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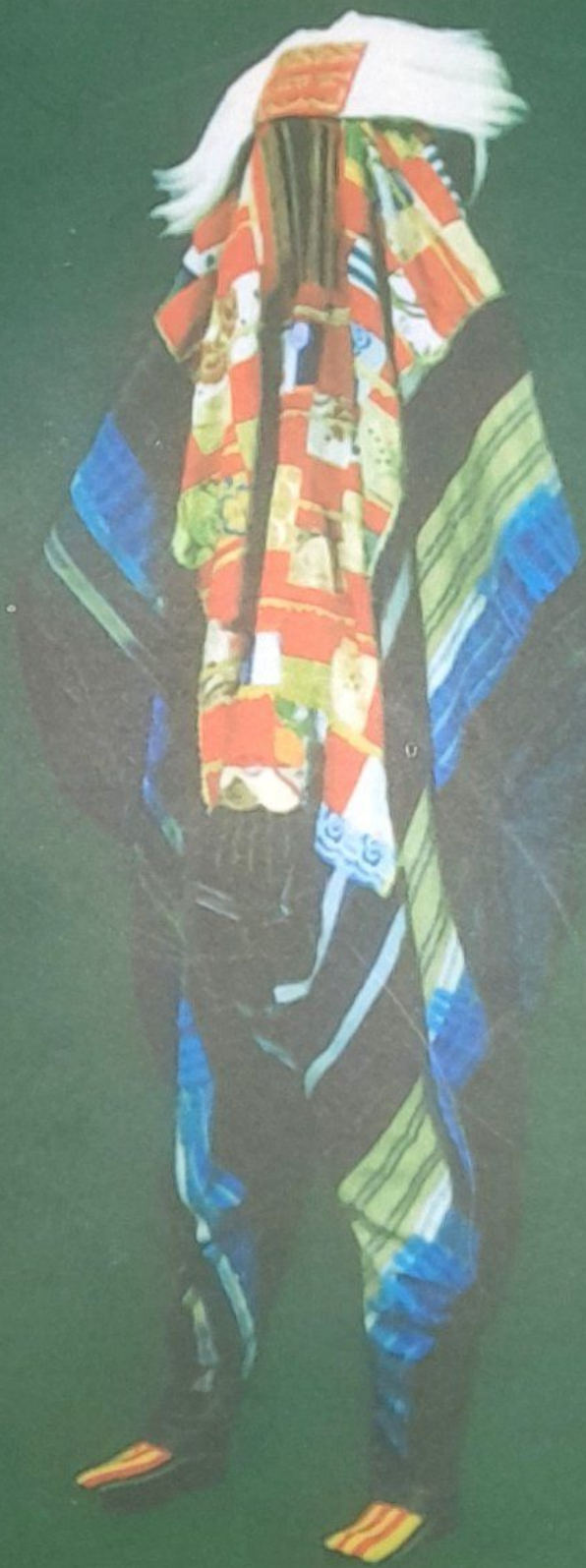

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND MEDIA ARTS, FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA



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Gendered Participation of Women in Dance Education in Nigeria

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Abstract
Dance as an art form is being taught in many Nigerian universities in departments with diverse nomenclatures such as Performing Arts, Theatre Arts, Creative Arts and Dramatic Arts. Dance learning and tutoring is pivotal to the overall knowledge of any performative art because of its connection with other art forms. It has however been generally observed that the number of women, who study and teach dance in Nigerian universities are relatively few compared to men. This in itself is a gendered position that we find worthy of scholarly mention especially because very scanty attention has been paid to it in previous studies. This study therefore examines the gendered positioning of female dance scholars in Nigerian universities with a view to ascertaining their number. It connects the factors responsible for the gendered experiences they go through with the low participation of women in dance teaching and learning in Nigeria. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions were adopted as methods of gathering data, while the interpretive design was used. Gender stereotypes, culture dynamics, modernisation, inadequate curriculum benchmark and low-income capacity were discovered to be the factors debarring women from pursuing and advancing formal dance education in Nigeria. This paper encourages an all-inclusive dance curriculum that will capture latest dance styles and trends, so that emerging female dance scholars can explore diverse areas of dance beyond academic learning, to capture current realities. It also suggests that more studies about women in dance education should surface so that gender stereotypes limiting women can be properly discussed for the advancement of scholarship.
Keywords: ***Dance, Dance education, Gendered positioning, Women in dance education.***

