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Contributors' Copy

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All submissions should be made to the following addresses cpssjournal@gmail.com and copy aganimasawun@gmail.com and adraj2010@yahoo.com Submissions should be between 6,000 words and not exceed 8,000 words; double spaced and with footnotes. The Journal is published twice a year in January and June.

Gender, Politics and the 2011 Nigeria's General Elections

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Abstract

The under-representation and inadequate participation of women in decision-making bodies highlights the marginalisation of women throughout the world and in Nigeria in particular. This paper "Gender, Politics and 2011 Elections" is an in-depth study of the analyses of Gender, Historical Background of Women Participation in Politics and Factors Affecting Women's Participation Among others. The paper found out that despite all the world conferences decision on gender, there is no part of the world that has not met the 30 percent participation of women in politics.

Background to the Study

Females constitute a large percentage of the Nigerian's population but they are a distinct economic, political-social minority because of the wide gap in societal power and resources between men and women. The word 'Gender' seems to have first appeared among American feminists who wanted to insist on the fundamentally social quality of distinctions based on sex. The word is used to determine sexual difference.¹ The difference between 'sex' and 'gender'; sex refers to the biological feature that goes with being male or female; also it refers to a natural division derived from the most basic psychological differences between males and females. These differences

are genetically determined, largely universal and genetically constant. While "gender" refers to the social cultural and psychological features that identify someone as a man or as a woman, which are highly variable across cultures and are continually subject to change. Gender is not only about women, it refers to a structural relationship between sex that is linked to the state, the economy and institutions. Gender distinctions are not accidental or facts of nature but are reproduced institutionally.

The gender which is more discriminated against is glaring, in Nigeria; women's opportunities cannot be equalised with that of men. Although it is like that everywhere, but it is worse in this part of the country, although

there exist no constitutional obstacle for women to aspire to any post, either elective or appointive. The beliefs in Nigeria about sexual differences, despite their socially constructed character, inform and impinge upon everyday practices at all levels.

Since Section 40 of the 1999 Constitution states that "Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons and in particular may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of their interests" this political freedom in Nigeria has made people in the country to be proactive to political activities.

Before independence from the colonialists, Nigerian women through the movements led by great women like Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, Margaret Ekpo, Janet Nwokedi, Queen Aminat and others, questioned the colonialists' arbitrary manner of governance and their socio-economic policies in neglecting them in matters that pertained to their well-being. The women led by Ransome-Kuti protested against the existing policies and their implications on the rights of women.

The resistance culture of the women led to the formation of a formidable and viable movement in 1947, called the National Women Union (NWU). The (NWU) later became the popularly known Federation of Nigeria Women Societies.²

The convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women by United Nations which was held in 1979 secured a pledge from states to develop policies, legal framework and other measures to abolish all forms of discrimination against women in every aspect of their lives. Some conference like

Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), Beijing (1995) and New York (2000) followed with the aim of improving women's status and solving the problem of inequality and social injustice to which women are subjected. In Africa, several declarations were ratified including the Khartoum (1988), Arusha (1990) and Abuja (1995) to specifically address the issue of gender imbalance while specially calling for full participation of women in governance.³ The methodology that would be employed would be qualitative research methodology; the research will be conducted based on the use of primary and secondary data from both archival and internet.

The under-representation and inadequate participation of women in decision-making bodies highlights the marginalisation of women throughout the world and in Nigeria in particular. Although women are seen to be very active in their communities, they are not adequately represented in political structures. The situation was on the average, women do not constitute a mere ten percent of all elected legislators and in most states, in both public and private sector they remain under-represented.

Despite the commitments by the United Nations at the Beijing platform where members endorsed the fifty percent threshold of managerial decision-making positions to be occupied by women by 2011.⁴ The world including Nigeria cannot boast of achieving this, there are some factors that rendered Nigeria women politically powerless and they are: Colonialism, Socio-cultural Factor, Political Factor, Economic Factors, Jealousy and Envy among women. Details will be found in the paper.

This study is embarked upon to evaluate

the participation of women in Nigeria's politics at decision-making levels both appointive and elective positions.

The study will give an explanation of what women participation at decision-making positions in Nigeria over the decades is like 2011 elections will be focused on because it is the year that the Beijing Conference of 1995 said that the women participation compared to their male will be 50 percent. An assessment of this will be done taking some recommendations from different scholars and analysing it.

