

The Effects of Gender Equality in Nigeria A Case Study of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality remains a major issue in Nigeria, with significant implication for socio-economic development. This research x-rays the effect of gender equality on economic empowerment, education, health care, and social development in Nigeria. Using a pooled method of approach, this research combines a quantitative data from a survey of 150 respondents with qualitative imminence from in-depth interviews with prominent personalities. The finding shows that gender equality in the positive has impacted education and health care development, while also advancing economic empowerment and social development. Notwithstanding, sticking with as visible barriers are cultural and social norms, limited access to education and health care and gender-based violence. This research work recommends reforms in policy, education, and community involvement to promote gender equality and foster sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Gender equality, Socio-economic Development, Nigeria, Education, Health Care, Economic Empowerment and Social Cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Gender equality in its vast sense encompasses a whole lot of effect on various pockets of case studies, for example, gender equality in education, work place, schools, family, business etc, and all of this will be x-rayed under the common case study, Nigeria, thus the topic, the effect of gender equality, a case study of Nigeria.

Nigeria is a country located in West Africa. It shares boundary with Benin Republic to the west, Chad and Cameroon to the east, and Niger to the North and its coast lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the south and it borders Lake Chad to the northeast.

Gender equality according to Wikipedia definition, can also be viewed as, sexual equality and is the state of equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, including economic participation and decision-making; and the state of valuing different behaviors, aspirations and needs equally, regardless of gender.

UNICEF defines gender equality as “women and men, girls and boys, enjoying the same rights, resources, opportunities and protection. It does not require that girls and boys or women and men be the same or that they be treated alike.

It was furnished as of 2017 on gender equality by the United Nations Development Program’s Human Development Reports to be the fifth of seventeen sustainable development goals (SOG) of the United Nations. The report portrays content that, gender equality has not incorporated the proposition of genders besides women and men, or gender identities outside of the gender binary and is measured annually.

One thing to that comes to mind is, as much as the Nigerian constitution enshrines and provides for gender equality and nondiscrimination, Nigerian women continue to suffer injustices and marginalization. This is often as a result of discriminatory laws, religious and cultural norms, gender stereotypes, low levels of education and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women. The outcome of gender equality base research basically has different areas of research to talk about, an inclusive gender equality means that all citizens of Nigeria, both the igbo’s, yoruba’s and the Hausa female and male child should feel represent, heard and associated (Hellen Schrooyen). The gender equality empowerment agenda is recognized in the sustainable development goals (SDG) specifically goal 5.

This research intends to analyze the effect resulting to gender equality in Nigeria. It will bring to bear, the pros and cons of gender equality and how it affects the Nigeria state, to answer the following research questions, in order to conclude the research results and provide recommendations.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

This independent study has the following research objectives:

- a. To study concepts and theories of gender equality.
- b. To analyze the effects gender equality has on the Nigerian state.
- c. To recommend solutions to better improve gender equality.

Conceptual Framework

This theory stipulates and describes a process whereby, men and women are in equal enjoyment of rights and opportunities, where the needs, behavior, wishes and aspirations of both men and women are in equal value and favor. promoting equal access and distribution of resources.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gender: according to the oxford dictionary, “gender means the male sex or the female sex, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, or one of a range of other identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.”

Equality: also looking at the oxford dictionary, equality is defined as “the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.”

Effect: This by the same oxford dictionary refers as “a change which is a result or consequence of an action or other cause.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Essentially, gender equality in Nigeria is taking great and prominent focus with numerous research studies looking critically into its effects and implications as it regards to social development, education, health and economic growth (Oyedeji, 2017). This literature review aims to synthesize the findings of existing research on the effect of gender equality in Nigeria, highlighting the benefits, challenges, and areas for future research.

