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Shifting gender norms and sexual/gender-based violence, wealth access, decision-making and gender equality in Nigerian tertiary institutions

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of gender norms on male and female students' experience of sexual/gender-based violence, wealth access and decision-making in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Using a cross-sectional survey of 4,142 respondents, the study explored students' attitudes towards economic participation, financial autonomy, and decision-making. While most female respondents rejected traditional gender roles, a small percentage of both males (11.82%) and females (24%) maintained patriarchal views, particularly regarding male dominance in business and decision-making. Some respondents also believed women should seek partner consent to start businesses or give their income to male partners. Despite these challenges, the study reveals a positive shift toward economic independence and decision-making equality. The findings emphasize the need for gender sensitization and institutional reforms to promote female entrepreneurship, financial independence, and inclusive leadership.

Keywords: **Gender norms, economic autonomy, entrepreneurship, decision-making, higher education, Nigeria.**

Introduction

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) is a pervasive issue in tertiary institutions globally, exacerbated by entrenched stereotypes and power imbalances that sustain gender inequalities (García-Moreno, Pallitto, Devries, Stöckl, Watts, & Abrahams, 2013; Matus, Riberi, & Rojas, 2024). Educational spaces, presumed safe, are often sites where SGBV disproportionately affects women and marginalized groups, disrupting their academic and social experiences (UN Women, 2020). Studies across the UK and the US highlight alarmingly high rates of sexual harassment and assault, with significant academic and psychological impacts on victims (Fedina, Holmes, & Backes, 2018; NUS, 2010).

In Nigerian higher education, SGBV is widespread, with up to 60% of university students reporting experiences of gender-based violence (Global Citizen, 2021). However, cultural stigma, fear of retaliation, and inadequate support systems perpetuate underreporting, leaving many incidents unaddressed (Amnesty International, 2018). These violations impact students' rights, mental health, and academic success, often forcing victims to abandon their studies.

Higher education institutions hold dual responsibilities: fostering critical thinking and challenging societal norms. Yet, many lack adequate mechanisms to address SGBV, and certain campus cultures tacitly condone such behaviours (Humbert & Strid, 2024). Global organizations like UNICEF and the World Bank advocate for holistic approaches targeting the root causes of gender norms and power imbalances, while highlighting the significant social and economic costs of SGBV, including GDP losses of up to 3.7% in some countries (World Bank, 2019).

Efforts to tackle SGBV in Nigeria have included grassroots advocacy, such as Women Against Rape in Nigeria (WARN), which promotes awareness and policy reforms (Global Citizen, 2021). Universities are encouraged to implement secure reporting systems, revise policies, and foster supportive campus cultures to challenge norms sustaining SGBV (UN Women, 2020). These initiatives can create safer and more equitable learning environments. Therefore, this study explores how gender norms and institutional values contribute to SGBV in Nigerian universities. Adopting the Social Role Theory and Social Norms Theory, this study analyses the socialisation processes perpetuating SGBV in examining students' attitudes, institutional policies, and responses; the research aims to inform recommendations that enhance campus safety and promote gender equity.

These frameworks comprehensively understand the cultural and institutional dynamics perpetuating violence and inequity. The Social Role Theory explores how societal expectations enforce harmful traditional roles (Eagly, 1987; Hooks, 2000), while the Social Norms Theory explains the impact of societal expectations on human behaviour.

Purpose of the Study

Scholars like Adebisi et. al. (2024), Nowrouzi‑Kia et. al. (2024) and Ogunfowokan et. al. (2024) have made concerted efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in educational settings; research focusing specifically on tertiary institutions in Nigeria remains limited. Given higher education's social and economic importance, ensuring a safe learning environment is crucial for academic success and societal development (World Bank, 2019). This study aims to fill this gap by assessing the prevalence of SGBV, the influence of gender norms, and the effectiveness of institutional policies within Nigerian universities to inform policy improvements.

Understanding gender norms and values is essential for creating effective interventions to address SGBV in tertiary institutions (Cislaghi & Heise, 2020). By examining these norms within Nigerian contexts, this study seeks to identify specific cultural and institutional factors contributing to SGBV. This knowledge can guide targeted strategies to promote gender equality, increase awareness, and reduce violence in educational settings (UN Women, 2020; UNICEF, 2018). The unique contribution of this study lies its extensive coverage, as the tertiary institutions surveyed are distributed across the geo-political zones of Nigeria. This has provided the study with a comprehensive understanding of the various cultural nuances influencing gender norms in the country.

Research Questions

1. What is the distribution of male and female respondents in relation to gender norms and practices within Nigerian tertiary institutions?
2. How do gender norms and practices related to access to wealth and well-being differ between female and male respondents in the context of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Nigerian tertiary institutions?
3. How does the distribution of female and male respondents reflect gender norms and practices related to the right to decision-making and participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

4. What is the distribution of female and male respondents based on gender norms and practices related to violence?

Theoretical Frameworks

Examining the shifting gender norms, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), wealth access, decision-making, and gender equality in Nigerian tertiary institutions, this study adopts the Social Role Theory and Social Norms Theory to provide a theoretical base foundations. These theories explain how societal expectations shape gender relations within tertiary institutions, influencing power dynamics, behaviours, and available opportunities.

Social Role Theory

The social role theory was propounded by Alice Eagly in 1987. Eagly argues that gender roles are socially constructed through socialisation, education, and cultural norms (Eagly & Wood, 2016). Social role theory states that human beings are socialized from an early age into specific roles—men are dominant, decision-makers, and financial providers. On the contrary, women are often expected to be nurturing, submissive, and economically dependent (Eagly & Wood, 2016). With regard to Nigerian tertiary institutions, the social role theory explains the impact of gender roles on students' perceptions of leadership, access to wealth and decision-making ability (Lorber, 2018). Significantly, women are pressured by society to conform to traditional gender roles, thereby discouraging their participation in leadership while promoting financial independence (Eagly & Wood, 2016). Similarly, SGBV can be said to be a consequence of the entrenched gender roles, where male dominance and female subordination are emphasised, making the report of abuse difficult.

