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He Who Says Organisation Says Oligarchy and She Who Says Gender Says Woman: The Quest for Men's Interest in Gender Studies

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Abstract

This paper interrogates the gynocentric orientation of gender studies, arguing that its prevailing focus on women's experiences has produced a harmful "single story" that marginalises male-specific burdens and diverse masculinities. Drawing on Robert Michels's Iron Law of Oligarchy and critiques of exclusionary narratives, the study posits that the field frequently narrows the expansive concept of "gender" to exclusively denote "woman". Employing a critical-analytical

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approach guided by the intersectionality framework, the research synthesises theoretical literature and lived-experience accounts to expose exclusionary practices. Our analysis demonstrates how this women-centred focus systematically occludes the study of diverse masculinities and male suffering, often relying on a reductive narrative that frames men primarily as oppressors and women as victims. The paper specifically highlights unique male burdens—such as elevated occupational risk, social role strain, suppressed emotional expression, and poorer help-seeking behaviour—that remain largely unexamined in mainstream scholarship. Furthermore, we show that formal and informal exclusionary practices within academic and activist communities discourage men from participating as researchers and interlocutors, thereby reinforcing narrow gynocentric epistemological boundaries. The conclusion is that a genuinely intersectional and reoriented gender studies, one that actively incorporates men's perspectives and experiences, is crucial to strengthening the field's explanatory power, reducing harmful single-story framings, and advancing collective strategies to address gendered injustices affecting all people.

Keywords: *Gender Studies, Women, Gynocentrism, Oligarchy, Organisation, Men's Interest, Intersectionality, Social Roles' Burden, Feminism, Gender Equality.*

Introduction

Generally, gender studies is a fallout of the second-wave feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which ignited the fire of the first women's studies programmes across the Western world in the early 1970s. But gender, as a term or concept, became popularised in the 1970s following the First International Conference on Women. The conference, which was held in Mexico City from June 19 to July 2, 1975, was convened to coincide with the International Women's Year. Bringing together 89 countries to discuss issues of women's rights, gender equality, development, and peace, the conference culminated in the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985), in addition to establishing a global plan of action to advance women's rights.

More so, Betty Friedan's seminal work, The Feminine Mystique, which many consider to be the foundational text of the feminist movement/

ISSN 3043- 5501
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ideology, is acknowledged for creating the intellectual foundation for gender studies. Specifically, gender studies is an interdisciplinary field with its origin in women's studies, and concerns such as women, feminism, and politics (Wiesner-Hanks, 2019). Therefore, within the gender studies paradigm, the underlying drive was to use the idea of gender to establish the growing notion that women are naturally and systemically disadvantaged and undervalued in most societies of the world.

Clearly, the term 'gender' is not the exclusive preserve of women, and this is without prejudice to the realities of a world where women are mostly confined to playing the second fiddle. This paper is interested in undermining the appropriation of the gender studies field by women based on the inherent contradictions of such a posturing and the implications for both sexes. Within the framework of gender studies, the term "gender" should necessarily refer to the socio-economic and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in modern societies and organisations. Sadly, this assertion is not popular with many female gender scholars, who interrogate gender and related issues from the narrow prism of femininity.

Interestingly, Robert Michels' seminal theory, "The Iron Law of Oligarchy," first outlined in Political Parties (1911), posits that due to the complex nature of large modern organisations, especially given the fact that not all members can participate in their leadership, only a few elites govern. Whether the organisation is democratic or not, all organisations devolve power, inevitably, into small and self-serving elites. Since direct democracy is impossible because of the population explosion, the consolidation of power will be in the hands of a few. These few elites, even when they have good intentions, normally prioritise their own interests, sometimes at the detriment of the majority's interests (Michels, 1911).

