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THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF GENDER ROLES AND SOCIALISATION OF CHILDREN IN TIV SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the changing patterns of gender roles and socialisation of children in Tiv society. The socio-cultural issues of the female and male genders in the changing roles and pattern of socialisation in Tiv society is a discourse that requires significant attention. The paper utilised primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source consists of oral interview. The secondary source consists of books, journal articles and internet sources. The primary data was analysed using descriptive and content approaches. The findings discovered that the socialisation of children in Tiv society was based on the normative factor. This is because the male children were seen to be superordinate over the females who were perceived inferior or subordinate. The study also found out that male children had inheritance rights over the females. A number of implications were drawn which included lack of initiatives, low perception amongst the girl children, domestic burden on women which has far reaching effects on the education of female children among others. However, persistent social change and awareness through Christian religious activities and literacy education of parents, advocacy role of civil society organizations among others have shown that there has been a change/a shift in the pattern of socialisation of children in Tiv society. This is because, the female gender now has access to education and even right to inheritance in Tiv society. It was recommended among others that parents, Guardians and the general public should change their perception that view male children as superiors to the female in Tiv society in particular, and other Nigerian cultures holistically.

Keywords: Changing patterns, Socialization, Children, Gender Roles, Socio-cultural Perception, Tiv Society.

Introduction

In almost all human societies of the world, the first question parents ask at the arrival of a new born is, "is it a boy or a girl"? The expectations following or thrilling this question clearly portrays the importance human beings attach to sex differentiation. This is due to the valuable nature and the high demand placed by most African men including the Tiv on male children over the female. Every society just like the Tiv have sex based differentiations that encouraged certain treatment given to men and women in different ways. There is also an expected

different roles and behavioral patterns from the both sexes. This form of social relations and interaction on the basis of gender also applies to the socialisation of children respectively. According to Ugbem (2009: 92); "the socialiation of members of society, especially the children in traditional societies are usually done on the dictate of social and cultural norms of societies". This means to say that the female children are socialised differently by different societies based on the socio-cultural norms practiced by such societies. In the same vain, social and gender roles are assigned and sanctioned to the female and male children right from the family, community and society at large.

According to Okpaga Adagba as cited in Ugbem (2009:93); "the differentiation in role performance between male and female folks, and the socialization of children (male and female into playing both male and female roles) do not imply that one sex should have superior status over the other, or a particular sex is more important than the other". The basis of gender mainstreaming is to ensure that division of labour or differentiation is efficient and role enactment of different sexes complement one another. But unfortunately, in most societies, especially the traditional societies of the world, socialization of children, male and female is done on the basis of male superiority and female inferiority or subordination. In Africa, particularly in Tiv land, a lot of attention is given to male children than the female children. The cultural norms recognises the male children as having inheritance rights over the females. Until now, at some instances, the female children were and are denied access to education in order to favour the male children who have liberty to educational attainment. According to Usue, Emmanuel ordue and Andiir, Udoo (2023:56); "this assumption is based on the belief in the inferior status of women in some traditional societies of the world". Ugbem (2009:93); further asserts that, both men and women share in the assumption of the inferior status of women in some societies which is also passed on from generation to generation.

However, with the increasing level of social change, especially due to the increased literacy of people and the impact of Christian religious activities among others, there have been significant changes in the perception and socialisation of children in some societies and the contemporary Tiv society in particular.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Socio-Cultural Perception

Wegh (2009:154) is of the view that, the concept of socio-cultural refers to a wide array of social and cultural issues that have influence on human thoughts, feelings, behaviours and other related factors that affect both the individual and groups behaviours in the society. Wegh (2009:154); further assets that, socio-cultural practices are distinctive in nature and are embedded in the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterised a society or social groups. These social groups may be viewed as religious, family, educational, political structures etc, that exact influence on an individual or group behaviours in a given society. Furthermore, the concept of socio-cultural perception may be viewed in the light of how individuals or group of people, and culture have a sway on an individual or group's consciousness and reaction to situations around them. In this context therefore, socio-cultural perception is the worldview of Tiv people in regards to a child/children and the cultural norms and values that influence them generally.

