PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN TVET: STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING FEMALE LIBRARY EDUCATORS' PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Purpose: The study is on promoting gender equality in TVET: strategies for increasing female library educators' participation in universities in Nigeria

Design/Methodology/Approach: A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The sample population comprised of 10 female library educators (5 each) in University of Nigeria, Nsukka Enugu state, and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra state. A structured questionnaire on a four (4) – point Likert scale was used for collection of data. The instrument was a questionnaire which was subjected to face validation as well as pilot test using Cronbach Alpha which gave a reliability coefficient value of 0.81. Data collected from the study were analyzed using mean scores

Findings: The study found that TVET programmes such as digital literacy programs, information management and data curation etc were available for female library educators in universities; the extent female library educators are included in TVET programmes in universities are to a high extent; challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities are deep-rooted gender stereotypes, religious inclination, and societal norms and cultural beliefs; and that This implies that strategies to solve the challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities are by establishing zero-tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment, and providing women with equal slots on all TVET interventions. The study concludes that TVET programs, including digital literacy, information management, and data curation, are available to female library educators and the female library educators are included in these programs to a high extent, reflecting a significant commitment to enhancing their technical skills and professional development and demonstrating a positive trend towards gender inclusiveness in TVET.

Implications: The research provides an in-depth analysis of the avenues to promoting gender equality in TVET programmes in universities in Nigeria. The study provides important insights into the strategies for increasing female library educators' participation in TVET programmes in universities in Nigeria. The study also suggest what universities should do to ensure that female educators in the library profession in the school are supported to promote their inclusion and participation in TVET programmes in universities in Nigeria

Originality: Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that Universities should establish and enforce strict zero-tolerance policies against gender-based discrimination and harassment. Universities should ensure that female library educators receive equal slots and opportunities in all TVET interventions

Key Words: Library Educators, Gender equality, TVET, Female participation, Universities

Introduction

Library educators play a critical role in shaping the academic and professional competencies of future librarians. They are responsible for imparting knowledge and skills related to library and information science, ensuring that students are well-prepared to manage and innovate within library systems (Uzoagba, Agim & Ezejiofor, 2024). These educators typically hold advanced degrees in library science and are involved in teaching, research, and

administrative tasks within university settings.

The teaching responsibilities of library educators in universities encompass a broad range of activities, including the development and delivery of curriculum, assessment of student performance, and mentoring of students (Agim, Irieguna & Chivuzo, 2023). They also engage in research activities that contribute to the advancement of library science as a discipline. Moreover, library educators are tasked with integrating new technologies and methodologies into their teaching practices to enhance learning outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2015). For these library educators to be effective in their teaching task they will require skills and training in certain areas most especially in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) areas

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a capacity building programme for the development of individuals. In the university aspect, they are channeled to build employees' skills within an institution. TVET is a critical component of educational systems worldwide, aiming to equip individuals with practical skills and knowledge essential for employment in specific industries or sectors (Majumdar & Wittenberg, 2017). In Nigeria, TVET plays a vital role in addressing the country's developmental challenges by providing opportunities for skills acquisition, entrepreneurship development, and workforce empowerment (Ogundele & Oke, 2019). Within the Nigerian university educational sector, Technical and Vocational Education and Training tends to support staff with cognate skills needed for them to function optimally within the university system

In view of the foregoing, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs are essential for library educators as they provide practical skills and knowledge that are directly applicable to the library profession. These programs include training in digital literacy, information management, and the use of advanced library systems and technologies. TVET for library educators ensures they remain current with industry standards and can effectively teach these skills to their students (Miranda &Tarapanoff, 2008). Therefore, the gender equality factor must be considered when deciding and drafting library educators into the Tvetprogrammes

Gender equality entails ensuring equal opportunities, access, and treatment for individuals of all genders in the selection, enrollment, and completion of and activity or programs (Khalifa & Okebukola, 2015). Gender equality in access to TVET programs is crucial for ensuring that both male and female library educators have equal opportunities to enhance their professional skills. Ensuring gender equality in TVET programs involves creating policies and practices that facilitate equal participation and support for all genders (Cole, 2015).

The participation of female university staff (including library educators) in TVET programs is generally lower than their male counterparts (Cole, 2015). This disparity can be attributed to various factors, including gender biases in professional development opportunities, balancing work and family responsibilities, and a lack of targeted support and encouragement for female educators. Increasing their participation requires addressing these issues through comprehensive strategies and support systems (Yusuf, 2012).

