

**CENTRE FOR WOMEN STUDIES AND INTERVENTION AS A CONTINUATION OF
MOTHER MARY WALKER'S ADVOCACY FOR THE DIGNITY AND RIGHT OF
WOMEN IN NIGERIA**

Rev. Fr. Prof. A.B.C. Chiegboka

Department of Religion and Human Relations
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

&

Chioma Maureen Udemba, HHCJ

Department of Religion and Human Relations
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
Email: cm.udemba@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

Women constitute about half population of Nigeria and are known to play roles as mothers, community developers or organizers and so on. Their contribution toward the economic development of societies is also more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. Yet their participation in formal and informal structure and processes, where decision regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made, remain insignificant. Aina (1998) observes that "Nigerian society has been patriarchal in nature which is the major feature of traditional society" (p.8). It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women. It is a system of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex, which provides material advantages to male while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of women. In ancient Greek mythology, the woman is stereotypically portrayed as a necessary evil that man endures. The Greek philosopher, Plato, for example, rejects the existence of Hades and argues that chastisement of man is to endure woman. The thought of this classic philosopher shaped the development of patriarchy and attendant cultural norms that regulate institutionalized inequitable social relationship between man and woman and the limiting of woman's participation in economic, social and political processes in societies. Consequently, women's rights are impeded and opportunities for self-realization and development are limited. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is one of the bold initiatives of concerned citizens (women religious) outside government to address the issue of marginalization, discrimination, oppression and violence against women in all forms especially by culture and poverty. This work will demonstrate the passionate activities of Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in restoring women their original dignity and wholeness and empowering them to become self-reliant and to know their natural rights as human beings created in the image and likeness of God. Thus, the centre resolved to boldly stand up and participate in the righteous work against gender inequality so as empower women in various areas. This work will bring us to see how far the centre has gone and her achievements in uplifting Nigerian women in realizing their worth, dignity, duty and rights in the society. With the aforementioned in view, this study seeks to unveil the many momentous and venerable deeds of Centre for Women Studies and Intervention toward helping Nigerian women to recover their original dignity, to "till it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). This exemplary social work, which at once is evidence of a Non-Governmental Organization established by women religious rising up in faith to perform their single duty, singles Centre for Women Studies and Intervention out for this comprehensive study in religion and society.

Keyword: centre for women studies, intervention, rights, dignity, and status.

Introduction

The discrimination and marginalization of Nigerian women in economic development and in social and political spaces have been a source of worry since time immemorial. Despite the adoption of United Nation's convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women in 1985, inequality still exists due to a myriad of cultural and structural challenges. This has constrained women's participation in all spheres of life with serious implication for human resource development and, in that capacity, economic development of the society and the general state of the gender equality.

Physical and psychological violence, sexual abuse, genital mutilation, femicide, human trafficking, slavery; these and many others are the dangers faced every day by Nigerian women of all ages, social classes and cultures. The desire to continue the apostolate of Mother Mary Charles Walker whose apostolate centered on empowering women and the girl-child propelled the foundation and the work of the Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in eradicating the cultural practices and marginalization which Nigerian women undergo, empowering and educating them on their dignity and fundamental rights as human beings. The centre has succeeded in fostering the dignity and wellbeing of a good number of women in Nigeria society.

The activities of the Centre for women Studies and Intervention are not well known by the public. As a result, many are ignorant of the reason behind the uplift of some of Nigerian women. The researcher chose the topic –Center for Women Studies and Intervention, uplifting the dignity, rights, status of women in Nigerian society to lay bare the immeasurable contributions of the centre in promoting the rights and status of women and empowering them to become self-reliant.

Origin of Centre for women studies and intervention

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is a mission/intervention of the Religious Congregation of The Handmaids of The Holy Child Jesus (HHCJ). It is the continuation of the mission of mother Mary Charles Magdalene Walker, the foundress of the congregation of the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus (HHCJ). Its mission is centred on empowering women and girl-child: educating them on their dignity and fundamental rights as human beings. The Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is a non-Governmental, non-religious and non-profit Organization registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in 1999 with registration certificate (RC: 12,045). Centre for Women Studies and Intervention has its headquarters in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria and regional offices in Delta, Cross-River, Ebonyi and Kogi States. Through advocacy, capacity building, awareness raising, sensitization, research and documentation, partnerships and paralegal engagements, the centre advocates for good governance, economic, political and socio-cultural rights.