Any study of gender strains the obvious point that women have been and remain second-class citizens economically, socially and politically. This study will stress the need for more inclusion of women in Nigeria politics in order to change the country for the better. This fuller inclusion will ensure that better policies are made everywhere since development across countries have combined to reduce the duration of interactions among states, thereby turning the world into what has come to be popularly known as the "global village"⁵ a study of this nature will create a body of information which will ensure greater development, equality and peace in the country given that development in the political sphere will bring about corresponding developments in the social, cultural, economic as well as other spheres. Also, it will help to heighten the political consciousness of women and bring them to believe in the possibility of transformation.

Conceptual Discuss/Theoretical Framework

The study of a country's affair requires a theoretical framework, thus the theoretical

foundation would be the system theory and the feminist theory. System theory says that every functioning phenomenon consists of different units. This units work collectively. The system is also seen to be self-regulating and adaptive as well as purposive-making constant internal adjustments in order to cope with the external environment.⁶ Feminist theory is a social theory which lays emphasis upon the importance of women's experiences. In other words, it advocates for the equality of women in value and status, however, there are different stands of feminist theory and these includes, radical feminism, liberal feminism, cultural feminism and stand point feminism. For the purpose of this study, the use of liberal feminism will be employed.

In essence, liberal feminism analyses the way women are excluded from power and from taking part in important activities and seek an end to this exclusion or under representation in power, office and in employment.

In a paper like this, it is very important to understand, this meaning of gender. The word 'gender' is etymologically derived from the Latin noun *Genus* which means 'kind' or 'sort' or 'group'. Primarily called a linguistic term, it refers to the grammatically grouping of words of nouns and pronouns into classes or kinds. Masculine, Feminine and Neuter.⁷ To this scholar, gender is simply the grouping of words into classes; it also means that gender is beyond the grammatical grouping. It also refers to the traditional grouping of people into feminine and masculine.

Gender can also be referred to as a culturally relative term that is gotten from social science. It is sometimes referred to as a product of Biology, which deals with the social practice.

This means that the interpretation varies, gender describes the socially driven aspect of life, role played, responsibilities taken on, expectation from the future and the behaviour and activities engaged.⁸ Social factors such as race and ethnicity bring about specific understanding and experiences of gender, due to the fact that gender cannot be simply referred to as sex.

Recently, gender has been used as synonyms for women, although this usage referred to some analytical concepts, it is about the political acceptability of the field. In respect of this, the use of gender is meant to denote that it has a neutral and objectives sound than thus "women". This gender is used to show the social relation between the sexes.

Gender has been seen as having two parts and several subsets that are interrelated and analytically distinct.

The core of the definition rests on an integral connection between two propositions; gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived difference between the sex and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.⁹

Therefore, one can say that gender is not a physiological but social concept that refers to sets of culturally defined character, trait, labeled, masculinity and feminist. The concepts that are pertinent for a comprehensive understanding of gender and gender relations is the interactions and relationship between the two sexes. It has much to do with the concept of power and its unequal distribution while gender roles can be referred to as a set of prescriptions for behaviour expectation about what behaviour is appropriate for a person holding a particular

position with a particular social context is a gender role.¹⁰

Looking at the word 'gender' in the state, it plays a vital role in determining and reacting to the economic, political and social forces that combine to forge women's subordinate status. The state can rarely be seen as homogeneous because it is not a unitary structure but a differentiated set of institutions and agencies, the product of a particular historical and political conjecture. It is far better to see the state as a site of struggle, not lying outside the society and social processes, but having on the one hand, a degree of autonomy that varies under particular circumstances, and on the other being permeated by them.¹¹

Gender inequalities are therefore buried within the state structure, but through part of the same dynamic process. Gender relations are also partly constituted through the state.¹² The state therefore partly reflects and partly helps to create particular forms of gender relations and gender inequalities. State practices construct and legitimise gender division and gender identities in part, which are constructed by the law and public discourses that emanate from the state. The process in which categories are defined within practices of rule, state policy and practices are also constructing women as objects of rule. Like most other patriarchal societies of the world, a Nigerian woman is socialised into a culture of female subordination. She is not only subordinate to her husband and men in her own family of orientation, but also to the entire members of her husband's family. The kinship structure places men in an advantaged position from historical past to the present.¹³

