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Issues, Challenges and Prospects of Female Education in Nigeria: Implications for Sports Administration in Schools

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Abstract - This paper sought to identify Issues, Challenges and Prospects of Gender Education in Nigeria Implications for Sports Administration. The population of the study comprised of 3993 male and female secondary school teachers from the six Geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The multiple stage sampling technique was used to select 5 schools from each of the (6) six geopolitical zones of the country. Out of which 277 were males while 3716 were females. Sampling them at 50% rate a total of 138 males and 1858 females were sampled. The instrument for data collection was the use of questionnaire which was validated by two experts each from departments of Educational Foundations and Human Kinetics & Health Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The validated instrument was trial – tested with the use of Crobach alpha co-efficient to obtain an internal consistency reliability of 0.78. Mean scores were used to profer answers to the two research questions, while the t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses. The research findings revealed that the educated women are more aware of the value of sports (physical education) in gender education. Furthermore the study revealed absence of gender sports sensitive schools environment; persistent gender discrimination at the home and community levels. Recommendations were made.

Keywords : girl–child–education, sports (physical education) gender friendly, gender-gap, gender-sensitive schools, gender inbalances. balanced education.

I. Introduction

Despite some noticeable advancement made in the area of sports participation, as a means of realizing balanced education in Nigeria, gender imbalances still persist. If education is viewed as an instrument for national development as construed by the (Federal Government of Nigeria 2004) then it must be total and all embracing (gender friendly). Balanced education is equally seen as "an indispensible means of unlocking and protecting human rights" Education for all Global Monitoring Report (EFAGMR, 2000).

The implication of this is that education is a powerful tool that is capable of developing individuals potentials for optimum self-reliance and empowerrment. Furthermore it is the view of this paper that the type of education Nigeria must pursue will be such that will entail the use of aggregate of all the educational processes that could enable an individual develop his or her ability, attitude and bring about a positive change in behaviour, beneficial to the society and the individual concerned. The realization of such an individual could only be possible with adequate administration of sports (physical education) in the education programme of schools in Nigeria.

According to Ikwumelu (1991) he succinctly stated that:

"National development implies not only national economic growth such as increase in out-put or production, but also qualitative and quantitative changes in the individuals in social institution, and level of living, excitement of the quest for modernization, reorganization and re-orientation of entire economic, political and social system"

This statement goes further to portray the importance of education in national development of every country of the world. Bearing in mind that women (females) constitute more than half of the world's population (UNICEF 1998). There are still noticeable impediments that tend to hinder realization of gender parity in Education, with regards to administration of sports (physical education) in schools. Gender is an individual self-concept of being male or female as distinguished from actual biological sex. Gender gap therefore is not fixed at birth only, but also some physiological, social, and cultural factors equally contribute to the initial or early establishment of this identity, which tends to be more pronounced as the girl-child grows. There is therefore need for more analytical research to explain womens limited access to education, its implications for sports administration in schools. Even though so much emphasis has been made in the past regarding the importance of women education, in all countries of the world including Nigeria in their quest for national development, not much has been considered about the role sports (physical education) should play in such educational process.

Physical education (sports) is an integral part of the schools curriculum which involves training, development and care of the human body through the application or administration of well selected physical

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activities, which results to healthy and physically fit individual (Adeyeye 2008). Physical education is equally about sharpening overall cognitive abilities and motor skills via athletics, exercise and various other physical activities like martial arts and dance. (Semidara 2008).

Furthermore, Ikulayo (2009) and Awoyinfa (2005) all succinctly referred to physical education as the process of learning all the rudiments of sports activities in an attempt to appreciate human health and effective human wellness. Physical and health education plays a major role in the transformation of any society and the girls (females) comprising more than half the entire population of the world; it then becomes imperative that a critical re-examination be made, on how well and effective sports (physical education) is being administered and applied in the total process of educating the girl-child (gender). This may be the reason why UNESCO (2000) affirmed that the world has reached consensus that no country's development can be judged as satisfactory, if their women do not fully participate and form part of such development. Hence Snyder (1990) stated that.

