FEMINISM AND WOMEN EDUCATION, ASSESSING ITS IMPACT ON GENDER EQUALITY

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK

APRIL, 2024.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this study was carried out by Oghenenyerohvwo Rita WALI under our supervision in accordance with the requirements of the department of Social Work, University of Benin, Benin City.

_____	_____
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_____	_____
Date	**Date**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear husband, Mr Uche N. Wali, who has guided me through the rough terrain, there is no possible way I would have attain this feat without you. You singlehandedly financed and sponsored me from beginning of this educational course to the end, through most times sacrificing your personal comfort, to ensure I never lacked. You have been a light in the darkest night. Your wisdom, moral support, love and otherwise, have helped me find my way, and I am forever and tremendously grateful.

Thank you for being there, my dedicated husband and friend, and the world's best father to our lovely children. May God continue to uphold you, with His Mighty Hands forever, Amen!

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ABSTRACT

This study examined feminism and women education, assessing its impact on gender equality. The objectives of the study were to investigate the impact of gender inequality on women's level of education in Egor LGA of Benin City, examine the consequence of male sexism on women's political participation, and evaluate the outcome of gender disparity on women's employment status. The research design adopted is the one-shot or cross sectional design. This entails the collection of data only once from the sampled study participants. This research design was adopted because the data needed for the study would best be obtained with this form of research design. The analysis of the different categories of the quantitative data was presented with frequencies, percentages, tables, charts and cross tabulations. The findings from the study revealed that there exist a positive relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment in Egor LGA of Benin City, there is a link between male sexism (bigotry) and women political participation in Egor LGA of Benin City, and there is a significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment opportunity in Egor LGA of Benin City. The study recommended that the governments (national and sub-national) should prioritize their goals to put more focus on ensuring that there are equal rights, equal opportunities, equal working conditions and the stoppage of all forms of gender discrimination and bias in order to increase women's capacity and efforts towards economic growth and development, Nigerians at all levels, from the family unit up to the institutions and work organizations, particularly those at the management positions, should realize the need for a gender balanced society and encourage women's increased and effective participation and contribution to their own individual and collective economic development and national productivity. The Economic policies of governments should be geared towards the creation of jobs, and the girl-child education should be encouraged, so as to give the female folks a sense of belonging in the society and encourage them to make positive impact in their families.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Feminism and education in Nigeria is an important concept and relatively new in Nigeria and it has only been in the last few decades that the country has started to make significant progress in terms of gender equality. In terms of education there have been a number of initiatives to improve access to education for girls and women. This initiatives has been supported by both the government and NGO's and they have helped to increase literacy rate and decrease the gender gap in education. The impact of these initiative on gender equality has been quite significant. For example, in terms of literacy rate there has been a marked improvement over last few decade. In 1990 the literacy rate for women was only twenty – six percent, but by 2016, this had increased to sixty percent and this is still lower than the literacy rate for men, but it represents a significant improvement**.**

Chambers 21st century dictionary by Edinburgh and Davidson (1996), defines Feminism as a belief or movement advocating the cause of women's right and opportunities, particularly equal right with men by challenging inequalities between the sexes in a society. The Nigerian society is a patrician one. Women are usually expected and told to be subservient to their male counterparts.

Again, Feminism is a movement, that aims to achieve equality for women in all areas of life, including social, political and economic spheres. In Nigeria, the feminist movement, has focused on issues such as education, reproductive rights, and political representation. In the home, the husband/wife relationship, as seen in Ola Rotimi (1977) our husband has gone mad again for example is essentially a master/servant one. In some cultures, women are expected to kneel while their husbands wash their hands in a bowl of water, while the wives hold out for them. We also see Sikira in the above text, as "my lord". In some cases, when the men themselves put their houses in disarray, they query their wives for it.

Feminism and education on the other hand, talks about the gender gap in literacy rate. According to UNESCO, the literacy rate for men in Nigeria, is over 75%, while the literacy rate for women, is only about 55%. This is a significant gap, and it has a number of consequences for women's education and empowerment. This is why this research focuses on the debasing and dehumanization of women, and the importance of their education in the Nigerian society, as well as the power of mothers in the Nigerian home. The history of the world from a woman's point of view is one filled with the relegation of women, while men played active roles and got their names stamped all over the history books. Women have historically been denied access to equal right to education, political and social sphere of history.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In Nigerian culture, there is the belief that women are second class citizens. Women are traditionally believed to be weaker sex and therefore need the support and protection of men. This patriarchal socio-cultural patterns carry down into the nuclear family. Generally, parents possess a negative attitude toward schooling for girls, due to a commonly held belief that girls belong at home with their mothers learning and carrying out domestic responsibilities (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). Like many cultures that abide, many parents have the attitude that educating girls is a waste of time and money because they will eventually be married out and their education would only profit their husbands and their families. In African culture, for example, women, regardless of their status and professions, are responsible for domestic responsibilities such as household chores, bearing and raising children, doing the laundry, cooking, etc. The domestic role of women in African culture is fundamental to the sustainability of marriage. Women play the traditional roles that are recognised by their society as well as other economic and social roles. These traditional beliefs have been found to foster negative attitudes which limit parents, husbands and societal's support for the furtherance of the Nigerian woman's education as soon as she has attained a certain level of education or gotten married. Research has indicated that women often experience less spousal support than their male counterparts (De Klerk and Mostert, 2010). For this backdrop, it is pertinent to investigate the feminism and education in Nigeria, while assessing its impact on gender equality.

The research statement of this research problem: "Despite significant progress in terms of literacy rates in secondary and primary school enrollment, there is still a significant gender gap in education and political participation in Nigeria. This is especially true in rural areas, and surprisingly where cultural and economic factors have a greater impact on educational outcomes. In order to further improve gender equality, it is important to understand the underlying causes of this gender gap, and to develop interventions that can address these issues."

One of the factors militating against the active participation of women in politics is the stereotypical constraints against women who strive to attain political and organisational leadership roles (Okafor, Fagbemi and Hassan 2011). These stereotypes range from the traditional gender roles that relegates the woman and the girl-child to domestic and household duties and chores, often leaving these women mentally isolated to the point where their sense of career ambitions is replaced with societies expectations of them, while the critical issues like governance and protecting of their rights should be left to the men. This act of male chavinism and deep-seated prejudices against women have brought about great under representation of women in politics and governance where important decisions are taken relative to their male-counterparts which is a terrible challenge to their active participation in the nation's politics. Even when women were deeply involved in terms of being foundation members of a political party, they were never given equal opportunity in political arrangement, but, rather, a complementary role, (Olusegun, 2015).

There have been many cases where a woman's state of origin disallows her appointment and the husband's state also refuses to endorse her. In many of these instances the government plays safe by appointing a man instead. And this has continued to consolidate women's under-representation in national politics (Agbalajobi, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the consequence of male sexism on women's political participation in Central Benin City.

Gender disparity is one of the developmental problems in the 21st century and globally. It is also a major cause of unemployment in Nigeria. The Nigerian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) would increase by up to 13.9 billion USD, if the Nigerian woman had the same opportunities as Nigerian man. Much of the economic instability in Nigeria stems from gender disparity demonstrated in the economic exclusion of the 49 percent women population. When the Nigerian economy reached an annual negative GDP growth rate in 2016 since 2019 (Nairametrics, 2017), the women were the most hit, this is because majority of women were excluded from the workforce and relied on the male partner.Yet the women continue to remain the most marginalised (Ademuson, 2016). Gender disparity has a negative effect on women when it comes to employment. The role that women play in economic growth cannot be over emphasized especially in a developing country where women's contribution in the informal sector is undeniable. The discrimination against women remain a common occurrence today and serves to hinder economic prosperity. The strength, size and resilience of the Nigerian woman, constituting almost half of the entire

population makes her an economic and social force to be reckoned with. Along these lines of thought, it is crucial to evaluate the issue of feminism and education in Nigeria by assessing its impact on gender equality.

1.3 Research Questions

Emanating from the research gaps exposed in the statement of the research problem, are the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of gender inequality on women's level of education?

2. How does male sexism affect the political participation of women?

3. What is the outcome of gender disparity on women's employment status?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study generally aims to boost the knowledge feminism on education by assessing its impact of gender equality Egor LGA of Benin City, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following sub-objectives which are to:

1. Investigate the impact of gender inequality on women's level of education in Egor LGA of Benin City.
2. Examine the consequence of male sexism on women's political participation.
3. Evaluate the outcome of gender disparity on women's employment status.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

$H_0$1: There is a significant relationship between gender inequality and women's level of education.

H_r1: There is no significant relationship between gender inequality and women's level of education

$H_0$2: There is a significant relationship between male sexism and political participation of women.

H_r2: There is no significant relationship between male sexism and political participation of women

$H_0$3: There is a significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.

H_r3: There is no significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will provide a detailed portrayal of the different way in which women are dominated as well as a divergence of women taking charge of their lives in terms of trying to ensure that they are educated as much as possible, to enable them to make a

significant impact in the society, and their lives, which would eliminate the superciliousness of the patrician society and give rise to a gender egalitarian society. This study also will help a great deal in understanding the different ways that gender inequality affects people's lives. It can also help us develop strategies to improve the quality of education and promote gender norms and rights, and can make us know more, the links between gender equality and poverty. This is because gender inequality often leads to lower and fewer economic opportunities. By tying to uncover these links, we can improve on policies and programs to reduce gender inequality and poverty to a drastic minimum.

Another important significance of this study is to know ways that gender inequality is perpetuated in educational settings, which can include things like discrimination, gender stereotypes, and gender-based violence. By identifying these issues, we can get the different strategies to address them. And lastly, we are able to see how gender inequality affects specific groups, in their daily disposition. For example, we see how this issue affect girls and women from different ethnic groups, socioeconomic backgrounds and geographic regions. This information can help us develop targeted policies and programs to address gender inequality in specific contexts.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is aimed at exploring the indices of feminism: women education and political participation in Nigeria. There are a lot of different aspects to consider,

including the impact of gender stereotypes, the role of the government, and the influence of culture. In this study, focus will be on women residing in Egor local government of Benin City, Edo state Nigeria. Only women with basic formal education found within the Central City will be involved in this study.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Gender: Identification as male or female, and association with a (social) role typically associated with one sex.