The Concept of Changing Pattern

According to Akpede and Abanyam (2013:112); "the term 'changing' is a derivative of the word 'change'. 'Change' is said to occur or take place when there is significant alternation in the structure of another thing; it could be social, material, cultural, human interactions and inactions in a society'. The concept of 'changing' therefore, may be defined as the continues process of change or transformation in a particular thing, individual, groups, or society. However, the term 'pattern' refers to "the way, form, or model of doing something". In this context, the concept of changing pattern refers to the changes that occur in gender roles and socialization of a child/children in Tiv society.

The Concept of Socialization

According to Ajir (2009:92-93); socialisation is the learning of beliefs, habits, skills, and necessary other requirements for effective participation in social life. Similarly, Ogoh (2012:100); describes socialisation as a learning process that aids the individual to acquires the culture of a given society. Ogoh's definition of socialisation is in line with that of Ajir who agreed that socialisation is a learning process in which a member of a society undergoes. Ogoh (2012:101); opines that socialisation is a lifelong process which begins from the day an individual is born to the day he/she dies. Socialisation process in an individual occurs in phases and the most crucial is childhood socialisation. This is because, infancy is essentially a biological being, described by Ogoh as a barbarian' who does not know the ways of life, and the norms and values of society. Childhood socialization which is the focus of discussion in this paper, is the process of socialization which transforms the infant and a child from a biological to social being. Through the process of socialization, the individual becomes socially aware of his/her existence and acquires a self. In this paper, the concept of socialization is used to refer to the process by which Tiv people inculcate socio-cultural values of Tiv society into their children to become social beings.

The Concept of Gender

According to Ityavyar (2022:159); the term, 'gender' refers to "the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed and structured. This includes; norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy as well as relationship with each other. As a social construct, gender issues vary from society to society, and could change overtime. Gender issues are key in social organisations, as well as group relationship in the society. According to Ugbem (2009:98); "a better understanding of gender issues in human societies upholds identification of different tasks, opportunities, constraints and initiatives which allows for more identification of target groups and more appropriate support policies and efficient use of resources". In traditional Tiv society, the socialization of males and females vary in accordance with the expectations placed on them by the society. The female children where socialised into performing roles and tasks rationally defined and assigned to them, and the male were also socialised into performing expected roles and tasks as defined by the tradition.

Brief Historical Background of Tiv Origin and Migration

The origin of Tiv people like any other ethnic group in Nigeria has been obscured. The obscurity explains why there are so many theories that have substance, why some seem to have no substance, but have been used as a source of materials available in Tiv studies. According to Idyorough (2015:30); the Tiv are classified by anthropologists, historians and

linguist as semi Bantu ethnic group. They presently inhabit Benue, Nasarawa, Taraba, Plateau and Cross River States. The Tiv are mostly found on both sides of the River Benue about 240 kilometers up the confluence of River Niger and Benue in Nigeria. This area is known as the Benue Valley region, situated between the high plateau and the Cameroun mountains. Tiv are largely peasant farmers and they produce yams, millet, sorghum, cassava, maize, and other produce. In addition to farming; pottery, and weaving, brewing of beer have been the preoccupation of the Tiv that is especially engaged in by children and women. Prior to colonialism, the Tiv system of economy was subsistence in nature.

Relatedly therefore, Gbor (1978:9); suggests that, 'the Tiv could have originated from Congo (Zaire); and the suggestion universally linked Tiv past with that of Bantu in Zaire. Other scholars such as Gundu, cited in Catherine M. Torbunde (2009:64); disputed Tiv origin from the Bantu "world". They based their analysis on certain important cultural traits, like the slow advances in Tiv linguistics and other cultural traits. From the available evidence, Denga, Daniel I., Idyorough Alamveabee, and Wuam Terhemba, in their respective submissions as discussed above noted that the Tiv probably are of Bantu origin and migrated from Congo (Zaire) as a result of factors associated to marriage, conflict, famine, population increase, and several other problems with their neighbouring bush tribes of central or southern part of Africa, to the Benue Valley or Middle Belt in the late 18th and 19th centuries through the Nigeria Cameroun boundaries.

