
Women Involvement in Nation Building in Nigeria

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Abstract

It is naturally believed that the place of women is in the kitchen. Women are taken to occupy the secondary position as a helper, companion and home maker. Many cultural setups put women at the back position as if they lack initiative to make a meaningful contribution in the environment they find themselves. The role of women is fundamental and vital right from the smallest unit of the society, which is, the family, community and the nations as a whole. Irrespective of the prevailing culture in any society, the position and activities of women have in no doubt contributed to the functionality and continuity of such a society. Premised on this background, this paper analyses various stages of women struggles for leadership participation and involvement in the development of Nigeria; the paper also discusses the conceptual meaning of Women and Nation Building. In addition, it established the nexus and interconnection between women and nation building; roles of women in nation building; various factors hindering women's participation in nation building in Nigeria and suggest ways by which women can be made to perform better. The information were obtained from were obtained from textbooks, journals, newspapers, internet materials and literature from academic journals in relation to the subject studied. The paper explored thematic on approaching the arising issues. It is therefore, the intention of this paper to examine the role of women in nation building economically, politically, traditionally, socially, religiously and educationally. The study recommends that stakeholders in Nigeria project are urged to advocate for the protection of women from abuse, empower them economically, educationally socially and politically and review the necessary legislations to accommodate the growing interest of women in nation-building.

Keywords: Women, Nation-Building, Politics, Women Emancipation, Society.

Introduction

Women refer to all adult female human beings. They have been identified with particular role assigned to them by their various environment and nature. These roles are linked with their physiology and psychology as specified in gender homo-sapiens category. Definitely, women are the salt of the earth and without salt food will be tasteless. Likewise, if women are not involved in the process of building a nation, the rate of development of such nation cannot thrive as it ought to. Traditionally, many people believe that women have definite roles to play in the development of any society. Ezeali (2001) emphasized household or domestic activities such as teaching the children, caring for the elderly and sick people, house cleaning, preparation of food and caring for the husband. When we examine the above topic critically one could deduce that in the upbringing of a child, a woman in a family is the first teacher in socializing a child, that is, the process of inculcating the right manners always help children growth into responsible and law abiding citizen.

According to Kanta in Ezeali (2001), children are brought up right from the beginning with some good feelings about how to behave in the society. For positive social behavior among children, women are at the centre. She always establishes a more humane order in the society in order to wipe out illiteracy, misery, poverty and unemployment. Women all over the world have been assisting children in all ways which will later help them to grow into adult in home environment where there is mutual, emotional and physical support.

Nigeria remains one of the third world countries where low women participation in Nation building has been a major challenge. The Northern region and some state in southern region for instance exhibit this tendency with low degree of intensity where women are nothing to attained or aspired for participation in nation building at local and national levels. Recent developments in Nigeria have shown that women participation in Nation building has decreased due to political assault and harassment, victim of conflict, crises and unrest, inferiority complex and deprivation of rights and freedom in some communities across Nigeria states. The political terrain of the country is still been driven by cultural norms, beliefs, attitudes and other societal vices which has adverse effects on political participation of women (Ojo & Adedayo, 2022). Based on this above analysis the paper is out to present the involvement of women in nation building.

Conceptual Clarification

Woman

A woman is an adult female human being, prior to adulthood, a female human is referred to as a girl (a female child or adolescent). The plural women are sometimes used in certain phrases such as “women’s rights” to denote female humans regardless of age. It is usually refers to a named female person. There are certain qualities of being a womanhood is just a state of being a woman and femininity means a set of typical female qualities associated with certain attitude to gender policy.

Nation Building

The word nation building is a compound word which consist of nation and building. The word shall be examined, one after the other. Nation according to the Advanced Learners Dictionary of Contemporary English as cited in Awopetu (2001) is “a large community of people associated with particular territory, speaking a single language and usually having the same character or political aspiration.” Though in Nigeria, we do not speak a single language, we live in the same territory which has united us to be one nation.

Nation building can also be describes as a concerted effort to bring different people together in order to achieve one common goal. It can be a way inculcating into citizen of new independent territories who are different in languages, religion, value but a sense of common belonging and identity (Adekaye, 1991). Nation building can also be attributed to the process

of growth and development of nation (Amustuta, 1990). Also, this concept can be a process that accelerated development with a view to predict, planned and influenced by government action.

