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Article

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CULTURAL INHIBITIONS IN THE FACE OF CONTEMPORARY GENDER ISSUES IN IKOT ABASI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract

This study examines the persistence of cultural norms that inhibit gender equality in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. Cultural inhibition remains a significant barrier to addressing contemporary gender issues in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. Deep-rooted traditional norms and patriarchal values often restrict gender equality, limiting women's participation in socio-economic and political spheres. The study adopted a historical and survey research methods, while data were collected from primary and secondary sources, interviews and focus group discussion were also used. The study revealed that religious and community institutions often uphold doctrines that promote male dominance over women. The social problem which is endemic in nature calls for a critical approach to socio-religious background empowered by holistic education. It is observed that the women have great potentials that will impact positively on the society when it is properly harnessed in relation to that of the men. It is therefore submitted that when an equal opportunity is created for both male and female, the society will benefit as well as develop because every segment will be contributing to its welfare. The study concluded that all forms of inhuman cultural practices, discrimination and gender issues perpetuated must be challenged if the society must protect the status of women for their contribution to the development of Ikot Abasi LGA.

Keywords: Cultural Inhibition, Contemporary Gender Issues, Ikot Abasi Local Government Area, Gender Equality.

Introduction

Ikot Abasi is a patriarchal society. That is, males hold primary power; and dominate in roles of political leadership, primary authority and control of property. Even in many families, males hold authority over the females. In fact, Ikot Abasi society happens to be a place where most decisions are made by the males. Women's actions and inactions are constantly under scrutiny

by people especially her male counterparts. The present researcher, as a minister of the gospel who has served for many years in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area and other areas became interested in the topic after critical observation of how the status and privileges of women were undermined, how she was subjugated, denied the rights to inheritance, and property acquisition. Esen (1982) rightly confirmed this in the assertion that: Ikot Abasi society is a male society, created by man for the men, and dominated almost entirely by male interests. Women are seen mostly as appendages with clearly circumscribed roles, which are merely calculated to advance the pervasive interests of the males. More often than not culture is usually the justification wielded for the denial of women's right and the perpetuation of gender inequality in Ikot Abasi. Some of these harmful cultural practices pervasively promote the crimes against the women which includes: female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic violence, child brides or early marriages, rape, denial of inheritance, domestic violence against women, discriminatory Laws against women, legislative intervention, violent against person, gender inequality, (Mukumu, 2015).

In today's society like Ikot Abasi Local Government Area, the power relations between men and women still undermines women's role in politics, their socio-economic and diplomatic values due to the cultural consideration of women as only relevant to the social side of life, and the cultural composition of the society that perpetuates these gender roles. Notwithstanding, the role of women in the Ikot Abasi Local Government Area has continued to attract the international feminist audience and has been at the centre of discourse for decades. This has been heralded by increased international awareness and legislation on women's right and working modules and resolutions in some places issued by the UN and other international multi-lateral organisations, which Nigeria is a member and has officially adopted. Culture is supposed to be an accepted way of life by a group of people living within the same geographical area. However, this has ironically been used as an instrument of inhibition and oppression against the female gender. Moreover, it is observed that culture ought to be dynamic based on the realities of events occurring in human society but is most of the time arbitrarily applied in its rawness without consideration to the feelings of some members and changes or development taking place globally. Realistically, one expects that culture should be flexible as well as adaptable to the aspirations of its adherents to instill in them a sense of freedom and cohesion which will galvanize them into positive action for the benefit of their society. So, culture should basically serve as a point of solidarity to bring men and women of goodwill together but it is unfortunately misapplied by some people as a weapon to cause division among members of the same family, village, town, and country which eventually breeds hate. In all the situations where culture has been misapplied or abused, the women are usually the victims which place limitations on them. It is based on the above cultural practices which are known to have been used to inhibit the advancement of women generally that prompted this writing. The hope is that, a suitable dynamic cultural setting operational on equitable basis should be created for both genders, to enable them advance and realize their aspirations within the society

