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GENDER INEQUALITY AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE IN ENUGU STATE: AN EVALUATION FROM 2007-2011

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Abstract

Gender inequality and the attendant consequences constitute impediments to societal progress. The effect of gender inequality on women participation in governance and its implication on Nigerian political development is not in doubt. Nigeria and Enugu State in particular is not left out of the gender imbalances and its effect on participation of women in governance cannot be overemphasized. The extent to which this anomaly has been resolved or redressed is the concern of this study. Marxist Feminism was adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis to explain the domination, exploitation, oppression and suppression of women by men. The study relied on secondary sources of data and employed qualitative and content methods of data analysis. It was noted that governance in Enugu State has been predominantly men's affairs, the number of women in public positions still fall below the 35% as provided by National Gender Policy of 2006. It was revealed that gender inequality exacerbated by socio-cultural factors accounted for women under-representation in governance. The study recommended that gender imbalances in all facets of lives in Enugu state should be abolished. The implementation of 35% Affirmative Action and adoption of quota system of representation for women will bridge the gap between men and women in governance.

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Cultural Practices, Women Participation, Governance, national Gender Policy**.**

Introduction

Howard (2009), is of the view that although evidence of gender inequality and exploitation exists in most societies, the problem is more severe in many parts of the developing world. According to UNDP (1997), women constitute half of the world's population and have contributed significantly to the well – being of the human race. In Nigeria, for instance, women, have always played the roles of mother, producer, home manager, community organizer, and social, cultural and political activist. But Enemuo (1999), states that despite their large number and crucial functions, the

division of roles between the male and female sexes, as prescribed by most cultures, assigns the subordinate position to women. As a consequence, women have for long suffered various forms of discrimination, inequality, exclusion especially from governance. Also Agbalajobi (2010), reveals that men are the major determinants of political actions and inactions generally concerned with the perpetuation of power of the state. Accordingly, when women compete with men for access to political power, they do so on the terms already established by men for competition among themselves. Therefore, the success of women in politics like that of any group cannot be achieved within a system without displacing or replacing the existing elite.

Opinions are divided on whether the role of women is predominantly in the home front or whether they can engage meaningfully in socio-economic and governance like their male counterparts as a way of contributing their quota to societal development. But the fact is that whatever role women play in any society is determined and assigned socially and culturally to the different genders that is male and female. Consequently, gender roles and relations resulting in inequality (domination or discrimination) is the creation of the norms of the society. Against this background, gender inequality and women participation in governance in Enugu State from 2007 to 2011 is the major concern of this study.

Anifowose (2004) in Agbalajobi (2010) reiterates that in all parts of the world, women have been subjected to domination by men. This is as a result of persisting cultural stereotype, abuse of religious and traditional practices, patriarchal societal structures in which economic, political and social power are dominated by men and the role women have historically played as followers of the male political leaders. This form of discrimination is not simply an African or Nigerian phenomenon but a global one. The only difference is that, it has lasted for a very long time in this part of the world as other developed nations are moving towards gender equality or equity. Discrimination and subjection of women is further enforced by customs, traditional practices, beliefs and the law. Discrimination against women has its root in the nature of our societies which celebrate men as being unique, stronger and fit for public offices while women are feeble and weak and meant for private life. This has effect on women perception of governance and therefore has led to a very low level of political interest, knowledge and activity of women in politics (Agbalajobi 2010).

Political enfranchisement of women in Nigerian politics seems to have maintained on the surface a level of gender equity politically, because it is assumed that constitutionally that there are no barriers to women's participation. But this does not happen practically in Nigerian politics. Since the inception of democratic governance in 1999, there has been low level of women participation in governance. Women are under – represented in both elective and appointive positions, hence the call for the full implementation of National Gender Policy of 2006 to redress this gender bias against women. Section 40 of 1999 Constitution of Nigeria guaranteed the rights of citizens (women and men) to participate in governance. Though the number of women in both the elective and appointive positions has increased from 1999 to date, yet there is noticeable level of under – representation of women when compared with their men counter parts.

Women's quest for participation in governance is premised on the fact that women in Nigeria represent half of the population and hence should be allowed a fair share in decision – making and the governance of the country. Also that all human beings are equal and women possess the same rights as men to participate in governance and public life. The right to democratic governance is an entitlement conferred upon all citizens by law.

