



FEMALE EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RE-CULTIVATING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTHERN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

Female is a strategic development priority. Better educated women tend to be healthier than uneducated women, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more income, give birth to fewer children, marry at a later age, and provide better health care and education to their children. The paper posits that academic integrity is very crucial for the female pursuit of academic knowledge in realizing their potentials. This makes the connection between female education and academic integrity significant. The values of academic integrity are expected to be promoted or re-cultivated in the school. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study. Relevant and related literature was reviewed. The study adopted the survey research design. The sample for this study consisted of 750 female undergraduate students selected from three tertiary institutions in the study areas. In analyzing the obtained data, the Chi-square inferential statistics was adopted. The findings revealed that female education for social development is significantly moderated and modulated by academic integrity and reduced academic dishonesty in terms of cheating, plagiarism, unethical behavior, purchase of research papers and falsification of research data among lecturers and students. It was concluded that education is an engine of growth and key to the development of every society based on its quality. Hence the paper recommended that in view of the unique role of our women in facilitating social development through political participation, fertility regulation and labour force engagement, academic integrity should be re-cultivated in the tertiary education system.

KEYWORDS: Female education, social development, academic integrity, fertility regulation and political participation.

INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity implies the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in academic environment.

This is a fundamental value and very significant to the academic accomplishment of the student. This means that if an individual is involved in an academic misconduct in the course of study, the individual is taking away opportunity to learn and

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obtain an educational credential that reflects his or her own achievements. Therefore, academic integrity permits both the various categories of personnel in the academic environment such as the university to build new ideas, knowledge and creative works while respecting and acknowledging the works of others (Ogban & Nkpoyen, 2020). The implication for this is that the academic institution is expected to respond to academic misconduct in a fair, consistent, transparent and timely manner (University of Wollongong Australia, 2021).

The tertiary institution is perceived and believed to be an ivory tower. This conveys on it the status of the center of excellence, a place of learning, an environment secluded to provide means for resolving practical societal issues. Central to this fact is the role of the 'significant others' in the university. This encompasses both academic and non-academic human resource responsible for the daily activities. Every student is taught by the teacher; hence, the teacher is seen as the epicenter of scholarly endeavor (Eni & Ewa, 2020). This explains why every educational endeavours positions the teacher at the apex. Even in all religions, their headship is called the teacher. That is why Jesus is given the title a Teacher (Luke 24:19) in Eni and Ewa (2020).

Elaborating further, Uchegbue (2010) admitted that the massification, privatization and globalization of education generally and particularly of tertiary education have now made it possible, not only to the elite classes, but also to all categories of people. Therefore, the tertiary educational institution has the disposition to produce individuals with proven integrity for the society. This is why certificates awarded in these institutions carry the wordings which affirm that the bearer of the certificate has been trained both in character and learning. However, contrary to the expectation of society, these values, norms and culture of integrity, hitherto identified with tertiary institutions are gradually slipping away. Today, tertiary institutions which were once seen as Ivory Towers are gradually being reduced to habitations of all sorts of corrupt practices which negate societal values (Esiem, Basse & Oju, 2020). Most corrupt practices indulged in by members of tertiary institutions include: plagiarism, academic fraud, grade buying, examination malpractices, sexual harassment, sex-for-grade and admission racketeering (Esiem et al, 2020).

In academic integrity, expectations are that the recipients of education complete any assignment, examination and other scholastic endeavours with the utmost honesty. The recipient is enculturated to disdain engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of himself or another student. Education is very vital such that its objectives cannot be meaningfully fulfilled without strict adherence to the universal standard of academic honesty (Ogban & Nkpoyen, 2020). Acts of dishonesty not only undermine the learning process and disadvantaged students who earn credit honestly, but also subvert key responsibilities of the academic enterprise such as the assessment and certification of educational progress of both male and female members of society. It implies that the certificate acquired dishonestly is a product of a 'scammed' process and the individual with such credential cannot contribute productively and effectively to social development (Bretang, 2018).

As noted, Olajokun (2003) and Adekale (2013), development is three-pronged, in that it includes growth in three key areas, namely: the economy, environment, and social life of a people. Of these tripod valence of development, social development has been noted to be key, especially as it embodies the development in the other two areas. Social development is essentially about improving the well-being of every individual in society such that they can, through education, skills acquisition, women empowerment and access to amenities and privileges reach their full potentials. The thesis here is on the fact that the level of development of society is linked to the well-being of each and every citizen. Social development means investing in people. It requires the removal of social, economic, and political barriers to allow citizens attain personal dreams and national goals with confidence and dignity. Social development can be said to have happened when there is access to quality education for citizens irrespective of age, sex, or tribe etc. This makes the foundation laying in academic integrity a highly desirable value orientation (Osim, Afebe & Moses, 2020)

Authentic female education, no doubt, thrives on this foundation of academic integrity. Members of academic community acknowledge that this is a necessary and sufficient condition to maintain the universal standard and work of the whole community.