Although, the Social Role Theory provides a theoretical foundation for this study, it is not without limitations. Jackson (1998) criticised the social role theory for its assumptions that individuals passively conform to gender roles without considering their right to resist. Furthermore, Jackson (1998) critiqued the social role theory for over-emphasising the impact of socialisation without recourse to external structures that can challenge the existing gender norms, like laws and policies and other institutional reforms. However, despite these shortcomings, the social role theory remains relevant to this study, because it provides a framework for understanding how gender roles are reinforced and maintained.

Social Norms Theory

This study adopts the Social Norms Theory to address the limitations of the social role theory. Social Norms Theory was developed by Robert Merton in the 20th Century. The theory, beyond focusing on the influence of gender roles in tertiary institutions in addressing shifting gender norms, SGBV, access to wealth and decision-making, provides a detailed understanding of the influence of societal expectations on human behaviour (González, 2024). The social norms theory asserts that individuals act according to what they perceive as socially acceptable within their community. This implies that, in Nigerian tertiary institutions, the persistent gender inequality, women's limited access to wealth, and prevalence of SGBV are not just a result of personal beliefs, but also social norms.

Regarding this study, the social norms theory believes that where the university culture normalises male dominance in leadership and decision-making, the students and staff may be unable to challenge it, even when they disagree. Social Norms Theory explains why women may avoid seeking leadership positions or financial independence if they believe such actions stand against societal expectations (Edirneligil & Tanhan, 2024). This theory, therefore, is valuable in designing strategies that encourage institutional behavioural change.

However, Social Norms Theory has its limitations. Foucalt criticised the social norms theory for its inability to account for individual resistance to social norms (Douzinas, 2023). Douzinas (2023) argued that an individual's resistance to social norms is important to understanding activism within universities. Additionally, Green (2024) argued that changes in social norms cannot be adequately measured or quantified due to constant shifts in perception. Similarly, the social norms theory has also been criticised by Lawless (2023) for focusing primarily on behavioural norms instead of structural inequalities, when addressing gender disparities in society.

Despite these limitations, the social norms theory is valuable to this study as it explains the changing nature of gender norms and provides intervention approaches that can result in an attitudinal change towards attaining gender equality in tertiary institutions. Adopting the gender role and social norms theory provides an all-inclusive approach to understanding and addressing gender inequalities in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Literature Review

Shifting Gender Norms in Tertiary Institutions

The available literature on gender norms in Nigerian tertiary institutions reveals deeply entrenched patriarchal systems that influence various aspects of academic life. Adebayo and Akanle (2014) reported that traditional gender norms shape the experiences of students in Nigerian universities, where patriarchy is prevalent despite the increase in female enrolment in schools. Similarly, Igiebor (2023) explored the impact of cultural beliefs about gender roles on students' academic performance and outcomes.

Gender norms are socially constructed expectations of the appropriate behaviours, roles, and responsibilities attributed to men and women (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019). Historically, in Nigeria and many other societies, these gender norms favoured male dominance in various sectors like education, leadership, and economic access (Igiebor, 2023). Moreover, the shifting gender norms in the educational sector are challenging traditional perceptions of what gender is, leading to increased female participation in higher education and leadership roles (Yewande & Olawunmi, 2023).

Higher education, globalization, and various feminist movements have contributed immensely to changing attitudes towards gender roles in Nigerian universities (Igiebor, 2022; Popoola, 2023). Igiebor (2020) noted that despite the progress made in challenging gender norms, cultural and institutional structures hinder gender equality in the Nigerian education sector. However, this shift in gender norms is not distributed evenly, with some institutions adopting gender policies. At the same time, universities in rural areas with fewer resources hold on to traditional gender ideologies, Akanle (2014).

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Tertiary Institutions

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) refers to harmful acts directed at individuals based on their gender, which include rape, sexual harassment, assault, and coercion (Desai & Mandal, 2022). In Nigerian tertiary institutions, SGBV is a prevalent issue among students and staff, especially women (Ojo, et. al., (2023). Studies by Agazue (2023) and Popoola (2023) indicated that patriarchy, power imbalances, and institutional structures enhance the prevalence of SGBV in the academic world.

Notably, the most prevalent form of SGBV in Nigerian tertiary institutions is sexual harassment, rape and intimate partner violence (Agazue, 2023). However, the rate of reporting this anomaly is low due to the fear of stigmatisation and the low prosecution rate. However, a study by Kaymakcioglu and Thomas (2024) suggested that SGBV in tertiary institutions can be addressed through awareness campaigns, advocacy and lobbying, developing strong institutional policies, and establishing gender-sensitive reporting mechanisms.

Significantly, another prevalent form of SGBV in tertiary institutions is the "sex-for-grades" phenomenon. Agazue (2023) explained that this is premised on the power dynamics between male academic staff and female students. Agazue (2023) analysed institutional and systemic factors that strengthen this form of exploitation in Nigerian higher learning institutions, highlighting the culture of silence and lack of institutional support. Similarly, Kaymakcioglu and Thomas's (2024) research indicated that only a tiny percentage of SGBV cases are reported and duly prosecuted due to fear of stigmatization and lack of support.

Wealth Access and Economic Inequality in Higher Education

Wealth access is a term used to describe an individual's ability to acquire, control, and benefit from financial resources. The disparities between men's and women's finances within Nigerian tertiary institutions are evident in their differential access to employment, scholarships and grants (Nnoje, 2024). Notably, women in the education sector, particularly in tertiary institutions, are unfavourably exposed to economic discrimination, evidenced by lesser research funding opportunities, delayed promotion and limited access to wealth-generating activities (Akudo & Okenwa, 2015).

Studies like Laniran & Laniran (2017) and Okeke-Ihejirika (2017) argued that the barriers women face in academia are closely linked to gender norms discouraging women from seeking financial independence. Similarly, male dominance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria often can restrict women's access to wealth-building opportunities, Aina, Ogunlade, Ilesanmi & Afolabi (2015). However, Roy and Patro (2022) explained that the gender gap in access to wealth can be bridged by enacting financial inclusion policies and ensuring the development of gender-sensitive entrepreneurial programmes (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017).

Similarly, Cosentino, C., Fortson, Liuzzi, Harris, & Blair (2019) analysed and explained the effectiveness of scholarship programmes to increase female participation in Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Adejugbe & Adejugbe (2018) reported that, compared to their male counterparts, female graduates continue to encounter more significant obstacles in finding work and are paid less.

