

# GENDER INEQUALITY AMONG SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN CROSS RIVER STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, AKAMKPA

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined gender inequality among Social Studies students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. To achieve the purpose of this research work, one objective and one research question was raised and one hypothesis formulated to guide the study. Literature was reviewed based on the purpose of the study. The study employed ex-post facto research design was employed. The population of the study comprised one thousand, six hundred and twenty (1,620) second year Social Studies students' 2016/2017 academic session in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Accidental sampling technique was used in selecting two hundred (200) students as sample. The collected data was analyzed using independent t-test. The result revealed a significant difference between male and female students of Social Studies admitted in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. The study recommended that government should make a policy to encourage female students to have access to education in order to bridge the gap of gender inequality among students in tertiary institution.

**KEY WORDS:** Gender inequality, admission ratio and students' achievements.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality gap among Social Studies students in tertiary institution has become one of the issues of great concern in societies which require immediate attention by the government, educational stakeholders and policy makers in order to sustain the performance of students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Education is considered as a first step for every human activity and the development of any country relies largely on the

quality of education. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with individual's well-being and opportunities for better living (Nnaka and Anaekwe, 2006. Education has become a source of social stratification more than anything else in the country which the Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted as an instrument per excellence for affecting students (Chuktu and Wonah, 2017).

According to Ayari 2005, gender inequality is defined as the idea and situation that male and female are not equal. The author

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noticed that gender inequality is an unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals wholly or partly due to their gender. It arises from differences in gender roles. It denotes all the characteristics that differentiate a man from a woman (Gross and Trash, 2006). Gender inequality among Social Studies students' achievement has been among the contemporary issues in the current debate all over the world (Abdu-Raheem, 2012). Ayari (2005) opined that gender inequality is a word that combines the human race into one. The author further affirmed that, gender inequality is socially and culturally accepted that human nature has been divided into two major categories of male and female. This is an indication that man as a social animal constitutes a gender inequality which enables it to have male and female as a social dichotomy. So, genetic features of a male are different with the genetic features of a female. Generally, the constitution of the organs differs in terms of gender of an individual organism. Male organisms possess organs and systems different from their female counterparts. All these are as a result of gender dichotomy that exists in the human race which distinguish one another through such gender differences.

Assessing the place of females in education, Okeke (2001) laments that females do not have equal access with males to education especially at the tertiary level, a trend attributed to gender discrimination. Similarly, Mgbada (2003) argues that males and females do not have equal access to education. The author observes that in some parts of the state in Nigeria, most of the young girls are not given opportunity to go to school because their parents would prefer them married for their bride price. Chuktu and Wonah (2017) observed that the lukewarm attitude towards female education is not peculiar to Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa alone but it is a general trend throughout the world. Chuktu and Wonah (2017) equally observed that the available data on tertiary institution enrolment in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa shows that males usually outnumber the females since the colonial days. This is because the females are rated as second class citizens whose roles are limited to domestic activities. Based on this scenario, the study examines gender inequality among Social Studies students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Education has been considered as a vital tool in the promotion and sustenance of Social Studies students' development in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Regrettably, there is a gender inequality in gaining admission into tertiary institutions by females, due to the fact that, most of the young girls are not given opportunity to go to school because their parents would prefer them to get married so that they can get their bride price. Also, there is inherent fear that educated females are loose in morals and better informed, and can compete with males. These cultural practices not only deny females the roles they can play in the development but also hinder them from acquiring the needed skills and knowledge that they ought to acquire which will empower them and make them have self-confidence and self-reliance toward sustainable educational development.

This assertion has serious effect on the gender inequality admission ratios of male and female students' admission list for 2016/2017 session into Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa which showed lower percentage in number of female students' admitted. Despite the laudable efforts made so far by the government in introducing admission quota system, the problem of gender inequality on admission into Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Against this backdrop, this study therefore, seeks to examine gender inequality among Social Studies students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa

## 1.3 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine gender inequality among students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Specifically, the study sought to investigate whether there is any significant difference in admission ratios between male and female students into Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

## 1.4 Research question

In order to achieve the stated objective of the study, this research question was posed: How is the admission ratio between male and female students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa?