Negative tendencies such as cheating, plagiarism and various other forms of academic dishonesty must shift for the implantation of academic integrity in the tertiary educational environment as a vital means for realistic female education. It is important to educate girls fundamentally well. This is a universal women empowerment booster because it has the potential to serve as a consistent determinant of women better quality of life and progress in every development outcome from mortality decline to economic growth, democracy and equity (Ogban & Nkpoen 2020). Investing in quality female education delivers concrete, far –reaching, economic and social benefits for the entire society. Therefore, the educational process that formats and patterns the female child must be sustained on universally acknowledged standard. Their sound and principled education holds the key to motherhood and social development. This makes the issue of re-cultivating academic integrity very paramount to national development. Academic integrity appears to be the dominant force with the capacity to sustain authentic female education for social development.

The study admits that female education could lead to significant social development at all dimensions of societal life. Some of the most notable social benefits which this study explored included enhanced political participation, enhanced labour market participation and enhanced fertility regulation among graduates of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Academic integrity is the expectation that teachers, students, researchers and all members of the academic community act with: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Breaching academic integrity is also known as 'academic misconduct' or 'academic dishonesty'. Academic dishonesty makes student assessment unreliable. If a student fakes his or her own work, through plagiarism or cheat notes or whatever, the data would not tell the truthful information that can be acted upon. More importantly, the intellectual needs of students go unmet because of the false impression that everything is going well, when it is not so. Unarguably, academic dishonesty hurts not only the students involved but extends to all the students in the class with similar characteristics.

The noticeable associational impact of academic dishonesty is the erosion of mutual trust between students and faculty. This is noticeable among undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Cross River State Southern Senatorial District. Ordinarily, Students are expected to trust faculty to be knowledgeable in their fields and truthful in their teaching. Faculty too trust students to give true information about their progress via graded work. In other words that combination of truthfulness and trust should create a sort of spiral where one by one, student misunderstandings are removed and true mastery is attained. A breakdown on either end corrupts the entire process as observed in Cross River State Southern Senatorial District. And it only takes one instance of a breach of trust to manifest. In tertiary institutions in this area cheating or plagiarism tend to create a wide room for academic suspicion and intellectual inferiority among peers.

Academic dishonesty grants these undergraduate students the impression that the end justifies the means and that the grade is the most important thing. Academic dishonesty is not in the long-term best interests of undergraduate students especially the female. Or the short-term best interests, for that matter. The question is really one of economics. If a student cheats on an examination, for instance and earns five points by short-cutting mastery of some material and then takes an examination that has 20 points of questions on the same material, and will lose all 20 because of lack of mastery of that material – then the student fails. There is a net loss in the process of cheating or plagiarizing, even if you do not get caught. And if you do get caught, the stakes go that much higher. It is rational choice theory applied to the classroom. These are breaches of academic integrity with far reaching integrity questions about the quality of certificates. Violation of integrity, known as academic misconduct or dishonesty, represents an explicit threat to the effectiveness of female education. It disempowers the woman; it hinders the development of skills crucial for her professional life. Academic integrity empowers women to essentially and functionally involve in all dimensions of social development of families, communities and countries. The failure of our women to live a sufficiently fulfilled life may also be attributed to their easily compromised integrity

particularly in today's academic setting where cheap grades are conditionally available for

The study investigated female education for social development and academic integrity. Specific objectives were to:

harvesting. The female students who value academic integrity are able to help fuel sustainable economies for societies and humanity at large. Girls of such category can pursue meaningful work and contribute to their country's economy later in life. They are also four times less likely to get married young when they have eight years of education, meaning that they and their families are healthier.

