

**ENHANCING THE ROLES OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT
RESOLUTION THROUGH TECHNICAL AND
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN
SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study was carried out to identify the strategies for increasing the roles of women in conflict resolution through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 1511 made up of the Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. The sample for the study was drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. The instrument used for collecting data was a questionnaire titled 'Technical and Vocational Education and Training Role of Women Questionnaire (TVETRWQ)'. The instrument was developed by the researcher and it was validated by five experts. The instrument was tested for reliability using Chronbach's Alpha method and the reliability index was 0.80. The instrument was administered through the help of seven research assistants trained by the researchers for two days. The instrument was distributed to 500 respondents used as sample. The instruments were collected after three weeks and 475 was returned representing 95% retrieval rate. The data collected were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation and T-test. The data analyzed shows that the women require all the issues identified for them to be fully involved in conflict resolution in South-East Nigeria. It was recommended that stakeholders should provide necessary logistic supports to women to help them acquire relevant skills in Technical and Vocational Education for conflict resolution.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Technical And Vocational Education And Training (TVET),

Introduction

A woman is a female adult person. Women are the homemakers and centre of the family. Okorie (2000) notes that women are the custodians of social, cultural and fundamental values of the society and permanent changes are often best achieved through them. Women are the bridge between the men, children and the society.

Because of their important functions, women can be effectively used during conflict.

Conflict is a state of disagreement or argument between people, groups, societies or countries. Stone (2013) notes that conflict is an advanced form of misunderstanding which usually result in destruction of lives and properties. Conflict according to Daramola and Daramola (2011) is a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals. James, Bwotpowa and Paul (2011) observe that conflict is precipitated from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals, and aspirations by individuals or groups in defined social and physical environments. The common causes of conflicts include: personal, socio-political, economic, poverty, denial of rights, fraud, injustice, industry, welfare, wage, interests and unemployment. Causes of conflict according to James, Bwotpowa and Paul (2011) include: land space, the resources available, disputed jurisdiction of certain traditional rulers/ chiefs, creation of local government councils and the location of their headquarters, ethnic, individual or sectional competition of scarce resources. The effects of conflicts include: hatred, destruction of properties, famine, hunger, poverty, war, rape, kidnapping, armed robbery, displacement of people and untimely death. These effects are usually very disastrous on men and women but more on the children and women. Example, some women deliver babies when they are running away from warring communities, displaced, do difficult jobs to feed their children, breast feeding babies whether they eat or not, left as widows to charter for many children, molested by men and denied of their husband's properties.

To reduce the effects of conflicts in all, there is the need for quick resolutions. Conflict resolution according to Miller (2003) is the “variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts”. Mitchell and Banks (1996) define conflict resolution as a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self sustaining and in long run can produce a new positive relationship between hitherto hostile adversaries. Conflict is not to be demonized but confronted with efficient procedures for co-operative problems solving. The development of a procedure in conflict resolution is needed to reduce the effects arising from disagreements in South-East Nigeria.

The South-East is one of the geo-political zones in Nigeria. It is made up of five states namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. The inhabitants are predominantly Ibo which is also their language. The people in the zone have a common cultural belief that women should be married compulsorily into a man's family and remain as a sub-ordinate to him. It is also believed among the men folk in the zone that women should see more and talk less. These assumptions made it impossible for women to contribute in cases like land dispute, quarrels, communal clashes, among other things. This is pure injustice as women do not have a stake in anything that can contribute to conflict resolution. Achufusi

(2004) observes that these injustices led to Aba women's riot of 1929. Despite that riot women are still not free to do many things in the society especially in conflict resolution. The cause of the non inclusion of women has been attributed by researchers to socio-cultural and economic factors. Okorie (2000) notes that despite the number of women in 1991 population their economic base is still so small that they cannot contribute economically to any meaningful development.

To solve many of these problems on their own, women have formed many organizations to liberate themselves. These organizations are socio-cultural organizations found in the South-East Nigeria that help to better the welfare of women and provide skill training for them so as to equip them for conflict resolutions. Achufusi (2004) notes that some of these organizations include: Association of Business and Professional Women in Nigeria (ABPWN), African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL), Umuada Green (UG), Federated Association of Women Lawyers, and Women in Colleges of Education (WICE) among other organizations.