Erondu and Obasi (2000) posited that Nation building is a process of mobilizing available resources (human, materials and financially for socio-economic and political development of a given nation state. Nation building is further defined as building the tangible and intangible threads that hold a political entity together and gives it a sense of purpose (Gambari, 2008).

On the other hand, the word build means putting parts together to form a whole, while building is a process of construction in which different materials are put together to make a whole just as if we are building a house. Nation-building is an old term that has already flourished and declined. The term “nation-building is used today in marked vogue and inconsistent manner. It is being referred to as a process of socio-political development, which ideally allows initially loosely linked communities to become a common society with a nation state corresponding to it but such a process can set off the ground as a result of political, economic, social cultural and other dynamics. Nation building at the same time has always signified a process of social mobilization either from the bottom up or from the top down, it is the process of building a nation (Aputa, 2002). In a nut shell, nation building process involves the creation of new political, social structures and mechanisms while overcoming and destroying old ones at the same time.

Elements of Nation-Building

Three important elements for successful nation building have been identified, these are persuasive ideology, integration of society and a functional state apparatus.

For nation building to succeed, it must come from an angle of integrated persuasive ideology that enhances special legitimation, justification of policy as well as social mobilization for its end. Nation building necessarily presupposes the forming of a nation either restrictive or otherwise. It creates a relationship of national identity covering all the groups that make it up. The nation subsume the various groups and thereby make identity and loyalty to the groups subordinate to that of the nation. This was borne in mind with the introduction of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) with its ideology and objectives to integrate the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. The scheme has worked well in that corps members are deployed to various places of assignments far away from their tribes with each adapting to the conditions of the place of assignment.

Another element prerequisite for a successful nation building involves the integration of society from the loosely associated groups that existed previously. The various ethnic groups must not only be convinced that they belong to the nation Nigeria, this notion must also be found in social reality. It is expected that for this to succeed the pattern of communication among the social group needs to be intensified to the extent that communication does not principally take place within the group. A stronger language of communication must be developed. At a particular time, a national language (WASOBIA) for Nigeria incorporating the languages of the major groups was being developed.

Last, is the element of functional state apparatus? This implies the development of a functional apparatus that can actually control the national territory. Obvious in this element is that the society has constituted itself as a political society bearing in mind the first-two elements discussed above. In this way, the state becomes the political organizational form of a society that is able to act. Effective fiscal system is put in place, an organized police and legal system and an administrative apparatus accepted throughout the country is effectively established. The state need loyal personnel that does not identify with the individual social, ethnic or religious community but rather with the state and nation. The state apparatus must assert its monopoly of force over the entire national territory in nation building.

Women and Nation-Building

The role of women in nation building in any society cannot be **overemphasized**. Though in the previous years, women have been relegated to the background on issues of development most especially in this part of developing world like our country Nigeria (Adebola, 2015). Globally women have contributed positively to the progress of humanity as the first teacher in the home; they nurture children from early stage of life to adulthood. This goes a long way to make them become useful citizens in the society.

Women have been an instrument of change to effect positive nation building in the following areas. Economically, politically, socially and culturally. These are the potential positive effects of women's participation, resulting to lower corruption rate, faster economic growth and improved overall standard of living. If a new government is to achieve legitimacy and obtain popularity and support, it must deliver tangible improvement in the quality of people's lives within a reasonable period of time. This is the more reason why women must be included even in the earliest phases of economic reconstruction and administrative reconstitution. One can see that the status of women is not merely a litmus test but also an active agent in bringing about such an outcome.

As rightly stated, that when you educate a man, you educate an individual but when you educate a woman, you educate a nation (Elsadik in Obiagwu, 2001). A mother is therefore, the child's first educator, and education of a child starts from birth through the life span. During this period, she has influence on the intellectual development of the children.

Women are very important in the economy of a nation. In the olden days, in a Yoruba setup, men married many wives in order to help them on their farms, their major income then came from food production and processing. In this case, women support their children, husbands and themselves from income generated from agriculture.

Fordham in Obiagwu (2001) posits that:

“Women represent an enormous potential source of human capital and of scientific and industry. The rate of return on investment in women's education is as high or higher than for men even if measured by income differential alone”

Women Emancipation in Nigeria Political System

Women have always been relevant when it comes to the biological and social upbringing of a child. They conceive the child for nine months and after given birth, they rear the child for at least two years and in this process. The norms, customs and values will be transmitted to all the young ones by their first teacher which is their mother. Young children need to be protected from severe emotional shock.