"a mothers' level of education is the single most important influence on the survival rate of her children and on their achievement in school - - - - failure to improve women's access to education, limits family income and impedes the well-being of their families".

Despite notifiable global efforts to close gender gap in education, wider gap still persists in the quality of education offered the girl-child (gender) vis-à-vis inclusion and adequate administration of sports (physical education), in the education process.

This becomes very pertinent when one considers the assertion made by Nwangwu (1995) and Ezegbe (2001) who maintained that women occupies central position in the family and society with regards to political, economic and social role in national development, and development is hardly attainable without the full involvement of women in Education. The girl-child participation in sports (physical education) both at the primary and secondary school levels is further hindered by the obsession which parents have on coach/female athlete relationship further increase their fear and objection in allowing their female off-springs to take part in competitive sports (Alagbu 1999).

II. Statement of the Problem

Researchers over the years had noticed inbalance in gender education in Nigeria. This study sets out to further ex-ray the poor quality of even the little education given to the girl-child. Physical education as a school subject has been neglected and regarded as inferior when compared with other school subjects in the school curriculum, often times where it is practiced it is regarded as a male affair. Based on the foregoing, this study sought to identify issues, challenges and prospects in female education in Nigeria, with a view to examining the extent sports (physical education) is applied or administered in the process of the girl-child education in Nigeria.

Inorder to carry out this study two research questions and two-Null hypotheses were generated to guide the study:-

a) *Research Questions*

- What are the hindrances to proper application or administration of sports (physical education) in the education of the girl-child in schools.
- What are the prospects of adequate and proper application or administration of physical education (sports) in the education process of the girl-child in Nigeria schools.

b) *Null Hypotheses*

- There will be no significant difference in the mean perceptions of male and female teachers on the hindrances to proper application or administration of sports (physical education) in the education of the girl-child.
- There will be no significant difference in the mean perceptions of male and female teachers on the prospects of adequate and proper application or administration of physical education (sports) in the education process of the girl-child.

III. Method

The design for the study is the survey method, since the aim is to elicit information from selected sample and later generalize. The area of the study is the South-East Geopolitical zone of Nigeria (Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi states) out of the 5 States using the multi-stage sampling technique 5 schools were sampled from each of the 5 States. Male and female teachers were sampled at 50% rate, giving a total number of 138 male teachers and 1858 female teachers. The total number of respondents is therefore 1996.

The reason for using teachers for this study is due to their experiential knowledge on the values of adequate application or administration of physical education (sports) in the process of education generally vis-à-vis the education of the girl-child, as it obtains in schools in Nigeria.

a) *Instrument*

The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire which comprised of two parts "A" & "B". Part "A" sought information on personal matters of the respondents. While part "B" sought for information concerning challenges and prospects of women education as it relates to hindrances to proper application or administration of sports (physical education), in the educational process of the girl-child. Part "B" was made up of 20 items, which was rated on a

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modified 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4 points) Agree (3 points) Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point).

The questionnaire was face validated by two experts from Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, while the other expert was from Department of Educational Foundations Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka.

The validated instrument was trial tested on teachers who did not form part of the research respondents. In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha co-efficient was used, which yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.78 (high internal consistency). The researchers made use of CEP students and Sandwich students that resides in the areas of research to minimize logistic costs. A total of 1996 questionnaire were distributed out of which only 1968 were returned as usuable for the study.

