Achieving Gender Equality through Higher Education Internationalization: The Case of University of Jos, Nigeria

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Abstract

The MDGs seek to create a more equitable world through addressing and combating poverty issues, inequalities between the global North and South as well as between genders in order to create a more inclusive world for all to foster development. The expansion in higher education in Nigeria to meet competitive International Best Standards in both teaching and cutting-edge research for development has provided opportunities for Universities in Nigeria to attract international support towards addressing the MDG-related goals. The University of Jos introduced a Gender Policy with support from the Jos - Carnegie Partnership Committee (JCPC), aimed at addressing gender disparities in educational opportunities. This paper employed data from the Staff Training and Development (STD) Unit of the University of Jos to examine the impact of the internationalisation of higher education on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs in Nigeria. A gender analysis of the opportunities for training up to PhDs, fellowships, conferences and workshops both internally and externally for academic staff showed that higher education is adding value to women; and that the conditions for accessing such opportunities is improving. However, challenges still exist. I recommended that challenges may be addressed through proactive setting of implementation machinery to ensure adherence to gender policies, sustain international networks and funding higher education amongst others. These can go a long way to enhancing the achievement of the goal of MDGs on gender equality for development.

Key Words: Gender equality, Higher Education, Internationalisation, MDGs, SDGs

L'égalité des sexes par l'internationalisation de l'Enseignement supérieur : le cas de l'Université de Jos, Nigeria

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Les OMD visent à créer un monde plus équitable à travers le traitement et la lutte contre la pauvreté, les inégalités entre le Nord et le Sud ainsi qu'entre les sexes afin de créer un monde plus inclusif pour tous pour favoriser le développement. L'expansion de l'enseignement supérieur au Nigéria pour répondre aux meilleurs standards internationaux compétitifs tant dans l'enseignement et de la recherche de pointe pour le développement a donné l'occasion aux universités dans le Nigeria d'attirer l'appui international pour résoudre le problème des objectifs liés aux OMD. L'Université de Jos a introduit une politique de genre avec l'appui de la Jos - Partenariat Carnegie (CMPC), visant à l'élimination des inégalités entre les sexes dans l'éducation. Ce document à l'emploi des données de la Formation et perfectionnement du personnel (STD) Unité de l'Université de Jos à examiner l'impact de l'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur sur les efforts déployés pour atteindre les OMD au Nigéria. Une analyse sexospécifique de l'accès à la formation allant jusqu'au doctorat, bourses de recherche, des conférences et des ateliers à la fois interne et externe pour le personnel académique a montré que l'enseignement supérieur est l'ajout de valeur aux femmes ; et que les conditions d'accès à de telles possibilités s'améliore. Toutefois, il reste des défis à relever. J'ai recommandé que les défis peuvent être réglées par la divulgation de mécanisme de mise en œuvre pour assurer le respect des politiques de genre, de soutenir les réseaux internationaux et de financement de l'enseignement supérieur, entre autres. Ils peuvent aller un long chemin à l'amélioration de la réalisation de l'objectif des OMD sur l'égalité des sexes pour le développement.

Mots clés : Égalité Entre Les Sexes, De L'enseignement Supérieur, L'internationalisation, OMD, Odd

Introduction

Gender inequalities that pervade all aspects of society albeit in different dimensions and intensity are recognised as impediments to development and creating a just world, devoid of disease and poverty. The global community identified eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to achieve development (2000 – 2015 AD) and goal number two sought to end gender inequality. Some measure of success was recorded within this period with regional variations, thus the introduction of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to 2030. SDG number 5 aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Education, particularly Higher Education (HE) is recognised as a means of achieving gender equality. Higher education (HE) recognised as key to social and economic development. Knowledge informs innovations in the production of goods and services (Fapohunda, 2011; Saint, Harnett & Strassner 2004). Developed countries make substantial investments in research and development (R&D) accounting for about 85% of total investments in R&D, followed by China, India, Brazil and East Asia (11%). The rest of the world 4% in 1996 (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner 2004 p1). The less developed economies are still lagging behind. HE is a fulcrum that not only produces knowledge that drives development but

has potential strategic advantage in moulding and transforming gender relations in the society when it is operated based on the principles of gender equity (Tanko, 2006).