Section 42 (1) of the same constitution further states that: A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not, by reason only that he is such a person be subjected to any form of discrimination. This sub-section clearly prohibits discrimination in the political process on the basis of sex. In view of the foregoing provisions, there is nothing in the constitution that excludes women from participating in governance in Nigeria. But in actual practice, there is remarkable discrimination against women as a result of socially constructed gender roles. Few and insignificant number of women were elected into various posts in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections held in the country. Men dominate most public offices till date. No woman has been elected either as a governor of a state or the president of the federation. We only had few women as members of the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) and as members of state Houses of Assembly across the country.

Olurode (2013), reveals that countries have made significant efforts to improve the chances of women in electoral and appointive positions. Some countries especially, emerging democracies

have legislated female participation in their electoral process by imposing gender quotas on political party nominations to elective posts. Developed countries like Canada and Scandinavians ensure gender mainstreaming in all policy decisions. According to him a National Gender Policy was developed and adopted in Nigeria since 2006, but not fully implemented. Women are grossly under-represented in governance and from the political process. It is worthy of note that significant improvement has been made in appointive positions as ministers, heads of parastatals and commissions.

The participation of women in governance however falls short of the desired 30% by international standards and 35% as entrenched in the National Gender Policy 2006. According to him, statistics indicate that women are grossly under-represented in elective positions and the electoral process such that in the 2007 elections, they constituted only 9% in the Nigerian Senate and 9.27% in the House of Representatives, 5.45% of the State Houses of Assembly and 0% of the Governorship and Presidential elective offices. The situation turned worse in 2011 general elections where women garnered only 7.3% and 6.1% of members of the Senate and House of Representatives respectively (Olurode, 2012).

Enugu State which is the focus of the study is not different from what obtains at the national level. It is the same low level of participation and under-representation in the political process. Consequently, between 2007 and 2011, no woman was elected either as a governor or deputy governor, women constituted 1.47% of members of State House of Assembly in 2007 and 1.17% in 2011, 1.47% of appointive positions in 2007 and 2.21% in 2011. The situation slightly changed in 2014 with the nomination of women as deputy gubernatorial candidates by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Peoples Congress (APC) in the 2015 general election in Enugu State. Against this background, the objective of this paper is to evaluate the impact of gender inequality on women participation in governance in Enugu State between 2007 and 2011?

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is Marxist Feminism. Marxist feminism according to Ferguson and Hennessy (2010) is a branch of feminism focused on investigating and explaining the ways in which women are oppressed through systems of capitalism and private property. Marxist feminists contend that women's liberation can only be achieved through a radical

restructuring of the current capitalist economy in which much of women's labour is uncompensated. In the same vein, influential work by Marx and Engels (1848) laid the foundation for some of the early discourse about the relationship between capitalism and oppression. The theory and method of study developed by Marx (1859) termed historical materialism, recognizes the ways in which economic systems structure society as a whole and influence everyday life and experience. Historical materialism places emphasis on the role of economy in determining the base of the society. According to Engels (1884), the shift from feudalism to private ownership of land has had a huge effect on the status of women. In private ownership system, individuals who do not own land or other means of production are in the views of Engels in situation of enslavement -they must work for the owner of land in order to be able to live within the system of private ownership. Engels (1884), explains that the transition to this type of system resulted in the creation of separate public and private spheres and assigned access to waged labour disproportionately to men.

Ferguson and Hennessy (2010), contend that such gender oppression is closely related to class oppression and the relationship between men and women in society is similar to the relations between proletariat and bourgeoisie. On this account woman's subordination is a function of class oppression, maintained like racism because it serves the interest of capital and the ruling class; it divides men against women. Also Vogel (2013), states that in the capitalist system, two types of labour exist. The first is the productive in which the labour results in goods or services that have monetary value in the capitalist system and thus compensated by the producers in the form of a paid wage. The second form of labour is reproductive, which is associated with the private sphere and involves anything that people have to do for themselves that is not for the purposes of receiving a wage (i.e. cleaning, cooking, having children) both forms of labour are necessary, but people have different access to them based on certain aspects of their identity. Women are assigned to the domestic sphere where the labour is reproductive and thus uncompensated and unrecognized in a capitalist system. It is in the best interest of both public and private institutions to exploit the labour of women as an inexpensive method of supporting a workforce. Hartmann (1981) contends that for the nuclear family, the power dynamics dictates that domestic work is exclusively to be completed by the woman of the household thereby liberating the rest of the members from their own necessary reproductive labour. Marxist feminists argue that the exclusion of women from the productive labour leads to male control in both private and public domains. They also believe that

women's liberation will be achieved when capitalist system is eliminated through socialist revolution that would usher in better conditions for women.

