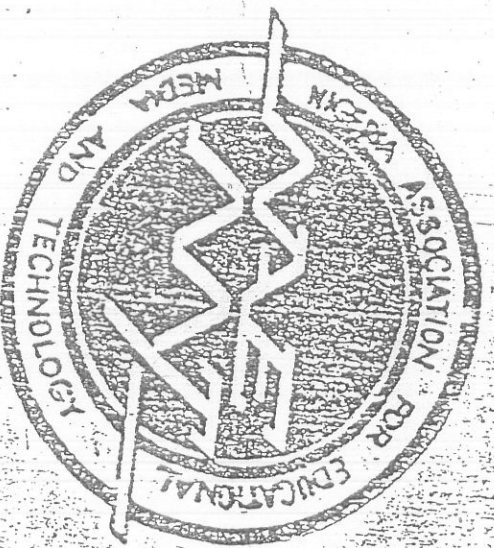


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The Journal of Educational Media and Technology (JEMT), a biannual Journal of Educational Media and Technology (JEMT) accepts articles in the following areas:

- a. Health and Physical Education
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- c. Mass Communication
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Special consideration will be given to research articles in the major areas listed above, and such research articles should have particular implications for Audio Visual Communications in education in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general.

1. Papers must be type-written, double-spaced on quarto sheets, and typed on one side only. They should be accompanied by abstracts of not more than 150 words in length.
2. Papers, type-written as indicated above should be between 10 and 20 pages in length, excluding abstracts.
3. Details of reference to each work cited (including sources of tables and diagrams) must be given.
4. The Journal has adopted the following bibliographical description.

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vii. number of pages to which reference is made, preceded by "p" or "pp" followed by a full stop.

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- iv. the date of the issue or volume from which reference is made followed by a comma;
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5. Tables and figures should be kept to the barest minimum.
6. Footnotes are not allowed.
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9. Articles for either the March or September issue of the Journal of Educational Media and Technology (JEMT) should be submitted in six copies to:

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EDITORIAL

These twin issues of JEMT Volume Three Numbers two and three are products of our 1992 annual convention. That Ilorin convention was held from 3rd - 6th of May 1992 at the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMRTI). In spite of the economic situations in the country and the scarcity of fuel across the nation at that time, members showed up in large numbers and more papers were harvested than we can possibly accommodate in these two issues of our Journal.

The two issues were initially planned to be published as two books in line with the sub-themes of the conference:

- (a) Horizons of Educational Technology in Nigeria; and
- (b) Developing the Nigerian Women: Educational Technology Perspectives.

However, funds were inadequate to prosecute the book project hence these two Journal issues. Readers, Researchers and Students will be greatly enriched by the multi-dimensional approach given to the subject of Educational Technology in these twin issues of our Journal of Educational Media and Technology.

Editor

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 THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN WOMEN'S AWARENESS FOR
 DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In most countries of the world, the position of women compared to that of their male counterparts raises questions in spite of research reports which prove that much of what has been considered inherent differences among men and women, are results of social and cultural conditioning women are still relegated to the background.

This paper therefore advocates increased awareness for Nigerian women, through the mass media to enhance the contribution of women to national development.

INTRODUCTION

Through out the world, most women face social constraints. Women have been conditioned to a stereotypic way of thinking and behaviour. Change, being different and complex thing, finds many women still holding on tenaciously to that which is stereotypical and refusing to move with the tide of time.

In Nigeria, today as in most countries of the world, women are not on the same "pedestal" either in the work place a outside it, with men. Most often then not, the most well-paid jobs and occupations of high esteem are held by men. Women are integrated to the background in almost every sphere of ***. A women's place is said to be in the home; as a wife, mother and homemaker. She

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needs not be in an achievement setting in the work place or in a career. Some occupations are tagged "for me", while others are tagged "for women". The social milieu in most African cultural settings prevents the woman from enjoying intellectual improvement or exploration.

