

GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE ACADEMIA: PRECIPITATE OF ANTIMONIES IN THE IGBO LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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ABSTRACT: *In the recent past, language studies stress language and gender issues in relation to sexism – a dynamic field in Sociolinguistics. Sexism as discrimination and prejudice based on sex as a natural phenomenon is a man-made huddle created by men to exhibit power. Even when the language of a speech community is not fully sexist like Igbo language, sexism is stressed in such an environment out of a decision based on status quo bias. Thus, the decision-making model of Baron (2008) on maintaining status quo bias is found a useful anchor for this study. This paper reports a survey on sexism as a phenomenon not fully ingrained in Igbo language, yet, highly exhibited in the culture. To this end, a descriptive survey was employed on the administration of selected universities in five South-eastern Nigeria states. An in-depth interview was administered soliciting views on this practice of inequality in the academia as a model and center for equality. The findings reveal that females are less involved in the higher levels of the university administration as a result of status-quo bias. A significant use of this study is that it lays bare the unnecessary bias against women, and proves that language is not necessarily the cause of sexism, but men. By suggestion it encourages women not to be tendentious against themselves.*

KEYWORDS: Gender, Igbo language, inequality, academia, status quo bias.

INTRODUCTION

Although an interesting number of women have entered academics, yet they are few in higher ranks. Women Deans and Professors are a minority group and women Vice-chancellors are rare. A follow-up survey in 2000 by Association of Commonwealth Universities is not encouraging as women remain disproportionally represented within instructors, lecturers and unranked positions, Akinsanya (2012:139). When I read this article online sometime in January 2017, it occurred to me that I have never heard of a female Vice-Chancellor in any of the government universities in the core Igbo land - a speech community of five states in South Eastern Nigeria namely: Abia State, Anambra State, Ebonyi State, Enugu State, and Imo State. Igbo people who speak the Igbo language are found in some states of Nigeria. My reflections on Akinsanya's (2012) paper prompted the idea that culture exhibited in language could be rearing its head in gender inequality in the universities. Thus, the question "Is Igbo Language that sexist?"

Holmes (1972:336) states that “Sexist language encodes stereotyped attitudes to women and men”. She wonders if language could “contribute to the maintenance of social inequalities between the sexes ... rather than the speakers”. Nordquist (2017) defines sexist language as a language that uses words or phrases that demean or stereotype members of one sex or the other, while some other authors see it as a language that excludes one sex or the other suggesting superiority of one as exemplified with the generic ‘he’ in English language where ‘he’ stands for male and female. In language studies sexism is simply a language game of competence and performance depicting language attitudes. Sexism as language attitude is thus the embodiment of linguistic choice that is contextually controlled to control stereotype attitudes towards women and men. In other words, a language is sexist when it supports, maintains, and propagates social inequality through its vocabulary. But, for a working definition, a language is sexist when it has feminine and masculine referents indicating sexism for exclusion.

Some Igbo feminists like Omego (2013) (2014), Okunna (2014), Ikonne (2015) even those that come from the literary perspective like Ushie & Aboh (2013) distinguish choice of taboo words and expressions by female and male Igbo language speakers. These works are of the opinion that women are more euphemistic in their choice of words and thus considered less offensive. This distinction is based on available lexical variations which are mere isoglosses or what is also called heteroglosses based on language attitude. Men’s need to position themselves in dominant models of masculinity is the language attitude behind these choices, (see Chambers (2003), Coates (2007), and Obuasi (2008)). For the females, they choose euphemisms because they have natural tendency towards linguistic flexibility for social circumstances and for face saving. Even Omego (2013:80) attests to it as she states that women use euphemistic synonyms “in public or polite company”. Choice of words by females is choice dependent and not necessarily language dependent. That is to say, “in the female brain, linguistic functions are more diffusely represented than in the male”, Chambers (2013:151).

Sex is a biological and physiological attribute of an individual, while gender is a social acquisition – a social attribute based on sex. Meyerhoff (2006:202) supports this view in an exact way that suits our views as follows:

In other words, sex is something you have, and it can be defined in terms of objective, scientific criteria – that is, the number of X chromosomes a person has. Gender on the other hand, is a social property, something acquired or constructed through your relationships with others and through an individual’s adherence to certain cultural norms and proscriptions.