The application of Marxist feminism is useful in explaining and understanding gender inequality and women participation in governance with a focus on Enugu state. The theory is apt in investigating and analyzing the ways in which women are oppressed through the system of capitalism and private ownership of property. Women's subordination is not a result of biological disposition but of social relations and men's efforts to control women which have become institutionalized in the family and legitimized through patriarchy. The assignment of productive labour which attracts wages to men and reproductive labour without wages to women. Consequently, women are excluded from public sector reserved for men and consigned to the domestic sphere of caring for the family. This has made women to be dependent on the men for living including financial dependence. Women must be confined to the private domain and attempt to venture into public sector such as politics characterized by violence and attendant consequences is always seen as deviant behavior.

Conceptualizing Gender and Governance

In the views of Enemuo (1999), gender is now widely used to designate the culturally defined, socially formed identities of men and women that are highly variable across cultures and continually subject to change. This implies that the term gender denotes the different and unequal perceptions, views, roles and relevance, rewards, etc. which a society assigns to men and women through its culture. It refers to the socially constructed inequality between women and men.

Duru (2014, p. 11) conceives gender as ''social attributes that are acquired or learned during socialization and include activities, responsibilities and needs connected to being a male or female''. According to her, gender simply refers to masculinity and femininity; masculinity means social consideration that is appropriate for male which include traits as physical features, boldness, aggressiveness, strength, fearlessness etc. Femininity on the other hand is the opposite. They include those socially defined and observed attributes that are appropriate for females such as care, tenderness of heart, emotion, physical weakness and other features on which a female is identified with.

It is important to emphasize that gender roles are not natural. They are constructed and invented by society. However, gender is not the same thing as sex, because while sex refers to physical differences between males and females, gender concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women. The differences between the male and female sexes are natural, universal and largely constant. For instance, each of the sexes performs the same reproductive functions in all cultures. Their biological features are also the same. On the contrary, gender differences are created and sustained by society through its traditions, customs, conventions, mores and regulations. The gender notions about male and female include:

> "Traditional stereotypes that characterize women as submissive, illogical, passive, talkative, emotional, easily moved with tears, etc. Men on the other hand are assumed to be competent, logical, and independent. These stereotypes tend to reflect men and women as belonging to opposite ends of bipolar adjectives in which men have desirable qualities while women have undesirable ones. Societal norms and stereotypes also function as a traditional ideology that relegates women to housewife role while promoting men as actors, providers and final authority" (Udegbe, 1998, p. 3)

In reaction to this, Enemuo (1999), reiterates that these character portraits of male and female are not determined by nature but have been constructed by society. Their overall impact has been to put women in subordinate position vis-à-vis men. Nwofia and Emezi (2014), posit that gender as a socio-cultural construct differentiates and assigns appropriate behaviour and access to power and status to men and women. This varies from society to society, changes from time to time and perpetuates strong elements of inequality between the sexes. In effect, the creation of gender differences that is accepted by customs and traditions has resulted to inequality between men and women otherwise referred to as gender inequality. Gender inequality exists in the relationship between men and women in both private and public life.

Howard (2009), avers that evidence of gender inequality and exploitation exists in most societies, but that the problem is more severe in developing world. In his opinion, examples of gender inequality include divorce laws, that greatly favour husbands; barriers to women seeking commercial credit for small businesses, the "double day" that working women typically face (coming home after a day's work and having to do most of the house work and child care) and restricted opportunities for women in government, the professions, and better-paid, blue-collar

jobs. Nigeria as a developing nation is not an exception as the scenario above typifies the inequality between men and women as they relate in different ways.