Psychological and those in related fields have argued the point, that much of what has been considered to be inherent differences among men and women, are in fact, the results of social and cultural conditioning in developed parts of the world; where research has been on for many years on this, stereotypes about women are "breaking" down. And so, many women, in many spheres of life, have proved themselves to be capable and to be as competent as men. Examples abound in the likes of Margaret Thatcher and other women who were Prime Ministers and Heads of State of their countries at different periods in history. There is also Valentine "Forestikova, the woman astronaut, who proved that "space belongs to men and women alike". (Onabamire, 1980). In intellectual fields, women have won honours of excellence, just like men. However, this is not to say that women in those parts of the world, have won what has been termed "the battle of the sexes." But, many women in spite of great odds against them, have excelled in their various fields.

in Africa and the developing worlds, of which

Nigeria is one the relegation of women to the background of national activities and development is worse. A black mother's dream of a better world is believed to be reposed in her son, not her daughter. For example, a Kenyan poet, Joseph Kariuku, once wrote a poem that went thus:

Black Mother

Rocks her Son.....

She keeps marvelous dreams

She dreams of marvelous worlds

where her son would go to school

To school, where men study (p. 218).

According to the poet, the School is where men study. Not where women study and not, where men and women study but a place exclusively for men. One is apt to ask: where do women study? Any wonder then, that today, like in many developing parts of the world, many are yet to appreciate women education.

There is also the subtle limit as to which field she should go into (if she ever enters school) and how far she is supposed to go, academically. The Stereotypic occupational fields include nursing, teaching secretarial studies and the like. And of course, a woman is not expected to excel in a chosen career or academic field. If she does, she stands the risk of being labelled. Herein, lies the fear of access syndrome for many women.

As noted, many women in developed parts of the world have with field societal prejudice to excel in their various fields. Women's awareness needs to be raised, for the same to be said of women in Nigeria. They need the enlightenment and training that would give them positive self image and self-confidence, in themselves as women and their capability. It is probably for this reason that the Federal Government of Nigeria deemed it proper, to have the National Women's Commission, and Programmes like the Better Life for Rural Women which has led to a focus on women and their improvement in National life. But there is still a dearth of information for the average Nigeria woman as to what is possible as a female and how that which is possible can be made possible. Herein, lies the role of the mass-media, in making meaningful contributions towards the raising of women's awareness. Women in National Development:

Rosen and Aneshensel (1978) once argued the point that the "Striking" under-representation of women in the higher strata of the American occupational structure cannot be explained in terms of job discrimination alone, but that the effects of sex role. Socialization of educational and occupational expectations must also be taken into account. Females are said to be socialized towards the domestic goals and away from occupations which might put them in competition with men. The above

argument can also be made of the Nigerian society. For fundamental changes to be effected, there is the need for the socialization that would be seen as aspiration, success and competition as being wrong for the female. The mass-media, as a powerful tool of information, which has the potential of reaching every home, can help effect necessary changes.

Erroneous beliefs such as that of Wipper (1972) that "men know all the problem - So let the women.. solve their home social problems with their husbands and parents, and men solve the public problems with the government, politically and socially, and the belief that women are unimportant in development have led to their being described as "the neglected human resources for development or, the forgotten factor in economic development". (E.C.A. 1975). But women need not be the neglected human resources.

Development involves social and economic development, which leads to an improvement in the quality of a nation's citizens' life. Women if equipped with the necessary tools can participate in the production of the nation's wealth. They can participate in the decision-making bodies of the Country and help effect necessary and desired political, economic and social change.

The participation of women in development is very important, as development can proceed most rapidly only

if the nation's human resources, either male or female are given the opportunity to participate fully in the development process of the country. (Alele - Williams, 1986). And, sustainable development can only be achieved when women are in the mainstream of the national life, and participating fully in the nation's development (Akande, 1991). Women should be involved in the nation's decision - making bodies, as already noted, not only to make it possible for them to be participants of political, social and economic change but more importantly, to make it possible for them to take care of the needs of women in the country, because there is no doubt about it, that women would be more receptive to the needs of women than would the most understanding of men.

The above is not to say that women have not been contributing to the nation's development. They are actively engaged in farming, food processing, trading, weaving and pottery. Few, equipped with the necessary qualifications, occupy eminent positions. Women, are presently making their contributions within their own limited scope; educational and cultural limits inclusive. They can however make greater contributions, if they are equipped educationally and psychologically.