In many regions around the world, including Nigeria, where institutional hurdles, socio-cultural norms, and conventional gender roles have historically disadvantaged women, gender equality has emerged as a critical area of research. Gender equality has been studied from a variety of angles, including its effects on Nigerian society in the areas of education, politics, health sector, social work, and the economy. This study of the literature looks at previous researchers' conclusions about the impact of gender equality in Nigeria; with a particular emphasis on how gender parity or lack thereof affects social development and the larger picture.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND IMPACT OF GENDER EQUALITY IN NIGERIA

Many Nigerian scholars who have examined the economic implications of gender equality contend that more gender equality may greatly enhance the country's economic development and progress. Ikeora (2016) points out that attaining sustainable development in Nigeria depends on women's economic engagement. She contends that reducing gender disparity can increase economic output, particularly in terms of access to jobs and education. Ikeora contends that women's economic empowerment reduces poverty by raising household earnings and enhancing family wellbeing.

According to World Bank (2019) achieving gender equality has the ability to raise Nigeria's GDP by 23%.

Oyedeji (2017) has the conviction that gaining gender equality can result to improved Women's economic empowerment, increase in household income and improved living standards.

In justification of above related research of the positive impact gender equality has gained on the Nigeria economy are increased women participation in Nigerian workforce constitute 42%, growth of women-owned businesses is to the tune of 22% of Nigerian businesses, and improved support to women entrepreneurs for financial access through the Nigerian women's fund and women's empowerment initiatives, just to mention a few. Considerable as well are the negative impact visualized despite the influence of gender equality. these includes, limiting access to credit for women thereby hindering entrepreneurship, Women engaging their 4-6 hours daily in an unpaid care work, reducing economic participation, Women dominating low-paying sectors, causing inequality in income. Conservatively, gender equality could have effect on Nigeria economy through set out laws and policies ranging from National Policy on Women (2017) which ensures equal access to economic opportunity and resources, Nigerian Women's Economic Empowerment Act (2019) which promotes women participation in entrepreneurship and business, Pension Reform Act (2014) which ensures equal pension benefits for men and women.

Aina and Omoniyi (2019) also highlight the benefits of gender equality for Nigeria's labor sector. They argue that as more women join the formal sector and engage in entrepreneurship, decreasing gender gaps in employment will boost Nigeria's GDP. According to their research, gender prejudice, a lack of financing availability and inadequate support networks are major obstacles faced by female entrepreneurs in Nigeria. However, if these issues are resolved, women's economic contributions can contribute to the stability of the national economy.

GENDER EQUALITY AND HEALTH OUTCOME

In Nigeria, gender inequality has a major impact on health outcomes as well. Gender-based differences in healthcare access have a negative impact on women's health, according to research from scholars like Okafor (2019) who have studied the relationship between maternal health and gender inequality. Okafor contends that cultural norms that limit women's mobility and financial liberty are the reason why women in many regions of Nigeria, especially in rural areas, have restricted access to healthcare services, including maternity care. According to his study, rates of maternal and infant mortality can be lowered by advancing gender equality, particularly in the area of healthcare access

The World Health Organization (2018) found out that gender equality in healthcare is accompanied with enhanced health outcomes and reduced maternal mortality

A research carried out by Orji (2016) proves that attaining gender equality in healthcare enhances access to reproductive health services.

Revealed under the negative effect of gender equality in the Nigerian health care stipulates Maternal Mortality rate is very high, women in Nigeria face limited access to health care services especially reproductive health. Women record the highest of HIV/AIDS cases in

Nigeria. Nigeria to this effect and to attain positive stride effecting gender equality has laws regulating the health system to promote gender equality such as, National Health Act (2014), ensuring access to healthcare services including reproductive health, National HIV/AIDS Policy (2017) which addresses gender disparities in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment etc.

GENDER EQUALITY AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Several academics have studied the connection between gender equality and education in Nigeria, concentrating on the impact of gender differences in education on development. Gender disparity in education, Kelechi (2017) believes, continues to impede attempts to increase literacy rates and human capital development, especially in northern Nigeria. According to Kelechi's research, socio cultural practices including early marriage, gender norms that value males' education and financial limitations make girls less likely to attend school. He contends that empowering women and eradicating poverty depend on advancing gender equality in education.