Internalisation of education can be mutually beneficial when it seeks to standardise the quality of teaching and research to create a globally employable workforce and to address developmental challenges, particularly for low and middle income economies. Part of the means of achieving this is through scholarships that allow for staff and students exchange, external examination, research linkages, regional programmes, curriculum development, etc. The other aspect of internationalisation involves the migration of skilled workforce from one region to another but it is to the former understanding that this paper seeks to address (Adeoye, Anyikwa & Avant, 2012 pp 111 – 113). This is particularly relevant for the Nigerian society, which has witnessed a deterioration in the economy that has affected all sectors, particularly the funding of public education. Internalisation therefore offers opportunities for greater capacity development with regional and international aid/cooperation.

The introductory section of this paper presents the salience of gender equality in the development of human resource as a condition for the holistic development of societies, particularly the developing or less developed nations of the world. Global initiatives to this end were made through the introduction of MDGs, which recorded varying levels of success and presently the SDGs. Education is envisaged as one of such means of attaining gender inequality and enhancing development and higher education through internationalisation is an important component of that has a gender gap. The next section discusses higher education and gender inequalities that exist globally and in Sub-Saharan Africa, which has low and varying levels of participation both in terms of enrolment and the nature of disciplines. The historical background of modern education in Nigeria and Gender inequality shows that gender inequalities in modern education were entrenched at the onset of education due to the Victorian values that relegated women's activities to the private sphere, thus education that was provided by the Colonial Government targeted the males employed in the Colonial bureaucracy and subsequent efforts at the inclusion of females were in areas to enhance their traditional gender roles, thus delaying women's participation in HE. The paper subsequently discusses internationalisation of education in the University of Jos, analysing the gender equity in enrolment, participation in Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) researches and staff development through training and conferences. Three sources of secondary data from the University were utilised: reports from the Linkages Office, data from the Office of Research and Development and the Staff Training Unit. The last two sets of data were analysed using descriptive statistics and were cross tabulated by key variables of gender, level of study, location of study and by academic disciplines. The last section is the discussion of key findings.

Higher Education and Gender Inequalities

Historically, universities were founded as male institutions, which reflected both in the nature and content of knowledge produced. The entry of women both as students and faculty were gradually

achieved. The global average of women's enrolment in higher education was reported to still be low at about 25% (Oanda & Akudolu, 2010). Gender inequalities negatively influence participation in higher education for both female students and staff though some aspects of these inequalities may not be quite obvious (Ayodele, 2006).

Gender inequalities in access to and participation in education have been widely reported particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa in all sectors (Fapohunda, 2011; Oanda & Akudolu, 2010; Vincent-Lacrim 2008). Tertiary education is of particular disadvantage in Sub-Saharan Africa where women's participation is reported to be as low as 6% in some places but generally is less than 40%. The disparities are higher at postgraduate levels and socio-economic factors limit the participation of females from less privileged backgrounds from enrolling in private universities (Oanda & Akudolu, 2010).

Gender stereotyping also influence the courses studied by females; they are disproportionately represented in the humanities/Arts and study courses that are akin to their domestic roles. Women have token representation or are absent in science, technology and engineering courses (Jaja, 2013; Fapohunda, 2011; Oanda & Akudolu, 2010; Vincent-Lacrim 2008; Salami 2006). Furthermore, female academic's career progression is hampered by conflicting gender roles as they mostly spend double or more of the time required tocomplete the required training in their fields up to PhDs (Salami, 2006).

Historical roots of Gender Inequalities in Education in Nigeria

Historical and traditional practices and factors have limited access of women to education in Nigeria (Ityavyar & Obiajunwa 1992; Best 2006). These emanate from, and reinforce their limited access to economic and political empowerment. Most of Nigeria's Colonial and post-Colonial histories witnessed the introduction of Western education and modern economy with the Victorian values alongside the traditional patriarchal culture that relegated the roles of women to the domestic sphere. Modern education was provided by the Colonial authorities mostly at the primary and secondary levels to service the Colonial bureaucracy, which was largely a male affair. When Missionaries expanded the frontiers of education, opportunities for females participation were provided but quite limited in numbers and scope of subjects taught. (Coleman,1958). Higher education (HE) was introduced into the country about two decades after the amalgamation of Nigeria, with the founding of the Yaba College of technology in 1934 then the University College Ibadan (UCH) in 1948. The first generation of Universities in the country were founded around the independence period. The elites who pioneered the quest for independence were males who had received their education in England (Jaja, 2013).

