GENDER INEQUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA: A SOCIO-RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
Gender issues in our contemporary African culture have been in existence. The socio-religious and cultural effects of patriarchy on contemporary African Women (South Eastern Nigeria as a scope of the study) have been in existence. Women have been marginalized from the cultural, political, socio-economic and religious dimensions of African society. This paper discovered that gender issue starts from the family. In the family, a male child is being celebrated and handled as being precious and tender over the girl child. The male child is groomed in such a way that he has domineering power over the girl child. This domineering power of male over female make our females depend more on men without thinking and finding a way of developing themselves. However, in our contemporary culture, family and friends make mockery of a man who has only female children, even the female children are being deprived of sharing in their father's inheritance/property. The recent government approval of right for females to share in their family inheritance, is not working in most areas in Africa, especially in the remote areas. This research discovered that lack of inadequate education, information and religious belief promotes gender disparity in Africa which greatly affects women. This research recommended that women be empowered, enlightened and handle with care as with their male counterpart.
Keywords: Patriarchy, Woman, Culture, Religion

Introduction

Gender issues as it affects women have been a food for taught in our contemporary African culture. This research will be using the following words: disparity, issues, inequality, interchangeably as they all mean almost the same thing. This research examined this gender issues more from the religious and cultural point of view. It was discovered that gender issues are rooted in the cultural and religious norms. According to Oluwagbemi-Jacob and Uduma (2015):

> Pictures of masculinities and their contrasting femininities are painted in such a way that everything masculine is considered to be important, valued, and rewarded while the feminine aspect is assumed to be less important, less valued, and more often than not goes unrewarded

There is this believe that everything about female is inferior, oppressed, exploited and disadvantaged. These impressions are being gathered through reading of feminist texts especially, that of Western authors. In collaboration to this, Dorathy (2015), states:

> One has to be cautious with such generalizations as evidence has shown that they are not true of women in all cultures and at all times. Traditional Igbo society of South east Nigeria provides one with a test case of a culture where the generalization of female inferiority does not hold.

African culture, the birth of a male child is celebrated more than that of a female child. Male child is valued more than a female child to the extent that a man that has only female children is not only mocked but is seen as weak and not active. Male children are treated and most valued than the female children, and they are exempted from certain house chores such as sweeping, cooking and so on. Odusanya (2023) in collaboration with this states that, "it is unthinkable for a boy child to involve himself with household chores or to be seen to help his sisters in the kitchen, to do so would be interpreted to mean that he is becoming less a man and might even be mocked by his peers" He also quotes Oyekanmi and Moliki (2021):

> In the Traditional African imagery, marriage seems to be the proper women's end goal, she must be meek and humble, not speak when men speak, never challenge his authority, and never look into the eye of her husband or leader because that would be highly disrespectful, be respectful and quiet, never to challenge authority.

These are as a result of misplaced information. Women are not really being treated as second class citizens; rather women see themselves as inferior to men. This is what the society made them to believe by according men more prestigious post than women. Women become dependent on the male counterpart economically and financially as a result of the orientation that they should be under men. Nzegwu (2004) in Dorathy (2015) "disagreed with the views that evaluate women as second rate or persons that play the second fiddle". Nzegwu (2004) "maintained that in Western Igbo land, which is an achievement oriented society, individuals (both males and females) are expected to be industrious and to excel."

Because of gender inequality, girls become exposed to domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse (child marriage), poor education, and unwanted pregnancy and health problems. The reason is because, they have the mentality of believing that without their male counterparts, they cannot make it, thereby following them about as gold diggers to gather from them. Wicked males use that opportunity to harm them. This research purposes to find out solutions to these disparities among genders.

This research is limited to South Eastern part of Nigeria. This work involved two major areas of data collection namely primary sources which include journals, periodicals and secondary sources which include documented and literary works.

Definition of Terms

Gender: In African cultural context, gender is an avenue for conducting one's actions in an alignment with cultural expectations: although, African continent is diverse in

culture and values, yet the notion of women being the subordinate and weaker sex is uniformity. (Animasalu, 2020, Okolo & Nwachukwu, 2022).

Gender Equality: Gender equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Gender Parity: Gender parity means that each gender is not represented equally. It also means the absence of gender balance. It is an instrument at the service of equality, which consists in ensuring the access of women and men to the same opportunities, rights, opportunities to choose, material conditions while respecting their specificities.