There has been little research carried out in Nigeria on academic integrity. Also, most of the research is not strictly empirical in nature but based on perceptions of occurrences of various types of academic integrity issues. Scholars have been concerned with factors identified as being responsible for academic dishonesty including the education system, pedagogy, sociocultural environment, economic environment, infrastructure, technology, institutional policies, and management systems. These have only provided theoretical knowledge. Based on extant literature, there is no published evidence on female education for social development and re-cultivating academic integrity. The consequences of academic dishonesty on female education among university undergraduates of Cross River State have not been empirically explored. Therefore, the researchers deem it fit to specifically investigate female education for social development and re-cultivating academic integrity for better positioning in contemporary society. Therefore, the question that the study sought to answer was: what is the nature of relationship between female education for social development and re-cultivating academic integrity among graduates of tertiary institutions in Southern Cross River State Nigeria?

Research questions

Are women enhanced public participation in political life significantly associated with academic integrity?

1. To what extent enhanced women labour force participation for social development significantly associated academic integrity?
2. How does enhanced women fertility regulation for social development significantly associate with academic integrity?

Objectives of the study

1. Examine association between women political participation for social development and academic integrity.
2. Determine the association between women labour force participation for social development and academic integrity.
3. Investigate the association between women fertility regulation for social development and academic integrity.

Statement of hypotheses

1. Women political participation for social development has no significant association with academic integrity.
2. Women labour force participation has no significant association with academic integrity.
3. Women fertility regulation has no significant association with academic integrity.

Significance of the study

The re-cultivation of academic integrity in tertiary institutions as a result of the findings of this study would help produce female graduates who are sound in character and learning and possess the needed competencies for political participation, labour force participation and family fertility regulation. Academic integrity allows students and staff the freedom to build new ideas, knowledge and creative works while respecting and acknowledging the work of others. The tertiary institution will respond to academic misconduct in a fair, consistent, transparent and timely manner. The regulators of educational institutions would achieve the goal of providing qualified and competent female graduates who would contribute to social development by implementing the recommendations of this study. The entire society would benefit from quality political, economic and family services from graduates of tertiary educational institutions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The inter- relationship between women's education and academic integrity is a sine qua non for social progress in all societies. Studies have shown that while quality female education correlates with academic integrity, access to education in itself may not completely eliminate deep-seated patriarchal ideologies or repressive and gendered

cultural norms (Egbo, 2000). Nevertheless, it neutralizes or at least minimizes the impact, thus bringing women closer to the center from the margins, which is a necessary condition for their

minority and lower-class students especially the women. Thus, Persell relates teachers' expectations to institutional and societal structures. Social interaction between teachers

participation in social development (Egbo, 2000). Moreover, the now well-documented social malaise which has plagued African nations since gaining independence from various colonial powers, suggests the need for alternative and praxis-oriented development platforms that aim to include erstwhile marginalized groups such as women, in the development process. The sustaining of such education on academic integrity is an essential requirement (Egbo 2000; Levine, Cynthia, Greene & Grown, 2008). Based on the importance of women education to social development, re-cultivating academic integrity has assumed a very significant dimension in Nigeria's march towards stamping significant development dominance in global affairs through women-centered solution.

Beginning with social structural realities of wealth, power, and status, symbolic interactionism of Mead and associate have attempted to theoretically link these with interactional patterns. The interest is in how structural variables become incorporated into the individual's interpretations of everyday life and how the individual acts on such a base. Persell (1977) in Mfam (2020) presented a theoretical paradigm which deals with four levels of analysis—the societal, institutional, interpersonal, and intra-psychic. She drew on Marx as well as Weber to point out the interdependence of structures of dominance and their associated ideologies.

The educational system is shaped by the structurally derived ideologies. This system, in turn, supports the existing structures of dominance. The institutional level (the structure of the educational system), then, is shaped by the polity and economy. The schooling process—achievement testing, ability grouping and tracking—reflect the structural needs of society (Persell, 1977) in Mfam (2020). By drawing on symbolic interaction theory Persell then goes on to explain the interpersonal and intra-psychic levels. Here the focus is on the origins and consequences of society expectations from tertiary educational institutions. Both society and teachers develop expectations and respond to pupils on the basis of widely accepted criteria of judgment of school performance. However, differential expectations of teachers serve to limit educational attainment of

and students in the classroom affect broader decision-making processes such as tracking of students into educational paths that have their parallel in the social structure of the society especially women

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Idaka and Anagbogu (2012) documented that descriptive design is used to ascertain what situations, events, attitudes or opinions are occurring in a population. The study areas were Calabar Municipality communities, Calabar South communities and Akamkpa communities. These Local Government Areas are in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of undergraduate students from the University of Calabar, Cross River State University of Science and Technology and College of Education Akamkpa. The sample for this study consisted of 770 respondents drawn from the population of study. The Cochran's (1963) formula was used to derive the sample size.