Socially, the higher the social standing of a disciplined child, the higher it is for talent to be recruited and the greater its actual accomplishment (Okediji in Akinleye, 2001). That is to say the social vibrant life of a mother dictates the social pattern of the child. If children are well brought up, they eventually grow up to be good citizens of tomorrow. It is now incontrovertible that when you develop or train a woman or a female child you are training the whole nation.

Recently, Women In Developing (WID) as a concept was launched. The objective of this (WID) most especially in developing the world is to integrate women into development, they should be free from oppression and they should not be ignored in decision making ventures. Right away from the period women have been contributing to development, they had been underrepresented when compared to their men counterparts according to Adadevoh in Maureen, (2006).

“the position of women in the patriarchal pre-colonial Setting. Set the background for the present political guagmire in Nigeria. For instance, in the epoch, power structure are highly patriarchalised and only exceptional, few female can venture into public sphere of patriarchal politics”.

Politically women have been playing leading role in shaping our nation right away from pre-colonial area. They have been taken active part in the administrative system, entrepreneur and business. For instance, the involvement of ‘iyalode’ (women leader) of the old age empire, Moremi of Ile Ife (Adebola, 2015).

Colonization indeed victimized and depressed our women by denying them the opportunity to participate in politics and wield authority. ‘Their potentiality were repressed as men posed a stumbling blocks for women. Men are of the opinion that politics would unsex and degrade women, destroy domestic harmony and finally leads to a decline in birthrate. This erroneous belief was supported by Grinshaw (1996) that women are directly fitted for acting as Nurses and teachers of our early childhood by the fact that they are themselves childish, frivolous and short sighted. Infact, Grinshaw (1996) sees women as big children all their life.

With the coming of our colonial master, the activities of women was limited to some petty trading and other activities. Nevertheless, we have some of them that are still participated in leading roles, such women as Mrs Margaret Ekpo, Mrs Janet Makelu and a host of others in the Eastern House of Assembly; Late Mrs Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti in the West, Hajia Ganiya Sawasa waged a fierce battle for the political and cultural emancipation of women in the North. In spite of being entirely circumscribed by their counterparts, some women activists in Nigeria still engaged in vigorous struggles against the infringement of their interest and those of their communities. Take for instance, the Aba Women Riot of 1929 as a result of the speculation that women should be paying tax just like their husbands.

Following Nigeria’s independence in 1960, few women emerged to participate actively in political agitation, for example Chief (Mrs) Wuraola Esan and Mrs. Beatrice Kwango were nominated as senators in the first republic. Between 1960 and 1965, three were in the National Assembly. The second Republic ushered in the first set of women ministers for example Mrs. Adenike Egun Oyagbola (Minister for National Planning) Mrs. Janet Akinrinade (Minister of State for Internal Affairs) and others.

The interim government of Chief Earnest Shonekan also recorded some women who served as successful secretaries of state like Chief (Mrs) Bola Kuforiji Olubi, Mrs Bimbo Akintola and Mrs Labara Dagash and others.

Under the Babangida regime (1986-1993), the military and civilian exclusion of women from government was altered. This administration initiated the formulation of a national policy on women and it brought the role of women in the country’s politics to the front burner (Adebisi, 2015). It is also interesting to note that during this administration, Babangida’s wife, Maryam, did much to raise the profile of Nigerian women both locally and internationally. The office of the first lady was introduced by Maryam Babangida. Her Better Life Programme in 1987 enabled the Nigerian women to be educationally economically and politically empowered. The regime of Babangida also appointed some women into high offices Example of such appointment is professor Grace Alele Williams, the first woman to be appointed as a University Vice Chancellor. The policy initiated by Babangida’s administration was approved under Chief Olusegun Obasanjo’s regime. The policy reads thus;

“The national policy on women aims at encouraging sectorial and national action to better recognize and thereby, more effectively involve women as equal partners, decision makers and beneficiary in shaping a greater future for all citizens of this nation. The national

policy on women is the gateway for instituting stable democratic governance, where women’s input in national development would be recognized and appreciated. The national policy document is therefore, women’s security and a guarantee for future full of hope and promise” (Maureen, 2006).

