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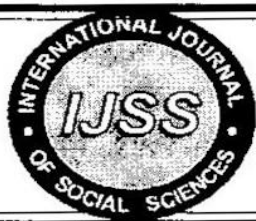
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THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN NIGERIA 1990 – 2000

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ABSTRACT: This paper critically examines gender responsive educational policies. A method that is intended to facilitate a process which can systematically mainstream gender disparity (inequality) in educational policies from the stage of problem identification to setting and defining general and specific objectives. A simple method of analyzing gender response policies and a checklist of documents which are necessary is provided.

Key Words: Educational Policy, Women, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

A nation's population is usually almost evenly divided between males and females except under peculiar circumstances such as war and highly selective immigration which normally affect males more than females. In general, women constitute about 50 percent of the population of any country.

Education according to Aliyu (1997) is being recognized as an essential for self actualization, better health income and improved lifestyle or quality of life.

Education is the most important institutional barrier to female participation in the formal labour force. All available evidences show that both male and female, particularly female participation rates in the formal sector increase with the level of education. There is a positive correlation between educational level and modern sector employment. While the level of women's educational attainment is a principal determinant of the supply of women's labour in the formal sector, the types of education they receive largely determine the types of jobs they secure. The issue of female education is therefore very important.

More specifically, the multiplier effect of female education was stressed by the African scholar, Dr. Emmanuel Aggrey, when he remarked that “if you educate a man, you educate an individual; but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation”. The problem of literacy is more widespread in the developing countries like Nigeria rather than the developed nations. Compared to men, women in developing countries are often badly catered for on educational level.

Various factors account for the increasing number of working women in the modern sector. These include greater opportunity for female education, expanding job opportunities of the 1970s and 1980s, women’s emancipation, economic imperatives which necessitate increasing earnings for the family and the gradual elimination of some of the inhibiting social-structural barriers. By and large, Nigerian women who have had the opportunity to be educated have performed quite well in the professions both in the public and private sectors of the economy. Parents prefer to invest more in the education of their male children, particularly when a choice has to be made. There is a relatively higher dropout or wastage rate among girls due to the need for them to help at home.

Allele Williams (1987) also revealed that the wastage rate among females at higher levels of education is higher comparatively. According to her, societal pressures on females such as early marriage, distraction on them from schooling by other extraneous factors as well as consideration of female education as secondary to that of boys in some societies and certain inhibitive religious practices in some parts of the world are the major causes of wastage rates.

The Beijing declaration (1995) noted that education is an essential tool for achieving the goals of full equality, development and peace. Some discrimination were also identified in girl’s access to education due to customary attitudes, early marriage and pregnancies, inadequate and gender – biased teaching and educational materials, sexual harassment and lack of adequate facilities.

Education being the gateway to formal employment, political awareness, etc. should be an intensification of education for women. Giving equal preference to male and female education as well as counseling girls will reduce the high rate of dropout among females. Also, bright prospects of job opportunities could encourage parents to keep their girls in school.

Various socio – cultural values constitute impediments to women’s entry into the modern sector. Cultural inhibitions include the culture which subject women to be dependent on men for their fulfillment in life and thereby accord low status to women-limiting their hopes and aspirations. Religious or cultural values such as purdah system hinder the participation of able bodied and even educated women from contributing their quota to the development process.

Where a few women who are well educated may be able to secure good jobs, majority who are averagely or barely educated engage in some productive economic

activities like petty trading, food processing ventures and raw food production.

The main purpose of policy is to exercise control and for efficiency. However, in recent times it is seen now that policy is an impediment or bottleneck in gender status. This paper intends to focus on the side effects of educational policy and to suggest policy measures that could be put in place to ensure proper gender mainstreaming in educational policies.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The central focus of this paper relates to the extent to which educational policy has impacted people with specific reference to women and to critically examine women and the problems they encounter in education and how educational policies have affected them. Policies in education should aim at raising the socio and economic status of women and hence create conditions favourable to delayed marriage and lower marital fertility.

The objectives of this paper therefore include:

1. To examine the educational policies in Nigeria between 1990 – 2000.
2. To investigate the effects of these educational policies on women.
3. To make recommendations that would enhance effective educational policies on women.