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Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, disparities often exist due to societal norms, institutional biases, and awareness. Several other factors also influence the participation of female library educators in TVET programs. According to Adedokun and Oluyemi (2018), these include societal expectations, cultural beliefs, and gender-based discrimination, which can limit access to professional development opportunities. Additionally, traditional gender roles and the responsibilities of managing both professional and domestic duties often restrict the ability of female educators to engage fully in these programs (Drenner, 2020; Schultz, 2016).

Promoting gender equality in TVET programs for library educators is essential for fostering an inclusive and equitable professional environment. By addressing the barriers to participation and implementing supportive measures, universities in Nigeria can enhance the professional development of female library educators. This, in turn, will contribute to the overall advancement of the library and information science field, ensuring that all educators have the opportunity to excel and innovate within their roles. Therefore, this paper will center on promoting gender equality in TVET: strategies for increasing female library educators' participation in universities in Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal situation, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs would be equally accessible to all library educators, regardless of gender. Both male and female library educators would have equal opportunities to participate in professional development activities, enhancing their skills and knowledge in digital literacy, information management, and other relevant areas. Universities would actively promote gender equality in these

programs, ensuring that institutional policies and practices support the full inclusion of female educators. This would result in a balanced representation of genders in all levels of academic and professional advancement within the field of library and information science.

However, the current situation in some universities reveals a significant gender disparity in the participation of library educators in TVET programs. Female library educators are underrepresented in these professional development opportunities, facing numerous barriers that impede their full participation. These barriers include societal norms, cultural beliefs, gender-based discrimination, and traditional gender roles that disproportionately affect women. As a result, female educators often have less access to the resources and training necessary to advance their careers and contribute effectively to the field.

Previous studies on gender equality in TVET programs have predominantly focused on broader educational contexts or other professional fields, with limited attention given to the specific challenges faced by female library educators. While some research has highlighted the existence of gender disparities in professional development, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that address the unique barriers and needs of female library educators in Nigerian universities, most especially in Nigeria. Moreover, existing studies often fail to propose targeted strategies that can effectively promote gender inclusiveness within this specific academic and professional group. This gap in the literature underscores the need for focused research that can inform policy and practice to support female library educators.

Research Questions:

1. What are the various TVET programmes available for female library educators in universities in Nigeria?

2. To what extent are female library educators included in TVET programmes in universities in Nigeria?

3. What are the challenges that impede female library educators' participation and gender equality in TVET in universities in Nigeria?

4. What are the strategies for increasing female library educators' participation and gender equality in TVET in universities in Nigeria?

Literature Review

Gender Equality

Gender equality refers to the principle of equal rights, opportunities, and treatment regardless of gender, ensuring that individuals of all genders have the same access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes in society (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [UN Women], 2020). It encompasses the idea that all genders should be treated fairly and have equal opportunities for personal, social, and economic development, without discrimination based on gender identity or expression (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020).

In the context of education, gender equality aims to eliminate gender-based disparities in access to education, retention rates, academic achievement, and participation in educational and vocational programs (UNESCO, 2019). It entails ensuring that both females and males have equal opportunities to pursue education and training in all fields, including traditionally male-dominated areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs (European Commission, 2018).

Gender equality is not only about addressing existing disparities but also challenging gender stereotypes, norms, and biases that perpetuate inequality and restrict opportunities for individuals based on their gender (World Economic Forum, 2021). It requires transforming societal attitudes, beliefs, and structures to promote gender equity and create environments where all individuals, regardless of gender, can thrive and fulfill their potential (International Labour Organization, 2019).

TVET in Nigerian universities

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigerian universities encompasses a broad range of educational programs aimed at equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for employment in various technical and vocational fields (Agim, 2018). TVET programs in Nigerian universities typically focus on practical, hands-on training in specific trades, professions, or industries, preparing students for careers in areas such as engineering, agriculture, healthcare, business, and information technology (Okebukola, 2008). Also, in universities, various TVET programmes includes electrical work, hands-on training in culinary arts and event planning, practical training in programming, hands-on training in farming techniques, construction management, carpentry, and plumbing.