Historical Background of Women Participation in Politics

During the pre-colonial era in Nigeria, women were not left out of the political scene. Women's power was different depending on the place. In some places, women shared equal power with their male counterparts but in some places they are mere subordinate to their male counterparts.¹⁴ Looking at the analysis of pre-colonial power structure (Ebenezer and Ronke, 2006:339) there were three categories of human involvement in power (e.g. Idia-King Esigie's Mother). There was also the ruler (e.g. Queen Aminat of Zaria) women who were successful had access to political power on merit and in several communities women emerged as leaders or rulers.¹⁵

In Nigeria, however, women political activism dates back to 1929/30 Aba women roots, which was spearheaded by the Mikiri Organisation of Igbo Women which gave way for reforms in the Native Administrative System. The 1946 Richard's Constitution was later hyphenated by these women. Other organisations that focused then included Abeokuta Women Union (AWU), Aba Market Women (AMW) and Lagos Market Women Association (LMWA) stopped some policies and instances of discrimination of the colonial order in Nigeria. Since the time electoral policies were introduced up till Second Republic; no woman contested for a post.

But criticism was always coming under the leadership of Olufunmilayo Ransome-Kuti (who was the first woman to drive a car) women began to question the implication of the existing policies and the quality of women life.

In addition to the achievement of Mrs. Funmilayo, she joined the National Council of

Nigeria citizens and she was among the delegates sent to abroad to complain to the secretary of the state for the colonies Mr. A. Creech Jones other powerful women includes Mrs. Bolarinwa of the Western Nigeria, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo and Mrs. Mokelu in the Eastern Nigeria.

In 1947, the first union was created by Mrs. Olufunmilayo Ransome-Kuti which was later changed to Federation of Nigerian Women's Society which demanded for one third seats in the legislative houses. Women in the southern region were enfranchised then while their northern counterparts were enfranchised in 1979 in the First Republic, the two women senators that we had were Mrs. Kerri and Chief (Mrs.) Wuraola Esan. By Second Republic, women participation still remains low; just one female in Senate, and 3 in the House of Representative and there were just 3 Ministers. It can be deduced that up till now, the only 30% Beijing Conference have not been met.

With the return of military rule in December, 1983 the first formal quota system was introduced by the Federal Government as regards the appointment of women into governance. The Buhari administration directed that at least one female must be appointed a member of the Executive Council in every State. All the States completed with this directive; some states even had two or three female members.

In the early 1990s, two women were appointed Deputy Governors; these were Alhaja Latifat Okunu of Lagos State and Mrs. Pamela Sadauki of Kaduna State; Chief (Mrs.) Titilayo Ajanaku emerged as Chairperson of a Local Government Council in the West. During the gubernatorial elections, no female governor

emerged in any of the states. Only two female Deputy Governors emerged, namely: Alhaja Sekinatu Ojikutu of Lagos and Mrs. Cecilia Ekpenyong of Cross River State. In the Senatorial election held in 1992, Mrs. Kofo Bucknor Akerele was the only woman who won a seat and Florence Ita Giwa who won in the Calabar Constituency under the Banner of the National Republican Convention (NRC). Amongst the members of the Transitional Council appointed by President Babangida in January 1993, only two were women, namely Mrs. Emily Aikimhokuade and Mrs. Laraba Dagash.

In the Interim National Government of Chief Ernest Shonekan, two female ministers were appointed into the Cabinet. General Abacha had a number of female ministers at various times in his cabinet, including Chief (Mrs.) Onikepo Akande and Ambassador Judith Attah.

During the military regime of General Abdulsalami Abubakar (9 June, 1998 to 29 May, 1999), there were two women in the Federal Executive Council: Chief (Mrs.) Onikepo Akande (Minister for Commerce) and Dr. Laraba Gambo Abdullahi (Minister of Women Affairs).

In the Fourth Republic which started on May 29, 1999 the Nigerian political terrain has witnessed an increase in the number of women political appointees, even though women did not perform well during the elections. In the elections held before 29 May, 1999; few women emerged as Chairpersons of Local Government Councils. A number of women won elections as Councilors. There is no female Governor in any state of the federation. Only Lagos State produced a female

Deputy Governor in person of Senator Bucknor Akerele. In the National Assembly, there were only three women in the Senate, namely: Chief (Mrs.) Florence Ita-Giwa representing Cross River State South Senatorial District; Mrs. Stella Omu from Delta State and Hajia Khairat AbdulRazaq (now Hajia Gwadabe) representing the Federal Capital Territory. There were only 12 women in the House of Representatives and these were: Barrister Iquo Minimah, Mrs. Patience Ogoto, Lola Abiola Edewor, Patricia O. Etteh, Dorcas Odujinrin, J.F. Adeyemi, Binta Garba Koji, Gbemi Saraki, Florence Aya, Linda Ikpeazu, Temi Harrinnan and Mercy Almona Isei.