The Mission of Centre for Women Studies and Intervention

The Mission of the Organization is to uphold the dignity of women and the girl-child through conscientization and empowerment. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is one of the bold initiatives of concerned citizens outside government to address the issues of marginalization, oppression and violence against women and the girl-child in all form especially by culture and poverty. Since inception, Centre for Women Studies and Intervention has been a vanguard for training women especially at the grassroots. Women who face an ever-present risk of social relegation are trained to become politically aware, socially responsible and economically independent in order that they might become active in the promotion of a better world. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention continue to organize Grassroots trainings and Mobilization Campaign on the issues of inclusion of women in governance and campaign against violence against Women across Nigeria.

The vision of Centre for Women Studies and Intervention

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention's are targeted at improved prevention of violence against women and girls especially in the areas of female genital mutilation and Gender Based Violence through changes in behavior, practices and attitudes, increased effectiveness of legislation, policies, national action plans, and accountability systems to prevent and end violence against women and girls. This also involves promotion of social values of non-discrimination and equality for all. Centre for Women Studies Intervention has over the years helped change lives of women and girls, emphasis shall be made on projects implemented and currently running.

Invitation by Shanahan to Come to Nigeria

In the 1920s, Bishop Shanahan (CSSP) of the Vicariate of Southern Nigeria sent fervent appeal to Europe for volunteers for the Nigerian Mission. "Come to Nigeria and help us", was his clarion call. The need was enormous. According to Waturuocha (2005), "mission schools then were scattered and scanty" (p.4). Calabar had just one school for girls. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Clunny originally managed it. They were recalled to France for health reasons. Bishop Shanahan made a general appeal

to female religious congregation in English speaking countries of Europe for help. His dire appeal was not heeded. Subsequently, he directed particular appeal to the Irish Sisters of Charity, urging them to accept the Nigerian mission. These felt unready for the Nigerian mission. However, Mother Mary Charles Walker and few others stood up and volunteered. They made their request known to the superiors. There was great resistance to the mission from considerable members of the Congregation. Hazards of health and the extremely weather and trying living conditions in the tropics were foremost of the reasons that the mission would not be embraced. Almost all the Sisters, who had initially volunteered for the mission, rescinded their decision. Mother Mary Charles Walker did not. She was resolute in her resolve to go on this mission. The call: "Come to Nigeria and help us" became the cause of her avocation in her vocation as Sister of Charity. Going to Nigeria became the one life she cannot but give herself to in order for her to fulfill her religious life as a Sister of Charity. On this, Waturaocha (2005) notes:

For Mother Mary Charles, the call was immediate and with all due process, obtained permission from Rome, from Holy Father. Pope Pius XI, in a rescript dated 23rd May, 1923, gave her his permission to answer the Nigerian missionary call as well as allowing her to live out of her convent while still remaining a Sister of Charity (p.5).

On September 12, 1923, she set sail from Liverpool to Nigeria. She arrived in Calabar on October 2 and became the sole woman religious in the Vicariate of Southern Nigeria, which was founded in 1885. It was made up of East, North, and South of the Niger and the British Cameroon. In Calabar, she was known as "Charles Walker"., Mother Mary Charles Walker voluntarily came to help with the formation of women. She succeeded in fostering the dignity and wellbeing of women through educational, medical, pastoral care and social services.

Position of Nigerian Women before the arrival of Mother Mary Charles Walker

Woman is born and raised for marriage. They belong to the bedrooms of their husbands and the kitchen. They live for men to beget. Theirs is to conceive, bear and raise children. Women are the "weaker sex". They were disparaged against and thought of as dependents (wards) of men. Nmah (2003) states that:

The resultant weakness has deprived women of the strength to rise up and insist on a change in their environment for the sake of their families and children. Women fear the difficulty of having to live without a male companion in a man's world. (P.59).

At the arrival of Mother Mary Charles Walker, women were second-class citizens. They were thought of as inferior sex and property of men. They were good for marriage and happy to third, fourth or fifteenth wife. They had no right to property. They were like slaves who must work to take care of the house, rear children and function for reproductive purposes. They suffered in the cause of bearing twince. The barren or childless woman was useless in the community. Child-care covers breastfeeding of a baby, training and supervision, repair and mending of physical and emotional life of children. Marriage was regarded as a career for women. This is highest goal that every girl strives to attain.

