Research Article

Men without Women: Gender Analysis of Political Participation and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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Abstract: The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in its report of September 2010 has ranked Nigeria 117th out of 186 countries on the world scale of gender inequality in politics. Basically, in Nigeria, male dominance of politics and political appointments has predominated in spite of the fact that women constitute about half of the world total population and about 49% of Nigeria's population. The exclusion of women from political participation has also reflected in other areas of the society such as education and even in both the Public and Private Services. This exclusion becomes criminal when seen from the viewpoint of sustainable development of the nation and from which a substantive part of the population has been excluded. The essential attitude of this paper is to explore why this is so, to raise questions and underline dilemmas facing sustainable development in Nigeria and to query if continued exclusion of a substantial part of the population from contributing to policies and participating in politics can be rationalised and allowed to continue. In attempting to offer answers to the queries raised, the paper will investigate the factors that have allowed these skewed participation and ineffective contribution to development in Nigeria by women.

Keywords: Political, Men, Women, Gender and Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The traditional African society, of which the Nigerian society is not an exception, is paternalistic. Women are rarely mentioned or present during important events or discussions. However, in spite of this, oral traditions of most African communities have confirmed the active roles of women in economic, political and social affairs of their communities especially in periods of crises. For instance, oral histories of ancient empires in Nigeria, the Fon of Benin Republic, the Kikuyu of Kenya and the Ashanti of Ghana have made mention of the heroic exploits and roles played by women in the political and economies of their communities. In Nigeria, oral traditions have mentioned the heroic exploits of Queen Amina of Sokoto (Hausa/Fulani Kingdom), Moremi in Ile-Ife (Yoruba Kingdom), Emotan in Benin (Benin Kingdom) and Inkpi in Idah (Igala Kingdom). Prominently, in literature and other literary works, women had been portrayed as playing the roles of either benevolent or malevolent beings. For instance, women had featured prominently as queen-mothers, regents, obas or kings, priests and even as deities that are worshipped by the people. These show that women's second class status does not have a traditional root but rather can be said to be a modern phenomenon. The criminality of this exclusion of women is more felt when the present day society with its constitutional claim to equality of sexes, the values of individuality and egalitarianism still hold on to alternative beliefs and attitudes about women and their role in a modern society.

This is what Bem & Bem (1970:142-155) have called the "non-conscious ideology."

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in its report of September 2010 Nigeria ranked 117th out of 186 countries on the world scale of gender inequality in politics. Also, as far back as 1975, the International Labour Office (ILO) publication on "Employment of Women" showed that women accounted for half of the world's population while in Africa, it is generally estimated that women are numerically superior to men in many countries due to the ravages of war and conflicts. In fact the 1992 census statistics showed that women were superior numerically to men in Nigeria in eleven (11) states. Thus, if it is accepted that in the quest for sustainable development a major resource of every nation is its people and their effective utilisation and contribution is a necessary precondition for social, political, economic and technical development, then the neglect or exclusion, whether consciously or otherwise, of a major part of the total population is not only criminal, it is dangerous, uneconomical and inimical to development and its sustainability.

However, this phenomenon is not peculiar to developing countries alone. Fenn (1976) had noted that in USA, 39% of the total labour force is women and only about 1% of them ever reach the upper level management or the top of their professions. A similar finding has been reported for Nigeria (Makinde *et al.*, 1993:567-574).

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This bias is also reflected in modern management texts which have equated successful leadership characteristics with traits mostly associated with males. According to McGregor and as cited by Dipboye (1975);

> The model of a successful manager in our culture is a masculine one. The good manager is aggressive, competitive, firm and just. He is not feminine, he is not soft and yielding or dependent or intuitive in the womanly sense.

As in politics, women's career possibility at management level in the Public and Private sectors are faulted by myths and stereotypes which have portrayed them as being intellectually inferior, emotionally unstable, less assertive and when compared to men, do not value achievement and promotion (Dipboye, 1975). In fact researches conducted among children have practically confirmed that there exist great differences between both sexes even right from such tender age as one year old (Goldberg & Lewis, 1969; Smith, 1933; McDavid, 1959; & Crandall & Rabson, 1960). Their works have added credibility to the belief that there are innate differences between male and female and that certain female hormones may actually be responsible for their inability to aspire to greatness.