Supporting this assertion, Fab-Ukozor (2007, p. 104) contends that the fact of "women subjugation is obvious." As marginalized group, women suffer various forms of deprivation in all spheres of life including education, health, employment and politics. These deprivations have made women disadvantaged and reduced them to the extent that a greater percentage of them are exposed to various forms of violence at all levels of societal living and even the most educated ones find it difficult to actualize themselves in their different professions. As a result, gender gap has remained visibly skewed in favour of men, be it in education, health, economy or politics''(Fab-Ukozor 2007, p. 104).

Governance according to(Atu, Odibo, Uduimoh and Egbuchulam, 2015) is the administration of a state. They opine that the ultimate objective of governance is to effectively, efficiently and equitably deliver public good to citizens of a state. They further stated that governance is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable, and inclusive and follows the rules. On the broader sense, governance to Heywood (2007, p 6) "is the various ways through which social life is coordinated". The author posited that government is one of the institutions involved in governance. Boeninger (1991) sees governance as good government of society, with capacity for efficient problem solving and conflict resolution.

The Nexus between Gender Inequality and Women Participation in Governance

Gender inequality is the disparities among individuals based on gender. These disparities include discrimination in terms of wealth, opportunities, resources, services, benefits, decision – making, status, power and influence. Gender discrimination or inequality is as old as human race and continues to be with us in various proportions and dimensions across societies. This is corroborated by Duru (2014),expressing the view that gender inequality could be traced to the intellectual works of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels. Their writings created a social consciousness and an idea of social oppression. They were against women's discrimination and subordination as these were not linked to biological difference as held by society but by social arrangements that have clear and traceable history. Marx and Engels argued that the family institution is the basis of women subordination and blamed the society for legitimizing family system as a structure that is

fundamental in all societies. The family system which has the father (patriarch) as the head has no anthropological and archaeological evidence; such evidence includes the prehistoric human beings in which kin network were tied to blood relation. Therefore, these ties were traced to female line because of one's inseparable links to one's mother (Matrilineal) than one's father. That during the era, women wielded powerful influence on economy and other social activities especially during the hunting and gathering stage. According to them, what destroyed this type of social system is what according to Engels (1884) calls 'the world historic defeat of the female sex'. Duru (2014) infers that this change brought about property, the idea and reality of one group or members claiming as their own the essential resources for economic production thereby assigning economic ascendancy to men who initiated their property ownership, they developed enforceable needs for labour force which include slaves, captives, women (wives) or children as heirs who would serve as a means of preserving and passing on property.

According to Babawale (1999, p. 210) culture refers to that "complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" it is the total way of life of a people, the social legacy that the individual acquires from his group. The place of culture in the life of the people cannot be overemphasized. This is because as a way of life societal behaviour and individual conduct are determined by culture. Therefore, gender roles are socially and culturally defined and have implication on governance.

Against this background, Enemuo (1999), is of the opinion that the customary practices of many contemporary societies are biased against women and serve to subjugate them to men and to undermine their individual self-esteem. According to him, the overall impact of the negative cultural norms has been to engender very low regard for women, entrench a feeling of inferiority in the individual woman and place her at disadvantage vis-à-vis her male counterpart. As a result of gender-biased cultural norms and practices:

> "Women become conditioned into accepting social debasement of the type associated with widowhood rites and self-imposed abuses of the type that denies female children good food. Even in urban centers and civilized circles, the stereotype gender roles make women over play their femininity by accepting that they are the weaker sex, overemphasizing the dainty nature of their comportment, viewing the ambition of some

members of their sex as ominous and regarding achievements as untoward competition with men" (Enemuo 1999:230).

The obnoxious harmful traditional practices in Igbo land reduce the widow's dignity and sanctity. Discriminatory cultural practice is an infraction on the fundamental rights of women and not in consonance with section 42(1) of 1999 constitution which prohibits discrimination including participation in the political process on account of sex.

But reiterating the inability of constitutions to protect and safeguard individual rights, Kura and Yero (2013) claim that even though that human rights exist in national constitutions that they continue to encounter impediments in relation to culture and religious practices which empower patriarchal societies. Therefore, the existence of those customary practices as dehumanizing as they are keeps the women folk in perpetual subjugation in all facets of societal life and acts as disincentive to political participation.

The patriarchal system operating in Nigeria as elsewhere reinforces gender inequality and women discrimination. Consequently, the patriarchal nature of Nigerian society, built on male domination, implies that women as wives must be under the control of men as husbands. This form of subjugation of women to men particularly in decision-making has hindered women involvement in governance.