These programs often combine classroom instruction with practical training, internships, or apprenticeships, allowing students to acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to

their chosen fields. The curriculum of TVET programs in Nigerian universities is designed to meet the needs of industry and the labor market, ensuring that graduates are adequately prepared for the workforce and capable of contributing to national development (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2014). There were also welding, and other building trades, IT infrastructure management, network administration, database management, and troubleshooting of engineering systems in many university programmes that involves TVET.

The objectives of TVET in Nigerian universities include promoting skill acquisition, entrepreneurship, and innovation among students, fostering economic development and self-reliance, reducing unemployment, and addressing the skills gap in key sectors of the economy (Okoro, 2017). These objectives align with the broader national goals of poverty reduction, sustainable development, and industrialization, highlighting the crucial role of TVET in Nigeria's socio-economic development agenda (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019).

TVET programs in Nigerian universities offer a wide range of services to students, including academic advising, career counseling, skills assessment, job placement assistance, and access to technical facilities and equipment (Adesoji & Adesoji, 2014). These services are designed to support students throughout their educational journey and facilitate their transition into the workforce upon graduation, enhancing their employability and job prospects (Okoro, 2017).

TVET for Library Educatorsin Nigerian universities

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for library educators in Nigerian universities plays a crucial role in equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to manage and innovate in today's rapidly changing information landscape. TVET programs encompass a wide range of specialized training, including digital literacy, information management, cataloging and classification, and the use of library management systems. These programs are essential for developing the competencies required to support effective teaching, research, and administration within academic libraries (Cole, 2015).

The importance of TVET for library educators cannot be overstated. With the advent of digital technologies, the role of librarians has expanded beyond traditional duties to include digital resource management, data curation, and the facilitation of access to electronic information resources. Consequently, TVET programs are designed to provide continuous professional development, enabling librarians to stay updated with the latest advancements in information technology and to implement these innovations in their work (Miranda & Tarapanoff, 2008). This ongoing education ensures that library educators can meet the evolving needs of students and faculty, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience in universities.

Despite the recognized importance of TVET, there are significant barriers to the participation of library educators in these programs in Nigeria. Gender disparities are particularly pronounced, with female library educators facing numerous challenges that hinder their full participation. Societal norms and cultural beliefs often place additional domestic and caregiving responsibilities on women, limiting their availability for professional development opportunities (Schultz, 2016). Additionally, gender-based discrimination and traditional gender roles within the workplace can create an environment that is less supportive of female

educators pursuing further training (Yusuf, 2012).

Current level of female participation in TVET programs

The current level of female participation in TVET programs in Nigerian universities remains low. This is due to several factors, including limited access to funding, insufficient institutional support, and a lack of awareness about the available opportunities. Previous studies have highlighted the need for targeted interventions to address these barriers and promote greater gender inclusiveness in TVET (Drenner, 2020). For instance, the implementation of flexible training schedules, provision of scholarships, and establishment of mentorship programs can significantly enhance the participation of female library educators in these essential professional development activities.

To address the gender disparities in TVET participation among library educators, it is crucial to develop and implement strategies that promote gender equality and inclusiveness. Institutions should adopt gender-sensitive policies that ensure equal access to training opportunities and actively work to create an inclusive environment. Providing financial support, creating mentorship and networking opportunities, and raising awareness about the benefits of TVET are all essential steps in this direction (Weller & Pratt, 2014). By supporting female library educators in their professional development, universities can foster a more equitable and effective educational environment.

Gender disparities in TVET within universities

Gender disparities in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) within universities are prevalent in many countries, including Nigeria. Despite efforts to promote gender equality, women continue to be underrepresented in certain fields of study and face various challenges in accessing and participating in TVET programs (Aderinoye & Adegbesan, 2019). One key factor contributing to gender disparities in TVET is societal perceptions and stereotypes regarding gender roles and occupations. Traditional gender norms often dictate that certain fields, such as engineering and technology, are more suitable for men, while others, such as nursing and caregiving, are considered more appropriate for women (Ezeani, 2015). These stereotypes influence students' educational and career choices, leading to a disproportionate representation of men and women in different disciplines within TVET.