Introduction

Dance is a gendered art form in Nigeria. The cultural origin of traditional African dances influences the gender that performs it. In the perception of Clarke (2014:58), Nigerian dance has a ritual origin from early religious and magical ceremonies and festivals of the Yoruba, egwugwu and mmo masques of the Ibos and the Owu and Oru water masquerades of the Ijaw. There are different types of dances that originated from ritual

performances and traditional rites in Nigeria. They include Egungun masquerade dance, Obitun, Apepe, Agbeko, Swange, Akoto, Atilogwu, Koroso, Bata Iwolori and Okitoroko dance of the Ogori-Magongo people, among many others. Male and female characteristics are ultimately conveyed through the movement patterns of their respective dances. For instance, the Tiv men express their masculinity through a sequence of quick, strong motions, while the women represent their femininity through a prolonged grace. In the words of Ifure and Tam (2019: 1), dance is perceived as a feminine art regardless of who performs it. It is integrally linked to the human body, and as bodily experiences in reproduction are associated with women, dance is considered a feminine profession not worthy of serious academic attention.

The inclusion of dance in the educational system and its level of instruction relies on how a culture views and values the human body as well as the role of dance education. Research has shown that some dances are strictly performed by women. Examples of these female-only dances are the Bori of Hausa people, Obudiye dance of Igbo people, Uyai dance of Akwa Ibom people, Kengbe of Ilorin people in Kwara state, Obitun of Ondo people in Ondo state, Ijo Olori of Ekiti people in Ekiti state, Okitoroko of Ogori-Magongo people, and Iwolori of Ekinrin-Adde people; both in Kogi State, Nigeria. This informs that there are certain roles reserved for women in dance. Men are mostly known for war and masquerade dances, while women do more of dances that display planting, healing, seduction, sexuality and spirituality. In the same vein, teaching and learning of dance in Nigeria have posed some limitations on Nigerian women who are continuously faced with some impediments due to their gender classification.

Gender plays a huge role in dance education in Nigeria. The gender dynamics responsible for the participation of women and men in the teaching and learning of dance in Nigeria have been proven to be influenced by the cultural underpinnings of traditional dances originating from rituals and festivals. There are certain dance styles that are clearly associated with a particular gender due to cultural differences in gender and the emphasis placed on stylistic elements that are viewed as either masculine or feminine. Male dance styles typically emphasise power, leaps, agility, and upper body strength, while feminine dance styles emphasise flexibility and fluidity. This study explores the gender dynamics

and other possible limitations experienced by women in dance education in Nigeria through real fact-finding interviews with expert individuals.

Dance is the art of gesture and movement. It transforms images, ideas and feelings into movement sequences that are personally and socially significant. Dance employs physical energy within time and space, and often draws from the power of music, literature, drama and the visual arts. Dance is a natural means of communication and expression, integrating movement, feelings and intellect (Clapson et al, 1999: 2). According to Ojaade (2004: 238) Dance is an art form which involves the rhythmic movement of the body to music, especially with a view to expressing an emotion or an idea or to narrate a story. In other words, dance is a patterned rhythmic bodily movement usually performed to music as a form of communication or expression (Lorngurum and Tsevende, 2013: 54). Dance education is the learning of dance and its technicalities for the advancement of knowledge and conservation of history for continued cultural preservation and expression of inner feeling. The term 'arts education' has been used to categorise teaching and learning of dance and other art forms in many Nigerian institutions. The Nova Scotia Report of the Advisory Committee on the Public-School Programmes (1999) established a rationale for the place of the arts in education thus:

> Education in the arts assists us in perceiving, analyzing and interpreting ourselves, our community, our environment and our cultural heritage. It adds a new dimension to the students' abilities to see the world, perceive problems and take action towards their solution. Education in the arts provides a unique mode of experience that stimulates creative and intuitive thought while developing the intellect. Arts education assists in perceiving and responding to the environment through the senses.