Adewale (2018) goes on to say that improved social outcomes and increased economic growth can result from gender equality in education. He highlights the fact that educated women are more likely to support their families financially, engage in the workforce, and make educational and health-related investments for their kids. According to Adewale's research, initiatives to close the gender gap in education like community-based awareness campaigns and scholarships for girls have been successful in raising school attendance and closing the gender gap, especially in rural regions.

Research carried out by UNESCO (2018) shows that, promoting and encouraging gender equality in Education results to improved academic attainment and lower dropout rates (UNESCO 2018).

Adebayo (2015) conducted research has it that attaining gender equality in education has the potential of improving women's economic opportunities and reduces poverty (Adebayo 2015).

Through gender equality, Nigeria has attained some stride in increased girl's enrolment in primary education which rose from 63% to 73% between 2010 and 2020. Also gained through the Nigerian Girls Education Initiative are programs that provide scholarship to disadvantaged girls. All these were made possible through some laws and policies promulgated in Nigeria that promotes gender equality as regards Education. These include, Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act (2004) which ensures compulsory education for girls and boys, National Policy on Education (2013) which promotes girls' education and gender sensitive curricula. Equally, the Education sector also records some negative effect resulting from gender equality. This can be inferred as

Low enrolment rates: It is revealed that 63% of girls are out of school as compared to 53% of boys.

Limited Access to STEM Education: the female gender is underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

GENDER EQUALITY AND PAY GAP IN NIGERIA



Gender pay gaps are associated with various forms; In Nigeria women face sizeable wage difference levels, including those in salaried jobs. It is estimated that women held only 38 percent of all salaried jobs in the region in 2015. In some parts of Nigeria, wage difference raises dusk to create inferiority complex among the gender.

GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

UNDP (2019) conducted research indicated that gender equality when attained results to improved social cohesion and reduced conflict

Found also in the research by Ogbuagu (2017) indicates that a gained gender equality impacts women's participation in politics and decision-making processes positively.

To a measurable point, social development has recorded some fit as a result of gender equality as can be felt in reduced child marriage rates the was predominant, increase in women participation in politics, as well as anti-gender-based violence initiatives like the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund and Project Alert Support Survivors. Making these possible are the laws and policies promulgated which included National Policy on Women (2017) promoting women participation in decision making processes, Nigerian National Gender Policy (2008) which ensure equal treatment for men and women, Discrimination Against Persons with disabilities (Prohibition) Act (2018) which protects people with disability from discrimination.

Notwithstanding these results and more enjoyed by the country as a result of more awareness of gender equality, it is pertinent to note that research has it also that the country suffers some negative effect emanating from gender inequality related to social development which includes, 43% of Nigerian girls are married before 18 years limiting education and economic growth, 25% of women have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM) causing some health complication. Not leaving out, is domestic violence in which reveals that 30% of women experience it.

The missing link that the research intends to conduit is the effect of gender equality and inequality in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A thorough search of academic databases, encompassing Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Web of Science, was carried out using relevant keywords including gender equality, Nigeria, economic growth, education, health, social development, gender gap and job segregation. Inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and reports published in English between 2010 and 2022

To put together this research work, as investigational method, both primary and secondary data were used. The study utilized the qualitative research method and all documentary data will be collected from the related study reports. The process and steps of the research had engaged some prominent citizen and commoners in different areas on one-on-one interviews

to form up the primary data. To protect their opinions, the few individuals interviewed preferred to remain anonymous. To attain the secondary data, random sample survey was carried out by the researcher, where he had to distribute questionnaires to four states, Abia state to represent the igbos, Ogun State, to represent the Yorubas, Kano State, to represent the Huasas and Rivers state, to represent other regions that make up Nigeria as a nation. The researcher chose these states to represent Nigeria because of its vastness and constraints cover the whole Nigerian States. To effectively carry this out, the researcher distributed a total of 400 questionnaires, 100 for each state as stated. Its administration involved a mix of both individual and married couples distributed in random across the various Local Government Area that makes up each state. In another vein, the study calls for the use of tables and percentages, which will successfully break down the data gathered based on the information gathered. Not leaving out other things that made up the secondary data were information gotten from Journals, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, websites, published and unpublished works, magazines, and other related material



DIVORCE CASES – IS JUSTICE GENDER SENSITIVE?