Feminism: This refers to a social and political movement that advocates for the equality of the sexes.

Female Education: This refers to the learning and educational opportunities provided to girls and women. It encompasses the right and access to education, as well as the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes through formal, non-formal, and informal means.

Inequality: The state of not being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities.

Male Sexism: A term used to describe the believe that men are superior to women, whether mentally, physically or in any other way.

Gender disparity: Differences in men and women's access to resources, status and well-being.

Status: Relative social or professional standing or position.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Relevant Concept

2.1.1 Feminism and Education

For most of human history education was a privilege reserve for men. In fact, it was not until the 19th century that women started to gain access to education. The first women's college in the United State was founded in 1836, and it was not until the 1800s that women were admitted to some of the major universities in the US. We see that even abroad is not left out in this ugly challenge of women being sidelined when it comes to education, but even then, women's education was often limited to "female" subjects, like home economics and child – rearing. In the early 1900s, women started to fight for equal access to education. In the US, and in Nigeria the women suffrage movement was gaining steam, and many women saw education as a key part of their struggle for equality. In 1920, women finally gained the right to vote, most importantly in the US. And this helped to pave the way for more educational opportunities for women.

In 1960, the feminist movement gained more momentum, and by the 1970s, there was a real push for equal access to education. The concept of "gender equality", is one of the few issues on feminism and education. Which is the idea that men and women

should have equal access to education and other major opportunities. There is also the concept of "women's empowerment". This refers to the process of empowering women to take control of their own lives and make their own decisions. There is also "gender mainstreaming". This refers to the process of integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of education, including teaching, and evaluation.

One key event in the fight for educational equality was the passage of title IX in 1972. This was a federal law that prohibited discrimination based on gender in any educational program or activity that receive federal funding. This law had a huge impact on women's education, opening new opportunities in fields like SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND LAW. Another key event was the establishment of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1996. This organization fought for women rights, including equal access to education.

2.1.2 Phases of Modern Feminism

First Wave Feminism

Amy Naasin (unpublished 2016) opines that the first wave of Feminism occurred in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It began with focus on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to charter marriage and the ownership of married women and their children by their husbands. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, it was focused on activism for suffrage rights for women.

Martha Rampton in the Pacific Magazine (Fall issued 2008) states that the wave emerged out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. It formally began at the Seneca Falls convention in 1848 when three hundred men and women rallied to the Cause of equality for women. Elizabeth Cady Stanton drafted the Seneca Falls Declaration outlining the new movement's ideology and political strategies. In 1869 the National Woman Suffrage Association was founded with the express goal of giving women the right to vote. Founded by Elizabeth Cady Stanton herself and Susan B Anthony, the association also encouraged women to begin working outside the home.

Amy Naasin (unpublished 2016) says that the feminists of that era faced a lot of challenges and opposition. Susan B Anthony was arrested and convicted in a publicized trial for coming out to vote. In England, Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney became the first woman to be arrested in the fight for equality. Their fight was successful to an extent as of 1920, women were granted the right to vote in the USA. Also in 1860, New York passed a revised Married Women's Property Act which gave women shared ownership of their children, allowing them to have a say in their children's wills, wages and granting them the right to inherit property.

Other parts of the world were not left out in the wave. In 1977, International Women's Day was celebrated for the first time in Austria, Denmark and Switzerland on the 19th of March. More than one million women and men attended the

International Women's Day rallies campaigning for women's rights to work, vote, be trained, hold public office and be free from discrimination. The Egyptian Feminist Union was formed in 1923, Charlotte Maxeke founded the Bantu's women's league in South Africa in 1918 and there were more instances of feminist activity and accomplishments in different parts of the world.

The Second Wave

Martha Rampton in the Pacific Magazine (Fall issued 2008) states that it began in the 1960s and continued into the 1990s. This wave unfolded in the context of anti-war and civil rights movements and the growing self-consciousness of a variety of minority groups around the world. The New Left was on the rise and the voice of the second wave was increasingly radical. In this wave, sexuality band reproductive rights were dominant issues and much of the movement's energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex.

According to Michael Hunt (2014) in The World Transformed: 1945 to the present, this wave was sparked off by a book written by Betty Friedan titled The Feminine Mystique. During the late 1950s, Betty Friedan sent a questionnaire to hundred women who had graduated, as Friedan had, from Smith College fifteen years earlier. She asked open-ended questions about the women's lives since graduation. The

surprising responses she received led her to sig deeper, spending years interviewing women and conducting research.

Friedan realized that many middle-classed, college-educated women were suffering from a vague, undefined dissatisfaction. These women had experienced the intellectual and social stimulation of a university education but rather than apply that knowledge to a job, many had opted to leave a career behind in favour of marriage and children. For much of their lives, these women had heard the message that their ultimate fulfillment would come from being a wife and a mother. Yet, many of these women had felt that something was missing from their lives, and each felt alone in her feelings.

Their husbands developed careers, made important decisions and earned money. The women, however, were told that their place was in the home and their pursuit of a career would be selfish and would result in the neglect of their children. Betty Friedan (1963) The Feminine Mystique which was one of the most influential books of the 20th century, criticized the idea that women could only find fulfillment through child rearing and home making.

The second wave was increasingly theoretical, based on a fusion of neo-Marxism and psychoanalytical theory and began to associate with the subjugation of women with broader critiques of patriarchy, capitalism, normative heterosexuality and the woman's role as wife and mother, Sex and gender were differentiated, the former

being biological and the latter a social construct that varies culture to culture and over time.

While the first wave was generally propelled by Middle class western white women, the second phase drew in women of color and developing nations seeking sisterhood and solidarity, claiming “Women’s struggle is class struggle.” Feminists spoke of women as a social class and coined phrases such as “the personal is political” and “identity politics” to demonstrate that race, class and gender oppression are all related. They initiated an effort to rid the society top to bottom of sexism, from children’s cartoons to the highest levels of government.

The Third Wave

Amy Naasin (unpublished 2016) states that the third wave of feminism describes the feminist activity that began in 1990. It arose partially as a response to the perceived failures of and backlash against initiatives and movements created by second wave feminism during the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s and the perceptions that women are of different colors, nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds. Even if these sets of feminists benefited greatly from the political, legal and economic achievements of the previous waves, they still critiqued positions and what they called the unfinished work of the second wave.

Fourth Wave Feminism

Jessica Abrahams in her 14th August 2017 article states that this wave began around 2012 and is characterized by a focus on the empowerment of women, the use of internet tools and is centered on intersectionality. This wave continues the push against problematic gendered norms that cause the oppression and marginalization of women in the society that the first, second and third waves did.

Prudence Chamberlain (2017) in The Feminist Fourth Wave states that Fourth wave feminism additionally argued for equal pay for equal work and that the equal opportunities sought for girls and women should extend also to boys and men to overcome gender norms (For example, allowing men to express their emotions and feelings freely, expressing themselves physically as they wish and being engaged parents to their children).

Fourth wave feminists use print, news and social media platforms collaborate and mobilize, speak against the abusers of power and seeking justice against assault and harassment and promoting body autonomy.

2.1.3 History of Feminism in Nigeria

Pre-colonial Era

In the pre-colonial period, Nigerian women actively participated in public life and had independent access to resources. We cannot say the same about the Hausa-Fulani women in the north whose activities were limited by Islam. However, Northern

women with a high position by birth had more rights regarding their decisions and funds. An example is Queen Amina of Zazzau, In 1576, she became the famous ruler of Zazzau in northern Nigeria. The Ijala kingdom in Northern Nigeria was founded by a woman named Ebele Ejuanu.

Among the Igbo and Ibibio, women controlled their affairs and had a certain political influence through their collective strength. In Ijaw, Kalabari, Edo, Efik and Itsekiri areas, some women with high status had specific political power. They managed affairs through the queen mother's office in Benin or their relationships with the male leaders.

However, in the Yoruba and Riverine Igbo communities, not only individual women with high status but also women as a collective unit had social and political influence through the organizations and their representatives, such as the Yoruba "Iyalode."

In the pre-colonial era, Nigerian women rather complimented the man and not submit to him.

(www.legit.ng)

Colonial Era

The Yoruba and Igbo in the south of Nigeria played influential political roles in both women and men's societies. Women gathered in groups (for example, Women of the

market) to assert their rights. The colonialists introduced certain rules and weakened the social, economic and political women rights implementation.

Women representation in the public sphere was deficient, although women received the voting right in the 1950s (the south) and 1980s (the North). In 1929, the Women's war (also known as the Aba Women's Riot) took place. Igbo market women protested against British taxation. Based on their roles as mothers and family suppliers, women collectively defended their new sphere of authority.

Protests of women in Abeokuta happened in 1948, almost two decades after the riots in Aba. Women again rebelled against colonial taxes. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti was the principal at a school in Abeokuta and she organized the Abeokuta Women's Union. "Elite" women of Abeokuta joined the solidarity with the market women of Egba land. They worked together to find a way of stopping excessive tax collection.

The women group, coordinated by Mrs Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, fought against authoritarian decision making by the colonial government. Later, these protests became an integral part of the independence movement. The anti-colonial resistance led to the National Women's Union (NWU) formation.

The National Women's Union was the first national women's organization with a general representation covering all ethnic, religious and class segments founded in 1947. The Union had prominent women leaders such as Margaret Ekpo and

Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti. In the 1950s, they fought for women's rights and thecountry's independence along with Nigeria's founding fathers.

Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti became a leader of the women's wing of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in West Africa. Margaret Ekpo was also a fierce advocate for women's rights and supported equality with men. In the north of the country, strong figures such as Gambo Sawaba and many others played outstanding roles in the fight for women's place in the society.

The active women role led to the formation of the elite women who focused on charity but could not resist the men's supremacy and anarchy in the society. In 1959, the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS) was established to patronize women's organizations in Nigeria. (www.legit.ng)

Post-Colonial Era

The feminist movement in Nigeria was widely spread throughout the country. In 1953, the Federation of Nigeria's women societies (FNWS) was organized. It had a political component already. With the help of the FNWS, women could have political participation and full representation in all legislative chambers.