Women did not assume leadership roles in the enlarged society even though they had always been effective leaders in their women group. Domestication, which was more or less compulsory, was seen as their role. Food and oil processing, cooking, provision of wood, provision of water from long distance streams all formed part of women's domestic responsibilities. According to Lewntark (1992), very early in childhood, girls were taught how to balance container on their heads and carry it from one to six kilometres on rough ground. They had no equal right to education as the boys. Right to choice of career was closed. The girls were not allowed to attend boys' school. When the choice had to be made because of limited means, it is boy that is chosen to go to school. Moreover, the type of education the girls received was to fulfill her role as housewife and mother. She received training in housewifery and childcare. Thus, men had greater educational opportunities. Though early missionaries attested that the key to the conversion of African people was the Christian education of women," women were not educated. There was indeed obvious gap between boys and girls in school system. The magisterial Phelps-strokes Report on education in Efik of 1920 shows that mission and school have not made serious effort to bring girls into the school and to provide suitable training for them. According to Mbonu (2010) "It is reasonable to say that more boys than girls completed formal education in Efikland" (p.4).

The killing of twins and their mother was the customary practice in Anua. Twins and their mothers were believed to be the products of charm. Twins' heads were stuffed in calabash and left for death. Their mothers were driven into the bush to die. "May you have twins!" was a curse too terrible for a woman to hear. The reality is that women were subordinated, socially, economically, politically and otherwise.

Mother Mary Charles Magdalene Walker Empowering Nigerian Women

There was a widespread discrimination against the girl-child. Women and girls were domestically abused. There was a general lack of respect for life during the time of Charles Walker in Calabar. She laboured for the overcoming of the violation of women in mind and body by educating them in their right. She formed their conscience and taught them about their freedom of thought. She worked with them to understand and recognize their responsibility for their own moral, ethical, spiritual and intellectual formations and that of the society.

Every human being, female or male, whom God created in his image, has the eternal assignment of growing up to be in the likeness of God. Therefore, education as human formation and development is innate to human and society. Formation (growth) is in the nature of the character of human and of society. Because of the centrality of education in human beings' ability and capacity to fulfill the purpose for which they exist, societies in all ages and in everywhere have invested in formation. Human being and Society have vested interest in development and growth. Arinze (1965) sees education as "the development of the whole man, soul, body, intellect, will, emotion and physical wellbeing" (p.20). Thomas Aquinas states that the purpose of education is to aid man attain the goal of existence. Charles Walker believed that education of girls and women is the single most effective way to promote true human dignity and improve lives together in families as the societies.

The importance of education to the development of society cannot be over emphasized. It would not be an exaggeration to say that without education most societies would stagnate and die. Women and girls in Nigeria were denied the opportunities for education. Consequently, their development was impeded and the growth of that society became hindered. Bishop Shanahan invited Charles Walker to undertake this monumental task of advancement of the humanity and society through the education of girls and women. Educating girls and women always is the catalysts for social transformation and authentic human living and responsible co-existence. Under Bishop Shanahan, women education and literacy programs in schools were supported and promoted.

Charles Walker's vocation shone brilliantly in her creative imagination and her manifest ability to ingeniously respond to the situation in Calabar. There and then girls were deprived of right to education. It was clear to her that education that a society that does not educate its girls is a doomed one. This is true not because education enhances social progress; educational formation of women has ripple effect within the family and across generations. Besides, investing in girl's education is one of the most effective ways in poverty eradication and promotion of human betterment. To strengthen the assertion that education of girls and women has impact the development of societies, Hooks (1984) states that "female education is the pre-condition of the development of a nation. Both men and women are the members of society. So it is true that both men and women should receive proper education in order to build up a proper society" (p. 80). Through education, Charles Walker empowered women with the knowledge, the skill and self-governance necessary to participate in the development process in their societies as full-fledged members of their societies.

Charles Walker took over the management of St. Joseph's Girls' school Calabar and help to include domestic, science, home management, needlework and art. Her aim was to provide comprehensive educational formation with firm character building. Thus, she made literacy available to girls in Calabar. She designed vocational education for girls who had passed school age and those preparing for marriage. She established one such of schools in Calabar. Horticulture, domestic science, crafts, needlework and raffia constituted the main part of the curriculum. Okure (2016) attests that "the reputation of St. Joseph's Convent Primary School Calabar attracted high ranking visitors from around Africa and beyond" (p. 72).