Attention to women was increased with several international conventions and declarations to which Nigeria participated and accented to. Some of these include the declaration of 1975 as International Year of the Woman and 1975 – 1985 as the decade of the woman; 1995 Beijing Declaration. The First Ladies of Nigeria during the regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and

Sani Abacha introduced the Better Life for Rural Women by Mrs. Maryam Babangida. Family Economic Advancement Programme by Mrs. Abacha respectively, which increased the visibility of Nigerian Women as well as the creation of the Ministry for Women Affairs during the period (Best 2006; Best 2008).

Government policy drive on education was articulated in the National Policy on Education in 1977. The policy was reviewed in 1981. Secondary education was to be improved upon with greater FG participation. Two federal secondary schools created in each state. One specifically for girls while the other co-educational. However there was no firm commitment to enforcing the utilisation of educational services in terms of enrolment, retention and completion, especially for girl-children at the secondary level, nor to ensure uptake at higher levels. Beneficiaries of the policy served to increase the enrolment and participation of females in higher education but this has remained lower compared to that of men (Best, 2006).

In Nigeria, the HE sector, like other sectors of the Nigerian Society suffered a setback with the economic downturn due to the overreliance on crude oil exports to the detriment of other sectors of the economy. The funding fell below the 26% recommended by UNESCO, leading to the deterioration in the availability and quality of facilities, materials and the learning environment. The reduced capacity to sustain tertiary education resulted in the mass migration of skilled human resource (Jaja 2013; Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2004). Efforts to revamp the HE sector by Government include the requirement for universities to source for 10% of their funds from internally generated revenue (IGR) and a tax of 2% on the profits of companies and industries to fund the educational sector 50:40:10 at the higher, primary and secondary sectors (Jaja, 2013 p. 23). The capacity for the three tiers of government to provide scholarships for HE studies has dwindled and internationalisation remains key to reviving this sector. It becomes pertinent to assess the gender equity in relation to limited opportunities in developing the human resource. However, like the national situation, the principles of gender equality are yet to uniformly guide the administration of HE institutions in Nigeria. For the Universities, the National Universities Commission (NUC) has left this to the discretion of the different Universities and their councils (Best and Godongs, 2006). The University of Jos is one of such few universities that have a gender policy and we shall assess the application of this in providing opportunities for training.

Internalisation and Gender Equity in the University of Jos

The University of Jos belongs to the second generation of universities established in 1975. It was initially a campus of the University of Ibadan but became a full-fledged campus in 1978. The University has partnered with several institutions and organisations, which include the following: The Japan JICA Project; The Jos-Durham Linkage Programme; The Jos-McMaster Linkage Project; The Jos-Leverhulme Linkage; The Jos-Carnegie Corporation Partnership Programme (JCPC). The Jos-Netherlands Peace Programme; Several partnerships and linkages have been forged with International and Local Partners that promote internalisation from 2003 to 2015 as demonstrated by Table 1.

Table1: Partnership and Linkages in the University of Jos 2003 - 2015

S/No	Faculty	Foreign	Local Pub	Local Private
1	Engineering	1	1	1
2	Art	2	1	-
3	Social Sciences	1	-	-
4	Centre For Excellence On Phyto medicine	6	2	1
5	Medical Sciences	8	-	-
6	Linkages Office	1 THREE TRANCHES	-	-
Total		19 (76%)	4 (16%)	2(8%)

Source: Linkages office, UNIJOS, May 2015

Table 1 demonstrates that most of the partnerships in the University of Jos have been with foreign institutions or organisations, especially in the medical and pharmaceutical sciences. However, the Jos-Carnegie Partnership is the only partnership that embarked on some activities to enhance gender equity in the University. Before this partnership and the subsequent interventions, the University operated in a gender-blind environment (Gender Intervention Team (GIT) Final report, Best 2006). Through this partnership, several activities were embarked upon to promote gender equity in the University; key among these was the facilitation and adoption of the Gender Policy by the University. Through the Female Support Initiative (FSI), a total of 3,560 indigent female Students received various scholarships that supported their retention and performance and reduced the chances of engaging in transactional sex with all the attendant risks. Furthermore, the part of the activities of the Gender Intervention Team (GIT) included advocacy for the disaggregation of data in the University. Gender sensitisation and awareness workshops for the University community and key stakeholders on gender equity to enhance mainstreaming and the formation of Association of Women in Science and Technology to facilitate the uptake and retention of women in sciences were all part of this partnership between 2003 and 2012 (Gender Intervention Team (GIT) Final report). There are also some marginal improvements in the female gender enrolments as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: University of Jos Student- Enrolment 2007 -2012

Student	Session/Year	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Undergraduate	2006/2007	2146	1462	3608	40.52
Undergraduate	2007/2008	2035	1410	3445	40.93
Undergraduate	2008/2009	3254	2272	5526	41.11
Undergraduate	2009/2010	CANCELLED SESSION			
Undergraduate	2010/2011	3103	2535	5638	44.96
Undergraduate	2011/2012	2559	1711	4270	40.07

Source: GIT Final Report

An Analysis of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) and Internalisation

The TETFUND is a special fund to support HE in Nigeria. The major areas of intervention include research and research and staff development. The funds for research are managed by the Office of Research and Development (ORD) while the training and other staff support of the fund are managed by the staff development Unit.

