



EMERGING ISSUES IN RIGHTS OF CHILD, GENDER AND FAMILY LIVELIHOOD

Stella O. Odebode (PhD)

Director, Gender Mainstreaming Office

University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Nigeria

Tel:234-8034891880



Introduction

Who is a Child?

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) defines a child as any human being below the age of eighteen years.

- The child therefore is growing as a future adult without any means of protecting himself.

Human Rights

- Human rights violation remains a prevailing issue that calls for debate among academia and legal minds.
- As rights of the populace are being violated in the society, so it is in the family- the microcosm of the larger society.

Human Rights Cont'd

- Cases of rights violation, abuse, harassment and all forms of violence against minors re-surfaces on the front pages of our national dailies.
- These inhumane incidences are usually perpetrated by familiar faces or people closely related in one way or the other to the victims.

Introduction



Human Rights Cont'd

- Reports on child abuse have often made me wonder if these incidences occurred in the past but were under-reported or
- There has been a dramatic increase in the number of media exposure, especially, the social media.

It is unacceptable and has to be addressed seriously by all of us, especially the law making and law enforcing arms of government.

Human Rights Cont'd



Human Rights Cont'd



What is a Right?

- A right is a national due, a moral claim and a legal entitlement (Nigeria and the Rights of the Child undated).
- Children's rights were recognised after the 1st World War, with the adoption of the Declaration of Geneva in 1924.
- Children's rights are human rights.
- They protect the child as human being. As constituted by fundamental guarantees and essential human rights.

What is a Right



What is a Right



What is a Right



Who is a Child?

- A child is referred to as a minor, otherwise known as a person younger than age eighteen.
- He or she is an individual who cannot make decisions for himself or herself nor give consent to any actions or inactions against him or her.

Who is a Child?



Who is a Child?



Who is a child?



Scope of Children's Right

- Children's right recognises the fundamental guarantees to all human beings:
- the right to life,
- the non-discrimination principle,
- the right to dignity through the protection of physical and mental integrities (protection against slavery, torture and bad treatments, etc.).

Scope of Children's Right Cont'd

- These rights are civil, political, economic, social, cultural, individual and collective rights.
- Children's rights are adapted to children because they take into account his fragility, specificities and age-appropriate needs.

Children's Right



Children's Right



Scope of Children's Right Cont'd

- All children, irrespective of their religion, race or abilities should be free from all forms of discrimination.
- Does not matter where children live, what language they speak, what parents do, whether they are rich or poor.
- No child should be treated unfairly on any basis (UNICEF Convention on Rights of the Child, 1990).

Scope of Children's Right Cont'd

- It is therefore unequivocal to state that the protection of the rights of the child is solely the responsibility of his or her immediate family.
- The society, especially the government across all levels owes the child the duty to protect his or her rights.
- A child is expected to contribute his or her quota to the development, progress and well-being of the family.

Child Marriage

- On child-marriage, you will recall the treated debate in the Nigerian Senate and the House of Representatives about the age of consent in marriage.

Child Marriage

- UNICEF describes early marriage as a formal marriage or informal union before the age of 18.
- Early marriage is a reality for both boys and girls, although girls are disproportionately affected by it.
- The statistics are staggering, 700 million women married before their 18th birthday; 250 million before age the of 15.

Child-marriage

- There is inadequate legislative framework for protecting underage girls from premature marriage.
- This constitutes a violation of their human rights.
- There are many international and regional treaties against child marriage.

Child Marriage

- Nigeria enacted the Child Rights Act in 2003, but only 24 states have adopted it.
- Ogun and Lagos have taken positive steps to enforce it.
- In Nigeria, we do not have the political will to domesticate and enforce international and regional laws and treaties against child-marriage.

Child Marriage

- UNICEF warns that even though progress seems to be made against child marriage, if the fight is not accelerated, the global number of child brides will remain as high as it is now.
- The talk on the child is that of the fates of the powerless in a world of power.

What is Gender?