Penetrating the district of Anua, she observed that there were only five little girls in the boys' school. The women had no one but male catechist to teach them. The people came from all round begging for teachers for their little girls. Okure (2016) reports the call of the people to her thus: "Come to us and bring us light, we do not want our children to grow up in darkness as we did" (p.81). To bring education to the girls in Anua, she founded St. Philomena Convent Primary School Anua. Hinsely (1930) makes an appraisal of the schools founded by Charles Walker thus:

At Calabar, Nigeria in the Efik country, Sister Mary Charles Walker has worked wonders among the women and girls. Her schools at Calabar and Anua are considered the best girls schools in the country and her name is known to all who are interested in African education. (p.5).

Cooke (1980) notes that "her strong point were her ability to deal with children be it in the classroom or in the solidarities or extra school activities" (p.92).

By providing educational opportunities for girls and women in Calabar and Anua, she helped women to acquire life skills that allow them to make sound decisions and influenced changes in the community. Women's visibility and participation in society and church life underpinned her education philosophy. She was against the system that produces half-educated women, who were neither at home with their traditional culture nor in the wider international community. According to Mbonu (2010) she insisted on integral formation of women who would take their proper role in society and church life. To this end, Bishop Shanahan would rather have his new missionaries, the missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary, receive training from Sister Charles Walker in Nigeria than have them be trained in Ireland. Mbonu (2010) citing Shanahan states:

The more I think of the idea of sending the Sisters for a few months in a Training College before they sail for Nigeria, the less I like it. I am convinced that Sister Charles Walker in Nigeria knows more about schoolwork than any Sister in the English training college. Her experience in Africa is invaluable (p.44).

Her vision of a community informed her act of teaching the mastering of reading and writing. The vision of how women and girls can excel drove her education ethos. According to Okure (1981) "She made literacy available to women not only in Calabar and Anua, but also in other towns and villages of the vicariate" (p.24). Bishop Shanahan, in part of his handover note of April 30, 1926, for his successor, pays tribute to Sister Mary Charles Walker. In it he writes: "God has blessed her work beyond expectation. Although she is still alone she has been able to bring the convent schools up to a high standard of efficiency"(p.12). The same Shanahan, cited by Okure (1981), states:

I congratulate you and your girls of St. Joseph's Convent School on the success you have achieved in being classified A+... It is the first time in the history of the mission that a girls' school has honourably carried off the much-coveted honour of being classified excellent. (p.27).

Charles Walker was truly successful in raising the literacy level of women in Calabar and Anua. On this Nwokpo (2002) write:

The more we see, the more we are amazed at what sister Charles Walker has accomplished single handedly. This school (Calabar) is in a flourishing condition. It is the only Montessori school in the whole region. Sister was almost in despair about being able to teach the native anything, no system that she tried seemed to produce any results, so at last she decided to send for the books and see what she could make of Montessori method. She had never seen it in operation, and has just taught herself, but the results are wonderful (p.57).

Montessori Method of education was her singular instrument for the formation of human person that she envisioned for women and girls. The training was so effective that the girls worked conscientiously and progressively on their own without supervision. This unique manners of formation of mind and body and spirit led women to attain heights in learning that were unimaginable.

For Mother Charles, man and woman were created originally for one another in the unity of two in one. They are equal in dignity. They are equal persons. Therefore, depriving women of their

rights to education is utterly disrespectful to the dignity of men and women. Charles Walker is the “Architect of women’s education in Southern Nigeria”. In Okure’s (1981) view, “she introduced the Montessori method of education with such startling success that those who came either to study or to inspect her methods were forced to speak with high praise of her schools” (p.19). Many teachers from different parts of the west coast visited her homes to learn her spirit and her adaptation of the Montessori system of education in Africa. Thus, she succeeded in drawing the attention of Nigeria and the world at large to girls’ education in Africa. To crown it all, she wrote and published a truly scholarly work: “Education of Girls in Southern Nigeria”.