Gender Inequality: Definitions.net states that gender inequality denotes the unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender. The term acknowledges that men and women are not equal due to cultural, biological, and psychological norms. They are treated disadvantageously under the same circumstances. Gender inequality according to Jayne Leonard (2021), refers to "the differences between genders in terms of status, power, wealth, health, and employment… gender inequality is the product of sexism, which is prejudice or discrimination against people based on sex or gender. It primarily impacts women and girls, with consequences that begin at birth".

However, Jayne Leonard listed the following as the way gender inequality affects women globally, in comparison with men:

1. Lower rates of schooling and employment
2. Less pay for similar work
3. Higher levels of stress
4. Higher rates of unpaid work, such as caring for the sick relatives
5. Exposure to higher rates of sexual assault, intimate partner abuse, and gender – based violence
6. Lack of representation in government

Culture: Culture can be defined as a way of life of a group of people: the behaviours, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. Culture is the systems of knowledge shared by a group of people. Spradley (2016) in collaboration with this defined culture as "all the ways of life including arts, beliefs, and institutions of a population that is passed down from generation to generation". Culture is the way of life for an entire society which includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, arts, and so on. James Spradley (2016) defined culture as "the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behaviour".

Religion: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary defined Religion as "a belief in a god or gods and the activities that are connected with this belief, such as praying or worshipping in a building such as a church or temple" Religion is a belief

in a divine or superhuman power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe. Mark Stibich (2022) defined religion as "a set of organized beliefs, practices, and systems that most often relate to the belief and worship of a controlling force, such as a personal god or another supernatural being".

Gender Theories

Various theories of gender are to be espoused in the course of this study. They include:

The Human Development Perspective Theory

A more recent theory emphasizes the conversion of economic development into a cultural process of human development that gives rise to an emancipative worldview, reflected in self-expression values that emphasize human choice and autonomy, including the choices and autonomy of women (Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003; Welzel, Inglehart & Klingemann 2003). This rise in emancipative orientations develops mass expectations targeted at making elites responsive and inclusive. In this way, rising emancipative values lead to increases in women's empowerment throughout society (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005) and in parliament (Welzel 2003; Inglehart, Norris & Welzel 2002). At its core, the human development perspective links social modernization to emancipative values through changes in existential constraints. The theory highlights changes in modern societies particularly conducive to women's empowerment and therefore establishes a link between cultural modernity and publics that value greater equality between genders. Ultimately, Welzel (2003) ties the modern human resources crucial to the human development sequence to economic development. But in this view the effect of economic development is more indirect. Inglehart & Norris (2003) find that cultural modernity holds real, positive consequences for women.

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a type of conflict theory that examines inequalities in gender-related issues. It uses the conflict approach to examine the maintenance of gender roles and inequalities. Radical feminism, in particular, considers the role of the family in perpetuating male dominance. In patriarchal societies, men's contributions are seen as more valuable than those of women. Patriarchal perspectives and arrangements are widespread and taken for granted. As a result, women's viewpoints tend to be silenced or marginalized to the point of being discredited or considered invalid.

The Concept of Gender

Jane Pilcher & Imelda Whelehan (2005) stated:

> The concept of gender, as we now use it came into common parlance during the early 1970s. it was used as an analytical category to draw a line of demarcation between biological sex differences and the way

> these are used to inform behaviours and competencies, which are then assigned as either 'masculine' or 'feminine'. The purpose of affirming a sex/gender distinction was to argue that the actual physical or mental effects of biological differences had been exaggerated to maintain a patriarchal system of power and to create a consciousness among women that they were naturally better suited 'domestic' roles.

Oakley (1972) in Jane Pilcher et el (2005) noted how western cultures seem most prone to exaggeration of gender differences and argues that the 'social efficiency' of our present gender roles centre's round women's role as housewife and mother. There is also the more vaguely conceived belief that any tampering with these roles would diminish happiness, but this type of argument has a blatantly disreputable history and should have been discarded long ago" (Oakley 1972:192). Jane Pilcher & Imelda Whelehan (2005) define gender order as:

> A patterned system of ideological and material practices, performed by individuals in a society, through which power relations between women and men are made, remade, as meaningful. It is through the gender order of a society that forms or codes of masculinities and femininities are created and recreated and relations between them are organized.