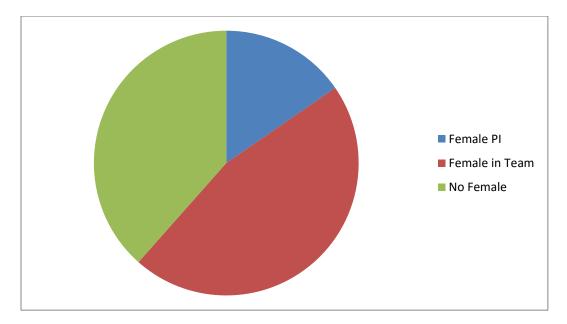


Fig. 1: Gender Representation in Institution – Based Researches from TETFUND Grants 2010 – 2013.

Source: TETFUND Disbursements to the University of Jos, 2010 - 2013.

From Fig.1, there is some significant gender representation in research teams in the assumption of leadership in research as Principal Investigators or members of the research Team. However, the non-inclusion of females in almost half the teams does not align with international best practices and reduces the capacity for mentoring females in these disciplines as well as in the production of knowledge from gendered perspectives.

University of Jos Data on Staff Training

A total of 563 staff of the University have or attending various training programmes in the last 15 years (2000 - 2015). Figure 2 provides information on their gender.

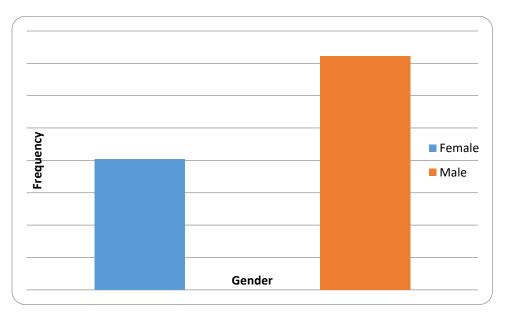


Fig. 2: Distribution of Staff on Training by Gender

Figure 2 above indicates that more males (64%) than females (36%) access the training opportunities in the University. A cross-tabulation of gender by cadre of staff in the University shows 403(71.6%) of beneficiaries are academic staff, while 106(28.4%) are non-academic staff. The requirements for career progression for academics are higher, explaining the difference. 69(43.1%) of the non-academic staff that have or are being trained are female while this is lower for females in the academic sector 133(33%). However, data is not readily available indicating the training needs in the University against the opportunities provided.

The data of academic staff was further analysed by the Faculties as shown in figure 3.

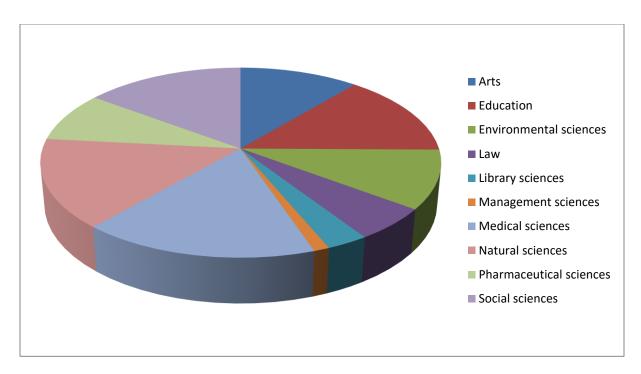


Fig. 3: Distribution of Staff on Training by Faculty

Most faculties are fairly represented in the training opportunities for staff. However, the low representation of the Faculty of Management Sciences is explained by its recent creation out of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

A further cross-tabulation of academic staff on study by gender and faculty shows the gender disparities in staffing and occupations. There is no single faculty where the female gender has higher numbers accessing training. Their greatest representations in the Faculties of Education, Social Sciences and Arts assume similar patterns with enrolment figures and occupational choices at the tertiary level.