From the beginning of the post-colonial era, women's movement in Nigeria formed many protests but only in major cities such as Lagos. women's organizations have developed their activities their activities in focal areas related to women's interests.

For example, in the Niger Delta region, women fought against discrimination, dehumanization and injustice in the field. They opposed Multinational Oil companies and the Nigerian Military Occupation of their lands with the Federation of Ogoni Women Association. Women suffered because of violence, burning, beating and torture during the three-year campaign of the then military government in 1993.

Feminism achieved the suffrage, higher education, the right to work and own real estate. Also, women can be engaged in politics and hold managerial positions. Still, feminism has a lot of tasks to perform in the country Domestic violence remains a significant problem and the torturer is often not blamed, only the victim is blamed. Also, there are patriarchal practices such as forced marriages, female circumcision and various kinds of women exploitation.

(www.legit.ng)

2.2 The Nigerian Woman

From precolonial times to the early 21st century, the role and status of women in Nigeria have continuously evolved. However, the image of a helpless, oppressed, and marginalized group has undermined their proper study, and little recognition has been granted to the various integral functions that Nigerian women have performed throughout history. Historically in Nigeria, certain tribes treated men preferentially for economic empowerment and inheritances (Olanrewaju et al., 2015; Pathak, 2017). For instance, the Igbos do not include women or girls in a will when sharing land or

another asset (Agbasiere, 2015; Azuakor, 2017). Women are thought to be fit for the kitchen and assist with farm duties. This makes them dependents and subservient to their male counterpart (Ene-Obong et al., 2017). Gender inequality is a multifaceted concept that incorporates both opportunities and outcomes. The latest review of the Nigerian economy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) revealed that closing the gender gap is key to achieving higher growth in the economy, enhancing productivity and greater economic stability (Archibong, 2018; Adegbite and Machethe, 2020).

There has been a lot of advocacy by both the government and civil societies making a case for training the girl child and providing equal opportunities over the years (Abendroth et al., 2017; Connell et al., 2020). Over time, with the advent of western education, exposure and enlightenment, there is a need to see how the gap caused by inequality and discrimination against women has been bridged and to what degree. In Nigeria, women dominate the unpaid job sector, twice the figure for men. The economic value of females was projected to be about 30% of the gross national product (UNDP, 2015). Like other parts of the world, women in Nigeria face several discriminations that limit their full capacity.

The most serious threat to the influence and privileges of women occurred during the 20th century, when patriarchy combined with colonial changes to alter gender relations. As male chiefs collaborated with the British colonial administration in

collecting taxes and governing, the position of female chiefs declined in importance. When the economy became increasingly geared toward the production of cash crops for export, Nigerian men and European firms dominated the distribution of rubber, cocoa, groundnuts (peanuts), and palm oil. Women, pushed to the background, were forced to shift to the production of subsistence crops. A previous land-tenure system that had prevented land alienation gave way to land commercialization, favouring those with access to money gained from the sale of cash crops. Western-style education also favoured boys over girls and thus largely excluded women from many of the new occupations introduced by colonialism. The most powerful agency of change for the modern woman has been Nigeria's formal education system, from which a large number of elite women have emerged. Intelligent, educated, and confident, they can be found in all leading occupations; they now challenge many aspects of patriarchy and are gradually organizing to ensure that the political arena expands sufficiently to accommodate them.

2.2.1 Feminism: Gender Inequality and Women's Education Attainment

A famous African proverb apprises us, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)" (Suen, 2013). Education is a basic human right, and because females represent approximately half of the world's population—they form a significant global resource—their right to education cannot be ignored. "Imagine you are in a sinking boat. Half the people are

knowledgeable on how to confront the issue while the other half is just seated, day dreaming," said a male student. This analogy emphasizes that educating boys and not educating girls' compromises the stability and development of the entire world. Therefore, it is critical to address gender disparity in education. It is critical to empower women and to support them to eliminate gender disparity (UNICEF, 2015).

Educating girls keeps hunger away, reduces the number of child marriages and early pregnancies, improves health status and overall socioeconomic circumstances, and creates a better and peaceful society (Bhagavatheeswaran et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2013). Education is one way through which we can disrupt the vicious circle of abuse, poverty, and oppression of women. Education empowers women, makes them aware of their rights, and enables them to maintain good health and raise healthy children and families. Education has a great influence on changing society (Khalid, 2012).

Given the current situation and socioeconomic circumstances, communities are required to make choices about sending their sons and daughters to school. Therefore, it is critical to increase awareness about the importance and impact of educating girls to enable communities to make appropriate choices and provide an enabling environment to achieve gender parity in education. Creating awareness about the importance of educating girls and addressing the issue of gender disparity in education, require constant support from all stakeholders. Due to global scarcity of resources, it is vital to adopt a much more coordinated and integrated approach instead of duplicating efforts and working individually without adequate consultation

or collaboration. It is also important to learn from previous experiences, initiatives, plans, and programs to analyze what worked and what did not work.

Loosely stating, the uneducated women can be broadly divided into two categories — those who never attended any educational institution and those who did start their studies despite adverse circumstances but had to discontinue due to various reasons, the most common of these being marriage. There are many women who never even get to start their education properly and those who did get a flavour of formal teaching at some point in their lives, but then had to cease the process to either fulfill their other responsibilities that are societally deemed more important than education, or simply to appease the overwhelming waves of events that enter into a woman's life after marriage.

2.2.2 Male Sexism and Women's Political Participation

The entrenched socio-cultural and religious practices in Nigeria skewed in favour of men and against women constitute serious challenge to women active participation in politics. Women according to Muoghalu and Abrifor (2012), are discouraged from participating in public life from childhood through adulthood by authority figures such as husbands, fathers, mothers and other relations due to cultural image of a virtuous woman defined as quiet, submissive who should be seen and not heard. Because of the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society, most Nigerians including women still believe and accept the traditional perspectives that view women as

inferior to men, second class citizens, weaker sex, to be seen and not heard, child bearers/ primary care-givers, etc. In most cases, they feel the game of politics is an exclusive reserve of men and dare not venture into it and those who manage to venture are usually contented with the back seats (Ngara et al., 2013). Politics in Nigeria, especially seeking elective position is an expensive venture requiring huge financial involvement and solid financial backing. Generally, the relatively pathetic poor financial disposition of Nigerian women is a critical challenge which mostly accounts for their poor participation in politics and political defeat in elections. About 90% of women in Nigeria, according to Ngara et al. (2013), currently live below poverty line, so in spite of concession granted by some major political parties which lowers the cost of obtaining party nomination forms for women into elective office, nonetheless, the cost of realizing electoral ambition is still far beyond the reach of even the most highly placed women in the absence of "a godfather who foots the bill in exchange for unlimited favour when the seat is eventually secured" (Yahaya, 2012). Considering the financial backing, the godfathers' and other financiers of politicians in Nigeria prefer male political aspirants to female ones based on the societal value assumption that political activities are masculine and male candidates are believed to stand better chance of wining elections. In Nigeria, the women poor access to credit facilities, lack of inheritance rights for developmental purposes; including culturally unacceptable control of their income and resources while living with their husbands

(for married ones) contribute to their lack of financial strength as a major challenge in their active participation in politics.

Nigerian women are marginalized, discriminated against and are greatly under-represented in politics and governance where important decisions are taken relative to their male-counterparts which is a terrible challenge to their active participation in the nation's politics. It is regrettable that although women constitute the greater number of the registered voters in any elections held in Nigeria, they are yet to experience full representative positions (Okoronkwo-Chukwu, 2013). The 1999 Nigeria Constitution generally refers to non-discrimination on the basis of sex, etc but is not explicit in ensuring equal representation on gender basis, takes no cognizance of the disadvantaged position of women, and has no provision for gender equality. Likewise, "the Federal Character Principle, which is meant to ensure equitable representation of states and ethnic groups in national appointments, actually places Nigerian women at additional disadvantage by implying that they can only represent their ethnic and states of origin. Where culture does not permit a woman to represent her place of birth, she loses a golden opportunity. There have been many cases where a woman's state of origin disallows her appointment and the husband's state also refuses to endorse her. In many of these instances the government plays safe by appointing a man instead. And this has continued to consolidate women's under-representation in national politics (Agbalajobi, 2010).

2.2.3 Gender Inequality and Women's Employment Opportunities

Women have become a powerful force for growth and development and labor market policies and initiatives need to be developed to assist women with the transitions and challenges in the labor market (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). Empowering women involves making contributions to the economy as women are promoted as workers and entrepreneurs (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). However, according to the study by Okoyeuzu et al. (2012), a relatively low level of female labor participation and regional variations in female labor in Nigeria are in conflict with the equality goals. This study was a historical account and analysis of past poverty alleviation measures. Okoyeuzu et al. further found that Nigeria still falls short in terms of gender equality and equal access to opportunities to advance socially, economically, and politically. Evidence of several forms of gender based discrimination in Nigeria includes the gender-based division of labor, disparities in power and resources between men and women, and gender bias regarding rights and entitlements.

Gender disparity is one of the developmental problems that face every developing country in the 21st century and globally. It is also a major cause of unemployment in Nigeria. Although, over the years there have been measures put in place to curb this marginalization, the unemployment rate keeps rising in the face of declining economic growth. This is often exacerbated by increasing population rate that is most times divided along gender lines. The latest data released on unemployment in

Nigeria by the National Bureau of Statistics indicated that women ranked the highest when it comes to unemployment. The report showed that unemployment hit 12.2 million females, as against 9.5 million men. Looking at the result, it is quite alarming how women are being marginalized when it comes to the labour force. The overall number of persons in labour force was estimated to be 80 million, out of which males are about 41.6 million while females are 38.6 million. Female unemployment has risen to 31.6 percent from 26.6 percent in the third quarter of 2018 while male unemployment also rose to 22.9 percent from 20.3 percent in the same period.