Statement of the Research Problem

In all societies there are existing traditional practices and cultures. In terms of birth and lineage, there exist matriarchal and patriarchal cultures. The patriarchal world view is a belief that women are subordinate to men in the workplaces and in the society at large. On the contrary the Matriarchal system is a form of social organization in which the family is

headed by a woman. The patriarchal system is one that encloses all right and duties in the agnatic line, men and male, children have control in the lineage. In some countries with matrilineal ideology, for instance, the Nuer and Bantu people in central Africa, descent is traced through the female line but the authority is vested on the men because of patriarchal system postulated by culture, women are seen to be priced for and are subjected to marriage and widow inheritance. In Ikot Abasi for instance, the belief and traditional practices and norms of subjecting and seeing them as a mere decoration have been challenged as evidenced in the elevation of the status of women and involvement through education, favorable government policies for the women, entry of women into politics and through the activities of women advocacy groups. But, in spite of the advocacy, not much change has been witnessed in the attitude of the people towards women. This is based on the people's belief that women are subordinate to men in the society. The cultural bias in favour of men in Ikot Abasi robs the women of confidence in their own abilities and limits their accomplishments despite the great works and contributions of great women in the study area. However, some women have achieved comparatively high statuses to their male counterparts from the family setting to government positions. Despite these, it has been observed that a majority of women in Ikot Abasi are still suffering under patriarchal structure and harmful cultural practice in this contemporary time. The male child is preferred, celebrated and nurtured as the custodian of the family lineage, while women are valued as disposable property that would only contribute to family through her spouse. Women because of gender issues posed by this culture are denied the right to family property but are compelled to perform all rites as freeborn. Some people consider having a female child as having none, because she will eventually marry out. Widows are required to live a secluded life but widowers can remarry without hitch. It is this gap created through cultural inhibitions that this paper seeks to address.

Objectives of the Study

Cultural inhibitions has generated gender issues in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area and in view of these anomalies, the objectives of this study are to:

- i. critically analyze the Cultural Inhibitions in the face of Contemporary Gender Issues in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area?
- ii. identify factors Inhibiting Gender Issues (Gender inequality) in the Ikot Abasi Local Government Area?
- iii. examine the effects of Cultural beliefs and practices in the face of Contemporary Gender Issues in Ikot Abasi LGA?
- iv. evaluate those Cultural practices or belief that promotes Gender issues in Ikot Abasi LGA?
- v. Determine what are possible solutions to this Cultural Inhibitions in the face of Contemporary Issues in Ikot Abasi LGA; and
- vi. make recommendations for better understanding of Cultural Inhibitions in the face contemporary Gender Issues Ikot Abasi LGA.

Clarification of Terms

Meaning of Culture: "The totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours", Linton (1945). From the above, it is seen that

culture is meant to bring order and meaning to the people living within a particular area. It is clear that culture is designed to assist those living in a society to realize their collective aspirations as well as potentials for the benefit of every member. In a functional society which has regard for its culture every member contributes to its welfare and development as no section is marginalized or looked down on as the inferior that should not be given the chance to express opinion on matters affecting their lives. Another aspect of culture is explored by Meads (1982) who observes that "Culture is an abstraction from the body of learned behavior which a group of people who share the same tradition transmits to their children and in part to adult immigrants who become members of the society. It covers not only the art and sciences, religious and philosophies... but also the system of technology, the political practices, the small intimate habits of daily life cited in Agunloye (2003). The above further buttresses the fact that culture is not static or rubber stamped by the ancestors but an experience that is learned and shared by a group of people who live together. It could be changed or influenced by the events which take place in neighboring communities or by immigrants. The fundamental aspect of culture is its formulation and acceptance by the people through constant practice. It is not meant to be foisted or imposed on the people but emanates through gradual process before being taken as a way of life. Culture is designed to benefit the society and as such should not be used as instrument of intimidation or subjugation or even humiliation as it is being practiced today in some parts of the world where women are oppressed.

Gender: The World Women Development (2012) defines gender as socially and culturally constructed norms and ideologies which determine the behaviour, actions of men and women. For instance, gender roles of men as owners of property, decision makers and heads of household are socially, historically and culturally constructed and have nothing to do with biological differences. "It is important to note the difference between sex and gender. Sex refers to the biological differences between male and female while gender refers to social identity and roles. Understanding gender relation and the power dynamics behind them is a prerequisite for understanding individuals asset to and distribution of resources, the ability to make decision and the ways in which women and men, boys and girls are affected by political process and development.