In the State Houses of Assembly very few women emerged as members. While in some States, one or two women emerged in the Houses, most other states have virtually no female in their legislatures. States like Cross River, Akwa Ibom State, Rivers, Lagos and many others do not have female members in their State Legislatures.

Women have been appointed as Commissioners and therefore members of the Executive Councils. President Olusegun Obasanjo appointed a number of women into Federal Executive Council. They are: Dr. (Mrs.) Kema Cikwe (Minister of Transport), Mrs. Dupe Adelaja (Minister of State Defence), Dr. (Mrs.) Bekky Ketebugwe (Minister of State, Ministry of Solid Minerals), Dr. (Mrs.) Amina Ndalolo (Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Health), Mrs. Pauline Tallen (Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Science and Technology) and Hajia Aishatu Ismaila (Minister of Women Affairs), Chief (Mrs.) Titilayo Ajanaku is the Special Adviser to the President on Women Affairs.

From the foregoing, it is evident that only very few Nigerian women have participated and emerged in Nigeria's political landscape, in spite of the pioneering efforts of women like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Margaret Ekpo since the 1950s today, the number of women in top jobs is still nearly insignificant.

Politics and the 2011 Elections

Politics can be referred to as a term that is used to capture the stretching of political relations across the states. The extension of political power and political activity across the boundaries of the states (David, 1999:49-50). Political decisions and cautions in one part of the country can rapidly acquire the whole country ramifications. In addition, sites of political action and/or decision-making can become linked through rapid communications and complex networks of decision-making and political interaction. Associated with this stretching is a frequent depending impact of national political processes such that, unlike the ancient and modern empires, action at distance permeates with greater intensity, the social conditions and cognitive nation of specific places or policy communities. As a consequence, developments at global level frequently acquire almost instantaneous local consequences and vice versa.

More than a hundred years after women were enfranchised, the question of women's political participation remains on the national agenda, permeating many regional plans of action. In all states, women and men have equal rights to vote and be voted for. As far as development is concerned a number of aspects need to be kept in mind, one of which is the change that is brought about as a result of

having women in politics. These changes are diverse and range from changes in perceptions to discourse on and about women as well as changes in legislation politics and institutions which all have national consequences. A quick glance at the trends of women participation in politics both at appointive and elective positions indicates a diverse progress report from different parts of the country. The record from the inter-parliamentarians union (IPU) shows that one in every five elected in 2005 was a woman.

The year 2005 was significant in the history of women elected into parliaments across the globe. It was gathered that 1548 women were elected, representing 20 percent of members elected in the year. This was a sharp departure from the records of 2000, which show that only 11 percent of women were elected.

Subsequently, the figure rose to 18 percent in 2003 and fell to 16 percent in 2004. This is a significant progress when compared to statistics of 1995, which showed women in parliament to represent only 11.3 percent. The question now is how far having women gone towards meeting the 30 percent target in elective office spread? It was at the Beijing Women Conference of 1995 (Beijing Platform of Action) that it was agreed that thirty percent ration should be reserved for women as a quota to be filled in an elective offices, particular into parliaments. Records from 28 of the 39 parliamentary elections in 2005 showed that 72 percent progress was made in terms of meeting the 30 percent quota.

In 1999, records show that there were only 12 women elected into the State Assemblies as against 978 males. Also only three women out of 109 Senators were elected into the Senate

in the same year under review while 13 women were equally elected into the House of Representatives as against 347 men. In 2003, there was a slight increase as only 39 women were elected as against 951 men, 4 women were elected into the Senate as against the 105 men. In 2007, there were 5 Deputy Governors in Nigeria, who were women, in the Senate, we had 9 women, House of Representative 27 women and State House of Assemblies, we had 5.5 percent out of the 990 members we had all over the country.¹⁶

As at 2011, the records showed that out of the 63 registered political parties in Nigeria, 21 fielded candidates for the contest. It is also worthy to mention that during the Presidential Primary Elections of the PDP, Sarah Jubril contested and she was the only one that voted for herself. This shows the patriarchal attitude of people to women participating in politics. In additional female presidential candidate contested under United National Party for Development, Mrs. Ebiti Ndok.

