

Abstract

Gender inequality remains a significant issue in developing nations, where many women face social, cultural, and political stigmas, stereotypes, and subjugations. Lack of education is a primary cause of these inequalities, disproportionately affecting women. Highly educated women are often perceived as rude, uncooperative, and incapable of managing household duties, discouraging some women and their parents from pursuing higher education. This study aimed at assessing the effect of Open Distance and E-Learning (ODEL) in enhancing women's access to higher education in Zambia. The study utilized a desk review methodology, examining relevant empirical literature to identify main themes and extract knowledge gaps. The study found that women are significantly marginalized by conventional learning systems at the university level, with restrictive socio-economic factors being the primary barriers to accessing tertiary education. The study further established that ODeL provide women with the flexibility to study while working and managing family responsibilities. ODeL helps women overcome constraints related to time, space, resources, and socio-economic barriers, significantly contributing to their empowerment. The study therefore recommends pursuing policies and programs to develop information and communication technology (ICT) and open distance education to broaden access to quality educational opportunities for women in higher education.