Inhibitions: According Merriam Webster dictionary Inhibition is defined as inner impediment to free activity, expressions, or functioning, something that forbids, restricts.

Research Method

This study adopted both historical and descriptive methods to examine the cultural Inhibitions in the face of contemporary gender issues. This method is fundamental because of its inherent ability to determine the interrelatedness between variables. Conscious of the fact that some values cannot all be tested by the research instrument of social sciences, oral interview, and focus group discussion was also conducted.

Brief Background Information on Ikot Abasi Local Government Area

Ikot Abasi is located in the south west corner of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It is bounded by Oruk Anam Local Government Area in the north, Mkpato Enin and Eastern Obolo Local Government Areas in the east and the Atlantic Ocean in the southern border separating it from Rivers State on the Ikot Abasi River. The Imo River forms the natural boundary in the

west separating it from Rivers State. It has present population of 167,966 and occupies a land mass of 334,719km. Ikot Abasi people are part of the Ibibio tribe living in and controlling the southern areas of Akwa Ibom State ,Nigeria. It is a trading centre for the yam tubers, cassava, fish, palm produce and maize .Ikot Abasi is also called Opobo, formerly known as Egwanga or port town in Akwa Ibom State lies near the mouth of the Imo (Opobo) River and is situated at a creek in the mangrove swamps and rain forest of the eastern Niger River.

Theoretical Framework

Social Theories of Gender Relations:

- i. **The Structural-Functional Theory:** It sees role of women in the family as expressive-providing warmth, security, emotional support and stabilization of male adult personalities. They need to take care of children and generally care for the members of the family. To Partson (1955), gender differences help to integrate the society. This is accomplished through the complementarity of roles in family units. Distinctive socialization is therefore required for the two sexes to stamp appropriate gender identity and impart skills needed for adult life. These differences are polar opposite adjectives. They consider male as heirs of the family and female as appendages to be married out. Freud (1973) for instance, saw women as men without pennies who envied men for possessing one. Cixous (1981) has described this as phallogocentric or male-dominated language. She maintains that women must rise up to assert themselves in learning and discoveries so as to unblock in society a sexuality that is just as much feminine as masculine. Oakley (1972) berates Talcott notion of the “expression role of women” as an example of intrusion of western male-dominance ideology into scientific analysis.
- ii. **The Conflict Theory:** It holds that gender implies not only how people think and act, but also inequalities in the distribution of wealth, power and privilege between the two sexes. Engels (1972) in his *Origin of the Family* traced the origin of sexual partners, establishment of monogamous marriage and the institutionalization of patriarchal family.
- iii. **The Postmodernists:** This theory contends that women subordination results from the cultural construction of who a man or woman is. They argue that the use of word and language affect our psyche on the definition of men and women. They point to the effectiveness of the capacity of language to shape our thoughts and desires. Postmodernist conceptions of why women are oppressed has been criticized for neglecting the social context of power relations and failing to recognize the systematic oppressions of gender, class and race (Walby,1992). All these theories point to the fact gender roles are specified by culture despite some infiltration from the western education or modernization. These Inhibitions created are still potent in the face of contemporary gender issues. In addition, Meads (1982) who carried out a breaking research on gender. Travelling west to the Tchambuli discovered a culture that, like our own, defined females and males differently.that gender rests on culture”.

Some Cultural Inhibitions in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area

Some societies in Ikot Abasi still uphold harmful traditional practices and norms, which portray women as a weaker group and relegate them to inferior positions, without regards to their mental capacity and educational competencies. Evidently, Ikot Abasi women are not

only increasingly being marginalised from advancing in their career life but recent studies have shown that they are excluded from having a political career and inheritance rights, which has a significant importance to their economic advancement and sustainability. Although there is no constitutional barrier to the increased participation of women, however, there exist societal and cultural barriers that frustrate participation of women. Etuk (2002) affirms that since we are in a patriarchal society there are cultural Inhibitions that caused gender issues for instance in terms of roles both in the family, Church, society thereby limiting them on what to do. More so, in line with the basic principles of humanity, the rights of women have remained largely a textual postulation in legal documents, with no direct positive impact on the living conditions of the average Nigerian woman.