The data collected were analysed in relation with the two research questions and 2 Null hypotheses that guided the study. Statistics of mean was used to answer the two research questions; while the t-test was used to test the 2Null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1 : Mean Perceptions of Male and Female Teachers secondary school on the hindrances to proper Application or Administration of Sports (Physical Education) in the Education of the Girl-Child in Nigeria

S/N	Item Responses (138) N = 138	Males Responses (1830) N= 830							Female						
		SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}_1$	SD_1	DEC	SA	A	D	SD	X_2	SD_2	DEC
1.	Home and community Gender discrimination hinders full participation of girls in the educational process that involves proper administration of sports (physical – education)	65	23	42	08	3.05	1.00	A	1008	820	2	-	3.55	0.50	A
2.	Low parental income affects females in participating in education process that involves proper administration of sports (physical – education)	42	28	33	35	2.56	1.17	A	821	1000	09	-	3.44	0.51	A
3.	Many negative traditional and cultural practices affects female's participation in education process that involves proper administration of sports (physical education)	56	29	30	23	2.86	1.13	A	991	209	529	101	3.14	1.02	A
4.	Non existence of gender sensitive schools where sports is adequately administered hinders females balanced education.	69	26	04	39	2.91	1.29	A	721	1008	100	1	3.34	0.58	A
5.	Influence of religious factor affects females participation in balanced education.	12	14	69	43	1.96	0.87	D	208	100	993	529	1.99	0.89	D

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6.	Females low-self image of themselves also affect their participation in balanced education in which physical education is adequately administered.	62	44	16	16	390	1.01	A	1003	705	100	22	3.47	0.66	A

S/N	Item Responses (138) N = 138	Males Responses (1830) N= 830							Female						
		SA	A	D	SD	X_1	SD_1	DEC	$\overline{SA}$	A	D	SD	X_2	SD_2	DEC
7.	Female adherence to existing cultural norms adversely affect their willingness to participate in balanced education in which physical education (sports) is adequately administered.	72	30	22	14	3.16	1.03	A	1009	700	115	06	3.48	0.63	A
8.	Persistent inadequacy of funds to provide needed specific sports (physical education) facilities/equipment in balanced education of the girl-child.	61	45	12	20	3.07	1.05	A	701	1020	69	40	3.30	0.65	A
9.	Indiscriminate use of corporal punish ent in schools is one the reasons for female under participation in balanced education.	05	03	93	32	1.86	0.62	D	08	100	122	160	1.19	0.54	D
10.	Inability of govt. to monitor and analise gender issues and tackle them affects female full participation in balanced education.	68	30	32	08	3.14	0.97	A	1112	400	208	110	3.37	0.91	A
	Total Mean					2.78	1.03						3.03	1.13	

Key:

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	StronglyDisagree

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Table 1 reveals that only items 5 and 9 of the male teachers rating have the mean scores of 1.96 and 1.86 with standard deviation range from 0.87 and 0.62 respectively. All other mean rating of the male teachers have the mean score range from 2.56 to 3.16 with the standard deviation range from 0.62 to 1.29 respectively. Following the same trend the mean ratings of female teachers reveals that all the items with the exception of 5 and 9 have mean score range from 3.14 to 3.55 with standard deviation range from 0.50 to 1.22 respectively. For the female the mean scores for items 5 and 9 are 1.99 and 1.19 with standard deviations of 0.89 and 0.54 respectively.

Table 2 : t" test Analysis of Male and Female Teachers on Issues challenges and prospects of women (Girl – child) education in Nigeria: Implication for sports administration in schools

Source	N	X	SD	DF	"t cal;"	't' crit (0.95)	DEC
Male	138	2.78	1.03				
Female	1830	0.03	1.13	1966	8.33	1.96	Sign

Table 2 shows that in the 't' test analysis, the two mean scores with 1966 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 8.33. Since the computed 't' is greater than the critical 't', the null hypothesis (1) is rejected.

