

The State of Nigerian Female Education in the Post Colonial Era; With Reference To Some Northern States.

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ABSTRACT: *This study titled “The State of Nigerian Female Education in the Post Colonial Era; with Reference to Some Northern States” has been established to examine the concept of “Female Education” from gender point of view and to assess the position of women education in some selected northern states; such as Bauchi, Zamfara, Kano, Katsina and others after nations’ independence. The study aims at exploring the problems associated with this brand of education among others include; economic recession, poor governance and non-challent attitude of the Government. The work further draws into light the origin of female education, with concrete example drawn from Katsina Emirate. It also highlights the impact of this type of education, most particularly on the political, economic social and religious life of the first generation of educated women. Furthermore, the study assesses the tremendous contributions of some International Organizations such as United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Human Resource Development (HRD), and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to mention just a few out of others, in promoting Girl-child and women education respectively. The last but not the least, the work justifies that good governance, efficient financial management, devotion to duty, patriotism, gender equality, designing, implementing and adopting appropriate modern and relevant educational curriculum as well as moral and financial motivations are some of the ways forward.*

KEYWORDS: *The State, Nigerian Female Education, Post Colonial, Northern States.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The history of women education after Nigeria’s political independence October, 1st 1960 involves a study of the contemporary political, economic and social problems confronting not only this brand of education under review but Nigerian system of education in general. It is interesting to note that the origin and development of women education in Nigeria with particular reference to Katsina Emirate of Northern Nigeria pre-dates the 1804 Sokoto *Jihad*. Boyd (1997) opines that prior to this period there was neither evidence of the emergence of women scholars nor schools dedicated for their education. Furthermore, Dangana (1991) argues that Nana Asma’u bin Fodio’s scholarly position and intellectual contributions to the development of women education were the major factors for the solid foundation of women education. He further claims that the conditions of women before the *Jihad* were deplorable; their status was largely confined to the issues of marriage, enslavement and concubine. But, with the outbreak of the *Jihad* and the efforts of the *Jihadists*, women education began to take its right shape. In effect, the *Jihad* culminated in the rise of a number of women scholars particularly within the Sheikh’s family. These women became versed in Islamic sciences and produced many works. Among these women was Asma’u, whose contribution was what, laid the concrete foundation of women education in *Hausaland*. The main contributions of Asma’u were the formation of “*Yantaru Organization*” in 1804 (Women Institute of Education) and publications for the purpose of facilitating women education. In addition, Boyd (1997) stresses that Asma’u bin Fodio has established education for women. This establishment was skillfully organized and successfully administered even after her death.

Major Problems Militating Against Women Education in the Context of the Recessive Economy:

Boyd (1997) opines that female education in the case of Northern Nigeria started in the 1930’s, he further revealed that during this period of its inception. The problems that retarded its progress centered on Muslims’ strong opposition to the reasons behind its introduction: these reasons bore relevance on religious, cultural, economic, traditional, political and gender issues. In any case, it should be noted that Boyd emphasizes that the track in which women education started in Nigeria was sloppy. In fact, there was no demand for this brand of education; it was against the whole of African opinions, Emirs, District Heads, Village Heads and the people (Boyd, 1997).

Buhari (2000) the problems confronting women education in contemporary Nigeria with special reference to the existing economic recession include: inefficient system of administration (oppressive rule), complete absence of resource control and inefficient governmental management. He listed other problems such as privatization of public corporations, inappropriate issuance of license for private schools to operate, bastardization of public schools, lack of patriotism, negligence of duty, mass production of women graduates without employment and failure of the Nigerian government and elites to address the problems. Furthermore, some Nigerians view the problems in terms of the poor financial status of the Nigerian state, which is not economically sound. Other people picture the problems from the diversion of International Agencies' Financial Aids for Education into personal accounts. Other problems include: the scarcity of funds for sponsoring researches on women education. It is considered that these problems constitute major challenges confronting women education in the post colonial era.

Women Education in Post Colonial Nigeria: The Role and Contributions of International Organizations:

In view of the current economic hardship in Nigeria, many agencies have become financially and morally committed to uplifting women education and their status against gender insensitivity. (UNESCO) (2000) states that one of the goals of International Organizations including (HRD) Human Resource Development, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); Common Wealth of Nations and the African Union (A.U.), is to eradicate gender disparity, particularly in the sphere of education, UNICEF (1997) argues that a large number of girls are out of schools compared to males. This made it very disheartening, when it was found that all the fifteen states that recorded below average in terms of the number of girls out of schools were in the North, among others include; Katsina, Bauchi, Benue, Adamawa, Niger, Sokoto and others. Of these, Katsina in particular, Sokoto and Zamfara States recorded as low as 23.6% of female enrolment. UNICEF has further stated that as part of the efforts to promote Girl – Child Education, the UK, Department of International Development (UK, DFID) has donated the sum of £25 Million. Katsina was one of the six beneficiaries; others were Sokoto Bauchi, Niger and Jigawa.

Some Impact of the Earliest Educated Women on the Society:

Zainab (2008) reflects that one of the profound impact of women education on the society was the emergence of distinguished public figures in the post-colonial era. In the case of Katsina, Late Hajia Hassu Iro Inko was one of the early educated women, Dr. Halima Adamu one of the first female medical Doctors in the North, Hajia Hajju Lawal, the first female judge in Katsina and Hajiya Binta Remawa, the first female Lawyer. Other impact include; the emergence of women associations, acquisition of professionalism in famine skills: such as knitting, dying, pottery, nursing and teaching profession respectively.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of the major problems militating against women education have been outlined: such as the following lapses: inefficient system of administration, scarcity of fund, looting of national treasury, financial mismanagement, negligence of duty and lack of patriotism to mention just a few. In view of these problems, the study strongly recommends that good governance, efficient financial management, patriotism, devotion to duty, gender equality not disparity, moral and financial motivations are amongst some for confronting and overcoming the problems. Furthermore, privatization of the Nigerian economy is not an appropriate policy for economic development of the nation. The work further suggests that resource control, proper maintenance and management of public utilities could as well contribute in tackling women educational problems. The study has wholeheartedly and unreservedly recommends that leaders must be altruistic, just, dynamic, progressive, patriotic, meaningful to their beloved nation and resourceful for the reconstruction and betterment of the Nigerian educational sector.

III. CONCLUSION

This presentation examined the concept of “Women Education” from gender point of view. It also considered the historical evolution, problems associated with this brand of education and its impact on our immediate Nigerian societies with particular reference to Northern Nigeria after political independence. The last part of the work reflects on the contemporary position of women education in relation to contemporary political, economic, religious and social problems facing Nigeria. Finally, the study proffered solutions to the current problems militating against the progress of Girl-Child and Women Education respectively in Nigeria.

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