Gender and Decision-Making in Higher Education

Women's participation in university leadership is restricted by institutional discrimination, gender bias, and cultural barriers. Kahraman and Haktanır (2024) defined decision-making as the act of choosing and influencing institutional policies. Women continue to be under-represented in leadership and governance roles in Nigerian higher education institutions (Igiebor, 2020). Despite the continuous increase in female enrolment rates, the number of women in decision-making positions – Heads of Departments, Deans, and Vice-Chancellors - in academia is still relatively few.

Notably, women are still under-represented in senior academic and administrative roles in Nigerian universities. According to Igiebor (2020), these can be attributed mainly to structural and cultural factors preventing women from fully participating in university decision-making. Research by Aina, Ogunlade, Ilesanmi and Afolabi (2015) suggested that mentorship programmes, affirmative action policies, and capacity-building initiatives can increase women's representation in decision-making positions.

Gender Equality in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Awareness creation and sensitisation on gender issues have been promoted by implementing gender-sensitive academic programs and developing gender-equality policies like the Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy by Nigerian universities (Popoola, 2023). However, institutional resistance and cultural biases impede efforts to promote gender equality by implementing these policies (Umeh, 2018). Research by Vilhena, et. al. (2024) explained the significance of advocacy initiatives, gender-sensitive curriculum development, and institutional reforms in advancing long-term gender equality in post-secondary institutions.

According to UNESCO (2023), gender equality in education refers to equal education and treatment for all, regardless of gender, allowing everyone equal access to opportunities, resources, and rights. Even though Nigeria has made strides towards gender equality, there are still evident gaps in access to wealth and financial opportunities, leadership, and educational attainment (Omojemite, 2024). Godara (2024) assessed the efficacy of gender

policies in Nigerian universities in promoting gender equality and stated that there is a wide gap between the development and implementation of policies. Similarly, Popoola (2023) analysed the anti-sexual harassment policies in different learning institutions and posited that the methods and levels of enforcement varied.

The adoption of a multi-stakeholder approach involving students, academic staff, administration, and civil society organisations was identified by (Godara, 2024) as a tool that can be adopted towards attaining gender equality in institutions. Although, Popoola (2023) discovered differing levels of compliance among various institutions, the National Universities Commission's gender mainstreaming guidelines (2019) provide a framework for institutional reforms in this regard.

Methods

Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was used with quantitative methods in assessing gender norms, values/practices associated with sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The quantitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of the patterns, frequency, characteristics, and impact of gender norms, institutional values, and SGBV on respondents. Stakeholders, including academic and non-academic staff and relevant institutions, were involved to ensure a comprehensive scope and to promote a safer, more inclusive academic environment.

Study Locations

The study was conducted in Enugu, Kaduna, Osun, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), representing various geo-political zones (South-East, North-West, South-West, and North-Central). Tertiary institutions were chosen across different types (public and private universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education) for a balanced representation.

Population

The study targeted major stakeholders in Nigerian tertiary education, including students, staff, ministry officials, and law enforcement. This included collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NABTEB), and NAPTIP for stakeholder buy-in and policy alignment.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling technique was used. In the first stage, using snowballing sampling techniques, one institution from each category (university, polytechnic, and college of education) was selected from each state. Respondents were then chosen using simple random sampling within each institution. The Ministry of Education and NAPTIP were purposively included in their regulatory roles. In total, 4,142 students were surveyed, with a higher proportion of females to capture the gender-focused nature of SGBV.

Data Collection Instruments and Analysis

Data were gathered using structured questionnaires for quantitative data and interview guides for qualitative data, managed via the Open Data Kit (ODK). Quantitative data were analysed using Stata for descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis using ATLAS.ti software. To ensure reliability, coders applied a standardized codebook, and all audio recordings were transcribed and translated where necessary.

Ethical Considerations

The study received ethical clearance from Obafemi Awolowo University's Institutional Research Board (IRB), and informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure ethical compliance. No participant was forced to participate in the study, and they were all informed of their rights to decline any question they felt uncomfortable to answering. Their responses were also anonymised; no direct quotations were traced to the participants.

Results and Findings

Distribution of male and female respondents in relation to gender norms and practices within Nigerian tertiary institutions

Highlighted in Tables 1 and 2 are responses to the gender role relations and the contextual value shaping gender violence, exploitation, and abuse. Table 1 presents the quantitative data collected from female participants, outlining their perspectives on gender roles, norms, and practices. The table categorizes responses as 'Agree,' 'Disagree,' and 'Not Sure.' Mean scores indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Table 1:

Distribution of Female Respondents by Perspectives on Gender Roles, Gender Norms and Practices

Gender Roles, Norms and Practices	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
Female students are meant to support and not head associations on campus.	343(10.85)	2,575(81.46)	243(7.69)	1.29
Decisions regarding students' political participation are made by male students on this campus.	672(21.26)	2116(66.94)	373(11.80)	1.54
It is more acceptable that religious associations on campus should be headed by males.	579(18.32)	2,237(70.77)	345(10.91)	1.47
Vital positions in student union government/ indigenous associations should be occupied by male students.	430(13.60)	2443(77.29)	288(9.11)	1.36
It is more appropriate that students' representative councils be headed by male students.	431(13.63)	2403(76.02)	327(10.34)	1.38
Scholarly opportunities are mostly available to males than females.	310(9.81)	2288(72.38)	563(17.81)	1.37
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score of Gender roles and norms				8.41
Composite Score: Females with Androcentric Values (% with Score of 12+)				627(19.8)
Composite Score: Females with Non-Androcentric Values (% with Score of <12)				2534(80.2)

The data show that most female respondents reject androcentric views on gender roles, norms, and practices within campus settings. For instance, 81.46% disagreed with the idea that female students are meant to support, rather than head associations, with a mean score of 1.29 indicating a strong rejection of this belief. Similarly, 66.94% disagreed with the notion that decisions regarding political participation are male-dominated, though a notable 21.26% agreed, reflecting some lingering acceptance of male leadership in politics. On leadership within religious associations, 70.77% disagreed with the preference for male leaders, while 18.32% agreed, revealing a relatively higher acceptance of gendered leadership norms in religious settings compared to other domains. Regarding Student Union or indigenous associations, 77.29% and 76.02% disagreed that leadership positions should be male-dominated, indicating significant support for gender equality in these spaces. However,

9.81% agreed that scholarly opportunities are more available to males, with a higher 17.81% unsure, suggesting some ambiguity or perceived inequality in this area. The total mean score of 8.41 reflects moderate adherence to gender-equal norms. The composite scores indicate that 19.8% of female respondents still hold androcentric views (with scores of 12 or higher), whereas 80.2% exhibit non-androcentric perspectives, supporting gender equity.