Going forward in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area gender role is the cultural stereotype of what is masculine and feminine. Their roles vary greatly in different societies, cultures and historical periods, and they depend also on socio-economic factors, age, education, ethnicity and religion. Although deeply rooted in cultural norms, gender roles can be changed over time, since social values and norms are not static. Example of sex roles is that only women can give birth and breastfeed. Examples of gender roles are the expectation of men to be economic providers of the family, and for women to be caregivers in many cultural contexts. However, women prove able to do traditional male jobs as well as men (for example men and women can do housework; men and women can be leaders and managers). Gender role is often abbreviated to gender in literature, without leading to any ambiguity in that context. Most societies have only two distinct gender roles -male and female -and these correspond with biological sexes. Contemporary sociological reference to male and female gender roles typically uses masculinities and femininities in the plural rather than singular, suggesting diversity both within cultures as well as across them. In a personal interview (April, 2024) gave affirmation on the essential point on the issue of birth, the difference between boys and girls is their sex; as they grow up, society gives them different roles, attributes, opportunities, privileges and rights that in the end create the social differences between men and women. Common gender stereotypes and norms include the following examples:

- i. A man is socially superior to the woman.
- ii. A man has the right to assert power over a woman, A man has the right to correct or discipline female behaviour. A woman's freedom should be restricted.
- iii. Physical violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts within an inter-gender relationship. A woman is responsible for making a marriage work. Intimate partner violence is a taboo subject and reporting abuse is forbidden.

It is noteworthy that women who do not conform to gender roles are often considered harsh, controlling or manly even in the place of work. Men also have strict gender stereotypes that typically enforce the idea that men do not have any feminine qualities. Essentially, this means that it is culturally unacceptable for men to display qualities of being emotional, weak, caring or nurturing. This leaves the male stereotypical qualities of athleticism, loudness, strength, dominance and being in complete control of emotions. While this can negatively affect men's mental and emotional growth, it also encourages men to excel in active sports and in the place of work for fear of being considered feminine or weak. Financially, gender stereotyping seems to affect men positively, but tends to restrict men's creativity and emotional growth.

Male stereotyping promotes masculine norms and principles. These include statements such as: Take it like a man. Be a man about it. These imply “do not display emotions, Be strong willed. In other words, men should be tough in both body and spirit. Physical toughness means never shirking from the threat of physical harm; while displaying emotional toughness requires that men conceal such emotions as fear, sadness, nervousness, and uncertainty. Outward displays of anger, confidence, or stoicism are considered to be far more socially acceptable for men. Men gain the approval of others when they make their careers a priority and pursue occupational fields such as corporate management and politics, which offer opportunities to increase their social and economic status. Finally, Be a man, which is also implies being one of the boys, as a rule of masculinity calls on men to win the respect and admiration of other men and to appear to enjoy a special sense of camaraderie with male peers. Being a man means visibly complying with all masculine norms. Men who are creative and emotional, who don't meet the stereotype, tend to be seen in a negative light. Male gender stereotype results in dilemma and crises for the male.

Factors Inhibiting Gender Issues (Gender Inequality) in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area (LGA)

Discriminatory Culture and Norms: Agbalajobi (2010), postulates that the cultures of many societies are based of subjugating women to men, and undermining their self-esteem. Women are typically associated with domesticity according to Abiola in Lanre (2003), Gender inequality remains pervasive in many dimensions of life, the nature and extent of the discrimination very considerably in Ikot Abasi. Females are discriminated against, even in their own families. Most men are trained not to partake in most domestic chores such as cooking, sweeping, fetching water and firewood; these chores are exclusively left for women. In favor of this, Ihimodu (1995) agrees that women were relegated to the domestic sphere.