The discrimination against women remains a common occurrence today and serves to hinder economic prosperity. And half of the population of work force in Nigeria consists of female workers. However, the type of work as well as the condition under which women work and access opportunities for improvements differs from men. Women are often disadvantaged in access to employment opportunities, access to finance, and conditions of work. Besides, despite significant progress in female labour force participation over the past decades, there exist pervasive and persistent gender differences across different sectors of the economy. Looking at this data; Underemployment rate amongst males in Nigeria stands at 26.3 percent in 2020 compared to 15.4 percent in 2018 while under employment rate for females in Nigeria has risen from 25.9 percent recorded in 2018 to 31 percent in 2020. With the data above it is obvious that there is labour segregation, inequality due to low investment in human capital such as schooling and training, differential income roles, and

comparative biological advantages in entry levels, entry barriers, preferences and prejudices in Nigeria labour sector. Gender equality through the empowerment of women is the primary factor that promotes economic growth. When women are not fully participating in the labour force, a substantial number of the population is not being utilised. There is however a resultant decline in productivity which results in unemployment.

2.3 Review of Relevant Theory

2.3.1 Feminist Theory

The two key terms that are central to the feminist discussion have been ‘gender’ and ‘patriarchy’. In the feminist context, gender is not a replacement word for sex or the biological difference between a man and a woman. Instead, it refers merely to the power relations between men and women, how the relations have been socially and habitually implemented, and how the power is deployed (Ruiz, 2012). Patriarchy, on the other hand, refers to the system where the female is subordinate to the male (in power and status terms). The theory adopted for this research is the feminist theory, which is one of the major arm within sociology. The term feminism was coined by a French socialist named Charles Fourier in 1837, and was first used in 1872 in France and in the United States in 1910, it includes a wide range of subjects from political, economic, social, cultural and social, but its central message remains the equality

among the sexes, equal opportunities for women and the dissolution of the oppressive practices associated with patriarchy, while also seeking increased access to education, better health care and improved life choices for women.

Feminist theory can be understood in the context of being both a normative and intellectual discourse, shining its limelight on the social phenomenon, issues, and experiences as it concerns women that are swept under the carpet, following years of dominant male perception (Crossman, 2017). The feminist theory is aimed at understanding and explaining the intricacies that surround the subject of gender inequality and gender roles, while also trying to explain the blurred lines that exist between men and women within a social construct.

The feminist theory was originally designed to explain and address the growing rate of oppression faced by women globally, without recourse to tribe, nationality, status, and age. Feminism as a theory has evolved over the years and has developed into two major shift which includes the particularising and contextualising the different experiences as they affect women, rather than the previous approach which universalised the struggle, losing elements in the way. The second dimension involves the shift from seeing and women as categories to be focused on, to getting into such categorisation, while exploring what makes up oppressive gender practices.(Carlson & Ray, 2001). Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical, fictional, or philosophical discourse. It aims to understand the nature of

gender inequality. It examines women's and men's social roles, experiences, interests, chores, and feminist politics in a variety of fields, such as anthropology and sociology, communication, media studies, psychoanalysis, ecology, home economics, literature, education, and philosophy.

Feminist theory often focuses on analyzing gender inequality. Themes often explored in feminist theory include discrimination, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, art history and contemporary art, and aesthetics. Feminist theory is a major branch within sociology that shifts its assumptions, analytic lens, and topical focus away from the male viewpoint and experience toward that of women. In doing so, feminist theory shines a light on social problems, trends, and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory. Many people incorrectly believe that feminist theory focuses exclusively on girls and women and that it has an inherent goal of promoting the superiority of women over men.

In reality, feminist theory has always been about viewing the social world in a way that illuminates the forces that create and support inequality, oppression, and injustice, and in doing so, promotes the pursuit of equality and justice. That said, since the experiences and perspectives of women and girls were historically excluded for years from social theory and social science, much feminist theory has focused on their interactions and experiences within society to ensure that half the world's population

is not left out of how we see and understand social forces, relations, and problems. While most feminist theorists throughout history have been women, people of all genders can be found working in the discipline today. By shifting the focus of social theory away from the perspectives and experiences of men, feminist theorists have created social theories that are more inclusive and creative than those that assume the social actor to always be a man. Part of what makes feminist theory creative and inclusive is that it often considers how systems of power and oppression interact, which is to say it does not just focus on gendered power and oppression, but on how this might intersect with systemic racism, a hierarchical class system, sexuality, nationality, and disability, among other things.

It is usual to distinguish between three basic types of Feminism – Liberal, Radical and Marxist, each of which has its own general explanation for sex and gender inequality, and a matched solution.

2.3.2 Liberal Feminism

Liberal Feminists believe that the main causes of gender inequality are ignorance and socialisation. They do not believe that social institutions are inherently patriarchal. They believe in a “March of Progress” view of gender relations. This means that they believe that men and women are gradually becoming more equal over time and that this trend will continue.

As evidence, liberal feminists point to various legal reforms which promote sexual equality such as the sex discrimination act (1970), the fact that girls now outperform boys in education, the fact that there are now equal amounts of men and women in paid work. Liberal Feminists are especially keen to emphasise the beneficial effects which women going into paid work has had on gender equality – as a result, women are now much more independent than in the past, and women are now the main income earners in 25% of households.

Within the family, evidence shows men are doing a greater share of domestic labour (housework, childcare), decision making is becoming more equal and that male and female children are socialised in a much more similar manner with similar aspirations.

One criticism of the liberal feminist view is that it is ethnocentric – it only really reflects the experiences of white, middle class women.

2.3.3 Marxist Feminism

Marxists Feminists argue the main source of women's oppression is capitalism. The disadvantaged position of women is seen to be a consequence of the emergence of private property and their lack of ownership of the means of production

From a Marxist Feminist perspective, the traditional nuclear family only came about with capitalism, and the traditional female role of housewife supports capitalism – thus women are double oppressed through the nuclear family and capitalist system.

Women's oppression within the nuclear family supports capitalism in at least three ways:

1. Women reproduce the labour force – through their unpaid domestic labour, by socialising the next generation of workers and servicing the current workers (their husbands).

2. Women absorb anger – Think back to Parson's warm bath theory. The Marxist-Feminist interpretation of this is that women are just absorbing the anger of the proletariat, who are exploited and who should be directing that anger towards the Bourgeois

3. Women are a 'reserve army of cheap labour' – if women's primary role is domestic, and they are restricted from working, this also means they are in reserve, to be taken on temporarily as necessary by the Bourgeois, making production more flexible.

One Criticism of Marxist Feminism is that women's oppression within the family existed before capitalism and in communist societies.

2.3.4 Radical Feminism

Radical Feminists see society and its institutions as patriarchal – most of which are dominated and ruled by men – men are the ruling class and women the subject class. Gender inequalities are the result of the oppression of women by men, and it is

primarily men who have benefited from the subordination of women. Women are an oppressed group.

Against Liberal Feminists they argue that paid work has not been 'liberating'. Instead women have acquired the 'dual burden' of paid work and unpaid housework and the family remains patriarchal – men benefit from women's paid earnings and their domestic labour. Some Radical Feminists go further arguing that women suffer from the 'triple shift' where they have to do paid work, domestic work and 'emotion work' – being expected to take on the emotional burden of caring for children.

Rosemarie Tong (1998) distinguishes between two groups of radical feminist:

1) Radical-libertarian feminists believe that it is both possible and desirable for gender differences to be eradicated, or at least greatly reduced, and aim for a state of androgyny in which men and women are not significantly different.

II) Radical-cultural feminists believe in the superiority of the feminine. According to Tong radical cultural feminists celebrate characteristics associated with femininity such as emotion, and are hostile to those characteristics associated with masculinity such as hierarchy.

Radical Feminists see the traditional nuclear family as particularly patriarchal, and advocate its abolition and the establishment of alternative family structures and sexual relations. The various alternatives suggested by Radical Feminists include

separatism – women only communes, and matrifocal (female centred) households. Some also practise political Lesbianism and political celibacy as they view heterosexual relationships as "sleeping with the enemy." Radical feminists have often been actively involved in setting up and running refuges for women who are the victims of male violence.

Criticisms of radical feminism:

I) Ignores the progress that women have made in many areas e.g. work, controlling fertility, divorce.

II) Too unrealistic – due to heterosexual attraction separatism is unlikely.

2.4 Feminism in Africa

Since the end of the WWII, international relations (IR) field has taken new dimensions, departing from the singularity of analytical approach of realist ideologies in the field, and broadening the core theoretical structure to include new concepts emerging from the traditional liberal theories such as the institutionalism, world-system theories, global political economy. Globalisation caused by the increasing interdependence of nations was a major influencer of this shift, and today, the IR field no longer revolves mainly around the realist war and security dogma. In addition, the globally syndicated demand for inclusion by women's rights activists for misrepresenting the African, irrespective of her nationality, women's employment gave birth to the new era of Feminism. This was a call often syndicated with larger

movements such as the class struggle, the struggle for human rights, peace, or for democracy. Notwithstanding, the feminist ideas have not been spared from backlash, particularly attacks from most world religions and politically conservative groups. Africa is a multicultural and diverse continent and framing feminism in Africa can be lity, as encountering or experiencing same realities or problems. Evidently, this is not the case as Africa is not a country. Africa has its specificities due to the sociocultural and religious formations of different African countries. The Arab woman from Morocco experiences life differently from a woman from a democratic nation like South Africa, with the predominantly Christian population. However, and quite arguably, the issues African women face when it comes to gender relations are also faced by women elsewhere in the world. That is, the repression, discrimination and oppression the African women face is not isolated to the continent alone and adopting the term African feminism is not out of order. Although most educated women whether African or not, feminist or otherwise are faced with the dilemma of challenging the conservative and patriarchal socio-cultural practices, however, the discourse of African feminism cannot exclude the specificities because some realities within the African context make its feminism comparatively distinct (Atanga, 2013). More so, the issues African women face is unarguably different from the experiences and realities of, for instance, the European woman. Nonetheless, most of these global and African feminist discourses are yet to translate into significant policy formulation or reformation that empowers the African woman, and especially the Nigerian woman.

Perhaps, due to the complexities within the different societies. For instance, Nigeria is a very diverse country, with 36 multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious states, and these complexities may require different approach to addressing them.