Table 2

Distribution of Male Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices

Gender Roles and Norms	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
Female students are meant to support and not head associations on campus.	248(25.28)	653(66.56)	80(8.15)	1.58
Decisions regarding students' political participation are made by male students on this campus.	242(24.67)	614(62.59)	125(12.74)	1.62
It is more acceptable that religious associations on campus should be headed by males.	251(25.59)	608(61.98)	122(12.44)	1.64
Vital positions in student union government/ indigenous associations should be occupied by male students.	248(25.28)	623(63.51)	110(11.21)	1.62
It is more appropriate that students' representative councils be headed by male students.	264(26.91)	578(58.92)	139(14.17)	1.68
Scholarly opportunities are mostly available to males than females.	149(15.19)	674(68.71)	158(16.11)	1.46
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score			9.6	
Composite Score: Males with Androcentric values (% with Score of 12+)			309 (31.50)	
Composite Score: Males with Non-androcentric values (% with Score of <12)			672 (68.50)	

Table 2 provides an overview of male respondents' perspectives on gender norms and practices across various characteristics. The responses are categorized into three options: Agree, Disagree, and Not Sure, with the mean score indicating the average level of agreement or disagreement among the respondents. The majority of male respondents rejected androcentric views across most surveyed categories. For instance, 66.56% disagreed with the notion that female students are meant to support, rather than lead associations, and 68.71%

rejected the idea that scholarly opportunities are predominantly for males. These findings suggest a significant shift toward more egalitarian attitudes among male respondents, with mean scores across categories ranging from 1.46 to 1.68, indicating a leaning toward disagreement with gender-biased statements.

Despite progress, approximately 25% of male respondents agreed with androcentric statements related to leadership and decision-making in student governance and political participation. For example, 26.91% agreed that male students should head student representative councils, while 24.67% supported the notion that decisions regarding political participation are predominantly male-driven. These figures highlight a lingering adherence to traditional gender roles among a notable subset of respondents.

The composite scores reveal that 31.5% of male respondents scored 12 or higher, reflecting adherence to androcentric values, whereas 68.5% scored below 12, indicating non-androcentric perspectives. The total mean score of 9.6 reinforces the trend of declining adherence to gender norms that marginalize women, but underscores the need for further progress.

Table 3

Distribution of Female Respondents on Gender Norms and Wealth Access associated with SGBV in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Access to Wealth and Wellbeing	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
Entrepreneur activities among students are more profitable, when owned by male students.	198(6.26)	2614(82.70)	349(11.04)	1.24
Female students are not well-suited for some entrepreneur business on campus.	304(9.62)	2529(80.01)	328(10/38)	1.29
A female cannot work or start a business on campus without the consent or permission of her partner.	274(8.67)	2589(81.90)	298(9.43)	1.27
It is appropriate for female students in entrepreneur activities on campus to keep/give her income to the male partner.	136(4.30)	2731(86.40)	294(9.30)	1.18
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score of Gender roles and norms				4.98
Composite Score: Females with Androcentric Values (% with Score of 8+)				340(10.8)
Composite Score: Females with Non-Androcentric Values (% with Score of <8)				2821(89.2)

The majority of female respondents rejected gender norms that limit their access to wealth and well-being in entrepreneurial activities. For example, 82.7% disagreed that male students find entrepreneurial activities more profitable, and 80.01% rejected the notion that women are unsuited for certain types of campus businesses. Low mean scores (ranging from 1.18 to 1.29) across all items reflect a firm rejection of androcentric perspectives. While most respondents opposed the idea of requiring partner consent for entrepreneurial endeavours (81.9% disagreed), 8.67% agreed, showing a minority adherence to patriarchal norms. Similarly, 4.3% agreed that it is appropriate for women to give their income to male partners, further reflecting gender-based control over women's economic agency.

The composite scores reveal that 10.8% of female respondents adhered to androcentric values with scores of 8 or higher, while 89.2% reflected non-androcentric perspectives with scores below 8. The total mean score of 4.98 underscores overall progress toward rejecting gender norms tied to wealth access and well-being.

Table 4

Distribution of Male Respondents on Gender Norms and Wealth Access associated with SGBV in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Access to Wealth and Wellbeing	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
Entrepreneur activities among students are more profitable, when owned by male students.	112(11.42)	766(78.08)	103(10.50)	1.33
Female students are not well- suited for some entrepreneur business on campus.	160(16.31)	698(71.15)	123(12.54)	1.45
A female student cannot work or start a business on campus without the consent or permission of her partner.	116(11.82)	777(79.20)	88(8.97)	1.33
It is appropriate for female students in entrepreneur activities on campus to keep/give her income to the male partner.	95(9.68)	775(79.00)	111(11.31)	1.30
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score				5.41
Composite Score: Males with Androcentric values (% with Score of 8+)				182 (18.55)
Composite Score: Males with Non-Androcentric values (% with Score of <8)				799 (81.45)

Table 4 summarizes male respondents' views on gender norms and practices regarding access

to wealth and well-being, particularly in entrepreneurial activities on campus. The majority of male respondents rejected gender norms limiting women's access to wealth and well-being in entrepreneurial activities. For example, 78.08% disagreed that male students' entrepreneurial activities are more profitable, and 71.15% disagreed with the belief that female students are not well-suited for certain business activities on campus. These responses reflect a rejection of traditional gender norms that associate entrepreneurship and financial success with male students. The low mean scores (1.30 to 1.45) for these items also indicate that, overall, male respondents tend to support more egalitarian views on wealth access.