Surprisingly, these proscriptions are initiated and maintained by women at child rearing. The way a child is brought up is highly dependent on language, as such language determines the ‘who’ or the ‘I’ in a person. In the Igbo ways of life, a girl-child is made from birth to know that she is not to be heard, or seen and must depend on the male, lest she would be given names. Even in playing games, the girl-child is restricted from taking part in games of intellect like the ‘Bow and arrow’ which trains mental concentration. She is scolded for

playing football, thereby hindering her proper ‘self esteem’ development. Agreeably, sex is a distinction maker, but the discrimination associated to it is a social phenomenon.

Sexism in Igbo Language

Obviously, there are linguistic differences in the speech of females and males as indicated by earlier researchers like Trudgill, but that is more in the area of pitch as affected by biological constructions, Chambers (2003). Guendouzi (2005: 26) posits that “when considering the issue of gender, it is important to avoid suggesting that specific discourse features are ‘natural’ markers of power or gender ... that gender is identified in adult studies of speech”. The woman is just another man with few physiological differences in the reproductive system. Thus, the word women = *wo* for *womb* + *man* for *man* = *wombman* shortened for woman.

Many world languages have the characteristics of assigning masculinity and femininity to objects and referents (nouns) which makes them sexist especially when that is conspicuous. No language is completely sexist, and even those languages that are sexist do not assign such roles to all nouns. Few examples to depict what is meant here can be viewed in the following table:

Table I: Word Gender Markers

English Language		French Language		German Language		Hausa Language		Igbo language	
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
She	He	elle	Il	Sie	Er	Mata	Miji	Q	Q
Headmasters	Headmaster	La maitresse/ directrice	Le directeur	Leiterin	Leiter	shugaban makaranta	Shugabar Makaranta	onyi isi	onyi isi
Redemptor	Redemptrix	Redemptrice	Redempteur	Erloeserin	Erloeser		Maifansa	Qnye- nzoputa	Onye- nzoputa
Someone	Someone	quelqu’un	quelqu’un	Jemand	Jemand	Wata	Wani	madu/onye	madu/onye
Woman	Man	Femme	Homme	Frau	Mann	Mata	Miji	Nwanyi	Nwoke

The question here may be whether genderless languages can be sexist, and the answer may be in the affirmation considering what is obtainable.

Again, in the Igbo language, the gender pronoun referents (he, she, and it) have just one single pronoun ‘Q’ or ‘q’ for all. Example:

He is alive. = Q di ndu.

She is alive. = Q di ndu.

It is alive. = Q di ndu.

There are homogeneous tendencies in the behaviour and believe of *Ndi* Igbo – they have a lot of common characteristics even when they are spread into many states. A people’s language is their identity as it reveals most of what they are known for. Of the six words used above, only in one instance has the Igbo language exhibited sexism, yet the social life of *Ndi*-Igbo

exhibits a lot of social inequality. To this fact, Okigbo (2015) @ obindigbo.com.org states that the women are regarded as “temporary children” and so denied even inheritance, but in times of need they become reference points.

The Igbo man believes very much in the spirit-world. Even in the spirit-world, woman and men are assigned roles without much discrimination. The earth goddess is “the source of all fertility”, as well as the “ultimate judge of morality and conduct”, Achebe (1958:29). Yet, at celebrations around this deity, men take charge. This may be understood as Igbo ceremonies are marked with masquerades. Women are restricted from partaking in cultic events around the masquerades, even when the masquerades’ houses are decorated on the outside by women. Achebe (1958:71) adds, they scrubbed and painted the outside wall under the supervision of men. If they imagined what was inside, they kept their imaginations to themselves. No woman ever asked questions about the most powerful and the most secret cult in the clan.