While this argument has been documented, however, counter studies have shown that female characteristics and traits are what is needed by today's managers. For example, Durkin (1971) in his study has concluded that;

> The aptitudes which seem to underline successful management are objective personality, abstract visualisation and high English vocabulary. Equal numbers of men and women possess objective personality and high vocabulary. More women have abstract visualisation than men. The ratios are three in four; and one man in two. Theoretically, at least there ought to be more women in management than men.

Knowles & Moore (1970) have also concluded in their study that;

> About the only testable difference between men and women seems to be women's greater ability in interpersonal relationships. The manager of the future will need to be more people-centred, more able to work with people than to exercise position power.

On the other hand, the relationship between democracy and development has been alluded to by scholars. Most western oriented analysts have argue for democracy as the best, if not the only viable, institutional framework for development. Given the examples of the developed nations, one is apt to agree with analysts; among whom are Sklar (1987, 1996); & Ake (1989, 1996, 2002) that democracy, if opted for and properly practised, can facilitate development. In particular, Ake (1989:90) has argued that Africa needs democratic governance not only because it is desirable in itself, but because it will greatly facilitate development. Although this view has been given some credence with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a unipolar power structure manned by America with its claim to Western democratic tenets and principles, however, the examples of China and the Asian Tigers posit to us alternative models of development and a different brand of 'democracy'. Underlying this argument is that democracy of the liberal type facilitates development but it is not exclusive to it alone. As a matter of fact, our intellectual and academic predisposition is that for a Third World nation that is desirous of rapid development, liberal democracy may posit an avenue but a rather slow and expensive one. Our strong conviction is that liberal democracy with its bi-camera or uni-camera system of representativeness is a luxury that most Third World nations, Nigeria inclusive, may not be able to afford. Although liberal democracy may have facilitated development in the Western nations; this is because they have had ample time at their disposal to develop at their own slow but steady pace and none of them had ever been deliberately underdeveloped. Their rate of development had never been impaired or subjected to control by another sovereign state. The luxury to develop at its own pace and time, hitherto accorded to and enjoyed by the developed nations, is no longer available to the Third World nations if they are going to be a force in the world and in international politics. in spite of this, democracy has become the 'in-thing' now.

Following the Schumpeterian tradition, therefore, Diamond *et al.* (1988: xvi, and 1995: 1-57) have argued that for a political system to be truly democratic, it must exhibits certain features which include (1) periodic competition among individuals and organised groups, (that is, political parties) for effective government positions, (2) a highly inclusive level of political participation in the process of leadership selection through an electoral process that does not exclude any social group, and (3) a level of civil and political liberties such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organisations, sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation. This suggests therefore, that a system of democracy that will transform the society and put it in the direction of development must provide equal opportunity for all segments of the society to compete and be adequately represented in order to ensure plurality of opinions, result-oriented policies leading to socio-economic transformation of the society. However, in Nigerian democratic system, wide and glaring gender gap in political participation has been identified.

If democracy enhances development and it is necessary for sustaining development, then the exclusion of about 48% of the population from active and relevant participation is a prescription for development failure

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(See Table 1 below). Deriving from the 2006 Census figures, women were numerically superior in Ebonyi, Enugu, Kebbi and Ogun states. In virtually all the other states, men were just marginally more than women with about 50-1000 population. This paper therefore, seeks to use ex-post facto descriptive statistics to analyse and discuss the skewed nature of political participation of women and discuss its implication for sustaining development in Nigeria.