The Mass Media and Stereotypes

The term mass media refers to the different means of

Imparting information and knowledge. It refers most importantly to magazines, newspaper, the radio and the television. It is a powerful tool for information dissemination and has the potential of influencing enormous number of people. In Nigeria, especially in the urban settings, television is becoming almost a universal feature of modern households. In view of its prevalence, it is necessary to delve into its social and psychological influences.

Laboratory and field experiments, and correlational surveys have shown that television viewing can influence one's self image and behaviour. Several studies have reported relationship between claimed amount of television viewing and strength of traditional sex-role beliefs. (Copeland and Slater, 1985; Morgan, 1982). Descriptive analyses of programming in the west indicate that television is characterized by pronounced patterns of Stereotyping (Signorielli, 1984). Women are also said to be numerably grossly outnumbered by men in many categories of programmes. In programmes where there is numerical balance, women enjoy a much narrower range of roles than men. Further, certain personality characteristics are said to be over-emphasized for women and others by men, with men usually judged more favourable. (Butler and Paisley, 1980).

Researchers such as Cantor, (1978) and a report by

the United States Commission on Civil Right (1977) have shown by their reports on the contents of television programmes, that television presents the "male - world". Both sexes are portrayed stereotypically. Males are shown to be more active, likely and to take the lead and control of situations, while females are portrayed as passive helpless and different to males. Condry (1981) therefore was of the viewpoint that television programmes inadvertently teach ... about gender roles, attitudes and values. Tuchman, (1978) went further to say that such stereotyped media portrayals, condition and restrict the range of opportunities for girls and what they believe are open to them when they grow up.

At present in Nigeria, a perusal of newspapers and magazines would reveal that though more attention is being focussed on women, that has been the case in the past, more still needs to be done. What one finds on the so-called "feminine" pages of our newspapers and magazines, is attention to what can be termed "irrelevancies" like teaching how to cook some dishes, local or foreign, (which one can easily get the recipe if need be from any of the cooking books around, or teaching how to make some cloth designs and how to make-up. One can hardly find any mention on how to succeed as a woman in a career or in a male-dominated profession and the like. The growing woman can hardly get anything on how to

find her working in the world as a woman, rather what she's taught is how to be the sexiest women around and how to catch and hold a man. One wonders why some print media are ever "happy" to print nude women and to pour encomiums on their body while the same is not made to apply to males. But such "sex-objects" of women in the image women are made to see of themselves in the print media. Further, one always find write-ups on how to satisfy your man as a woman, but one may not find write-up on how to satisfy your woman as a man. If there is any mention of such at all, it is always in passing. One is sometimes apt to ask - Doesn't the woman need to be satisfied? Their fictional stories also go stereotypical in the portrayal of women. Women are helpless, weak, subservient and the like. The woman who steps out of her "bound" gets punished for it in the stories. It does not take much to know what lessons a young woman gets to learn from such stories. Such are what the print media focus more attention on.

For the radio and television, the same stereotypical trend goes. A look at the "feminine" programmes called by different names by different stations would reveal discussion focusing on how to cook different menu, how to keep your man and the like. There is yet, any known programme on, for instance how to keep your woman, because the societal perception is that the man can and

should have as many women as he can keep at his beck and call. The woman's needs (or the women's needs) are unimportant. Radio drama presentations also portray women in the stereotype; helpless, weak, subservient etc. Women hardly occupy leadership positions. And dominant roles are played by men while women are numerically, always outnumbered by men. However, at recent times, there are certain drama presentations (like "checkmate" on the national television network) that have tried not to go stereotypical, by giving a woman the lead role and executive of a family business as against the norm ways of behaviour by men and women, most often goes stereotypical too. The women should be weak, while the men are authoritative. Documentary programmes almost never remember to mention a woman who may have excelled in the areas pertinent to the point under discussion.

