

GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND INTRA-HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES DISTRIBUTION IN CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

In Nigeria, many women are discriminated upon and are unable to fully participate in intra-household decision-making on economic resources. This reality limits their influence on the intra-household resources allocation. Thus, the study was undertaken to advance understanding on gender discrimination and intra-household resources distribution in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were; to examine the effects of gender disparity on decision-making and access to education of the Efik people. To achieve these objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated based on the identified variables namely; decision-making and access to education. To generate data for testing the hypotheses, a 20 item well-structured questionnaire was developed which was validated coupled with acceptable reliability coefficient estimate of 0.85. The survey design was adopted in this study due to its unique features, which are suitable for the study. The study has a total population of 501,400 out of which 400 sample size was derived with the aid of Taro Yamane sample size determinant formula. Snowball sampling technique was adopted in the study due to its suitability in seeking for the most eligible subjects for the study. The generated data were statistically tested using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The use of this statistical tool was on the nature of the study hypotheses. In conclusion, the results of the study revealed that gender discrimination does not significantly affect the decision-making and access to education of the Efik people, as their culture does not permit discrimination in term of gender. Based on these findings, the study recommended among others that more intensified efforts should be put in place to fully implement gender formulated policy in order to achieve total zero discrimination in other areas.

Keywords: Gender, gender discrimination, intra-household, resources, disparity.

Introduction

The term "gender" is derived from a Latin noun which means "kind" or "group". It is used as a concept to classify word into masculine and feminine (Anyalebechi, 2012). Gender is socially and culturally constructed roles for men and women, while sex refers to the most basic biological differences between men and women. Gender discrimination exists between men and women, with women mostly at the receiving end. Patriarchy system in Nigeria subordinate's women and gives room for discrimination even within families. Afolabi (2003) affirms that institutions of society such as family, religion, legal, political, educational, economic, media and socio-cultural practices have perpetrated the subjugation and disempowerment of women in Nigeria. Even at present, the

issue of gender discrimination in Nigeria has remained increasingly high. It permeates most if not all aspect of Nigeria society as a result of its default social structure which favor men over women.

In Nigeria and other developing countries in Africa, culture plays a dominant role in socio-economic and political engineering which grossly infringe on the right of women. This results in exploitation and directly subordinates women in all spheres of life. This reality is worrisome as many women are still unable to make informed decision about basic human rights such as right to access to education, access to sexual and reproductive health services, property sharing and even access to decision-making and access to inheritance allocation. In all of these discriminations, women's only crime is predicated on the fact that they were born a 'female'.

However, despite several women's right outlined in the amended 1999 constitution, many women do not enjoy the same freedom as men (Kangiwa, 2015), as there exists a wide range of inequalities between men and women in attaining and accessing certain positions in Nigeria. This phenomenon is pervasive and costly, this is because even within families and household women have been historically and internally denied access to or granted unequal access to resources, power, status and decision-making processes. These discriminations revolve around household resources distribution within families, it is an important aspect in every household because it provides an in-depth insight on how resources are distribute. While households are units of production, consumption and socialization, it's composition may vary by culture, socio-economic status, location and may probably change through time. It consists of a single family or another group of people and includes one or more families or members unrelated by blood (Haviland, 2003).

However, studies on gender discrimination have shown heterogeneity within households in terms of resources allocation between men and women but little or no empirical evidence exists on this phenomenon among the Efiks in Calabar. Thus, the study seeks to advance understanding on the form, nature, dynamics and prevalence of gender discrimination and how it relates to intra-household resources distribution with specific attention to educational attainments and decision-making processes within households.

Objectives of the study

The major objective of the study is to advance understanding on the relationship between gender discrimination and intra-household resources distribution. Specific objectives are:

1. To examine the effects of gender disparity on decision-making of the Efik people
2. To describe the relationship between gender inequality and access to education of the Efik people

Null Hypotheses

1. Gender disparity does not significantly affect decision-making of the Efik people
2. There is no significant relationship between gender inequality and access to education of Efik people.