The above image shows the effect and gap between both genders. With Equality, equal rights of both genders the rate of broken homes, failed marriages, divorce has risen drastically.

DATA ANALYSIS

By the research method technique, both primary and secondary data was applied. At the end of the research approach, two hundred (400) respondents were expected to give opinions to the questionnaires shared in various localities of the states, three hundred and fifty (350) of the four hundred were recovered and had responses returned. Inclusively to the presentation are interview sessions held with eight (8) prominent persons which included both physically and on phone to get their views on the effect of gender equality in the Nigerian state.

Table 1. Showing data distribution based on the gender of the respondent

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	150	42.86%
2	Female	200	57.14%
	Total	350	100%

Source: Field work August, 2024

The above table indicates distribution according to gender in whereby 42.86% of the respondents were males and 57.14% were females.

Table 2: Data distribution based on age of respondent

S/N	AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	18-35	65	18.57%
2	36-60	85	24.29%
3	61 and above	200	57.14%
	total	350	100%

Source: Field work August, 2024

Above table indicates the distribution by age. It indicates the various response opinions from various age grades in their category. It proves that the age group of 61 and above years contributed the most opinion to the data collected for this study, with 57.14%, followed by the age group of 36-60 years with 24.29%. Having mentioned those, the table also represents the age grade, 18 – 30 donated to the research work, the least, at 18.57%.

Table 3: Data distribution to show the respondent's occupational status.

S/N	OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Highly placed citizens	60	17.14%
2	Middle class citizens	90	25.71%
3	Lowly placed citizens	30	8.57%
4	Students	170	48.58%
	TOTAL	350	100%

Source: Field work August, 2024

As shown in the distribution table above, it represents that of the status of the respondents. It indicates that leading in the biggest percentage of data citing (48.58%) came from the student's response to the researchers' postulation. The table also shows how all the levels of groups of the citizenry of Nigeria who in one way or the other may have experienced the effect of gender equality were involved in opinions that formed the researcher's end product result.

Table 4: Data distribution to show respondents' Educational background.

S/N	EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
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1	Tertiary Education	180	51.43%
2	Secondary Education	60	17.14%
3	Primary Education	80	22.86%
4	others	30	8.57%
	TOTAL	350	100%

Source: field work August 2024

The table above indicates the academic background of the respondents. It reveals that 51.43 percent of the respondents have attained tertiary education and as such, should have a good understanding of the topic in research. The table also reveals 22.86 percent respondents only attained primary education as against 17.14 percent that furthered to secondary school. it can also be seen that 8.57 percent of the respondent are in the class of others.

Table 5: Data distribution to show respondents' employment status

S/N	EMPLOYMENT STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Employed	170	48.57%
2	Unemployed	60	17.14%
3	Self employed	70	20%
4	others	50	14.29%
	TOTAL	350	100%

Source: field work August 2024

It is revealed in the above table that 48.57 percent of the respondents are gainfully employed. The percentage that is unemployed is 17.14 percent. And 20 percent are self employed, while others are in the tune of 14.29percent.

Table 6: Showing distribution based on access to health care

S/N	ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Male	261	74.57%
2	Female	89	25.43%
	TOTAL	350	100%

Source: field work August 2024

This table showcases the distribution of data depicting access to health care. It shows that the male gender gained 74.57 percent access to health care than the female gender that scored 25.53 percent.