Jane Pilcher & Imelda Whelehan (2005) define gender segregation as that which,

> …occurs when women and men are located separately from one another, while otherwise participating in a broadly similar set of activities. For example, in some countries, while there may be educational provision for both boys and girls, rather than being educated together in the same institutional location, they are instead deliberately segregated on the grounds of gender and are educated separately, in 'single-sex' schools or universities

Gender according to March, Smith and Mukhopadhyay (1999) in Okolo E. and Nwachukwu C.C. (2022) is referred to "the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in families, societies and cultures". Kanu (2011) was of the opinion that "the concept of gender is vital because it reveals how women's subordination or men's domination is socially constructed". According to WHO (2017) in Okolo et el (2022) "gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between masculinity and femininity". Ogbuagu in Ogbuagu and Akpuru (2005) (ed) explained that gender is socially constructed for the purpose of allocating power, duties, responsibilities, statues and roles in any given social milieu or context. It is universally conceptualized either as an organizing concept which can be inoffensively interpreted as neutral (that is without bias) or as a value laden concept which is applied to impasse discriminatory practices against group by another within a given settings" Gender does not mean focusing solely on women or females but rather on the inequalities between male and female, and should not be confused with feminism or women's studies (Kanu in Okolo et el (2022). Levesque (2011) in Okolo et el (2022) sees gender role as "a social role encompassing a range of behaviours and

attitudes that are generally, considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex. It is usually centered on conceptions of masculinity and femininity, although there are exceptions on variations. The specifics regarding these gendered expectations may vary substantially among cultures".

Gender in African Culture

According to Tydskr (2015) in Okolo et el, in the Traditional African imaginary," women are expected to be quiet when men speak, respectable by being respectful to men (especially to male leadership), good mothers of the nation and not to challenge authority in general. African women politicians are expected to be quiet and not challenge authority". Maathai (2007) in Okolo et el (2022) stated that "a proper woman in the African tradition has always been imagined within the context of the family. She is expected to accept marriage and have children because marriage is assumed to be the end goal for most African women". Maathai (2007) asserts:

> The proper African woman should not speak up therefore was not only a creation of colonialism, it had also been institutionalized within the masculinity state by virtue of their patriarchal inheritance from African traditions. The silencing of oppositional views is equivalent to the ordering that patriarchal societies have done to women. Hence a proper African woman is imagined to exist within an ideal African family composed of a real loving husband or father who is usually the head of the household.

In the African culture, women are not supposed to be too educated; in fact, the question of education sometimes brought division between elite and grassroots women's organization (Tudskr, 2015, Kanu 2015). According to Chinweizu (1990), "women have the power of the kitchen which is always passed on to the daughters to make sure that such power is not taken away from them. The male child is always allowed to be with the father while the female ones are to be with the mother in the kitchen to learn to cook". From this Chinweizu's opinion, it is now dictated that the African culture designates the kitchen and cooking to women while the men are to be served. Based on this, a man that cooks is termed as woman because he does the work of a woman. However, women can do all that men can do only that they were exempted from doing such chores that will expose their private parts: such chores like, climbing a tree, splitting fire wood, bending down to sweep the vast area of the compound.

Lesser Bulumberg (1984), in Dorathy (2015), points that "culture produced a category of highly resourceful, and economically empowered women who could take male titles and wielded a lot of influence in their families and communities". In collaboration to this, Acholonu (1995) affirms that "what determine social status in all parts of Africa, are economic power and hardly gender". In continuation, Acholonu (1995) states "a rich woman, an educated woman, or enlightened woman who is outspoken, hardworking, and fearless, can hardly expect to be looked down upon by any member of the society or of her own immediate family. On the contrary, the

family, community looks upon her and accords her recognition through traditional honours and titles "

Gender discrimination is prohibited under almost every human rights treaty. This includes international laws providing for equal gender rights between men and women, as well as those specifically dedicated to the realization of women's rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women– considered the international bill of rights for women. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future. Eradicating gender issues means a world where women and men, girls and boys all enjoy equal rights, resources, opportunities and protections.