Drawing a parallel to the preceding view, this paper argues that in gender studies, the interest of a few constitutes the dominant group, such that the interest of "others" is prominently overshadowed, making the term "gender" a cover and a synonym for the term "woman". Thus, when applied to the academic discipline of gender studies, the title of this paper serves as a potent metaphor that deliberately suggests that the field prioritises a narrow set of perspectives and marginalises

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

all the interests it was designed to accommodate. Even though gender should encompass the spectrum—masculine, feminine, non-binary identities—activists and academic discourse have concentrated more attention on addressing issues of patriarchy, misogyny, female empowerment, and other challenges confronting women. Thus, this paper argues that by the prevailing distinction, gender studies is reduced to capturing, mainly if not only, the struggles and experiences of women, thereby making the field gynocentric. The consequence is an imbalance that points to the neglect of the unique experiences of males. To remedy this, this paper presents arguments for the need to accommodate the interests of men in gender studies.

The paper is organised into four sections, excluding the introduction and conclusion. In the first, an argument is presented to demonstrate that gender studies is a field affected by single stories and their associated issues. We argue in this section that the male perspective is often overlooked in many gender studies works. The second section focuses on showing that the male gender faces its own struggles and that what is perceived as societal privilege may actually be a burden. The third section is dedicated to the theoretical foundation of this study—the theory of intersectionality. In the fourth section, the study explores how intersectionality can be achieved within gender studies.

The Danger of a Single Story in Gender Studies

Chimamanda Adichie, in her July 2009 TED Talk, speaks of the danger of a single story. Single stories, she holds, "create stereotypes," are bedevilled with incompletion, and wear the toga of being the only story. Unfortunately, as she posits further, such stories rob people of dignity, make the recognition of equal humanity difficult, and emphasise differences rather than similarities (Adichie, 2010). A lot of the stories captured in research works in gender studies exclude the views of the male gender, narrowly capturing only the woes of women; in fact, the male gender is to be blamed for all the throes of women, and by extension, society. Such stories are one-sided, neglecting complexities and alternative voices.

Consequently, what we have is a situation in which women are narrowly conceived as caregivers, victims, sexual objects, mothers, wives, daughters, and whatever else nature and society have normalised

ISSN 3043- 5501
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them to be. These stories pitch the interests of women against those of men. Unfortunately, single stories, as Biddulph (2011:45) points out, "emphasise difference, rob people of their dignity and create critical misunderstanding."

Arising from Prathap's (2017:550) point of view, Adichie's position underscores the point that "all lives are a complex overlap of many stories and yet the human tendency is to compress all this to a simple dimensional narrative." When compressed stories are told repeatedly, they gain traction and narrow how people think about the subject of the story; such stories erase complexity and diversity. In fact, such stories tend to attain the status of an axiom, arrived at through hasty generalisation, one which presents itself as the only truth, or which replaces other parts of the truth. A single story is an incomplete story, no matter the angle from which it is viewed. Therefore, the danger of a single story is that it may become the only story. As Agarwal (2023) points out:

> It is essential to recognise that single stories not only affect how people are perceived but also how they perceive themselves. When individuals from marginalised communities are continuously bombarded with a narrow narrative, it can create internalised stereotypes and limit their aspirations and potential. Therefore, it is crucial to amplify diverse voices, especially those from underrepresented groups.

Therefore, doing gender studies from a single-story angle makes the field prone to prejudice, discrimination, and a lack of empathy towards the course of the male. More so, in gender studies, the narratives paint a picture of men as heartless and devils because at the heart of feminism, to which gender studies is connected, is the matter of patriarchy, male domination, and male supremacist ideology. According to Clemence and Jairos (2011: 61), the idea of maleness is associated with some concepts- "aggression, competitiveness, lack of fear, analytic reasoning, anger, fear of failure, competition, strength, as well as being assertive and unemotional." In their combination, these concepts come with some danger because men are conditioned to see themselves in the light in which they are painted.