This work of Achebe, although rated as fiction, is based on real Igbo world. The scenario created by Achebe’s work from chapter five to seven gives a clear picture of the level of sexism that existed in Igbo land even before the western influence. Men who are men, not “effeminate men”, must have several wives who must never enter their husband’s huts without invitation. The female children remain with their mothers in their different huts, never to enter their father’s huts except send on an errand; while the male children are encouraged to remain with their fathers in the *Obi* where they would be told masculine stories of violence and bloodshed. This way, the barrier boundary is created.

Again, the Igbo women are assigned dual responsibility of attending to matters of dispute in their maternal homes as *umuada* (daughters of the land), and in their marital homes as *umunwunye di* (wives of the kindred). The culture that assigns them this role is the same that deprives them of other roles. Men unnecessarily and tenaciously hold to the status quo bias because it suits them, not because of culture, as the language that carries the culture is sexist lenient. The maxim that time changes everything including language and culture does not apply to this salient discrimination against women.

Modernity has influenced the way *Ndi Igbo* live, greet, dress, speak, even their economy, politics, religion, in-fact every aspect of their social life except gender hegemony. The effect of formal education therefore becomes questionable as gender hegemony is still widely obvious, even in citadels of learning.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical explanations this study hinges on is that of Baron’s (2008) decision making model which stipulates some rational behind every decision making by rational persons with regards to negating the role of emotions while taking decisions. Emotions bring in status quo bias that maintains an eternal yesterday. Samuelson & Zeckhauser (1988) posit that it is a state where people maintain view points, and do nothing to allow change, while Sherfin (2008) adds that it is the state where people allow minimal change.

Baron (2008) proposes three approaches in decision making; the descriptive, prescriptive and normative approaches. The descriptive approach is the anchor of status quo bias. It deals with how people actually take decisions. Definitely, one's world-view is culture-dependent which determines to a large extent one's perceptions and thinking. In everyday life decisions are taken. World view in Igbo land is based on perceptions that men are strong, superior, intelligent, unique, powerful and functional while women are regarded as the opposite and from birth made to know it and live with it. This, which Agbalajobi (2010) sees as social exclusion, is a good example of status quo bias – living in the eternal yesterday.

From the prescriptive perspective, decisions are taken based on how people ought to think. In other words, it involves rational thinking without influence from societal values and demands. Thus decisions and actions are based on open minded reasoning without reference to sex, gender, or culture - inclusion and exclusion do not exist. Ohia & Nzewi (2016:271) posit that inclusion and exclusion do not relate only to “lack of material resources, but also to matters like inadequate social participation, lack of cultural and educational capital, inadequate access to services and lack of power”. This perspective establishes that “female academics in Igbo land are excluded and restricted by culture and tradition from taking full advantage of the opportunities that help to make better and stronger academics”, Ohia & Nzewi (2016:271). It must be noted that although these universities are nested in Igbo land, the staff strength of the federal ones is not restricted to only Igbo speakers, but the state universities consider that. Thus, the principal officers in the state universities are by state appointments, while the federal ones are by federal government, all based on best qualified at elections.

The normative perspective sets a standard for achieving decision making, and it is considered apt as it gives clue to the reason for gender inequality. Olojede (2009) and others like Nwaka (1996), Nzomo (1996), Chraibi (1998) affirms that women's rights as citizens are denied as they are given devalued status. It is a matter of denial, not based on any cogent reason.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As a descriptive survey, this study was carried out in ten government universities of the five core Igbo speaking states in South Eastern Nigeria, to ascertain the level of gender equality in the appointment of the three central principal offices of the university. These ten government universities are:

- a. Abia State University, Uturu (state owned) - Abia State
- b. Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (federal owned) - Abia State
- c. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli (state owned) - Anambra State
- d. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (federal owned) - Anambra State
- e. Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (state owned) - Ebonyi State
- f. Federal University Ndufu – Alike, Ikwo (federal owned) - Ebonyi State
- h. Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu (state owned) - Enugu State
- g. University of Nigeria, Nsukka (federal owned) - Enugu State

- i. Imo State University, Owerri (federal owned) - Imo State
- j. Federal University of Technology, Owerri (federal owned) - Imo State

Three post-graduate students were used as research assistants to get information from the Registry Departments of the universities. Getting the names of the officers and their tenures from the university administrations was the greatest challenge of this survey. All kinds of huddles were met, and in the end some universities could not divulge the information even after formal letter of permission to access such information.