LITERATURE REVIEW

i) Introduction

Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate, no despotism can enslave. It chastens vices, it guides virtues, it gives at once grace and government to genius. Without it what is man? A splendid slave, reasoning savage. These are the words of a poem written by Joseph Addison. Education is a total lifelong process that begins with one's birth and ends only with one's death. Education is a process; it has been identified as an empowering tool.

Education can be described as the acquisition of some potential to conquer the environment such that it produces survival and the development of man., Ibenyenwa (2000) also describes education as being able to receive knowledge, in turn, it is power to master and interpret one's environment.

Education takes place inside the schools and outside them. Both formal and informal education, according to Aliyu (1997) are recognized immediately as essential for self actualization, better health, income and improved lifestyle or quality of life. Women education cannot be less described as Afebende (1999) says that it is the education received by women which would make them become aware of themselves and their capacity to affect their environment. Education seems to be

the greatest leveler of opportunities. It enhances and enriches the capacities of human beings to play their various roles effectively. Education is seen as a major factor that impacts heavily on role performance.

Kramarae and Treichler (1995) opined that the desire for education which is widely felt by women is a desire which springs from no conceit of cleverness, from no ambition of prizes of intellectual success as it is sometimes falsely imagined, but from the conviction that for many women to get knowledge, is the only way to get bread and still more from the instinctive craving for light is stronger than craving for bread.

According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its Human Development Report 1995, "Every country has made progress in developing women's capabilities, but women and men still live in an unequal world". UNDP also noted that in the developing countries' among illiterate people, women outnumber men by two to one.

Girls' education as seen by EFA (Education for All) is a single intervention that could produce the best, most wide-ranging results for long-term sustainable development. It emphasizes that "it is the world's best hope". Girls' education has been said to improve family cohesion, health and nutrition. It contributes to stronger economies and to building lasting democracies.

It is in recognition of this, together with the alarming disparities that still exist within some countries, that '25 by 2005 initiative' was developed, which aims at providing an agreed upon platform for acceleration and coordinating work on girls' education. It was also in recognition of this that Strategy for Acceleration of Girls' education in Nigeria (SAGEN) was launched. SAGEN is a national response to a global challenge to rapidly reduce the number of out of school girls. SAGEN outlines a plan of accelerated action to ensure that all girls currently denied access to quality education are in school by 2005.

Some people hold the view that women are their own worst enemies. This may sound extreme but there is some element of truth in it as women themselves seem to constitute some constraints which work against their education and general empowerment. Dr. Simi Johnson, a former Nigerian Federal Minister, at a seminar on Capacity Building for women in Development, held in Lagos in June 1996, after tracing the historical perspective to women empowerment conclusively, held women responsible for some of the reprehensible practices for which they accuse all but themselves. According to her, women usually fail to accord fellow women leaders as much respect as they would accord male leaders. "Every elite woman sees herself as being more qualified to occupy the position that a fellow woman occupies. A woman may in fact go to any extent to undermine another woman's leadership position. In ordinary discussions, women rapidly admit that they approve of men's leadership" (The Guardian, 1996). Dr. Johnson also observed that more

men than women endorsed the idea of a woman president and this is contrary to the position of women that political upliftment is an inevitable component of moves to achieve gender equality and women development. Many women lack proper education and they do not make efforts to improve themselves. As Dr. Johnson opined, "empowerment in so many sentences is not enough, women must go back to school to learn new technologies and capacities, if you want a good job, go to school. I don't believe in talking about government to empower us"

Female education affects family, health, nutrition, agricultural productivity and fertility, yet there is a wide gender gap in education. Lack of resources and pressure on time and energies put enormous constraints on the ability of women to maintain their own health and nutrition as well as that of their children. As a result, women are less well equipped than men to take advantage of the better income-earning opportunities that have emerged in Africa. Although, food and nutrition are women's prime concerns in Africa, and they are the principal participants in agriculture, independent farming by women has been relatively neglected. Women's family labour contribution has increased, but goes unpaid.

As noted by Fashoyin and Idowu (1985), women married to husbands earning good salaries usually feel indifferent to work while those who work have a carefree attitude. Such women take relish in the wealth or relative comfort of their spouses. In Nigeria, there are significant regional differences in women participation in agriculture. For instance, a study of women in the country revealed that on an overall basis, 40 per cent of rural women surveyed regarded farming as their occupation (Adekanye, 1981).