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

Moreover, gender studies may seem to be promoting the cause of women, but what they do is to present women as poor, defined by hardship and struggles. Indeed, there are a whole lot that do not quite fit women, including any posturing and mentality that suggests they are playing the pity card. Pointing out how single stories in gender studies affect women, Agarwal (2023) holds that:

> One common single story about women of colour is that they are one-dimensional characters, primarily defined by their struggles and hardships. These representations overlook the diversity among these women, their successes, resilience, and the uniqueness of each woman's experience. Such a single story reduces women of colour to a simplified narrative, denying them their complexity, which may lead to discrimination and limit their opportunities.

Agarwal, using her identitarian tag as an Indian woman, further points out specifically that:

> Being a woman of Indian origin, I have often encountered a single story that Indian women are solely homemakers, submissive, and bound by tradition. This narrative often paints them as being oppressed, with their lives dictated by a patriarchal society. While this may be true for some, this single story overlooks the vast number of Indian women who are breaking barriers in fields like business, politics, science, arts, and more. It fails to capture their strength, ambition, and their roles as change-makers within their communities. This stereotyping can be detrimental as it diminishes their accomplishments, reinforces gender bias, and limits our understanding of the diverse realities of women from India.

A single story is dangerous to both males and females because it narrows perspectives, creates an untrue dichotomy between both sexes, and prevents the evaluation of some problems from a holistic approach. The single story is dominant and often overshadows the complex, intersectional, and diverse experience of gender. The single-

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

story sidelines other voices in the gender space, and when it discusses other aspects of gender, it narrates only some facts while ignoring others. By narrating a side of the whole story, a woman-centric gender studies seeks to make the repeated story the dominant one.

The Male Gender, His Struggles, and the Burden of Society

There is a common Nigerian street pronouncement, "I am going through a lot, and a lot is going through me." This ubiquitous statement suggests that the individual is experiencing a significant amount of stress, difficulty, or emotional turmoil, which may be a state of struggle on multiple fronts, including emotional, family-related problems, health issues, work-related stress, or financial difficulties, such that the person is overwhelmed. A critical engagement with the male's predicaments may just validate this pronouncement. Speaking generally, women see men as being privileged, as they are born into a patriarchal society that bestows advantages by birth and social normalisation.

While it is contentious that all males—irrespective of social, religious classes—enjoy such privileges, even if we agree, for the sake of argument, privileges can be a burden. Ask the only child of wealthy parents, who must inherit the weight of managing the family's estate. What we see in that case is privilege, but this one comes with significant expectations and responsibilities, which impose pressure that can be psychologically and socially taxing with a heavy weight of expectation (Luthar & Becker, 2003; Sustainability Directory, 2025). The male in traditional society has a lot of roles imposed on him (Young et al, 2024; Kamwele & Mwihia, 2024; Okolo & Nwachukwu, 2022). Naturally, he is expected to be the breadwinner, the protector, and he gets drafted to war in the event of one; and the arduous tasks in the family and society fall mainly on his shoulders.

Historically, the masculine role has been profoundly shaped by physical and occupational hazards, positioning men as warriors on battlefields, essential labourers in dangerous industries, and first responders expected to display courage by directly confronting danger during crises. This longstanding dependence on male physical strength often leads to a disproportionate assignment to high-fatality roles, effectively placing men at the forefront of highly perilous tasks. In modern times, this

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

burden is clearly evident in occupations such as construction, mining, and law enforcement, which have statistically significant rates of injury and death. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2023), more men (51.4 per 100,000, 000 working age adults) die from work-related incidents compared to women (17.2 per 100,000, 000). The industries with the greatest risks include agriculture, construction, forestry, fishing, and manufacturing.

Collectively, these sectors account for 63% of all fatal work-related injuries worldwide (ILO, 2023). A study on South Korean workers revealed that men aged 55 and above faced a work-related fatality rate nearly 30 times higher than that of women in the same age group (Park, Park, Jung, Na, & Kim, 2024). Moreover, men are not only vulnerable at work; they also face risks in domestic settings. Intimate relationship problems and separation pose a significant public health issue, showing strong and measurable links to severe mental and physical health challenges in men. Data indicate that marital separation can quadruple a man's risk of suicide.

