of 1960s and 1970s, fatherhood instincts were attuned to girl enrolment in schools.
148 Women's educational advancement was a social order in conformity with the free education introduced in the
149 1950s and it was in the interest of the aspirations of the modern Yoruba family.

150 Women's education was entangled and limited to certain professions. The socio-economic realities of the
151 postcolonial era necessitated schooling, yet it was encapsulated in the realm of survival and sustainability. Female
152 enrolment in teacher training school was often high and regarded as the most suitable. Generally, scholarship on
153 feminisation of schooling in Nigeria is not glaring but it is suffice to explain that the kind of education preferred
154 for girls and women in the first two decades after independence was aptly aimed at building an African home,
155 however its feminisation has rarely gained attention in the scholarly nexus of schooling and feminised ideologies
156 consequently. By implication, the primary education enrolment of girls dwindled in contemporary times and
157 vividly, the phenomenon of poverty is constantly a factor. Given the fact that the level of socio-economic
158 stability was a multi-layered effect of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), several ramifications of
159 underdevelopment is evident in Nigeria's education system. To an extent, this is very preponderant that female
160 enrolment in teacher training is constant. Inadequacy in enrolment in primary education and lack of interest to
161 move beyond secondary education visible accounted disciplines for low enrolment in other beyond, education and
162 managerial systems in polytechnics. According to Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, enrolment in Teacher training
163 programmes was higher for female; of course the stereotypic perception of the post-independence era still had

164 effects on the reasons for optional choice of mainstreaming women into the teaching profession. As shown in the
165 table below:

166 5 a) Life Statements

167 The perception then was that a teacher satisfy the class status and definitely made the home. This implied rarity
168 of women's education indisciplines beyond teacher training.

169 The kind of education available to women is qualitative but it lacks correlation with the socioeconomic realities
170 of contemporary times. Given the real life scenario below:

171 6 b) Educated but Unemployed Scenario 1:

172 I studied Agriculture for my first and second degrees. I am seeking for job. I am tired of bringing my children
173 to school in the morning and taking them home in the afternoon. In fact, my car is a school bus. My husband
174 is not concerned about my state of joblessness. I need to work just in case you get one for me! I am only selling
175 these eggs to while away before I get employed. Scenario 2:

176 I have a Ph.D. grade after my Masters programme. I have been searching for job all the while. My husband
177 only manage to give me the car keys when he buys a new car to replace. He is a recluse at home, he is not
178 passionate about my joblessness. In fact, I am ready to travel and relocate any where I can get a job. Even when
179 I attempt to sell using the car to display, he frowns at it and yet he is not ready to pay my school fees to start
180 a doctoral programme. He does not waste time to express grievances if the food is lately prepared, ??9 Oral
181 interview with Mr. TunjiOyerinde Retired Principal, Ibadan 2009. but he pretends not to feel my emotions for
182 being jobless. I am ready to relocate, even if it means separation.

183 7 Scenario 3:

184 Since my days in the Polytechnic, I have made up my mind to be a business woman. I don't even have the
185 passion to write any CV. I prefer to do buying and selling. In fact, I am comfortable being a trader and I take
186 care of my children with pleasure. After all, while in Poly, I studied Accounting, the most sensible thing for me
187 is what I am doing. Moreover, my elder sister is a Mastersdegree holder in Microbiology and she is a housewife.
188 She can't even sustain a business venture.

189 8 VII.

190 9 Interventions from Governance from the 1980s

191 Given the challenges of SAP in Nigeria's political economy of the 1980s, the Better Life Programme for Rural
192 Women (BLP) initiated by the First Lady-Maryam Babangida acted to introduce an adult education model for
193 women. The model of learning was institutionalised in women education centres in Nigerian States to create
194 a holistic lifelong learning for skills and social development. ??2 Subordination and education of women are
195 dysfunctional, but from the 1990s, socio-economic realities in the SAP era repressed the economy to question the
196 relevance and even the context of education.