Akande's article on girls' educational aspirations in Oyo State, southern western Nigeria, also examines the differences between girls from urban and rural backgrounds. Her research found a significant relationship between girls' family locations and their educational aspirations. Urban girls' were far more likely to aspire to University (63%) than rural ones (26.3%). Rural girls' highest ambitions tended to be to train as a nurse or a teacher, an interesting result of the role models available in rural areas and of the high status accorded to nurses and teachers in the villages. Akande also found a significant relationship between family location and girls' scholastic performance. Rural girls perform less well overall than urban ones. More rural girls complained of interruption to their homework from household chores and errands. It is not only the quality of education in rural areas which may affect attainment but the demands of rural life (Akande, 1987).

ii) Education and Fertility

Education's effect on fertility has been described in terms of three causal paths.

- (1) Education dampens the demand for children. Education may directly affect family size and notions about acceptable styles of childrearing. Education also reduces the economic utility of children, creates aspirations for upward

mobility that are not entirely consistent with having a large family, and increases the opportunity cost of women's time. Education also increases the earnings ability of women which should, in principle, represent a counterbalancing "income effect" – larger families become more affordable as a woman's contribution to household income rises – but the evidence seems to show that this effect is overshadowed by education's negative effects on demand in most contexts.

- (2) Education has mixed effects with respect to the supply of children. Staying in school longer delays entry into marriage. However, in the absence of contraception, more education also may have a positive effect on the supply of children because better educated women may breastfeed less, and for shorter durations. Better educated women tend to have lower rates of infant and child mortality, directly contributing to the "supply" of children but indirectly affecting fertility in the opposite direction, as birth intervals lengthen in child survivorship.
- (3) Female educational attainment influences the cost of fertility regulation where the pre-dominant methods of contraception are still female methods.

Education reduces barriers to the adoption of family planning, in terms of awareness and willingness to use contraception. The sign of the composite relationship between education and fertility is indeterminate, though more education has generally been associated with lower fertility within and across countries. The United Nations' analysis of World Fertility survey data indicated that in the late 1970s and early 1980's, women with 7 or more years of schooling married nearly 4 years later, on average, than women with no education lifetime fertility. The same women also had about 25 percentage points higher contraception use (another fertility reducing effect) and breastfed children 8 months less than women with no education (a counterbalancing effect that could increase fertility) (United Nations, 1987).

According to a recent World Bank and United Nations publication, the "single most effective policy action" that can be taken to lower fertility outcomes is to increase female education levels.

iii) African Women and Education

Women's participation in national educational systems is again biased due to the socio-cultural and economic environment. There is also a lack of genuine political will to ensure that girls are given equal access to education in Africa. More than two – thirds of Africa's illiterates are women. Harrison correctly observes that: 'women's burdens –heavy throughout the third world – are enough to break a camel's back in much of Africa' (Harrison, 1983).

Women are regarded as inferior to men and are not expected to aspire as high as men, especially in what is considered as 'male' fields (engineering, computing, architecture, medicine, etc.). Alele-Williams(1989), has amply demonstrated that the problem of low participation rate in Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) among females is a worldwide phenomenon. Also, Bajah and Bozimo (1989), noted that cross national studies of educational attainment have established that universally, girls appear to perform as well as boys in science and mathematics. It is largely assumed that educating women would make them too independent; in other words, they would not do what they are expected to do – look after the house, bring up children and cater for their husbands' needs.

iv) Women in Nigeria: Educational, Political and Socio- economic Enhancement

In spite of the importance of female education, there has been a relative deprivation of girls' educational opportunities in Nigeria (Akande, 1995). The Nigerian culture, as in many other cultures, has defined the role of women mainly in terms of home keeping and child bearing. It is therefore, expected that girls should settle for "feminine" vocations such as teaching, nursing, home economics and secretaryship.

At a workshop held in Lagos in 2001, the Executive director of WARDC- Women Advocated Research and Development Council, Abuola Akiyode Afolabi said that to redress the issue of low level female education in Nigeria calls for a massive and aggressive enlightenment campaign on the importance of educating the girl child, the dangers of early marriage and the consequent vesico-vaginal fistula (VVF).

