



## Report of the Career Development Workshop for Women in Physics

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The workshop was organized under Prof. S. Narasimhan of India and Prof E. Simmons of USA. The Local Organizer is E. Coppola. The activities took place at the Leonardo da Vinci Building in the Euler Hall.

The workshop took place from 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 at the Abdussalam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICFP) Trieste, Italy.

Dr. Fatima S. Koki and I attended the workshop from BUK with other Nigerian participants from FUTA, University of Ibadan, OAU, Ife, University of Ilorin and Covenant University, Ota.



Participants at the workshop in a group photograph

There were a total of 71 participants from Africa, Asia, Europe and America.

The workshop began with an opening remark by the acting Deputy Director of ICTP: Seifallah Randjabar-Daemi. Another remark was given by Antonella Grim, the Municipal Councilor for Education, University and Research of Trieste. After the opening remarks, the workshop talks for invited speakers commenced.

In her presentation, the Associate Director of the American Institute of Physics, Rachel Ivie pointed out that: “a newly completed survey of 15,000 Physicists worldwide reveals that women Physicists still do not have equal access to the career-advancing resources and opportunities enjoyed by their male colleagues”

Young-Kee Kim of the University of Chicago, in her Progress and Prospects summarized her presentation in these words:

*“I will introduce my research field, experimental particle physics, which needs large and complex accelerators. This nature of our field requires many of us to participate in experiments often located far from our own institutions or countries. I will discuss my life journey from a girl from a small village in South Korea to where I am. I learned a very important lesson during my career: a strong sense of community and the power of collaboration. The sense of community was crucial for someone like me to succeed. Mentors are also an important element to my career development. I have seen steady improvements in the participation of women in physics in the last couple of decades. In fact, there are about*

*tens of thousands of women physicists in the world right now and we should be encouraged by this.”*

In the two-body problem session of the workshop, which was moderated by Professor Elizabeth Simmons of the Lyman Briggs College, Michigan State University, USA, couples in the same field of Physics shared their experiences. Three couples at the ICTP spoke on how they met and how they have been coping with their careers. The wives relate what help the husbands have rendered in the advancement of their careers or otherwise. The men also shared their stories. It was clear that women who had the support of their partners advanced better. One of the couples told of how they were able to stay on a project together, even though the husband was the head of the project and they were able to successfully complete the project without any hitch.

The only male presenter: Samin dranath Mitra (Editor of the Physical Review Letters) made a presentation on the Physical Review Letters. Participants were taken through ‘the ways and how of publishing in a prestigious journal and the perspective of a PRL Editor’. One of the key advices he gave participants is to learn to balance the relationship between readership, particularly funding agencies. He noted that publishing scientific papers have become easier now as a result of availability of internet/emails and software that have made it easy to create and distribute articles.

In the course of the workshop, presentations on the second and third day, Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> were: Career design, exploring funding opportunities and negotiation skills to enable women make impacts in their field and achieve leadership

positions. The presentation on ‘Clear, Concise, Compelling: how to present your science to best effect’ was very educative. So was the session on preparation of an effective CV. It was quite informative. Majority of participants had one thing or the other to adjust in their submitted CVs. This segment of the workshop was particularly of interest to me; I tend to submit CVs very frequently when I apply to attend a conference or participation in a workshop panel.

The morning session of the 19<sup>th</sup> September was dedicated to panel discussion of Women in Physics in Africa. I was one of the panelists with Dr. Iyabo Usman of the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa and Nana Browne Klutse of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

Dr. Iyabo Usman in her presentation enjoined women physicists to visualize their career development as a velocity-time-graph. They start and accelerate to a certain velocity. They could remain at that constant velocity while they take care of other activities such as getting married, raising a family etc. They could then accelerate again and steadily reach the pinnacle of their career. What they must not do, she advised, is allow themselves to decelerate.

Dr. Nana Browne spoke on the situation of women in Ghana and the outreach programme to encourage young women from secondary schools through university to appreciate and undergo studies in the sciences and particularly Physics and Mathematics.

I made a presentation on my career trajectory; what obstacles I encountered and how I was able to surmount them and arrive at where I am today, despite returning to the university

ten years after secondary school and married with three children at the time. My philosophy for success as I informed participants is: Persistence, Patience, Perseverance and leaving grudges behind as they only serve to weigh you down. Another coping mechanism is adopting the 'snail methodology'. Using this mechanism, you make yourself visible only when the environment is right and thereby ensuring that people can see and appreciate your worth and ability to function as a leader.