The arts are a dynamic part of our life and culture, providing pleasure and enjoyment, as well as enabling us to gain awareness and deeper insights. Similarly, dance does a lot to improve societal bond and strengthen cultural values.

Dance is a well-celebrated art in Nigeria, however, it doesn't enjoy same currency as a vocation. "It is a much stigmatized profession and a poor relation even within the theatre" (Tume, 2015). This stigma essentially rubs off on dance practitioners and teachers. More importantly, the place of

women in this sector is not of much significance. Generally, dance teachers and tutors in Nigeria are quite few compared to other areas of the arts, yet there is an obvious shortage of women among them. It has also been observed that many female dance students emerge at the level of undergraduate learning, but upon crossing over to the practice or teaching divide, their number reduces. At the postgraduate level, the number of students who apply to do Masters and Doctoral programmes in dance pales considerably to applicants in the other aspects of the theatre. This wholesomely affects the number of dance teachers that are produced, because only a learner of dance can become a teacher of dance. This may also be a pointer to the lack of independent departments of dance in Nigerian universities. Given the many advantages of dance as an art form, this calls for concern. Hence, this paper finds out why these situations exist, and what can be done to improve the circumstance. Also, many research areas have been explored in dance scholarship in Nigeria. Dance scholars like Bakare (1998), Ugolo (2004), Ojuade (2004), Dosumu-Lawal (2014), and Tume (2015) among others have written prolifically on areas ranging from dance choreography to dance theory and criticism, sociology of dance, dance history, contemporary dance, to mention only a few. However, there is scanty evidence of research in the area of women in dance education and their gendered experiences. This is the pertinent concern addressed in this study.

Dance Education in Nigeria

Dance teaching, training and learning in Nigeria can mostly be found in universities and a few existing dance schools or private performing troupes scattered around the country. In higher institutions of learning in Nigeria, dance is being taught in departments of Theatre Arts, Performing Arts, Creative Arts, Media Arts, and Dramatic Arts. Dance also features prominently on the curriculum of some other departments such as Human Kinetics, African Studies and Liberal Arts. Some of the popular private dance training centers in Lagos are: Imagneto Dance Company, Vivace Koncept Incorporated; Kay C and Jonah Dance Company; Black Image Theatre Company; Black Edge Troupe; Gifted Steppers; African Kreative Dance Company; Crown Troupe of Africa; Ijodee Dance Company; Footprints of David; and Black Roots International Dance Company. Other dance companies across Nigeria include: Afri Theatre Troupe, Makurdi; Black Heritage Troupe, Jos; The Dance Company, Abuja; Anaguta Isharuwa Dance Troupe, Jos; and Heritage Performing Troupe,

Makurdi. Many of these dance troupes teach mostly contemporary dances as well as western dances like Tango and Salsa. Music artistes consult such dance companies to engage dancers who will feature in their music videos. Advertisement companies also patronise them for vixens, who are models that double as dance artistes.

It is notable that out of the dance companies listed above, only one was founded by a female choreographer and that is the Imagneto Dance Company Limited. It was founded by Kafayat Oluwatoyin Shafau (popularly known as Kaffy) in 2002. Kaffy holds a diploma in Data Processing from the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria, and has attracted many young Nigerians to her dance company because of her extraordinary dance skills and achievements. She broke the Guinness World Record for "Longest Dance Party", after dancing for 44 hours and 40 minutes non-stop at the Nokia Silverbird Danceathon in 2006. (*BellaNaija*, 2015). Private and independent dance schools or companies in Nigeria are mostly founded and managed by men. However, it has been observed that:

> Some dance troupe owners are married to fellow dancers or dance teachers, and the vibrancy of their troupes are ultimately built on their collective energy as a couple. Examples are, Dayo and Bunmi Liadi of Ijodee Dance Company and Abu and Esther Usman of African Kreative Dance Company. However, when it comes to public acknowledgements, recognition or accolades, the women suddenly become anonymous or invisible. (Tume, 2024).

