



Online Curriculum Development for Gender Equity in Sierra Leonean Secondary Schools: A Qualitative Exploration

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Published: 08 April 2010 | **Received:** 04 December 2009 | **Accepted:** 17 March 2010

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18908426](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18908426)

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Abstract

Online curriculum development has emerged as a critical tool for enhancing educational equity globally. In Sierra Leone, secondary schools face significant challenges in achieving gender parity in education, which is exacerbated by traditional teaching methods and limited access to digital resources. The study employed a qualitative research approach involving semi-structured interviews with educators and policymakers, document analysis of existing online curricula, and thematic content analysis of student performance data from selected schools in Nigeria's Sierra Leonean diaspora communities. Data were collected through snowball sampling to ensure comprehensive representation across diverse educational settings. Findings suggest that online curriculum development can significantly improve gender equity by providing equal access to learning materials for both male and female students, particularly in remote areas where traditional teaching methods are less effective. A notable theme identified was the transformative impact of interactive multimedia elements on student engagement and participation. The study concludes that tailored online curricula offer a viable pathway towards achieving educational parity in Sierra Leonean secondary schools within Nigeria's context, though challenges persist related to teacher training and infrastructure limitations. Recommendations include the development of comprehensive professional development programmes for teachers on integrating technology into their curriculum, ensuring equitable access to digital resources through partnerships with local communities, and ongoing evaluation of online curricula to adapt them to changing student needs and technological advancements. online curriculum development, gender equity, Sierra Leonean secondary schools, Nigeria

Keywords: *African education, gender studies, qualitative methods, curriculum analysis, indigenous knowledge systems, participatory action research, cultural competence*

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