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pie.v41i4.7040](https://doi.org/10.38140/pie.v41i4.7040)

e-ISSN 2519-593X

Perspectives in Education

2023 41(4): 401-420

PUBLISHED:

13 December 2023

RECEIVED:

2 February 2023

ACCEPTED:

29 August 2023

Bridging gender disparities in the teaching profession in tertiary institutions for globalisation

Abstract

Globally, female teachers have established careers in teaching. In Nigeria, there are more females in the teaching profession at lower levels of education than at tertiary institutions. This study examined the gender distribution rate of teachers in secondary and tertiary institutions and the factors that caused differences in gender balance at tertiary institutions using mixed method research. A proforma form was used to collect quantitative secondary data, while the interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage were used to analyse the quantitative data collected to establish the rate of male and female teachers. The qualitative data were analysed thematically with the aid of Atlas ti. The results showed that the rate of female teachers outweighed their male counterparts by 4.35% at secondary schools, while male lecturers outnumbered female lecturers by 54.67% at the tertiary level. Lack of ambition to aspire higher, as well as societal perspective and marriage, among others, were factors responsible for the low rate of female lecturers in tertiary institutions. In order to address the gender gap identified at tertiary institutions for globalisation, educational policy makers were advised to ensure that tertiary institutions increase the percentage of women in their academic recruitment.

Keywords: *gender, teaching profession, tertiary institutions*

1. Introduction

As technology advances, people's learning, working, and communicating methods are rapidly changing. Business organisations, schools, and informal institutions have all been impacted by globalisation, understood as the combination of economic integration, technological diffusion, and easier access to information (World Development, 2012). The role of education in globalisation must be considered. Education is agreed globally as the instrument for national development and globalisation. Teachers who transmit knowledge to students are the leading players in the education system.

Education has proven to be the primary means of individual growth and national transformation of a nation. It is also believed that education is to nation-building as blood



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is to human life (Awodiji, 2018). Teachers can build nations and even the world. Attempting to achieve more equality in attainment and responsibilities for teachers has been as challenging as it is for other professions. It is a profession through which the desired and applied knowledge is imparted to enable an individual to be responsible to himself and society. Even though girls and women were denied access to education in the past for various reasons, today, both men and women in Nigeria enjoy equal access to education – as long as obstacles, problems and peculiar difficulties do not arise on the way (Etejere, 2008). Obiageli et al. (2022) found that women with secondary and tertiary education are more likely to contribute to Nigeria's economic growth and child welfare. Therefore, it was recommended that the government implement appropriate policies to increase women's education.

Globally, gender disparities are manifested in many aspects of education, including access, retention, success, career choices and opportunities (UNESCO, 2015). Gender equity in education is a priority to promote the right to education worldwide for all (Limaj and Strori, 2022). It has been shown that in many African countries, including Nigeria, there are relatively few female teachers in tertiary institutions compared to primary and secondary schools (Mama, 2003; Moja, 2000; Mulugeta, 2012; Okolie, 2020; Shabaya and Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). Gender imbalances characterise African educational institutions (Teferra and Altbachl, 2004). Researchers have advocated for global systemic changes in higher education to provide women with more equitable career, leadership, and employment opportunities (Allen et al., 2021). Policy makers should ensure that teacher development policies are gender-sensitive and address the gender issues that hinder women from getting trained as teachers and progressing in their careers to higher institutions like their male counterparts.

Several factors have been identified for the gender gap in the educational system. As well as society-specific factors, cultural norms contribute to the educational agenda gap by fostering favouritism toward males (Jayachandran, 2015.; Rieckmann, 2017). It is prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa, where a few females are found at tertiary levels (Mulugeta, 2012). Therefore, gender disparity in the teaching profession is not limited to African countries, as reports have shown that in developed nations, females dominate the teaching profession in primary and secondary schools. International data for European Union (EU) countries show that in most European countries, females continue to dominate primary and secondary education in the EU, with less than one-third being males (Heijstra et al., 2017; Tašner et al., 2017). In Slovenia, it was reported that the highest proportional gender imbalance was generally in primary schools (Lassibille and Navarro Gómez, 2020). At the end of Slovenia's 2014/15 school year, 88% of primary school teachers were females (Lassibille and Navarro Gómez, 2020). Males prevail among tertiary institution teachers; the percentage of males (59.7%) among higher education teachers in Slovenia was higher than women (40.3%) (Tašner, Mihelič and Čeplak, 2017).

In Nigeria, despite the report on the high number of females in the teaching profession, the case is the reverse in higher institutions of learning compared with primary and secondary school levels of education. As it has been reported, females have a higher increase in population in the teaching job than their male counterparts (Moja, 2000; Mulugeta, 2012; Okolie, 2020). Statistics have revealed that of the 5,040 teachers in the Owerri zone secondary school system, females are about 60% (Okoroji and Anyanwu, 2013). The world population margin of females over males manifests itself in most world affairs where both genders have equal chances of competition. As part of their research, Aderemi et al. (2013) examined the staffing patterns of males and females in science and technology fields at tertiary institutions from

1997 to 2006, as well as the factors that motivate women to pursue science and technology education. The study found that attitudes towards gender roles enhance women's acceptance into male-dominated fields. These, among others, propelled the researchers to embark on this paper in search of the causes of the disparity in the unequal gender distribution of lecturers at tertiary institutions. Thus, the study advocates for women's increase in teaching positions at tertiary institutions.