The in-depth interview method was also used as an open-ended discovery tool to get people's views on the reasons for gender inequality of high-ranking posts. For appropriate evaluation, three female and three male members (six from each university) of staff of each of the universities that have worked for ten years in each school were chosen. In the universities that are not up to ten years, respondents were chosen from foundation members of staff. For analysis, the responses from the interviews were transcribed. One excerpt from a female and one from a male were selected from the five states irrespective of university for analysis making a total of ten transcriptions.

Data Presentation

From the above discussions, the Igbo language as part of culture cannot be rated as sexist, yet there is notable discrimination against Igbo women. Women's powers vary from place to place in Igbo land, and generally, aged women participate in "high level meetings" as *Umu-ada* or *Umu-okpu*, Isichei, (1979). The following word of Prof. Olojede (2009:3) clears the air:

For example, among the Igbos of Midwestern Nigeria, the villages and rural towns were ruled jointly by the *Obi* (male king) and the *Omu* (female king) (Okonjo, 1975). The *Omu* was not the wife of the *Obi* and is in no way related to him. The *omu* ruled in conjunction with the *Obi* A clear division of functions existed between them and neither was inferior to the other A person with strong personality and someone who has taken the *igba-odu* (ivory title) an equivalence of the *Ozo* title taken by men Elsewhere in Igbo land where there was no *Obi* or *Omu*, women had some functions ... participated in discussions at the lineage level (*Umu-nna*) ... constituted part of its governing body.

Toyin (2015:2) adds credence to this quotation as follows:

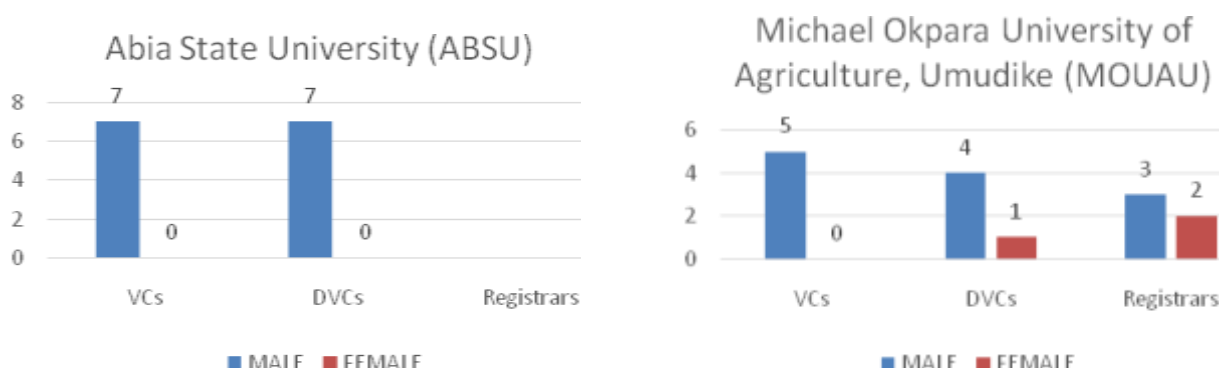
The most successful among them rose to the prestigious Chieftaincy title of Iyalode (Iyom in Igbo Language), a position of great privilege and power. In politics, women were not as docile or powerless as contemporary literature tends to portray them.... Beyond the household level, power was generally dominated by men ..., but in many areas specific titles were given to women.... 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.