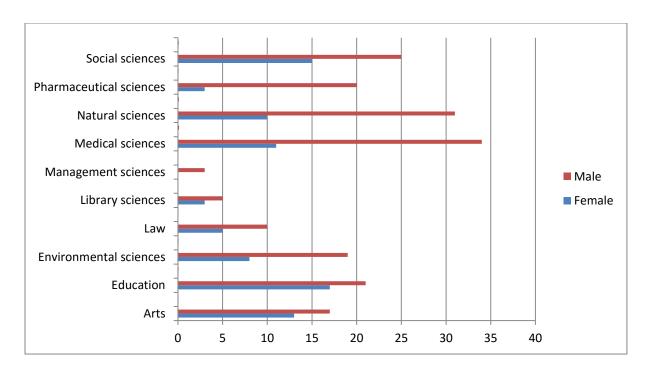


Fig. 4: Distribution of Staff on Training by Faculty and Gender

The data on staff training was further analysed by place where staff are on training to assess the mobility and opportunities for internalisation in the University.

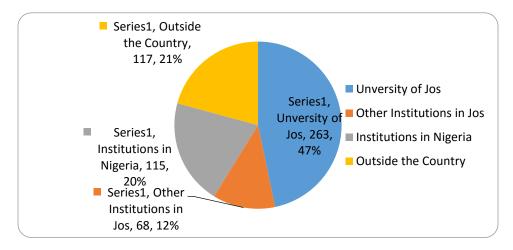


Fig. 5: Place of Study of University of Jos Staff

Almost two thirds of staff of the University train within the institution or in other institutions in Jos. A further cross tabulation of data by gender reveals that over half of the females study in the University and only 31 (15.3%) have or are studying outside the country.

Figure 6 provides information on the nature of programmes staffs are enrolled into.

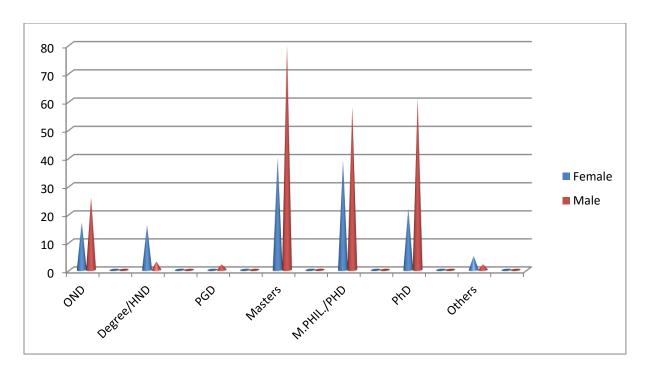


Fig.6: Staff on Training by Type of Programme and Gender

Most of the staff enrolled for ordinary diplomas and degrees are in the non-academic sector as the minimum required for the post of a graduate assistant is a first degree. It appears that females who had been employed in the non-academic area have greater opportunities to increase their qualifications. The figures on training at postgraduate level continue to reflect the lower participation of women in this sector.

TETFUND also provides funds for conference attendance. Due to the limited funds available, criteria for selection of attendees are set by the Training Unit. This includes gender, rank, length of service in the university and whether or not staff have enjoyed TETFUND sponsorship to attend conferences. We note that some of these requirements particularly rank and years of service in the University would be a limiting factor for the female gender, whose participation in HE institutions' is more recent. The data is presented in figure 7.

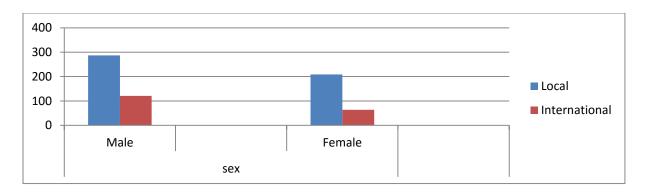


Fig. 7: Distribution of Staff sponsored for Conferences through TETFUND by Gender

The data in Fig.7 indicates that more males than females receive support to attend conferences. We had earlier alluded to the fact that some of the criteria for selection are disadvantageous to women.

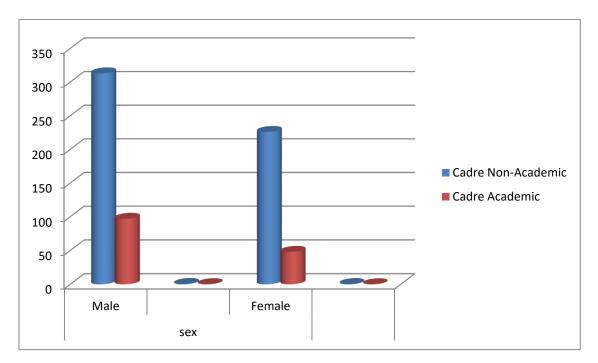


Fig. 8: TETFFUND-supported Conferences by Gender and Cadre

Figure 8 reveals that non-academic staff receive more support to attend conferences compared to academic staff.

