

## **Gender Mainstreaming: Factors and Strategies in Nasarawa State Teacher Training Institutions**

**Emmanuel Ogidis Musa<sup>1</sup> & Aria John Saleh<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University of Lafia, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of English, Nasarawa State College Of Education, Akwanga

Corresponding Email: ogidisbubba1@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*This paper focuses on gender mainstreaming, gender inequality, involvement of male and female in lecturing work in Nasarawa State teacher training institutions, factors and recommendations. Two research questions were posed for the study. The study utilized Nasarawa State teachers training institutions as a target population; names of academic staff of four colleges of education and two university faculties of education were randomly sampled out eight teacher training institutions in the state for analysis using simple random sampling technique. The total numbers of 451 males and 100 females academic staff of the sampled institutions were utilized for the study. Simple percentage was used for the computation to determine the involvement of male and female academic staff of the institutions. The analyses revealed that: men were more involved in lecturing work in Nasarawa State teacher training institutions as shown by the computed rates of 81.85% for men against 18.15% for women. Also, men were more involved in lecturing science courses in Nasarawa State teacher training institutions as shown by the computed rates of 74.4% for men against 25.6% for women. The paper recommends that: Government and school management should come out with policies that will encourage women in terms of employment opportunities to bridge the great vacuum existing between male and female employment in the teacher training institutions in the state. More women should be employed to lecture science courses in the teacher training institutions in Nasarawa State.*

**Keywords: Gender, Mainstreaming, Inequality, Challenges, Strategies**

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### **1. Introduction**

Education is the engine for human development while human beings are nation builders. Particularly, the role of women in education and for nation building cannot be over emphasized for fact they are the first in the children upbringing, carryout domestic chores in addition to their regular jobs. If women are empowered educationally, the more the productive capacity of the economy. Educated girls and women will heal the economy and also make it wealthier (UNESCO, 2015). For the fact children start learning at the period when they are

fed using the breast, women should be given equal opportunity as men in all human ramifications. This is because they are the first people children meet for their upbringing.

Education could be regarded a gate way for progress, growth, empowerment for poverty reduction, development, self-reliance and economic emancipation. It also brings about improvement in health and nutrition, and empowers and transforms people's lives to be better members of their communities via acquisition of the basic skills of literacy, vocation and trade, numeracy as well as the ability to access and use information. No doubt, women are builders of nations. Ekwonye (2017) expressed that when you educate a woman, you educate a nation. Men and women are meant to be partners in progress. Inequality in the society emanates through indigenous, ethnic, racial, social, linguistic, religious, political and economic considerations. Many people who are less privileged to have high social status may have less access to educational opportunity, therefore, their health and nutrition are mostly affected negatively. However, poor attention to women education may result to their low productivity in the society.

FRN (2014) emphasizes on eradication of illiteracy and equality of educational opportunities for the citizens as a matter of urgency for male and female Nigerians. The federal government takes the need to address the problem of educational inequality among Nigerians as a matter of great concern that is why the aspiration of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) is taken very serious. It is of great significance to look into gender issue in the educational system of Nigeria. Gender mainstreaming is among the key issues confronting female education in the 21<sup>ST</sup> century. Major problems facing girls' education in Nigeria are access to school, attainment in the year of schooling, academic achievement and accomplishment after school (Ekwonye, 2017).

Gender means a system of roles and relationship existing between males and females that are defined by social, political and economic context. Based on biological view, gender is defined in terms of masculinity (males) and femininity (females) or in terms of genetic and genitalia differences. Scientists and development experts use the term "sex differences" and "gender differences" to differentiate between men and women (Ekwonye, 2017). These two words define the differences between males and females, but have different expressions and point out that gender relations determine access to material resources, land, credit and power. A say in decision or policy, the division of labour, the responsibilities of family members within and outside and educational opportunities for professional advancement are implications of gender in everyday life.