2. Gender, teaching profession, and globalisation in tertiary institutions

According to Lindqvist *et al.* (2020), defining gender follows culture and historical specificity, assigning socially defined roles to the genders. Gender is categorised into four aspects: sex, which stands for physiological or bodily aspects; self-defined gender; social gender regarding gender expressions; and legal gender. However, this study will focus on the physiological or bodily definition of gender. Gender, defined by physiological characteristics, consists of males and females. Wombo and Azuaga (2021: p 2) defined gender as "a social construct that deals with the roles exercised by both males and females". Though physiological differences seem to be the only disparity between the male and female genders, several issues surrounding the perception and expressions of the two sexes are still being tackled by several legislations and propositions, including Sustainable Development Goal 5, which advocates gender equality. Some issues include gender discrimination, gender inequality and gender disparities or gaps in several fields of human endeavours. The goals of the SDGs towards reducing gender disparity are to ensure more legislation in workplaces towards equal representation of women, more civil society groups canvassing for inclusiveness and a rise in women's representation in leadership spheres.

Education has witnessed several gender issues ranging from disparity and unequal representation of women to gender discrimination and sexual stereotyping. Hayward and Karim (2019) stated that gender discrimination is one of the issues women face in different parts of the world, such as India, some parts of Africa, and South Asia. Their study further revealed that the war against gender inequity in tertiary education is being won in Afghanistan. However, while this may sound commendable, gender inequality that hitherto disfavoured females in Afghanistan, according to Hayward and Karim (2019) now disfavours males in tertiary institutions in the United States and other Western nations (Stoet and Geary, 2020). Women's empowerment in the teaching profession and other fields in society has been at the forefront of gender equality campaigns, which prompted the UN Convention on Women in 1979, 1995, and 1997 to focus on ensuring that women are not left behind in attaining equality with men in education (Onyido, 2013). With more representation in all levels of learning, especially at the tertiary level, comes more representation of women teaching in tertiary institutions.

Conversely, factors like globalisation have influenced gender issues in tertiary education and every other aspect of society. Kaur (2018: p41) defines globalisation as "a complex, economic, political, cultural and geographical process in which the mobility of capital, organisations, ideas, discourses and people have taken a global transactional form." Another way to view globalisation would be to describe it as the inter-mingling of culture, ideas, ideology, education, inventions, innovation, and economic activities at an intercontinental level, made possible by such modern technology as aeroplanes, the internet, and mobile telecommunication gadgets. Sader *et al.* (2005) define globalisation as the "emergence of supranational institutions as well as the impact of global economic processes" involving

“production, consumption, trade, capital flow, and monetary interdependence”. The World Bank (2011) reports that globalisation has permeated the modern world. It is already shifting gender norms by providing more economic empowerment for women and creating better access to information through modern communication technology (Al-Bakr et al., 2017; Benería et al., 2015; Bello-Bravo et al., 2015). It was concluded that with globalisation comes more opportunities to achieve gender equality, especially in fields and disciplines hitherto riddled with gender inequality.

Backing up the World Bank (2011) report on the positive influences of globalisation on women’s empowerment, Kaur (2018) also agreed that globalisation is turning the narrative of widespread gender inequality, especially for women in developing countries. In contrast, Kaur (2013) emphasises the negative gender implications of globalisation, including barriers for married women with children. Sader *et al.* (2005) report that while student enrolment is 53% more females than their male counterparts, women only comprised 37% of all academics in South Africa. According to the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC, 2021), 53% of university graduates and master’s degree holders are women. The figure, however, dropped to 44% at the doctoral level. The report presents a more startling picture: Of all university researchers worldwide, only 30% are women, while women also make up 43% of teachers in tertiary institutions worldwide. The argument scholars have been baffled with is why fewer women are in higher institutions than in primary and secondary institutions (Adusah-Karikari, 2008).

Generally, female education was one of the areas of gender equality that attracted the earliest attention. The insights from the lack of equality, which has made the girl-child to be at a subpar level compared to the male child, inform the existence of the trend in academia. Usoh et al. (2013) discuss the role of NGOs and the government in supporting women in education. Decrying the fate of women’s status in higher education, Usoh et al. (2018), whose study focused on Indonesia, explained that traditional gender roles have been at the forefront of reducing women’s educational opportunities. The argument by Usoh et al. (2018) counter-balances their earlier assertion that globalisation was a culprit in gender inequality in schools. However, David (2015: 20) argues that “gender equality is a generally contested and politicised issue in higher education today despite the impacts globalisation has had on women’s education and participation in the global market.” Also, Muftahu’s (2020) study revealed that in Nigeria, many factors are associated with this phenomenon, including social upbringing, cultural orientation and socioeconomic status. It is believed that women should stay at home or do less demanding work to spend time with their families. With this mindset, people see the lower-level teaching profession as a career where women can assume such roles (Gorard and Smith, 2004; Rwafa, 2016). Due to the academic rigour involved in tertiary education, females are generally seen as homemakers and, therefore, are not permitted to pursue professional careers (Hall, 2016; Bryan, 2017; Waltemeyer, 2018).