2.4.1 Feminism in Nigeria

Feminism in Nigeria originated from an increasing demand to improve the quality of lives of the Nigerian women. Its origin can be traced to the pre-colonial era where vocal women like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Magareth Ekpo beat the odds that characterized acute patriarchy of the Nigerian society, emerged as politicians, and identified as pioneers to the feminist struggle in Nigeria (Faseke, 2001). These women and many others played a key role during the era of the 1960's Nationalist struggle campaigning for equal rights and opportunities for all in Nigeria (Strobel, 2001). There were series of protest in the pre-colonial era, however, one of which includes the prominent Aba (Southeast Nigerian state) women's riot, the Abeokuta (Southwest Nigerian state) market women's protest in 1948 against heavy taxes levied by the colonial masters. These protests were spear headed by Funmilayo, who had by then was recognised as a women's right activist (Faseke, 2001). These women led a protest which succeeded in abolishment of the excess tax system and the struggle against unjust treatment meted out against women despite the fact that they fulfilled their civil responsibility (Oduntan & Mcintosh, 2011). These nationalist protests by women paved the way for the contemporary feminist movement in Nigeria through the formation of the National women's union in 1947 which later

metamorphosed into the federation of Nigerian women's society in 1953 (Strobel, 2001). The leadership of this union fought for the inclusion of women into the male dominated political space through playing an active role in political forums and their individual engagements (Okeke–Ihejirika & Franceschet, 2002). Despite the sacrifices made by these women to ensure the effective inclusion and active participation in the decision-making sphere, the goal is yet to be actualised as women still constitute the minority in power, as the goal for 30 percent representation in the legislative arm is not yet attainable (Oluyemi, 2016, The United Nations, 1995). A common view amongst observers was that this under-representation by women within the political space has compounded over time and contributed to the low quality of life of thevast majority of Nigerian women. And although, Nigeria is a signatory to the United Nations convention that protects the rights of women, yet, the gender domination has pervasively persisted unabated due to patriarchy within the society.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Feminist theory is a major branch within sociology that shifts its assumptions, analytic lens, and topical focus away from the male viewpoint and experience toward that of women. In doing so, feminist theory shines a light on social problems, trends, and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory. Psychoanalytical feminists believe that gender inequality comes from early childhood experiences, which lead men to believe

themselves to be masculine, and women to believe themselves feminine. The "script" written by society is in some ways similar to a script written by a playwright. Just as a playwright expects actors to adhere to a prescribed script, society expects women and men to behave according to the expectations of their respective gender roles. Scripts are generally learned through a process known as socialization, which teaches people to behave according to social norms. Both genders grow to take up social roles and adapt to institutional structures being constructed from male supremacy and patriarchy. Society then becomes characterized by the domination of men over women with consequential effects on the socioeconomic life in this context of the Nigerian woman.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Research methodology depicts the steps processes, followed or undertaken by a researcher carrying out a research work. Donald (2013) defines research methodology as the specification of procedure for collecting and analyzing the problems at hand such that the difference between the cost of obtaining various level of accuracy, the accuracy and expected value of the information associated with each level of accuracy is maximized.

3.1 Research Design

In the language of research project, the word design means the plan or approach the researcher has agreed to use in solving research problems. Research design comprises a series of prior decisions taken together to provide a master plan for executing a research project. Research design requires the specification of procedures. These procedures involves decisions on what information to generate, the data collection method, the measurement approach and the way in which the data are to be analyzed. As Nachmias (2014) observed, it is blueprint crafted to address problems of scientific inquiry. The research design adopted is the one-shot or cross sectional design. This entails the collection of data only once from the sampled study participants. This research design was adopted because the data needed for the study would best be obtained with this form of research design.

3.2 Population of the Study

The estimated population of Egor Local Government area is 374,515 and a 2016 projected population of 490,600 with 188,895 males and 185,620 females. And the total population of women within 20 years and 69 years is 101283 (Egor local government area statistics department, 2021). This is the target population for this study; these are people who are residents of Egor Local Government Area. This is necessary to target people who are old enough to understand the issue under study. This comprises of all adult female between the ages of 20 - 69 years in respect to their

educational qualification, socio economic backgrounds, employment status, religious affiliation, marital status and ethnic affiliation.

3.3 Sample Size

A sample size is usually representative of the entire population, thereby retaining all the features of the larger population.

To get a sizable number of the respondents, the women will further be divided by their base locations, using lucky-dip method to select these locations numbered A, B, C, and D where systematic sampling will be adopted in the selection of towns, to make for even selection. The systematic sampling is a statistical sampling technique used to select a representative sample from a larger population. It involves selecting element from the population after randomly selecting a starting point within the population. The town will be selected at certain intervals using the “kth” element represented as

$$K = \frac{N}{n}$$

Where k= sampling interval

N= population size

N= sample size

In each of the households that will be selected, at least two female adults including the mother of the household will be selected purposively.

To determine the sample size; Solvin's formula for calculating sample size will be adopted.

It is represented as thus: $n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e)^2}$

Where n= sample size

N=Population of the study

E=Degree of freedom

1=Constant

Therefore

N= 101283

E=0.1

$n = \frac{N}{(1+N(e)^2)}$

$n = \frac{101283}{(1+101283(0.1)^2}$

$n = \frac{101283}{(1+101283)(0.01)}$

$n = \frac{101283}{1+101283}$

$n = \frac{101283}{1013.83}$

n = 100

From the analysis above, the sample size is 100.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The study adopted simple random sampling technique, systematic sampling technique and purposive sampling technique. In selecting women residents of Egor Local Government Area. The purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique used in research to select participants or cases based on specific criteria or purpose. It may not be feasible to cover the entire Egor LGA as a result of funds and time. Hence, simple random sampling technique was used to select two communities (Ugbowo and Uselu).

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

Fundamentally, only one research instrument of data collection was employed in this study as given below:

Questionnaire

The 5(five) point Likert Scale was used to point out the level of respondent's agreement or disagreement to statements. Section A consisted of questions on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, while Section B and other sections contained questions that were centred on the objectives of the study.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The quantitative method of data gathering was utilized for this study to obtain a well-rounded data that will ensure the adequate accomplishment of the study's objectives.

Quantitative method of data gathering involved the collection of data that was numeric in nature with the use of questionnaire. In gathering quantitative data with the use of questionnaire, the required copies of questionnaire were reproduced from the original copy. The researcher then administered the questionnaire directly to the appropriate respondents in their offices or work stations at periods objectively convenient for them. In order to ensure that respondents understand the questions in the questionnaire and give reliable and valid responses, the researcher and research assistants tendered value-free clarifications.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The research instrument was viewed and assessed by the researcher's supervisor. Her comments and suggestions were incorporated in the final questionnaire used for the collection of data.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of the different categories of the quantitative data was presented with frequencies, percentages, tables, charts and cross tubulations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the field. It deals with the analysis and presentation of the quantitative data. A total of a hundred questionnaires were administered and retrieved. Below are the responses obtained from the questionnaires presented in tabular and bar charts representing each of the questions.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Respondents Bio-Data

Table 4.1: Age of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-29yrs	69	69.0	69.0	69.0
30-39yrs	30	30.0	30.0	99.0
40-49yrs	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Figure 4.1

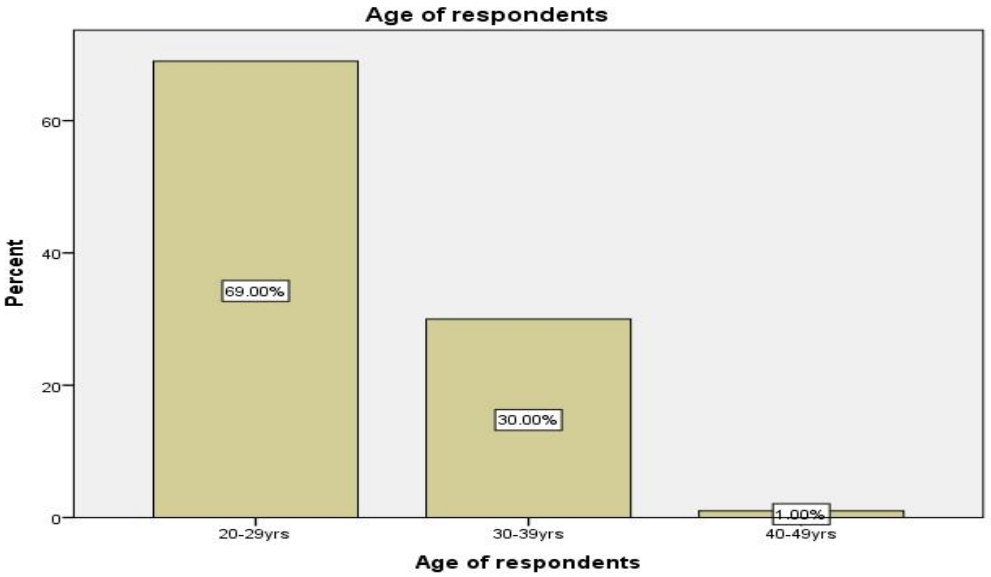


Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 shows the analysis of age of respondents. The table revealed that 69 respondents, which accounts for 69.0% were between the age of 20-29 years; 30(30.0%) of the respondents were between the age of 30-39 years, while only 1(1.0%) respondent is between the age of 40-49 yea respectively.