Gendered Participation of Women in Dance Education in Nigeria

Just as most independent dance companies in Nigeria were founded by men; a similar situation exists in the academia where male teachers dominate dance teaching. A search into all the dance teachers in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria, as at the time of this research, September 2024, becomes necessary to foreground our argument. The following tables provide information about dance teachers in Nigerian Universities and Colleges of Education where dance is being taught:

Table 1: List of male dance lecturers in Nigerian higher institutions of learning

S/N	NAME	UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION	DEPARTMENT
1.	Rasaki Ojo Bakare	Federal University Oye-Ekiti	Theatre and Media Arts
2.	Chris Ugolo	University of Benin	Theatre Arts
3.	Jeleel Ojuade	University of Ilorin	Performing Arts
4.	Arnold Udoka	University of Calabar	Theatre Arts
5.	Tor Iorapuu	University of Jos	Theatre and Film Arts
6.	Chukwuma Okoye	University of Ibadan	Theatre Arts
7.	Casmir Onyemuchara	Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu—Alike. Ikwo	Theatre Arts
8.	Rudolph Kansese	Niger-Delta University	Theatre Arts
9.	Chris Nwaru	Imo State University, Owerri	Theatre Arts
10.	Felix Emoruwa	University of Lagos	Creative Arts
11.	John Onuh	Benue State University	Theatre Arts
12.	Nicholas Akas	Nnamdi Azikwe University	Theatre and Film Studies
13.	Felix Akinsipe	University of Ilorin	Performing Arts
14.	Peter Adeiza Bollo	Redeemers University	Theatre Arts
15.	Kehinde Olalusi	University of Ilorin	Performing Arts
16.	Terkurah Adah	Benue State University	Theatre Arts
17.	Yaki Daniel Musa	University of Jos	Theatre and Film Arts
18.	Awuawuer Tijime	Obafemi Awolowo University	Dramatic Arts
19.	Okhaifo Phillander Eseigbe	Ambrose-Alli University Ekpoma	Theatre Arts
20.	Steve James	Federal University Lokoja	Theatre and Media Arts
21.	Dan Kpodo	University of Port Harcourt	Theatre and Film Studies
22.	Samson Akapo	University of Ibadan	Theatre Arts
23.	Osemwengie Ehigiator Osazuwa	University of Benin	Theatre Arts
24.	Godwin Onuche	Kogi State University Anyigba	Theatre Arts
25.	Femi Jacobs	Olabisi Onabanjo University	Performing Arts
26.	Femi Olufowobi	Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko	Performing Arts
27.	Adeolu Abe	Adeyemi Federal University of Education	Theatre and Creative Arts
28.	Seun Fabusuyi	Federal College of Education Osiele	Theatre Arts
29.	David Tume	Federal University Oye-Ekiti	Theatre and Media Arts

Source: Directory of the Association of Dance Scholars and Practitioners of Nigeria (ADSPON) September, 2024.

Table 2: List of female dance lecturers in Nigerian universities.

S/N	NAME	UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION	DEPARTMENT
1.	Mariam Asabe Iyeh	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	Theatre Arts
2.	Ifure Ufford-Azorbo	University of Uyo	Theatre Arts
3.	Yeside Dosunmu	Lagos State University	Theatre Arts
4.	Tosin Kooshima Tume	Federal University, Oye Ekiti	Theatre and Media Arts
5.	Emem Obonguko	University of Abuja	Theatre Arts
6.	Esther Onwuka	University of Abuja	Theatre Arts
7.	Josephine Abbe	University of Benin	Theatre and Media Arts
8.	Toyin Olokodana-James	University of Lagos	Creative Arts
9.	Awele Josephine Odunze	Delta State University	Theatre Arts
10.	Awele Peace Ikem	University of Benin	Theatre Arts
11.	Tope Adedokun-Richards	Kwara State University	Performing Arts & Film Studies
12.	Hairat Bukola Yusuf	Bayero University Kano	Theatre & Performing Arts

Source: Directory of the Association of Dance Scholars and Practitioners of Nigeria (ADSPON) September, 2024

The tables above clearly show the difference in the number of male and female dance scholars who equally teach dance in Nigerian Universities and Colleges of Education. Forty-one (41) names were listed on both tables in total. Twenty-nine (29) of them are male dance teachers while only twelve (12) of them are women as shown in table 2. The percentage of male teachers is 70% while that of female dance teachers is 30%.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was carried out on students who are dance specialists in the department of Performing Arts and Film Studies, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. The dance specialists are thirty-three in number; out of this number, twenty were boys while thirteen were girls. The thirteen female dance students were invited for a FGD on their view about gendered participation of women in dance education. As young female scholars, their experiences are significant to the understanding of the subject matter. Seven (7) questions were asked during the discussion session and thirteen (17) respondents aired their views on the subject of study. The questions and the analysis of their responses are provided below:

Q1. In your opinion, are there fewer female dance teachers than male?