Gender refers to social relations between "men" and "women". Gender must be seen in terms of three dimensions: the individual identity, the symbolism of gender and the structure of gender (Egbor, 2015). Gender also means socially

constructed features of men and women, like norms, roles and relationships between groups of men and women in the society.

Gender inequality is a multi-faceted issue that bothers both men and women. Despite the fact that the constitution of Nigeria gives room for equality in terms of educational opportunity for both sexes, gender disparities still remain in existence. Gender inequality refers to situations whereby men and women are treated differently on the basis of sex they belong to. These differential treatments may arise from distinctions in psychological, biological and cultural norms and values of the society. Some of these distinctions are backed up empirically while others are buttressed by social constructs. In spite of the campaign against gender inequality everywhere all over the world, gender disparity still exists at high rate. Stephanie et al (2017), report that only 20% white women in the United States and less than 10% women of color hold jobs with the certificates of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Gender inequality does not only apply to one aspect but in almost all aspects of life. Although stereotypes against women may not always be intentional but it may require intentional steps to address it. Educationally inequality arises whereby individuals have no equal access to education and educational facilities. This implies that people are segregated on the basis of either gender, colour, class, family, socio- economic or politics among others.

The concept of gender mainstreaming was first proposed in 1985 at the third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya. The idea has been formally featured in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China and was cited in the document called 'Beijing Platform for Action' (Wikipedia). Gender mainstreaming is real between men and women in all matters affecting them. Gender mainstreaming is a concept of assessing implications for people of different genders of any planned policy action, such as legislation and programmes in all areas and levels. Therefore, gender inequalities and discriminations are issues that need to be addressed in all spheres of human life. Gender mainstreaming is a broad approach which concerns with all activities related to development and human rights and ensures that both male and female can influence, participate in and benefit from these. The main goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equity and ensure that there are no disparities between men and women.

Gender mainstreaming is a global issue that has become a topic of discussion generally. Often times, women complain on alarming rate concerning gender inequality which could be culturally, politically, socially, psychologically, biologically, educationally among many other factors. Educationally, which is the main thrust of study; women complain that their education is not given proper attention. Osibanjo (2014) asserted that managerial roles discrimination against female in government universities in Lagos state negatively affected job performance. In the same vein, Stephanie et al (2017) stated that only 30% of

females were involved in research. Thus, this complains call for investigations to

Nigeria”. The findings of the investigation indicated that managerial roles discrimination against female in government universities in Lagos state negated job performance. The conclusion of the study was that employment should be based on merit rather than on gender discrimination in order to enhance better performance.

## **2.1 Factors Militating Against Gender Mainstreaming**

Many factors militate against gender mainstreaming in Nigeria. These factors include:

**Culture:** culture is an ethos issue militating against gender equality or parity. Cultural factors militate against gender mainstreaming. These factors include customs, beliefs, attitude, achievements, heritages, technologies etc. It is not easy to change or bend culture. In some culture girl education was not given proper attention based on the belief that girl education was regarded as waste of time and resources. The people of these cultures believed on the fact that at end, she will end up in somebody’s house as house-wife. Moreover, customs and traditions have tended to favour men than women to promote men and their status and demote women in status, to rise men as masters of homes, villages, clans, towns and nations (Ekwonye, 2017). Also, there are some cultures that attach high regard to women than men, these result to gender inequality.

**Religion:** gender inequality is embedded in some major religions of the world. In most cases, these religions assert superiority to men than women. Men are recognized as heads of families while women are expected to be answerable and submissive to men. Therefore, some religions legitimize and regard men more than women. The women presence in government has been very minimal despite the recent thrust in the National Policy on Education. Marginalization of women has denied them opportunities of assuming roles in many aspects of life (Ekwonye, 2017). Similarly, in Maiduguri, 10 October, 2019, Hajiya Liman Bello deprived health workers from Jere L.G.A. of Borno state, Nigeria entrance into her house because women were not included in team that visited her on the basis that only women can be allowed to enter the house (WHO, 2019). Basically, this was on the ground of her religious belief.