## 1.5 Research hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the admission ratio of male and female students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

## 2.0 Literature review

Male and female education plays a vital role in their economic, socio-cultural and political empowerment. Josiah and Adejoke (2014) stated that male and female students are tools for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. They added that, females education result in social benefits to the whole society like increase in civic and political participation, lower levels of sexual harassment, and reduced sexual and labour trafficking of young women. Taking all these significances of females' education into account, world leaders have decided to narrow the gender inequality in tertiary education, preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2017 - target 4 in the second goal of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Though some promising successes are recorded, the disparities in most nations especially in tertiary level are wide (Gibb, Fergusson & Horwood, 2008).

Hosts of factors affect the enrollment, retention and achievement of males and females in the educational world. An important factor explaining the relatively low access of females to the educational system is the traditional value system placing greater premium on males than on females (Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu, 2011). A study by Doris, O'Neill and Sweet man (2012) disclosed that, in Nigerian males have more access to education than females and greatest inequality is found in tertiary education and above. The study identified poverty, socio-cultural factors, gender-based violence, early marriage and teenage pregnancy as major barriers affecting females' access to and completion of education. In addition, school related factors like lack of motivated and gender-sensitive teachers, of girl-friendly school environments, the absence of targeted interventions to support females and quality education, as well as long distances to schools are determinant causes for low enrollment, retention and achievement of female students. Poverty as a factor that excludes females from education than males was also mentioned by Abu-Hola (2005) underlined the impact of poverty

as "when resources are scarce and the children to be supported in schools are many, the parents ignore the female-child". A similar study in Kenya Achoka, Nafula and Oyoo (2013) and in Ethiopia Gupta, Sharma and Gupta (2012) found that, stereotypic gender role dispositions, early marriages and female genital mutilation were among the traditional and cultural beliefs which made females to perform dismally in their academic endeavours. Dayioglu and Turut-Asik (2004) also revealed that female dropouts in developing countries are more sever. The study added that "females continue to be discriminated against by the parents first with respect to enrollment in school and later in providing higher as well as better education". Parents' educational and employment statuses; females' self-concept and the differentiating expectation of parents have their own contribution in students' academic achievement (Awofala, 2011).

## 3.0 Methodology

Ex-post facto research design was used for the study and the population comprised one thousand, six hundred and twenty (1,620) first year undergraduate students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa who were admitted in 2016/2017 academic session. And the admission list was used in selecting two hundred (200) respondents as the sample for the study. Admission list of 2016/2017 was used to examine the intake of Social Studies students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. The reliability coefficient of 0.75 for the entire instrument was obtained. Hence, the instrument was considered adequate and significant to the objective of the study. Independent t-test statistics was used for data analysis at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## 4.0 Findings and discussion

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in admission ratios of male and female students into Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. Independent t-test was used to analyze the data and the result is presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**

Independent t-test analysis of difference in admission between male and female students' into Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa (N = 200)

Gender	N	X	SD	T-Cal
Male	110	82.16	7.54	12.9
Female	90	70.23	5.38	

$P < 0.05$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $t$ -critical 3.0

The result of the analysis shows that the t-test calculated value of 12.9 was greater than the critical value of 3.0 when tested at 0.05 significant levels with 198 degree of freedom. This implies that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, there is a significant difference in admission between male and female students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

The result of the analysis in table 1 revealed that there is a significant difference in admission ratios between male and female students in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa which indicate gender inequality. This result is in line with the view of Gupta, Sharma and Gupta (2012), who lamented that female students do not have equal access with males to education especially at the tertiary level, a trend that has contributed to gender discrimination in the society. Also, the result is in consonance with Abu-Hola (2005) who observed that there is a lukewarm attitude toward female education as a result of several factors which affect their chance of gaining admission in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

### CONCLUSION

Education in Nigeria has been seen as an instrument per excellence for effecting national development and to sustain the development of education, there is need to ensure equal educational opportunity and accessibility for males and females because educating the female is like giving them a better chance to control their lives and to contribute to students' development. Gender inequality in education and accessibility if not properly addressed will have an adverse effect on students' development in Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that government should make a policy to encourage female students to have access to education in order to bridge the gap of gender inequality among students in tertiary institution. Also, there should be a policy that will enable female students gain admission with lower percentage into tertiary institution. More efforts are expected from concerned bodies so as to improve the performance of female students and narrow the achievement gap among departments. Thus, this will encourage the females as well as make them to have self-confidence and self-reliance toward sustainable educational development.

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