Yeba and Meno (2015) study established a relationship between gender inequality and financial capacity in higher education. It was submitted that married females often depend on their spouses for money and always allow husbands with low financial capacity to choose to focus on their children’s education at the expense of their wife’s education. In contributing to another study, Ahmed and Hyndman-Rizk (2020) note that while gender equality has been primarily achieved in Bangladesh, women’s employment in academia has not kept pace. Gender equality was blamed on low instrumental empowerment for women, caused by stereotyped subject selection, limited knowledge of ICT, limited career aspirations and

lack of relevant job skills. However, gender equality excludes globalisation as contributing to women's lower representation in tertiary education teaching. O'Connor (2019) states that women's under-representation in academic positions is premeditated by unconscious bias in training and mentoring. Thus, a fundamental transformation is needed to achieve gender equality in higher education teaching. Canli and Dermitas (2017) generally considered teacher training the only impact globalisation has had on all levels of education. The submission by Canli and Dermitas (2017) reflects that gender equality still has a long way to go in reaching a substantive level and ensuring the maximisation of globalisation impacts tertiary education teaching, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. This study argues for increased access to teaching positions for women in Nigerian tertiary education institutions in line with globalisation.

3. Research questions

The following questions guided the conduct of the study:

1. What is the distribution rate of male and female teachers in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What factors are responsible for female teachers' concentration in secondary schools compared with tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?
3. How can gender balance in tertiary institutions actualised for globalisation in Kwara State, Nigeria?

4. Research methodology

The research design adopted a mixed method approach of sequential type to explore and explain the reasons behind the disparity in male to female teachers at secondary and tertiary schools (Falaye, 2018). The population for the study comprised all teachers and lecturers at public secondary schools and public tertiary institutions, respectively in Kwara State. A proforma was used to collect the total number of teachers from the Kwara State Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development records and the total number of lecturers from tertiary institutions in Kwara State as of October 2022.

To answer the research question, quantitative secondary data was collected to have an overview of the teachers' enrolment in secondary and tertiary institutions. However, qualitative data was obtained through interviews to gain in-depth information on the concentration of female teachers at secondary schools compared with tertiary institutions in response to research questions two and three. Qualitative research of phenomenology design was adopted to explore was used to discover, and understand the factors behind differences in male-to-female teacher ratios in secondary and tertiary schools (Falaye, 2018). Furthermore, it examined how tertiary institutions can balance gender. With this approach, we gained in-depth insights and described, observed, and analysed findings to develop conclusions and recommendations for action.

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to select the participants (must be secondary or tertiary school teachers) (Falaye, 2018; Creswell, 2018). The participants were selected purposively to provide insight into the causes of the low number of female teachers at higher institutions than secondary schools. Based on the principle of saturation in sample selection, 25 participants were interviewed. However, only 22 (see Table 3) completed interviews were thematically transcribed and analysed. A structured interview was conducted

with the participants. The interview guide was developed and validated by evaluation and teacher education experts.

This study ensured trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Gunawan, 2015; Hadi and José Closs, 2016; Kornbluh, 2015). The credibility of a research study is determined by whether the research findings agree with the participants' reality (Stahl and King, 2020). To ensure credibility, research findings were shared with participants to verify their responses and themes (Cloutier and Ravasi, 2021; Kornbluh, 2015). Transferability and confirmability ensure that the findings are meaningful and can contribute to understanding phenomena across different settings and contexts. The results were presented as obtained from the respondents without prejudice to allow readers to decide on factors that caused gender inequality among higher education teachers (Lemon and Hayes, 2020).

The quantitative data collected were collated and analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages and group bar charts for comparison. In contrast, qualitative data were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically with the aid of Atlas ti. software.

5. Ethical concern

The participants voluntarily participated. For ethical reasons, no participant was coerced to partake, and for anonymity, the respondents were referred to by the "pseudonyms" they chose. Thus, all names referred to in the qualitative data are pseudonyms.

6. Results

The quantitative data was analysed descriptively using frequency count and percentage, while the qualitative responses obtained were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically using Atlas. ti software. The results obtained were discussed with the support of existing literature.

7. Results and discussion of findings

Table 1: Gender distribution of secondary school teachers in Kwara State from 2012/13 to 2021/22

Years/Academic sessions	Male (Y)	%	Female (X)	%	X-Y	%	Total
2012/13	7 313	49	7 760	51	447	3.96	15 073
2013/14	7 157	47	7 997	53	840	5.54	15 154
2014/15	7 597	48	8 180	52	583	3.69	15 777
2015/16	7 302	47	8 109	53	807	5.24	15 412
2016/17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017/18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018/19	7 946	47	8 913	53	967	5.74	16 859
2019/20	7 235	46	8 352	54	1 117	7.17	15 587
2020/21	4 211	26	8 641	53	4 430	27.15	16 315
2021/22	7 653	48	8 416	52	763	4.75	16 069
Total	56 414	358	66 368	421	9 954	7.88	126 246

Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Kwara State Ministry of Education Human Capital Development (2022).

Table 1 reveals that the rate of female teachers outweighs their male counterparts in the ten academic sessions considered. Although the disparity in the distribution is not pronounced, this is about 7.88%, with the figure ranging from 447 to 4 430 female teachers, as shown in columns X-Y. Kindly note that data for two academic sessions are unavailable, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. Therefore, the gender distribution at the secondary school level seems considerable for globalisation.

The analysis in Table 1 is presented in a group bar chart in Figure 1 to have a pictorial presentation and description of the gender distribution of secondary school teachers.

