Democracy, Women's Political Participation and the Policy Environment in Nigeria

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Abstract

The issue of women's political representation has gained salience in recent times. To this effect, increasing number of countries has sought to improve female representation and political participation generally. While some countries have adopted quotas as part of the electoral landscape, others have formulated laws to this effect while some have resulted to tokenism showing little or no attention to this all important global agenda. In the particular case of Nigeria, it is observed that the country has persistently showed a lackadaisical attitude as well as 'let-my-wish-be-done' approach to women's issues and their political empowerment which has been largely based on regime-type, personifying the interest and the intention of the leader that utilizes them as add-ons without any democratized policy making process towards their up-liftment. This paper argues that the Nigerian policy environment has not really been democratized to engage more women in political participation. Thus policy making has remained fundamentally male dominated and its environment largely repulsive to engaging more women in the country's quest for development. Since women's political participation is determined by governmental policy, the paper canvasses a democratized environment and gender friendly policy that involves more women in the determination of their fate to reducing the effects of male domination and its effects on the nation's development. Utilizing secondary sources of data, the paper recommends reorientation and aggressive girl-child education and resilient active participation of women in politics for policy turnaround and the development of the country.

Keywords: women's political participation, quotas, policy environment, democracy and development.

Introduction

The various challenges facing women in the face of the vital and enviable roles, which they play in the development process is well documented (Oke 2012:159). Over the years, some considerable concern and commitment to issues affecting women have been generated. However, a major challenge for women, like other disadvantaged groups, is to seek ways and means for their self-emancipation and empowerment. One way by which women can do this is for them to avail themselves of the various opportunities provided by relevant national and international agencies and organizations interested in and or committed to their advancement by working assiduously towards influencing policy in their favour. It is imperative that any society that claims to be just, democratic, representative and progressive, must ensure women's significant presence and participation in the higher-level public policy decision-making positions. This paper specifically addresses the policy environment and its impact on policymaking vis-à-vis women's political participation in Nigeria. It is believed that participation in the policy process is pivotal to women active participation in politics since it is the policy outcome that determines the fate of women within the polity.

According to Kousoulas (1982:314), public policy is an aggregate of decisions and plans formulated by governmental authorities to deal with public and social problems and to determine the disposition of state revenues and other resources. It is a general plan of action adopted by government to solve societal problems. Policymaking is always largely influenced by the institutional arrangement of each political system; its hallmark is the desire on the part of the policy actors to make efforts to provide alternative ways of addressing public problems. A survey of the various aspects of Nigeria's public life since independence portends a state of pathology (Agagu, 2010:10). Agagu contends that public policy in Nigeria is characterized by instability. This phenomenon, which has implications on governance and political stability, is a product of four inter-related factors. First, the nature of the country's public policy making and implementation, second, our policy actors, third, public institutions, and fourth, public policy environment.

The processes involved in policy making in any political system is reflective of the society, whether it is developed or underdeveloped; democratic or undemocratic. Nigeria is a heterogeneous state and a colonial creation. Thus, various interests are competing for relevance and supremacy within the polity. Therefore, policymaking tends to tilt in favour of that group or institution that can influence the power-that-be most. Since Nigeria is a patriarchal state, the men in most cases dominate the policy process and get their wish (es) implemented.

Policy framework in the country has been conducted in either a constitutional context (under Civilian Government) or autocratic context (under the military). In both cases, it is dominated by men and characterized by constant change, unethical behaviour, continuous pressures, conflicting values and competing political

objectives. Public policy in Nigeria is elitist and top-down. Since men constitute the bulk of policy makers and implementers, most policies in Nigeria are masculine and are put up (inadvertently) to reflect the wishes and aspirations of the makers.

The policy environment in Nigeria suffers from most problems confronting many third world countries. These problems range from policy imposition, hasty adoption of imported policies, lack of policy goals, male dominance, lack of social acceptability, lack of continuity in commitment to policy, lack of clear definition and co-ordination, as well as compromises during implementation. Others include lack of political will as well as lack of confidence in government policies by the citizenry (Egonmwan, 1999:242-251). Added to these is the problem of corruption, which affects policy choice and all aspects of policy process, as well as the dualist nature of Nigerian legal system that prevents automatic domestication of international agreements (especially those that have bearing on gender equality and women empowerment).