**Level of Awareness among Gender:** gender awareness among various groups in Nigeria is very low. Gender awareness among traditional rulers, religious leaders, community leaders, parents, teachers and even policy makers is too low. Even awareness about public issues among women in Nigeria is very low compare to men. This often counts against Nigerian women. For instance, during political contest and orientation, women always turn up less in number.

**Educational Gap between Men and Women:** The number of educated men and the number of educated women on the bases of professions and qualifications are not equal. In 2012, the percentages of female workers in some selected

professions were as follow: architects, 2.4%, lawyers and jurists, 25.4%, quantity surveyors, 3.5%, lecturers, 11.8%, obstetricians and gynecologists, 8.4%, pediatricians, 33.3% and media practitioners, 18.3% (Wikipedia). Similarly, in 2010, the Nigerian female adult literacy rate ages 15 and above was 59.4% while male was 74.4% (Wikipedia). These indicate that there is existence of wide gap between males and females in educational attainment. In the words of Ohis (2016), 'not all women have acquired adequate political education and so they know nothing or less about politics generally'. In the European union, females occupy positions almost half of the STEM as students in tertiary education but only 30% of research positions (European Commission 2009 & 2010) in (Stephanie et al 2017).

**Systematic Discrimination of Women:** The gap between males and females does not exist accidentally, but as a result of systematic discrimination against the women. The causes of gender gaps are embedded in the societal institutional system, starting from the family to all segments of the community. These systematic segregations are backed up by the societal norms and values, hence they are not easy to change them. Under the customary laws, females may not inherit real properties or any property of their mother except clothes, jewelry, pots and pan belonging to their mother (Ekwonye, 2017).

**Preference for Son to Daughter or vice versa:** Cultural values and practices attach preference to either masculine or feminine gender depending on the culture. Some cultures value sons while some value daughters. Some cultures prefer sons because sons carry on the lineage, family prestige, family names, possession, they perform religious rituals and burial rites (Ekwonye, 2017).

### **3. Methodology**

The researchers used lecturers in Nasarawa State teacher training institutions as the target population of the study. Lists containing names of academic staff of the selected teacher training institutions were used for analysis. Six teacher training institutions in Nasarawa State were used as the study sample. The sample institutions comprised three private colleges of education, one public college of education and two university faculties of education selected through simple random sampling technique. The sample consists of 444 males and 100 females academic staff of the six institutions selected. The analysis was carried out using simple percentage to determine the involvement of both male and female academic staff of the institutions selected for the study.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

**Research Question 1:** What is the rate of involvement of male and female in academic work based on institutions in Nasarawa state teacher training institutions?

**Table 1: Number and % of Male and Female lecturers in some Teacher Training Institutions in Nasarawa State 2019**

S/No	Institutions	Male	Female	Total	%Male	%Female
1	Ipere College of Education, Agyaragu	125	11	136	91.9	8.1
2	Metro College of Education, Lafia	44	3	47	93.6	6.4
3	JIBWIS College of Education, Lafia Campus	33	5	38	86.8	13.2
4	College of Education, Akwanga	164	53	217	75.6	24.4
5	Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State Uni. Keffi	57	21	78	73.1	26.9
6	Faculty of Education, Federal Uni. of Lafia	28	7	35	80.0	20.0
	<b>Grand total &amp; percentage:</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>81.85</b>	<b>18.15</b>

**Source: Field Study from the Institutions (from August-October, 2019).**

From the table 1, it shows that there were 125 (91.9%) male academic staff and only 11(8.1%) female academic staff in Ipere College of Education, Agyaragu. There were 44 (93.6%) male academic and only 3 (6.4%) female academic staff in Metro College of Education, Lafia. There were 33 (86.8%) male academic staff and only 5 (13.2%) female academic staff in JIBWIS College of Education, Lafia Campus. There were 164 (75.6%) male academic staff and 53 (24.4%) female academic staff in College of Education, Akwanga. There were 57(73.1%) male academic staff and only 21 (26.9%) female academic staff in the Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi. There were 28 (80%) academic staff and only 7 (20%) female academic staff in the Faculty of education, Federal University of Lafia.