Table 1. The 2006 Census Figures

STATE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Abia	1,434,193	1,399,806	2,833,999
Adamawa	1,606,123	1,561,978	3,168,101
Akwa Ibom	2,044,510	1,875,698	3,920,208
Anambra	2,174,641	2,007,391	4,182,032
Bauchi	2,426,215	2,250,250	4,676,465
Bayelsa	902,648	800,710	1,703,358
Benue	2,164,058	2,055,186	4,219,244
Borno	2,161,157	1,990,036	4,151,193
C'River	1,492,465	1,396,501	2,888,966
Delta	2,074,306	2,024,085	4,098,391
Ebonyi	1,040,984	**1,132,517**	2,173,501
Edo	1,640,461	1,577,871	3,218,332
Ekiti	1,212,609	1,171,603	2,384,212
Enugu	1,624,202	**1,633,096**	3,257,298
FCT Abuja	740,489	664,712	1,405,201
Gombe	1,230,722	1,123,157	2,353,879
Imo	2,032,286	1,902,613	3,934,899
Jigawa	2,215,907	2,132,742	4,348,649
Kaduna	3,112,028	2,954,534	6,066,562
Kano	4,844,128	4,539,554	9,383,682
Katsina	2,978,682	2,813,896	5,792,578
Kebbi	1,617,498	**1,621,130**	3,238,628
Kogi	1,691,737	1,586,750	3,278,487
Kwara	1,220,581	1,150,508	2,371,089
Lagos	4,678,00	4,335,514	9,013,534
Nasarawa	945,556	917,719	1,863,275
Niger	2,032,725	1,917,524	3,950,249
Ogun	1,847,243	**1,880,855**	3,725,098
Ondo	1,761,263	1,679,761	3,441,024
Osun	1,740,619	1,682,916	3,423,535
Oyo	2,809,840	2,781,749	5,591,589
Plateau	1,593,033	1,585,679	3,178,712
Rivers	2,710,665	2,474,735	5,185,400
Sokoto	1,872,059	1,824,930	3,696,999
Taraba	1,199,849	1,100,887	2,300,736
Yobe	1,206,003	1,115,588	2,321,591
Zamfara	1,630,344	1,629,502	3,259,846

Conceptual Clarification

Politics is nothing more than the exercise of power and so political context is an exercise in securing access to the source of power. Power does manifest in every area of human endeavour, in organisations and even in social relations. Although in organisations, the use of power is regarded as an anomaly, a pathology and dysfunctional (Makinde *et al.,* 1993:568); & Zaleznik & Vires (1975) have acknowledged it as;

> Connoting dominance and submission, control and acquiescence, one man's will at the expense of another man's self-esteem ...Yet it is power, the ability to control and influence others, that provides the basis for the direction of organisations and for the attainment of social goals. Leadership is the exercise of power.

On the other hand, Mmobuosi's (1988) view seems to have seen organisations as assemblage of individuals who are engaged in an apocalypse struggle for power and so he argued that in an organisation, there ensues;

> A struggle, whether subtle or explicit, to control the acquisition and distribution of finite resources include power itself. Power becomes pitched against power.... This is politics in motion.

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Power is a scarce commodity which must be fought for because its being possessed is a precondition for controlling other scarce resources and for influencing...acceptance.

However within political systems, power is commonly associated with different roles; tyrants, dictators, kings, rulers, generals etc. Power is accessed through participation in the political system and political participation refers to all activities that are voluntarily carried out by citizens with the aim of influencing personnel and policy directions of government at the different levels of the political system (Parry *et al.,* 1992; Suberu, 2004; & Verba *et al.,* 1995). Thus, political participation has been seen as consisting of those levels of activities by private citizens who are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take (Nie & Verba, 1975). Political participation has been variously categorised. For instance, Verba *et al.* (1978) have identified four types of political activities as campaign activity, communal activity, particularised contact and voting; while Milbrath & Goel (1977) have identified six types of activities as falling under political participation and these are; voting, party work, community activism, contacting officials, protest behaviour and communication activities.

Malbraith (1965) has identified three levels at which citizens participate in the political process; spectator, transitional and gladiatorial levels. The spectator level is the lowest in the hierarchy of participation and people at this level are apathetic to politics and its process although they may nevertheless be involved in voting, engaging in public discussion about politics, wearing and displaying of campaign materials and generally making minimal effort to influence others to vote in a certain way or for a certain person or party. The transitional level is only a rung above the spectator level and entails attending party meetings and rallies, making monetary contributions, and maintaining contact with political leaders and public officers. The gladiatorial level involves holding public office, actively seeking for public office, soliciting for funds for the party, attending political party caucus meetings and contributing money, time, and other resources to political campaigns. As Ewemooje & Ezegwu (2011) have noted, about 60% of the population are involved at the spectator level and about 8% and 2% are involved at the transitional and gladiatorial levels respectively. Several factors have been identified as been responsible for this such as; the individual's level of political awareness, political culture, socio-economic status and type of government and party system in practice. However, as it relates to women participation, other factors have been added such as the levels of political knowledge, lower feeling of external efficacy, or the feeling of inability or powerlessness to affect the political system positively (Lambert, 2008).