Another factor is the lack of female role models and mentors in TVET fields, particularly in male-dominated industries. The absence of visible female leaders and professionals in these fields may deter women from pursuing careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and other technical disciplines (Olatokun & Afuwape, 2017). Additionally, women may face discrimination and bias from peers, educators, and employers, further discouraging their participation in TVET programs (Onyilo & Egbon, 2018). Limited access to educational resources and support services also contributes to gender disparities in TVET. Women may encounter barriers such as inadequate funding, lack of access to technology and equipment, and insufficient support for childcare and family responsibilities (Adeleke & Olatunji, 2019). These challenges can hinder their ability to enroll in TVET programs, complete their studies, and pursue careers in technical fields. Addressing gender disparities in TVET requires comprehensive strategies that promote gender equality and inclusivity in education and the workforce. This includes efforts to challenge stereotypes, provide

mentorship and support networks for women in TVET, improve access to resources and opportunities, and create an enabling environment free from discrimination and bias (Abubakar & Kabilan, 2019).

Factors Influencing Female Participation in TVET in universities

Several factors influence female participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs within Nigerian universities, contributing to the gender disparities observed in these fields. Societal stereotypes and cultural norms often discourage women from pursuing non-traditional career paths in fields such as engineering, technology, and construction (Adesoji & Adesoji, 2014). These stereotypes perpetuate the perception that certain professions are more suitable for men, leading to limited opportunities and support for women interested in TVET. Furthermore, socio-economic factors such as poverty, limited access to education, and financial constraints disproportionately affect women's participation in TVET programs (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2014). Women from marginalized communities face additional barriers due to lack of resources and opportunities for skills development. These socio-economic disparities contribute to lower enrollment rates among female students in TVET programs compared to their male counterparts.

Gender biases and discriminatory practices within educational institutions also impact female participation in TVET programs. Studies have shown that women face challenges in accessing quality education and career guidance services, which may influence their decision to pursue TVET courses (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019). Limited access to information about available TVET programs and career pathways further restricts opportunities for women to explore and pursue their interests in non-traditional fields. Additionally, family responsibilities and societal expectations often place greater pressure on women to prioritize caregiving roles over education and career advancement (Adesoji & Adesoji, 2014). Cultural norms regarding gender roles and expectations may discourage women from pursuing TVET programs that are perceived as masculine or physically demanding. As a result, women may face internal and external barriers that hinder their participation and success in TVET fields.

Strategies for Promoting female participation and gender equality in TVET in university

Promoting gender equality in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs within universities requires a multifaceted approach that addresses systemic barriers and fosters an inclusive learning environment. One strategy is to implement gender-sensitive curriculum development, which incorporates diverse perspectives and experiences to challenge gender stereotypes and biases (Takala-Greenish, 2015). By integrating gender-sensitive content and teaching methods into TVET courses, universities can promote critical thinking and empower students to challenge traditional gender norms. Furthermore, universities can enhance support services and mentorship programs specifically tailored to female TVET students to address their unique needs and challenges (Dandison & Asiedu-Addo, 2014). Providing access to career counseling, skills development workshops, and networking opportunities can help female students build confidence, develop leadership skills, and navigate career pathways in non-traditional fields. Mentorship programs that pair female students with successful women professionals in TVET industries can also provide valuable guidance and support.

Additionally, universities can collaborate with industry partners to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities that promote gender diversity in TVET fields (Elueze & Anyadiegwu, 2017). By establishing partnerships with companies committed to gender equality, universities can facilitate hands-on learning experiences for female students and expose them to career opportunities in male-dominated industries. Industry engagement also allows universities to stay abreast of emerging trends and technologies in TVET fields, ensuring that their programs remain relevant and responsive to market demands.

Another effective strategy is to promote female role models and celebrate the achievements of women in TVET fields through awareness campaigns and recognition initiatives (Chikasirimobi, 2019). Highlighting the accomplishments of female alumni, faculty members, and industry leaders can inspire current students and challenge stereotypes about women's capabilities in technical and vocational careers. Creating visibility for women in TVET fields helps to counteract negative perceptions and encourages more young women to pursue educational and career pathways in these areas.