Table 4.2: Religion of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Christianity	78	78.0	78.0	78.0
Muslim	15	15.0	15.0	93.0
Traditional belief	4	4.0	4.0	97.0
Others	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Figure 4.2

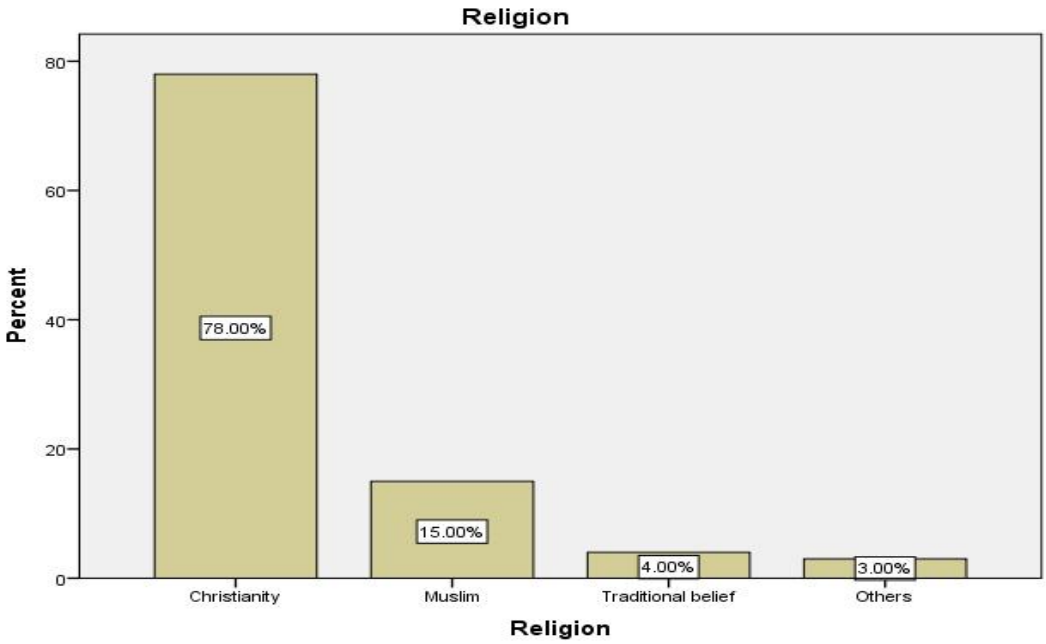


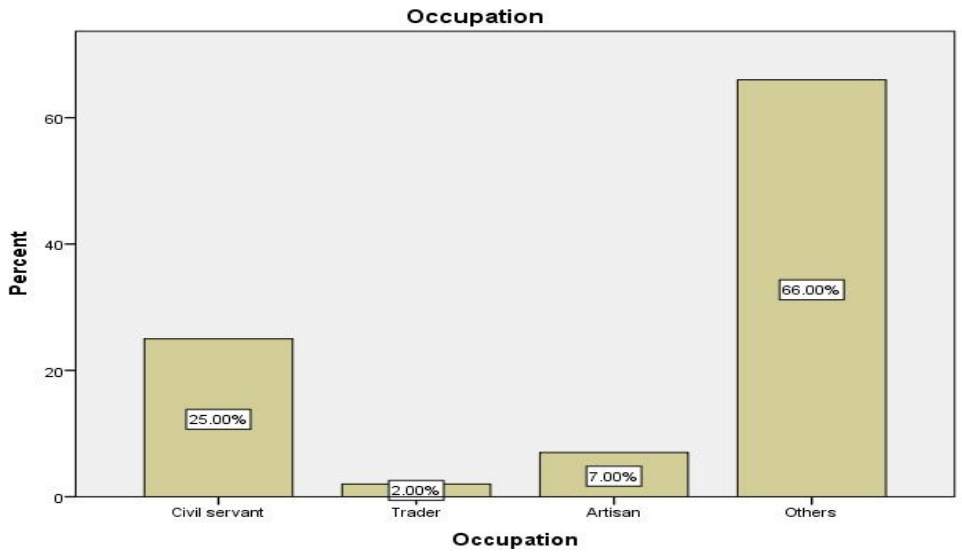
Table 4.2/Figure 4.2 shows the frequency distribution of respondents' religion. The table revealed that 78 respondents, which accounts for 78.0% were Christians; 15(15.0%) of the respondents were Muslim; 4(4.0%) of the respondents practiced African traditional religion; while only 3(3.0%) of the respondents were of other religious faith.

Table 4.3: Occupation of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Civil servant	25	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Trader	2	2.0	2.0	27.0
	Artisan	7	7.0	7.0	34.0
	Others	66	66.0	66.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Figure 4.3



Responses from table 4.3/Figure 4.3 on the occupation of respondents shows that 25(25.0%) of the respondents were civil servant; 2(2.0%) of the respondents were traders; 7(7.0%) of the respondents were artisans, and 66(66.0%) of the respondents

were engaged with other form of occupation which were not stated by the respondents.

Table 4.4: Level of education of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Secondary	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
Tertiary	62	62.0	62.0	69.0
Others	31	31.0	31.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Figure 4.4

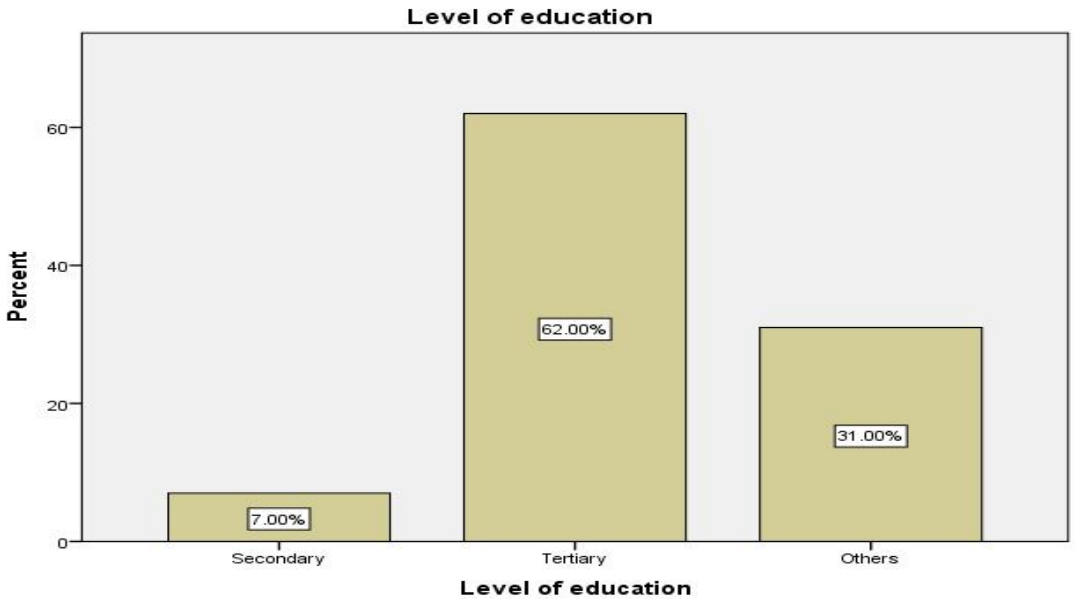


Table 4.4/Figure 4.4 above shows the analysis of educational attainment of the respondents, out of which 7(7.0%) of the respondents fall within the secondary school

education level; majority of the respondents, which accounts for 62(62.0%) fall within the tertiary education level; while 31(31.0%) of the respondents have attained other educational degrees which were not stated by the respondents.

4.2 The Impact of Gender Inequality on Women's Education Attainment in Egor LGA, Benin City

In this section, the responses to the questions were analyzed using Likert-Scale point (agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree).

Table 4.5: I had the same level of education with my brothers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	58	58.0	58.0	58.0
Strongly Agree	19	19.0	19.0	77.0
Neutral	3	3.0	3.0	80.0
Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	87.0
Strongly Disagree	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From table 4.5 above, 58(58.0%) of the respondents agreed that they have had the same level of education with their brothers. In the same vein, 19(19.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they have had the same level of education with their brothers. Then, 3(3.0%) of the respondents were neutral to the question asked; while 7(7.0%) disagreed and 13(13.0%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they

have had the same level of education with their brothers. Thus, in line with the responses, we can then deduced that majority of the respondents have same education level with their brothers.

Table 4.6: My father/guardian supported my education same way he did with my brothers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Strongly Agree	19	19.0	19.0	69.0
Neutral	17	17.0	17.0	86.0
Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	87.0
Strongly Disagree	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.6 shows that majority of the respondents, which accounts for 50(50.0%) of the respondents agreed, and 19(19.0%) of them strongly agreed that their father/guardian supported their education same way they did with their brothers. Then, 17(17.0%) of the respondents were neutral; while 1(1.0%) of the respondents disagreed, and 13(13.0%) of them strongly disagreed that their father/guardian did not supported their education same way they did with their brothers. From the responses, we can then conclude that the father/guardian of the respondents supported their education same way they did with their brothers.

Table 4.7: The male students in my class are/were greater than females

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Neutral	2	2.0	2.0	17.0
Disagree	39	39.0	39.0	56.0
Strongly Disagree	44	44.0	44.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In table 4.7 above, 15(15.0%) of the respondents agreed that the male students in their class are/were greater than the female. Then majority of the respondents, which accounts for 39(39.0%) disagreed, and 44(44.0%) of them strongly disagreed that the male students in their class are not greater than the females; while only 2(2.0%) of the respondents were neutral to the question asked. Therefore, in line with the responses, it can be concluded that the male students in the class are not greater than the females.

Table 4.8: Even with same level of education, the male gender gets the top most appointments and jobs in society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	31	31.0	31.0	31.0
Strongly Agree	34	34.0	34.0	65.0
Neutral	19	19.0	19.0	84.0
Disagree	15	15.0	15.0	99.0
Strongly Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.8 revealed that majority of the respondents, consisting of 31(31.0%) and 34(34.0%) were of the view that even with the same level of education, the male gender gets the topmost appointments and jobs in the society. But 15(15.0%), and 1(1.0%) of the respondents disagreed with this; while 19(19.0%) of the respondents were neutral. However, we can then conclude in line with the responses that the male gender gets the topmost appointments and jobs in the society even when they have the same level of education.

4.3 The Consequences of Male Sexism on Women's Political Participation

Table 4.9: Society sees politics as being reserved for men only

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	51	51.0	51.0	51.0
Strongly Agree	45	45.0	45.0	96.0
Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	99.0
Strongly Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.9 revealed that a higher percent of the respondents, consisting of 51(51.0%) and 45(45.0%) agreed and strongly agreed that society sees politics as being reserved for men only. But 3(3.0%), and 1(1.0%) of the respondents disagreed with the term, and said that the society does not see politics as being reserved for men only. With

the responses, we then conclude that the society sees politics as being reserved for men only.