The need for education is then considered to have a relatively high value. In spite of the inestimable value placed on education, illiteracy has been reported to be relatively high in Nigeria and the women are more disadvantaged. The UNICEF(1999) reported that out of the estimated 885 million adults who are functionally illiterate throughout the world, two –thirds are women. It also reported that in the developing world, of the 130 million primary school-age children who are out of school, 73 million are females. The National Newsreel (2001) published the United Nations report on adult literacy which said that adult literacy rate in Nigeria recorded a decline in the last decade, dropping from 57 percent in 1991 to 49 percent in 1999. It was reported furthermore that the wide regional variation in adult literacy rate shows that while the southwest and southeast regions had adult rate of 50 percent for females, the Northern region had less than that, this is likely to explain some of the variation that exists in Nigerian women participation in political and socio economic activities. Ibenyenwa (2000) reported that only 9 percent of the female population in Nigeria is literate, of which the larger proportion

of 60 are illiterate. This complies well with only 37 percent of the adult male who are illiterate.

This finding is supported by Anyaegbunam (1998) who had reported that women have not been given adequate education in Nigeria. Indeed, it is known that women are still generally educationally marginalized, disadvantaged and backward, with few girls than boys going to school. While the men get educated, the women are married off only soon to be liabilities due to their lack of education to cope with modern functions of being not only a housewife but also a functional and relevant economic and political factor for the survival of her family unit, the society and nation.

Nigerian women are lagging behind their counterparts in developed and some developing nations due to the late start in educating them. Our traditions and cultures have been hostile to the woman, reducing her to a kitchen manageress and producer of babies, who must only listen to the man to carry out his orders.

The society has stereotyped that certain subjects and professions are preserved for the male. We have stigmatized and confined women to certain roles through the figments of our imagination. Women are not to venture into areas considered masculine because it is thought (not rationally / scientifically proved) that women are inferior to men in intelligence. But we know that intelligence does not discriminate by sex. Generally, both male and female each has forty-two (2) chromosomes in their genes

Added to this, Science has observed that “there are no innate biological or psychological reasons why girls should not do as well as boys if given the opportunity and if provided with adequate motivation.

Bajah and Bozimo (1989) noted that for the Nigerian situation, their analysis has provided “ statistics of low enrolment of girls in science, mathematics and technology” and established that girls show lesser preference for mathematics and science –based subjects.

Thus the apparent “inferiority” that may be observed in women must be mainly attributable to the environmental manipulation of nursing their intelligence through negative self-fulfilling prophecy, stereotyping and stigmatization by the society.

Presently, the Nigerian woman is buffeted on every side by many forces: sometimes denied education; forced in to early marriage; confirmed to solitary living; subjugation by cultural norms to accept (without questioning or complaining) choices forced on her or whatever is metted out to her no matter how odd and unjust; discriminated against or harassed in all ramifications at work and in the society; almost politically disenfranchised from elective and political appointment; subject to cruel mourning rites whenever she is unlucky to lose her husband, looted of her family’s property when her husband dies even though she might have

contributed much to the purchases of the property, regarded as part of inheritance; cannot bail even though there is no prohibiting law to that effect. Alele-Williams revealed that the wastage rate among females at all levels of education is higher comparatively. According to her, societal pressures on females such as early marriages, detraction on them from schooling by other extraneous factors as well as consideration of female education as secondary to that of boys in some societies and certain inhibitive religious practices in some parts of the world are the major causes of wastage rate.

What the Nigerian woman is today and what she will be tomorrow depends on what plans Nigeria has for her women, But if she is motivated and educationally developed, Nigeria will develop faster than it ever has and backward she will go without properly educating the woman.

THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

Education in Nigeria is no more a private enterprise, but a huge Government venture that has witnessed a progressive evolution of Government's complete and dynamic intervention and active participation. The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for affecting national development. It is only natural then that Government should clarify the philosophy and objectives that underline its current massive investment in education, and spell out in clear unequivocal terms the policies that guide Government's educational efforts.

The five main national objectives of Nigeria as stated in the Second National Development plan, and endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National policy on Education, are the building of:

- (1) a free and democratic society;
- (2) a just and egalitarian society;
- (3) a united strong and self-reliant nation;
- (4) a great and dynamic economy;
- (5) a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The Nigerian government has pursued educational policies which aim at shaping the individual into a sound, useful and patriotic citizen. In order to achieve this objective, the country provides educational opportunities for all citizens at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The government places emphasis on the quality of education and seems to establish nationally acceptable standards and practice in order to ensure even and progressive development throughout the country.

Nigeria has toiled with some educational programs, some of which have only served as conduits to transfer money to the corrupt political leaders and their

chronies. For instance, the Nation launched the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976, but the program failed due to lack of funds necessitated by corruption, among other factors.