- i. **Educational Factors:** Another constraint that hampers women from equal access and counters their quest to participate actively in the society is education. Afolabi (2003) specifiable sates that most women in Nigeria are illiterate, despite the facts that they constitute half of the countrys population. Regardless, of the vital roles they perform in the society; mother, producer, home manager, community organizer, social-cultural and political activities. Anifowose (2004) postulates that most families prefer to send their male child to school, irrespective of the fact that female children also need education.
- ii. **Economic Factors:** Lack of economic incentives is one of the factors preventing women from participating to active politics in Nigeria. Historically, women experience discrimination that put them at a disadvantage economically. Agbalajobi (2009) emphasis that lack of finance brings hindrance to effective female participation in Nigerian Politics. Similarly, a large portion of the Nigerian female population is not as financially strong as their male counterpart. Political campaigns are expensive and require solid financial backing for success. Only a few affluent women have the financial economic power to enroll in political campaigns. Discrimination plays out in the preferential treatment within the job economy.
- iii. **Political Factors and Rule of Law:** According to Anifowose (2004), the perception that democracy would automatically boast gender equality in political participation has not been vindicated after years of return to civilian rule in Nigeria. Specifically Kira (2003) infers that women are unjustifiably discriminated against irrespective of the fact that in the world over today; democracy has become a vital tool for attaining sustainable

development. The constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria states that human beings are equal and women possess the same rights as men to participate in governance and public life. In Ikot Abasi, women are supposed to inherit their late husbands property. Often, these rights are being violated due to one reason or the other. In the same bid, Ogwu (1996) states that statutory and Islamic law provides for womens capacity to inherit assets following the husbands death.

Above all, the patriarchal society sets restrictive parameters on the women's activities, creating a social structure that promotes and condones domestic and sexual violence on women. Radical feminists support this argument and the abolishment of patriarchy Firestone (2003). "Firestone stated that the aim of the radical feminists is to overthrow the ancient and most rigid caste and class system (2003). A system, she argued, is based on gender and has been sustained for thousands of years by relegating the female societal roles through an unwarranted legitimacy and superficial permanence (2003). Broadly, most feminists consider patriarchy as an oppressive social construct that has over the decades justified the marginalisation of women in the political, education, professional, inheritance and family spheres of life Salaam (2003).

Effects of Cultural Inhibitions in the Face of Contemporary Gender Issues in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area (LGA)?

Ikot Abasi, traditionally assigns distinct roles to men and women, with men as breadwinners and decision-makers while women are primarily caregivers and house makers. These roles deeply embedded in cultural practices and inhibit gender equality by limiting womens education and equal opportunities. Some families prioritise male education over female believing that a womans ultimate role is marriage and child-rearing. Also in a typical traditional religious setting, women are not allowed to inherit houses, and lands, as it is seen as the exclusive right of the men to own land properties and houses in the Ikot Abasi LGA. Although, largely a patriarchy society, women are allowed access to communal farm lands to plant, but ownership of properties remains the exclusive right of men. Some states in the north-eastern Nigeria are kicking back against this cultural norm, however, only a scarce percent of women own lands or homes. This gender imbalance between men and women, the child-bride marriages, and the religious dogmas, has created a seemingly lower socio-economic status for women and girls, stigma that has been domesticated. More so, some researchers have outlined the child marriage as the stimulant for the lowest education level in the North as well as Ikot Abasi, adversely impacting on the literacy level of the girl child in Nigeria.

Cultural Beliefs that Promote Gender Issues in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area

At this juncture, it is important to highlight the various aspects of culture which have continued to support the subjugation of women. These include religious, economic and social observances. The understanding will enable us appreciate the seriousness of the issues at stake. Examples are taken from Africa and are applicable to Ikot Abasi Local Government Area which is used as a case study of this presentation. In a study on Women as Sex Symbols in Nigerian Home Videos Inim (2008) aptly captures this uncomfortable life style that many women are subjected to live when she observes that: The patriarchal image of the woman transcends the cultural and even affects the religions believes of the people... As a result, the woman must live all her life in subjection to mans will". Always neither seen nor

heard. To emphasize this, in Saudi Arabia, for instance, a woman is not supposed to walk the streets unaccompanied by a young male. This is supposed to show that she is responsible. The situation is so tense that the women are expected to be always conscious of their movement, dressing and the way they talk or laugh. To say the obvious, their public lives are controlled and monitored by men who are always eager to accuse them of wrong doing. Her mode of dressing which involves her covering all parts of her body serves as a means of protection for the man. It is believed that all of a woman's body is specially created to lure men. Therefore, to protect him from sinning the source of temptation has to be covered, irrespective of her feeling about it. This mode of dressing is also meant to testify to her delicate, subdued and submissive nature.