In the third Republic, women were sensitized and mobilized to participate in the political and economical activities in the country. A number of women contested alongside their male counterparts. Some of these women include Chief (Mrs) Titi Ajanaku (Ogun State), Mrs. Hanatu Challom (plateaus state), Mrs Oluremi Adiukwu (Lagos State), Mrs Cecilia Ekpenyong beat the men who competed with her and emerged as the deputy governor of Cross River State.

In the fourth Republic, more attention was focused on women as regards their advancement in all spheres of life, particularly in the political arena. The Obasanjo-led administration deserves commendation in his eight years in office as he transparently supported women in all areas of human endeavor. This brought about the appointment of Ngozi Iweala as Minister of Finance and Mrs. Obiageli Ezekiewl known as madam due process and many others. Other political appointments were also accorded to women between 1999-2003 as shown in the table below.

Nigerian Women in Political Positions in the Federal Executive Council (FEC)

	Names	Appointments
1.	Hajia Aisha Ismail	Hon. Minister for Women Affairs Youth Development.
2.	Dr. Esther Uduchi	Special Adviser to the President on Parliamentary Affairs
3.	Dr. Kemafo Chikwe	Hon. Minister for Transport
4.	Chief Modupe Adelaja	Hon. Minister of State Defence
5.	Dr. Bekky Ketebe-Igwu	Hon. Minister of solid mineral development
6.	Dr. Aina Ndalolo	Hon. Minister of State for Health
7.	Mrs Paulie Tallen	Hon. Minister of Science and Technology
8.	Mrs Precious Nyelale	Hon. Minister of State Water Resources

Source: Gender views, January – April 2003. (Maureen, 2006).

In the administration of President Musa Yar’adua, women have also been appointed into sensitive positions of authority. These appointees include: Professor Akinyuli; (Minister for Information), also performed well when she was NAFDAC Director General. Zainab Waziri (Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission); we equally have so many Deputy Governors which include Deputy Governor of Lagos State, Chief (Mrs) Sarah Sosan Deputy Governor of Anambra State, Chief (Mrs) Victoria Etiaba; and Deputy Governor of Osun State, Erelu Olusola Obada among others.

In the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, there was also the veritable inclusion of women into government. His cabinet included such notable women like Mrs Fidelis Njeze, late Prof. Dora Akunyili, Mrs. Diezani Alison-Madueke, Stella Oduah-Ogiemwonyi, Erelu Olusola Obada, Ruqayyah Ahmed Rufa’i Olajumoke Akinjide, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Mrs Omobola Johnson, Zainab Ibrahim Kuchi, Zainab Maina, some of them worked in the 2010 and 2011 cabinets. These women took an active part in the government which they worked for.

Also in the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, there are also women who have shown their mettle in nation-building. These women include, Gbemisola Ruqayyah Saraki , Sharon Ikeazor , Mariam Yalwaji Katagum , Aisha Abubakar , Aisha Alhassan, Kemi Adeosun, was later resigned. Amina Mohammed , Zainab Ahmed, Pauline Tallen, each of whom have headed or are heading important sectors in the economy.

Nigerian Women in Political Positions in the Federal Executive Council (FEC); 2015-2019

S/N	Names	Appointments
1	Zainab Ahmed	Minister of State for Budget and National Planning
2	Amina Mohammed	Minister of Environment
3	Kemi Adeosun	Minister of Finance
4	Aisha Alhassan	Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment
5	Aisha Abubakar	Minister of State for industry, Trade and Investment
6	Mariam Yalwaji Katagum	Minister of State for industry, Trade and Investment
7	Sharon Ikeazor	Minister of State for Environment
8	Gbemisola Ruqayyah Saraki	Minister of State for Mines and Steel Development
9	Pauline Tallen	Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development
10	Ramatu Tijani Aliyu	Minister of State for the Federal Capital Territory

Source: Fieldwork 2022

Nigerian Women in Political Positions in the Federal Executive Council (FEC); 2019-2023

	Names	Appointments
1.	Sharon Ikeazor	Hon. Minister of State for Niger Delta Affairs
2.	Zaniab Shamsuna Ahmed	Hon. Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning
3.	Sadiya Umar Farouq	Hon. Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development
4.	Mariam Yalwaji Katagum	Hon. Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment
5.	Sen. Gbemisola Ruqayyah Saraki	Hon. Minister of State for Mines and Steel Development
6.	Mrs. Pauline Tallen	Hon. Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development
7	Ramatu Tijjani	Hon. Minister of State for Federal Capital Territory
8	Amb. Maryam Y. Katagum	Hon. Minister of State for Transportation

Source: Fieldwork 2022

Women in Nigerian politics are incredibly too few. In the national parliament (both the Senate and House of Representatives) and State House of Assemblies. Nevertheless, there was an increase in 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 compared to the representation in Nigerian National Parliament (Senate and House of Representatives) from 1999 to 2003.