Looking into the different administrative sets of the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, Prof Olojede (2009:4) at the 41st Inaugural Lecture of Lagos State University established that women were given prominence in most parts of Nigeria until the European economic expansion in Africa in the following words:

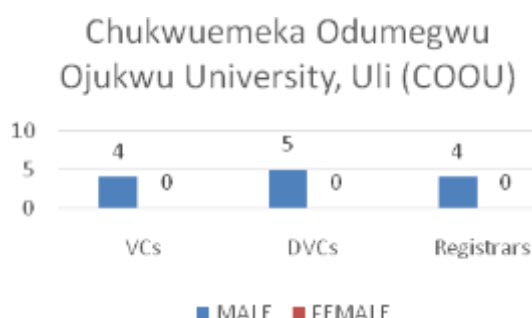
The immediate effect of colonialism therefore, was that the African kingdoms, empires, and people lost their freedom (Akinloye, 1976) It was then the European colonial authority that decided how the people would be ordered, and their economic resources disposed of The implication, therefore, was that indigenous political and economic structure were reordered to facilitate colonial purpose Britain ruled its new territory based on its own gender ideology of separate spheres for men and women Women, unlike before, become confined to the domestic sphere Politically, the position of women took a bad turn.

With colonialism and tending towards European life, the Igbo men continued shaping language to their powerful, dependent and chauvinistic realization of convenient life. In addition, those who find favour with this situation went as far as reading history and Biblical stories to find support for themselves. Such men claim to have Jewish decent because their Jewish gender inequality culture suits their intent. In the Jewish culture, a woman is culturally regarded as non-existence. Examples abound. Matthew 15:32-39 records that Jesus fed four thousand, men “not counting women and children”. Again, in John 8:3-11, “a woman who had been caught committing adultery” was brought alone to Jesus for punishment as if adultery is a one-man act. Zelophehad’s descendants were denied their inheritance if not for the intervention of Moses because they were women, Numbers 27: 1-7. Continuing with the Jewish culture that came with western education where women are hardly considered eligible of heritance, the Igbo woman is disenfranchised through negative actions of silently denying them meaningful participation in politics, and by extension even university administration. Character and role expectations of members of the society depend on cultural and societal norms arising from values and standards created by the same society. This is not peculiar to *Ndi Igbo*, as Olojede (2009) above establishes.

Language expectancy theory (Burgoon & Burgoon (2001) gives credence to this as it states that people develop expectations about language employed by others. Based on this, negative associations have been attributed to women’s language (regarded as deficits even when all speak same language), while men’s language with its attributes is the norm. The university is only a micro society reflecting the larger society whose social structure inbuilt regulate women to continue with the social expectations of subordinate status. A look at the research scope (the administration of universities in core Igbo speaking states) reveals the effect of this expectancy as presented in the following multiple charts:

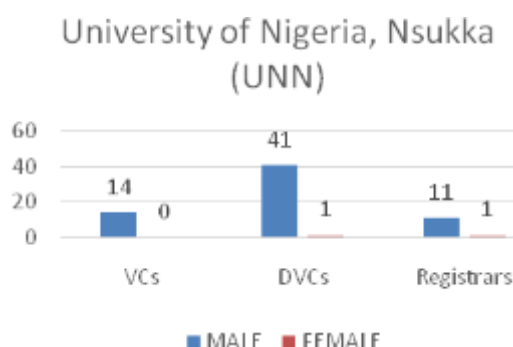
5.1.a ABIA STATE

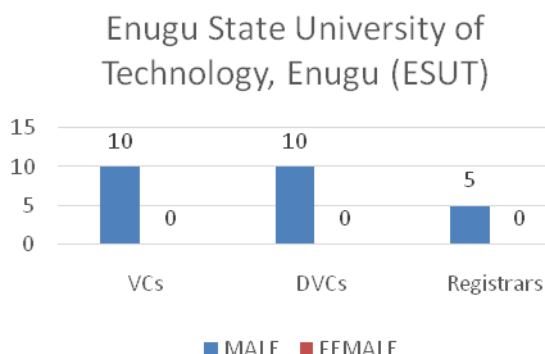
In Abia State, two universities are used for study. First, Abia State University, Uturu founded in 1981 has never had any female VC, DVC or Registrar according to information we have. The second university in Abia State is Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike – a federal university established in 1992, but began formal activities in 1993. It has never had a female VC out of her five (5) VC's. Out of her three Registrars, two female Registrars are recorded, and the only female DVC recorded is presently on seat.