Response 1: All thirteen (13) respondents believed that from what they have gathered from their colleagues in other schools in Nigeria, there are fewer female dance teachers than male.

Summary: 100% - Yes

Q2. Why do you think your answer in question 1 is so?

Response 2: Eight of the respondents cited parental influence as a major point. According to them, their parents are usually not in support of dance as a course of study or profession. Hence, females usually opt for other areas of the arts considered to be more suitable; like costumes, makeup and stage management. Also, after acquiring degree education most female dance students end up getting married or getting pregnant for men who are capable of taking care of them. This is hinged on the economic powerlessness of women. The respondents also said there is no future in dance for women outside the walls of the University. According to them, the kind of dances that are financially rewarding are not taught in school.

They also posit that it is not compulsory to have formal dance education before making money through dance. Two respondents said dance has evolved beyond classroom learning. Social media platforms are new hubs where different kinds of dances are featured on a daily basis. Dance challenges are also performed on different platforms such as Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. In addition, YouTube is a major platform where girls can quickly gain fame and make money if they upload their dance videos. University education does not determine all these. Moreover, females do not have the kind of energy required for exceptional dance movement styles that can stand them out among their male colleagues as we have it now.

Summary: 23.1% - Lack of economic power
61.5% - Low-income capacity, lack of financial prospects and parental influence
15.4% - Lack of physical energy and social media influence
Total = 100%

Q3. Why did you choose to specialize in dance as a lady?

Response 3: Four respondents said they chose dance because they had passion for it, six said they wanted to build their self-confidence, two said they wanted to gain body flexibility and the last one said she wanted to learn how to dance better.

Summary: 30.8% - Passion
46.1% - Self-confidence
15.4% - Physical fitness
7.7% - Knowledge
Total = 100%

Q4. Would you like to proceed to postgraduate studies in dance education after graduation?

Response 4: Nine respondents said no while the remaining four said yes.

Summary: 69.2% - No
30.8% - Yes
Total = 100%

Q5. What area of dance do you see yourself building a career upon in future?

Response 5: Eight respondents said they do not intend to build any career in dance, one said if she eventually reconsiders, it would be choreography. Three of the respondents said dance therapy while the last one said dance technology.

Summary:
61.5% - None
7.7% - If eventually, choreography
23.1% - Dance therapy
7.7% - Dance technology
Total = 100%

Q6. Is there any aspect of dance you wished you were taught but is not included in your curriculum?

Response 6: Two people said western dances such as ballet, salsa and tango, seven said hip-pop dance styles, the remaining four people said none.

Summary:
15.4% - Inadequate curriculum
53.8% - Inadequate curriculum
30.8% - None
Total: 100%

Q7. Would you encourage more ladies to study dance and why?

Response 7: Eight respondents said no; there is no future in dance education for women, three said yes; to back their dance abilities up with a certificate and the remaining two said yes; to sustain their passion.

Summary:
61.5% - No
23.1% - Yes, for a degree certificate
15.4% - Yes, for passion sustenance
Total = 100%

Discussion on Findings

The FGD responses reveal that dance teaching and learning is typically gendered and this imbalance favours men over women. They listed social media influence, low-income capacity, parental influences and inadequate curriculum are basic factors debarring female students from studying dance. Their responses are resonant with the general findings from interviews with the key informants discussed below:

I. Gender stereotypes and culture dynamics: Culture is a significant dictator of gender stereotypes and roles. Hence, dance teaching and learning is typically gendered in conformity with societal and cultural expectations. According to James (2024), "dance is seen as a profession that encourages waywardness and not suitable for responsible women". From Tume's experience, she states that:

> I've encountered some colleagues from other faculties who were unable to hide their shock or amusement when they found out about my field. They said "You mean you got a PhD in dance? You went to school to dance? Wow... and your husband permitted you?" It is always disheartening to encounter such level of ignorance from people who are expected to know better by virtue of their education (2024).