 Duru (2014) infers that patriarchy is the rule of fathers, a form of social organization in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. This notion is predicated on role division which characterizes every human society. The justification for patriarchy is based on assumption that men are preferred to women especially in the family who are said to perpetuate the family's name.

Again, Kura and Yero (2013) postulate that African countries remain pervasive towards violation of human rights in the areas of marriage, inheritance and divorce, as a result of coexistence of statutory religious and traditional systems. In their view, despite, the existence of constitutional provisions and commitments to regional and international human rights treaties and conventions the rights of women and girls are grossly violated and devalued in Nigeria and many African countries. This is known in the overall low Gender Development Index (GDI) for the country and manifested in low participation of women in paid employment, politics, leadership and decision making.

On the other hand, (Henderson & Jeydel, 2010) posit that countries with egalitarian cultures, such as Sweden, Finland and Norway, have more women in power. This egalitarian culture is a reflection of broader patterns of socioeconomic development and cultural modernization that are impacting many countries not just northern European ones. To them, cultural norms have made it difficult for women to participate in governance and one such barriers they encounter when running or deciding to run for an office is that political behavior is seen as masculine because aggression and autonomy are considered requisites. These are not traits commonly associated with women, and thus women are not seen as capable of doing the job if elected (thus people may not vote for them). When women do exhibit these traits, they are seen by the electorate as abnormal or deviant, which are not adjectives often ascribed to successful candidates for elective office.

In addition, voters often have problem overcoming traditional societal norms about appropriate division of labour between men and women. Women are associated with parental roles and men associated with paid labour. Thus, governance is not seen as an appropriate task for women since it will interfere with their parental responsibilities.

In the opinion of Ekundayo and Ama, (2014) arguments and opinions tend to differ on the role and place of women in the society. Culturally many believe women's place is predominately in the home and they are not to engage in other socioeconomic and political activities like the male counterparts. They are not to be seen or heard, they are incapable of making sound decision and it is unbecoming of women to expose themselves in public for political activities.

Cultural barriers can work against women's involvement in public sphere including participation in governance. According to Iwobi (2000) no group has been deprived of its human rights under the disguise of culture as much as women have been. This is true in all societies, particularly in Nigeria, where the harmful effects of the indigenous culture have been of concern to women, women groups and advocacy groups on gender issues. The inferior status and unequal treatment of women in Nigeria could be derived from the cultural belief systems that perpetuate women's inferiority psychologically, physically, these systems are also reinforced by the nation's customary legal system.

Lending credence to this fact, Taiwo, R. Denga, D. and Denga, H.(2009 p. 45) claim that "women have remained the underdogs in Nigeria; they have remained victims of oppression,

discrimination, alienation, humiliation, marginalization and exploitation". The country is male dominated. In the northern part, many women are in purdah system of marriage, the practice where women are physically separated from the men; required to cover their bodies and to limit activities outside their homes and in the south, women are marginalized and not included in the decision-making process. The suppression of women by men not only affects their opportunities for self-fulfillment, personal development and achievements but also hampers opportunities to attain leadership roles in public life.

It is no doubt that men dominate and control all spheres of Nigerian society. Against this background, Okediran, A. Olujide, M. G and Danesy, H.A. (2006) reveal that this kind of patriarchal domination has done terrible injustice to women by reducing women's knowledge and marginalized their chances in political positions and thus reduced women to "second class citizens or subordinate class". The patriarchal nature of Nigerian society has disempowered and subordinated women in the political process. This is attested by the fewer number of women holding important political positions in all the tiers of government especially in elective and appointive capacities.

Cultural stereotypes not only impede women participation in politics and governance but influence the behaviour of their supporters, family members such as spouses and the voters. But on the other hand, women's acceptance of societal prescriptions of gender roles also militates against their political fortune.

Therefore, it is in recognition of this that (Henderson & Jeydel, 2010), opine that voters often have trouble overcoming traditional societal norms about appropriate divisions of labour between men and women. It is believed that women are associated with parental roles, and men with paid labour. Thus governance is not seen as appropriate realm for women since it will interfere with their parental responsibilities. In Nigeria, female politicians are confronted with cultural prohibition on their political endeavour that their male colleagues do not encounter for example public ridicule than men, are labelled 'unfeminine' and some even risk their marriages and public discrediting by their husbands.