Furthermore, universities can create safe and inclusive learning environments that promote respect, dignity, and gender equity for all students (Ochanje, 2019). Establishing zero-

tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment and providing training on gender sensitivity and diversity awareness can help create a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect within university settings. By fostering a supportive and empowering learning environment, universities can attract and retain female students in TVET programs and contribute to greater gender equality in the workforce.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. A descriptive survey design is a study that aims at collecting data on something and describing it in a systematic manner. This involves collection of data on a representative population of the target audience, on which generalization is made (Nworgu, 2015). The area of the study is Enugu and Anambra States. The sample population comprised of 10 female library educators (5 each) in University of Nigeria, Nsukka Enugu State, and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra state. A structured questionnaire on a four (4) – point Likert scale was used for collection of data for this study. The instrument was a questionnaire which was subjected to face validation as well as pilot test using Cronbach Alpha which gave a reliability coefficient value of 0.81. The study used on the spot method of distribution and data collection. Data collected from the study were analyzed using mean scores

Analysis and Discussion of Findings
Research Question 1: What are the various TVET programmes available for female library educators in universities in Nigeria?
Table 1: Responses on the various TVET programmes available for female library educators in universities

S/NO	Items	Status	Decision
1	Digital Literacy Programs	√	Available
2	Information Management	√	Available
3	Cataloging and Classification	√	Available
4	Library Management Systems	√	Available

5	User Services and Information Retrieval	√	Available
6	Archival Techniques	√	Available
7	Records Management	√	Available
8	Digital Curation Workshops	√	Available

In Table 1, the various TVET programmes available for female library educators in universities were digital literacy programs, information management, cataloging and classification, library management systems, user services and information retrieval, archival techniques, records management, and digital curation workshops. This shows that various TVET programmes such as digital literacy programs, information management and data curation were available for female library educators in universities. This result is in line with the findings of Yusuf (2012) who stated that various TVET programmes available in selected universities were digital literacy programs, information management and data curation, and library management systems. In support of this results, Clarke, et al (2013) also asserts that user services and information retrieval, archival techniques, records management, and digital curation were the various TVET programmes available for female library educators in universities in Nigeria

Research Question 2: To what extent are female library educators included in TVET programmes in universities in Nigeria?
Table 2: Responses on extent female library educators are included in TVET programmes in universities

S/NO	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Female library educators are included in all library management systems training in the institution	3.16	High extent
2	Data curation internships schemes have female library educators as her participants	2.92	High extent
3	Female library educators are given higher slots in all information management programmes in the school	2.16	Low extent
4	Female library educators are given equal chance to partake in the digital literacy programs programmes in the school	2.91	High extent
5	Female library educators are involved in all user services and information retrieval programmes of the school	3.12	High extent

In Table 2, the extent female library educators are included in TVET programmes in universities were to a high extent as attested by the respondents. The table shows that female library educators are included in all library management systems training in the institution, data curation internships schemes have female library educators as her participants, female library educators are given equal chance to partake in the digital literacy programs programmes in the school, and female library educators are involved in all user services and information retrieval programmes of the school. However, few of the respondents attested to a low extent that female library educators are given higher

slots in all information management programmes in the school. This implies that the extent female library educators are included in TVET programmes in universities are to a high extent. This result disagrees with the study of Ezeani (2015) who asserted that women are not fully involved in TVET programmes in universities which may be due to the bias nature of the social and academic environment they find themselves. In most universities, female participation in TVET in universities was low due to cultural and religious inclination. In support of this result, Olatokun and Afuwape (2017) asserted that women are not considered in most of the TVET practicals and trainings in the institution, and that they are poorly placed in terms of precedence and choice to attend these TVET programmes in their institutions. Most slots and allocations to these TVET programmes have men as the majority beneficiaries and participants

Research Question 3: What are the challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities in Nigeria?

Table 3: Responses on the challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Deep-rooted gender stereotypes often discourage female library educators from pursuing technical and vocational fields perceived as traditionally male-dominated	3.13	Agree
2	Female library educators in many religious inclination may face barriers to accessing supportive education that prioritize male education	3.02	Agree
3	Traditional gender roles often discourage female library educators from participating in educational settings, including workshops	3.15	Agree
4	Female library educators may face barriers such as sexual harassment to accessing quality support and facilities to learn	3.22	Agree
5	Female library educators may lack access to career guidance and support services that encourage them to explore non-traditional career pathways	3.10	Agree
6	Female library educators in TVET programs may experience gender-based discrimination in educational settings, including internships	3.05	Agree
7	Female library educators often face institutional barriers with unequal access to resources in a male-dominated institution	3.32	Agree
8	Societal norms and cultural beliefs often discourage female library educators from pursuing technical and vocational fields in LIS	3.41	Agree