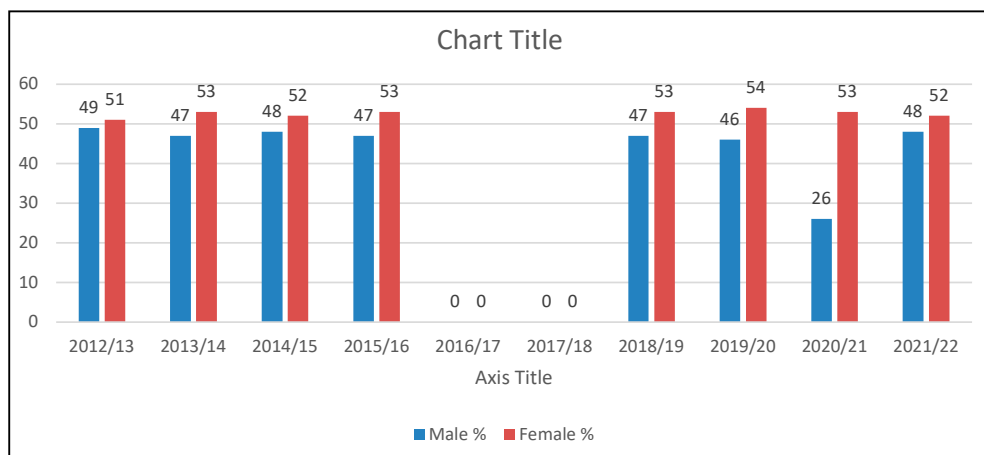


Figure 1: A group bar chart showing the gender distribution of all public secondary school teachers in Kwara State

Table 2: Gender distribution of tertiary institution lecturers in Kwara State from 2014/15 to 2017/18 Academic Session

Session	Male (Y)	%	Female (X)	%	Total	Y-X	%
2014/15	1 623	78	463	22	2 086	1 160	56
2015/16	1 559	79	428	22	1 987	1 131	57
2016/17	1 877	77	563	23	2 440	1 314	54
2017/18	1 868	76	576	24	2 444	1 292	53
2018/19	2 012	75	683	25	2 695	1 329	49
2019/20	2 025	72	794	28	2 819	1 231	43
2020/21	2 367	75	801	25	3 168	1 566	49
2021/22	2 801	77	822	23	3 623	1 979	55
Total	6 927	77	2 030	23	8 957	4 897	55

Source: Survey 2023

Table 2 shows that the percentage of female lecturers in tertiary institutions in Kwara State is much lower than that of male lecturers in all ten years considered. Although the disparity in the gender distribution was very pronounced, this was about 55%, with the figure ranging from

1 987 to 3 623 male lecturers, as shown in columns Y-X. Therefore, the gender distribution gap at tertiary institutions is too wide for globalisation. Awodiji (2018) found that female Pakistani lecturers were at 48% compared to their counterparts in Nigeria at 21.9% among lecturers in their universities. Furthermore, the percentage of males (59.7%) among higher education teachers in Slovenia was higher than women (40.3%) (Tašner et al., 2017).

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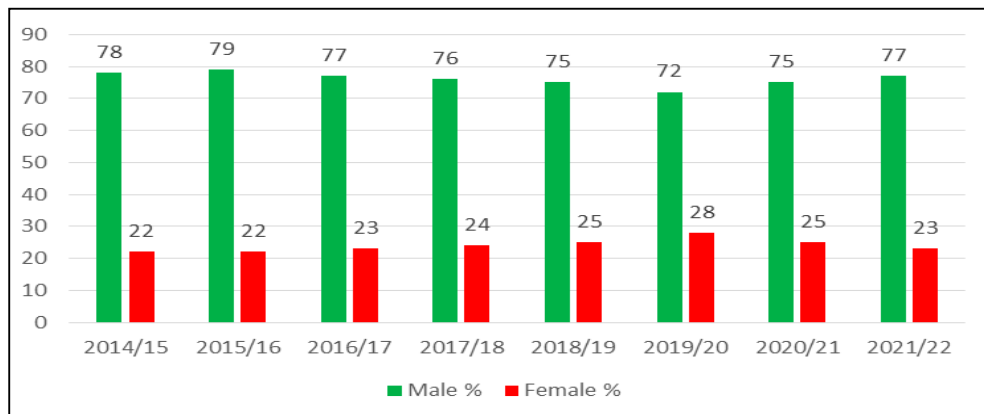


Figure 2: A group bar chart showing the gender distribution of all selected tertiary institution lecturers in Kwara State

8. Qualitative Analysis

Table 3: Demographic analysis of respondents

Respondents	Gender	Marital status	Family size	Years experience in teaching	Highest educational qualification	Current level being taught
1	Female	Married	3	18	BA.Ed	Secondary School
2	Female	Married	6	10	Master's	Secondary School
4	Male	Married	5	30	B.Sc	Secondary School
5	Male	Married	5	32	PhD	Tertiary Institution
6	Female	Married	7	18	Master's	Secondary School
7	Female	Married	6	23	B.Ed	Secondary School
8	Female	Married	11	24	B.Ed	Secondary School
9	Female	Married	4	6	PhD	Tertiary Institution

Respondents	Gender	Marital status	Family size	Years experience in teaching	Highest educational qualification	Current level being taught
10	Male	Married	6	40	M.Ed	Tertiary Institution
11	Female	Married	6	20	Master	Tertiary Institution
12	Female	Married	6	8	PhD	Tertiary Institution
13	Female	Married	7	43	PhD	Tertiary Institution
14	Female	Married	5	12	B.Ed	Secondary School
15	Female	Married	-	5	B.Ed	Tertiary Institution
16	Female	Married	4	6	Ph.D	Tertiary Institution
19	Female	Single	-	4	Master's	Tertiary Institution
20	Male	Married	6	15	Master's	Tertiary Institution
21	Female	Married	6	8	B.Ed	Secondary School
22	Female	Married	5	20	PD	Tertiary Institution
23	Male	Married	5	8	PGDE	Tertiary Institution
24	Female	Married	5	9	Ph.D	Tertiary Institution
25	Female	Married	4	20	B.Sc	Tertiary Institution

A total number of 22 (17 females and 5 males) respondents were interviewed and analysed. Males were included to have a holistic perception of the factors responsible for female teachers being low in number in higher institutions than in secondary schools. Also, out of 22 participants, 21 are married, and one is single. To validate the data collected, other demographics of the respondents are indicated in Table 3.