**5.1.b ANAMBRA STATE**
No information for Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (UNIZIK)

Alphabetically, Anambra State is our second state of study, and there are two government universities there. First is a federal university - Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. We encountered challenges getting information from the University to confirm bits of information

around; but there is no available information of any female VC, DVC, or Registrar. The second University is COOU - established in the year 2000. It has since had four VC's, five DVC's, and four Registrars with none as a female

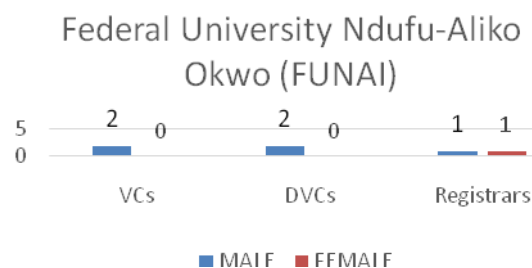
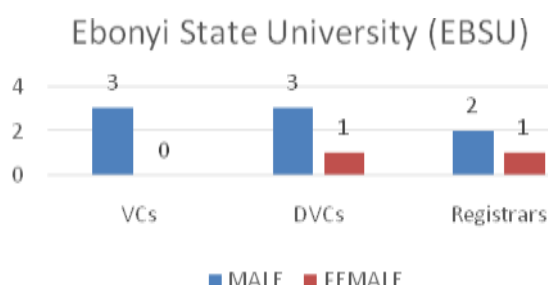
1.c ENUGU STATE



Enugu State is the home of the first Nigerian University – University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Though founded in 1955, it formally opened in 1960. Since then it has had fourteen (14), VC's, forty-one (41) DVC's, and 11 Registrars. Out of these, no female VC has ever been recorded, only one female DVC recorded, and only one female Registrar as at the time of this research.

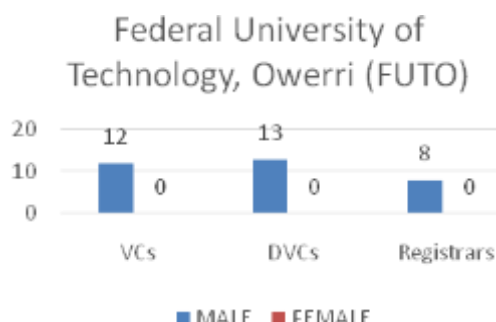
The second government university in Enugu State ESUT, was established in 1979 but formally started in 1980. It has since had ten VC's, ten DVC's, and five registrars. No female has ever gotten to these three posts.

5.1.d EBONYI STATE



The two universities in Ebonyi State are relatively young. First, the state university was founded and established in 1999. It has had three VC's – no female, three DVC's with one female as a DVC. Of their two Registrars, one was a female. The second and the most recent one is FUNAI establish in 2011. So far it has had two VC's – all male, two DVC's – all male, one Registrar who is a female and on seat as at time of this research.

5.1.e IMO STATE

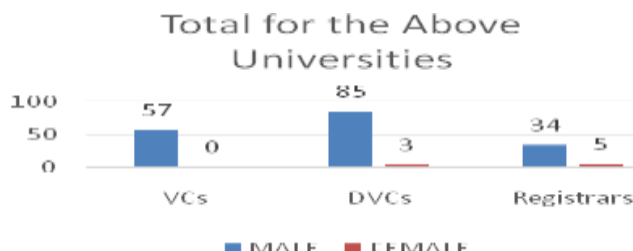


NO INFORMATION ON IMO STATE UNIVERSITY -IMSU

Finally, Imo state as our last state of study also has two government universities as the rest. First is a federal university (FUTO) which was established in 1980. It has since had 12 VC's – no female, 13 DVC's – no female and 8 registrars – no female. Thus, no female has ever reached the three highest levels of authority in the University in her thirty-eight (38) years of

existence. The second University in Imo State is IMSU. The bits of information we got could not be confirmed. So, there is no study on IMSU. But we must acknowledge that as at the time of this research, the VC is female.