Empowering girls from the start is proven to have lasting and compounding benefits over the course of their lives. When girls are supported to be active in civic and political spaces, in particular, they are empowered with the tools and skills they need to be drivers of positive change in their families and communities. Girls are the experts of their own experiences, priorities and needs, and are powerful catalysts for a world where gender equality flourishes. Promoting gender equality is also central to ensuring child protection and the fulfillment of child rights, as abuse, neglect, violence against women and exploitation both reflect and reinforce gender inequalities

Causes of Gender Inequality in African Contemporary Society

Gender discrimination, starting in childhood, continues to rob children of their childhoods and limit their chances – disproportionately affecting the world's girls. A girl is far more likely to be denied her rights, kept from school, forced to marry and subjected to violence – her voice undervalued, if it's heard at all. This assault on childhood also deprives nations of the energy and talent they need to progress. Culture and Religion are the main sources of gender issues/disparity as well as architect of oppression for women in our contemporary society. (March Smyth and Mukhopadhyay (1999) in Okolo E. and Nwachukwu C.C. (2022) The conception of what are typically feminine or masculine as in character, abilities, expectations, affects female in a special way. That is why most of our females comfortably dwell in the training they received from their parents. These ones forgot that change is available and ultimate for a better living,

For further explanations, we can say that our culture accord preferential treatment to male children, while female children where provided with fewer survival advantages. Fewer women are in political carrier**.** This is as a result of gender inequality. Female children are often subjected to early marriage. Women often times become the victims of violence and sexual assault both at work and home and our culture is not helping matters. Poverty makes women to do low paid job and depend more on male. As a result of poverty, most women got involved to prostitution and child trafficking. One

may ask. "Why is it that women in most cases do not support each other by voting them into power or assist them gain one post or the other?". The answer is: as a result of orientation they got from family concerning the superiority of men over women. Secondly, one may say that there are women in posts that matters in our society, this cannot be disputed. But, if not for gender disparity, more women would have assumed higher posts in our society.

Effects of Gender Inequality

Psychological Effect of Gender Inequality

Jayne Leonard (2021) stated that "some of the psychological effects of gender inequality include higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and post- traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in women and people of marginalized genders". She further states that "people can experience mental health conditions as a direct result of gender based discrimination or violence, for example. They can also develop conditions directly as a result of exposure to socioeconomic inequality, chronic stress, and harmful messages in the media". Women provide unofficial care to family more than men. This caring can negatively impact a person's mental and physical health. Experience of sexual harassment and its fear have damaging effect on mental health of female gender. Gender inequality causes women to be poorer, have less education and face more health risks than men. Women have less autonomy over their decision making, less access to resources and information than men to inform these decisions.
When girls are empowered to lead their lives, speak their minds and determine their futures, everyone benefits. History suggests that when we fight gender oppression, societies are more stable, safe and prosperous, with happier, better educated citizens.

Religious Influence on Gender Issues

Rwafa (2016) laments that "factors such as biblical notions of the creation of man and the place of women in the society have strengthened the age – old patriarchal systems of local culture and encouraged and justified indirectly, the oppression of females in our contemporary society". Bawa (2019) observes that "challenging conservative interpretation of the bible is fundamental to dismantling oppressive gender norms. That women and activists are thus encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity to challenge and dismantle or discourage oppressive structures, irrespective of their origins". Rwafa (2016) argues that when young women acquire education, and are poised to purse rewarding careers; these women are considered as problematic because, according to patriarchal dictates, they are bound to be disrespectful to their husbands. He asserts that these religious stereotypes built upon the gender roles of women are damaging and undermine the capacity of women to contribute positively to their societies.

Reducing religious tensions may improve gender equality. However, religious framed social structure in faviour of males would accelerate gender inequality. Unfortunately, religion has been proven to maintain and support gender imbalance in the society. These roles are hardly challenged since religion is believed to represent a sacred power. Although, gender imbalance is not the direct teaching of the church, the perceptions of some church congregations, derived from the bible, have been their life inspirations for years. Religion and culture could be said to remain the source of gender inequality and oppression for most women in Africa.