Literature Review

Discrimination is an action against people on the grounds of their group membership, particularly the refusal to grant members of another group the opportunities that would be granted to similarly qualified members of one's own group (Kangiwa, 2015). Kangiwa, further conceptualized discrimination as a characteristic of a social relationship in which individuals and groups are denied access to the goods, services and resources which are generally accorded to other citizen. Whereas, gender discrimination implies several states and processes in which women are either denied access to or experience unequal access to critical goods, services, activities and resources accorded to their male counterparts (Alemika & Ogugua, 2001 in Kangiwa, 2015). The concept of intra-household resources distribution refers to the process by which resources (more broadly including income and consumption of goods, tasks, leisure and investment in human capital) are allocated among individuals and the outcomes of those processes (Alexander & Baden, 2009). Household refers to one (or more) people who live in the same dwelling and share meals. It also consists of a single family or another group of people (Haviland, 2003). An empirical study by Piccoli (2017), on share of household resources in Albania comprising at least one man, one woman and one child, revealed that the intra-household distribution of resources in Albanian households in 2002 was unfavourable to women with an average share of 26.7% almost 11 percentage points less than men. Piccoli, further observed that intra-household distribution of clothing consumption is mostly even. In rich families, the share of male and female resources shows a substantial discrimination against women, in terms of resources distribution.

Another finding by Cherchye, Rock and Vermeulen (2009), revealed that resources were distributed almost equally with women having access on average, to 47% of household resources. The study further observed that female share of resource is larger when women have a higher degree of education than men. In aspect of time, women work longer hours and have less leisure time than men, because domestic task are not equally distributed in the households. In an aspect of health, the researchers observed that girls and young women may be more likely to be undernourished and anaemic and may use health services less often than boys and young men. Again, an empirical study by Frempong and Stadelmann (2017), titled "Does Female Education have a bargaining Effect on Household Welfare? Evidence from Ghana and Uganda", revealed that, female education has the potential to enhance household welfare, the effect however, does not necessarily work through enhanced bargaining power. United Nation (2010) cited in Otinche and Nnabueny (2015) observed that significant proportion of married women especially in poorest household of less developed or developing region have little or no say on how the household earnings are spent or invested. Whereas in countries with gender inequality in property and inheritance right, many women are unable to fully participate in decision-making on the issue. Differences of opinion are likely to exist among household members as to who makes decision. Moreover, people may not admit the true allocation of influence. Although, women and men make discussion which pertains to their own spheres of activity but Unlike men, female contributions to household decision-making is greater either partly and publicly acknowledged.

Kooffreh and Kooffreh (2018) in their study of Efiks household of a married man with children, noted that decision-making is a common preference, as there is no preference in gender when it comes to decision-making that affect most households. According to Kooffreh and Kooffreh, resources are being allocated to daughters and sons irrespective of gender. However, in decision

processes, there are unitary model of the household, in which the household pool all resources and acts as though it is a single decision-maker. This demonstrates who earns the income or own assets that affects the outcome of household decisions. On the other hand, the collective models of household challenged the positions of the unitary model, by arguing that each person in the household has difference preferences and bargaining between those individual is what determines the allocation of resources. However, none of these models directly consider the processes of household decision-making, but empirical evidence is convincing that individual-level factors do influence outcomes across a range of settings (Doss, 2013). In theorizing on the phenomenon of gender disparity, Marxist feminist theory posits that, it is strictly a product of differential access to means of production in the society which is made possible by the dominant family system in the society. The model views gender discrimination as resulting from the unequal power of men and women in societies. They traced the origin of gender inequality to the development of capitalism, patriarchy and male domination. To reduce gender discrimination, this theory advocates the empowerment of women both physically, socially, economically, politically, educationally and otherwise. The implications of this theory to this study is that, in Nigeria society, all sectors including family and households have been structured in a patriarchy system which gives men dominance over women, hence making it difficult for the female folks to easily access resources within households.

In disagreement with Marxist feminist perspective, functionalist argued that gender is biologically determined, which implies that the difference between men and women are naturally determined. Again, based on women's biological functions of child bearing, rearing and nursing they are naturally tied to the home. Thus, the distribution or allocation of resources and roles between the biological sexes lies in the fact that the bearing and early nursing of children establish strong, presumptive primacy of the relation of mother to the small child (Parson cited in Haralambos & Holborn, 2004; 98). According to the feminists, gender should not be viewed as biological or instinctual but as socially constructed. There is no natural division of labour of social roles on the basis of sex, rather it is based on social construct. The theorists laid more emphasis on the gender inequalities than the difference between men and women. Therefore, if there exist any discrimination in intra-household resource distribution within households, it simply means that the discriminations are caused by a cultural factor rather than biological forces (Oakley, 1974 cited in Haralambos & Holborn, 2004:98).