Research Question 2: What factors are responsible for female teachers' concentration at secondary schools compared with tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?

In response to research question one, the factors responsible for the gender gap of teachers at tertiary institutions as generated from the interview are presented as follows:

Factors responsible for female teachers' concentration at secondary schools compared with tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Responses generated from the qualitative data gave rise to the following themes: Marital factors, personal factors, qualification, financial factors, societal factors, and religious factors, among others.

Marital Factors: Responses generated revealed that most females who prefer secondary school work to tertiary institutions do so because of marital reasons despite their educational qualifications. These reasons include care for their homes, time for their family, husband's

decisions, and individual family differences. Prominent among these reasons is the care of their homes.

Care of their homes: Most respondents pointed out that the roles of females in caring for the homes hooked many women and hindered them from furthering their education. Hence, they are limited to secondary schools. Mrs Fehintola stated, *“Females usually find themselves tied down by family problems like childbearing, caring for the home, the husband and other, and other family members.”*

There are husbands who, according to Mrs Gidiado,

“will say ah you should go for teaching with this your NCE because you will be able to take care of the house, take care of my children, look after their house and look after everybody in their house.”

Supporting these views, Dr Sam, a lecturer in one of the tertiary institutions, explained that

“at the lower level, that is, primary and secondary level of education, females have free time to attend to their nuclear families and the female teachers will after work, will want to go home, attend to their families and do domestic stuff.”

In the words of Mrs Amoke, females have the mentality that teaching at the lower level of education will *“help them to manage their home and take care of their children”*. It is glaring from the responses generated that females are saddled with the care of their homes, maybe due to societal perspectives, personal passion, or family agreement. This factor tends to hinder their passion for teaching in higher institutions because they may need more time in their homes for tertiary institution jobs.

Time Factor: Corollary to the home care factor is the natural desire of some females to take up employment that will give them ample time for homes. Respondents expressed their view that most females prefer secondary school teaching to a tertiary institution because Mrs Sade,

“The teachers close 2 or 3 O'clock, in that definite time, she can attend to her family, but at the tertiary level, you do not have space. The time is choked.” Mrs Sade explained that teaching at a secondary school *“allows women to have time for themselves; it is not a kind of rigour profession, you have time.”*

According to her, after the school closes for the day, such a woman will have time to go and do other things. Mrs Adeyinka, backing this view, said that teaching in secondary school will give females enough

“time for the children and the family, but in the higher institution level, to show level, they may be closing late hour, but teaching in secondary school, primary school, close by two and so you will have time for the children.”

From the preceding, it can be deduced that time for self and family can be a militating factor against female lecturing in tertiary institutions.

Husband's Decision: In Africa, it is culturally believed that the husband is the head of the home, and whatever his decision is, it is based on the family members (Akinola, 2018; Arekapudi and Manzoni, 2022). Hence, some females who aspire to further their education and get employed in tertiary institutions may be debarred by their husbands. This may be because such husbands felt teaching at a lower level of education would give their wives ample time at home. Sharing her experience with one of the interviewees, Dr Owolabi (pseudonyms) said,

Even like my own husband when we got married. I didn't even know that what he had in mind for me was teaching. For me to go into teaching, he does not want his wife to be doing yes sir under anybody in the office. I never knew that. So also the mind of many men; they want their wives to themselves so that they can take good care of their children at home. So, as a teacher, as a woman, you will be able to have enough time for your husband and have enough time for your husband and your children.

In the words of Dr Deborah (pseudonyms), a lecturer at one of the tertiary institutions, “At times they [female] have aspirations to do all these things, but the husband may not be supportive”. Unsupportive by the husbands may be because the husband is “jealous that why is she competing with the [him] tertiary education is meant for the husband”. Seven respondents pointed out the lack of husbands’ support as part of the factors responsible for women’s concentration in secondary schools. However, most of the respondents mentioned it passively.

Extended family view: Aside from the husband and children, extended family members can speak against females pursuing higher qualifications or in higher institutions, teaching engagement. African family setting is such that the nuclear family is rarely separated from the extended family. Hence, some husbands make decisions based on the extended family’s view. Dr Agbenke (pseudonym) mentioned that “at the time, they [female] have aspirations to do all these things, but the husband might not be supportive ...” She further explained that this might be because “the in-laws being jealous that why is she competing with the husband? Tertiary education is meant for the husband”.

Qualification Factor: Higher education is a significant requirement for teaching in a tertiary institution. According to Mrs Yetunde (pseudonym), a secondary school teacher, there is an educational level required “to teach in a tertiary institution ... most women have acquired their Grade two, NCE, Degree, most people stop at that. Only very few go for their master’s”.

Supporting this view, a female lecturer, Owolabi, mentioned that “teaching at the tertiary level requires attending higher institutions for training and reading further”. Hence, most females could not get employed in tertiary institutions because they do not have the required qualifications. Some of the respondents referred to this as an inadequate qualification for females.

A teacher, M. Moshood (pseudonym), stated, “it is very few, very few, very few women that go beyond maybe their first degree now, and that has limited them to ... the level or the position where they can teach”. Therefore, some females were forced to concentrate on teaching in secondary schools because of their inadequate qualifications.