The Model Dilemma: From 'Development' to 'Sustainable Development'

The central dilemma facing development scholars is the non-agreement on what the concept means and what actually constitutes development. For instance, development has been construed as implying improvement in the human capacity while others have view it as implying improvement in the physical environment and level of social services. We argue here that real development should encompass both aspects, that is, development should be seen as encompassing human capital capacity development that will eventually translates into the development of the natural resources and endowment of a society, its physical environment leading to the general welfare of the whole citizens. This is in line with Rodney's (2011:1) conceptualisation of development. He argued that;

Development in human society is a many sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being... At the level of the social groups, it implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relations... In the past, development has always meant increase in the ability to guard the independence of the social group.

Dudley Seer's (1963:3) has put his conceptualisation of development in form of three fundamental questions;

The questions to ask about a country's development are ... what has been happening to poverty? And what has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result development even if per capita income doubled

However, according to the World Bank (1991:4), the major challenge facing development;

... is to improve the quality of life... a better quality of life generally calls for higher incomes but it involves much more. It encompasses as ends in themselves better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty, a cleaner environment, more equality of opportunity, greater individual freedom and a richer cultural life.

The International Conference on Popular participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa held at Arusha in Tanzania from 12 to 16 of February, 1990, explicitly captures the role of political participation in Africa development and states emphatically that;

We are united in our conviction that the crisis currently engulfing Africa is not only an economic crisis, but also a human, legal, political and social crises ... the political context of socio-economic development has been characterised, in many instances, by an over-centralisation of power and impediments to the effective participation of the overwhelming majority of the people in social, political and economic development. As a result, the motivation of the majority of African people and their organisations to contribute their best to the development process, and to the betterment of their own well-being as well as their say in national development has been severely constrained and curtailed and their collective and individual creativity has been undervalued and underutilised (UN-IATF, 1990.Art. 6)

Article 7 of the declaration further affirms that "nations cannot be built without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the full and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the people." Article 10 of the declaration states clearly that;

In our sincere view, popular participation is both a means and an end. As an instrument of development, popular participation provides the driving force for collective commitment for the determination of people-based development processes and willingness by the people to undertake sacrifices and expend their social energies for its execution. As an end in itself, popular participation is the fundamental right of the people to fully and effectively participate in the determination of the discussions which affect their lives at all levels and at all times

However, many development analysts have concluded that the 1980s were a "lost decade" for Africa. This is in spite of a decade long regime of economic restructuring administered through the religiously code of market forces and liberalisation. But almost a decade later, Africa's development conditions and prospects are still considered as more despairing than those of the lost decade. According to Ogunseye (1997:3), in Africa, the various post-independence attempts at state-led development, though reasonably successful in some social sectors and in physical capital formation, were largely undermined by economic and institutional ineffectiveness, corruption and inefficient macro policies. The North-sponsored adjustment policies foisted on African nations as a way of developing constitute nothing short of an enemy's position for it retardation tendency and for not effecting any meaningful development in Africa. Hence the current development model foisted on African nations by the World Bank and IMF is considered to be no longer compatible with the aspiration, vision and focus of these nations. The adoption of sustainable development as a counter measure has achieved a general consensus among development practitioners and agencies.