Despite the general trend of disagreement with gendered economic norms, some male respondents still adhered to traditional views. For instance, 11.82% agreed that female students cannot start a business without their partner's consent, and 9.68% agreed that women should give their income to male partners. These percentages, although relatively small, highlight the persistence of patriarchal norms within specific segments of the male student population. These figures suggest that patriarchal attitudes, while not dominant, still exist in a minority of respondents.

The composite scores reveal that 18.55% of male respondents held androcentric values, with scores of 8 or higher, indicating a smaller proportion of male students adhering to traditional gender norms regarding wealth access. Conversely, the majority, 81.45%, held non-androcentric values, reflecting progressive views on gender equality in economic participation.

Distribution of female and male respondents reflecting gender norms and practices related to the right to decision-making and participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions

Tables 5 and 6 unveil the evolving perspectives on gender dynamics, decision-making and participation, and promotion of gender equality for building a culture of resilient to sexual and gender-based violence in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Table 5

Distribution of Female Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices on Right to Decision-Making and Participation

Right to Decision Making and Participation	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**

The male partner decides where to go for activities including reading and social events.	416(13.16)	2267(71.72)	478(15.12)	1.41
Male partners are usually responsible for decisions on when and where to have fun.	634(20.06)	2050(64.85)	477(15.09)	1.55
Females in this school rarely go out to visit friends without the approval/permission of their male partners.	295(9.33)	2480(78.46)	386(12.21)	1.31
Females rarely join males to make decisions about issues affecting students in the institution.	406(12.84)	2376(75.17)	379(11.99)	1.38
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score of Gender roles and norms				5.65
Composite Score: Females with Androcentric Values (% with Score of 8+)				760(24.0)
Composite Score: Females with Non-Androcentric Values (% with Score of <8)				2401(76.0)

Table 5 reveals a significant shift among female respondents, showing a strong rejection of traditional gender norms related to decision-making and participation. The majority of female respondents rejected the notion that male partners should control their activities and decisions. For example, 71.72% disagreed with the idea that the male partner should decide where to go for activities, and 64.85% disagreed with the statement that male partners are responsible for decisions about when and where to have fun. These high percentages suggest a strong resistance among female students to male dominance in decision-making related to social and recreational activities, as reflected in the relatively low mean scores (1.31 to 1.55).

Similarly, 78.46% disagreed with the idea that female students rarely go out to visit friends without the approval of their male partners. This indicates that a large majority of female respondents reject the concept of male control over their personal freedom and social activities. The mean score of 1.31 for this item further emphasizes the low acceptance of such restrictive gender norms. Regarding decision-making in student affairs, 75.17% of respondents disagreed with the statement that females rarely join males in decisions about issues affecting students. While this indicates that many women feel excluded from decision-making, the fact that 12.84% agreed with the statement suggests that gender-based exclusion from participation still exists in certain contexts.

The composite scores reveal that 24% of female respondents held androcentric values (score of 8 or higher), reflecting a minority that subscribes to traditional gender norms related to decision-making and participation. Conversely, the majority (76%) held non-androcentric

values, suggesting that most female respondents favour more equitable decision-making and participation.

Table 6

Distribution of Male Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices on Rights to Decision-Making and Participation

Right to Decision- Making and Participation	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
The male partner decides where to go for activities including reading and social events.	160(16.31)	637(64.93)	184.(18.76)	1.51
Male partners are usually responsible for decision on when and where to have fun.	204(20.80)	599(61.06)	178(18.14)	1.60
Females in this school rarely go out to visit friends without approval/permission of their male partners.	132(13.46)	736(75.03)	1134(11.52)	1.38
Females rarely join males to make decisions about issues affecting students in the institution.	165(16.82)	698(71.15)	118(12.03)	1.46
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score Composite Score: Males with Non-Androcentric values (% with Score of <8)				5.98
Composite Score: Males with Androcentric values (% with Score of 8+)				258 (26.30)
Composite Score: Males with Non-Androcentric values (% with Score of <8)				723 (73.70)

Table 6 provides insights into male respondents' views on gender norms related to decision-making and participation. Male Dominance in Decision-Making: A significant proportion of male respondents disagreed with statements reflecting male dominance in decision-making. For instance, 64.93% disagreed with the idea that male partners should decide where to go for activities, and 61.06% rejected the notion that male partners are responsible for deciding when and where to have fun. The mean scores (1.51 to 1.60) for these items suggest a moderate inclination to reject traditional gender norms that prioritize male authority. The majority of respondents (75.03%) disagreed with the statement that females require male approval to visit friends. However, the 13.46% who agreed indicate that some men still adhere to restrictive gender norms regarding women's mobility. The mean score of 1.38 highlights the prevailing rejection of these restrictive norms among the respondents. While 71.15% disagreed with the idea that females rarely join males in decision-making on issues affecting students, the 16.82% who agreed shows that male-dominated decision-making structures still exist in some contexts. This reflects the

persistence of androcentric attitudes, albeit among a minority.

The composite scores indicate that 26.3% of male respondents held androcentric values (scores of 8+), suggesting adherence to traditional gender norms. In contrast, 73.7% held non-androcentric values, reflecting a growing shift toward more equitable views on decision-making and participation.

Table 7

Distribution of Female Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices: Sexual Rights

Sexual Rights	**Agree No(%)**	**Disagree No(%)**	**Not sure No(%)**	**Mean**
A female cannot refuse to have sex with her boyfriend under any condition.	240(7.59)	2728(86.30)	193(6.11)	1.21
The male partner should solely make decisions regarding the usage of contraception.	186(5.88)	2682(84.85)	293(9.27)	1.21
In case the female gets pregnant, the male partner should solely decide whether or not to abort.	229(7.24)	2658(84.09)	274(8.67)	1.23
It is forgivable, if the male partner has several sexual partners.	187(5.92)	2757(87.22)	217(6.86)	1.17
The female should comply with the sexual urge of her male partner at all times.	209(6.61)	2735(86.52)	217(6.86)	1.20
A male partner may decide to withhold having sexual relations with his female partner when she wants it.	1015(32.11)	1673(52.93)	473(14.96)	1.79
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score of Gender roles and norms				7.81
Composite Score: Females with Androcentric Values (% with Score of 12+)				101(3.2)
Composite Score: Females with Non-Androcentric Values (% with Score of <12)				3060(96.8)

The data in Table 7 highlights gender norms and practices regarding sexual rights among female respondents in Nigerian tertiary institutions, providing insight into societal expectations and decision-making dynamics related to sexual rights and autonomy.