There were four Vice President candidates and they were Rose Yakubu of African Renaissance Party (ARP) Kadijat B. Abubakar of the Better Nigeria Progressive Party (BNPP), Bintu Fela Akinola of Fresh Democratic Party (Fresh) and Bilkisu Ismo Magogo of National Transformation Party (NTP).

There were 348 governorship candidates that contested elections for governorship seats across the federation; 13 (3.7%) out of the 348 governorship candidates were women and they contested in 10 states namely Benue, Delta, Imo, Ebonyi, Enugu, Kano, Kebbi, Kwara, Oyo and Plateau. The names of the contestants and party are: Emilia Uba, Omaliko, African

Democratic Congress (ADC), Victoria Azabaer Pausu, All Progressive Grand Congress (APGC), Dame Gloria Obi (ADC), Princess Esther Nwodo Agbo (Peoples Redemption Party), Nkechi Offor, African Liberation Party (ACP), Scolastica Emerole, Action Party of Nigeria (APN), Hausa Mohammed African Democratic Congress (ADC), Gbemisola Saraki-Fowora (Allied Congress Party of Nigeria) (ACPN), Dada Fatima, Meja Peoples Progressive Party (MPPP), Paullen Tallen (Labour Party) None of these women were successful at the elections. Towards this end, Nigeria is yet to provide an executive governor that is a female. Though, Dame Virginia Etiaba who was the Deputy Governor of Anambra State was sworn in for some time when the Governor had some political challenges.

The 2011 general elections produced only one female Deputy Governor in the person of Mrs. Adejoke Orelope Adefulire of Lagos State who contested on the platform of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN). Out of the 109 Senators that won at the 2011 polls, only 7 (6.4%) were women; they are Nkechi J. Nwaogu, Mrs. Helen U. Esuene, Nenadi Usman, Aisha Jummai all of PDP.

Others are, Christiana N.O. Anyawu, Joy Emordi both of APGA, lastly Oluremi Tinubu of ACN. In the House of Representatives, out of the 360 available seats women won only 19 which was just 5.27 percent. This was a drop from what we had in 2007 which was 27 that was 7.5 percent.

In appointive post, it is worthy to mention here that Jonathan was the first President in Nigeria to appoint 13 women out of 41 ministers as members of the cabinet. This is commendable and shows the effectiveness of

the different programmes he launched to promote women participation in politics.

Table 1: The position occupied by women in 2011 politics can be illustrated below

Position	Number of Seats	No. of Women	Percentage
Governors	36	None	0
Deputy Governors	36	1	2.78%

From this table, it can be deduced that we had only one female Deputy Governor in Nigeria, which is a setback to what we had in 2007. When the number of Deputy Governors were 5. This 5 amounted to 13.8 percent as against the 2.78 percent we have in 2011.

Table 2: Females in the Legislature

Position	Number of Seats	No. of Women	Percentage
Senate	109	7	6.4%
House of Reps	360	19	5.27%
Total	469	26	5.54%

Table 2 shows the number of women in both legislature houses. At the Federal level it is just 26 women out of 469 are women, which is just 5.54 percent.

Looking at Table 3, it can be deduced that, even the State House of Assembly has not met the 30 percent of Beijing Declaration of 1995. Though there was an increase from what was obtained in 2007 which was 7.6 percent.

Table 3: State House of Assembly

State	Number of Seats	No of Women	Percentage
Abia	24	2	8.3
Adamawa	25	2	8
Akwa Ibom	26	2	7.7
Anambra	30	7	23.3
Bauchi	31	1	3.2
Bayelsa	24	1	4.1
Benue	29	3	10.35
Borno	28	0	0
Cross River	25	1	4
Delta	29	3	10.35
Ebonyi	24	4	16.67
Ekiti	26	0	0
Edo	24	1	4.1
Enugu	24	4	16.67
Gombe	24	0	0
Imo	27	3	10.35
Jigawa	30	0	0
Kaduna	34	2	5.88
Kano	40	0	0
Katsina	34	0	0
Kebbi	24	0	0
Kogi	25	1	4
Kwara	24	6	25
Lagos	40	1	2.5
Nassarawa	24	0	0
Niger	27	3	11.1
Ogun	26	1	3.85
Ondo	26	2	7.69
Osun	26	1	3.85
Oyo	32	0	0
Plateau	24	2	8.33
Rivers	32	3	9.38
Sokoto	30	0	0
Taraba	24	1	4.1
Yobe	24	0	0
Zamfara	24	0	0
Total	990	57	5.76

