

Professor Atayero Tasks Women on Solutions to Gender Dilemma

The Vice Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor AAA. Atayero, has called on women to be actively involved in proffering solutions to the gender dilemma. He made this call during his opening remarks at the recently held maiden edition of the Covenant University Career and Professional Women Conference (CPWC), organised by the African Leadership Development Centre (ALDC), Covenant University.

Professor Atayero, representing the Chancellor, Covenant University, Dr. David O. Oyedepo, noted that the bedrock of the conference, which is gender parity, has become more important because of the uniqueness of the African context; the old school of thought that perceive women as inferior and the need for women to rise above socio-cultural stereotypes.



Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor AAA. Atayero, making his remarks and declaring the Conference open

While he expressed joy at having such a gender-focused conference in the University, he encouraged participants not only to enjoy the conference, but also to take advantage of the serenity and ambience of the University so as to have an even greater experience in the conference.

“As a product of the gender that is so eminently represented here, I doff my hat to you all. I believe that by the end of this event, the glass ceiling of the belief that the female gender is inferior to the male gender would have been broken,” said Professor Atayero.

During her presentation, the first Keynote Speaker, Mrs. Olubunmi Aboderin-Talabi, who delivered a lecture on the topic, ‘Beyond the Glass Ceiling: Strategies for Success,’ x-rayed the representation of women in key leadership positions across the globe and her analysis revealed gross inequality in gender participation and representation across geographical regions.

Mrs. Aboderin-Talabi, who is the Chairperson, Executive Council, Women in Management, Business and Public Service, noted that women were held back by popular socio-cultural beliefs, and thus urged women to model the kind of behaviour they would like to see in others. She encouraged women to invest in training themselves as well as their employees in order to secure the competitive advantage.

While giving the second keynote address, which focused on the topic, ‘Beyond the Glass Ceiling, Drivers for Development’, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Uyo, Professor Comfort Ekpo, emphasised that literacy is a significant tool for eradicating poverty, gender inequality, and abuse among others. “Send all girl-children to school, including those that are domestic staff, and build self-esteem in all female children. Teach young boys the need for discipline and diligence; act as a role model and mentor and let all women, who have broken the glass ceiling, look down the ladder and pick up other struggling women,” she stated.

The conference also featured other notable women like Miss **Kemi Onabanjo**, a graduate of Computer Science from Covenant University who holds an MBA from INSEAD in France, where she was the Valedictorian for her class. Miss Onabanjo is the Senior Engagement Manager with leading global management consulting firm, McKinsey and Company.

Another amazing speaker was Mrs. **Audrey Joe-Ezigbo**, the Co-founder and Executive Director, Falcon Corporations, and a mentor on the formal mentoring programmes of the Lagos Business School, Pan Atlantic University.

In her remarks, the Director ALDC, Professor Aize Obayan, appreciated the Chancellor and Chairman Board of Regents, Covenant University, Dr. David O. Oyedepo, for his mentorship and support. She also thanked the Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor AAA. Atayero for ensuring the success of the event.

Professor Obayan described the event as “beyond business as usual”, adding that, “It is about going beyond gender and going beyond borders”. She stated that the conference was packaged to enhance the participation of women in the reconstruction of the trajectory of career and professional women, chart the path in breaking loose the shackles that have held women bound, interrogate the key drivers for change, and map out the critical steps forward.

Also at the opening session were the Deputy-Vice Chancellor, Professor Chinedu Shalom; Registrar, Dr. Olumuyiwa Oludayo; Dean, Post Graduate School, Professor Samuel Wara and other members of the Covenant University Management.

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