Table 3 : Mean Perceptions of Male and Female teachers on the prospects of adequate or proper administration of sports (physical education) in the education process of the girl-child

S/N	Item	Males (N = 138)							Female (N = 1830)						
		SA	A	D	SD	$\overline{X}_1$	SD_1	DEC	SA	A	D	SD	X_2	SD_2	DEC
1.	Social and economic status of women with balanced education is higher.	103	23	10	-	3.69	0.60	SA	1720	110	-	-	94	0.24	SA
2.	The earnings and saving capacity of women with balanced education is higher.	98	40	-	-	3.71	0.46	SA	1181	600	39	10	3.61	0.56	SA
3.	Incidences of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AID is low among women with balanced education	101	24	3	10	3.57	0.85	SA	1009	501	204	116	3.31	0.90	A
4.	Women with balanced education are more politically active and know their rights.	100	18	20	-	3.58	0.73	SA	172	630	1000	28	2.52	0.68	SA
5.	Women with balanced education contribute more to national development.	75	30	30	3	3.28	0.88	A	1005	701	100	24	3.47	0.66	A
6.	Women with balanced education play more vital role in the education of														

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	their children.	120	14	2	2	3.83	0.51	SA	1600	225	5	–	3.87	0.34 SA
7.	The nutritional status of children from women with balanced education is higher.	130	08	-	-	3.94	0.23	SA	1664	60	106	-	3.85	0.49 SA
8.	Women with balanced education are better informed about family planning.	13107		-	-	3.95	0.22	SA	1160	500	142	28	3.53	0.70 SA
9.	Educational attainment of children from women with balanced education is higher.	101	25	10	2	3.63	0.68	SA	1405	206	205	14	3.64	0.71 SA
10.	Women with balanced education are more economically empowered.	109	25	s4		-	3.76	0.49	SA	1608	202	20	-	3.87 0.37 SA
TOTAL Mean		3.69	0.63	SA						3.56	0.72	SA		

Table 3 shows the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the prospects of women education in which adequate sports (physical education) was administered as part of the balanced education process; the male teachers agreed on all the identified items with the mean score range, from 2.52 to 3.95 and a standard deviation range from 0.22 to 0.90 respectively.

In the same vain the female teachers all agreed on the 10 items with the mean score range from 2.52 to 3.94 and with standard deviation range from 0.24 to 0.90 respectively. The total mean score of the groups of respondents are 3.69 and 3.56 respectively, with a standard deviation of 0.63 and 0.72 respectively.

Table 4: 't' test Analysis of the male and female Teachers on the prospects of women/Girl-child education adequately balanced with sports (physical education administration as part of the education process.

Source	N	X	SD	DF	't'cal	't'crit	0.05	Decision
Male	138	3.69	0.63					
Female	1830	3.56	0.72	1966	6.50	1.96		Significant

The result in table 4 reveals that the 't' test analysis of the two mean scores with 1966 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 6.50. The computed t' is greater than the critical 't', therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there will be no significant difference in the mean perceptions of the male and female teachers on the prospects of adequate and proper application or administration of physical education (sports), in the education process of the girl – child was rejected.

IV. Discussion

From table I the findings reveals that male and female teachers were all of the view that gender discrimination at home and community, low parental income, negative traditional and cultural practices, absence of a gender friendly (sensitive) school environment; girls low self esteem, or image of themselves, females adherence to cultural norms, inadequate funding to cater for female adequate exposure to administration of sports (physical education) in the education process of the girl-child, and inability of government to monitor gender issues in education, hinder women's (girl-child) full exposure or participation in a balanced education. This further confirms or gives credence to FRN (2000) that maintains that there still exists the gender inequality, with low representation of the girls falling from behind as they move up in the education ladder.

The findings from this study that gender discrimination at home and community, negative traditional and cultural practices; and female adherence

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to established cultural norms, hinder girls willingness to participate in balanced education, in which physical education (sports) is adequately administered, tends to be in agreement with Ozigboh (1998) who opines that traditionalism has been the main impediment in the provision of adequate education for the girl-child. Further supporting these findings equally is Lifanda (2007) who asserted that at home and community levels gender-dissemination hinders the full participation of girls in schools education process. The use of girls as family care-givers (baby seaters) and income earners (hawkers of items/wares) still persist in preference to educating the girl-child.