The Federated Association of Women Lawyers formed a program called Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) which is aimed at settling some family and communal cases out of court. But the program could not yield much result as conflicts continue. Also Women in Colleges of Education (WICE) have provided skill training to members and indigent women in some communities to enhance the role they play in the society yet they could not be effectively used in conflict resolutions as their economic base is still small. Other organization also contributed in one way or the other. Yet despite these efforts, many families and communal conflicts still exist. In many cases, these conflicts have lasted for years with unprecedented number of lives and properties lost. Only a few of them are resolved by the women groups. The major reason for this poor performance in the resolution is that most of them are economically poor and cannot finance the project. In solving the problem, many of the associations try to bring in men groups who do not do much as most of the conflicts are caused by them through land and political disagreement. When conflict resolution measures are piloted by men it takes longer time for peace to be achieved as a result of selfish interest. It therefore means that an alternative must be evolved. The only reliable alternative is the use of the women without involving the men. Although many of the women are house wives, petty traders, and mostly illiterates. The only thing that can equip more women to contribute in conflict resolutions economically especially in South-East Nigeria in an illiterate condition is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training is an educational program that trains beneficiaries to acquire relevant competencies that will make the person to be able to progress in a chosen occupation. Okoye (2013) defines Technical and Vocational Education and Training as an educational program designed to impart and enhance acquisition and utilization of practice skills. The skills and

knowledge prepare an individual for occupations.

This type of education when acquired prepares women to be literate and get self employed jobs which they can use to contribute in conflict resolutions in the society. This is because their greatest problem is illiteracy, lack of skill training and insufficient funds. Therefore, if women in the South-East Nigeria are trained to overcome these problems through Technical and Vocational Education and Training they will contribute better in conflict resolutions.

Purposes of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to identify measures for enhancing the roles of women in conflict resolution through Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South-East Nigeria. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Identify the strategies for enhancing women's participation in conflicts resolution.
2. Determine the measures for enhancing women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training
3. Identify hindrances limiting women's participation in conflict resolution and technical and vocational Education and Training.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the measures for enhancing the participation of women's in conflict resolutions?
2. What are the measures for enhancing the participation of women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training?
3. What are the hindrances limiting women's participation in conflict resolution and technical and vocational Education and Training?

Hypotheses:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the strategies for enhancing the participation of women's in conflict resolutions.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the measures for enhancing the participation of women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Descriptive survey design according to Nworgu (2015), is the one in which a group of people is studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people considered to be representative of the entire group. The author further stated that questionnaire, test or interview could be used to collect data in descriptive survey design. Questionnaire was used to obtain data from Federated Association of Women Lawyers and Women in Colleges of Education in the area of the study. The study

was carried out in South-East Nigeria which has five states as follows: Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, and Imo. The population of the study was 1511 made of 310 members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and 1201 members of Women in Colleges of Education. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 500 respondents. First purposive sampling was used to select two states with two Colleges of Education each and the states are Anambra and Enugu. This is because these state provided high number of members of women in college of education who served as respondents. Secondly, purposive sampling was used to select members of women in college of education who are teaching courses related to vocational technical education. Similarly, simple random sampling technique was used to select members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers in the zone.

A 47- item questionnaire was developed by the researchers and was used to collect data from the respondents. Three experts from the Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, and two Senior Advocates of Nigeria validated the instrument. Kuder Richardson (K-21) formula was adopted to determine the inter-item consistency of the questionnaire items after a single administration of the instrument to 30 members of women in Colleges of Education from Federal College of Education (T) Asaba, Delta State. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.71. The researcher involved seven research assistants who were trained by her from Colleges of Education and Law Chambers. The assistants helped in the administration of the questionnaire to the respondents. A total 475 copies out of 500 copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved giving a retrieval rate of 95%. Four response options of Strongly Needed (SN), Needed (N), Strongly Not Needed (SNN) and Not Needed (NN) were posed for the respondents for each item. Each of the item was assigned a value, thus SN=4, N=3, SNN=2, and NN=1. This produced a cutoff point of 2.50. Any response mean of 2.50 and above was accepted, but rejected when below that. Data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the three research questions and t-test statistics to test the two null statistics.

Results

Research Question 1: What are strategies for enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolution?