Nigerian educationists here responded by culturing the education system in experimental test-tubes over the years in the search for the optimal system. The result is the innovation now popularly known as the 6-3-3-4 system which forms the framework of the new National Policy on Education. By 6-3-3-4 is meant, six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary school (J.S.S), three years of senior secondary school (SSS) and four years of University or Polytechnic education.

The old system which was described as the 6-5-2-3 system consisted of six years of Primary School education, five of Grammar School, two years of Higher school and three years of University Education. The flaws of the system among others included the turning out of grammar school leavers equipped with only general education without specific skills, with the result that those whose educational career terminated at this level no ready professions to turn to. So much emphasis was thus placed on literary attainment. The system was one-way traffic to the University. One just had to complete it and complete it successfully. Dropping off any where along the chain, even midway of the University segment produces a drop-out with half education, general knowledge and no specific skills.

It was a system endowed with great reverence for white collar jobs and little regard for manual labour. It was thus a recipe for mass unemployment particularly for those who could not make it to the final certificate. The challenges of making it to the final certificate were further constrained at each stage by the method of assessment which was based on the two to three hour tests used in determining candidates' knowledge of subjects which they had studied over a period of one whole year. It is needless to say that this method of assessment is inadequate.

The 6-3-3-4 system which was launched in September 1982 therefore seeks to rectify these imperfections and deficiencies. The school curriculum is not only to be enriched with science courses but more importantly with comprehensive opportunities to all candidates, having varying talents and abilities to acquire different and relevant skills by the introduction of technical, commercial and vocational subjects.

Pupils whose academic abilities cannot carry them beyond the junior secondary school would have been well equipped for and will readily fit into appropriate apprenticeship or other vocational training programs. Unemployment at this level will be minimal and human resources will be fully tapped and better utilized.

Those who proceed beyond the JSS to the senior secondary school will continue with their own mix of the Arts, Sciences, Commercial, Technical and vocational subjects as chosen by them and write the same at the National examination to be conducted at the end of the course i.e. the third year of the senior secondary school. Successful products of the senior secondary school will go straight to tertiary institutions – the University, polytechnics or colleges of education.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

With the foregoing analysis of women's relative deprivation in employment, education, political participation, etc. What is the way forward for Nigeria? Education being the gateway to formal employment, political awareness, e.t.c, there should be an intensification of education for women. They should be encouraged to enroll in science, technology and Mathematical (STM) education so as to widen their range of employment opportunities. Giving equal preference to male and female education as well as counseling girls will reduce the high rate of dropout among females. Also, bright prospects of job opportunities could encourage parents to keep their girls in school and thereby reduce dropout rates among girls. Thus the national economy should be revived to generate employment opportunities.

Government should encourage employers, NGOs and individuals to meet the rapidly increasing demand for nurseries and daycare centers for the children of working mothers. All forms of discrimination against women should be eliminated. Also, the myths and stereotypes that surround women at work should be dispelled. Women should have greater access to political opportunities as well as taking part in the political decision making process.

All data-gathering institutions in Nigeria should put special emphasis on gender disaggregated data. This would ensure a better appreciation of the characteristics of women at work, school, etc. and thereby enhance the formulation of more relevant policies to promote the status of women

The following are the measures that can be taken to ensure equal access to Education:

- a. Eliminate discrimination in education at all levels on the basis of gender, race, language, religion, national origin, age or disability or any other form of discrimination and, as appropriate, consider establishing procedures to address grievances
- b. Eliminate gender disparities in access to all areas of tertiary education by ensuring that women have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships, and by adopting positive action when appropriate.

- c. Create a gender-sensitive education system in order to ensure educational and training opportunities, full and equal participation of women in educational administration and policy decision-making.
- d. Provide in collaboration with parents, non-government organizations, including youth organizations, communities and the private sector, young women with academic and technical training, career planning, leadership and social skills and work experience to prepare them to participate fully in society.
- e. Increase enrolment and retention rates of girls by allocating appropriate budgetary resources, and by enlisting the support of parents and the community as well as through campaigns, flexible school schedules, incentives, scholarships and the other means to minimize the costs of girl's education to their families and to facilitate parents' ability to choose education for the girl child and by ensuring that the rights of women and girls to freedom of conscience and religion are respect in educational institutions through repealing any discriminatory laws or legislation based on religion, race, or culture.
- f. Promote an educational setting that eliminates all barriers that impede the schooling of pregnant adolescents and young mothers, including as appropriate, affordable and physically accessible child-care facilities and parental education to encourage those who are responsible for the care of their children and siblings during their school years to return to or continue with and complete schooling.
- g. Make available non –discriminatory and gender-sensitive professional school counseling and career education programmes to encourage girls to pursue academic and technical curricula in order to widen their future career opportunities.
- h. Improve the quality of education and equal opportunities for women and men in terms of access in order to ensure that women of all ages can acquire the knowledge, capacities, aptitudes, skills and ethical values needed to develop and to participate fully under equal conditions in the process of social, economic and political development.