**Research Question 2:** What is rate of male and female involvement in academic work in science courses in Nasarawa state teacher training institutions?

**Table 2: Number and % of Male and Female lecturers in sciences courses in some Teacher Training Institutions in Nasarawa State 2019**

S/No	Institutions	Male	Female	Total	%Male	%Female
1	Ipere College of Education, Agyaragu	37	5	42	88.1	11.9

2	Metro College of Education, Lafia	10	3	13	76.9	23.1
3	JIBWIS College of Education, Lafia Campus	7	3	10	70.0	30.0
4	College of Education, Akwanga	52	23	75	69.3	30.7
5	Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State Uni. Keffi	18	10	28	64.3	35.7
6	Faculty of Education, Federal Uni. of Lafia	10	2	11	83.3	16.7
	<b>Grand total &amp; percentage:</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>

**Source: Field Study from the Institutions (from August-October, 2019).**

From the table 2, it shows that there were 37 (88.1%) male academic staff and 5(11.9%) female academic staff in science courses in Ipere College of Education, Agyaragu. There were 10(76.9) male academic staff and only 3 (23.1) female academic staff in Metro College of Education, Lafia. There were 7(70.0%) male academic staff and 3 (30.0%) female academic staff in JIBWIS College of Education, Lafia Campus. There were 52 (69.3%) male academic staff and 23(30.7%) female academic staff in College of Education, Akwanga. There were 18(64.3%) male academic staff and 10(35.7%) female academic staff in the Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi. There were 10(83.3%) male academic staff and only 2 (16.7%) female academic staff in the Faculty of education, Federal University of Lafia.

#### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

Evidence from the analysis as depicts from table 1 shows that 81.85% of lecturers (academic staff) in the teacher training institutions in Nasarawa state were male while 18.15% were female. This implies that there were imbalances in the employment as shown by the results. The study is in line with the study by Ekwonye (2017), in which the results of the study revealed that: 1. There is gender imbalances in terms of employment in Colleges of Education and 2. Female teachers are underrepresented. Also, the investigation is in consonance with that of Osibanjo (2014) in which findings of the investigation indicated that managerial roles discrimination against female in government universities in Lagos state negatively affected job performance.

From table 2, the findings of this study clearly revealed that men were more involved in lecturing work in science courses in Nasarawa state teacher training institutions than women as shown by the computed rates of 74.4% for men against 25.6% for women. This study agrees with the study of (European



Commission 2009 & 2010) in (Stephanie et al 2017) who state that only 30% of females were involved in research. However, for the fact that women involvement in lecturing work Nasarawa state teacher training institutions has less percentage rate does not imply it was a deliberate and calculated arrangement against women to be underrepresented. It could be that less number of women applied for the job, less number of women were qualified for the job among many other factors in which the above factors stated agree with the results of the study carried out by Fortsch et al (2018) , who findings showed that the academic achievements of female computer science graduates in Germany exhibit lower professional efficacy to their male counterparts which indicate higher professional efficacy and presence of stereotype within the computer sciences graduates on the basis of gender.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results from the analysis of the academic staff working in the teacher training institutions, it clearly shows that men are more involved in lecturing jobs than women in Nasarawa state teacher training institutions. The following recommendations could reduce the educational gap between males and females: Government and school management should see it as a matter of great concern to come up with policies that will encourage women in terms of employment opportunities in Nasarawa state teacher training institutions to bridge the great vacuum existing between male and female employment status in the institutions. Women education should be encouraged by employing more women to lecture sciences in Nasarawa State teacher training institutions.

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