5.1.f Summary



In conclusion, in the five states of our study there are ten Universities, but the bits of information we have on two could not be confirmed. Thus, two universities are not discussed, but eight. In summary, all the eight universities discussed have fifty-seven (57) Vice-Chancellors with none as female; eighty-five (85) Deputy Vice-Chancellor's, with only three as females. Out of the thirty-four Registrar, in all, only five female Registrars are recorded.

Data from Interviews

The second segment of this study was the in-depth interview of selected senior members of staff of the different universities which set out to find the reason behind the above gap of inequality. The transcribed interviews reveal that society has a lot of the blame for the inequality, not language; but "tradition" as stated by one of the interviewees. Language and culture are inseparably propagated by tradition. From the excerpts, it is observable that women constitute also some percentage of the problem. The unfriendly nature of the university environment to women is not peculiar to universities in Igbo land. The works of Onsongo (2006), Akinsanya (2012), Aforiwaa & Afful-Broni (2014), Winchester & Lynett (2015), and others, attest to this. In gender equity, global norms provoke appeal to unitive categories, but domiciliary realities on realization remain fractured. The fractured nature of this reality makes the universities in Igbo land as citadels of learning pay lip service to the global gender equity norms even when it is not natural to the language of the people that carries their culture. This roots from the religious and cultural patterns of child rearing which makes the female ever dependent on the man – from father to brother, then to husband, even when the liberal feminist theory argues that girls and boys are born with equivalent potentials. From Ghana, Oforiwaa & Afful-Broni's (2014) investigation into gender and promotions in higher education in the University of Education, Winneba reveals that only lip service is paid to gender equality as a result of society and culture. If one may ask, "Is this 'lip service' syndrome an African phenomenon?". This calls for investigation.

Way Forward

Education emancipates and aids development. A major challenge of the women academic is not lack of qualification, but lack of one linguistic tool - assertiveness, a rudimentary tool for appropriate development which will make the female overcome the feeling of guilt created by tradition on female social involvement. The challenges of the woman academic condition her

psychological dispositions to vying for high posts. What is the importance of education, then? A change of the status quo will remain a mirage, unless there are serious re-orientation of all members of the society, and in particular the women.

Whatever happens to an individual starts from the mind. Women and especially those in the academia should see themselves as models for their less 'educated' sisters. It is therefore necessary that each one tells herself 'Yes, I can make it'. Some are already doing so for the status quo to change.

The value of women cannot be overemphasized. As one of the respondents puts it, no woman is held by any law not to context at any level in the university. Women should therefore come out of their eternal yesterday to exercise their values for the good of the society. Zuofa (2006:10) caps up this as he attests that women are "the main custodians of social, cultural, and fundamental values of a society; and permanent change is often best achieved through them". Positive change can be possible in the universities when more females take up posts and powers.

CONCLUSION

Antimonies in the Igbo language and culture are based on status quo bias which has become a tradition manifesting in gender inequality in the academia. This survey reveals that the level of sexism in the Igbo language that carries Igbo culture is minimal, thus the antimonies. It also affirms that colonialism and westernization worsened the position of women. As women are found employable and promotable by university statutory laws, women should set themselves free from the shackles of psychological cage of tradition practiced by institutions and systems seen as educated and gender neutral, yet acting far from gender neutral. There is no need hiding under "culture and tradition" to fan sexism in Igbo land when the language of the people that carries the culture cannot be grouped as sexist.

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Appendix: The Excerpts:

Abia State - Male

There is no known reason other than the fact that the appointment of VC and those principal posts are political. Women are not ready to stand out and be counted. How many have made it to even the DVC level? How many has tried contesting? Is there any law banning them from contesting? I believe they have not pushed hard enough, I don't know if that means they don't have the personality trait which are germane for high posts, but when it is talking about useless things you see them.

Abia State - Female

I have not even given a thought to that. But I can think of few points now. First no woman is ready to fight the men and their chauvinism. They own the society and dictate what happens. Secondly, lack of due process and diligence in the screening and appointment of university principal officers. No law stops the woman, yet the law is written in the words and actions against women. Other reasons may include lack of institutional framework for career women job development knowing how heavily burdened the woman is with the society assigned roles.