To eradicate illiteracy among Women:

The government, national, regional and international bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-government organizations should:

- a. Reduce the female illiteracy rate to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on rural women, migrants, refugees and internally displaced women and women with disabilities.
- b. Provide universal access to, and seek to ensure gender equality in the completion of primary education for girls.

- c. Eliminate the gender gap in basic and functional literacy as recommended in the world Declaration on Education for All.
- d. Promote together with literacy, life skills and scientific and technological knowledge and work towards an expansion of the definition of literacy, taking into account current targets and benchmarks.
- e. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education.
- f. Develop curricula and teaching materials and take positive measures to ensure women's better access to participate in technical and scientific areas, especially areas where they are not represented or are underrepresented.
- g. Develop policies and programmes to encourage women to participate in all apprenticeship programs.
- h. Ensure access to quality education and training at all appropriate levels for adult women with little or no education, for women with disabilities and for documented migrants, refugees and displaced women to improve their work opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Being a woman, the phrase 'It is a man's world' really hurts. One does not want to believe it, nor does one want to accept it. But when you look around, both in the society and in the professional world, you grudgingly concede that despite genuine efforts at some levels to restore this imbalance, many things never change. The most resistant being the gender inequality issue. This is sad because the secondary role of women in our society has more to do with our own indifferent behaviour and tolerance of injustice to the issue than being a Muslim or a Christian.

Role of women in society is definitely attributable to the beliefs, norms, and values of the society. These beliefs may be formed on the basis of historical religious beliefs or perceived on future economic needs. In the underdeveloped countries where the historical role of women is confined to the four walls of the parents or husband's house, the female member is perceived as an economic burden. Lack of education and lack of earning power makes the societies wish for male offspring, since they can share the economic burden of the family. Parents believe that the female job opportunities are limited and once they are married they will stop supporting them. This perception is coloured by religious beliefs and by the pressure of social norms. Realistically, however, female employment is much higher in the lower class than in the middle or upper classes. The lower class female works in the fields in villages, while in the cities they mostly work as housemaids and servants. In many cases, the male members i.e. fathers and husbands sit at home while the female slave away day and night to support their husband and the rest of the family.

In the middle and upper class, female education is quite common, but female employment is rare. The society has allowed certain “respectable” positions for them which they are designated to follow, like teaching and medicine. Remaining professions are pursued by those few females who dare risk the gossip and slandering of the society. Thus, the females pursue education not with the objective of specific careers in mind but as eligibility criteria to catch the most eligible bachelors in their social strata.

The social and religious beliefs also affect the work place environment. Women who do manage to defy the traditional role set by the society face an almost skeptical and disbelieving environment in the workplace. In a male dominated professional world, women are in minority and are only considered competent for certain lower management positions. When it comes to the top management ranks, there will be little incidence of female dominance. Thus, often women have to prove to their male counterparts that they have risen to these positions not on the basis of their “femme fatale” attractions, but genuine brilliance and competence. This is especially true when women working in the marketing field are perceived as trying to sell themselves to sell the product. The minute designations like “Public Relations” and “Client Executives” are attached to women. The sly and sluggish look on women’s faces tells the story about how the male mind works. The exploitation is not only present in the undeveloped countries but also in the developed countries. The proliferation of the media has revealed that companies use the female form to attract attention and action from the potential buyers. Regardless of the product or service, the addition of an “attractive” female is sure to increase product interest. Thus the image of the professional female has been stereotyped. This belief in nearly all managerial ranks – i.e. that women may be good for routine work, but to lead and manage organizations you need men. Such discriminatory and biased opinions will of course be more prevalent in the underdeveloped societies, as laws on equal opportunity and sexual discrimination are considered more of a launching matter than serious legal violations.

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