Financial Factor – Another germane factor raised by the respondents, which can also be linked to inadequate qualification, is inadequate funds. Some females who desire to further their education need more funds.

In the words of Mrs Alabi (a teacher), one of the respondents,

“Some women want and have interest in becoming professor, in becoming a doctor, once they don't have the financial capacity to further their education, they will just be in one school teaching.”

Dr Deborah, a lecturer, also pointed out that further education “entails much money, so most women are incapacitated due to lack of finances to further their education”. This may partly be “because the government pays teachers like labourers, so their salary is not even enough for them to save rather than of saying they want to further their education”.

Some husbands would have sponsored them, but needed more funds to do so.

Mrs. Adeyinka, a secondary school teacher, referred to the situation in the country and explained that it might be challenging for a family man to sponsor his wife to further her education because they need to cater to children first.

Mrs. Gidiado, a secondary school teacher, expressed her view that:

“Some parents do not have the money. They are not all that buoyant to send their children to the university, so they will prefer their daughter go to the colleges of education because of financial problems because the money is not all that there.”

The peculiarity of working in tertiary institutions: Some females dread lecturing in higher institutions because of the professional hazards and academic rigour. A lecturer, Dr Bukola, mentioned that *“lecturing at a tertiary institution is more hazardous than teaching at the secondary school level”*. She explained further that cultism, gangsters, and hooliganism are rampant on campuses more than in secondary schools. Fear of being in such an environment may limit some females from seeking employment at tertiary institutions. Another aspect is the issue of academic rigour in tertiary institutions.

Mrs Owolabi, sharing her experience, said that because of the academic rigour, *“there are times you don’t even have time for yourself except you try to create one. You have to be loaded with much work, many jobs, a lot of many things.”*

Her experience aligns with the assertion of Dr Sam, a male lecturer in a tertiary institution, who mentioned that rigour in a tertiary institution is enormous, including writing papers for promotion, different departmental meetings, lectures at any time and other duties. All these factors may discourage females from working in tertiary institutions, whose primary aim is the care of their homes.

Negative notions about the teaching profession: Responses generated revealed negative notions about teaching in secondary or primary schools that may make men detest such appointments. Dr James, a lecturer, said, *“Teaching in secondary schools is regarded as low-grade and low-income”*. Also, the cultural perception of females as weaker vessels meant to do work with less rigour has caused some females to concentrate in secondary school rather than progress *to tertiary institutions*”.

This notion also affected some parents who would not want their male children engaged in such a profession.

Religious Factor: Respondents mentioned that religious beliefs uphold the view that females are meant to stay at home or do work that will not be so demanding so that they can have time for their families.

All the factors mentioned above are interconnected; severing them from one another may be difficult. This is because a married woman cumbered with the care of her home may need the opportunity to further her education. Hence, inadequate qualifications quench the ambition or passion of such a woman to lecture in a tertiary institution.

Person factor: The individual’s positive and negative decisions also affect their profession. The responses generated showed some positive personal factors, which include (i) female passion for teaching, (ii) ability to sit for a long time with children, (iii) child-friendliness, and (iv) the nature of the teaching job. Negative personal factors were also generated, such as (i) inferiority complex; (ii) phobia of lecturing, (iii) inadequate personal capability, (iv) male lack of interest in teaching; and (v) lack of ambition.

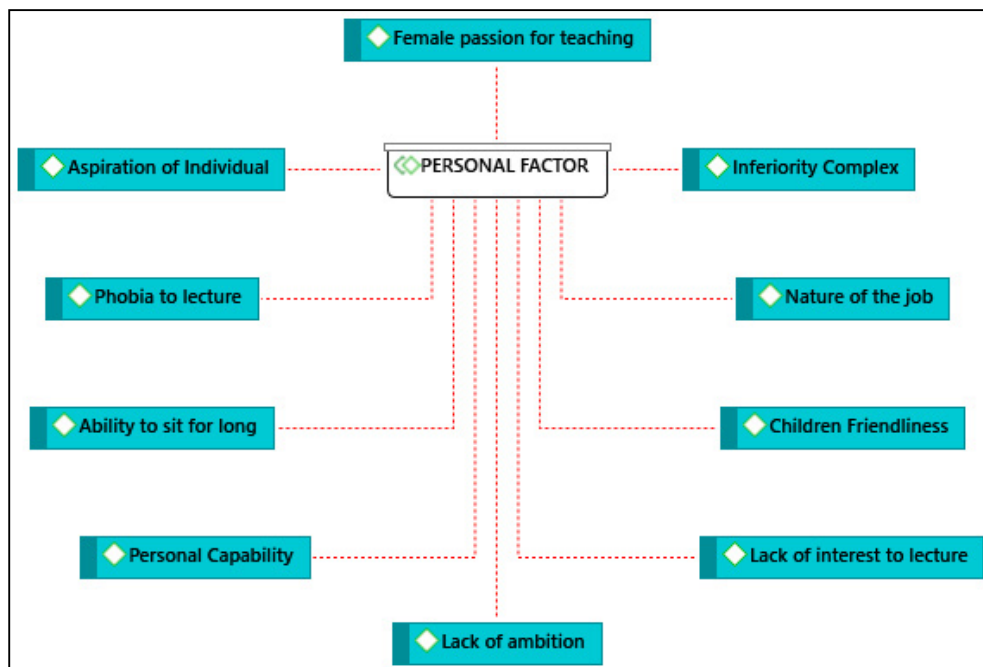


Figure 3: Personal factors

Research Question Three. How can gender balance in tertiary institutions actualised for globalisation in Kwara State, Nigeria?