Additionally, men in distressed or abusive relationships—which often involve psychological and emotional abuse such as verbal assaults, humiliation, and manipulative tactics—are at a considerably higher risk of developing clinical depression and anxiety. Beyond these mental health issues, chronic relational stress is a known trigger for various adverse physical health outcomes, including hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, weakened immune function, and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

As a result, men often resort to maladaptive coping strategies, such as increased alcohol and drug misuse, which can further worsen their mental health problems (University of British Columbia, 2022; Mouhsen, 2025). Moreover, the execution of assigned roles to men frequently occurs with minimal regard for personal psychological welfare, leading to internalised struggles, including pervasive feelings of worthlessness. This emotional distress is commonly suppressed or met with derision or dismissal when expressed, directly reflecting the prevailing societal mandate of stoicism and the expectation that men must endure extreme hardship without complaint.

ISSN 3043- 5501
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The male is indeed going through a lot, and gender studies need to hear his own story, too. This is indeed so because "history" may not be "his story" as it is often alluded to. The male gender is taught from a young age to be strong but silent, to exercise maturity, machismo, and show emotional restraints. He is readily accused of betraying manliness when his ambience or actions express vulnerability, discouragement, or even sadness. Indeed, through socialisation, the male is a beast of burden, one who bears in silence his many failures, pains, and struggles with untold anxiety because of societal expectations, part of which is to keep quiet and bear all in silence. In a lamentation titled, "The Burden of the Male Gender in Contemporary African Society," posted on a social media, Jekins Ofota points out that:

> From childhood, boys have been conditioned to be tough, to suppress emotions and pains, and to live up to the expectations of being a "man". Life has been harsh and unyielding for the male gender. If a boy is injured, he is told not to cry because he is a man. He grows up with everyone expecting him to be a "man." But do men feel pain? The mental health of the "male gender" is often overlooked. The ambience is foggy and hazy, and mental health is often regarded as nothing important. While women receive support and empathy for their struggles (be it financial, spiritual, work-related, emotional, and marriage-based issues), society quickly intervenes to alleviate their mental torture, but men are expected to endure silently. The moment he speaks out, he's seen as weak and fragile and termed "not man enough". This stereotype perpetuates the belief that men must be strong at all times.

Ultimately, men's mental health takes the hit; this is why the male suicide rate is statistically higher than that of females (Schumacher, 2019). As a result of isolation, loneliness, shame, and the inability to voice out when faced with predicaments, men often succumb to the pressure within. The ones who do not succumb to suicide resort to substance abuse. In contemporary times, the modern male is going through some crisis, as there are shifting societal expectations, evolving gender roles, and overlooked emotional strains and burdens. The male has indeed faced centuries of deeply ingrained social and cultural expectations that are significantly burdensome.

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

The expectation that the male be masculine imposes some weight on the mental and physical balance that he exudes, sometimes leading to emotional suppression and suicide when the burden is too heavy to bear. The man is the primary financial provider and the breadwinner whose worth is determined strictly by what he brings to the table. In old age, he is often neglected more than the woman, who gets cared for more by the children. As Adil, Shahed, and Arshadm (2017) put it, as the breadwinner, he often feels more social, physical, and emotional pressure from political instability, unemployment rate, and the rise in poverty in society.

In the area of health, men are more predisposed to diseases such as cardiac arrest and diabetes (Chew et al., 2012; Gao et al., 2019), and these may further strain their emotions, especially if they are unable to meet up with roles assigned to them by society. As such, when they come down with any of these illnesses and are unable to provide for the family, they must endure the mental torture that comes with being ordinary members of the family. Adil, Shahed, and Arshadm (2017: 57) used the term "gender role strain" to refer to "the stress and pressure caused by societal expectations from individuals to behave and perform according to the role expectation attached with each gender."

