

## THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF BUSINESS, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS

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### Abstract

*The paper examined the place of women in the advancement of business, technical and vocational skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world as they initiate and establish business organizations either individually or as a group .Women are refined product of God or are helpmate to men. These imply that men cannot do without women, for that, they are the crown of their husbands, joy of the home and society. The position of women as competent business employees, competent skills initiator as electricians, carpenters, tillers and lot of more were also discussed The major outcome of this paper includes that women should not be seen as second class citizen, weaker vessels in the home and society, working tools in the farm and that cultural emphasis that say a female child cannot answer his father name should be abolished. Based on the outcome of this paper, the paper concludes that women should be given the right on land, inheritance, cultural values and harmful norms and religious beliefs against women should be removed in the society. The paper suggests that government through its various agencies should map out strategies of reaching out and providing funds to those women who are willing to set up businesses. Men should encourage women to be educated by providing them with funds and the society should discard those unfavorable cultural practices that hinder women from maximizing their potentials in the business, technical and vocational skills.*

**Keyword:** Business, Technical, Vocational, Skill, Women.

### Introduction

The rate of poverty in the nation has reached an alarming state. Unfortunately majority of the poor in the society are the women, Dikeocha et al., (2017). This is not because they chose to be poor rather they are not given the opportunity to create wealth like their male counterparts. The present situation in the country demands for active participation of all to seek and proffer solution. The

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revival of the nation cannot be left only in the hand of the men folk. Women, as divine helpers, home and nation builders have a lot of contributions to make towards revitalization of our economy. Women constitute 70% which is the greater percentage of the Nigeria populations according to the last census figures of 1991, Nigeria Population Census (NPC) therefore; if any meaningful result is to be achieved in the advancement of business, technical and vocational skills, the relevance of women cannot be underrated. Women are known for their prudence and when empowered financially, they can carry out business that will meticulously ensure that whatever resource provided to them is managed judiciously. Women have been identified as the key agents of sustainable development (Dikeocha, et al., (2017). Ezegebe & Akubue (2012) added that any society which neglects women in her human resource potentials cannot achieve any meaningful development. Women are result oriented, transparent and serious minded as a result, they are fertile ground of investment. Women in ancient days are marginalized, dehumanized, caged and discriminated against in the society, but in this contemporary world, women are standing their ground to be educated, that was why Oduma (2012) asserted that half of the world population consists of women but in comparison to men, women unemployment level is higher both among the educated and less educated, even where employment is provided, it is mostly in lesser paid job and agriculture farms. Akpotohwo (2011) noted that women are gradually getting involved in business, technical and vocational career. In the same vein, Aderemi et al., (2008) as cited in Dikeocha et al., (2017) argued that women have limited access to critical resources like: education, land, technology and credit. Hence, they are often excluded from employment in the formal sector.

The participation of women in economic activities at all levels is hampered by factors such as limited resources, lack of government assistance, lack of training and education opportunities, cultural values and discrimination against women. Women are not allowed to own lands and they have less access to technological input like farming equipment. Fasubaas cited in Ogogor et al.,(2016) asserted that Nigeria women, like women in other developing countries of the world, suffer from undue discrimination, marginalization and exploitation by the men folk through the implementation of their culture, traditional and religious belief which place men above women and clamp it down on women that they are inferior to men. Ogogor et al., (2016) also stated that government on their part pay only lip service to enforcing laws concerning the right to women. These has led to more exploitation and dehumanization of women and have made it difficult for them to obtain credit facility from banks and other lending groups despite evidence that women loan repayment rates are higher than that of the men. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as cited in Oduma (2012).

### **The Place of Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education**

Women are refined products of God; they are help mate to men. This donates that man cannot do it alone. To actualize man's dreams, man requires the assistance of the woman, just as the Bible says in (King James Version, Proverb chapter 18 vs. 22); women are home and nation builders. They are the crown of their husbands; they are the joy of the home and society. Without the woman, the world will not be sweet for men to inhabit, this was why Oduma (2012) noted that women are valuable, they are not second hand, and they are not inferior and are not weak. In spite of their

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daily pressure of life in which they go through, they remain strong. The place of women education in the advancement of business, technical and vocational skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the act of women initiating and establishing business organizations either individually or as a group of women. Oduma (2012) defined women vocation as women who think of business enterprises, initiate them, coordinate production, sales, manage finance and face risks and benefits of running a business organization. The advancement of business, technical and vocational skills of women deals with capacity building, skill acquisition, productivity, credit delivery and creation of enterprise promotion. Crossdale & Okocha (2016) described women in business, technical and vocational skills as giving women strength, authority, encouragement or power to act. It entails entrusting women with the authority or right to participate in policy and decision making process in whatever sphere of life they may find themselves for fulfillment, self-reliance and dignity. The advancement of women education in Business, Technical and Vocational skills could also be viewed as the process of enhancing women capacity to make choices of occupation and to transform those choices to competencies that are needed for their living and contribution in the society they find themselves. Women have freedom of choice and action which enables them better influence the course of their lives and decision which affect them.