The sampling techniques used in this study are the multi-stage sampling approach using stratified, cluster, systematic and purposive. The first stage of the sampling involved the categorization of the study areas into Stratum A, Stratum B and C respectively (Calabar Municipality as stratum A, Calabar South local government area as Stratum B and Akamkpa local Government area as Stratum C). Firstly, in Calabar Municipality (Stratum A), the 10 political wards constituted the 10 major clusters of the study, in Stratum B (Stratum B) the 12 wards constituted the 12 major clusters, in Akamkpa (Stratum C) the 10 wards constituted the 10 major clusters. From Cluster A, 258 respondents participated, from Clusters C and D 256 respondents participated. The actual respondents, who were female undergraduate students on vacation from any of the three tertiary institutions in the study area were systematically and purposively selected. The inclusion criteria included women in various political positions, women employed in government and NGOs and married women with less than 3 children. A 30 item YES and No open-ended questionnaire items were used. The questionnaire was sub-divided

into four sections lettered A-D Was used to obtain information from respondents.

The coefficient alpha (Cronbach Alpha) was used to determine the internal consistency of the

Department of Sociology. Of the 258 copies administered in Cluster A, 251 (97.28%) were returned; of the 256 administered in Cluster B, 248 (96.9%) were returned; of the 256 administered in Cluster C, 251 (98.04%) were returned. A survey response rate (return rate) of 50% or higher should be considered excellent in most circumstances (Customer Thermometer 2021). The questionnaire was validated by experts from the Department of Sociology. Abonyi (2005) stressed that all research instruments must be subjected to face validity before proceeding with other validation procedures.

instrument. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.83 which is very good (Classroom Assessment, 2021). Coefficient alpha was adopted to measure the degree of internal consistency or stability of the instrument because Uzoagulu (1998) argued that the alpha value of an instrument considers the items in the instrument as well as the average inter-item correlation. The Chi-square statistical method was used to analyzed the hypotheses.

The instrument was personally administered with the help of five research assistant from the

Demographic profile of respondents

Variable	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Age		
Less than 25 years	105	14
25-34 years	80	10.7
35-44 years	140	18.7
45 years and above	425	56.7
Total	750	100
Sex		
Female	750	100
Total	750	100
Employment status		
Government employees	410	54.7
Private sector employees	205	27.3
Self-employed	85	11.3
Unemployed	50	6.7
Total	750	100
Qualification obtained		
NCE/OND	205	14
BSc/HND	345	22.7
MSc/MED	140	17.3
PhD	60	46
Total	750	100
Religious affiliation		
Christianity	724	96.53
Islam	16	2.13
African traditional religion	4	0.53
Others	6	0.8
Total	750	100
Current relationship status		
Single	185	24.7
Married	520	69.3
Divorced/widowed/separated	45	6.0
Total	750	100
Political/civic engagement		
Yes	475	63.33
No	275	36.53
Total	750	100

Source: Field data, 2023

Based on the above table, the highest proportion of respondents were in the age bracket of 45 years and above, representing 56.7 percent. The highest proportion of respondents were government employees representing 57.4 percent. In terms of qualifications obtained, those within the BSc and HND bracket were highest in number representing 22.7 percent. Majority of respondents were Christians. Majority of

respondents were married women. From the table, 475 963.33 percent admitted involvement in civic/political affairs at the ward/community/office/state levels.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis one states that “women political participation for social development has no significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria.”

Where X^2 = Chi-square, E = Summation, Of = Observed frequencies, Ef = Expected frequencies

Table 1: Chi-Square(X^2) analysis of the association between women political participation for social development and academic integrity in Cross River State (N = 750)

Women Political Participation indicators	Academic High level	Integrity low level	Total
Effective engagement in civic participation	78	47	125
Attending Political meetings	68	62	130
Holding Political offices	44	66	110
Belonging to a political party	58	47	105
Voting in elections	98	82	180
Contesting elections	46	54	100
Total	392	358	750

Source: Field data, 2023

$df = (R-1)(C-1)$ where R = row, C = column, 1 = constant

$df = (6-1)(2-1)$

$df = (5)(1)$

$df = 5$

Level of significance = 0.05

Critical (X^2) value = 11.1

Contingency(X^2) table showing the association between women political participation for social development and academic integrity in CRS