The respondents identified various factors essential to achieving gender balance in tertiary institutions. The identified factors are personal solutions, family support, public awareness and government support.

Personal solution to gender gap bridging: According to the responses generated, the solution starts with the individual. It is necessary for females to (i) acquire the necessary degree. Mrs. Oyetunde, a secondary school teacher, advised that “*women should also try to further their education*”.

Mrs. Mariamo, also a secondary school teacher, emphasised the necessity of females acquiring the needed degrees to enable them to become lecturers. (ii) Profitable engagement: Inadequate finance was identified as a challenge in acquiring the necessary degree.

Therefore, Dr Agbenike suggested that females

“should be up and doing. Suppose you know you are going to a higher institution. In that case, you should be able to pay, you should be able to engage yourself meaningfully in vocation and in different things that can fetch you money to help your husband”

(iii) Determination: Mrs Alabi, who is a lecturer, suggested that women should be determined, they:

“Should not look at their marital error factors or religious factors in achieving their goal to become successful academically; they should not look at the level of their husband; maybe their husband has not reached the level of a doctorate, why will I now become a doctor, they should encourage themselves to become someone academically”.

Family Support: Another solution identified is family support; especially for married women, it may be challenging to make academic progress without proper family support. (i) Husband's support: As shown in Figure 4, for married women, the husband's support is germane; (ii) mutual family agreement; (iii) family member encouragement; (iv) family planning; and (v) parental support.

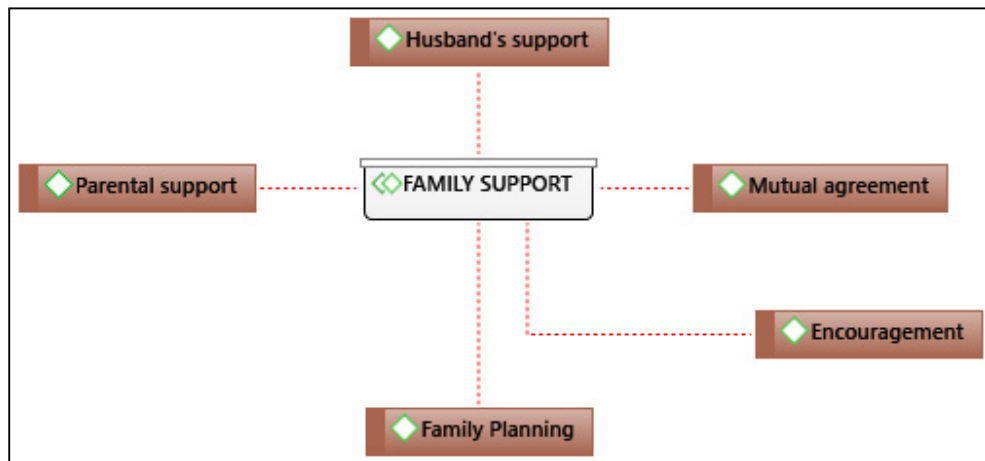


Figure 4: Family support

Government support: Figure 5 shows participants' responses on how the government can encourage through different support. The respondents believed the government has many ways to support females, as shown in Figure 5.

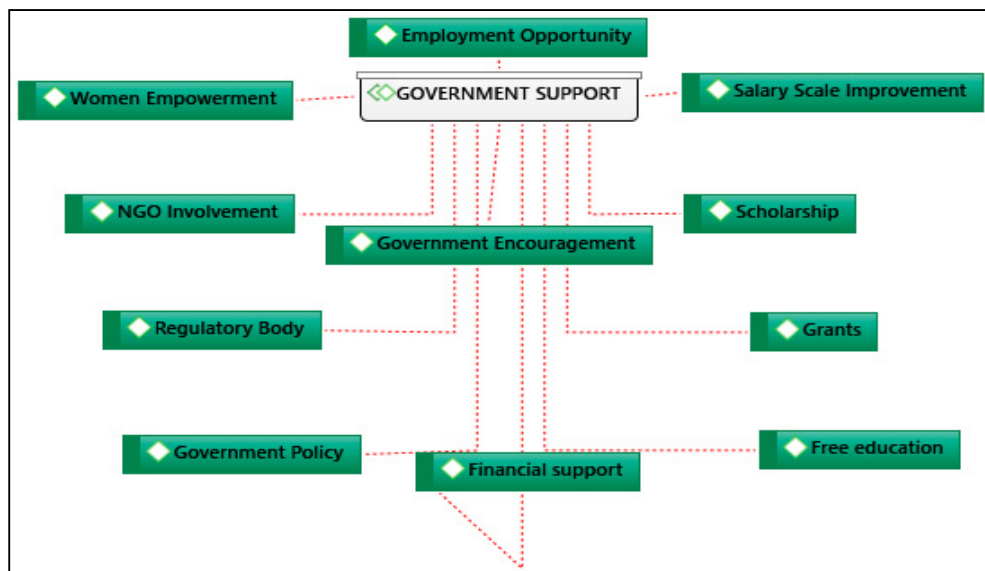


Figure 5: Government support

Orientation – Respondents' opinions suggested the necessity of giving adequate orientation to boost their morale so that they, too, can press further academically and stand tall academically. Orientation should include (i) public awareness programmes, (ii) enlightening programmes for women, (iii) enlightenment programmes for parents, and (iv) programmes to eradicate gender inferiority.