Generally and in line with Agagu (2010:21), Nigeria's policy environment can be adequately captured from four perspectives. The first is from the perspective of policy formulation and adoption. The second is from the perspective of policy implementation. The third is from the perspective of the country's socio-economic and political milieu. Fourth is the obtrusive international environment governed by international political economy.

In the main, Nigeria's policy environment is said to be characterized by the following (ibid.):

The first is importation of policies. This denies the citizenry of the necessary participation expected of them. Inability to accommodate inputs of the citizenry robs most policies of their richness and necessary support from the people. In other words, policies are made for the people and not with the people. This portrays leadership in Nigeria as imposition in which governance is synonymous with the capricious will of those at the helm of affairs. In this wise, women are further relegated since formulated policies in most cases are men's and they protect patriarchal interest. The effect in most cases has been policy summersault and legitimacy crisis.

Second and emanating from above is the unnecessary rush in the adoption of policy. It appears government alone knows everything about the people and the society. From these two features, policies become nothing short of imposition. Policymaking becomes devoid of policy analysis as well as implementation analysis. It is therefore not surprising that many of our policies end up in confusion and failure.

Third, policy implementation is often subjected to whims and caprices of the chief's executives or his associates. This implies that there is no commitment to policy continuity or stability. This is because policies are not tied to national goals. Deriving from the above is the culture of constantly abandoning policies initiated by previous governments.

Fourth, policy implementation is often affected by erratic budgetary allocations. Usually, this is governed by the fluctuating price of oil at international level as well as government's priority in terms of policies and programmes. Fifth is the late release of funds for programmes even when funds are available. One uncharitable development in the country since 1999 is late passage of federal budget. This greatly affects policy implementation. Sixth, the socio-political factors in the country have serious effects on policy formulation and implementation. Some of these include resistance to change. Seventh, is the devastating effects of corruption on policy implementation. Many policies in the country have been truncated by corruption. In some cases, funds meant for the implementation of programmes have been diverted or embezzled through corruption, thus, signaling the end of the policies. Corruption has become a malignant cancer. Added to this, is the impact of the uncertain economic environment. These have serious effect on funds available for executing policies. The location of Nigeria in the international capitalist system impinges greatly on the public policy process and in most cases subjects it to the dictates of the metropolitan countries and their agents. Lasty is the impact of international environment, which can have a commanding or demonstrating effect.

In the Nigerian environment, policy and practice are two different things largely due to lack of political will to ensure that policies by government are pursued with vigour to operationalize them. Constitutional provision of section 26 (2) defines who is a Nigerian citizen and it may be acquired by naturalization and registration. No provision is made for the process by which non-Nigerian men married to Nigerian women and who are so desirous may become Nigerian citizens as provided for foreign spouses of males, this is discriminatory and deleterious to the quest for women empowerment.

A level playing ground can be attained through some constitutional policy reforms and a change of mindset and attitude acquired from the highly patriarchal society we are living in. It will however take the efforts and contributions of all citizens. It is a collective responsibility to be facilitated by leadership at all levels.

Thus, the existing structures and institutions as well as other avenues for policy formulation have not pursued gender sensitiveness with all the seriousness it deserves. Of particular relevance here was the composition of the on-going National Political Reform Conference, which is male dominated. Out of the 420 delegates to the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC), 31 were women. This had implication for policy formulation and women empowerment to the effect that policies, deliberations and legislations emanating there-from were likely to be more masculine friendly (Oke, 2005:52).

The Nigerian government has also formulated specific policies to resolve problems facing women in

gaining entry into the Nigerian public administration. A notable government action was taken through the 1999 constitution to guarantee women's equality with men. Section 17 (1) of the 1999 Constitution states that the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be based on the principles of freedom, equality and social justice. Chapter II of the same constitution deals with non-justiceable directive principle of state policy. The state is enjoined to direct its policy towards ensuring that all citizens without discrimination on any ground whatsoever have the opportunity for securing adequate means of liveli-hood as well as adequate opportunities to secure suitable employment [Section 14 (3), Section 15 Sub-Section 12]. In addition, discrimination on grounds of ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion, or political opinion is prohibited. Thus, a Nigerian citizen is not to be subjected either expressly, by or in the practical application of any law in force in Nigeria, or any executive or administrative action of the government, to disabilities or restrictions to which citizens of Nigeria or other group, place of origin, religion, political opinion or gender are not subject (Section 42) (1) (a) (b). Furthermore, a citizen of Nigeria is not to be accorded any privilege or advantage, which is not accorded to other citizens of Nigeria of other ethnic groups and interalia, gender (Olojede, 2009:12).