197 It is sufficing to maintain that education alone in the formal path fails to capture the development realities.
198 It is perpetual to find educated women exist as house wives and recently, the problematic was mapped in the
199 interventionist role of Goldman Sachs Programme for 1,000 women in developing countries. The programme
200 trained women in required and practical education to equip them for private business engagements. ??0 Paucity
201 in the availability of employment suggests a situation where women's education may appear useless but it remains
202 a prerequisite. Furthermore, in northern Nigeria, women's education is not necessarily meant to qualify for
203 economic function, but to fulfill a social responsibility of being. Often, this ideology was a function how Islam
204 had been interpreted to project women's lives. Hence, the struggle to make education of women relevant for
205 public consumption is rife. The perception in northern Nigeria is in line with how Freeman described that
206 women's education has been to perpetrate a culture of femininity, that subordinate to men to serve their interest.
207 31 (NCWD). NCWD was an affirmative action and an offshoot of the National Policy on Women (NCW). The
208 objectives of BLP thus indicate educational features as a factor that cuts across the underlisted: The strategies
209 of BLP included the following: 1. Raising the consciousness of women about their rights and responsibilities
210 in the areas of economic, political and social development. 2. Mobilizing women for a better understanding
211 and resolution of their problems through collective action 3. Educating women on simple hygiene, improved
212 nutrition, family planning, childcare, care of husband and environmental sanitation. 4. Mobilizing women
213 to seek leadership roles in all spheres of national life and to improve their educational status through literacy
214 programs. 5. Enlightening women on opportunities and facilities available to them in their local government areas
215 6. Providing avenues for the acquisition of skills (and their development), credit facilities, and the establishment
216 of cottage industries. 7. Providing opportunities for technological development, recreational facilities etc.

217 10 VIII. Envisioned Educational Spaces

218 In spite of the challenges of education for women and girls, the few women that had access to general and relevant
219 education occupied viable professions. While the typical education accessed by women between 1960s and 1980s

220 were tilted to nursing and teaching there were dimensions to explain other perspectives to public participation.
221 In the works of Majorie McIntosh and Catherine Coquery -vidrovitch, as education increased the propensity and
222 opportunity to engage in politics, governance and so on. The categories of advantage and disadvantage varied,
223 but the basic advantages are profound in the success stories of women in various professions. Modupe Faseke
224 in the book Nigeria Women Professional: A Historical Analysis examined the categories of women who had to
225 an extent positive experience of being educated. The book presented narratives of the biographies of women
226 that excelled in various ramifications in Nigerian context. The perspective of the narrative focused on women
227 in Development and retreats the outcome of development. Therefore, education is almost available and constant
228 but several factors made or mar the relevance of education of course, the opportunities they had were either
229 favoured by their class, ethnic or religious disposition in the context of Nigerian Society. Much as it could be
230 argued that marriage was a disadvantage to women's education in northern Nigeria, it is not in entirety. In the
231 description of Justice FatiAbubakar's biography, she married before law studies. In fact her husband facilitated
232 her ambition to study law at University of Ife. ??4 Also, the advantages of being educated especially among
233 women in Southern Nigeria enhanced collective positioning and in fact it is an approach to development. By
234 collectivity, several women mobilised each other to form interest groups to continuously advance the WID agenda
235 of integration. For example, by the 1960s there was National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), also though
236 necessitated by patriarchy, women's faction, wings were developed as separatist groups to enable women claim a
237 platform for self determination and exercise developmental solutions.

238 Of course, her education was aided by the fact that her father was a colonial civil servant and her mode
239 of education was trans-Nigerian, in the sense that she schooled in Ilorin, Sokoto, Ife. Being from the north,
240 education was less motivated for women, but hers was exceptional and basically it is a function of aristocracy
241 that feature class distinction on access to social welfare.

242 In Southern Nigeria, the excellences achieved in women's education were due to the presence of educational
243 facilities through the missions and Christianity. The major Yoruba cities for instance, were quite cosmopolitan
244 that it afforded all advantages to take for any girl. In the biographical narrative of BolajokoKuforiji -Olubi, the
245 first female accountant in Nigeria, she had the opportunity to become a Boardroom professional in the banking
246 finance, and business industry. Her life depicts the typical excellence associated with Lagos city, where education
247 was a norm.

248 11 35

249 Technology is contemporary and futuristic in development analysis. Invariably, technology is the future of
250 development. The level of enrollment female in sciences remains relatively low 36 IX.

251 of course, the attitude is rooted in the understandings of education early decades after independence. The new
252 space that could really visualise the realities of development is women's access and opportunity to technology in
253 all ramifications.