Factors Affecting Women Participation in Nigeria Politics

At United Nations Fourth Conference women in 1995 the global community stressed the importance of women assuming position of power and influence, not only because of their

view and talents are needed but also as a matter of human right. Moreover, increased involvement of women in decision-making processes with respect to social values, development direction and allocation of resources enable woman as well as men to influence societal agendas as well as help to set priorities. Yet a decade after the conference the statistical picture for woman's participation at high level of decision-making remains bleak. Obstacles which affect women participation during election are considered.¹⁷

The exclusion of woman from political processes in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonial time when women were forced to give up many of their political right. As a result of colonisation, the resurgence of woman's movement demanding greater political participation in Nigeria took place later than in other countries. Women living in the Northern Nigeria received suffrage as late as 1978. It should also be mentioned that Nigeria has not created a comprehensive legislative framework securing quotas for women in political parties and national elections. Nigeria is one of the countries that in 2003 was still debating on the use and implementation of quotas.¹⁸

In addition to the above mention factors; Afia Zakia, Senior Programme Manager at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. Listed the following barriers impeding women's political participation in Nigeria:

- (1) **Impact of Money Politics:** The cost of engaging in electoral politics remains too high and leads to the exclusion of most women from the election processes. It is important to note that many women do not have

access to their own funds and they depend on their partners or relatives for raising money to participate in elections.

- (2) **Marginalisation of Women in Political Parties:** For example women are marginalised while being promoted to leadership positions within their parties. According to the study conducted, political party refused to take women aspirants seriously and they are being labeled as cultural deviants.
- (3) **Patriarchal Attitudes:** Although not directly in immediate families and the time, but certainly among men in political parties.
- (4) Lack of a substantive women's movement and cohesiveness among women's groups that claim supports women's political participation.
- (5) Failure to enforce existing legal norms and international agreements for instance, the domestication of Beijing law has failed in Nigeria and constitutional mandate have been ignored.
- (6) Inadequate strong mandate and real power of the ministry of women affairs.
- (7) Inadequate meaningful support from donors.
- (8) **Electoral Violence:** This is the very cankerworm that is destroying Nigeria's electoral system. Women can not afford to stand men in issues of electoral violence.¹⁹

2011 General Elections (Issues)

Following the Presidential election, groups monitoring the election gave it a dismal assessment. Chief European Union observer Alojz Peterle reported that: though the election was an improvement on what Nigeria election used to be. Regrettably, the election amendments failed to introduce some of the Election Reform recommendations, such as independent appointment of the chair of INEC. According to him, this will go along way to improve the outcome of the election.

One group of observers said that at one polling station in Yenagoa in the oil-rich south, where 500 people were registered to vote, more than 2,000 voters were counted. In addition, another observer, Felix Ababa Job, head of the Catholic Bishops Conference, said there was massive fraud and disorganisation, including result sheets being passed around to politicians who simply filled in numbers as they choose while bribed returning electoral officers looked away.

A spokesman for the United States Department of state said he was deeply troubled by election polls calling them flawed and said it hoped the political parties would resolve the differences over the election through peaceful and constitutional means.

According to Layi Mohammed (ACN) he said in some parts of Nigeria, the result sheets viewed so far was not signed by Resident of our agents at the state level. They were only signed by Resident Electoral Commissioner and only PDP agents. Looking at this statement, it can be deduced that Layi was not satisfied with the result of the election.

The National Chairman of the Democratic Peoples Alliance (DPA), Chief Olu Falae, with

leaders of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigeria People Party (ANPP), National Advance Party (NAP) and the National Democratic Party (NDP), has called for the setting up of an Interim National Government (ING) to conduct credible elections in the country. Falae explained that the country needed an (ING) to guard against the emergence of the military on the political scene.

Nigeria's Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka said that he was not satisfied with the election though he believed that there was a lot of improvement in the electoral process. In the final analyses, it can be deduced that through the 2011 election was an improvement of what the electoral process we used to have in Nigeria a lot still needs to be done to finally eradicate electoral malpractices.

Problems of the 2011 General Elections

Elections make-up one type of social-political mechaniser among others, for aggregating preferences of particular kind in a political system. It is a procedure recognised in a democratic state for choosing persons to hold offices in the state. It performs several roles and functions in contemporary democratic practice. These range from participation, mobilisation, integration, education, selection, regulation and legitimating in politics. The roles may even be symbolic like in one party state or in the former communist states.