The underlying principle deducible from the constitutional provisions is that of equality of men and women before the law. This implies equality of rewards for work of the same kind performed by both men and women alike. Similarly enshrined is the right to work without discrimination on ground of gender. Legally, women have a right to equal place with men in decision- making bodies such as boardroom, parliament, and executive councils. However, in practice, the position is not that simple. There is a wide gap between theory and practice.

The reality is that all over the world there are numerous problems confronting citizens. At the same time, the state is seen as a problem-solving mechanism, while public policy is regarded as deliberate decisions to act (or not) in response to societal problems (Johnston, 2001:298). The inability of the Nigeria's patriarchal state to accede to the imperatives of gender equality and active women political participation in governance, constituted the bane of women empowerment in the country. The state influences how women are viewed in society in various ways: through legislation, in how public institutions are staffed and run, and through social policies. These mechanisms can affect whether women are seen as autonomous individuals or as dependent on men (Oke, 2005:53). The Nigerian state has assumed the role of an all-powerful arbiter that authoritatively allocates the country's resources as it likes and since men constitute the bulk of those wielding the state power; women are somehow relegated through the state practices.

The Nigerian State and its Constitution
Schorlarly literature attests to the fact that from colonial time, constitution making in Nigeria has always excluded female legitimacy (Ityavyar, 2007:2). The Clifford Constitution of 1922 restricted the electorate to adult males in Calabar and Lagos who had been resident in the city for at least one year and had a gross annual income of N100:00. The Richard Constitution of 1946 only reduced the property qualification to N50:00. The Macpherson Constitution removed property qualification but still restricted the electorate to only adult males who pay their taxes while the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 gave universal franchise in the East and West of Nigeria but limited to adult males in the North. Only in 1979 was the right to vote extended to all Nigerian women (ibid). This contrasts sharply to democratic practice and mitigates against the quest and aspiration for active participation of women in politics.

Even in post-independence Nigeria, the country's constitution is always written in masculine language as if only men exist in the country. The constitution does not guarantee economic, social, and cultural rights to women, and the 1999 constitution does not provide any precise affirmative action clause. Chapter 4, Section 42 of the 1999 constitution grants every citizen freedom from discrimination on the basis of their place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion (1999 Constitution FRN). Apart from the constitutional provision, Nigeria has also ratified international and regional human rights instruments such as Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (CRC), as well as being part of the International Consensus in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). Nevertheless, there are still widespread practices that discriminate against women participation in the political processes of decision-making. Article 12 of the Nigerian Constitution makes it impossible for Nigerian women to press for implementation of sections of those international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Nigeria prohibiting gender discrimination. The section states clearly that "no treaty between the (Nigerian) Federation and any other country shall have any force of law except to the extent to which any such treaty has been enacted into law by the National Assembly. Thus, Nigerian women criticize the 1999 Constitution as being largely gender insensitive. One of the consequences of political discrimination against women is that it limits their opportunities to develop their full potential based on equality with men.

It is submitted that discriminatory practices to which women are subjected in politics and decision-making bodies cannot be justified under the constitution. Under the Electoral Act 2006, every citizen of Nigeria is qualified to vote and be voted for. Therefore, women are not subjected to any legal disability, which their male

counterparts are not subjected to under the laws dealing with local and national elections in the country. Although they can vote and be voted for, women have been relegated to the background in the politics of the nation as men constituted the bulk of decision-makers. Thus, men dominate the governance of the country contrary to the constitutional provisions of equal participation in governance.