As laudable as this policy is, some dilemmas underline and challenge its realisation and effectiveness as a counter weight to the North-imposed development option for Africa. First is that sustainable development is presently in a hostile environment basically because most African governments are still 'friendly' with the 'old' SAP model which imposes debt-paying on African economies, the compliant official rhetoric in favour of sustainable development notwithstanding. As Ogunseye (1997:7) has pointed out, this is because the mainstream development policies and actions of the state and business in Africa are overwhelmingly geared in pursuit of the unsustainable but much admired modernisation benefits enjoyed in the North. Second is the dilemma posed to sustainable development by the attraction of and desire for the symbols and tangible benefits of the existing modernisation model? These symbols include modern consumption patterns, cars, and overseas travels, socio-economic and material advantages, all of which command respect and admiration as symbols of success among the poor. Third is given this 'economy of affection' for the symbols of modernisation, how then can the admiring and aspiring poor be persuaded of a new and different model of development based on low-input, low energy consumption, recycling, cycling and walking? This challenge further questions the notion that the poor and marginalised people do not particularly care about many of the material benefits of modernisation, and would be largely satisfied with an appropriate and well-designed 'grass-root development' model that works.

The Nature of the Dilemma

A major point been made by this paper is that citizen participation is sina quo non for an effectively functioning democratic system and the full involvement of all citizens in the democratic process can only augur well for the stability of the society and legitimacy of the government. Democracy is premised on equal representation of interests, preferences and needs. It suggests, therefore, that anywhere these basic but fundamental principles of democracy are lacking, such democratic system must be called to question because it denies democracy as ensuring freedom of participation which is a key form of development and sustainable development at that.

Our analysis of women participation and exclusion in the democratic process will be limited to only at the gladiatorial level. As mere symbols of equality, women have not been consciously excluded from participating in politics at both the spectator and transitional levels. In fact their presence at campaign rallies has always been courted if not paid for by the

parties. However, it is at the gladiatorial level where those to hold public offices or actively seeking for public offices are chosen that they are often left out. Where they are chosen or appointed, it is only to serve as tokenism because their numbers in government at local, state and federal government levels is serious skewed against their numerical population size (compare Tables 1 &2).

The focus of this paper is basically on gender inequality and participation in politics. Gender like every socially constructed label, transcends biological dimension only. Rather, it should be seen as referring to the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values and relative power and influence in society. In reality and in the concrete world, gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being either male or female. Gender is also relational, that is, gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation. Rather, they are defined in relation to one another and through the demonstration or "doing" of gender in relations to others (Enarson, 2009). The implication of this is therefore that gender equity is not the same as gender equality. Gender equity is the practice of being fair to men and women in relation to their respective situations and needs whereas, on the other hand, gender equality means that men and women enjoy the same social opportunities. It further means that both sexes have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential to contribute to national political, economic, social, and cultural development and to benefit from them.

Table 2. Legislative Seats at the National, States and Local Government Areas

Chamber/House	Male	Female	% of Female 1999	Male	Female	% of Female 2003	Male	Female	% of Female 2007
Senate	106	3	2.8	105	4	3.7	100	9*	8.3
House of Rep.	348	12	3.3	338	22	6.1	333	27*	7.5
State Houses	969	21	1.2	951	39	3.9	934	56	5.6
LGA Councillors	8730	80	0.9	8540	270	3.1	8646	164	1.9
Fed. Exec. Council	37	5	12	39	6	13	39	6	13
LGA Chairpersons	767	7	0.9	762	12	1.5	763	11	1.4

Source: Agbi, (2011)

Table 3. Total Students Enrolment in Secondary and University by Sex

School/Gender/Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Junior Secondary School	**2,950,737**	**3,684,644**	**3,507,928**	**3,634,163**	**3,695,648**	**3,466,247**	**3,498,553**
Male	1,746,909 (59.20%)	2,083,699 (56.55%)	1,972,637 (56.23%)	1,984,387 (54.60%)	2,040,367 (55.21%)	1,897,430 (54.74%)	1,920,338 (54.89%)
Female	1,203,828 (40.80%)	1,600,945 (43.45%)	1,535,291 (43.77%)	1,639,776 (45.40%)	1,655,281 (47.79%)	1,568,817 (45.26%)	1,578,215 (45.11%)
Senior Secondary School	**2,020,937**	**2,173,533**	**2,826,799**	**2,771,634**	**2,773,418**	**2,819,952**	**2,821,444**
Male	1,115,360 (55.19%)	1,201,219 (55.27%)	1,579,165 (55.86%)	1,567,011 (56.54%)	1,559,038 (56.21%)	1,587,633 (56.30%)	1,580,007 (56%)
Female	905,577 (44.81%)	972,314 (44.73%)	1,247,634 (44.14%)	1,204,623 (43.46%)	1,214,380 (43.79%)	1,232,319 (43.70%)	1,241,437 (44%)
Grand Total Enrolment	**4,601,105**	**5,124,270**	**6,511,443**	**6,279,562**	**6,407,581**	**6,515,600**	**6,319,997**
Students Enrolment in Universities	**444,949**	**606,104**	**727,408**	**724,856**			
Male	274,131	373,778	492,874	466,159			
Female	170,818	232,326	234,534	258,697			