Table: Women in Nigerian Parliament

Nigeria Position in World Ranking	House of Representatives				Senate			
	Election Dates	Seats	Number of Women	%	Election Dates	Seats	Number of Women	%
181	March, 2019	360	22	3.0	March, 2019	109	7	6.5
181	March, 2015	360	24	5.6	March, 2015	109	7	6.5
125	April, 2011	360	24	6.8	April, 2011	109	7	6.4
117	April, 2007	360	25	7.0	April, 2007	109	9	8.3
107	April, 2003	360	21	4.9	April, 2003	109	3	2.8
104	April, 1999	360	12	3.4	April, 1999	109	3	2.8

Source: Research Survey, 2022

The number of women elected to Public offices (Legislative arm) in Nigeria did not increase after 2019 election. Instead, there was a decline to women political participation since the inception of the fourth republic. According to Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), 2019, 62 Women have been recorded as elected, a meager 4.17 per cent of elected officials. This figure shows decline from the 2019-2023 period. In the 2019 General Election, 235 women, forming 12.34 percent of candidates, contested for a seat in the senate of which seven (7) (6.42 percent) were elected. In the House of Representative, 533 women contested, with the major parties fielding a total of 31 (15 APC and 16 PDP) candidates. However, only 11 (3.05 percent) have been elected.

Women Struggles for Leadership Participation and Involvement in Nigeria: Analytical Perspective

Historically, Nigeria women have played significant roles in public affairs in Nigeria before and since Nigeria came into being in 1914 when the Northern and Southern Protectorates were amalgamated by Lord Lugard. Traditions are part of the history of a nation. In historical Nigeria, traditional rulers played a major role in the society. Men and some few women were involved in leadership roles in pre-colonial period. As stated by Chuku (2009), Men and women, to differing degrees, exerted political power in traditional Nigeria. Women held a basically complimentary, rather than subordinate in the traditional pre-colonial Nigerian society. Women's main purpose in the society was to be mothers of men's children. For example, under the customary law, women generally were regarded as "beasts of burden" "hewers of wood", "carriers of water" and "baby making machines". Women were able to participate in the decision-making of their pre-colonial communities through the female lines of authority that had existed parallel to male hierarchies.

Accordingly, Nkomo & Ngambi, (2009) stressed that women held various leadership roles in the pre-colonial Africa as queen mothers, queen sisters, princesses, chiefs and holders of office in towns and villages. In the political affairs, women in Nigeria played important roles in the society. Our pre-colonial history is filled with exploits of women like Moremi replete with the exploits of queen Amina of Zaria, who led armies to drive out invaders from Zaria. Moremi of Ile-Ife, who sacrifices for her people speaks of selfless leadership that are bereft of these days. Our recent past speaks of prominent women leaders like Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, Margaret Ekpo, Efunsetan Aniwura, a fierce female general in Egbaland who champion various causes of women emancipation.

Regardless of women downgrading and relegation in the past, in the history of Nigeria, women have tired in different ways to avert, monitor and avoid otherwise threatening situations of peace and stability. Women's activism and advocacy, women's education, successive governments' positivity towards women's empowerment, and women's interest in participating in politics are gaining a great deal of positive energy. This is an indication that there is a bright future for the involvement and participation of women in peace building and conflict resolution processes. (NSRP, 2013).

Roles of Women in Accelerating Nation-Building

The role of women in nation building cannot be underrated. Over the years, women have been relegated to the background on issues of development, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. The reason may have been that the views of women are always sentimental, while women have contributed positively to the progress of humanity. The roles of women in fast-tracking nation building are as follows;

a) Economic role

The involvement of women in economic activities has in no doubt generated wealth for the nation. Small scale businesses are dotted all over Nigeria and are managed mostly by our women from the meager resources available to them thereby generating income to complement whatever is available for the family. With women emancipation, so many of

them have access to fund and are business managers doing very well like their male counterpart. Infact, some of them are in the banking industry. Take for example, Mrs. Celica Ibru in oceanic bank. It was reveals that women dominate in teaching and nursing professions in Nigeria and form more than 35% of workers in other professions. The future of the civil service, especially education and health in the country seems to depend on women. However, by a contribution of factors women could contribute more to national development if deliberate efforts are made to encourage them.