Anambra State - Male

From my personal opinion, I think of three factors: culture, formation and social orientation. As we know, many indigenous cultures in Africa encourage male chauvinism; this same mind set has been subtly carried into the University system. Coincidentally or sadly, out of obedience to our various home traditions, most of the women in the system have chosen to live with the status quo in order not be given a bad name by the society.

Next is formation. The founding fathers of university education in Nigeria seemingly introduced the system in that way – the man would always be the overall head. This may not have been announced or written anywhere, but their body language throughout the period that the colonialists held sway may have suggested such to closer observers. Check: between 1948 and 1960, what positions were held by women in the then University College Ibadan which was largely run by the whites? The orientation of the people is therefore that to run the universities, men must hold the highest positions of authority. Again, I would rather ask you a question and your answer would buttress this point. Having been conscious of your political environment for over two decades now, why is it that no state in Nigeria has elected a female governor and why has Nigeria not elected a female president since independence? My answer is because of societal orientation. Add your own answer.

Anambra State – Female

Hmmm; Nne! Are you interested? Take am easy before they finish you. Anyway, my first reason is the way the society sees us. The men believe we can't make good administrators because its time consuming, but I think the main reason is that tradition conditions even the way we think and reason. It is really a challenge. The women's responsibility is to take care of all household chores, everything concerning the children including 'school runs', attend to the man, and also attend to extended family demands. Their belief is that when the women is allowed such high posts, she would no more be there to attend to these responsibilities as they would demand.

Jealously is part of it too. These posts come with financial benefits. Most men don't like the idea of their wives earning more than they do, worse still if the man is in the same institution with you.

Again we have wrong psychological dispositions against ourselves. We are stereotyped and so we just live in it to avoid the rot of the men, and when you try any way out the women would be your greatest attackers.

Ebonyi State – Male

As for the post of VC, I think it's because women are not trusted with such level of responsibility because of tendency of exceeding their authority, in the sense that the process is sometimes democratic and women should not be allowed certain authorities now. Haba! Even when the men allow a woman, women still vote against themselves despite winning strength as per population.

Politics is a game of number. How many ladies are ready to throw caution to the wind in the hope she might emerge VC? How come that Hillary Clinton did not become the president of the USA? You might be in a better position to answer your own question.

Ebonyi State - Female

Simple, women hardly become Vice Chancellors and Registrars for two reasons. First is societal stereotype of portrayal of women as second class. Second is pressure and expectations from the home front and even the society, including woman that expect women conformity to societal stereotype.

Enugu State - Male

Abeg, is't that your matter. Anyway, it is simply cultural diffusion and lack of political maneuvering. At that level, it is highly political and only those that are highly connected reach here. After senior lecturer, every other post may become political and most women are not ready to dent their images or become "devilish" just to be VC. Many women may not like the idea of living a false life to cling to such posts. Again being Africans, one's opponents at such elections would continue "looking for you" long after you defeated them.

Enugu State - Female

Really! I thought about that once. I could not come up with an answer. I think it's simply politics based on culture. Somehow, yes. In Nigeria, age long belief is that females are inferior to males. They are relegated. Only the strong females can match them of which those females are classified as "*nwayi ka nwoke*" (woman like man) in Igbo land. Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* explains it all.

Imo State - Male

I would think it's the same reasons that have made no women to become president, Vice President, Senate President, Speaker of House of Reps, Governors, etc.

Though, we have had one-woman Vice Chancellor - Prof. Alele Williams. One thing you must know is that if a woman comes up for any of these positions, and if it is to be determined by popular vote, her fellow women would be the ones to vote the most against her.

Do you know that in America more women voted for Donald Trump than those that voted for their fellow woman despite Trump's terrible reputation of absolute lack of respect for womanhood?

Imo State - Female

It's simply gender inequality. It's just that the males must always be in charge. Males believe that females must never be in charge and when a woman becomes in charge she would make them subordinate. How can a man answer "ma" to a woman? That is belittling his ego. Ego is the reason that all.