9. Discussion of findings

Based on the findings, the study observed that the females are more than their male counterparts in every year of the study at the secondary school level. Also, the number of female teachers in public secondary schools increased yearly. Thus, it implies that more females are interested in teaching at the secondary school level than their male counterparts. Also, there was a disparity between male and female lecturers in tertiary institutions. Thus, the study concluded that females lag in developing skills and knowledge that stagnate them in the teaching profession at the secondary school level. Thus, the findings agree with David (2015) that gender equality is a contested issue in higher education, despite globalisation's impacts on women's education and participation in the global market. Also, Tašneret et al. (2017) found that male teachers are higher among tertiary institution teachers in Slovenia. It was submitted that in sub-Saharan Africa, few females are found at tertiary levels (Kelleher et al., 2011; Mulugeta, 2012).

As it has been rightly observed, female folk are more in the teaching profession than their male counterparts at the lower levels of education than those in tertiary institutions. Hence, the following factors were found to be responsible for disparities in gender distribution:

Marital factor: This involves elements such as care for the home/domestic activities, time factor, husband's decision, extended family view, and individual family's differences. Some husbands prefer to have wives who teach at low levels of education because they feel that such females would have more time to take care of their families. Most females naturally quest for adequate time to cater for their homes; some husbands also desire their wives to teach at a lower level of education to fulfil their marital obligations. Many educated and township business people prefer their wives to go into the teaching profession at lower levels of the educational system to other professions, because teaching allows women ample time to attend to their household chores (Okoroji and Anyanwu, 2013). Yeba and Meno's (2015) study confirmed a strong relationship between marital status and gender inequality in tertiary institutions. Parsons' functionalism model projects gender-specific roles like housekeeping and childcare as women's primary responsibilities, with partial men's participation. Also, findings revealed that most females who prefer secondary school work to tertiary institutions do so because of marital reasons despite their educational qualifications. The marital factor is one of the major factors debarring some females from teaching in tertiary institutions. All these, coupled with some views that women should not compete with men, caused some females to remain in secondary schools rather than seek employment in higher institutions.

Qualification and financial factors: Higher education is a significant requirement for teaching in a tertiary institution. Lack of ambition to aspire higher, i.e. to acquire the prerequisite higher qualifications that would make them employable at higher institutions. At the lower level of education, the minimum qualification is a National Certificate in Education (NCE) and a Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.Ed). Still, at the University level, the National Universities

Commission (NUC) minimum requirement for a lecturer is a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree. This factor limits females from aspiring to pursue a career at a tertiary institution. A similar issue has been associated with women not being able to acquire higher qualifications for teaching in tertiary institutions due to financial constraints. Some husbands would have sponsored their spouses, but needed more funds to do so.

Sharma (2010) and Obiageli et al. (2022) complement this view that poverty is the major factor limiting women's education. Semela (2007) identified factors that explain females' higher academic dismissal rates than males. Among these factors are sociopsychological issues, financial concerns, and academic guidance. Yeba and Meno's (2015) findings revealed a significant association between financial autonomy and gender inequality in higher education. It was reported that tertiary institutions require money. Also, married women often depend on their male spouses for funding, which always prompts husbands with low financial capacity to prefer to focus on educating their children and leaving their wives at home. In contrast, women with the most minor income source prioritised their children.

Religious factor: In most religious circles, the female is considered a supportive figure, a person who is seen as an advisor, a helper and a teacher. It was found that religious belief supports the idea that women are meant to be at home or do work that will not be so demanding so that they can have time for their husbands and family members. With this mindset, people see the teaching profession at lower levels as a career where females can exhibit such roles (Gorard and Smith, 2004). Rwafa (2016) argues that African religions are implicated in constructing damaging stereotypes that contribute to social, political and economic inequalities between men and women in Africa. Societal perspective: Females are usually regarded as homemakers. The belief that females are usually regarded as homemakers delimits them from pursuing professional careers at the tertiary level due to the academic rigour involved (Hall, 2016; Bryan, 2017; Waltemeyer, 2018). At the lower levels of the educational system (i.e. primary and secondary), the workload is less tedious than obtained at the higher levels. This is buttressed by Muhammad (2020), that factors such as social upbringing, cultural orientation and socioeconomic status are responsible for the disparities in gender balance at tertiary institutions. Some parents see teaching at a lower level of education as a suitable profession for their female children because it is a career where their children would feel secure and have time for themselves and their families.

10. Conclusion

The study examined the distribution rate of male and female teachers and lecturers in secondary and tertiary institutions. Quantitative data from secondary sources and interviews were used to X-ray the gender disparities in the teaching profession. Based on the findings, the study concluded that females are more than their male counterparts in every year of the study at the secondary school level. This implies that more females are interested in teaching than their male counterparts at the secondary school level. Also, there was a disparity between male and female lecturers in tertiary institutions. Thus, the study concluded that females need to catch up in developing skills and knowledge, which stagnates them at the secondary school level in the teaching profession.

11. Recommendations

As a way of balancing gender disparity in tertiary institutions for globalisation, it is therefore recommended that:

- Female teachers with appropriate higher qualifications should be encouraged to seek employment in higher institutions.
- Government at all levels and non-government organisations should provide support (bursary, scholarships, and study leave with pay, among others) for female teachers who aspire to further their education beyond the Bachelor's degree level.
- Policymakers should ensure that Nigerian tertiary institutions increase the percentage of qualified female academics in their recruitment and selection processes to bridge the gender gap identified at the tertiary institution level.
- Sensitisation programmes on the need to pursue higher qualifications should be organised (through workshops, seminars and symposia) to serve as an eye-opener to female teachers.

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