Specifically, the following legal provisions and practices need to be repealed and outlawed to enhance more women participation in politics and gender equality:

i.   Section 26(2) of the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999. The section provides that "a woman who is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria; or every person of full age and capacity born outside Nigeria any of whose grandparent is a citizen of Nigeria." This means that unlike her male counterpart, a Nigerian woman cannot confer residency rights on her spouse who is not a citizen of Nigeria.

ii. Section 55(1) of Penal Code application in the Northern states provides that "Nothing is an offence which does not amount to infliction of grievous harm upon any person and which is done by a husband for the purpose of correcting his wife." This is a violation of her right to dignity guaranteed by Section 34 of the 1999 Constitution.

iii. The police Act (Cap 158) Laws of the Federation provide that a woman in police force must seek the permission of the Commissioner of Police in her area of service before she can marry. This law, which restricts the rights of policewomen to marry, is not applicable to their male counterparts.

iv. Section 55 and 56 of the Labour Act which provides for the exclusion of women from underground work and restricts women from being employed for certain jobs are discriminatory provisions.

v.   The requirements for corroboration before conviction for rape in … has continued to encourage the act of violence against women as conviction is usually difficult to secure even in cases that are manifestly bad.

vi. Genital mutilation, a very deadly practice that has been outlawed in certain states in Nigeria but unfortunately this practice has not been prohibited by specific laws in most parts of the country.

vii. The award of the custody of children of failed marriages to their fathers in accordance with the patrilineal nature of Nigerian society is discriminatory. Even where the father has proved to be irresponsible in the cause of the matrimonial relationship, the children's custody is awarded to him.

viii. Section 18 of the Marriage Act (Cap 218 LFN 1990) provides that if either party to an intended marriage is less than 21 years of age, a marriage license could be granted or a certificate issued but parental consent would have to be sought and it is the consent of the father that is required. This provision elevates the status of a father above that of the mother. It is discriminatory and should be discarded.

ix. Early marriage has constituted many problems to the girl-child as early marriage and eventual child pregnancy increase the risks of complication arising from Vesico-Vascular Fistulae (VVF) and Marternal Mortality; it also terminates abruptly the education of the girl child. Efforts should be made to outlaw this practice in all the States of the federation (Falana, 2009:8).

Thus, a lot of efforts have been made through judicial activism to get some of these discriminatory practices and laws struck down by the law courts for being inconsistent with the constitutional provision of freedom from gender discrimination and therefore illegal but the obstacles and brick walls of locus standi have remained a stumbling block in the liberation of women through the law. Nigerian courts would therefore need to follow the new trends on the issue of locus standi in respect of corporate rights litigation. It is worrisome to note that Nigerian's Courts still hold on to the narrow interpretation of locus standi of "if your interest is not directly affected you cannot complain." Even fundamental rights provisions within Chapter IV of the Constitution also require that the litigant must have been directly affected. Secton 46 of the Constitution provides that "any person who alleges that any of the provisions of this Chapter has been, is being or likely to be contravened in any state in relation to him may apply to a High Court in that state for redress." From the provision of that section, any other person or organization outside the person directly affected by the infringement will be termed a meddlesome interloper by the Courts. This trend is not healthy especially in a country like ours where about 75% of women folk are ignorant of their rights under the law. Non-governmental organizations and human rights activists should have access to court to protect and challenge the infringements of the rights of the less privileged and illiterate members of the society.

Democracy and Women political participation in Nigeria.

Democracy is about a system of government, it is about the establishment of certain institutional and procedural characteristics designed to facilitate mass participation in decision-making process and to guarantee accountability and basic material needs of the people. Generally, democracy involves the opportunity to participate in decision-making in the political process. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. It extols the consent of the governed and it protects human personality and values. Democracy includes fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty, equal opportunity for all, majority rule, representativeness, minority rights, right of choice between alternative programmes, popular consultation, consensus on fundamental issues and periodic elections. The concept of democracy confers the opportunity to participate in decision on all adult citizens. The citizenry enjoys widespread participation in the political process. Democracy is a form of government organized in accordance with the principles of popular sovereignty, political equality, popular consultation, and majority rule. The principle of popular sovereignty requires that basic governmental decision-making power be vested in all members of the community and not in any particular person or the ruling class. The principle of political equality means equal opportunities for all members of the community, not actual equal participation. As long as each member has a genuinely equal opportunity to participate to the degree that he/she wishes and can manage, the requirements of political equality are satisfied.