Methodology

The study adopted Survey design. The choice of this design was essential for a number of reasons; the quantitative method is commonly used to collect data from a specific sample which allows for drawing of inference (Agba, Nkpoyen & Ushie, 2010), shows the inter-relationship between variables (Bryma & Bell, 2002; Osuala, 2005) and allows for the use of questionnaire (Babbie, 2012; Anyanwu, 2000). Again, the study utilized qualitative method to ascertain the

respondents' undiluted opinion on the phenomenon. The subjects were drawn from Calabar Municipality and Calabar South which has a projected population of 501,400 (National Population Commission & National Bureau of Statistic, 2016), composed of three major ethnic groups (the Efik, Ejagham, and Oquas). While, the sampling frame comprises 22 wards in Calabar Metropolis (12 wards in Calabar south and 10 in Calabar Municipality) with many households. However, five (5) wards were then randomly selected from the 22 wards from which eighty (80) households were selected using the table of random numbers. With the aid of Taro Yamane sample size determinant formula, a total of 400 sample size was deduced. Thus, 400 eligible individuals who are Efiks were selected through snowball sampling technique. The choice of this technique is basically because its existing subjects provide more referrals to the study. The instrument for data collection was a well-structured questionnaire, titled "Gender Discrimination and Intra-Household Resources Distribution (GDAIR)". To validate the instrument for the study, the instrument was analyzed by experts in Test and Measurement, who measured the face and content validity of the instrument. The instrument has a reliability coefficient (r) of 0.85 which was determined using Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate.

The questionnaire used in obtaining data was made up of two sections namely, section "A" and section "B". Section "A" was made up of questions covering the demographic characteristics of respondents. The purpose of this section is to elicit data on sex, age, marital status, occupation, religion and educational attainments of the respondents. While various parts of section "B" were sub-divided into two parts. The essence of this section is to elicit data on the respondents' perception on the phenomenon under study. It was structured using 5-point Likert scale and had a total number of 20 items. The adoption of this method was due to the fact that it addressed issues in the hypotheses and satisfies the objectives of the study. Section "A" of the questionnaire were analysed, classified and presented using simple percentages, frequency distribution tables which was done using SPSS. Whereas, section "B" items were tested and analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation co-efficient. Based on the statistical analysis, if the data leads to a decision to reject the null hypotheses (H_0), then its alternate form(H_1) will be accepted and vice versa. Out of the 400 copies of questionnaire that were administered only 369 representing 92.3% per cent were properly filled and returned without any form of mutilation.

Table 1: Showing demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	158	51.1
	Female	211	42.8
Total		369	100
Age	20-29	40	10.8
	30-39	88	23.8

	40-49	193	52.3
	50-above	48	13.00
Total		369	100
Marital status	Married	297	80.4
	Single	63	17.0
	Separated	9	2.4
Total		369	100
Educational qualification	FSLC	43	11.6
	WAEC	92	24.9
	B.Sc	199	53.9
	M.Sc/Ph.D.	35	9.4
	Others	Nil	Nil
Total		369	100
Religion	Christianity	351	95.1
	Muslim	18	4.8
	Traditional religion	Nil	Nil
Total		369	100

Source: field survey (2020)

Table 1. presents the socio-demographic information of the respondents. The table 1 revealed that out 369 respondents, 158 were males and 211 were females representing 57.1% and 42.8% respectively. The table also revealed that 10.8% of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 20-29, 23.8% fell within the age bracket of 30-39, 52.3% fell within the age of 40-49, while 13.00% of the respondents were 50 years and above. The results also showed that 80.4% of the respondents were married, 17.0% were single, while 2.4% were separated. Again, 11.6% respondents had FSLC, 24.9% had WAEC, 53.9% had B.Sc while 9.4% of the respondents had M.Sc & Ph.D. This finding indicates that most of the respondents in the study area had some form of formal educational background. On religion, the results showed that 95.1% were Christians, 4.8% were Muslims while African traditional religion has none respondents. This result is expected because the study area is a Christian dominated state.