The data for answering research question one is presented in Table 1

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation ratings of respondents on the strategies for enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolution
N= 475**

SN	Items Statement	\bar{X}	Sd	Table Value	Remarks
1	Involving women in peace keeping operation	2.50	0.45	1.96	Needed
2	Involving women in providing relief to displaced persons.	2.70	0.42	1.96	Needed
3	Using women to mediate in conflicts	2.60	0.4	1.96	Needed
4	Using women in the identification of warring communities	2.60	0.66	1.96	Needed
5	Using members of National Association of Women Journalist to cover stories during wars	2.80	0.006	1.96	Needed
6	Provision of free education for women	2.60	0.4	1.96	Needed
7	Provision of equal right of women to men	3.00	1.02	1.96	Needed
8	Sensitization of women	2.70	1.10	1.96	Needed
9	Inclusion of women in decision making	3.50	0.001	1.96	Needed
10	Inclusion of women in policy formulation	3.60	0.2	1.96	Needed
11	Inclusion of women in negotiation	2.80	0.06	1.96	Needed
12	Removal of cultural practices against women	2.60	0.42	1.96	Needed
13	Periodic workshops for women on their role in conflict resolution	2.60	0.40	1.96	Needed
14	Periodic workshop's for women on their role in child upbringing and family issues	2.60	0.40	1.96	Needed
15	Using members of federated Association of women Lawyers for warring communities	2.53	0.40	1.96	Needed
16	Giving free pass to women in war torn Zones	2.80	0.66	1.96	Needed

17	Enacting a law granting women free access and harmless in conflict zones	2.67	0.49	1.96	Needed
18	Recruiting more women in red cross societies	3.54	0.71	1.96	Needed
19	Community conferencing	3.40	0.47	1.96	Needed
20	Arbitration	3.02	0.07	1.96	Needed

\bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The data in table 1 above reveals that the respondents acceptable all the 20 items in research question one as the strategies for enhancing women's participation in conflict resolution. In the table all the items had a mean in the range of 2.50-3.60. This means that each of the mean is above the cutoff point of 2.50 and the Standard Deviation was below the table value of 1.96 and because of that they were all accepted.

Research Question 2:

What are the measures for enhancing women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)?

The data for answering research question two is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation ratings of respondents on the measures for enhancing women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

N= 475

SN	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Table Value	Remarks
21	Reducing University Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) cut off points for Admission in TVET.	2.59	0.48	1.96	Needed
22	Reduction of Ordinary level admission requirement to five credit in relevant subjects	3.31	0.41	1.96	Needed

23	Provision of scholarships to women in TVET	3.76	0.02	1.96	Needed
24	Reservation of 40% admission quota to women	2.53	0.43	1.96	Needed
25	Removal of Pay as You Earn Tax (PAYE) for women in TVET.	2.56	0.47	1.96	Needed
26	Removal of taxes for women managing TVET institutions	3.00	0.28	1.96	Needed
27	Establishment of vocational training centers in communities	3.15	0.31	1.96	Needed
28	Periodic workshops for women on recent research finding in TVET.	2.97	0.31	1.96	Needed
29	Periodic workshops for women on the need to teach vocational skills to their children	3.27	0.07	1.96	Needed
30	Job description in TVET in favour of women	2.95	0.06	1.96	Needed
31	Employment of more women educators in TVET.	2.60	0.47	1.96	Needed

The data in table 2 above reveal that the respondents acceptable all the 11 items in research question two as the measures for enhancing women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. In the table all the items had a mean in the range of 2.53-3.76. This means that each of the mean is above the cut of point of 2.50 and the Standard Deviation was below the table value of 1.96 and because of that they were all accepted.

Research Question 3

What are the hindrances limiting women's participation in conflict resolution and Technical and Vocational Education and Training?

The data for answering research question three is presented in table 3

Table 3: mean and standard Deviation ratings of respondents on the hindrances limiting women's participation in conflict resolution and Technical and Vocational Education and Training. N= 475