This barrier not only prevents people from voting for women but also prevents women from contesting elections or taking active part in politics and governance. Women often do not see

politics or elective office as worthwhile venture, either because they also ascribe to this societal norm of sexual division of labour and where governance is reserved for men or because they choose not to come forward as candidates for political offices. A study conducted by the inter-parliamentary union found that female politicians in many countries identified hostile attitudes towards women's political participation as one of the most important barriers to running for office.

 The need for gender balance has robbed off on governance through growing interest in politics by women, especially in Nigeria and Enugu State, where the few women who have been elected or appointed into public offices had made a difference, though with few exceptions. In the United State of America and Western Europe women's movement has become a political force.

Also, women have learned that there was no way they could count politically other than engaging in political activities, especially, voting (Roskin, Cord, Medeiro & Jones, 2010). Gender equity, just like governance, has put forth its claim for participatory democracy with adequate protection for the political and legal rights of women. No doubt, the extension of voting rights, elective and appointive positions to women has led to egalitarian society in Nigeria and Enugu State, where the barriers of wealth, influence, fame and gender remain major impediments to the advancement of the female folk. In a democratic environment, governance principles insist that individuals (women and men) political and legal rights be safeguarded and that man-made gender divisions be eliminated.

 In Nigeria, gender has greatly impacted governance processes via a number of ways, in terms of policy, particularly; the entrenchment of the National Gender Policy, 2006, which was meant to ensure that women in Nigeria get 35% representation in elective and appointive positions. (Olurode, 2012).

Although, the Nigerian state and Enugu State specifically, are very far in attaining the 35% affirmative action in terms of women representation and participation in the governance processes, all hopes are not lost, as the feminist groups keep pushing for the 35% representation as enacted in the 2006 National Gender Policy, popularly referred to as the Affirmative Action. Another major way in which gender has affected governance is through its impact on the political culture. This may be linked to trends that have resulted to popular disenchantment with politics on the part of women, especially in Africa and Nigeria in particular. For examples, Olurode (2012), opined that

statistics indicated that women are grossly under-represented in elective positions and excluded from electoral process such that the 2007 elections, they constituted only 9% in the Nigeria Senate and 9.27% in the House of Representative, 5.45% of State House of Assembly, 0% for the Governorship and Presidential elective offices. According to him, the situation turned worse in 2011 general elections where women gained only 7.3% and 6.1% of members of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively. Enugu State, which is the focus of this study, has the character-stamp of the Centre in terms of female representation and participation in politics, of both their presence in government and the positions they hold (Rourke, 2008).

Very small number of women has been elected into various positions in the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections in Nigeria. Equally few women were appointed into public offices within these periods. Men on the other hand, had taken a disproportionate share of public positions till date. No woman has ever won gubernatorial elections even though women had always contested these elections. It is on the basis of this that Allanana (2013) contends that legislative representation has witnessed the presence of women yet they remain under-represented when compared to their men counterparts. Few and almost insignificant number of women were elected into various posts in the past four (4) general elections held in the country between 1999 and 2011.According to him, the result of the survey shows that no woman was elected governor of any state in the federation. There were few women as members of the Houses of Assembly across the country and as members of National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives).

Table 1: Gender representation in political offices in Enugu state 2007 – 2011

Office	2007			2011		
	Seat available	Men	Women	Seat available	Men	Women
Governor	1	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	1	1 (0.29)	0 (0)
Commissioners	28	24 (7.04)	4 (1.17)	28	23 (6.74)	5 (1.46)
Members of State House of Assembly	24	19 (5.57)	5 (1.47)	24	20 (5.87)	4 (1.17)
L.G.A chairpersons	17	17 (5.00)	0 (0)	17	11 (2.23)	6 (1.75)
Councilors	260	247 (72.34)	13 (3.81)	260	236 (69.21)	24 (7.03)
Senators	3	3 (0.9)	0 (0)	3	3 (0.88)	0 (0)
House of Representatives	8	8 (2.35)	0 (0)	8	6 (1.76)	2 (0.58)
Total	341	319 (93.55%)	22 (6.45%)	341	300 (88%)	41 (12%)

Sources: ENSIEC, INEC data base and Enugu state official publications 2007 – 2011.