The findings reveal a strong inclination among female respondents toward autonomy in sexual decision-making, with a significant majority rejecting statements that restrict their rights. For instance, 86.30% disagreed with the idea that a female cannot refuse sex with her boyfriend, and 84.85% rejected the notion of the male partner solely deciding on contraceptive use. These low mean scores (around 1.21) reflect an overall repudiation of

androcentric norms, signaling a widespread endorsement of female autonomy in personal relationships. However, certain areas reveal a nuanced perspective; 32.11% of respondents agreed that a male partner could decide to withhold sex, even, if the female partner desires it, suggesting that some still accept male authority in specific contexts. Composite scores underscore this trend, with only 3.2% of female respondents scoring 12 or higher, indicating adherence to androcentric values, while the vast majority—96.8%—exhibit a non-androcentric stance. These insights highlight a shift toward gender equality, though residual acceptance of male authority suggests areas for targeted gender sensitization and empowerment initiatives.

The data indicate a strong inclination among female respondents towards rejecting traditional gender norms that restrict their decision-making and sexual autonomy, showing significant support for gender equality in these areas. The high percentage of females with non-androcentric values suggests that prevailing norms within Nigerian tertiary institutions may increasingly favour gender equity, at least among the surveyed female population. However, the acceptance of male decision-making in certain contexts, such as withholding sex, indicates residual influences of traditional gender expectations.

Table 8

Distribution of Male Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices: Sexual Rights

Sexual Rights	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
A female cannot refuse to have sex with her boyfriend under any condition.	93(9.48)	789(80,43)	99(10.09)	1.29
The male partner should solely make decisions regarding the usage of contraception.	115(11.72)	738(75.23)	128(13.05)	1.36
In case the female gets pregnant, the male partner should solely decide whether or not to abort.	112(11.42)	754(76.86)	115(11.72)	1.35
It is forgivable, if the male partner has several sexual partners.	118(12.03)	719(73.29)	144(14.63)	1.39
The female should comply with the sexual urge of her male partner at all times.	101(10.30)	766(78.08)	114(11.62)	1.32
A male partner may decide to withhold having sexual relations with his female partner when she wants it.	277(28.24)	558(56.88)	146(14.88)	1.71
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score				8.42

Composite Score: Males with Androcentric values (% with Score of 12+)	169 (17.23)
Composite Score: Males with Non-Androcentric values (% with Score of <12)	812 (82.77)

This data in Table 8 offer insight into male respondents' views on gender norms related to sexual rights in Nigerian tertiary institutions. For most statements, a substantial majority of male respondents disagree with androcentric views that limit female autonomy in sexual matters. For example, 80.43% disagree with the statement that a female cannot refuse sex with her boyfriend, and 75.23% disagree with the notion that males should solely decide on contraception use. However, the mean scores for each statement (ranging from 1.29 to 1.71) suggest a slightly higher acceptance of these androcentric norms compared to female respondents. Notably, 28.24% of male respondents agree that a male partner can withhold sexual relations, even, when the female partner desires it, reflecting a higher tolerance for male authority in this context.

Regarding composite scores, 17.23% of male respondents scored 12 or higher, indicating adherence to androcentric values, while 82.77% scored below 12, reflecting non-androcentric perspectives. The total mean score of 8.42 also suggests moderate adherence to non-androcentric norms, although a notable minority still holds views that limit female autonomy. This distribution indicates that while a majority of male respondents support gender equality in decision-making related to sexual rights, there is a significant subset that upholds traditional male-dominant perspectives. These attitudes among male students could have long-term implications for gender dynamics in broader Nigerian society, influencing workplace norms, family structures, and community relations. Addressing gaps now can lead to a more gender-equitable future.

Table 9

Distribution of Female Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices: Violence

Violence	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
If the female does something wrong, her male partner has the right to punish her.	235(7.43)	2753(87.09)	173(5.47)	1.20
There are times when a female deserves to be beaten.	102(3.23)	2866(90.67)	193(6.11)	1.12
No woman can claim being raped by her male partner.	349(11.04)	2522(79.78)	290(9.17)	1.31
A male partner can decide to lock up his female partner in the house as a form of punishment	127(4.02)	2932 (92.76)	102(3.23)	1.11

A male partner has the right to prevent his female partner from going to lectures as a form of punishment	79(2.50)	2994(94.72)	88(2.78)	1.08
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score of Gender roles and norms				5.82
Composite Score: Females with Androcentric Values (% with Score of 10+)				193(6.1)
Composite Score: Females with Non-Androcentric Values (% with Score of <10)				2968(93.9)

The majority of female respondents rejected androcentric statements supporting violent practices by male partners. For instance, 87.09% disagreed with the notion that a male partner has the right to punish a female for wrongdoing, while 90.67% disagreed with the idea that females deserve to be beaten. Low mean scores (ranging from 1.11 to 1.31) further reflect widespread opposition to violence as part of gender norms. However, only 6.1% of female respondents scored 10 or higher on the composite scale, indicating adherence to androcentric values regarding violence, while 93.9% scored below 10, showcasing a predominantly non-androcentric stance. Despite this, 11.04% of respondents agreed that a woman cannot claim rape by her male partner, pointing to the persistence of some beliefs in male entitlement within intimate relationships. The overall mean score of 5.82 aligns with respondents' broader rejection of violent norms.

The high level of disagreement with violent norms among female respondents suggests a cultural shift toward rejecting gender-based violence, signalling progress toward gender equality. This shift could influence societal attitudes, reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence in Nigerian communities. However, the 11.04% agreement with the notion that marital rape cannot exist highlights a concerning gap in understanding consent within marriage. Addressing this issue through targeted educational interventions is essential.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of gender sensitization programmes in tertiary institutions to challenge and change lingering androcentric beliefs. Strengthening policies against intimate partner violence and providing accessible counselling services can support victims and help mitigate violence. Lastly, the widespread rejection of violent norms by female students has the potential to shape future family and community standards, fostering a more equitable and violence-free society in Nigeria.