However, the perceived skewed ratio of men to women in gladiatorial politics has set out scholars to attempt to offer possible reasons for this. Harriman (2006) has argued that the reasons for this include fear, poor or low self-esteem and lack of confidence, ignorance or indifference to politics. Ezegwu & Okafor (2011) have contended that female low representation in politics is as a result of their weak political orientation. Lambert (2008) has opined that these gaps in representation occur basically because women are more hesitant to express their political preferences and as such, this had led to less representation. In an earlier study conducted to interrogate the skewed sex ratios in the Nigerian Public Service (Agara, 2001:1-17), we deduced certain reasons for this differential. While some of the reasons adduced then are still germane to this present study, additional reasons for this differential may also be adduced.

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First is faulty early socialisation. Scholars are agreed that political socialisation starts at an early age, what Easton & Hess (1970:129) have called "pre-school age." According to McLean (1996:386), political socialisation is "the process by which people come to acquire political attitudes and values ... and the earliest socialisation is believed to be the deepest." However, in a patriarchal society, faulty socialisation results from how boys and girls are raised. The boys are raised to be more enterprising, daring, assertive, aggressive, competitive and independent while the girl-child is socialised to be dependent, passive and affiliative. The early socialisation of the boy-child prepares him for the world out there, while the girl-child is shielded and protected from the world out there. The political world is a highly competitive world where no hold is barred in the attempt to win all. It was never envisaged that women will venture into this world and hence are not adequately prepared for it.

Although access to education is guaranteed in the country's Constitution for all and irrespective of sex, the society's preference for the male-child (Hoffman, 1977; Sear *et al.,* 1957; & Pohlman, 1969) ensures that in case of a choice being made due to financial resources, the male-child will have the first preference of being sent to school. This is reflected on Table 2 where the male child have higher population in schools at every level than the girl child in spite of the fact that the male do not have such great numerical superiority than the female (see Table 1). A prerequisite for participation in politics at the gladiatorial level preclude some form of educational which inculcate some sense of awareness on the person. However, even at that, certain aspects of the school curriculum have also been identified as encouraging gender differences. Delamont (1982) had identified five major ways in which school's socialisation and curriculum have emphasise gender differences to the detriment of the girl child. These include the classroom organisation where male sit differently from female and the register is arranged usually with the girls' names coming after those of the boys.

The third is the influence of role models. Learning theorists have emphasised how this helps to mould the character and ambition of adolescents (Kolhberg, 1966; & Mischel, 1966). The is the age children begin to 'dream', form opinions and perceptions of what or who they want to become. They are assisted in doing this by role models, especially those they come in contact. As noted earlier, "proximity plays an important role in this regard" and so it is not unusual to see adolescents wanting to become 'actors' or tailoring their behaviour, manner of dressing, hairstyle, language, and poise after such characters especially in this age of globalisation, televisions and satellites (Agara, 2001:6). In a study conducted by Makinde *et al.* (1992), 135 women managers in the Nigerian Public Service out of a total of 197 affirmed that their role models were female and specifically their mothers, aunties and sisters. So role models impact on the drive or ambition of female and the dearth of notable women politicians that hve impacted their countries and generations have a hand in influencing younger female to want to participate effectively in politics, at least, at the gladiatorial level.