Table 7: Showing distribution based on perception of gender equality

S/N	PERCEPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Believes men and women should have equal rights	290	82.86%
2	Believes men should have superior right over women	60	26.67%

	TOTAL	350	100%
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Source: field work August 2024

This table demonstrates the distributions along the line of perception of right equality between women and men. It indicates that the Nigerian populace believes that it will profit more, when both the men and women have equal rights which are indicated at 82.86%, while those of contrary view is indicated at 26.67%.

Table 8: Showing distribution based on existence of gender equality in Nigeria

S/N	PERCEPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender equality exist in Nigeria	270	77.14%
2	Gender equality does not exist	30	8.57%
3	Indifferent	50	14.29%
	TOTAL	350	100%

Source: field work August 2024

This table showcases the distribution of data depicting opinions of respondents on whether gender equality is effective in the country Nigeria or not. It shows that gender equality is operational taking the highest percentage (77.14%). The percentage that believes gender equality is not operational takes 8.57 percent of the respondent, while those indifferent in their opinion as responded takes 14.29 percent.

Table 9: Showing the disposition of the respondent to the effect of gender equality in Nigeria

Table 9A: Economic Empowerment

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender equality can improve the country's economic empowerment	278	79.43%
2	The country's economic empowerment does not rely on gender equality	72	20.57%
	Total	350	100%

Source: field work carried out on August, 2024

Table 9B: Educational improvement

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender equality can improve the country's Educational improvement	222	63.43%
2	The country's educational improvement does not rely on gender equality	128	36.57%
	Total	350	100%

Source: field work, August, 2024

Table 9C: Health Care Improvement

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender equality can improve the country's health care improvement	300	85.71%
2	The country's health care improvement does not rely on gender equality	50	14.29%
	Total	350	100%

Source: field work, August, 2024

Table 9D: Social Development

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender equality can improve the country's social development	248	70.86 %
2	The country's social development does not rely on gender equality	102	29.14%
	Total	350	100%

Source: field work, August, 2024

Citing the above chart table, it conceives the postulation that, gender equality has the capacity to effecting improvement and development in the country (Nigeria's) economic, educational, health care and social strata. This is depicted in 4 different chart table captioned 9A, 9B, 9C, 9D, under table 5 showing the disposition of the respondent to the effect of gender equality in Nigeria

In the table 5A, it was indicated that the highest percentage of respondent or 79.43% believes that, gender equality improves the country, Nigeria's economic. While the percentage of those that believes the country's economic development is not reliant on gender equality scored 20.57%.

Looking at the second table, table 5B, it considers therein, and reveals 63.43% of the total percentage of respondent believes that educational development is be tied to gender equality. While those that believes contrary is 36.57% relying educational development of a country on gender equality.

According to table 5C, it can be deduced that gender equality affects health care to a recommendable development. This is revealed by the 85.71% of the 350 respondent who filled the box that said that affirmed and believed gender equality improves health care was the highest. When gender equality is attained, health care sure will be improved as there will be introduction of more professionals into the profession to handle and tackle the issues arising from health care thereby reducing the burden on just a specific gender. The table also indicates that, 14.29% of the respondent believes gender equality has no effect on health care improvement.

On table 5D, we can x-ray 70.86% of the total respondents saying that gender equality has a great effect on the social development of the country. It will interest you to know that, on few occasions of one-on-one interview held with some of the respondent, they said they are more comfortable relating with opposite sex in many dealings they transact. 29.14% believes otherwise.

Table 10: Showing the disposition of the respondent experience on gender discrimination

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	I have been a victim of gender discrimination	296	84.57 %
2	I have not experienced any form of gender discrimination	15	4.29%
3	Others	39	11.14%
	Total	350	100%

Source: field work, August, 2024

Reading the above table, it is revealed that 84.57% of the respondent has suffered gender discrimination in one form or the other at some given quarters and occasion. That reveals the highest. Followed to it is 11.14%, those who could neither figure out whether what they faced was as a result of gender inequality. 4.29% responded that they have not been discriminated at any point.