Socio-cultural Perception of Children in Traditional Tiv Society

On a peripheral level, the Tiv people were known to have value for a child. To an average Tiv man, a child was perceived as a valuable asset and a lovely companion. The male children according to the Tiv tradition are perceived as those who hold the future of Tiv society in their hands even in contemporary times. The female children were perceived as those who would be given out in marriage and proceeds from the marriage would be used for the up keep of the family. According to Denga (1995:93); "the tradition and cultural practice of the Tiv people permit that descent should be traced to the father (paternal) and not the mother (maternal), hence the practice of patrilineal-system. The male children have the right to inheritance and are perceived as being superior or superordinate over the females who are viewed as inferior or subordinate members of the family. In traditional Tiv society, even when a Tiv man has given birth to female children but does not have a male child; he is not pleased and does not live a happy life. Wegh (2009:155); asserts that, a traditional Tiv man who has ten (10) female children is not satisfied without a male child. Reason being that female children were only celebrated and recognised in societies that practice matrilineal-system where descent is traced to the mother and the female children are allowed to possess inheritance rights by tradition.

An extrapolation from the foregoing analysis shows that the perception of male children in traditional Tiv society as being superior or superordinate over the female's inferior or subordinate position in the family may have some implications. First and foremost, the female children may suffer low esteem, and may not have the initiative to be gallant in taking bold decisions as they are not involved in decision making process as their male counterparts. The male children would look down on the female children and would even underrate the female children as they engage themselves in domestic activities.

Again, the perception of male as superiors over the female in traditional Tiv society may have the tendency to influence the socialization of children in traditional Tiv society. According to Usue and Andiir (2023:55); in traditional Tiv society, the female children are socialized into activities such as housekeeping, home making, attendance to kitchen functions and other domestic activities such as baby sitting and nursing tasks. whereas; the male children were socialized into performing leadership roles such as, involving them in decision making. Socializing them into skill acquisition especially in areas of hunting, representation of parents at community meetings and others. These behavioural traits according to Ityavyar, Dennice; as cited in Usue and Andiir (2023:55); "are an embodiment of 'patriarchal system' practiced in traditional Tiv society". Usue and Andiir (2023:55); however, defined patriarchal system as "a set of social relations, common to members of a community who lived together for a long time, sharing and learning from each other's customs and traditions, and who have a material base that enables men to dominate the women folk".

According to Wegh (2009:156); "the subordinate position accorded the female children in traditional Tiv society is assumed to be normal and natural and it permeates all spheres of life, social, education, politics, and so on". This does not imply that the female children were not shown love or cared for; in traditional Tiv society. The data collected through oral interview revealed the foregoing in the affirmative order; that the girl child in traditional Tiv society was perceived as someone who was viewed as playing domestic roles, and not the assertive roles as the male children were perceived. The female children were perceived as those who someday would be given out to marry, and proceeds obtained from the marriage, would be applied in training the male children or kept for family use. For this and several other reasons, the female children though, do not have inheritance right in traditional Tiv society, they were cared for and equally shown love by their parents and their family members (oral interview with Anga Amase).

Socio-cultural Perception of Children in Contemporary Tiv Society

It is observed that the perception of children in traditional Tiv society was viewed as a normal and natural phenomenon. This perception supported the subordinate view of the female children and superior view of male children by the Tiv tradition which permeates contemporary Tiv society as well. According to Wegh (2009:156); "the subordinate or inferior view of the female children in traditional Tiv society transcends the colonial and post-colonial-contemporary Tiv society in almost all spheres of Tiv society". The female children were discriminated against in the area of educational attainment, in favour of the male children. The female children perform domestic roles such as house chores in the aspects of washing plates, keeping the compound clean, and so on. For the educated women, they were also expected to take the back sit and focus in the kitchen.

However, due to social change perhaps, through literacy education, participation and involvement of parents in Christian religious activities, advocacy role of civil society organizations such as women in Nigeria (WIN), National Council of Women Societies among others, have had significant changes in the perception and socialisation of children in Tiv society. According to. Torbunde (2009:78); many of the Tiv Christian families, show love and care which tremendous add value their children irrespective of sex. These Tiv Christian families view and accept that children are a special gift from God Almighty. Thus, they treat children irrespective of the gender as equals, without discriminatory tendencies.