Table 10

Distribution of Male Respondents by Gender Norms and Practices: Violence

Violence	**Agree No (%)**	**Disagree No (%)**	**Not sure No (%)**	**Mean**
If the female does something wrong, her male partner has the right to punish her.	124(12.64)	760(77.47)	97(9.89)	1.35
There are times when a female deserves to be beaten.	65(6.63)	815(83.08)	101(10.30)	1.24
No woman can claim being raped by her male partner.	107(10.91)	742(75.64)	132(13.46)	1.35
A male partner can decide to lock up his female partner in the house as a form of punishment	42(4.28)	850(86.65)	89(9.07)	1.18
A male partner has the right to prevent his female partner from going to lectures as a form of punishment.	40(4.08)	883(90.01)	58(5.91)	1.14
SUMMARY STATISTICS				
Total Mean Score			6.53	
Composite Score: Males with Androcentric values (% with Score of 8+)			423 (43.12)	
Composite Score: Males with Non-Androcentric values (% with Score of <8)			558 (56.88)	

Male respondents predominantly rejected androcentric norms supporting violence against women. For example, 77.47% disagreed with the idea that a male partner has the right to punish his female partner for wrongdoing, while 83.08% rejected the notion that women deserve to be beaten. Similarly, 86.65% disagreed with locking up a female partner as punishment, and 90.01% opposed the idea of preventing a female partner from attending lectures. These results reflect a general disapproval of overt violent practices. However, the mean scores range from 1.14 to 1.35, suggesting the persistence of some androcentric attitudes among a minority of respondents. Notably, 10.91% of male respondents agreed that marital rape cannot exist, and 12.64% endorsed the right of a male partner to punish his female partner for perceived wrongdoing. The composite scores further illustrate a division: 43.12% of male respondents adhered to androcentric values (with scores of 8 or higher), while 56.88% held non-androcentric views (scoring below 8). The total mean score of 6.53 suggests a higher tendency toward adherence to androcentric norms compared to female respondents.

The findings highlight progress in rejecting violent norms among a majority of male respondents, but they also underscore the persistence of harmful beliefs in a significant

minority. The 10.91% agreement with the idea that marital rape cannot exist points to deep-rooted misconceptions about consent in intimate relationships, necessitating targeted educational interventions and awareness campaigns. The relatively high percentage (43.12%) of male respondents with androcentric values indicates that traditional views on gender roles and violence remain influential among men. This underscores the need for comprehensive gender sensitization programems, specifically tailored for male audiences in tertiary institutions to address these harmful norms. Institutional policies and enforcement mechanisms must also be strengthened to address violence against women and ensure accountability. Counseling services and workshops promoting healthy relationship dynamics could further help to reduce acceptance of androcentric norms, fostering greater gender equity. Lastly, shifting male attitudes on violence can significantly impact broader societal norms, as men often play influential roles in community decision-making and cultural practices.

Discussion of Findings

The data generated for this study in Tables 1 and 2 highlighted the gender norms and practices Related to violence in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The findings revealed significant rejection of androcentric norms supporting violence among both female and male respondents. Female respondents overwhelmingly disagreed with statements suggesting that male partners have the right to punish or beat females (87.09% and 90.67% disagreement, respectively). Similarly, male respondents moderately rejected these norms, with 77.47% disagreeing with males punishing their female partners. However, concerning beliefs such as the denial of marital rape persisted among 11.04% of females and 10.91% of males, pointing to gaps in awareness about consent in relationships. These findings align with the work of Edward (2025), who noted that while societal awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) is increasing, cultural and institutional barriers still sustain harmful gender norms. Gender sensitization programmes in tertiary institutions remain critical for challenging such narratives.

Tables 3 and 4 data presented the gender norms associated with wealth and well-being in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Female respondents largely rejected the idea that males are better suited for entrepreneurship, with over 80% disagreeing with these statements. Male respondents similarly disagreed, though with slightly lower rates (78.08% and 71.15%, respectively). However, 8.67% of females and 11.82% of males believed that females could not start businesses without their male partners' consent, reflecting persistent patriarchal

attitudes. Studies such as Okeke et. al. (2023) highlight how economic independence for women challenges traditional gender roles, yet resistance persists, particularly in male-dominated communities. Targeted policies to promote female entrepreneurship and financial autonomy on campuses could address this gap.

Data analysed in Tables 5 and 6 revealed the gender norms associated with leadership and representation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Both male and female respondents showed significant rejection of androcentric leadership norms. For instance, 81.46% of females and 66.56% of males disagreed with the statement that females are meant to support but not lead. However, 24.67% of males agreed that males should dominate decisions regarding students' political participation, a sentiment echoed by 21.26% of females. This finding reflects structural gender biases in student governance, as Adesina and Bello (2023) noted, who emphasized the need for female leadership empowerment programmes to challenge institutionalized biases. Gender-equitable leadership training could further foster inclusive governance.

Data analysis in Tables 7 and 8 highlighted gender norms associated with decision-making and participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. While the majority of respondents rejected restrictive norms regarding female autonomy, male respondents showed higher adherence to androcentric views compared to females. For instance, 16.82% of males believed females rarely participate in decision-making, compared to 12.84% of females. The findings reflect ongoing challenges in promoting gender-inclusive decision-making. According to Afolabi and Olowookere (2022), excluding women from institutional decisions perpetuates broader gender inequalities. Interventions to promote equal participation, such as affirmative action policies, could mitigate these disparities.

Most respondents' overall rejection of androcentric values reflects a promising trend toward gender equity, extending beyond tertiary institutions. As Fagbemi et. al. (2023) assert, educated women are catalysts for societal change, yet androcentric beliefs persist among some males (26.3% in decision-making and 18.55% in wealth access). Interventions targeting younger men are essential to fostering equitable attitudes and practices (Afolabi & Olowookere, 2022).

Discussion of Composite Scores Across Tables

The composite scores provide a summarized measure of the prevalence of androcentric (patriarchal) versus non-androcentric (gender-equitable) values among respondents across

various domains of gender norms, including violence, wealth access, leadership, decision-making, and participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Analysis of the composite scores across all Tables showed that females consistently held more non-androcentric views than males. For instance, 80.2% of females exhibited non-androcentric values on wealth access (Table 3), compared to 81.45% of males (Table 4). However, males consistently scored higher in androcentric values across violence, wealth access, and decision-making norms. This difference underscores the impact of patriarchal socialization on gender attitudes among males, as supported by UN Women (2023). Institutions must prioritize male-focused gender education to bridge these attitudinal gaps.