Table 11: Showing distribution of the possible causes for gender inequality

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Cultural norms	163	46.57%
2	Poor education orientation and awareness	102	29.14%
3	Ineffective legislation	85	24.29%
	Total	350	100%



Source: field work, August 2024

From the field source mentioned above, we may infer that 46.57% of votes were cast for cultural norms as the root reasons for various gender inequality issues experienced in the country that has affected gender equality. It posed as the highest percentage to cause of gender inequality. On a personal discussion, because of the limiting factor of funds to travel round the whole region that make up Nigeria, the researcher was able to engage prominent personality of the different region residing in Rivers State, the sample state for the case study, Nigeria on verbal interview on the relationship of cultural norm and how it has affected gender equality despite the achievements? From the South Eastern Nigeria, the respondent, a titled chief reveal that, in the Igbos practice patriarchal tradition. This allows only men to hold Specific authority and control.

This has posed great barrier to gender equality. Women also are also seen as commodity they buy through bride price they pay in marriage. As regards roles, many women are limited to domestic and childcare. Furthering in the research for data, the researcher interfaced with an alhaji from Jigawa State, but residing in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, who preferred to remain anonymous, on how cultural norms from the northern axis of Nigeria affects gender equality? He says, by the Purdah system practiced in the North, women's mobility and social interactions are restricted. They also believe in early marriage where young girls are married out at very young age limiting them from education and economic opportunity. Also operated in the North is inheritance law where women are often excluded from inheriting properties. An interview also was granted to a Yoruba man from the Western region of Nigeria. When asked how gender equality is practiced in the West, he says, Men are viewed as the head of homes; women have limited access to financial services and credits as well as promising domestic roles to women. It took a different tone when the researcher had a turn with an Ibibio couple also residing in Rivers State as it regards what the south-south relates gender equality. In consonance they said, the Ibibios practice matrilineal tradition where women significantly influence the family and community.

The women relatively have more access to economic empowerment. Girls are motivated to be educated. More women have the expectation to double for domestic and economic functions Followed from the table data source above is 29.14% who believes and says that poor education orientation for gender equality has promoted gender inequality to a great deal. One of the respondents, while interacting outside the questionnaire on a recorded audio interview, opined that, if both genders will have equal educational orientation, it will better spur both gender to have gender equality awareness thereby pursuing it in the same vein. Followed to that is the 24.29% who believes the root cause to gender inequality is the country's ineffective legislation. They have it to say that, these laws that encourage gender equality are existing but not effective. This is as a result of inability of government effectively implementing and the law enforcement agencies from enforcing the laws. Also, is the lack commensurate funding and resources, ill awareness of the existence of the laws and education of the citizens as well as corruption and bureaucracy? All these contributed to the ineffectiveness of the laws in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Critical analysis of the data presented and analyzed above reveals the proof of existence of gender equality in Nigeria scoring 77.14% as the highest response to that favor. That gender equality has a great effect on the Nigeria economic empowerment, educational development, health care improvement and social development.

That a variety of elements, including cultural norms, poor educational orientation and ineffective gender equality legislation are the root causes of gender inequality in our society with cultural norms taking 46.57% as the highest percentage of root cause to gender inequality. In the cause of this research, the researcher took note of the progress of Nigeria gender equality process. Before now, Nigeria, have been faced with significant barriers more particularly from the northern part of Nigeria where historically, women are often regarded as subordinate to men. As a result of this, feminist movements have been pushing for change since 1920's, tribalizers like Fumilayo Ransome-kuti and Nwanyeruwa fighting for women rights and equality. Even though the researchers agrees that Nigeria still have a long way to go on gender equality, this research reveals also that in recent times, Nigeria has made more progress such as, the implementation of policies to promote gender equality to a great extent relating to (WEE) Women Economic Empowerment. These efforts have contributed to increased women representation in politics with notable women like Ngozi Adichie Chimamanda and Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi advocating for women. Women now own businesses accounting for 41% enterprises in Nigeria. Girls' education also has improved greatly though still has some significant gap.