The children's programmes or programmes for the youth, do not usually deviate from the norm of the other programmes. Stereotypical roles, ways of behaviour and action is most often the trend. Again, even advertisements portray women stereotypically. Women are most often then not the classroom teachers, they are secretaries serving "executive men" at meetings with coffee. They are the cooks in the kitchen, and waiting to serve their men, who may be sitting at table with the children, or reading newspapers in the sitting room with

the children, and usually, too, with the male children. One wonders if the day would come, when one would see a woman, "after a hard day's work" being served with lunch or dinner by her man, while she too smiles lovingly at her man.

Though, it can be argued that television and radio drama presentations are not "real", their stories have need to see that, that which is put out on air for people to consume, meets with the current dispensation on women. The same goes for the print media.

The Role of the Mass-Media:

The mass-media as an important tool of disseminating information, is an important socialization, agent, that has the potential of influencing people greatly. Moreover, in almost every home in Nigeria, one would find the people in possession of at least, either the newspaper, magazine, radio or the television.

In the rural areas of Nigeria, where essential modern facilities like electricity and good roads are unavailable, in most probability, people would be in possession of the radio. Where the newspapers are television can therefore not reach, one would find that at least, one medium (the radio) would "get" there. Therefore, the mass-media, especially the radio should be used most effectively in the campaign for improving women's lots. This becomes very necessary, because as

noted by Onabamiro (1980), the struggle for equality with men by women has been an uphill task in history. The mass-media can play meaningful role in the struggle within the Nigerian Society.

In playing such meaningful roles, they should focus on what women in advance countries have been able to do and achieve, and what they are still trying to do, to prove to the Nigerian women that they too can indeed achieve and succeed in their chosen goals. In line with this, the mass-media should not portray women in just the "feminine" work roles like nursing, and should not be confined to just the home. If women are portrayed in non-stereotypic way, it will have the effect of changing the females thinking and attitude towards success and achievement, outside the home, and in any field. Women should also not be portrayed as being helpless and weak, as is often the case. Moreover, they need to be shown to be capable of control and to have leadership qualities.

Furthermore, they need to focus attention on women in leadership positions and women who are achieving in the so called men's field within the Country. This would help portray that leadership and achievement is not necessarily, a man's world. They also need to help propagate that being in a leadership position or in an achievement setting or being successful in any field does not imply that you have to be a failure in the "home-

making". They need to allay the fears of many women that if they are achievement-oriented, they would find it difficult to get a husband or that men would not appreciate them. This is necessary since it has been proved that the fear of success syndrome in women have been found to inhibit achievement in them (Horner, 1968). Also there should be special adult programmes for women who can no longer go to school, but who need to widen their horizon and get themselves literate. Generally, women activities should be relayed as much as possible. Moreover, portraying women as sex objects should be discouraged because of its negative effects.

Also, parent should be taught to socialize and bring up their children in a gender - aschematic way. This will go a long way at giving women a positive self image. Moreover, men too, should be encouraged to give a "Supportive System" to the women in their life, either when they are doing well at home, or outside the home. When the "Support - System" is there for a women, the in most probability, her fear of success, if she has any, will be greatly reduced.

The national stands to gain a lot by raising the consciousness of women. When more and more women are educated, they would be better able to educate their children right from the home and give them a better sense of direction. Herein lies the truism that when you

educate a woman, you educate the nation. When women's consciousness is raised, they would be able to contribute their quota in any area of the national life; politically, socially and economically. Thus, more and more women would not only be aware of their civic rights, but would be able to make significant contributions to the political life of the country.

Conclusion

Though change is a complex and difficult phenomenon, changing societal conceptions of female roles and raising the awareness of women, can be brought about most rapidly with the help of the mass-media.

The mass-media specialists need to make sure that they put out for consumption, is not at variance with the effort of the government, at giving women, a positive self image and at raising their level of consciousness, moreso, if the females are not to get *** at different angles which can lead to a confused self image; as to what should be and what is possible for them. If the mass-media in the Country complement the efforts of the government, the "wheel of change" at improving the lot of the female folks will move faster, and who knows, that which will take Nigeria into a technological age, may well come from a woman. And, no doubt, the "wheel of national progress" will move faster with more and more women, contributing their quota to national development.

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