Analysis, Results and Discussion

The quantitative tool applied to evaluate the data was Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient by using SPSS. Pearson's coefficient is a reasonable and familiar means of assessing linear association between variables.

Null Hypothesis 1: Gender disparity does not significantly affect decision-making of the Efik people

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis on gender disparity in decision-making and intra-household resources distribution

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	r-value	Sig.
Gender disparity in decision-making	369	11.05	1.28	0.032	.000
intra-household resources distribution	369	9.12	1.06		

**significant at 0.05 level; df = 367; critical r-value = 0.103*

The result in table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.032* is lesser than the critical r-value of 0.103 at 0.05 level of significance with 367 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected. This leaves the conclusion that gender disparity does not significantly affect decision-making of the Efik people.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between gender inequality and access to education among the Efik people.

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation analysis on gender inequality and access to education of the Efiks people.

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	r-value	Sig.
Gender inequality	369	11.05	1.28	0.101	.000
Access to education	369	8.53	1.96		

**significant at 0.05 level; df = 367; critical r-value = 0.103*

The result in Table 3. revealed that calculated r-value of 0.101* is greater than the critical r-value of 0.103 at 0.05 level of significance with 367 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between gender inequality and access to education among the Efiks people.

Discussion of Findings

Gender Disparity and Decision-Making of Efik People

The test of hypothesis one led to the conclusion that gender disparity does not significantly affect decision-making of the Efik people. This conclusion was drawn as a result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of hypothesis one which produced a correlation coefficient(r) value of 0.032 which is less than a critical r value of 0.103 at 0.05 level of significance. The square correlation $(0.032)^2$ which is a measure of effect size indicates the proportion of explained variance on the dependent variable. This finding reveal that among household members of a typical Efik people, there is zero discrimination between gender when it

comes to who says what, who decides what and general decision making. The culture operates on zero tolerance to gender discrimination as the female children decisions are considered not neglected.

Women contribute even in most decision-making ranging from health, daily household needs, household chores, large household purchase and children welfare. The study can therefore conclude from the result that, there is no statistical significant of gender disparity among Efiks in decision-making of who decides what. The finding is in agreement with Kooffreh and Kooffreh (2018) who noted in his study that among typical Efiks household of a married man with children, decision-making is a common preference, as there is no preference in gender when it comes in decision-making that affect the households. Again, Kooffreh and Kooffreh further affirmed that, resources are being allocated to sons and daughters irrespective of gender.

Gender Inequality and Access to Education

The test of this hypothesis utilized Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis, which revealed a calculated r value of 0.101 which is less than the critical value of 0.103 at 0.05 level of significance. The square correlation $(0.101)^2$ which is a measure of effect size indicates the proportion of explained variance on the dependent variable. This finding concludes that, there is no statistical significant relationship between gender inequality and access to education among gender in Efik land as both gender- daughter "Adiaha" and son "Akpan" are given equal preferential educational treatment. This lay emphasis on the fact that, intra-household resources allocation in the households is partly affected by women educational attainment, as revealed in the study. However, when women are educated, their bargaining power and their share of resources within the households improve. The higher the educational level of women in a particular household, the higher their equality in bargaining power which influences the household allocation of various resources. This finding is in agreement with Frempong and Stadelmann (2017), who noted in their study that, female education has the potential to enhance household welfare, the effect does not necessarily work through enhanced bargaining power. Again this finding agrees with Cherchye, Rock and Vermeulen (2009), who argued that female share of resource is larger when women have a higher degree of education than men. However, resources were distributed almost equally with women having access on average, to 47% of household resources.

Conclusion

Gender discrimination and intra-household resources distribution has been x-rayed in the study and no intra-household inequality in resources distribution among gender was revealed. This is due to zero or minimal gender biasness among Efik people as women have access to education at all levels and equally influences any household decisions. Suffice to say that, increase in the resources controlled by women within the households without any form of discrimination will improve not just the wellbeing, education and nutrition of the children but the general economic development outcomes. The reason being that most important decisions that affect economic growth take place at the household level, which includes fertility decisions, education of children, labour force participation and production activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that

1. Zero gender discrimination in terms of decision-making should be inculcated in other cultures given its benefits to general economic growth and development.
2. Equal access to education should be intensified, in order to attain full women rights and equality. This will ensure that the desired result of absolute zero discrimination is achieved “*an equal world is an enabled world*”.

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