Table 4.10: The current ration of women's political participation compared to men is low

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	52	52.0	52.0	52.0
Strongly Agree	23	23.0	23.0	75.0
Neutral	9	9.0	9.0	84.0
Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	91.0
Strongly Disagree	9	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In table 4.10, majority of the respondents 52(52.0%) agreed that the current ration of women's political participation compared to men is low. In the same vein, 23(23.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the term. But 9(9.0%) of the respondents were neutral; while 7(7.0%), and 9(9.0%) of the respondents are of the view that the current ration of women's political participation compared to men is not low. In line with the responses, it can be taken that the women's political participation as compared with their male counterpart is low.

Table 4:11: Women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic processes

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	28	28.0	28.0	28.0
Strongly Agree	55	55.0	55.0	83.0
Neutral	16	16.0	16.0	99.0
Strongly Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Analysis from table 4.11 revealed that 28(28.0%), and 55(55.0%) of the respondents were of the view that women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic processes. But 16(16.0%) of the respondents were neutral, and only 1(1.0%) of the respondents thinks otherwise. Drawing our conclusion from the responses, we then say that women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic process.

Table 4.12: Male chauvinism in politics is more psychological rather than physical

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	29	29.0	29.0	29.0
Strongly Agree	40	40.0	40.0	69.0
Neutral	24	24.0	24.0	93.0
Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	98.0
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Results from table 4.12 shows that majority of the respondents, which accounts of 29(29.0%), and 40(40.0%) agreed that male chauvinism (bigotry) in politics is more psychological rather than physical. Then 24(24.0%) of the respondents were neutral; while 5(5.0%), and 2(2.0%) of the respondents thinks otherwise. Therefore, in line with the responses, we then conclude that male chauvinism (bigotry) in politics is more psychological rather than physical.

Table 4.13: Male electorates are disposed to voting female candidates into political positions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	8	8.0	8.0	8.0
Strongly Agree	4	4.0	4.0	12.0
Neutral	4	4.0	4.0	16.0
Disagree	36	36.0	36.0	52.0
Strongly Disagree	48	48.0	48.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.13 shows that lower percent of the respondents, which consists of 8(8.0%), and 4(4.0%) were of the view that male electorates are disposed to voting female candidates into political position. Then a higher number of respondents 36(36.0), and 48(48.0%) disagreed that male electorates are not disposed to voting female candidates into political positions; while 4(4.0%) of the respondents were neutral. In

line with the responses, we then conclude that male electorate are not disposed to voting female candidates into political positions.

4.4 The Outcome of Gender Disparity on Women's Employment Status

Table 4.14: My gender limits my employment opportunities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	11	11.0	11.0	11.0
Strongly Agree	17	17.0	17.0	28.0
Neutral	34	34.0	34.0	62.0
Disagree	26	26.0	26.0	88.0
Strongly Disagree	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Analysis from table 4.14 revealed that 11(11.0%), and 17(17.0%) of the respondents agreed that their gender limits their employment opportunities. Then 26(26.0%) and 12(12.0%) of the respondents disagreed that their gender do not limit their employment opportunism; and 34(34.0%) of the respondents were neutral. Then, in line with the responses, it can be taken that gender does not limit employment opportunities, as rightly confirm by the respondents.

Table 4.15: Male counterparts get the same job as me even with lesser

qualifications

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	12.0
Neutral	30	30.0	30.0	42.0
Disagree	35	35.0	35.0	77.0
Strongly Disagree	23	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Results from table 4.15 shows that 7(7.0%), and (5(5.0%) of the respondents were of the view that the male gets the same job with their counterparts even with lesser qualification. Then majority of the respondents, which consists of 35(35.0%), and 23(23.0%) disagreed that male counterparts do not get the same job with them if they have lesser qualification; and 50(50.0%) of the respondents were neutral. However, in line with the responses, it can be taken that male counterparts do not get the same job when they have lesser qualification with their counterparts.

Table 4.16: Women are not employed due to excuses of maternity leave

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	52	52.0	52.0	52.0
Strongly Agree	2	2.0	2.0	54.0
Neutral	15	15.0	15.0	69.0
Disagree	30	30.0	30.0	99.0
Strongly Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Analysis from table 4.16 shows that 52(52.0%), and 2(2.0%) of the respondents agreed that women are not employed due to excuses of maternity leave. Then 30(30.0%), and 1(1.0%) of the respondents disagreed that women unemployment is not due to excuses of maternity leave; while 15(15.0%) of the respondents were neutral. Therefore, in line with the responses, we then conclude that one causes of women unemployment is due to excuses of maternity leave.

Table 4.17: During lay-offs, the female gender is more at risk

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
Neutral	27	27.0	27.0	67.0
Disagree	9	9.0	9.0	76.0
Strongly Disagree	24	24.0	24.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Results from table 4.17 revealed that of the respondents, which accounts for 40(40.0%), of the respondents were of the view that during lay-offs, the female gender is more at risk. Then 9(9.0%), and 24(24.0%) of the respondents disagreed that during lay-offs, the female gender is not more likely to be at risk; and 27(27.0%) of the respondents were neutral. In line with the responses, it can be taken that during lay-offs, the female gender are most affected and at risk of losing their job.

4.5 Test of Hypotheses

Parameters for Testing the Hypotheses

Statement of Hypothesis: Null and Alternative

Note: If the chi-square (x^2) calculated value is greater than the table value of 21.026, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Hypothesis One (Null): There is a significant relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment.

Chi-Square Test

In testing hypothesis one, responses in table 4.7 will be used.

Table 4.18: the relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment.

	Observed (N)	Expected (N)	Residual
Agree	58	11.6	2.32
Strongly Agree	19	3.8	0.76
Neutral	3	0.6	0.12
Disagree	7	1.4	0.28
Strongly Disagree	13	2.6	0.52
Total	100		

Test Statistics

	The relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment.
Chi-Square	4.00[a]
Df	12
Asymp. Sig.	0.05

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 4.00.

Source: Researcher's Computation (2024) using SPSS ver23.0

Result: As an outcome, the test of hypothesis result using the chi-square analysis as indicated in the above table shows that there is a positive relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment, given the chi-square value of 4.00, with a corresponding significant probability value of 0.05. Thus, with the chi-square value significant at 5% level of significance, we reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis which states that there is a positive relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment.

Hypothesis Two (Null): There is a significant relationship between male sexism and political participation.

Chi-Square Test

In testing hypothesis two, responses in table 4.14 will be used.

Table 4.19: the relationship between male sexism and political participation.

	Observed (N)	**Expected (N)**	**Residual**
Agree	29	5.8	0.116
Strongly Agree	40	8.0	0.16
Neutral	24	4.8	0.96
Disagree	5	1.0	0.02
Strongly Disagree	2	0.4	0.08
Total	100		

Test Statistics

	The relationship between male sexism and political participation.
Chi-Square	1.336[a]
Df	12
Asymp. Sig.	0.05

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.336

Source: Researcher's Computation (2024) using SPSS ver23.0

Result: The test of hypothesis result using the chi-square analysis as indicated in the above table shows that male sexism in politic is more psychological rather than physical, given the chi-square value of 1.336 with a corresponding significant probability value of 0.05. Thus, with the chi-square value significance at 5% level, we reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between male sexism (bigotry) and political participation.

Hypothesis Three (Null): There is a significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.

Chi-Square Test

In testing hypothesis two, responses in table 4.16 will be used.

Table 4.20: the relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.

	Observed (N)	**Expected (N)**	**Residual**
Agree	11	2.2	0.44
Strongly Agree	17	3.4	0.68
Neutral	34	6.8	0.136
Disagree	26	5.2	0.104
Strongly Disagree	12	2.4	0.48
Total	100		

Test Statistics

	The relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.
Chi-Square	1.84[a]
Df	12
Asymp. Sig.	0.05

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 1.84

Source: Researcher's Computation (2024) using SPSS ver23.0

Result: The test of hypothesis result using the chi-square analysis as indicated in table 4.26, shows the extent to which gender limits women employment opportunities, given the chi-square value of 1.84 with a corresponding significant probability value of 0.05. Thus, with the chi-square value at 5% level of significance. Since the chi-square value of 1.84 is lower than the chi-square table value of 21.0, we therefore reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment status.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

This is on feminism and education, assessing its impact on gender equality. However, from the analysis above, the findings from the study revealed that majority of women on Egor local government area of Benin City have the same education level with their brothers; father/guardian supports the girl-child education same way they did with male; male students in the class are not greater than the females; male gender gets the

topmost appointments and jobs in the society even when the females have the same level of education.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the society sees politics as being reserved for men only; that women's political participation as compared with their male counterpart is low in Egor local government area, and women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic process; male sexism (bigotry) in politics is more psychological rather than physical; male electorate are not disposed to voting female candidates into political positions.

Finally, the study revealed that gender does not limit employment opportunities in Nigeria, and male counterparts do not get the same job when they have lesser qualification with their counterparts; one of the major causes of women unemployment is excuses of maternity leave, and that during lay-offs, the female gender are most affected and at risk of losing their job.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the summary, conclusion and recommendations for this research work which premise on feminism and education in Nigeria, assessing its impact on gender equality.

5.2 Summary

The economic sector of our society is one area where discrimination against women has been richly pronounced. According to the CEC Report (2007), the role of women in employment and economic activities is often underestimated because most of women work in the informal sectors, usually with low productivity and incomes, poor working conditions, with little or no social protection. It observes that the female labour force in sub-Saharan Africa in 2005 was about 73 million, representing 34% of those employed in the formal sector, earning only 10% of the income, while owning 1% of the assets. However, the denial of women's inheritance and land rights has made their socio-economic participation considerably constrained and by implication, their educational aspiration (Nmadu 2000). Politics is increasingly becoming commercialized. More and more money is needed to participate in politics. Women lack access to and ownership of productive resource, limiting the scope of their

political work. However, the findings from the study in line with the objectives of the study are stated below;

Objective One:

The findings from the study in objective one revealed that majority of women on Egor local government area of Benin City have the same education level with their brothers; father/guardian supports the girl-child education same way they did with male; male students in the class are not greater than the females; male gender gets the topmost appointments and jobs in the society even when the females have the same level of education.