From the table, no woman was elected Governor and Senator in 2007 and 2011. Also no woman was elected member of House of Representatives in 2007. However, out of three hundred and forty-one (341) elective and appointive positions in 2007, only four 4 (1.17%) women were appointed Commissioners; five 5 (1.47%) were elected members of the State House of Assembly and thirteen 13 (3.81%) were elected councilors. Therefore, the total number of women in political offices in 2007 was twenty-two (22) representing 6.45% in contrast to three hundred and nineteen (319) or 93.55% positions held by the men. But in 2011, out of the 341 political offices, five 5 (1.46%) women were appointed commissioners, four 4 (1.17%) were elected into the State House of Assembly; six 6 (1.75%) were appointed chairpersons of local government councils in the care-taker management system; twenty four 24 (7.03%) were elected councilors and only two 2 (0.58%) were elected members of House of Representatives. Within this period, women representation in government increased from twenty-two 22(6.45%) in 2007 to forty-one 41 (12%) even though there was an increase in women representation or participation in government, it is not proportional to their men counterparts who had 93.55% and 88% respectively in 2007 and 2011.

From the statistics, Enugu State is an example of women-driven culture of apathy, as it concerns participation in politics and governance processes, but similar tendencies abound elsewhere in Africa, Asia, especially in the Gulf region. This has partly resulted to political lesbianism, when women seek for their own identity and withdraw from the male dominated political environments. This conscious withdrawal of women from politics has given a facelift to the gospel of feminism,

in terms of attention-grabbing. This has led to an overwhelming sympathy for feminist struggle, casting aspersion on the continued legitimacy of governments and governance processes without the input of women, who, according to Rourke (2008, p 464), "constitute about half of the world's population, but are distinct political, economic, social minority because of wide gap in their societal power and resources compared to men". Feminism, after all, is politics, which has placed huge burden on the male dominated governance process, thereby, forcing the politicians to make some compromises in churning out policies and legislations that wear the trappings of feminism, at least for appearance sake, in order to be seen as re-engineering culture of participation in women, especially, as it concerns politics and governance processes (Rourke, 2008).

Governance addresses the questions about equal distribution of values in the society with no emphasis on gender division. Governance which translates to ruling rightly "requires attaching equal importance to each citizen's life" Mckinnon(2008, p 151). According to him, such "a requirement of impartiality among citizens' rejects certain consideration as grounds for political action". For example Mckinnon (2008) maintains that governance rejects gender division of citizen as a good reason to attach less importance to benefiting him or her rather than someone else, and so opposes extreme forms of racism or sexism. So construed governance fittingly exercised, safeguards individuals' rights regardless of gender. Therefore, the exercise of governance is justified on what sums up benefits and burdens for the men and women in the society, especially in the area of distributive decisions across various spheres of life

Furthermore, gender is closely related to governance on equality of opportunity because each of the concepts seeks to advance what exists in the absence of arbitrary discrimination. In the opinion of Srivastava (2012, p 38) "equality of opportunity is simply not only what exists in the absence of arbitrary discriminated but also in the absence of disadvantages or handicaps for which the society is responsible. Equality, according this author, "believes in the principle of providing equal opportunities to all the members of society". Talabi (2019, p. 43) Feminism and governance preach unrelentingly, inclusive government, that is, "a government that includes capable, honest citizens based on merit irrespective of gender". Also, he states that there is a positive correlation between gender equality and development (economic growth). She opines that countries that do not treat women as second class citizens are likely to prosper in a sustainable manner, and this is true regardless of that country. Hence, governance should uphold inclusiveness with the significant

inclusion of clever, capable, conscientious and compassionate women in leadership positions in line with the National Gender Policy of 2006, which recommended 35% Affirmative Action of Women representation in public offices in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that women are underrepresented in the governance process both in elective and appointive positions in the state. Therefore, it recommends that all cultural and customary practices which discriminate, subordinate, oppress and hinder women participation in governance in Enugu state should be abolished. There should be provision of equal rights and opportunity for men and women in all facets of life. The implementation of 35% Affirmative Action on women and the enforcement of Enugu State Gender and Equal Opportunities Act of 2004 in governance process; adoption of quota system for women participation by political parties and waiver of payment of nomination fees by women in the state should be encouraged.

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