The workshop ended with concluding statements and participants said farewell with promises to keep in touch and a hope to meet in future conferences and workshops.

### **Acknowledgement**

I thank the Abdus Salam ICTP for half travel grant, accommodation and feeding during the workshop. I also thank the Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rashed *mni*, MFR, for approval of top-up funding.

### **Campus Security**

The Security Division of Bayero University has noticed with dismay recent minor cases of theft and acts of misdemeanor in our Campuses. The frequency and the dimension of the cases suggest that the culprits are either part of us or live closely with us in the community which affords them the ability to carefully and successfully operate with the slightest opportunity. Members of the University community are hereby reminded that all crimes and security matters in the University are the responsibility of every member of the community. Staff members are therefore requested to assist the Security

Division in identifying the manifest and latent security threats, and in devising and prioritizing the strategies needed to avert them. To enhance the Campus Security situation, staff members living in the University quarters are advised to take note of the following:

- a) Assess and improve the physical security of your residence where such are considered inadequate.
- b) Ensure that all doors and windows in your house are in proper condition and adequate burglar proofed where necessary.
- c) Ensure that all external doors are secured with locks and bolts.
- d) Restrict access to your house and/or the keys to the houses to your family members or trusted neighbours.
- e) Avoid accommodating strangers in your house or Boys quarters unless you vouch for their character.
- f) Avoid indiscriminate employment of house help/domestic servant. Water vendors must be vetted by you.
- g) Don't harbor people you don't know, they could be a threat to you and the community.
- h) Be vigilant, report any strange happening or object promptly. Keep all valuables out of sight.
- i) Keep curtains or blinds drawn after dark.
- j) Removing/trimming flowers and clearing of bushes close to the house makes it more difficult for an intruder to hide himself or for reptiles to come into your house. The cleaner and tidier the area around your house, the easier it will be to spot unusual or suspicious movement.
- k) Avoid leaving objects like chairs and stools used for recreational purposes indiscriminately as they would assist

intruders to gain access into your home easily.

- l) Have a well lit environment by replacing dead electric bulbs and creating new electricity point where they are desirable-security lights.
- m) Make a safety check each night to ensure that all doors and windows are locked before going to bed.

Members of the University community are to note that in case of emergency or distress call any of our official lines earlier published in the Bulletin can be reached especially the following numbers.

New Campus Unit - 07042829723  
Old Campus Unit - 07042829724

We have intensified night patrols in all the Campuses from 11:00pm to 6:00am daily with a view to detecting and apprehending the culprits. The security staff is there to protect you and not to intimidate you. Learn to trust him. Therefore, all forms of insecurity must be eliminated by all.

## LOST & FOUND

- 1) A bunch of keys.
- 2) A BUK I.D. card belonging to Ibrahim Amina Uba (AIS/10/DAH/00266).

- 3) A West African Senior School Examination statement of result belonging to Khalil Munir Mujahid.
- 4) A BUK Library student I.D. card belonging to Richard S. Tauna (SMS/12/SOC/00133).
- 5) A BUK I.D. card belonging to Dankadai Halima Mahmoud (EDU/09/BAE/00882).
- 6) A BUK I.D. card belonging to Owoloja Emmanuel (SCI/09/DIC/00841).
- 7) A Muslim Student's Society of Nigeria BUK branch's I.D. card belonging to Ibrahim Zayyad Baba.
- 8) A Khadija Chrome Furniture I.D. card belonging to Hamza Isa.
- 9) A wallet containing BUK I.D. card, Voter Registration card, ATM cards and a photograph belonging to Akintunde Yusuf Adetunji (SMS/11/ECO/01426).
- 10) A BUK I.D. card belonging to Owoloja Emmanuel (SCI/09/DIC/00841).
- 11) A BUK I.D. card belonging to Halima Dankadai Mahmoud (EDU/09/BAE/00882).

The owners should come and claim the items at the Publication and Documentation Division (Bulletin office), near the Council and Senate Chambers.

## Do You Know:

- That the Environment Needs our Care and Attention?
- That You Have to Nurture Nature in Order to Enjoy It?
- That the Pressure on the Environment is too Great?
- That We are Losing too Many Trees, Fauna and Flora?
- That the University spends a lot of Money to Maintain the Environment?
- ✓ **Plant a Tree Today and Maintain it to Maturity.**
- ✓ **Keep Your Office and Residence Neat and Tidy.**
  - ✓ **Use the DUSTBIN to Dispose of all Litter.**

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