b) Religious Role

Much as some religious set up are reserved for men, there are equally some religions that put women in pivotal position and this has in some areas enhanced or underscored their role in nation building. Consider the important position of Iya Osun in the popular annual Osun-Oshogbo Festival that has been taken to international level, Iya Osun is highly revered. The kind of Oshogbo consults with her before he takes decisions that affect his people (Adegun, 2008).

c) Social Role

The activities of our first ladies through their pet programmes like better life for rural women, child care trust, family support and others both at national and state levels have no doubt assisted nation building. Through these programmes, conferences and workshops are organized to enlighten women populace as regards what their contributions should be and also to educate them on how to avoid bad traditional practices.

d) Educational Role

Women are equally active in the performance of educational role towards nation building. Right away from their individual immediate family, women are regarded as educators. Women are the role model to children as they start speaking following the examples of their mothers. In the education sector, we have had women Vice Chancellors, women Registrars, uncountable women Professors, Senior Lecturers, teachers, administrators, all contributing to educational development of Nigeria as part of our effort in nation building.

e) Traditional role

It is not out of place to look into the role women perform in our traditional. With the conspicuous shift from the traditional monarchical system of government to the modern system, the relics of our traditional system still accommodate our women as they contribute to nation building through the surviving traditional institution in our various communities, especially in the southwestern Nigeria. Women are appointed chiefs to assist in the day to day running of our local communities and most importantly is the appointment of women to serve as regent upon the demise of a reigning kind and with that appointment, governance of such a local community traditionally though, becomes her responsibility.

f) Political Role

The transfer of governance to political class has no doubt introduced women into politics. The involvement of women in politics has gradually paid off as they struggle with their male counterparts to occupy position of authority. This has enabled them to meaningfully contribute their quota, and make their impact felt in nation building. Successive governments in Nigeria has embraced women and this has equally underscored a national policy that women should occupy 30 percent of all appointed and selected post. So many women through this, have found their way to position of authority and thus have contributed their quota to nation building. For instance, the exploit of Iyalode (women leader) of the old Oyo Empire has remained the reference point on how political involvement of women can engender a free society. Not only did they shape the political system of the period, they also acted as mediators in inter-ethnic rivalry. This can be seen in the exploit of Moremi during the Ife-Modekeke war.

Women Integration, Empowerment and Nation Building in Nigeria

Women can still be made to perform better if well equipped. The performance of some of our women that have been entrusted with position of authority demonstrates that if their potential are well tapped, our society would be better for it. Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- a) Provision of sound education:** Women cannot participate fully in economic, social educational political life of a nation When some of them depend on others with sound educational background. Adegun (2008) opines that majority of Nigeria women are illiterates. They need education for their income generating projects. Education empowers women to exercise their right and responsibility as citizens of their societies and enable them to make more informed choices (Fordham, 1990). As a result of this there should be provision for functional adult literacy for women above school age and basic education should be made compulsory for all citizens irrespective of their differences.
- b) Discouragement of early marriage:** Women occupy very important position in the society. It is important that if they are mature in all ramifications, society would feel their impact better. A lady who goes for early marriage is soon saddled with family responsibilities that may rid her of her potentials for any meaningful participation in the society.
- c) Provision of infrastructure or basic needs:** Our government will do well by providing the basic needs of the society so as to enable in Nation building. Women take their rightful position.
- d) Avoidance of all forms of discrimination:** The best of our women will be tapped if every effort would be geared towards removing all forms of discrimination. Thank God for national women policy on appointment.
- e) Financial empowerment:** Women must be empowered financially; some women are often constrained financially. Banks must therefore be advised to give soft loans as panacea to this programme. Women must be seen as worthy to stand as guarantors. Government can as well sponsor our women at first instance to remove this barrier to enable our society enjoy the in-born talent in our women for the building of our nation.
- f) Orientation for our Women:** Our Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should organize conferences and advise our women by giving them appropriate roles in our society. Give them information about the happenings in the developed World and thus sensitize them to take up challenges towards nation building.