A detailed analysis of these scores showed that:

a. **Violence-Related Gender Norms:** In terms of violence-related gender norms, 93.9% of female respondents rejected androcentric values, scoring below 10, while only 6.1% adhered to them. In contrast, 56.88% of male respondents scored below 8, indicating non-androcentric views, but 43.12% still held androcentric attitudes, suggesting the persistence of cultural justifications for violence.
b. **Wealth Access and Well-being**: Regarding wealth access and well-being, 89.2% of females and 81.45% of males scored below 8, supporting gender equity. However, 10.8% of females and 18.55% of males held androcentric beliefs, indicating some persistence of restrictive views, particularly among male respondents.
c. **Leadership and Representation:** In leadership and representation, 80.2% of female respondents held non-androcentric views, while 19.8% adhered to androcentric norms. Among males, 68.5% supported gender equity, but 31.5% maintained androcentric beliefs, highlighting the ongoing challenge of achieving gender equity in leadership roles.
d. **Decision-Making and Participation:** In decision-making and participation, 76.0% of females and 73.7% of males held non-androcentric views, while 24.0% of females and 26.3% of males adhered to androcentric norms. This highlights a growing shift toward gender equity, though male dominance in decision-making persists.

Overall Trends and Observations

The overall trends reveal notable gender differences in adherence to androcentric norms. Among female respondents, there was a consistent dominance of non-androcentric values across all domains, reflecting a broad rejection of patriarchal norms in areas such as violence,

wealth access, leadership, and decision-making. This demonstrates a significant shift toward gender equity among female students. In contrast, while most male respondents also displayed non-androcentric tendencies, their androcentric scores were consistently higher than those of their female counterparts. This highlights the lingering influence of patriarchal norms on male attitudes, suggesting that, while progress is evident, cultural resistance to gender equity remains more pronounced among males.

Notable Gaps in Violence and Decision-Making Norms

The domains of violence and decision-making revealed the most substantial adherence to androcentric norms among respondents, particularly males, highlighting the lingering influence of patriarchal values. While most rejected androcentric justifications for violence, a significant proportion, especially male respondents, still exhibited beliefs aligning with male control or dominance. This reflects the persistent cultural acceptance of violence as a tool of male authority. Similarly, decision-making norms favoured male dominance, with both male and female respondents aligning with these views, indicating the internalization of patriarchal values.

These findings amplify Edward's (2025) research, which underscores the role of entrenched cultural practices in normalizing male control in both private and institutional contexts. Although, non-androcentric values are increasingly prevalent, particularly among women, gaps remain, necessitating targeted interventions to address persistent inequalities.

Efforts to close these gaps should include educational campaigns, inclusive institutional policies, and community initiatives that challenge male dominance and promote gender-equitable practices. Preventing violence-related androcentric norms requires programmes fostering positive masculinities and support systems for victims of gender-based violence. These measures are vital to advancing equality in Nigerian tertiary institutions and society.

Implications of Findings

1. **Equitable Gender Relations:** The findings indicate a positive shift toward equitable and respectful gender relations among respondents, with implications for reducing gender-based violence. The strong rejection of androcentric values by female respondents suggests progress toward gender equality in decision-making and sexual rights. This shift may drive advocacy for policies that enhance women's autonomy

and participation in relationships and institutions, fostering broader cultural change in educational settings.

2. **Gender Dynamics:** Promoting positive masculinity, engaging men as allies, empowering women, and supporting survivors are essential steps to reduce gender-based violence and foster a culture of equality and consent.
3. **Challenging Harmful Stereotypes:** Addressing harmful gender norms and promoting healthy relationships fosters inclusivity and helps prevent sexual violence.
4. **Gender Sensitization and Awareness Raising:** Programmes for all students are crucial to challenge harmful norms and promote equality in violence prevention, leadership, and participation. Tailored interventions for males can address higher androcentric tendencies, while campaigns on consent and marital rights are essential to foster understanding and reduce inequalities.
5. **Leadership Training and Empowerment:** Leadership and mentorship programmes for women can address gaps in representation, while policies supporting gender-inclusive governance and entrepreneurship training strengthen female empowerment.
6. **Institutional Transformation and Policy Advocacy:** Institutions should strengthen policies that promote gender equity, challenge harmful norms, and safeguard female autonomy. This includes reinforcing policies on sexual consent, reproductive rights, and GBV, alongside support services like counseling. Universities should adopt gender-responsive governance, mandatory gender equity courses, and policies promoting female entrepreneurship and decision-making. Regulatory bodies should enforce laws protecting women's rights and hold perpetrators accountable.
7. **Research and Advocacy Implications:** The data highlight the need for further research on how gender norms affect students' participation and rights, influencing policy advocacy for gender equity in Nigeria. It emphasizes the importance of comprehensive gender sensitization programmes in tertiary institutions to address lingering androcentric attitudes, promote mutual respect and shared decision-making, and challenge patriarchal norms. These programmes should focus on sexual rights and mutual respect in relationships.
8. **Education, Training and Curricula:** To address violence-related androcentric values, particularly among males, comprehensive education on consent, human rights, and the consequences of GBV is essential. Leveraging the 82.77% of male

respondents, who display non-androcentric values through peer education initiatives can promote gender-equitable practices. Strengthening curricula to include gender equality, consent, and relationship dynamics will empower students and shape norms that support gender equity in personal and professional spheres. Additionally, implementing comprehensive sexuality education programmes can equip students with the knowledge to make informed decisions about sexual health and relationships.

These implications underscore the importance of continuous institutional and policy support to sustain the positive trends and address remaining challenges to ending SGBV, promoting gender equality, and creating a safer learning environment and more just tertiary institutions.

Conclusion

The findings reveal significant progress in gender equity, but underscore the need for continued interventions to address residual androcentric values. Universities should prioritize gender sensitization programmes, equitable policy reforms, and initiatives to promote female empowerment across all domains. Additionally, leveraging education as a transformative tool can drive systemic societal shifts toward gender-inclusive norms, as emphasized by recent research.

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