SN	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Table Value	Remarks
32	Illiteracy	2.60	0.47	1.96	Needed
33	Insufficient link between TVET institution and industries.	2.90	0.006	1.96	Needed
34	Teaching and learning with imported technology/skills	3.40	0.07	1.96	Needed
35	Exclusion of self skills in the curriculum.	3.60	0.42	1.96	Needed
36	Limited training opportunities	2.50	0.32	1.96	Needed
37	Inadequate capacity building	3.00	0.62	1.96	Needed
38	Poverty	3.00	0.76	1.96	Needed
39	Excess work load during training in higher institutions	3.10	0.42	1.96	Needed
40	Misconceptions of the roles of women	2.50	0.45	1.96	Needed
41	Cultural barriers	3.00	0.62	1.96	Needed
42	Gender bias in favour of male children	2.60	0.40	1.96	Needed
43	Corruption	3.00	1.10	1.96	Needed
44	Child bearing and raising responsibilities	2.70	0.01	1.96	Needed
45	Absence of women in major decision making processes.	3.50	0.20	1.96	Needed
46	Prevalence of rape and sexual assault	3.60	0.06	1.96	Needed
47	Excess workload in the family	2.80	1.10	1.96	Needed

The data in table 3 above reveals that the respondents acceptable all the 17 items in research question three as the measures limiting women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. In the table all the items had a mean in the range of 2.50-4.00. This means that each of the mean is above the cutoff point of 2.50 and the Standard Deviation was below the table value of 1.96 and because of that they were all accepted.

Hypothesis I

There is no significant difference in the mean response of members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the strategies for enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolutions.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	T
Woman layers	175	1.31	36	
WICE members	300	1.30	35	1.82

Significant at 05 level: df = 473 N = 475. Critical table 1.96

The table presents the calculated t-value as 1.82. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t- value of 1.96 at .05 alpha levels with 473 degree of freedom. The obtained t-value (1.82) was less than the critical t- value (1.96). Hence the null hypothesis was retained. The result indicates no significant difference in the mean response of members of Federated Association of Women's Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the strategies for enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolutions.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference in mean response of members of Federated Association of women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the measures for enhancing the participations of women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	T
Woman layers	175	1.89	.35	
WICE members	300	1.88	.34	1.98

Significant at .05 level, df = 473, N = 475, Critical table 1.96

The table presents the calculated t- value as 1.98. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t- value (1.96) at 0.05 alpha levels with 473 degree of freedom. The obtained t-value (1.98) was more than the critical t-value (1.96). Hence, the null hypothesis was not accepted. The result indicates significant difference in the mean responses of members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the

measures for enhancing the participation of women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Discuss of Findings

The data in Hypothesis one indicated no significant difference in the mean responses of member of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the strategies for enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolutions. The findings is in agreement with Daramola and Daramola (2011) when they suggested that conflicts should be resolved through seminars, conferences and synposiums for women on their expected roles in the schools.

In testing hypothesis two, no significant difference was observed in the mean response of members of Federated Association of Women Lawyers and members of Women in Colleges of Education on the measures for enhancing the participation of women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The best way to enhance women's participation in conflict resolution is through education, capacity building and workshops. The findings of the researchers above helped to justify the findings of the study.

Conclusion

Conflict is a disagreement between individuals or groups. The results of conflicts are usually disastrous to individual, societies and the world at large. In South-East Nigeria, conflicts of interest and many other things occurs resulting to mistrust among people. Some of these conflicts are caused by dispute over land resources and improved welfare. The men folk are mostly used in conflict resolutions but the irony is that most of these conflicts are usually not easily resolved because, the men who claim to be resolving it are those who caused and will continue to cause them for selfish interest. Because of this, there is need to use alternative measures and the best reliable option is the use of the women.

Women if used in conflict resolutions could lead to quicker and better results because they play a mediatory role between the society, men and children. For them to effectively do this, they need to acquire the competencies of Technical and Vocational Education and Training which will make them to be employable thus increasing their finances. This will enhance their contribution in conflict resolutions. The findings from research questions and hypotheses suggest that members of the Federated Association of Women Lawyers and Women in Colleges of Education accepted the points as the ways of enhancing the role of Women in conflict resolution through Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study the researcher recommends the following:

1. Scholarship should be provided for women in Technical and Vocational Education and Training
2. More admission chances should be reserved for women in Technical and vocational Education and Training
3. Workshops, conferences and seminars should be organized for women to enhance their roles in conflict resolutions.
4. Stakeholders should address the hindrances affecting women's participation in conflict resolutions.
5. Federated Association of Women Lawyers should be empowered financially to train other women in conflict resolutions.
6. A section of Women in Colleges of Education (WICE) that specialized in Vocational and Technical Education should be empowered to train others to acquire relevant competencies that will make them employable in life.

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