Discussion

Data from the University show marginal improvement in female enrolments at undergraduate and at the post graduate levels, thus the persistence of the gender gap in higher education attainment in the University of Jos. Criteria approved by National Universities

Commission (NUC) for ensuring equitable admission and participation of disadvantaged groups in HE include catchment areas and educationally disadvantaged States. Despite the acknowledged global educational disadvantage of the female gender in education, particularly HE (Fapohunda, 2011; Oanda & Akudolu, 2010; Vincent-Lacrim 2008), the NUC has not restructured admission criteria to redress the gender disadvantages. This delays the attainment of reduction of poverty and the attendant health challenges, gender equality and development in line with the SDGs through greater HE participation. Moreover, the major courses with greater female participation remain sex typical disciplines, particularly in Education, Social Sciences and Arts without greater participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses, which hampers the maximum utilisation of untapped potentials of the female gender. This gap has its roots in lower levels of education, particularly the secondary sector, where no visible effort has been made to restructure and redirect education to be more gender inclusive, to direct potentials rather than maintain the traditional attitudes to productive gender roles. The FSI in the University improved chances of completion for female indigent students but the sustainability of FSI post – Carnegie is uncertain as the economic downturn could affect the regularity of support from public-spirited individuals in keeping the initiative afloat. The University as of now is yet to set apart a statutory fund to continue to encourage female participation, despite the presence of the Gender Policy. The formation of the association of women in science and technology provides greater opportunities for female academics to grow in the system. However, the challenge of increasing the numbers of females in science, technology and engineering remain unresolved since these must be directed from the lower levels of secondary and primary education.

The laudable efforts of introducing a gender policy for the University have limited impact due to the absence of the implementation mechanism and of monitoring the implementation of the policy in the University. The disaggregation of data by gender and other key variables that can assist in mainstreaming gender in the University is not enforced, leaving room for continued operation in a gender-blind environment as evidenced in participation in research teams, opportunities for training outside the local environment. The female gender is therefore disadvantaged in these components, which enhance the internalisation of skills for the upgrading of the human resource and for development of the University and the society in general.

Data on status of staff indicate persistent gender inequalities in HE participation with females still on lower ranks of their professions. Staff training is critical to career progression but gender roles could influence decision to study in local environment, delaying timely completion. Efforts of internalisation of HE in staff training and development remains gender blind and ineffective in enhancing the needed skills for greater participation of female academics.

The anti-sexual harassment committee, which is provided for in the Gender Policy to ensure a conducive environment for study and work for both genders is yet to be established and operational. It is a known fact that sexual harassment is an aspect of gender inequality that has dogged many females in organisations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Gender awareness in the University of Jos has improved with the Carnegie-Jos Partnership. However, evidence-based gender-sensitive planning and mainstreaming is yet to be achieved in all sectors of the University's management.

We therefore recommend that:

- a) To ensure equitable participation of females as staff and students in higher education, the changes required need to emanate from the National Universities Commission, the National Board for Technical Education and the National Commission for Colleges of Education set up by the Federal Government to regulate tertiary education in universities, mono/polytechnics and colleges of education respectively in Nigeria. These bodies need to introduce a Gender Policy that must be adhered to by all institutions under their purview.
- b) In addition, similar changes need to be effected in primary and secondary boards of education to encourage interest in STEM subjects devoid of patriarchal sentiments.
- c) The Management of the University of Jos should establish equal opportunities desk offices in all departments and units as recommended by JCPC to ensure adherence to the principles of gender equity are upheld in the different units in the University. This office will ensure gender equity principles in admissions, staff training and development in the University.
- d) The University should adopt the principle of positive discrimination in areas where the gender gaps are wide will serve to correct decades of neglect. The adoption of the principles of gender equality demand that more creative means of granting female staff, particularly academic women training opportunities that are unhampered by their gender roles to fill the gender gap need to be explored and entrenched.
- e) Indices for monitoring the performance of different sections of the University and redressing imbalances to ensure gender equity for students and staff need to be introduced and enforced using the Gender Policy and its regular review to accommodate needed changes will serve to increase the ranking of the University as a Gender conducive environment and as a model of best practices.

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