Factors Hindering Women's Participation in Nation Building in Nigeria

a) Socio-cultural Factors

In many Nigeria societies in this fourth republic, traditions continue to emphasize women's primary roles as mothers and housewives and to restrict them to those roles. A traditional strong, patriarchal value system favors sexually segregated roles, and 'traditional cultural values' militate against the advancement, progress and participation of women in any political process. Societies all over the world are dominated by an ideology of 'a woman's place'. According to this ideology, women should only play the role of 'working mother', which is generally low-paid and apolitical. In addition, in some countries, men even tell women how to vote. This is the environment, in which a certain collective image of women in traditional, apolitical roles continues to dominate, which many women face (Gidudu, 2004).

b) Economic Factors

Women's historical experience of discrimination puts them at a disadvantage position economically. Socio-economic status of women to a greater extent plays a significant role in enhancing their participation and representation in political decision making bodies. In this regard (Shvedova, 2002) argues that social and economic status of women in society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies. In other word Lack of economic resources is one of the biggest obstacles that prevent women from participating in politics in greater numbers. Making it easier for women to access economic resources, therefore, is a key in expanding women's presence in the political realm. The study revealed that most of women are financially dependent on their husbands or relatives. So they may not be possible to them to enter in political campaign. Majority of gender scholars also argues that lack of financial resources is the overwhelming obstacles to women participation in developmental issues. Women move from their father's home to their husband's home. They are like refugees. They have no base from which to develop contacts with the people or to build knowledge and experience about the issues. Furthermore, they have no money of their own; the money belongs to their fathers, their husbands or their in-laws. Given the rising cost of running an effective campaign, this poses another serious hurdle for women in the developing world.

c) Political Factors

Political factors that constrain women's political representation in Nigeria relate to political institutions and practice. Institutional accounts of women's political underrepresentation lay emphasis on a country's political system and some of its specific features such as the electoral system and presence of specific institutions such as gender quotas in party recruitment processes. This approach suggest that political rules of the game are the primary explanation for systematic differences in women's representation among relatively similar societies, and that changing those rules is the most effective way to promote women's participation in political leadership (Karam 1998).

In addition, political violence in Nigeria elections have always been characterized by one form of violence or another since the return of democracy. Female aspirants of various political parties cannot withstand political violence; therefore, women participation in nation-building is drastically low and reduced.

d) Religious Factors

Religion is another important source of cultural beliefs in most countries. Arguments about women's inferiority to men are present across all dominant religions, and religion has long been used to exclude women from aspects of social, political, or religious life around the world.

But the major religions of the world are differentially conservative or patriarchal in their views about the place of women, both in the church and mosque hierarchy and in society. For example, Protestantism promotes nonhierarchical religious practices and more readily accepts women as religious leaders compared with Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity. And Islamic law is typically interpreted in a manner that constrains the activities of women.

e) Patriarchy Factors

Nigeria is a country and society ruled and dominated by men over women, which in turn has given rise to women being looked upon as mere household wives and non-partisans in decision making process in households not to talk of coming out to vie for political positions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is obvious that developing a nation is not only the role of men. Women in so many occasions are found performing actively in socialization of young ones, occupying positions of authority, trading activities, contributing greatly to religious matters and politics and helping in the fight of corruption and some notorious pandemic such as Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDS). They have been assisting the nation in expanding health and education services most especially the first ladies both at the Federal, State and Local Government levels. They usually donate money for food items and materials for motherless homes, prison yard and creating awareness through the media against vices.

Nigeria as a nation will record more success on the part of women once the various challenges facing them are reduced. This can be done the moment our Government is ready to use the global standards as instrument for formulate and assess their progress and achievement. Nigeria has signed and ratified the various relevant international instruments, treaties and conventions without reservation. These instruments have always emphasized that member nations should put in place all the necessary mechanism needed to eliminate gender discriminations, ensure equality and human dignity to all men and women.

It is expected that if the women are fully empowered through the enactment of relevant laws, they will perform well as it is often said that what a man can do a woman can do better.

To this end, This study advocate for bridging of the gender gap in public administration and established practice by continuing the efforts of the female public administrators who began to unravel the inequity in our public organizations and the under representation of women in our society. it is paramount to achieved a minimum of just 30% female representation in public service benefits a nation's society and economy at large and is essential for solving this century's problems.

The study recommend that there is need to build mass coalition of women support and advocacy group using Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Grassroots women associations to coordinate support and advocacy for fellow women in the society. Stakeholders in Nigeria project are urge to advocate for the protection of women from abuse, empower them economically and politically and review the necessary legislations to accommodate the growing interest of women in nation-building.

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