Fourth is the inclination for women to want to limit themselves to female oriented jobs. Most cultures, and this is not exclusive to developing countries alone, have jobs or occupations that are traditionally ascribed along gender lines. So, there are jobs reserved for male as distinct for others reserved for female only. This has also been reinforced by learning institutions through the use of visual aids and pictures showing male in particular occupations such as lawyers, doctors, pilots etc, and female as nurses, teachers etc. Apart from school, the family also plays an important role here. Weishaar *et al.* (1981) have reported in a study that while working mothers are often cited as primary influence, fathers are also cited as vocational model by women in non-traditional careers. Auster and Auster (1981) have also reported the influence of the father on women in non-traditional occupation. Women who have transcend gender-based occupational stereotype are influenced by family members who offer support for their ambitions and aspirations. However, in situation where such support is denied because of negative perception of politics, female involvement in this area would, of course, be limited.

Agbi (2011:21-24) has also offered many reasons for female low participation in gladiatorial politics. Of relevance to this thrust of this paper are; (1) that politics involve a lot of money and many women do not have access to such funds. (2) The issue of godfatherism. The issue of godfatherism in Nigeria politics have been seriously interrogated by various scholars (see the Special edition of *The Constitution,* vol. 7, no. 2, June, 2007). The menace of godfatherism in Nigerian politics has evolved into two types; godfather-broker and godfather-patron (Agara, 2010, Agara and Ajisebiyawo, 2010). (3) Is the issue of marginalisation of women in political parties? According to her, a study conducted by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) has shown that political party leaders refuse to take female aspirants seriously and labelled them as cultural deviants. Their argument is that the women do not have what it takes to assume leadership positions at the party level. (4) Is the lack of substantive women's movement and cohesiveness among women's groups that claim to support women's participation in politics? Many women are reluctant to identify with such group because of the fear of being seen as same-sex people or men-haters. (5) Is the wrong impression that people generally have about female politicians. They are generally thought of as being promiscuous and loose basically because most of the political caucus meetings are held in the night and sometimes in places far away from their homes.

CONCLUSION

In spite of the gloomy and skewed picture presented above by the tables, Ballington (2004:72) has reported that;

> Nowhere in the world has the rate of increase in the political representation of women been as fast as in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past four decades. The number of women legislators increased tenfold between 1960 and 2003, jumping from one percent to 14.3 percent in 2003. The largest increase came between 1990 and 2003 when the number of seats held by women rose from 8 percent to 14.3 percent. Rwanda became the country with the highest female legislative representation in 2003, as women in that country claimed 48.8 percent of parliamentary seats surpassing the Nordic countries.

Even though this is a welcome development, yet in many countries and even in Nigeria, the barrier to full women participation at the gladiatorial level still persists. Their present level of participation and the number of those involved is not commensurate with their potential contributions and numerical strength in the population. Under representation of any group in the politics of the state makes room for the politics of exclusion which can also create apathy and instigate negative behavioural pattern which may be counter-productive to development and its sustenance. Continued gender gap robs the state of benefits that may accrue to it from their active participation.

Studies have actually shown that women, more than men, have manifested relatively interpersonally oriented and democratic styles and men, more than women, have manifested relatively task oriented and autocratic styles (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Wollack (2010), on the other hand, has pointed out that states where women are political leaders often experience higher standards of living with positive developments in education, infrastructure and health, with concrete steps being taken to make democracy work and deliver. Using data from 19 member states of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), researchers have found that an increase in women legislators results in an increase in total educational (Wollack, 2010). As Wollack (2010) has further observed, the West Bengal villages in India that have greater representation of women in local councils experienced an investment in drinking water facilities that doubled those of villages with less women participation in their councils. Khan & Ara (2006:1) have even contended that increased and systematic inclusion and integration of women,

> Augments the democratic basis, the efficiency and the quality of the activities of local government. If local government is to meet the needs of both women and men, it must build on the experiences of both women and men, through an equal representation at all levels and in all fields of decision-making, covering the wide range of responsibilities of local governments.

It is no doubt that closing the gender gap will contribute immensely to economic empowerment which is a prerequisite for societal development. Duke (2010) has averred that democratic participation and economic empowerment are mutually supporting phenomena, as each one fuels the other.

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