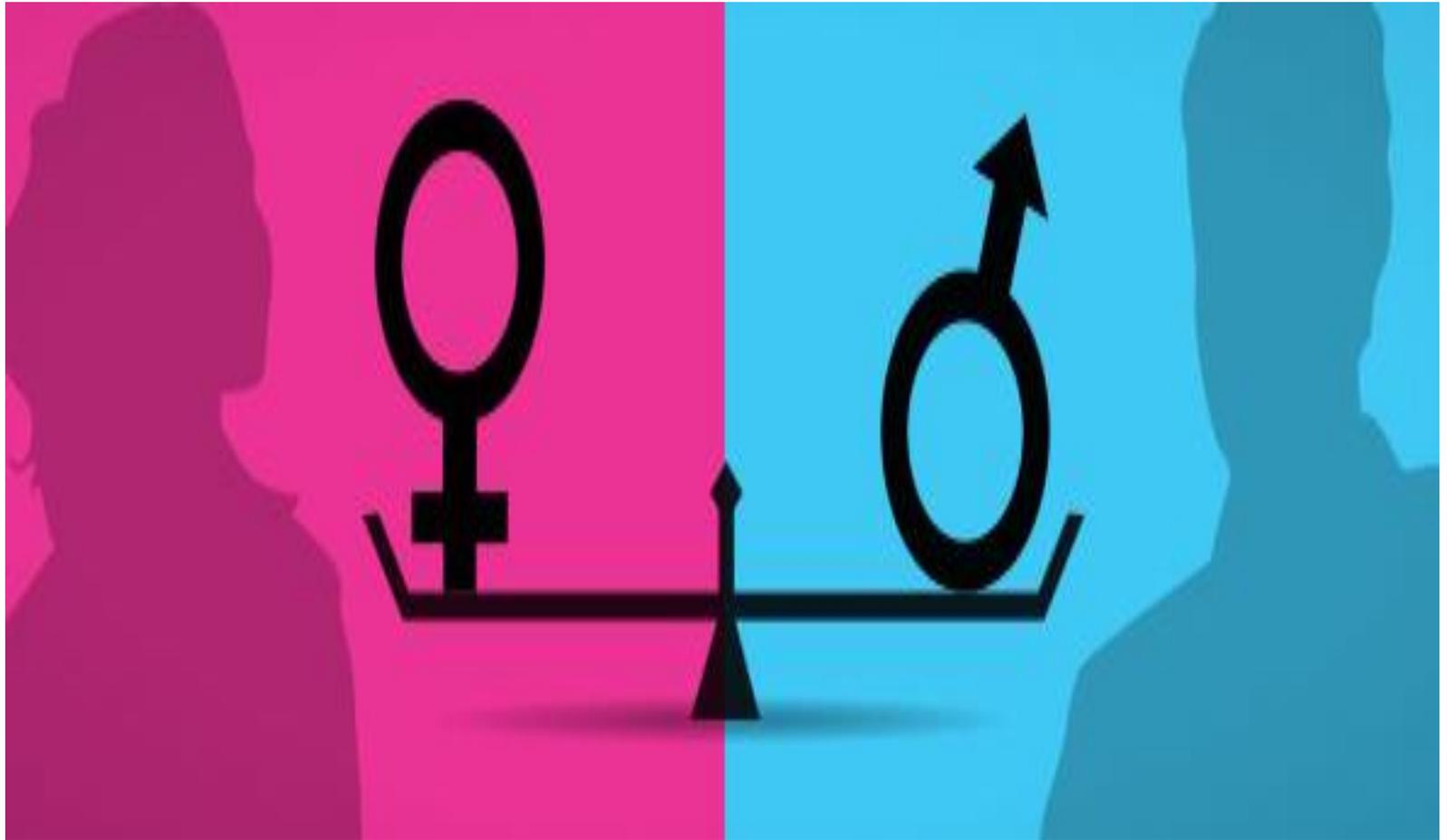
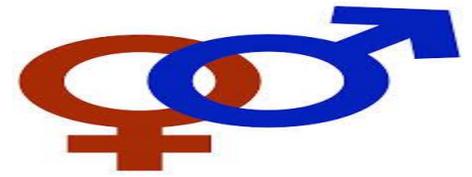
- Gender refers to the social construction of female and male identity.
- It is more than biological differences between men and women.

What is Gender? Cont'd

- Gender includes ways in which these differences,(whether real or perceived), are valued,used and relied upon to classifying women and men and assign roles and expectations to them.

What is Gender? Cont'd

- Gender term is put to use to remove gender-related obstacles to development interventions thus achieving gender equality.



What is Gender? Cont'd

- Over the years, Africa has tried to facilitate economic growth and sustainable human development in all sectors of the economy.
- Africa seems far from attaining the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- A major obstacle to achieving this goal is the lack of enthusiasm to confront the menace of gender inequality.

What is Gender? Cont'd

- Promoting gender equality and equity is now globally accepted.
- Gender is therefore important in emerging issues in rights of the child, gender and family livelihood as it has become a social reality.