The principle of popular consultation involves two requirements. First, a democratic nation must have some kind of institutional machinery through which public officials hear what public policies the people wish adopted and enforced. Second, having ascertained the policies preferred by the people, public officials must then put them into effect whether or not they believe them to be wise. The principle of majority rule in a democracy requires that no government decision be made against the ultimate desires of popular majorities. When the people disagree on a particular issue, the government should act on that issue as the large rather than the smaller number desire (ibid).

Nation states' quest to develop rapidly has entailed a maximum utilization of their human resources. Human resource is a factor of production and doubles as the 'user' of the other resources – materials and capital in the production process. All over the world, the human element constitutes human capital, which is made up of both male and female. In addition, the quest for development has, in most cases, premised on the practices of the ideals of democracy and representative government. This is premised on the belief that:

> The mere participation of women in the political life of a country is an important step in its democratic life. It offers equal opportunity practically and not only theoretically. It leads to a new perspective and a diversity of contributions to policy – making and to priorities of development, and it gives the female population a role in deciding the future of their country and the rights and opportunities for their gender (Sachet 2005).

In the same vein, Hillary Rodham Clinton (1997) emphasized that:

> There cannot be true democracy unless women's voices are heard. There cannot be true democracy unless women are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own lives; there cannot be true democracy unless all citizens are able to participate fully in the issues of their country.

According to a former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo,

> Democracy requires that men and women have unrestricted access to spaces of power where they can realize their political value and where their individual demands and preferences can be manifested and satisfied. The absence of women in political debates and the decision–making process distorts the appreciation of women's interest. Women's interests are not clearly articulated because male representatives and their interest groups do not possess adequate and appropriate knowledge, interest, or both. Development indices show that the involvement of women in governance promotes development because women form the bedrock of the society (Obasanjo, 2009:87).

Thus, at the level of policy making and implementation in Nigeria, democracy has not fully impacted the process as most policies are masculine both in their making and implementation. This is clearly reflected in the table below that shows the number of men and women to the elected officers at various times in the political development of Nigeria.

Table 1: Number of Women elected in 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011 Nigerian Elections

S/N	Position	Number of Available Seats	Number of Women in 1999	Number of Women in 2003	Number of Women in 2007	Number of Women in 2011
1	Presidency	1	0	0	0	0
2	Senate	109	3	4	9	6
3	House of Reps	360	12	23	27	23
4	Governorship	36	0	0	0	0
5	Deputy Governorship	36	1	2	6	1 (out of 26)
6	36 States Houses of Assembly	990	12	38	54	N.A.
Total		1532	28	67	96	30

Source: Author's Ph.D.Fieldwork 2011. University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

The table above shows the peculiarity of the Nigerian Democracy; it shows that the country's democracy is still largely patriarchal with men dominating most positions. Consequently, the numerical gain by women in elective positions over the past four elections has waned especially at the level of the National Assembly. Thus, the number of elected women diminished both at the Senate and at the House of Representatives. This is in spite of government's commitment to implementing various treaties at international, regional, and national levels, in particular, the Beijing Declaration and Platform forAction (BPFA), which provides for the Affirmative Action Policy, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as the National Gender Policy. There is therefore an urgent need to democratize the policy environment to accelerating more women access to policy making.

Towards a democratized policy environment

In light of the present condition of Nigerian women vis-à-vis their political participation, the political milieu can be made more receptive and attractive if the following steps are taken:

(1) **Aggressive education of the girl-child:** according to a 2014 UNICEF report, Nigeria has 10.5 million children out of school, the highest number in the world with about 60% of those children being girls. It also stated that "almost one of three primary age children is out of school". By implication, the Nigerian girl is one of the most disadvantaged in the world suffering from neglect in all its ramifications especially in the northern part of Nigeria (Archibong 2014:21). Thus, this automatically transforms into women's neglect in future and their subsequent exclusion from policy making with its attendant effect on them and the nation. To avert this scenario, aggressive education of the girl-child must be pursued with all the vigour and political will it requires.

