

THE GENDER NARRATIVE OF MUTUAL ENRICHMENT: GENDER DYNAMICS AMONG THE IGBOS

The topic of gender has been addressed with an imbalanced criticality for a long time. From the academia to the religious sectors, the impression has been that gender is only a controversial topic from a branch of feminism to destroy masculine tendencies in the world, from patriarchy to masculinity, mans-planations to masculine linguistics. Hence, gender as a topic has become almost synonymous with women subjugation, anti-feminine feminism, and empowerment of women or emasculation of men. Somehow, the narrative has been accepted that there is war between man and woman which must continue until woman wins.

Has this singular narrative addressed suitably the tensions surrounding gender related topics? It has achieved an appreciated awareness on gender-complexity, ills of masculinism, inequality against women, etc. But it has created, or at least, exacerbated the controversies in certain aspects of inter-human conviviality and gender issues; the nature-imbued masculinity or femininity seen in themselves as bad or good respectively; gender identity politics vs comfortable femininity; equality of outcome versus equality of opportunity; imbalanced upbringing of boys vs girls; academic mafianism against other gender narratives, etc.

There is and should be another real narrative too, where despite the human imperfections, each gender recognizes and cherishes the difference of the other, and all are mutually enriched; where the gender tension is not about winning; where the interdependence of the genders implies equal culpability, regress or progress.

Thus this paper argues from the gender dynamics of the Igbos.

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