With the use of the survey method and a purposive sample of 100 workingmen, the authors investigated Pakistani men's gender role strain and its effect on physical and psychological health and overall well-being. The findings reveal that being the head of the family and the breadwinner exerted the most strain on Pakistani men. This is followed by the burden that comes from being the one responsible for hard physical tasks at home and at work.

According to Clemence and Jairos (2011), the belief that all men in patriarchal societies enjoy some protection in a male-biased society, which brutalises weaker females, is suspect; a certain class of underrepresented males are victims of the system thought to pamper men. In one word, patriarchy has no respect for sex, as the weaker sex may, in fact, be the male. In fact, these "third sex," using the words of Clemence and Jairos, are "psychologically traumatised by patriarchal values of their societies but suffer in silence because it is unmanly to express emotion" (Clemence & Jairos, 2011:60). We may add to this position of Clemence and Jairos that while weaker men are victims

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

of patriarchy, strong women benefit from such a society, either as daughters, wives, or even matriarchs. In any case, it is important to emphasise that men, too, are obviously at the receiving end of the power structure of society. They suffer as many injustices as women are complaining about, if not more.

The nuanced implications of the analysis above are that while the feminist directs fury of her anger against the male, he is only a construct of society. Without doubt, society is instrumental in determining a man's behaviour, feelings, values, and the social norms he imbibes. However, adherence to social expectations comes at a cost, such that while men have some privileges, they also must endure personal and emotional constraints. The above analysis holds true, to different degrees, across races and ethnic groups.

Interrogating Framework: The Theory of Intersectionality

The critical theory, Intersectionality, was propounded in 1989 by the legal scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw, in her paper, "Demarginalising the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics;" and further developed in her 1991 work, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Colour". She emphasises the view that "people are not defined by a single social category but by multiple interconnected aspects of their identity that can result in unique experiences of privilege or oppression (The Oxford Review, n.d).

The paper adopts the theory of intersectionality to make critical interventions needed for capturing the lived realities of diverse sections within the gender space. The aim is to explore the theory to underscore the need for a paradigm shift in gender studies that emphasises diversion of focus from a unitary approach centred on gynocentrism to a better "intersectional approach" which focuses on capturing the experience of diverse sections of gender, especially the male. The former, we contend, focuses on one primary marker of difference in gender studies that emphasises the difference between the male and the female.

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

This approach, in line with the "Single Story" view of Adichie, is simplistic and reductionistic in nature and is unable to sufficiently explain the social problem encountered by either the male or the female. What the theory of intersectionality advocates is the need to address social issues by taking into consideration the relationships between various factors responsible for the oppression confronting both male and female, which feminist inspired gender studies believes confront only the female, thereby making the field a narrow set of perspectives that now potentially marginalise all the interests it was designed to accommodate, neglecting the unique experiences of males.

Men are equally oppressed by the very system believed to be favouring them. Thus, there is a need to move from a simplistic causation to a complex, systemic analysis, which will allow for taking into consideration new and more accurate information that would have been otherwise overlooked. Intersectionality as a framework in gender studies calls for a broader, more inclusive alliance that unites the struggles of the diverse spectrum of gender under a common banner.

Intersectionality in Gender Studies

The story of how men tend to be excluded or ostracised from gender studies is better told with the experience of Biko Agozino (2002) as retold in his critical essay, "What Women Studies Offer Men: The Entremesa Discussion" which rightly locate the untoward experiences of men who venture into women/gender studies, where seen and unseen, loud and silent, weak and strong fences of resistance are mounted against them by women who claim sole right to the ownership of the domain termed "gender". The "bitter" experience of Agozino is shared here:

> I submitted an abstract to an international conference on feminist perspectives on international law. The abstract was accepted three months in advance, and I wrote and submitted the paper one month in advance as required. The paper was accepted and circulated internationally to delegates, but only two days before the conference in Sweden, the organisers emailed, faxed, and phoned to cancel the paper and ban(sic) me from the conference. I am told by a feminist that there is a fear that men would

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

> get "turned on" by women's personal accounts, but I suspect that this is a smokescreen, given that academic discussions of gender issues are not always about erotic issues that could turn anyone on.