This means to say that among Christian families, both the male and female children are treated as having equal rights in the family. The data obtained through oral interview also affirmed that Tiv Christian families, especially the educated view children as special gift from God thus must be treated equally in all human endeavours. They do not send their female children into early marriages to obtain proceeds for the education of male children as it was done among other families in Tiv society. It was the believe of a Tiv Christian family to give their female children in marriage as it was appropriate for them to do (Oral interview).

Socialisation of Children in Contemporary Tiv Society

In contemporary Tiv society, the socialisation of male and female children still takes place on the expectation placed on them by existing norms and values in Tiv society. In other words, the socialisation of male and female children in contemporary Tiv society is practiced on the basis of gender division of labour, especially on the bases of household chores, educational attainment, involvement in productive activities and so on. To some Tiv families who held strong to Tiv traditional values, Wegh (2009:157); observes that, a girl is taught to do domestic work such as sweeping the compound, washing (both clothes and plates) preparation of meals, care and nursing of younger siblings and so on. The major expectation placed on the girl child socialisation was that of becoming a good house wife in the future.

Result from oral interview showed that, in the traditional Tiv society, a beautiful woman who does not know how to do domestic chores was compared to 'as a house that is beautifully built, and is decorated outside but very empty, unorganised, shabbily arranged and uncompleted in the interior' (Oral interview with mama Mbapuun Audu). In other words, the traditional Tiv society view a woman as that which is mainly born to receive good training from her parents, get married and take proper care of her husband and the children. This is reiterated by Ugbem (2009:91-98); who holds that the attention of girls was always drawn to the fact that the basis of girl or a woman's respect was in the perfection of her domestic duties. This also explains why the socialisation process of female children was to acquire pleasing behaviour, good manners and conduct to make people feel good, glad to give pleasure, and to agree with whatever they were told and taught. Women in Tiv society were expected to be conformist, passive and affectionate. Girls and women were expected to be obedient and subservient to all authorities without challenging them. They were expected to be good house wives to their husbands, and as wives; they were looked upon to give birth to children, especially the male children. This expectation according to Torbunde (2009:78); "was enormous. This is because a woman who was not giving birth to children especially the male children had no place, respect, honour and regard in her marriage".

Socialisation process for boys were based on the expectation that by tradition and culture of Tiv people; the boys were given inheritance rights and they hold the future of Tiv society in their hands. In other words, the male children were viewed as future leaders in Tiv society, and as such they were trained and socialized in acquiring leadership skills of breadwinning, heads of families, community leaders, and so on. The male children were expected to be daring always pushing forward and going at the front at all times. The male children were to always be on the attack, and not to be subservient as the female would be. Being passive and conformist like the female was against the tradition of Tiv and a feminine sign, which was a behaviour prohibited among the males in Tiv society. The socialization of male children in the

traditional settings of Tiv society was done with the perception that the male children were superior and superordinate over the female children.

Although, socialisation of children in contemporary Tiv society among educated and Christian family members has taken a new dimension. This is due to the persistent social changes through western literary education of parents, Christian religious activities of family members-parents and children, modernity, globalisation etc. According to Utor and Buter (2020:128); "these factors brought about salient changes in the socialization of children in contemporary societies". Ugbem (2009:102); added that; the advocacy roles played by civil society organisations such as women in Nigeria (WIN), National Women Societies and others also contributed to the change in the socialisation of children in contemporary society. With regards to Tiv society; Wegh observes that; "the children were not strictly socialized in tandem with traditional Tiv cultural values, where male children were perceived in the superordinate or viewed as being superior over the female children. The data collected through oral interview supported this view. It showed that both male and female children were perceived as naturally being endowed with the potentials such that if properly given attention and harnessed will be better off, and even excel in their endeavors. Although, the male children were viewed as persons who by the Tiv tradition possess inheritance rights. However, among the educated parents, this idea did not hold water. Among the elites and Christian families, the female children were equally given inheritance rights as their male counterparts. This was dependent on their conduct, readiness to do what is right and the ability to remain obedient to their parents (oral interview with Samuel Ukura). Another interviewee held that both male and female children were perceived as persons who own the future of Tiv society, and were given equal opportunities in their socialization processes. In other words, in contemporary Tiv society, the female children had equal rights to education, inheritance rights, and others, especially among the elites and Christian religious family members (oral interview with Gideon Mbakighir).