(2) **Women empowerment:** Women empowerment entails fundamental alterations in power relations between the gender in the distribution of societal resources and in cultural mores. It implies that women are accorded opportunities to develop their individual talents and contributes more meaningfully to societal development. The possible effects include accelerated and balanced social development in addition to improved welfare, education and health for children since it is generally known that the improvement in the socio-economic conditions of a woman usually translates into improved welfare for her children. Besides, empowering women is, in itself, a just cause. More so, empowerment is seen as the power to do things one could not have been able to do or that which one is incapable of exercising authority on before. It subverts cultural norms and it is a precondition to social development.

(3) **Gender Mainstreaming:** Gender Mainstreaming is an important element of women empowerment. This refers to the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (UN Economic and Social Council, 1997). It is a goal-oriented process. It recognizes that most institutions consciously and unconsciously serve the interests of men and encourages institutions to adopt a gender perspective in transforming themselves. It promotes the full participation of women in decision-making so that women's needs move from the margins to the centre of development planning and resource allocation.

(4) **Adoption of Affirmative Action:** Another element of empowerment is affirmative action. This has been defined as government initiated advocacy for the special rights of women, characterized by the conscious and systematic readjustment of the labour force through government policy. This is done

through a programme of planned action that combines legislation, social policy services close monitoring through an agency of government (Lovenduski 1986:253). At the same time, the more women there are in key decision – making positions of society, the greater the chances of effective adoption and implementation of affirmative action measures. Thus, according to Okwuosa (1996:118), three major determining factors which promote affirmative action are highlighted below:

(i)   a high level of commitment to the principles of affirmative action on the part of government and its incumbents, and its acceptablity to the public;

(ii)   the presence of extensive legal instruments for its implementation; and

(iii)   an effective network of feminist organization which can perform the functions of monitoring, intervention, debate and communication.

(5) **Democratic consolidation:** Since democracy offers best opportunity for people to air their views and make consultative policies that affect them, continuous experimentation with democracy will result in conduciveness that the environment requires to usher in fairness and equity in policy making. This will guarantee a process rather than arbitrariness in policy decision.

(6) **Free and fair election:** this must be guaranteed to ensure that the process is not only transparent but to ensure that leadership desire of the people becomes a reality. This process should abhor thuggery, do-or-die posture and should not be made too scary for the women.

(7) **Domestication of global policies and conventions on women:** all legal encumbrances to domesticating international policies, conventions and agreements on women must be removed towards fast-tracking active inclusion of women in societal administration and governance

(8) Eradication/Alleviation of feminine Poverty

There is no doubt that poverty is one of the root causes of the women problem especially in Africa and the third world. Certainly, a society that had for long neglected the proper education and economic empowerment of women had wittingly or unwittingly ensured that her women fold is kept in the dark economically and otherwise. Broom and Selznick (1973:174) observe thus:

The economic status of women is a special case because their prestige and authority are… seen as a by-product of the achievement of their husbands, because their position in the labour force is ambiguous and intermittent.

In other words, men control, dominate, and distribute the earth's resources according to their fancies. While women make up about 50 percent of the world's population, they earn only one tenth of the world's income and own less than one percent of property (MDGs, 2004/5: 2-5). One percent of the world's property is registered in their names. Osarenren (1993:9) observes that in Sub–Saharan Africa, only 47 percent of women aged 15 and above are economically active compared to the 85 percent among the men folk. Therefore, in the light of poor financial strength, women are really relegated to associate positions thus alleviating their poverty will give them more voice in the political terrain and enlarge their participation at all levels of governance.

(9) Provision and guarantee of adequate security: development triumphs in an atmosphere of peace and security, for women to be able to strategize and orchestrate for their inclusiveness and political participation, there must be adequate security and a secured environment in all parts of the country. The current insurgency perpetrated mainly by the by the Boko-Haram sect with its attendant consequences for women must be totally curtailed in the interest of every Nigerians since policies can only be implemented in the milieu of peace and security.

Conclusion

The Nigerian government has formulated specific policies to resolve problems facing women in gaining entry into the Nigerian public administration. However, a lot is still required towards their unrestricted and active participation. Since one's interest is best protected when present and involved, it is suggested that the scope for policy making be enlarged and women's inclusion and involvement be made a state policy towards accelerating active political participation of women in Nigeria.

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