Furthermore, the results from table 1 which revealed that low parental income and inadequate funding needed to be addressed frontally. The fact that gender (females) needed specific sports (physical education) facilities/equipment for balanced education of the girl-child, goes to confirm FRN (2005), which pointed out that the decrease in the percentage of female enrollment might be due to (hidden cost in education) such as cost of school uniforms, feeding, transportation fare, etc) costs of sending their girl-child to school. Also parents cost – benefit analysis.

This study also revealed that absence of gender sensitive schools where sports is adequately administered, hinders females full participation in a balanced education, which tends to negate the UNESCO (2002) declaration of Education for all; where it was stated that the most urgent world priority is to ensure access to improved and qualitative education for girls and women, where every obstacle that hampers their active participation must be removed. The result of this research shows that government tend not to have tackled seriously this issue of (hidden costs in education), which tend to affect the education of the girl-child most (parents cost-benefit-analysis regarding the education of their male and female children). The findings equally supports Lifanda (2007) who maintained that inability to analyse and monitor gender issues in Education policies as well as lack of adequate funding to address gender and girls specific needs, are major constraints in achieving gender parity in balanced education. From table one it could be deduced succinctly that the girls-child have low self-image, lack motivation and tendency of being satisfied with lower social status, all of which points to age-long social, cultural, economic and political factors, this therefore demands governments urgent attention, if gender disparity in balanced education, in which sports (physical education) would play desired role may be realized.

In table 2 it was revealed that the mean scores of the two groups of respondents were tested for significant difference, which showed that the calculated 't' (8.33) is higher than 't' critical (1.96) hence the Null Hypothesis (1) which stated that there will be no significant difference in the mean perception of male and female teachers on the hindrances to proper application or administration of sports (physical education) in the education process of the girl-child, was rejected.

The result in table 3 showed that, both the male and female teachers agreed that all the identified items on the prospects of women education can only be achieved in the education process where adequate and proper administration of sports (physical education) play desired role. Which equally confirms Bello and Okoro (2011) who said that sports (physical education) are far more than a luxury or a form of entertainment. Access and participation in sports (physical education) is a human right and very essential for all individuals of all ages to live and maintain a healthy life. That apart from playing and engaging in organized competitive sports (physical education), sports has a role to play in all societies since it improves peoples health and reduces the likelihood of diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The findings on table 3 equally corroborates Alagbu 2010, who said that when one makes a critical observation of the training (Education) process of our youths, one could discover that majority of them pass through the secondary schools without availing themselves of the most important aspect of the educational developmental process, which can only be offered through sports and physical education.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations were made based on the findings of this research study as follows:-

The adage which says that a healthy nation is a wealthy nation has far implications in the proper education of the girl-child since population-wise, they are more in mummer again it is said that women are naturally endowed with great virtues and potentials which if properly channeled or tailored through education, process where sports (physical education) would play its desired role, would help a great deal in the development of the Nigeria nation. Empowering the women through balanced education would result to the realization of children that would function effectively in the society as future leaders through the sound training they would acquire from their educated mothers.

- Based on the highlighted findings of this research study, a call is hereby made for immediate dismantling of all forms of gender discriminations and some cultural practices existing in the homes and communities, thereby allowing equal opportunities for the girl-child and their male counterparts in education.
- There is need to establish girl-friendly schools with the right climate that would be congenial to teaching

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and learning, in which the rights of the girl child is adequately protected.

* They should be more awareness campaign on the significance and importance of girl-child education by the male counterparts themselves, rather than women championing such campaigns. This will help to give the drive a s-tronger out – look and impetus.
* Efforts must be made by the federal government to further equip existing schools especially the (all-girls) and mixed (boys and girls), federal schools; with modern and standard sports facilities/equipment as it obtains in advanced countries of the world, if educated women with greater virtues and contribution towards national development must be realized.

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