Gender disparity is skewed towards women as they had a manual of how to do rightly behaviour and live a life in accordance with the patterns drafted for their way of life by their male counterparts. This arguably pushes the socioeconomic gender disparity as well as the multi-dimensional poverty index a notch higher since these women, stay at home spouses cannot adequately cater for their economic welfare without their husband's support (Temitoyo Omotola 2023). Religiously, the reputations of women are determined. For instance, in the Christian religion, Apostle Paul instructed that women be silent in the church (1 Timothy 2:12 and Corinthians 14:34). Religious practices contributed to the high rate of oppressing of women during widowhood.

The church has contributed to the gender issues. This can be seen in the bible 'woman should be under her husband …' this is a sorry situation women found themselves in as a result of their religious doctrine. Such doctrines according to Adanna Chinedu Madu (2010) "have only succeeded in molding women into servitude or subservience to their husbands, brothers and male friends" Juschka, Darlene (2010) asserts:

> Sex differences in religion can be classified as either "internal" or "external". Internal religious issues are studied from the perspective of a given religion, and might include religious beliefs and practices about the roles and rights of men and women in government, education and worship;… External religious issues can be broadly defined as an examination of a given religion from an outsider's perspective, including possible clashes between religious leaders and laity

Blau, Eleanor (1974) states too that:

> Some religions restrict leadership to males. The ordination of women has been a controversial issue in some religions where either the rite of ordination, or the role that an ordained person fulfills, has traditionally been restricted to men because of cultural or theological prohibitions. However, in the 19th century, some Christian denominations have ordained women. Among those who do not, many believe it is forbidden by 1 Timothy 2. Some of those denominations ordain women to the diaconate, believing this is encouraged by 1 Timothy 3–4.

But then, within the religious circle, there are certain jobs they are being deprived of. In our African traditional Religion, women although assumed certain posts, there are certain things they are limited to do. Example is breaking of kolanut.

Hunter, David G., (2018). States:

> Within Christianity, the two notable views on gender roles in a marriage are complementarianism and egalitarianism. The complementariansim view of marriage is widely accepted in Christianity, where the husband is viewed as the leader and the wife is viewed as the follower. Essentially, the man is given more of a headship role and the woman is viewed as a supporting partner. In Genesis 3, Adam named his wife Eve ("life") because she "was the mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20).

French feminist and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1949) saw religion as a tool of deception rather than a tool of direct control in society. She compared the religious deception of women to that of the working class in Marxist theory. She argued that religion is 'compensation' for women for their second-class status in society. That Traditional religions lift motherhood to divine status, thus deceiving women into thinking that the best choice for them is to stay home and out of public life. According to radical feminists, the role of mother and housewife is the most oppressive as it comes with financial dependence on men, and exploitation through unpaid domestic labour. Religion makes mothers and housewives believe they are more special than men for adopting the divine role of childcare and home-making. However, this is a false belief; in reality, men control both religion and society. If a woman attempts to step outside of her role, she would meet harsh opposition and failure.

Cultural Influence on Gender Issues

Culturally, women are home nurturing and onlookers at public gathering or at best entertainers for the male guest of honour (Temitoyo Omotola 2022). Women are being restricted by culture and religion to showcase their power and their talent. Notwithstanding, Women are capable of leadership position. For instance, history made us to understand that Amina of Zaria led men to war and became victorious. Deborah in the Holy Bible went to war with Barack and she won. Our women can also be at the affairs of certain prominent posts and decision making. Culturally, men are highly favoured. A typical African woman should not be too educated, the culture abhours it. Never divorce no matter what, except she wants to be castigated as a bad example with the inability to take a leadership positions, especially in religious settings (Jalloh, 2021). Women are trained to believe that they are inferior to men and that their main work is to be under a man, become obedient and do every house chores, and raise children.

Panacea to the Challenges of Gender Discrimination in Africa

In order to bridge the gender gap in contemporary Africa, the following steps are suggested.

- The church should modify their doctrinal beliefs in order to liberate women from this sorry state and encourage them to take up such jobs, which are culturally, and religious meant for men only. The church should create a ministry where the resources of the rich could be used to take care of the less privileged women. The church should feed the poor women and widows in their church. The church should take charity work in favour of the oppressed women and their children. The church should create empowerment programmes as skills acquisition, small scale business, education, to assist women.