Adedokun-Richards (2024) corroborates this point thus:

> As a female student of dance, I was repeatedly perceived as unserious and merely useful as an entertainer at public ceremonies. My self-image has often been affected in some ways in the past until I learnt to live above negativities and move on in my chosen career.

Similarly, Ufford-Azorbo (2024) explains that:

The Nigerian society expects the female body to be reserved and not constantly open to public view, but the man has more freedom and wide acceptance manipulating his body to the appeal of the audience. Consequently, cultural norms and expectations limit women's participation in dance as a career.

ii. Parental and Spousal influence: Family, friends, and spouses tend to discourage women from venturing into the profession of dance. James (2024) notes that some of the factors responsible for the imbalance in the participation of women in dance teaching include "finance, marriage, parental, societal and religious influences". It is generally observed that "African men do not want/allow their wives to perform in public spaces" (Adedokun-Richards, 2024). Ufford-Azorbo (2024) who asserts that "the society screams at the woman who would leave home care and other family responsibilities to participate in dance", also states that:

> Spousal support plays a vital role in enabling female dance lecturers excel in their careers. Emotional and practical support from the spouse enables women to balance work and family life. Such a woman will

be empowered to succeed and even mentor and produce her kind.

Tume (2024) observes that "female dance lecturers especially thrive when their spouses are also in the academia, and especially in the theatre field. Examples are Steve and Toyin James; Tam and Ifure Azorbo; and David and Tosin Tume". Ufford-Azorbo (2024) reiterates that "some female lecturers actually enjoy the support of their spouses... I would say I got lucky as I had professional dance practitioners as parents who naturally encouraged me. My spouse is also a theatre scholar, and he enjoys what I do."

iii. **Deficiency in dance curriculum**: The limitations of the current dance curriculum in Nigerian higher institutions of learning is also a key contributor to the issue at hand. There are little prospects for the kind of dances women learn in universities beyond graduate level. Other dance skills must be acquired for them to be able to function as successful dancers, choreographers and vixens; which is likely to be their last resort. Adedokun-Richards (2024) says:

> The African culture divides dance roles for women. When women are not dancing within the routine of dances permissible in culture, she is perceived to be overdoing. This affects the way women chase new knowledge in dance. Traditional African dances like Bata, Obitun, Apepe, Swange, Koroso, Atilogwu, Akoto, Agbeko, among others, are highly gendered. Women stick strictly to the dances they are allowed to do according to cultural dictates. When a woman wants to stay relevant in the teaching of dance, she must possess the expertise to teach certain western dances like ballet, salsa, pole dance, and hip-pop, among others.

In agreement with the above stance, James (2024) offers that "More women can be encouraged to participate in dance learning and teaching if many genres and specialties are taught and practiced in Nigeria". Also, this is one of the reasons why the number of students who train for dance in private dance troupes are quite higher than those who study it in universities in Nigeria. The private dance troupes typically have a wider range of dance forms in their repertoire. This research also discovers that

because they were set up basically for commercial purposes, entry requirements are not very important in private dance schools. However, to gain admission into Nigerian universities, some basic educational requirements must be met, and potential students who do not meet up with those requirements opt for private dance learning centers.

iv. **Imbalance between work and family time**: Marriage, child-bearing and family management are limitations capable of restricting women from exploring dance education to full capacity. For most married women in dance teaching, to strike a balance between taking care of the home front and academic activities is a daunting task. Adedokun-Richards (2024) asserts that:

> Dance teaching consumes time because of it theoretical and practical nature. The two hours usually allocated for each class is never enough to teach them. Several other hours are spent to teach dance routines and styles. The constraint in terms of availability of time affects my scholarly activities. Most times, I cannot combine dance teaching with academic writing, student mentoring and conference attendance, seamlessly. The home front mostly takes the rest of the time after teaching activities.

She reiterates that:

> Responsibilities emerging from family, society, religious activities and cultural demands are roles imposed on women by virtue of their gender classification which end up making them less productive.