Cell	O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² /2
1	78	65.33	12.67	160.5289	2.46
2	47	59.67	-12.67	160.5289	2.69
3	68	67.95	0.05	0.0025	0.000037
4	62	62.05	-0.05	0.0025	0.000040
5	44	57.49	-13.49	181.9801	3.17
6	66	52.51	13.49	181.9801	3.47
7	58	54.88	3.12	9.7344	0.18
8	47	50.12	-3.12	9.7344	0.19
9	98	94.08	3.92	15.3664	0.14
10	82	85.92	-3.92	15.3664	0.18
11	46	52.27	-6.27	39.3129	0.75
12	54	47.73	6.27	39.3129	0.82
Total	750				14.07

Calculated (X^2) value = 14.07

Critical (X^2) value = 11.1

Level of significance = 0.05

Degrees of freedom = 5

Result:

The result summarized in table 1 revealed that the calculated (X^2) value of 14.07 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 11.1 needed at 0.05 level of significance, with 5 degrees of freedom. The result is therefore significant; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that women political

participation for social development has a significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two states that “women labour force participation has no significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria.”

Table 2: Chi-Square (X^2) analysis of the association between women labour force participation and academic integrity in Cross River State (N = 750)

Women labour force participation indicators	Academic High level	Integrity Low level	Total
Improved earnings	148	132	280
Improved workplace decisions	98	122	220
Efficient manipulation of factors of production	142	108	250
Total	388	362	750

Source: Field data, 2023

Computation:

Ex of 148 = $280 * 388 / 750 = 144.85$

Ex of 132 = $280 * 362 / 750 = 133.15$

Ex of 98 = $220 * 388 / 750 = 113.81$

Ex pf 122 = $220 * 362 / 750 = 106.19$

Ex of 142 = $250 * 388 / 750 = 129.33$

Ex of 108 = 250 * 362 / 750 = 120.67

Contingency (X^2) table showing the association between women labour force participation and academic integrity in Cross River State

Cell	O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² /E
1	148	144.85	3.15	9.9225	0.069
2	132	135.15	-3.15	9.9225	0.073
3	98	113.81	-15.81	249.9561	2.20
4	122	106.19	15.81	249.9561	2.35
5	142	129.33	12.67	160.5289	1.24
6	108	120.67	-12.67	160.5289	1.33
Total	750				7.262

Calculated (X^2) value = 7.262

Critical (X^2) = 5.99

Level of significance = 0.05

Degrees of freedom = 2

Result:

The result summarized in table2 revealed that the calculated (X^2) value of 7.262 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 5.99 needed at 0.05 level of significance, with 2 degrees of freedom. The result is therefore significant; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that women labour force

participation has significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis three

Hypothesis three states that “women fertility regulation has no significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria.”

Table 3: Chi-square (X^2) analysis of the association between women fertility regulation and academic integrity in Cross River State (N = 750).

Women fertility regulation indicators	Academic high level	Integrity high level	Total
Improved child health	82	113	195
Improved family planning services	96	84	180
Improved child-school attainment	102	73	175
Improved family nutrition	86	114	200
Total	366	384	750

Source: Field data, 2023

Contingency (X^2) table showing the association between women fertility and regulation and academic integrity in Cross River State

Cell	O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² /E
1	82	95.16	-13.16	173.1856	1.82
2	113	99.84	13.16	173.1856	1.73
3	96	87.84	8.16	66.5856	0.76
4	84	92.16	-8.16	66.5856	0.72
5	102	85.4	16.6	275.56	3.23
6	73	89.6	-16.6	275.56	3.08
7	86	97.6	-11.6	134.56	1.38
8	114	102.4	11.6	134.56	1.31
Total	750				14.03

Calculated (X^2) value = 14.03

Critical (X^2) value = 7.81

Level of significance = 0.05

Degrees of freedom = 3

Result:

The result summarized in table 3 revealed that the calculated (X^2) value of 14.03 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 7.81 needed at 0.05 level of significance with 3 degrees of freedom. The result is therefore significant; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that women fertility regulation has a significant association with academic integrity.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Women political participation for social development and academic integrity