### **The Position of Women Education in the Advancement of Business, Technical and Vocation Skills**

Business, Technical and Vocational Skills are educational programmes needed by Nigeria to produce competent business employees, develop skills, technician, craftsmen and women to work in her industries. Business, technical and vocational skills are concerned with imparting functional skills to recipients in a particular profession in order to contribute to economic development. It does also impart relevant skills that suit our environment but it has been neglected by government and members of the society. The belief of many people is that business technical and vocational skills are for women of low academic performance and are for the children of low socio-economic background. Anyanwu et al., (2017) opined that there are so many professional areas which can help the country to surmount the problems of unemployment, poverty and insecurity. These areas include women entrepreneurship, women empowerment, carpentry, automobile, mechanic, tool making, tilling work, poultry, fishery, management of small and medium enterprise, cloth design, painting and a lot more. Women in most of the expertise engaged in construction attended technical colleges or universities in their countries. In fact, they prefer to be addressed as technicians than being called engineer. That is what business, technical and vocational skills does, in fact, it is a kind of education that involves the transfer of knowledge, attitude or ideas and skills in a formal way or in school setting that involves theory and practical so as to transmit the idea or skills acquired to produce goods and services that are generally acceptable to the society (Anyanwu, 2013).

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## Conclusion

The African culture laid much emphasis on male child than female folks. Traditionally, women are seen as second class citizen, the weaker vessels in the society and a working tool in the farm. Since women are denied right on land and inheritance, they are often accorded lesser recognition. The cultural values, norms and religious beliefs have subjugated women to background; hence educating women is usually seen as an economic wastage which has affected advancement of women education in business, technical and vocational skills. The societal values and aspiration has affected the development of women education in Nigeria. Women are not only supposed to be in the kitchen; they are to be seen and not only heard. The practice of early marriage, which is very common in the northern part of the country inhibits the advancement of women education in business, technical and vocational skills. The political system in the country has affected the development of women education in the society negatively; the ethics of democracy which lay emphasis on equality among the citizenry is in conflict with African traditions. Women are rarely seen in the politics because the society believes that “politic” is not part of women duties. Women are only forcing themselves into it. Nigerian women are generally poor and rejected since all their properties belongs to their husband. The income distributions per head among Nigerian women are generally lower than their men counterpart. Some men see educated women as not respectful and arrogant, but they forget that knowledge is power, not only to women folk but to all human beings. The high rate of poverty among Nigerian women has affected their rate of advancement in business, technical and vocational skills. Neglecting it by government and individual has negatively contributed to the economic recession confronting the nation presently.

The antidote for this problem is the resuscitation of technical colleges and restructuring of curriculum of business, technical and vocations education in a way to meet current challenges and organizing seminars and public talk to women in the rural area for women to see the need and place of education in their lives. These will minimize the rate of unemployment, poverty and insecurity among women. This will also produce qualified technologist, technicians, entrepreneurs, craftsmen and business women. In other words, the nation needs to make our abandoned industries to come back to see the light of the day.

## Recommendations

From the foregoing discussion, it is very clear that the place of women education in the field of business, technical and vocational skills is significant to the society and its environment, therefore:

1. Government through its various agencies should map out strategies of reaching out and providing funds to those women who are willing to set up businesses.
2. Men (husbands) should encourage their wives to be educated by providing them with funds for their school, no matter how little.
3. Instead of making women’s repayment higher than that of the men, commercial banks, industrial development banks and agricultural banks should make interest on loan obtained by women much lower than that of the men.

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4. Our society should discard those unfavorable cultural practices that have hindered women from maximizing their potentials.
5. Government and individual need to give adequate attention to the revitalization of technical colleges. There is a lot of heavy equipment in most of these technical colleges that government needs to repair. Individual and organization can also be involved.
6. There should be more campaign on the importance of business, technical and vocational skills toward combating economic recession. This can be done through available media, seminar, and talks or through local language in other to assist the rural dwellers. National orientation Agency (NOA) and Ministry of Information (MOI) both at Federal and state level can [shoulder] the programme.

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