Male dance lecturers do not have to worry about housekeeping, cooking, home management and general wellbeing of the family

The stress caused by this imbalance ultimately takes a toll on the female body and this one of the reasons "many female students do not want to teach dance or become professionals after school" (James, 2024). The nature of dance is such that it emphatically happens on the human body, so the "dancer's body is constantly on exhibition before the audience" (Ufford-Azorbo, 2024). Hence, dance teaching is considered a masculine vocation due to the physical demands of dance. This reality mounts a lot of pressure on women more than men, "as men's bodies do not go through the rigours of childbirth, so their bodies basically remain the same for many years. This is not so for women" (Terhemba Tume, 2024). According to

Adedokun-Richards (2024):

> As a mother, my energy and shape changes regularly. As much as possible, I make conscious efforts to maintain the right physical body and fitness required for dance as and when due... This is not applicable to my male co-dancers.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The experiences of Nigerian women in dance education are not palatable as recognised in the findings above. We therefore suggest possible ways through which women can experience better incorporation that will bring about greater participation at all levels of dance teaching and learning.

i. Culture dynamics capable of setting women back should be set aside whenever dance is to be learnt and taught. Knowledge should not be restricted by culture. Female students of dance in Nigeria should be exposed to opportunities available in other countries where more women practice dance at different levels. This will break the barriers of stereotypic limitations caused by social, religious and cultural influences. Teaching of dance should be included in early childhood resource materials and curriculum. This can be introduced by beginning with nursery rhymes, pretend plays and cartoons. Children should be made to understand the essence of rhythmic movement from their early stages without conscious attention to gender identity and differences. As much as possible, this will diminish the sense of early detection and realisation of gender roles beyond sentiments.

ii. Parents are encouraged to motivate female children and provide them with equal opportunities as male children. Girls should be given the liberty to study dance, just like every other course at different levels of learning. Similarly, spousal support is pertinent to female dancers and dance teachers. Maximum support from spouses will help them to discharge their duties more effectively without fear or apprehension. Women in dance education should be relieved of extra work load as their responsibilities consume time and energy. This will help them to engage in more scholarly activities that will position them proficiently in the academia. Female children should not be compelled to limit their artistic abilities below the expectations of a male child. All potentials should be objectively nurtured as soon as they are discovered.

iii. Dance curriculum in higher institutions of learning should be reviewed to capture emerging trends in dance education that are beneficial to women. Social media visibility provides bigger opportunities for female dancers beyond what the certificate in dance education can offer. Practical dance classes by female dance teachers should be uploaded on social media platforms to attract visibility and engagement in the global space. To close the gender gap, resources should be provided to facilitate online dance teaching. Novel instructional strategies, learning aids, and other teaching resources should also be provided for women in dance education. One of the discoveries of this research is that many employer prefer to hire male dance teachers because in most cases, men can play one or more musical instruments. Hence, female students should be encouraged to play instruments along with their male counterparts. Female dance students should be encouraged to go for industrial training at private dance troupes. Apart from availing them the opportunity to learn more professional approaches to dance practice, the experience of mingling with female dance trainees and practitioners in the industry will further encourage them to practice.

iv. Government policies should rise in support of women in dance education by creating channels of sponsorships and scholarships for them to attend conferences, publish articles, purchase adequate internet connection and create new innovations. This will encourage new learning and teaching styles in accordance with current global realities. Women in dance education should rise to the occasion of writing papers on issues that affect them in both theory and practice. This is the only way to open up to the global community for more direction and acquire more beneficial suggestions that can improve them.

Conclusion

This paper has been able to ascertain that women are fewer than men in dance education in Nigeria. The imbalance in women participation in the teaching, learning and practice of dance is attributed to gender stereotypes, culture dynamics, parental and spousal influence, deficiency in curriculum, as well as work and home front imbalance. The recommendations offered in the study will upgrade dance teaching in Nigeria, and ensure that women sustain dance as a career path. The

expectation of this research is to see many scholarly writings in the areas of women in dance education in Nigeria.

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Oral Interviews

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Tume, Terhemba David. Personal interview with the author via Whatsapp on 26th September, 2024.

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James, Steve Itsewah. Personal interview with the author via Whatsapp on 16th September, 2024.

Focus Group Discussion

Female Dance Students of the department of Performing Arts and Film Studies, KWASU on 15th August, 2024.