In Table 3, the challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities are deep-rooted gender stereotypes, religious inclination, traditional gender roles, sexual harassment, lack access to career guidance and support services, gender-based discrimination, institutional barriers, and societal norms and cultural beliefs. This implies that challenges that impede female library educators' participation in TVET in universities are deep-rooted gender stereotypes, religious inclination, and societal norms and cultural beliefs. This result is in line with the findings of Adedokun and Oluyemi (2018) who found that the female participation in TVET has

been affected by religious beliefs and certain forms of culture that are tied to the beliefs of most female respondents who are interested and would have participated in TVET in Nigerian universities. Deep-rooted stereotypes perpetuate the belief that certain careers are more suitable for men, while others are more suitable for women, limiting opportunities for female participation in TVET. Ochanje (2019) in support of this results attested that in some universities, there are cases of gender stereotypes and institutional barriers which have impede female participation and gender equality in TVET in universities. Hostile learning environments can undermine female students' confidence and motivation, leading to decreased retention rates and higher dropout rates.

Research Question 4: What are the strategies for increasing female library educators' participation and gender equality in TVET in universities in Nigeria?

Table 4: Responses on strategies for increasing female library educators' participation and gender equality in TVET in universities

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Incorporating gender-sensitive content and teaching methods into TVET courses on LIS	3.03	Agree
2	Universities can provide access to career counselling, skills development workshops, and networking opportunities tailored to TVET for female library educators	3.22	Agree
3	Collaborating with industry partners to create internship opportunities to expose female library educators to new career pathways	3.45	Agree
4	Establishing zero-tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment	3.12	Agree
5	Providing female library educators with equal slots on all TVET interventions	3.10	Agree
6	Providing training on gender sensitivity and diversity awareness to help create a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect within university settings	3.25	Agree

In Table 4, the strategies for increasing female library educators' participation and gender equality in TVET in universities as agreed by the respondents are incorporating gender-sensitive content and teaching methods into TVET courses, universities can provide access to career counseling, skills development workshops, and networking opportunities tailored to TVET for female library educators, collaborating with industry partners to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities to expose female library educators to new career pathways, establishing zero-tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment, providing women with equal slots on all TVET interventions, and providing training on gender sensitivity and diversity awareness to help create a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect within university settings. This implies that issues of poor participation of female library educators can be solved by establishing zero-tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment, and providing women with equal slots on all TVET interventions. This result is

in line with the findings of Dandison and Asiedu-Addo (2014) whose study revealed that universities can enhance support services and mentorship programs specifically tailored to female to address their unique needs and challenges. By integrating diverse perspectives and experiences, universities can promote critical thinking and empower women to pursue non-traditional fields. Additionally, Elueze and Anyadiegwu (2017) asserted that universities can collaborate with industry partners to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities that promote gender diversity in TVET fields. Also, Takala-Greenish (2015) stated that a good strategy to solve the gender issues is for the institution to implement gender-sensitive curriculum development, which incorporates diverse perspectives and experiences to challenge gender stereotypes and biases.

Conclusion

This paper can be concluded that TVET programs, including digital literacy, information management, and data curation, are available to female library educators, reflecting a significant commitment to enhancing their technical skills and professional development. Furthermore, the study indicated that female library educators are included in these programs to a high extent, demonstrating a positive trend towards gender inclusiveness in TVET. However, the study also identified substantial barriers that impede full participation of female library educators in TVET programs. Deep-rooted gender stereotypes, religious inclinations, and societal norms and cultural beliefs were highlighted as major obstacles. These challenges underscore the need for targeted interventions to ensure equitable participation. To address these barriers, the study recommends the establishment of zero-tolerance policies for gender-based discrimination and harassment within universities. Such policies are essential for creating a safe and supportive environment that encourages female participation.

Recommendations

From the data analysis and conclusion of the study, it can be recommended that:

1. Universities should establish and enforce strict zero-tolerance policies against gender-based discrimination and harassment.

2. Universities should ensure that female library educators receive equal slots and opportunities in all TVET interventions.

3. Universities should develop and implement gender-sensitive policies that address the specific needs and challenges faced by female library educators.

4. Universities should conduct awareness and sensitization campaigns to challenge and change deep-rooted gender stereotypes, religious inclinations, and societal norms that hinder female participation in TVET programs.

5. Universities should establish scholarship programs, grants, and other financial incentives specifically for female library educators to encourage their participation in TVET programs.

6. Universities should develop mentorship and networking programs that connect female library educators with experienced mentors and peers.

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