Socialisation Process

It was discovered in the course of study that in the socialisation of children in contemporary Tiv society, though; there were emerging changes in the pattern of socialization; the process was however, carried out in line with gender division of labour. According to Denga (1995:19); this was done to ensure that the differentiation between male and female gender was efficient and role enactment or performance was also done to complement each other. Males in contemporary Tiv society are still trained and socialized to be bold, very determined and daring. The reality of the matter is that the boys ought to be gallant and brave enough as breadwinners and persons who would take over from their fathers and continue with the family line or lineage. The boys are socialized to be leaders. In the same vein, the girls/female children were socialized as daughters who should grow into full time house wives and mothers. The data obtained also showed that in other cultures including traditional Tiv society where the female children were strictly socialized into carrying out domestic activities as in washing plates, clothes and other household utensils, and would be sent out into early marriages, and proceeds, obtained from such marriages would be used to train the boys or male children in school on the basis of male superiority over the female, was no longer same. The female children were equally sent to school along with the male children. This was also dependent on the performance of both the female and male children at school. when the female was performing better than the males, the female was favourably attended to (oral

interview with Phoebe Atetan), and the reverse was the case with the boys. This implies that formal education which used to be the exclusive preserve of male children is now extended to the girl children. This is partly viewed in the perspective of the fact that the female children were been able to also prove their worth by extending helping hands to their parents, through awareness creation by civil society organization, involvement in Christian religious activities and others.

Again, another interviewee held that at instances where the boys were not willing to go to school and were being non-challant in their attitudes towards their parents; the girl/female were preferably supported to go to school, and added that the boys especially when they get married they were viewed to be closer to their wives than their parents and would not want to care for their parents and about their homes. It was the girls who would normally come back to take care of their parents, so empowering a girl child to some extent secures one's future (oral interview with Ashiver Akpen). Ugbem (2009:103); is of the view that though, the opportunities were also given to the female children to go to school, but they had to combine the pursuit of education with domestic activities alongside others. Some were able to cope and some were not and they abandoned the process. It is important to note, that for some educated Christian families, both the female and male children were socialized into carrying out domestic activities of cooking, washing plates, clothes and so on. Data collected through oral interview showed that in some Christian families both the husband and wife were seen undertaking some home chores of cooking, washing plates, cleaning and keeping the compound tidy (oral interview with Asen Timothy).

On the whole, the male-female perception of children was not same in contemporary Tiv society as in traditional Tiv; where males were viewed as superordinate over female children. Both male and female were given equal opportunities even in the process of socialization of male and female. Among Tiv Christian family members the socialization of children was done on the bases of gender division of labour. This was to ensure that differentiation was efficient and role enactment complement each other.

Socialisation of Children into Productive Activities

Productive work in this context refers to any work which is done, that has value chain, and a worker can earn from it. According to Koko (2016:12); "the major economic activity in traditional Tiv society was farming". In addition to farming, there was iron smelters, craft makers, clothe weaving, hunters and other handworks, which were produced and done. The female/women could also be engaged in the brewing of local beer (Burukutu). Crops produced in traditional Tiv society were yam, cassava, millet, guinea corn, beniseed, melon, ground nuts, maize and others; which were produced on subsistence bases and sometimes could be bartered out. The children were socialized into carrying out farm activities and other skill acquisition or vocational training in areas such as craft works in form of rest chairs, rope weaving with bamboo substance, mat making and others with bamboo vibes. Female children were socialized into carrying out domestic activities and home chores such as washing plates, clothes, cleaning the compound and keeping it tidy, cooking with their mothers and so on. Female children could also be made to help their mothers on the farm, and specifically, they will be made to weed off grasses, plant, and also harvest farm produce. The female will be there to also cook for workers-working on the farm.