The analysis indicated that the calculated (X^2) value of 14.07 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 11.1 needed at 0.05 level of significance, with 5 degrees of freedom. This means that women political participation for social development has a significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings harmonised with Levine, Cynthia, Greene and Grown (2008) who argued in support of the merit of re-cultivating academic integrity especially in female education. As observed by them, this is necessary because women education empowers them to engage in civic participation, engagement in democratic activities, voluntary activities for public policy etc. Ogban and Nkpoyen (2020) emphasized that several instances abound where educated women in the developing world were able to secure benefits for themselves and

their society through involvement in political movements. There is an increase likelihood of sustainable democratic governance in countries with well educated women (Kabeer 2005). Education facilitates women’s access to opportunities and skills to exercise their political rights, participate in decision making, exercise leadership and contribute to social development. Female education is about more than getting girls into school. It is also about ensuring that girls feel safe and learn while in school, complete all levels of education with the skills and competencies to secure jobs, make decisions about their own lives, and contribute to their communities and the world. Female education is a strategic social development priority. Better educated women tend to be healthier than uneducated women, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more income, give birth to fewer children, marry at a later age, and provide better health care and education to their children. All these factors combined can help lift households out of poverty. Academic integrity empowers voice and agency. Women education must seek to generate positive outcomes about integrity in view of the crucial role in social development. Such women education must firstly engender honesty, trust in the value of their own intellect, demonstrate personal achievement, accept corrections from instructors as part of the learning process, showcase their own abilities etc. (Academic Integrity at M.T 2018).

Scholars (Levine et al, 2008; Imran & Nordin, 2013) argue in support of the merit of re-cultivating academic integrity especially in women education. This is necessary because women education empowers them to engage in civic participation and attend political meetings. A sound and healthy women education has impact on their potentialities for participation in national development and thus the need for emphasis on academic integrity. The girl receiving education must endeavor to avoid academic dishonesty by excluding performance anxiety/fear of failure, self-justification habits, low self-concept and tendencies for academic misconduct (Momsen,1991).

Women labour participation for social development and academic integrity

The analysis revealed that the calculated (X^2) value of 7.262 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 5.99 needed at 0.05 level of significance, with 2 degrees of freedom. This means that women labour force participation has significant association with academic integrity in Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings support Ogban and Nkpoyen (2020) that sustaining female education on academic integrity delivers concrete, far reaching economic and social benefits for all especially engagement in labour market. The yields from investing in female education are substantial. An educated girl is likely to increase her personal earning potential as well as reduce poverty in her community (Ogban & Nkpoyen, 2020).

A large body of macroeconomic evidence shows that increases in women's education generally lead to increase in their labour force participation as well as their earning capacities. Scholars (Osim et al 2020; Ogban & Nkpoyen, 2020) argued that if women education raises human capital, productivity and economic growth as much as male schooling does, then women's disadvantage in education is economically insufficient and inimical to authentic social development. Improved literacy can have a remarkable effect on women's earnings. Educated women are empowered to play a greater economic role in their families and communities and they tend to reinvest what they earn into their families.

Fertility regulation for social development and academic integrity

The analysis revealed that the calculated (X^2) value of 14.03 is greater than the Critical (X^2) value of 7.81 needed at 0.05 level of significance with 3 degrees of freedom. The results of the indicated the existence of a significant association

between fertility regulation or capability for healthy reproduction and academic integrity. Available literature reports that education of females significantly reduces the fertility and mortality rates and improves child health. This is attributed to the added value of an educated woman which academic integrity bestows (Levine et al 2008). While the economic benefits of educating girls are similar in size to the economic benefits of educating boys, findings suggest that the social benefits authentic female education grounded on academic integrity are far greater than those from investing on male education (Greenstein 2000; Hamra,2008). Women education achieves greater societal goal if grounded on good ethical value (Ojo, 2005). In the views of McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield (2001), emphasizing academic integrity in female education makes them more politically, economically and socially active and better informed about their healthy productive family and how to exercise family despite cultural constraints. Becker's (1993) Human Capital Theory (HCT) concludes that the dividends of education leads to greater outputs, reduction of social inequality, reduction of poverty and unemployment. It stresses the significance of academic excellence characterized by skilled and educated faculty. The recipient of education must follow the ethical requirements and where appropriate the professional standards appropriate to the discipline (Swansea University, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Women education has cognitive benefits. Education is an engine of growth and key to the development of every society based on its quality. Its paramount role in fostering social development by women has been acknowledged globally. In order for women to make significant contribution to economic growth and development, they must benefit from an educational process that is sustained on a sound academic integrity. Fundamental to the educational work that women are engaged in is the expectation that they will make choices that reflect integrity and responsible behavior.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government and Civil Society Organizations should endeavor to enlighten people about the social development benefit of female education in the aspect of political participation and academic integrity. Academic fraud in all its dimensions must be consistently emphasized throughout the various stages of the educational process as it

poses a hindrance to effective women labour force participation.

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