From the above, one can see the difficult life style that many women are forced to live in order to be allowed to exist in their society. They move about as mere beings that have no right to express themselves in their religious and social spheres. They live to satisfy the demands placed on them by religion in order to not get into trouble with the men who determine their fate. Again, many women are used as mere objects to be discarded at any time without honours and consideration. This situation is exacerbated if/when their husband dies and they become widows. For example, the widow is required to shave her hair as a mark or sign to prove that she is mourning her dead husband. However, interviewed (April, 2024) conducted revealed that humiliation and controversies which accompany this shaving rite is better imagined than witnessed. The focus group discussion lends credence to the above fact that: This is the moment dreaded by every Ikot Abasi woman, the moment when she sacrifices her possessions (as gifts to her in-laws), her personality, her dignity. If she expresses any uneasiness she is labeled a witch and may even be accused of being responsible for the death of the husband. This will in turn prompt yet another purification rite to prove her innocence. Again, Etuk (2002) reiterated a similar event that took place in one of the clans in Ikot Abasi, about two widows, Agnes and Beatrice who were isolated in a tent to discourage them from direct link or interaction with their sympathizers. Beatrice describes their ordeal and the humiliation they were subjected to when their husbands died, Our sisters-in-laws undo our hair.

Possible Solutions to these Cultural Inhibitions in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area

Women should no longer be decorative accessories, objects to be moved about, companions to be flattered or calmed with promises. Women are the nation's primary, fundamental root from which all else grows and blossoms. Women must be encouraged to take a keener interest in the destiny of the country. From the above experience, many have come to the realization that the contributions of the women to the development of the family and nation can no longer be ignored but should be recognized and celebrated. Democracy anywhere in the world is the prerogative of the people. This is because sovereignty they said belongs to the people (women inclusive). It is therefore important that the act of Governance should be diversified to capture the interest of women through adequate representation. First of all, the United Nations General Assembly should reaffirm its convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW) thereby making it compulsory for all nations of the world to adopt as cardinal objectives of its constitutions. Violation of this convention in any form should be meted with strident sanctions. Again, relevant clauses of the Beijing Conference should be reactivated giving specific rights to women. This way, the personality and character of women will be respected. Second, Societal obstacles of religion,

tradition and other obnoxious beliefs must be broken, women should not be domesticated, they have to enjoy right to work and associated benefits as men. They along with men have to have access to free and functional education and health care, electoral process and contest must not be a preserve of the rich. All these are parts of what can create level playing ground for both men and women. However, the reality is that those stated preconditions could only ultimately be secured when patriarchy is challenged.

Conclusion

This paper mainly points out some of the cultural practices which inhibit the advancement of most women in their struggles and sufferings to live a better life. It is also based on the imbalance found in the relationships between men and women which usually results in the domination of the female gender through cultural practices initiated by men and imposed on the women as a means of subjugating them. It is observed that culture which ought to be used for social harmony is twisted in favour of the men at the detriment of the women and this brings about ill feelings and misunderstanding in the society. It is clear that men have continued to feel that it is their birthright to rule and dominate the women in every sphere of human endeavours. In many parts of the world especially Nigeria, women are subjugated as well as manipulated in the guise of cultural observances which usually discomfort them. They are relegated to the background without being given the opportunity to express opinion in matters concerning them. Our cultural paradigm seems to place limit on the female gender and suggests that no matter how a woman is highly favored she cannot aspire to be a King, Emir, Oba, Imam or even a Priest because culture forbids her from making such an attempt without consideration to her feelings.

Recommendations

- i. There should be serious efforts for women advocacy in Government through policy and education on combating Cultural practices, that oppresses and Inhibit women, and such cultural taboos should be challenged and discouraged.
- ii. Parents must let the girl-child understand the importance of education.
- iii. Traditional Rulers/Leaders should carry out more teachings and campaigns against obnoxious cultural practices that discriminates women in the society and also from inheriting properties of their deceased husbands.
- iv. Religious Institutions should educate the society the implications of the harmful cultural practices on gender issues.
- v. Women should be encouraged to join cooperative societies that provide financial aid to small business women. Education of girl child should be promoted.
- vi. Government/Pressure groups/Media should intensify their efforts to reduce patriarchal tendencies on women by implementing in all honesty the 35% affirmative order of women's inclusion in the affairs of government.

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