While this research Portrays and emphasizes the positive highlights of benefits of gender equality in Nigeria, encompassing economic expansion, enhanced educational outcomes, improved health services and strengthened social development, challenges and obstacles remains, such as entrenched cultural and social norms, restricted access to education and healthcare, and pervasive gender-based violence. Also challenging gender equality in Nigeria is the ineffectiveness in implementation of existing laws that promotes gender equality. It will interest you to know that the provision in Nigeria (1999) constitution section 15(2) and 42(1) prohibits sex-based discrimination and section 17 outlines the elimination of disparities as a fundamental objective of state policy, including gender based disparity and section 17(3)(e) ensures equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex. But these are not totally effective as its implementation has not been effective. Future research should prioritize investigating strategies to overcome these obstacles and developing innovative approaches to advance gender equality.

Comparing Nigeria gender with the western countries, it reveals some important highlights the researcher believes can reshape the Nigeria policy making to enhance gender equality if adopted. Such are

Legal framework: most of the western countries have comprehensive gender equality laws which can easily be accessed for implementation, while that of Nigeria are in fragments, making it difficult for even victims to appropriate.

Women Representation: Women in most western countries have more female representation in politics (e.g., 30% in the US Congress) are women compared to Nigeria that has less than 6% in the National Assembly.

Social Norms: The western countries have more progressive attitudes towards gender roles, while Nigeria's societal norms often perpetuate patriarchal values.

The researcher is delighted to offer the following suggestions for proper channeling of the effect of gender equality in Nigeria so that the country can enjoy the benefits accrued.

The Nigerian law-makers should proactively and intentionally engage in total reformation of the countries policy to encourage gender equality. It should focus more on reviewing the existing laws it has to be able to relate with such that are contrary to promotion of gender equality and amend them. Also, to enact fresh laws taking into consideration the cultural and social norms that resist gender equality in our rural areas as well as implement them. It is the researcher's proponent to recommend that cultural norms as it affects gender equality in Nigeria be taken up for research in future as to its effect on gender equality, so as to properly position it to accommodate and enhance gender equality. To further help the countries policy reform, the government should overhaul its institutions saddled with the responsibility of promoting gender equality and strengthen them to meet the present challenges. Those to be reappointed to take up the duties should be sent out to research other western countries gender equality policies with the mandate to replicate to fit the Nigeria system.

The government through its educational institution should take up the responsibility of gender equality awareness programmes more closely. This they can do through including gender-sensitive education into its school curriculum, embark on continuous training of the lawmakers in the educating both girl child in the field as well as the traditional rulers in various community appreciate the delicate nature of the effect of gender equality. They could take the role of conducting annually, the awareness and orientation crusade to inject gender equality mentality into the citizenry, especially in the rural communities.

To help in strengthening institutions engaged with gender equality responsibilities, the country's budget should include a specific amount year marked yearly for women to access as credits to go into businesses to encourage women participation in entrepreneurial engagements.

The health care infrastructures should be strengthened to meet prevailing challenges. Gender based violence should be critically addressed and support services provided.

Conferences between the government, traditional rulers and religious leaders should be held annually in line to promote gender equality. Also, to be considered is government establishing as well as mandating traditional leaders to establish rural-based initiatives for gender equality and roll out modality for monitoring. National gender equality commission should be established with branch offices located throughout the regions of the country. This is to promote and encourage gender equality and empowerment of women in Nigeria. This commission will be saddled with responsibility to research and advice government on gender equality policies, address gender inequality cases and violence, provide evaluation services and monitoring of gender equality progress within the country as well as organize the implementation of gender-based issues. This research x-rays the very importance of gender equality in Nigeria, yielding benefits across economic growth, health, social development, and education. To attain development that can be sustainable, it is expedient to look into and

address the identified challenges and promote gender equality through relevant and friendly policy reforms, education of the Nigerian populace, and community engagement.

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