- Women should rise up and refuse the position of second class citizens which the society and culture imposed on them which they accept as a result of ignorance of their worth. Every ill treatment fashioned against women must come to an end such ill treatment of widowhood evil practices, female circumcision, seeing women as baby industry, as sex object, as punching bag, slave, submission to the husband under any condition, even when the husband is determined to kill her.

- In the school, girl-child should be taught that the only difference between her and the boys is that she is a girl and they are boys. She should be taught that as she grows up, she become a mother, while her male counterpart becomes a father. The girl-child should be taught that she is never inferior to the boys, and that she can perform better than the boys. She should be taught that she can do whatever a man can do and even do it better. Girls should get leadership positions in our schools just as their male counterparts. Giving them this privilege will make them feel fulfilled and the confidence that they are all equal with their male counterparts. The girl-child should be informed that all the cultural maltreatment imposed on women is evil. Bearing this in mind will help them get liberated as soon as they grow up.

- Solution to gender problems must start from the home. The family members must not discriminate against male and female child. They should be accorded equal right. House chores must not be for female only; it could be shared equally to both sexes. Domestic duties can be seen as a hobby and what one should do to keep his/her family neat and in order. A female child should be accorded respect and befitting welcome and ceremony as to the male counterpart at birth. Female child should have the right to share in the wealth of the family where she is born. Female child should be encouraged to get any of their choice jobs as of their male counterparts. Female child should not be prevented from going into business or government job to earn for a living, rather they should be encouraged. Men must stop regarding their wives as house-helps or slaves. Men should see their wives as their better half and helper. Female child should have the privilege to be educated.

- Non Governmental Organizations can sensitize women through campaigns concerning their rights as women. They should also initiate human rights enforcement in the court of law on behalf of victimized women for violation of their rights. The government should create ministry for women affairs in order to touch the lives of women socially, economically, and politically. The government should introduce microfinance schemes to assist women in their small scale businesses. They should build skills acquisition centres and fund them adequately. Women should be encouraged to participate in politics. Every discriminating action against women must come to an end. The only way out of the gender inequality problem is expanding women's rights, freedoms, desire to get education and work. Balancing the genders will lead to perfect cooperation of labour opportunities and harmony in the society as well.

Conclusion

Gebara Ivone(2002), states: "gender is a socially learned concept, manifested, institutionalized, and transmitted from generation to generation". This according to Dorathy (2015), "requires individuals to perform their roles, as men and women in conformity with what their culture expects of them". Gender ideas are learned from families, friends, schools, workplace, religious and cultural institutions as well as media. Children learn at a young age that there are distinct expectations for boys and girls. Cross-cultural studies reveal that children are aware of gender roles by age two or three. At four or five, most children are firmly entrenched in culturally appropriate gender roles (Kane 1996). Children acquire these roles through socialization, a process in which people learn to behave in a particular way as dictated by societal values, beliefs, and attitudes. Bardwick and Douvan (1971), state that "a lot of women look down on themselves and evaluate their bodies, personality qualities, and roles as second rate". Bardwick and Douvan (1971) further state "culture values masculine productivity more than female productivity; the essence of the derogation lies in the evaluation of the masculine as the yardstick against which everything is measured". They further state: "masculine endeavours are rewarded and their males who succeed, who acquire money, power and status, which acquire and produce things, achieve competition due celebrated. But the attributes that are associated with femininity such as the enhancement of and stabilization of relationships, as well ass the female creation of life are not highly esteemed by men and women alike." These abnormalities must be corrected because it brought about over dependent of girls on boys, making women look irresponsible and as use and dump.

Historically, women have accepted traditional gender roles. By doing so, they found comfort, guidance, and support through religions and religious communities. Radical feminists argue that Christianity, Judaism, Islam and many other religions evolved in patriarchal societies, where men had been using religious texts and dogmas to justify their superior status in society. Nawal El Saadawi theorized that Islam is not an inherently patriarchal religion, men have just used it to reproduce and spread

patriarchal attitudes and roles. Much of monotheistic religion is interpreted through the male perspective. Women have been rediscovering ancient female-focused religions, myths, and traditions, and have incorporated them into New Age spirituality.

Every religion respects women but they do not advocate liberation in the sense of total equality with men. Religion contributes to the hierarchical gender ideology and people blindly follows the path because of actual influence of religiosity (Seguino & Lovinsky, 2009)

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