Some Activities of Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in uplifting the rights, dignity and status of Nigerian Women

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention as women focused organisation, has been creating positive change for women and girls and their communities. Her practical and right – based projects directly addressed poverty, discrimination, oppression and marginalization of women and the girl child in all regions of Nigeria. It has affiliations with The United Nations Economic and Social Council, The UN department of Global Communications, The Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations. The Development Partners group on Gender (DPGG), PANDIMIR.

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention develops her projects in partnership with her beneficiaries especially women who work and live in rural communities. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is aware that women’s active participation in communal and national life is key to building a more sustainable future where the rights of women and men, boys and girls are respected. It is inspired and aided by organizations of which the centre partner with, who work for equity, human rights and development of humanity. The Centre has been pushing for inclusive governance that will give women voice and amplify their voices in decision making at both macro and micro levels. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention has carried out a national mobilisation of women in politics on Delimitation of electoral constituencies and Strength in networking for women politicians across the country.

The centre has been building the capacities of women in strengthening their rights and abilities to claim these rights. It has organised series of paralegal training workshop for participants from different parts of the country and subsequently set up Legal Aid Clinics in some five States of Nigeria. The activities of the Paralegal officers, according to reports received, have helped to provide quick access to justice (pro bono) for rural women who would otherwise have been deprived of this benefit and unable to afford the costs of proper litigation. This has also helped promote peaceful living in various communities across the country. The Centre also conduct trainings for Youths on human rights to enhance their capacities in tracking and monitoring human rights abuses in communities providing women and girls structure that will enable them seek justice. Her work to empower women encompasses women from different religious background from rural and urban communities.

In other to achieve gender parity, centre for women studies and intervention with support from its partners has implemented and continues to implement series of projects aimed at promoting gender equality, inclusion of women in governance and decision making processes. Guaranteeing the rights of women is the centre focus of the organization and enabling them reach their full potential is critical to attaining gender equality and meeting a wide range of development goals. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention has implemented and is currently implementing projects in Delta State, Ebonyi State and Cross river State, Nigeria.

The Centre has over the years helped change lives of women and girls, Emphasis shall be made on some of the projects implemented and currently running in Ogoja. These are:

Gender Awareness for Sustainable Development (GASUD)

In Ogoja, the GASUD project was implemented with support from *Misereor* (The German Catholic Bishop’s Organization for Development Co-operation) to empower women of their role in the development of their communities through education and awareness creation. It has contributed to the reduction of violence against women and led to the abolition of harmful traditional practices such as

female disinheritance and female genital mutilation. This has also led to the formation of women groups in Cross Rive state. Cross River Women Empowerment Network (CWEN).

Community Action to Eliminate Violence (CATEVAW) Project:

With support from the African Women Development Fund (AWDF), Centre for Women Studies and Intervention implemented the CATEVAW project in four local government areas (Ogoja, Obanliku, Ikom and Yakurr) in the State. The project was implemented to eliminate violence against women through community driven actions which empowers women to amplify their voices, articulate their interest, defend their rights and protect their bodily integrity. The project also aimed at supporting women including those who survive violence and providing safe keeping environment for them to be protected from all forms of violence through training and formation of women groups, Human rights and Paralegal services with skills to intervene, counsel, track and report on violence against women.

This was achieved through sensitization, Human rights training and engaging traditional leaders, Law Enforcement Agencies and community stakeholders towards cooperation for operationalization of violence against women laws which provides clear legal grounds that prohibit discrimination and violence against women.

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in line with implementing the project drafted customary bye laws for each local government addressing each injustice and discrimination against women in the communities which was adopted by the traditional leaders of the communities represented at the town hall meeting held.

Majority of the Human rights trainings were carried out in schools to educate young girls and boys on the available channels for enforcement of their human rights. This led to creation of human rights clubs. This was done with the view of providing life support skills and human rights education to young girls and boys in the project locations.

Action to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls (ATEVAW/G) 2020-2022:

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to eliminate violence against women and girls, is currently implementing a project called “Action to eliminate violence against women and girls” in four local government areas (*Ogoja, Yala, Bekwara and Boki*) of Cross River State. Harmful traditional practices by which Women are regarded as inferior or subordinate to men or as having stereotyped roles are common in Africa. Patriarchal systems perpetuate wide spread violence against women. The effect of such violence and discrimination on the mental and bodily integrity of women is that it does not only under-develop women but also traumatizes and deprive women and girls equal exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This is being done in an effort to consolidate previous work by Centre for Women Studies and Intervention in the State in putting an end to harmful cultural practices that perpetrates violence against women and girls from past projects and to provide a durable means to ensure achievement of the project goal which is to end violence against women and girls and sustainability of the project outcomes even after the project ends.