Links between Gender, Child's Right and Family

- Women play an essential role in fighting poverty – particularly in developing countries.
- In Nigeria, assistance directed towards women lead to positive impacts for the whole family.

Multiple Roles of women

- In Nigeria, rural women play several roles.
- They are farm managers, agricultural labourer and home makers.
- They are producers of food materials, home managers-caring, planning, implementing, evaluating, and utilising household resources,
- They are caregivers, with responsibilities to reproduce family labour and raise healthy and responsible children









Human Trafficking

- Trafficking in human beings especially women and children has increased in both magnitude and in reach, becoming a major human rights concern.
- Trafficking has grown between 1995 till date.
- UNIFEM (2002) estimated that between seven hundred thousand and 4 million women, children and men are trafficked each year into modern forms of slavery.

Human Trafficking





Human Trafficking



Human Trafficking Cont'd

- The demand for trafficked labour has increased.
- This has been seen as a demand for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.
- Women and girls are therefore pushed towards trafficking as an alternative to the drudgery, danger and exploitation inherent in the traditional lot of women in poor countries especially in rural areas.

Human Trafficking Cont'd

- Young women may literally be running away from the prospect of marriage.
- All of these have resulted in high demand for trafficked labour, thus, violating basic human rights .

Gender Discrimination in Families and Communities: A Gender Responsive and Human Rights Based Approach

- A family is defined as the smallest unit that constitutes a society.
- The family usually consist of the husband, wife and their children, and other extended members of the family.
- The socio-economic sustenance of the family is expected to be the responsibility of the parents.

Rural Women at work



Gender Discrimination in Families and Communities Cont'd

- In some African countries with patri-linear family systems, daughters are perceived as liabilities in their families.
- In poor households, families are willing to trade unwanted women and girls with little thoughts for their rights or future wellbeing.
- Women are manipulated by consumerism and pervasion of family values to fulfil family needs and consumption.

Gender Discrimination in Families and Communities Cont'd



Cont'd

- Young women are vulnerable to trafficking not only because they lack economic opportunities, but also because they want to escape from the burden of long hours of unpaid domestic work and family care expected of them.

Human Trafficking



Cont'd

- A gender responsive and a rights-based approach is a vision and practice of development that ensures fundamental human entitlements.
- Human rights cannot be reduced and they impose an obligation on states to fulfil them.

Cont'd

- Human rights orientation to trafficking must be responsive to gender differences and disparities, and focused on realizing human rights equally for women and men, girls and boys.

Cont'd

- Under International Human Rights Law, States are obliged to respect and ensure practical realisation of human rights based on the principle of non-discrimination.

Strategies for Prevention of Trafficking

- Anti-trafficking interventions must address prevention, protection and assistance, including return and resettlement and includes the following:
 - *Economic Empowerment for Women and Girls*
 - *Livelihood Strategies*
 - *Safe Migration and Citizenship Rights for women and Adolescent Girls*
 - *Transforming Gender-Biased Attitudes in Countries of Destination.*
 - *Integrating Human Rights and Development Strategies*

Way Forward

- Educate women and children about their legal and constitutional rights.
- Blend Customary norms and statutory law.
- Explore how to change gendered power relations.
- Seek deeper understanding of local cultures and norms.
- Ensure long term investment towards the changing of norms and practices

Way Forward Cont'd

- Investing in capacity building to change attitudes and institutional structures for land administration.
- Recognise importance of securing property right to achieve sustainable development goals.
- Increase investment in smallholder agriculture and rural development .

Way Forward Cont'd

- Emergency support for destitute victims of property grabbing and evictions.
- Engage in further work on children's property rights.

Case Study 1: Consequences of abusive relationships

- Mr Anthony Bankole and wife, Kemi Bankole (25th February 2014)
- Wife operated a business centre in UCH and husband is a former banker, now unemployed.
- Abusive relationship where husband frequently beat her up. She frequently came to work with a black eye and cried severally and other staff would encourage her.
- In one instance, he stripped her naked and locked her outside the home....until neighbours intervened.

Case Study 1: Consequences of abusive relationships

- Culminated in the last fight, where he strangled her to death at 1 a.m.
- Post mortem revealed bleeding into her brain, fractures of her clavicles and cervical bones
- Police issued a warrant for the arrest of the husband, but he went into hiding and then committed suicide at their uncompleted building site.
- Four young children now orphans

As young undergraduates



Kolade

Titilayo

While the going was good

Naijapals.com



Aftermath





Thanks for your attention