Specifically, the male children (boys) were taught to make heaps and ridges, after clearing the farm lands through the process of burn and slash. Both the female and male children were socialized and trained to engage themselves into cooperative farming (ihumbe) with their age grades. According to Ityavyar (2022:164); the reason for doing this (cooperative farming) was to collaborate and ensure farm work was done fast and with ease. It was also aimed at assisting the disabled who were willing to engage into farm work in spite of their physical challenge. It was equally aimed at assisting the aged, especially, those who had no children to assist them in farm work.

In addition to farming; the data obtained through oral interview showed that the female children were also socialised into group fishing activities (suwa yaren), while, the male were trained into building and constructing thatch huts, doing the roof tops, group hunting for game and others (oral interview with John Koko). It can be deduced from the foregoing analysis that Tiv society is mostly agricultural based. However, with persistent social changes, traditional Tiv society has been transformed and incorporated professional work persons such as teachers, clerical staff, cashiers, and other types of paid jobs. In as much as Tiv in contemporary Tiv society engaged themselves in these career jobs, agriculture is still the mainstay of Tiv economy and the basic source of livelihood in Tiv settlement areas. Very importantly too, in contemporary Tiv society, Denga (1995:20) observes that; "both the female and male children were socialized into acquiring farm skills, to enable them work on the farm. They also are given equal opportunities to go to school up to the tertiary and university levels. This is aimed at giving the children opportunity to acquire both farm skills and tertiary education in diverse areas of calling/career development, depending on their performances for a better future.

The data obtained showed that socialisation of children in contemporary Tiv society was not strictly done on the bases of Tiv traditional cultural values of male superiority over female. It was however, done according to gender division of labour to ensure there was efficiency in differentiation between male and female, and that role enactment and task performance complement each other, especially among the educated Tiv Christian families (oral interview with Tersoo Okpera).

Community Service

The socialisation of children; male and female in performing different roles and carrying tasks in communities especially in traditional Tiv society was done on the bases of male superordinate over female children, who mostly were seen as inferior sex before the male children. The male children were socialized into undertaking leadership responsibilities in the area of decision making, representation of parents especially the fathers at community meetings, assumption of inheritance rights and others. The girls/female children were noted for being subservient and subordinate to the boys in traditional Tiv society. The female children were not involved in decision making; rather, they were noted for cooking at community meetings, fetching water for men working at project sites in the community, playing the role of baby siting, attending to children and so on, in the community. According to Ugbem (2009:98); "the female children were not allowed to participate in decision making process in communities in traditional societies". It was also discovered from the data collected through oral interview revealed that women were not allowed to participate deeply in political activities in Tiv society; at best they were appointed into leadership positions that

would enable them lead their fellow women in coordinating activities that directly affected the women. Even in contemporary Tiv society, women are not involved and given equal opportunities alongside the men to participate deeply in political activities. At most, they are appointed women leaders and coordinators where it becomes necessary to do so. To the male politicians, there is the feeling that when women are allowed to occupy honourable and very top political positions such as the position of a chairman of local government area, governor of a state and others, the women would become in-subordinated (oral interview with Tor Aye), to the men.

As society changes, the influence of literacy education, Christian religion, civil society organisations among others; most parents in Tiv society have been informed and have seen the need to socialize the girl children into leadership positions. The data collected through oral interview revealed that the girl children were given the opportunity to participate in church programmes mounted by church organisations. In these organizations and societies such as the Girls Brigade (GB), women fellowship organizations and others; the girls are taught leadership skills. They also are exposed to decision making processes and or taught how to respond positively to community development issues. The boys were also trained in church organizations such as the Boys Brigade (BB), Bible study programmes where they are introduced to spiritual issues that shape and mode their thinking in becoming humble and imbibing the fear of God for responsible leadership (oral interview with Luter Akpen). This exposure enables the boys to see themselves and their counterpart/the girls as equal partners before God.

Implications of Changing Pattern in the Socialisation of Children in Tiv Society

The study established that gender division of labour exists in the socialisation of children in traditional Tiv society, especially on the bases of male children superiority over the female; and this has some adverse implications on the personality and social development of the female children in traditional Tiv society.