CWSI’s Interventions are targeted at improved prevention of violence against women and girls especially in the areas of Female Genital Mutilation and Gender Based Violence through changes in behavior, practices and attitudes. This involves promotion of social values of non-discrimination and equality for all. The project aims at increasing access to support services for survivors of Gender Based Violence, established platform for reporting, tracking and responding to incidents of Gender Based Violence, increased sensitization and collaboration with CSOs, women groups with law enforcement agents to ensure implementation of the Cross River State Law.

Educating children on the importance of co-existence of male and female in the Society

Often times Gender Discrimination and Gender Base Violence starts from young age. This explains why Centre for Women Studies and Intervention creates time in educating children on Human right

knowledge for the elimination of violence against women and girls. The Centre is committed to empower and educate all, especially those in the grassroots region on human right knowledge to ensure a safe environment where women can exercise their rights without any social or cultural impediment. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention impacts on the children the importance of men and women working in equality and empowering each other.

Covid-19 Palliatives:

CWSI with support from the United Nations Trust Fund to eliminate violence against women and girls was able to distribute palliatives in the form of cash support, foodstuffs, soap and face masks to over eight communities in the project locations reaching over more than a thousand vulnerable women and girls including those with disabilities. This was due to the fact that the pandemic which resulted in lockdown orders and movement restrictions had exacerbated poverty and low financial status of most of the women and girls in the project locations.

Conclusion

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention has over the years gained community buy-in of many stakeholders in the project locations which has contributed to the success recorded so far in her many interventions. The Centre has shown a very high level of commitment, displayed high level of integrity and dedication towards the achievement of its common goal. Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is helping so many Nigerian women to find their “truth”. They came to see and confessed that God’s “hands shaped [them] and made [them]” (Job 10:8). This truth has set them free; and they are free to be themselves as those who are full of grace and with whom God dwells and is with. They are not greatly troubled. They are full of joy. Their souls are magnifying the Lord; their spirits are rejoicing in God who saves them (Luke 1:29-46). They have found and received the joy of living who they are. They are not detracted by trying to be someone else. They have risen up and have stood up against being men's property. They are rising up and standing against being reduced to mere cooks.

Centre for Women Studies and Intervention schooled them and they have learned to stand up and to stand on their own. They are speaking their own words and revealing their own beautiful minds. So many women who have been taught by Handmaids have discovered the essence of the vocation of being a woman. The woman is the teacher. Always, the world receives wisdom from woman. This nature of God as Wisdom manifests as woman: feminine. Wisdom “makes men friends of God, and prophets” (Wisdom of Solomon 7:27). This is what Centre for Women Studies and Intervention is doing in Nigeria.

References

- Aina I.O (1998). *Women, culture and Society in Amadu Sesay and Adetanwa Odebiyi (eds). Nigeria women in society and development*. Ibadan: Dokun.
- Arinze, F.C (1965). *Partnership in education between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria*. Onitsha:Ude.
- Cooke, C. (1980). *Mary Charles Walker: Nun of Calabar*. Dublin : Four Courts.
- Hook, B. (1984). *Feminist theory from Margin to centre*. Boston: South End.
- Lewnhak, S. (1992). *The revolution of women’s work*. London: Eathscan.
- Mbonu, C (2010). *Sister Mary Charles Magdalen Walker: Inspiration of the founding charism of the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus*. Jos: Fab Anieh.
- Mbonu, C. (2010). *Handmaid: The power of names in Theology and society*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock.
- Nmah, P.E. (2003). *Women’s right in Igboland: A Christian reappraisal*. Aba: Soul winner.
- Okure, M. (1981). *Centenary Reflection: A tribute of Sister Mary Charles Walker*. Ibadan: Claverianum.
- Okure, M. (2016). *The Journey of love, life and work of Mother Mary Charles Walker, RSC*. Port Hacourt: Mustard Seed.
- Waturuocha, M. (2005). *Memoirs of Mother Mary Gertrude Waturuocha: A testimony of an eye witness on the life and work of Mother Mary Charles Walker*. Enugu: Snaap