254 Women's education and its relevance for economic sustainability remains a function of material poverty. The
255 disparity and inability to correlate education with desired livelihoods indicated the phenomenon of 34 Remi
256 Britto 2005. "Forerunner of Women's Rights and Advancement: Justice (Mrs.) Fati Abubakar" in Modupeolu
257 Faseke (Ed) Nigerian Women Professionals: A Historical Analysis Lagos. Tidings Publications. pp.91 -96. ??5

258 12 Conclusion

259 exclusion and limitation to selective jobs in teaching, nursing, clerical work, secretarial duties and so on. Mainly,
260 the contemporary realities that match education and development are entangled. The quality, quantity and
261 content of education women receive rarely fits into employability and neither provide alternatives for income
262 generation. This trend had been identified since the 1970s as Robertson and Eliou observed that education
263 for women is paradoxical and mostly that; "The road which leads (girls) to school in fact only a detour, which
264 leads them back to the home. 37 37 They maintained this position in the context of the realities in Ghana.
265 Robertson 1984b, table v -1; Eliou 197336 The quest for education within the political economy from the 1960s
266 was largely definitive but practically disoriented. Thus, dysfunctionality recreates the question that the post
education Nigerian society fails to restructure an economic system that makes contextual relevance. 1 2 3



Figure 1: 5



Figure 2:

12 CONCLUSION



Figure 3:



Figure 4:



Figure 5:

16

- 11 R.W. Richburgh, B.J. Nelson, & S. Tochtermann 2002. Gender Inequity: A word Geography lesson plan. *The social studies* Vol. 93, no. 1, pp. 23-30; World Bank Group 2003;
- 12 See R.W. Richburgh, B.J. Nelson, & S. Tochtermann 2002 Gender Inequity: A word Geography lesson plan?
- 13 Claire Robertson 1987. "Women's

[Note: 15 Modupe Faseke 2001. *The Nigeria Women: Her Economic and Socio-Political Status in Time Perspective* Ibadan: Agape Publications p.45. 16 E.A. Ayandele, 1974. *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society* Ibadan. Ibadan University Press.]

Figure 6:

[Note: 20 I. Olu Osokoya 1987. 6-3-3-4 *Education in Nigeria: History, Strategies, Issues and Problems* Lagos: Bisnaike Publishers.]

Figure 7:

[Note: 23 As above p.12]

Figure 8:

[Note: 26 As above p. 14.27 NAUW NewsletterIbada? Branch to 1966, p.2. 28 "Women's Education in Western Nigeria" *African Survey* (February-March, 1964) pp.11-15.]

Figure 9:

1

Year	MF	F	F%
2004	21,395510	9,571016	44.73%
2005	22,115432	9,926359	44.88%
2006	23,17,124	9,948567	45.36%
2007	21,632070	9,948567	45.99%
2008	21,294517	9,810,575	46.07%

[Note: Source: National Bureau of Statistics: Social Statistics, 2009]

Figure 10: Table 1 :

2

Year	MF	F	F%
2003/2004	328156	179068	54.57%
2004/2005	355560	207479	58.35%
2005/2006	245693	129359	52.65%
2006/2007	255926	122999	48.06%
2007/2008	225362	118025	52.37%

Source: National Bureau of Statistics: Social Statistics, 2009

Figure 11: Table 2 :

3

Year	Total	F	F%
2003/2004	29276	17082	58.35%
2004/2005	29449	17730	60.21%
2005/2006	23693	14352	60.57%
2006/2007	23567	14487	61.47%

Relatively, female enrolment for teacher training is appreciable, logically because it is relatively acceptable to men as husbands and it satisfies the masculine psyche. Male civil servants of the 1970s prefer to marry teachers. 29

Figure 12: Table 3 :

12 CONCLUSION

¹Esther Boserup 1970. Women's Role in Economic Development ... 2 Winifred Weekes-Vagilani 1985. The Integration of Women in Development Project. OECD Publishing.

²A.B. Fafunwa History of Education in Nigeria Lagos: NPS Educational 7 ... Ellis 1842 Daughters of England ...; see also Esther Adelaja 1991. Education and the Changing Roles of Women in Ijebu-Ode, 1930-1989." Unpublished B.A. Project, Department of History, University of Ibadan. P. 3. 8 See M.T. Oladejo "Women Intervention and Girl-Child Education in Colonial Yorubaland" (forthcoming) 9 Philip H. Coombs 1985. The World Crisis in Education: The View from the Eighties New York: Oxford University Press. P. 224 10 See La Ray Denzer 1992. "Domestic Science Training in Colonial Yorubaland" in Karen T. Hansen (Ed) African Encounters with Domesticity New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

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⁵See M.T. Oladejo 2012. Women's Business Education Proceedings of International Conference Lagos state University.