First and foremost, socialization process in traditional Tiv society resulted in bringing up girls and female children that are docile, passive and cannot take up initiatives on their own. The female children in traditional Tiv society were socialised to conform to situations and have always remain docile in decision making process, at both levels of the family and community. Non participation of female children in decision making within the family and at community levels implies the female children will not be able to influence issues that affect their lives, even when they grow into adult women and are married. Again, lack of involvement of female children in decision making process will result in denying them the opportunity to reflect on the reality of the experiences they face as members of their respective families and the efforts they should have made towards addressing certain situations that affect them will be thwarted.

The female children are susceptible to significantly suffer some health challenges as they grow and get married. The subordinate position of girl child which is rather advantageous to the male children placed the female children in a prevailing situation where; as future house wives, the women do not have the right to bargain, determine or decide on when to have sex with her husband, or initiate love making or practice safe sex. Invariably, the women become early preys to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV infections. The women to some

extent tend to suffer certain health issues in silence; for instance, (they tend to suffer certain health issues such as reproductive tract infections virginal discharges, and discomfort during intercourse, abdominal pains, etc), as an inevitable part of womanhood. The women remain quiet even when they are aware of the fact that the infection has been brought upon them by their husbands, whom they know, have been keeping multiple sex partners. In traditional Tiv society, like in most cultures in Nigeria; men have unlimited rights of sexual access to their wives. Any woman who tries to resist this and go against it, will not enjoy the support of her fellow women. Whereas, the husband would have the course and liberty to flirt about and even keep women as it pleases him.

Lack of access to education and the issue of early marriage on the part of female children, results to a pathetic situation where the girl child is completely lost as far as access to knowledge is and information is concerned. When the girl child is married to a partner who cares and decides to send his wife to school, then is a different thing. This also implies the wife too must have been obedient, loving and respectful to the husband. When the chances are slim and the opposite is the case and she gets married to someone who does not care and does not have value for education, she remains a nonentity and a liability. For development to thrive in Tiv society, literacy education must have to be taken serious, the education of the girl child viewed fundamental and given utmost attention when this is not done, it means development will be slow. In other words, lack of access to education on the part of women results to ignorance, poverty and penury which have negative impact on the lives of the female children and women in particular. Tiv society would only function, develop and continue to remain holistic when female children are perceived and given equal attention as their male counterpart to educational attainment.

Interestingly, as society continues to change through persistent social changes, influence from literacy education, Christian religious activities of some parents, advocacy role by some civil society organizations such as women in Nigeria (WIN), national women organisations and others; there have been significant changes in the pattern of socialisation of children in Tiv society. Though, the process may be done on the bases of gender division of labour; both the female and male children are given equal opportunities in terms of access to education, socialisation into performing domestic roles and functions in the family and so on. Among the elite Christian family members, the girl child is not viewed as someone who should be sent out into early marriage to facilitate the education of the male children. Similarly, the female children are equally given the opportunity to receive leadership training alongside the male children among the elite Christian family members.

Conclusion

The paper explored on issues of changing pattern in the socialization of children in Tiv society from a socio cultural and gender perspective. The paper expatiates on the concepts of changing pattern, socialization of children, socio-cultural perception, and gender. It adopts the structural functionalist theoretical perspective to anchor study discourse, and has however, argued that, children are viewed as integral components of human society. This is so because they own the future society as future leaders. The essence of socialisation therefore should not be on the bases of making a particular sex (male) more superior over the other (female). Socialisation should be done on the bases of division of labour to ensure

differentiation is effective and efficient and role enactment or performance between male and female complement each other.

Recommendations

1. There is the need for a socio-cultural reorientation in Tiv society especially on the socialisation of children as regards gender division of labour, which entails that differentiation between male and female is to ensure efficiency, and to emphasise that role performance between male children is aimed at complementing each other.
2. There is also the need for a change in the perception of children regarding the view that the male gender is superior the female gender in Tiv society.
3. The place of women in decision making process both at the family and community levels should be addressed in Tiv society, just like the educated elites, particularly Christian family members do in the process of socialising their children as prescribed by the Christian teachings.

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