With the emergence of the new nation-states in the 1960s, the concern about elections shifted to whether an election is free, fair and credible; there was also the concern to reduce crisis and conflict associated with elections. The crisis as conflict arises because elections

constitute the only acceptable means in a democracy for seeking political power. Thus, the issue of seeking power confers on elections the importance it commands in all democracies.

The extent to which election is free, fair and credible, more than electoral behaviour for its own sake defines the study of elections in a place like Nigeria therefore it may be asked to what extent an election reflects the wishes of the people. To what extent does it justify the time and resources devoted to it's in the course of democratic order?

In the 2011 elections, different issues arouse some of the issues are:

- (a) The Thuggery aspect.
- (b) The massive rigging of election.
- (c) The issue of ineffectiveness of the INEC officials.
- (d) The sidelining of the females in electoral post among others.

The Thuggery Aspect: Thugs were seen at all polling boots; these thugs sometimes disturb people that want to vote for the opposition party. For example, in Kwara State, almost all polling boots were dominated by thugs.

The Massive Rigging of Election: This happened extensively in the last election, the election was rigged in favour of the favourite candidates. In some polling boots, some electoral officers were rigged in favour of who gave the thugs enough money.

The Issue of Ineffectiveness of the INEC Officials: The INEC officials were ineffective at most polling unit some were almost three hours late and some even complained of inadequate material. Females were not given adequate support to be a party candidate; in

most cases the male counterpart was encouraged, there were exceptional cases like that of Gbemisola Saraki among others.

Recommendations

Women participation is a key ingredient of democracy; this is because women will be very active in fighting against corruption and bribery in elections. Women should be at the forefront in calling for electoral reforms to restrict the use of money in elections. There should be a massive voter's education and mobilisation; the role of voter's education and mobilisation is to ensure that adequate attention is given to more women participation. As mothers, their voice should be heard at the hallowed chambers of the National Assembly as a basic way to addressing the moral delinquencies in the society. Their voices are important for the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria; the forefront in calling for electoral reforms to restrict the use of money in elections, there should be a massive voter education and mobilisation. The role of voter's education and mobilisation is to ensure that adequate attention is given to more women participation.

Many non-governmental organisations like the National Action Committee on Women in Politics (NACWIP) should be involved in the campaign and championing of women participation in politics. NAWIP and other NGOs should be at the forefront in ensuring the implementation of provisions and statues, which Nigeria has signed as regards the implementation of women participation in politics.

It should be legislated, if it has to be that the 30 percent quota should be compulsory for most of the political parties to implement, INEC

should ensure the implementation of this. However, because of the circumstances of women not meeting the resources needed of election, special seats as in Tanzania and Rwanda should be reserved for women. In the case of Nigeria with identifiable six geopolitical zones, each zone should be allocated a five percent of the elective offices to be filled. It would not be demanding too much for each of the zone to forfeit five of the parliamentary offices from the State Assemblies to the National Assembly to Women, the sacrifice is worthy.

This would be of a proactive step in ensuring women adult suffrage for women, as a precursor to this, legislation should be passed by the National Assembly for the implementation of all the provisions and statutes concerning women, which Nigeria is a signatory.

Fostering a more inclusive and transformative type of politics means creating a more generalised political participation. It is necessary to create an environment that will facilitate the election, appointment and promotion of a sufficient number of women to decision-making positions. This can be achieved through a variety of ways; the participation and access to woman to decision-making can be increased through the media and new technologies of communication (internet). One of the defining features of Nigeria culture today and in the 21st century is media and its sister development – information technology.²⁰

Media is a powerful tool for transmitting and changing cultural values; this tool should be employed to campaign for more woman inclusion in decision-making positions. Media's power to influence and shape people attitude

lie in its ability to bombard the audience with messages that reinforce particular values. This promotes a shift in values and attitudes towards gender equality; and to advocate for women's equal political participation. Information and knowledge are a source of power, technological advances in communication allow more to gain access to the source of this power. The availability and accessibility of such things as office facilities, computer (i.e. the software and the hardware, and internet are necessary to change the way organising and networking is done. Such facilities provide quick dissemination of information and feedback that makes easier for coordinating for concert action.

Access to technology is recommended not only for women, but also for those with strong women friendly commitment, belief and influence because through these facilities, participation in discussions can be done more fully expertise and experience can be done more fully expertise and experience can be shared, common issues can be identified with possible courses of action.