Objective Two:

The findings from objective two revealed that the society sees politics as being reserved for men only; that women's political participation as compared with their male counterpart is low in Egor local government area, and women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic process; male chauvinism (bigotry) in politics is more psychological rather than physical; male electorate are not disposed to voting female candidates into political positions (Muoghalu & Abrifor, 2012).

Objective Three:

Moreso, the study revealed that gender disparity limits employment opportunities in Nigeria, and male counterparts do not get the same job when they have lesser qualification with their counterparts; one of the major causes of women unemployment is excuses of maternity leave, and that during lay-offs, the female gender are most affected and at risk of losing their job.

Hypotheses: The findings from the hypotheses tested revealed that;

1. there exist a positive relationship between gender inequality and women's education attainment in Egor LGA of Benin City.
2. there is a link between male sexism (bigotry) and women political participation in Egor LGA of Benin City.
3. there is a significant relationship between gender disparity and women's employment opportunity in Egor LGA of Benin City.

5.3 Conclusion

The rights of women and female folks in the socio-economic and socio-political space of Nigeria on her democratic agenda has been a matter of public debate and, hence attracts serious concerns by individuals, academic, public analysts and the wider international community as a whole. The plight of Nigerian women, like their counterparts in other parts of developed countries, have been characterized by lack of

adequate representation, Lack of access to well-developed education and training systems for women's leadership in general; undue dominance of men in the socio-economic and socio-political scheme of things; Poverty or lack of money or resources; lopsided political appointments and the general imbalances associated with very unjust treatment of the female citizens in its entirety. There is no doubt that this trend negates the collective interests of human fundamental rights and the rights of equality, freedom and personal dignity of women in society. This tradition also poses very serious threats on Nigeria's path to democratic consolidation and sustainable development in this country.

Therefore, in order to address the women question and transform gender relations, there is the need to challenge patriarchy in all its manifestations in domestic production, paid employment, culture and religion, sexuality, male violence and the state; and specifically promote women's rights. However, it is suggested that any programme(s) introduced should be carefully conceptualized in an innovative, creative and radical manner aimed at eliminating all forms of patriarchy, then we will be on the right path to overcoming the subordination and oppression of women and bringing about human centred socio-economic and political development.

Feminism in education has had a significant impact on promoting gender equality. By challenging traditional gender roles and advocating for equal rights and opportunities for all genders, feminism has helped to reshape educational systems and address

systemic gender-based discrimination. Some key aspects of feminism's impact on education and its contribution to gender equality are:

- Access to education: Feminism has played a crucial role in advocating for equal access to education for all genders. Historically, women and girls faced significant barriers to education, including limited opportunities, discriminatory practices, and societal expectations. Feminist movements have fought for policies and reforms that promote equal educational opportunities, leading to increased access to education for women and girls worldwide.
- Curriculum and textbooks: Feminism has challenged traditional academic curricula and textbooks that perpetuated gender stereotypes and biases. Feminist scholars and activists have advocated for the inclusion of diverse perspectives, women's contributions, and the exploration of gender-related issues in educational materials. This inclusive approach helps challenge gender norms, promotes critical thinking, and provides a more accurate representation of history and society.
- Gender equity in teaching and leadership: Feminism has highlighted the underrepresentation of women in teaching and leadership positions within educational institutions. Efforts have been made to address gender imbalances by promoting policies and initiatives that support the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in these roles. By increasing the presence of

women in positions of authority, feminist movements have provided role models for students and challenged gender stereotypes about leadership and intelligence.

- Sexual harassment and violence prevention: Feminism has played a crucial role in addressing issues of sexual harassment and violence within educational settings. Activism and advocacy have led to increased awareness, policy reforms, and support systems to address these issues. Feminist movements have worked to create safer learning environments, implement comprehensive sex education, and develop protocols for handling incidents of harassment and violence.
- Empowerment and critical thinking: Feminism encourages critical thinking, self-empowerment, and agency among students. By challenging traditional gender norms, feminism fosters an environment that promotes questioning and analyzing societal structures and power dynamics. This approach helps students develop a deeper understanding of gender equality issues and equips them with the skills to challenge injustice and advocate for change.
- Intersectionality: Intersectionality, a concept strongly associated with feminism, recognizes that gender inequality intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality. Feminist approaches to education acknowledge these intersections and seek to address the unique challenges faced by individuals who experience multiple forms of

marginalization. This inclusive perspective helps promote a more comprehensive understanding of gender equality and social justice.

- STEM education: Feminism has been instrumental in addressing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Traditionally, women have been underrepresented in these areas due to various societal factors and biases. Feminist initiatives have focused on encouraging girls' interest in STEM subjects, providing mentorship and support networks, challenging stereotypes, and advocating for policies that promote gender equality in STEM education and careers.
- Empowering girls and women: Feminism emphasizes the importance of empowering girls and women to pursue their educational goals and aspirations. This includes fostering self-confidence, promoting leadership skills, and providing mentorship opportunities. By empowering girls and women in education, feminism aims to break down barriers and create a more inclusive and equitable society.
- Challenging gender stereotypes: Feminism challenges traditional gender stereotypes that can limit educational opportunities and perpetuate inequality. By questioning and deconstructing societal expectations around gender roles and abilities, feminism encourages individuals to explore a broader range of educational paths and interests. This approach helps to create a more inclusive educational environment that values diverse talents and perspectives.

- Addressing bias and discrimination: Feminism has been critical in highlighting and addressing bias and discrimination within educational systems. This includes addressing unconscious biases in teaching practices, curriculum development, and assessment methods. By recognizing and challenging these biases, feminism promotes fair and equal treatment of all students, regardless of their gender.
- Engaging boys and men: Feminism recognizes that achieving gender equality requires engaging boys and men as allies. Educational initiatives influenced by feminism encourage boys and men to challenge toxic masculinity, promote respectful relationships, and embrace values of gender equality. By involving all genders in the conversation, feminism fosters a more inclusive and collaborative approach to education and gender equality.
- Global impact: Feminism's impact on education and gender equality extends beyond individual countries. Feminist movements have contributed to international efforts to improve access to education for girls and women in developing countries, advocating for policies and resources to support gender equality in education worldwide.
- Ongoing challenges: While feminism has made significant strides in promoting gender equality in education, challenges remain. Persistent gender gaps, stereotypes, and discrimination continue to exist in various forms. Intersectional feminism recognizes that individuals with intersecting identities,

such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and disability, face unique challenges and emphasizes the need for an inclusive approach to education.

Finally, feminism has had a transformative impact on education by challenging gender-based discrimination, promoting inclusive practices, and empowering individuals to advocate for gender equality. While progress has been made, there is still work to be done to ensure that educational systems are truly equitable and inclusive for all genders. Feminism's impact on education and gender equality is multifaceted, encompassing policy changes, curriculum reforms, cultural shifts, and individual empowerment. By challenging societal norms, biases, and systemic barriers, feminism continues to shape educational systems and promote a more equitable and inclusive learning environment for all genders.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the discussions, analysis and positions of this study, the following recommendations were made, which states that:

i. The governments (national and sub-national) should prioritize their goals to put more focus on ensuring that there are equal rights, equal opportunities, equal working conditions and the stoppage of all forms of gender discrimination and bias in order to increase women's capacity and efforts towards economic growth and development.

ii. Nigerians at all levels, from the family unit up to the institutions and work organizations, particularly those at the management positions, should realize the need for a gender balanced society and encourage women's increased and effective participation and contribution to their own individual and collective economic development and national productivity. With women constituting about half of the population in Nigeria, their increased economic development is of utmost social and economic value to the nation.

iii. The Economic policies of governments should be geared towards the creation of jobs.

iv. Since the involvement of women in job engagement affects the quality of family life, women should be given the same employment opportunity like their male counterpart.

v. The girl-child education should be encouraged, so as to give the female folks a sense of belonging in the society and encourage them to make positive impact in their families

vi. Government should encourage the strengthening of the capability for unemployed rural and urban women. Since unemployed women constitute an increasing portion of the rural dwellers, economic policies should aim at enhancing their women employment opportunity.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY

QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: FEMINISM AND WOMEN EDUCATION, ASSESSING ITS IMPACT ON GENDER EQUALITY

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year student of the above department and institution. In order for me to complete my B.Sc. Degree programme I am required by the University to develop and conduct a research project on the topic "**Feminism and Women Education, Assessing its Impact on Gender Equality"**. This consent form is one of the first steps in fulfilling this requirement.

I will greatly appreciate your participation in the study of the above topical issue. Attached here is a questionnaire designed to find out your views on the topic to enhance analysis and thereby for the completion of the project.

Please, kindly respond as honest as possible, as your responses shall be used only for academic purpose. Thank You.

Yours faithfully.

Ogheneyerohvwo Rita WALI
Researcher

SECTION A: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Age: 20-29 [ ], 30-39 [ ], 40-49 [ ], 50-59 [ ], 60 and above [ ].
2. Gender: Male [ ], Female [ ]
3. Religion: Christianity [ ], Muslim [ ], Traditional Belief [ ], others [ ].
4. Occupation: Civil servant [ ], Trader [ ], Artisan [ ], Others [ ]
5. Level of Education: None [ ], Primary [ ], Secondary [ ], Tertiary [ ], others [ ].

SECTION B: Gender inequality and women's education attainment

6. I had the same level of education with my brothers. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree [ ]
7. My father/guardian supported my education same way he did with my brothers. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
8. The male students in my class are/were greater than females. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
9. Even with same level of education, the male gender gets the top most appointments and jobs in society. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]

SECTION C: Male sexism (bigotry) and women's political participation

10. Society sees politics as being reserved for men only. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
11. The current ration of women's political participation compared to men is low. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]

12. Women have lesser opportunities of engagement in public political campaigns and democratic processes. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
13. Male sexism in politics is more psychological rather than physical. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
14. Male electorates are disposed to voting female candidates into political positions. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]

SECTION D: Gender disparity and women's employment opportunities

15. My gender limits my employment opportunities. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
16. Male counterparts get the same job as me even with lesser qualifications. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
17. Women are not employed due to excuses of maternity leave. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]
18. During lay-offs, the female gender is more at risk. Agree [ ] Strongly Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]