The experience of Agozino makes a serious case for intersectionality and why gender studies must not be left to women alone or be outrightly owned and dominated by them. In all ramifications, gender studies should be a multi-racial, plural-ethnic, and diverse-relational scholarship that is indeed gender-balanced from all perspectives, rather than being gynocentric. Raji-Oyelade (2008:61) argues strongly on the side of an all-embracing gender studies which is free(d) from the shackles of gender bias and what he calls "epistemological boundaries". In alignment with Raji-Oyelade's view, this paper posits that gender studies as a scholarly path must "fuse women's and men's experiences into a holistic view of human experience" (Cited in Berila et al., 2005, 34).

Indeed, the field of study should not be one that "casts the women in the powerless role of biological victims of the social order and all men as occupiers of the centre of power" (Clemence & Jairos, 2011:61). For as Burck and Speed have pointed out "…whether we are women or men, all the selves we are and could be are organised, and sometimes constrained and warped, by the various layers of the culture in which we live."

A conscious and deliberate understanding of the male in gender studies has the advantage of aiding understanding and acknowledging the differences of both sexes, thereby advancing the intersectional understanding of gender, addressing homophobia, and promoting the interest of both binary opposition in gender studies, against the backdrop of a world where both divides intermingle to find meaning in the face of existential predicaments. Indeed, gender relations are complex, and any study of these relations should take into consideration the interests of males, females, intersex, and transgender individuals, such that there can be the building of a coalition that enables activists to work on projects that take on the oppression that confronts all classes of gender. The advantage of this approach, even for the woman, is that it enables all to look at issues confronting men and women from a holistic point of view within the larger social context. Moreover,

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

"rather than simply constructing men as the oppressors, it allows us to explore the varieties of masculine experience, both hegemonic and non-hegemonic" (Berila et al., 2005, 40).

Misandry in the name of gender studies is loud enough to suggest that the world will be a better place in the absence of men. But as Berila et al. (2005) posit, it is sceptical if "the notion that women-only spaces are inherently safe spaces or are necessarily safer spaces than ones that include men." It is clear, for instance, that women are not less violently attacked in same-sex relationships, when chosen over heterosexual ones. Also, women from diverse ethnic, religious, social, and racial backgrounds who relate are not necessarily warm towards each other when they must work or be together. Indeed, women have oppressive practices.

In any case, women and men share safe spaces. Thus, gender studies should primarily aim to contribute to achieving a haven and a better life for all. This is, however, impossible if gender studies keep treating both sides of the coin as different currencies and/or women desperately build enclosures around gender discourses. Again, Raji-Oyelade intervenes by positing against the dangers and nuanced implications (or complications) inherent in a tendency to limit gender studies as the forte of women to the total exclusion of men. Accordingly, he situates the issue in context by affirming that:

> There is something dialectically interesting about the creation of enclosures and limitations in the production of knowledge: each attempt at providing an exclusive and exclusivist area/space of interpretation based on place, race or sex tends to follow two parallel paths, either as a very useful front of addressing issues which would have gone ignored in the larger public sphere, or as a prison-cave of uncritical bonding. But I propose that an enclosure is an enclosure: possibly enchanting, legitimising, authenticating, liberating, but in its extreme brand, a disclosure of parochial imagination (Raji-Oyelade, 2008:61).

What Raji-Oyelade (2008) describes fittingly as "parochial imagination" defines every posturing that gender studies is a field for "women only"

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

and men should be boxed in as subjects of discursive engagement and boxed out as outsiders. To illustrate how serious and vexed the issue of enclosure and exclusion is within gender studies scholarship, Raji-Oyelade (2008:63) gives an account of his personal experience:

> Early in the year 2001, I was a guest at the University of South Africa, where I was to know later that I happened to be the first male scholar to visit the Institute for Gender Studies. I had hoped that that qualification was enough for me to make a free enquiry about the programme of a similar institute in another part of the Republic. After a couple of letters seeking possibilities of access to the Institute's library were ignored, I was to find out, to my amusement then, that the organisation had built a mechanism into its system not to support the application of male researchers even with the minutest dignity of a calculating negative response … Everything pointed at a brick wall of a raging sexual discrimination, inverted for effect. I am interested in women's poetry, but I am male by all indications … Would I be advised to do a sex-change in order to qualify to study Nigerian female poetry, for instance, or would I be asked to "back off" when issues related to the image of the woman or the construction of female identities are to be discussed? Must I accept that Nemesis, in the figure of the vindictive female, has finally caught up with me, the unlucky scapegoat of the oppressive male? Or how would it be possible to foreclose other (male) intervention in women's literary productions and still utter philosophies about gender equality, tolerance, and equity?

Hence, the posers and concerns raised by Raji-Oyelade (2008) and others based on lived experiences are as relevant today as they were at the time. All attempts to cast gender studies only in the image of women and as a matter of feminist duty or guard of honour fall flat before the logic that equity respects no one. A female-only lock on gender studies is an assault on complementarities and a multicultural world order in an age when boundaries, insularities, and particularities are giving way (and rightly so) to inclusiveness and togetherness.

ISSN 3043- 5501
E-ISSN: 3093-0677

Instead of building barriers, gender studies must elicit, engender, and encourage bonding. The notion of gender should not be problematised to exclude men; rather, the dynamisms of the modern world paradigm should be accentuated with the space categorised as gender(ed).

Conclusion

In this paper, there has been an examination of a dominant view in gender studies, which is largely informed by feminism, that has made the field more about one side of the coin- the women. The view expressed in the literature from this angle is that the relationship between the man and the woman is lopsided and tilted in favour of the man. The man is seen as the perpetrator of gender violence visited against innocent women, who are portrayed as victims (Clemence and Jairos, 2011).

The argument we have pursued is two-fold. First is the position that the field of gender studies is replete with the single story, which, though it may not be false, is limiting as it does not capture all the necessary parts of the story it seems to seek to capture. The second is the position that the male story is not sufficiently captured in gender studies. One, it presents men as privileged, ignoring the burden that comes with the privileges. Two, it ignores that men, who are not part of the power structure of the society, equally suffer from the injustices perpetrated in society, just as women. The consequence is that there is a need to give more attention to addressing the predicaments confronting men within gender studies.

Recommendations

Berila et al. (2005:40) aver that "gender is something about which both men and women need to be concerned." In that light, this paper recommends that it is important that men be allowed to provide their own perspectives on issues within the gender studies space. Men's involvement in gender studies should not just be as objects of study, but also as researchers, critics, and others.

Gender studies need to break from the single-story orientation by seeking out diverse perspectives and resisting the urge to generalise or stereotype. This requires the pursuit of a broader understanding of

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issues, rather than approaching them from narrow perspectives based on women-centric posturing and sexist ancient grudges. The tyranny of binaries must stop because humans would remain who they are, and institutions reflect the input of both males and females from one generation to the next. Moreover, narratives that distinguish women as being emotional and men as strong need to be challenged and discarded. Men are equally as emotional as women; and women who choose to be are not less strong than men; and indeed, there are weak men as there are women. This points to the need to stop arbitrary gender norms and profiling. Men deserve to be told by both sexes: "Gentlemen, it is okay to cry."

In addition, there is a need for increased funding and scholarly attention on male-specific mental health issues and for the development of effective interventions. Future research should continue to apply an intersectional lens by investigating how masculinity is shaped by local histories, economies, and other identity markers to move beyond Western-centric narrative conventions in gender studies. Finally, educators and parents must challenge traditional gender roles and norms from a young age to foster environments where all children can express their full range of emotions and interests without fear of being ridiculed or stereotyped. Ultimately, the goal is to move beyond a rigid and binary understanding of gender to foster a society where men are liberated from the burdens of an outdated and self-destructive supremacist ideology.

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