In order to achieve women's equal political participation, it is not enough that social institutions create an enabling environment for change. Women must come to their own decision to actively participate in politics and decision-making at all levels. Individual women, need to raise their self-awareness and examine their own values and attitudes towards gender equality. Women and men are brought up in a culture that espouses given roles and expectations of both genders. In the process of becoming gender sensitive and politically empowered, women should examine these culturally defined roles and expectation to determine whether they promote or hinder their

development. To encourage more women to take on leadership position; it is imperative to challenge the traditional gender division of labour in theory and in practice.

Women have an equal right with men to participate in politics and assume leadership roles. However, the demands of domestic sphere so that women can exercise their right to actively participate in the public sphere. Women and men have an equal stake in family welfare and should be equally responsible to the family.

Equal political socialisation should be sought for both girl and boys from early children for their future leadership roles, opportunities should also be provided, including training to young people to prepare them for their future leadership roles. Gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men should also emphasise through education programmes and campaign put in place for the purpose. Asides from campaigns for balanced gender representation in political decision-making position, an integral part of the core of strategies for women's political participation is women agenda for change. Women's political leadership should further be strengthened in terms of realising the agenda of people centered and sustainable development; and working towards the elimination – in law and in reality of discriminations based on gender, race, age, class and others. Women political leaders, few or many they may be, can only make a difference if they are able to translate their political power into political, social, economic and cultural advancement of women and other marginalised groups.

Those in decision-making positions should make commitments to ensure that all women's

as well as men's concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislation, policies and programmes so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.²¹ This is referred to as gender mainstreaming. This is highly recommended because gender mainstreaming is integer to all development decision and interventions, since it concerns the staffing, procedures and culture of development organisations as well as their programmes and it also forms part of responsibility of all staff. In other word, "male and female" roles, at the centre for all programming action and evaluation, instead of treating these as marginal. The institutional context of decision-making leadership needs to be addressed to create more women and family friendly institutions through the introduction of flextime, providing government subsidised childcare, maternity and parental leave.

As the world changes, peoples, problems change and so do peoples expectations of their leaders. The prevailing leadership style in the world today is under heavy criticism for its failure of adequately address current socio-economic political problems.²²

The traditional leadership style draws heavily from masculine linked attributes. It emphasises control of and dominance over people and resources as the key to leadership. As a result, non-governmental organisations and women's movements have proposed an alternative style of leadership, called by a number of names such as women's leadership transformational leadership or Beta style leadership. This kind of leadership draws from values, attitudes and trait considered as famine

since it is women who have been socialised to internalise and mode these.

This kind of leadership style value diversity and flexibility; it recognises the interdependence of people and their environment, encouraging openness and collaboration. However, this feminine identified style of leadership is not limited to women alone. Men certainly possess the qualities described above, able it verging degrees of development; this new leadership parading should combine the best of masculine and famine identified attributes; gentle but firm, brave but prudent.

Attuned to this style of leadership, women have a certain advantages; once they attain a critical mass in politics and are extensively engaged in decision-making, they will change the way priorities are set as well as the programmes are developed and implemented. By nature of women's leadership, responses to issue will be more inclusive of the needs of a multitude of sectors rather than for the benefit of a privileged few.

The establishment of a legal platform based on any optimal method for addressing national, regional and global priorities constitutes a fundamental structural foundation for change. This requires, *inter alia*, a close revision of the juridical orders that directly or indirectly address gender issues (internet). In this context, the question of affirmative action is a programme designed to equalise admission opportunities for historically disadvantage a groups, taking into account the characteristics that have been used to deny them equal treatment. In aims to achieve equality without compromising acceptance and tolerance of differences; quotas have been viewed as one of the most effective affirmative actions in

appointive political decision-making positions. Hence, its use is recommended in order to increase the participation of women in decision-making.

Conclusion

Years after the Forth World Conference on Women, despite significant commitments to improve women 'situation, gender inequality still persist especially in a religious country like Nigeria. The main effect of gender on the nature of global politics, apart from the effect that such discrimination has on the status of women is to waste talent; it is high time women claim their right to decision-making in Nigeria.²³

Women need to enjoy the full exercise to their civil and political rights in order to participate in the political processes. The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and condition for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a woman's issue. It is important to understand the benefits that can be gained from the political leadership that is based on the partnership of men and women, in politics is the source of a more full and representative democracy. Empowerment of women and men are prerequisites for achieving political, social, cultural, economic and environmental security among all people.

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Interview

- With Afia Zakia, Senior Programme Manager at the Democratic Institute for International Affairs.
- Felix Ababa, Head of Catholic Bishop Conference.