

Gender Inequality and Women Participation in Politics: A Case Study of Jibia Local Government Area

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Abstract

Political stability and development of any political system is a function of the awareness and inclusive involvement of the citizens in its political activities irrespective of gender. Thus, poor participation of women in politics and governance has been a major concern at global level. Low level participation of Nigerian women in politics is often associated with culture, religious and economic constraint. The study, therefore; aims at examining the causes and effects of poor political participation of women as well as identifying the relationship between gender inequality and women inactive political participation in Jibia Local Government during the Fourth Republic. The study applies theories of sexism and gender perspective to illustrate causes and effects of women underrepresentation in Nigerian politics. A survey method was adopted with 150 people selected using accidental sampling technique to serve as respondents and SPSS version 25 was used in data analysis. The findings of the research show that child bearing and nurturing, religious practices and the role assigned to women by the society are the major factors that cause poor political participation among women which affect the quality of democracy in the country. It is, therefore; recommended that discriminatory socio-cultural and religious practices against women active participation in politics in Nigeria should be positively reviewed by stakeholders (particularly traditional/religious rulers) who should be educated to be gender sensitive and encouraged to protect women political and other rights and ensure support of their political and any important meeting of the family, Community and even in government establishments.

Keywords: Gender, Participation, Inequality, Women and Politics.

Introduction

Political stability and development of any political system is a function of the awareness and inclusive involvement of the citizens in political activities. This is why democracy demands from the common man certain level of active participation in public affairs. In any political dispensation, citizens can be involved in the political process and decision making by joining political parties of their choice, voting during election, participating in electoral campaign, community affairs and other political activities. The level and pattern of political participation of the citizens determine, to some extent, the success of the political system (Adamu, 2017). The increasing demands for gender equality have raised intense academic discourse on poor participation of women in politics all over the world. Women's low political participation is a universal phenomenon (AIT's Focus Nigeria, 2015). However the imperative of women participation in democratic governance cannot be over

emphasized.

Poor participation of women in politics and governance has been a major concern at global level. In Nigeria, women participation in political activities, other than voting during elections, is not proportionate to the population which they represent and has not translated into fair representation in political leadership positions (Nwabunkeonye, 2014; Samuel, Ogbale, Kirfi, Terwase, Nfor, Sambo & Atime, 2023). The global issue of goal 3 (to promote gender equality and empower women) of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other international clarion calls for bridging the gap created by long-term discriminations against women and making women visible in politics made Nigeria to recognize women in the political sphere, and include them in both appointive and elective positions. It is against this background that the research seeks to identify the factors influencing political participation among women in Jibia Local Government.

Review of Literature

This section is aimed at reviewing concepts and literature that is related to gender inequality and woman political participation. It is, therefore, divided into three subsections viz; review of related concepts; literature review and theoretical framework. Essential to understanding this research topic are concepts of gender inequality and political participation.

Conceptual Clarification

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality manifests as hierarchical gendered relations with men above women, and women being regarded as inferior and less valuable solely by virtue of their sex (Mikkola & Miles, 2007). Although the literature predominantly focuses on women it is recognized that men in less developed countries also suffer from behaviors and policies that foster hierarchical gender relations. Gender hierarchy is manifested in family relationships, inheritance laws and customs; valuations of women's work and its general invisibility; and the power to make decisions in society, the family, work place, religious and other cultural institutions. It is apparent in the relative opportunities available to women and girls for development, education, health and nutrition and in the pattern of violence between the sexes (Mikkola & Miles, 2007).

Political Participation: A Conceptual Discourse

It is necessary to make a conceptual clarification of the term political participation in order to enhance our understanding of the subject matter. Political participation is one of the fundamental ideas of a democratic society and an essential component required for ensuring the stability and legitimacy of every political system (Agbaje, Kumari & Kidwai, 1999:193) in (Godwyns, 2011). It is the sine qua non of democracy because democracy involves a commitment to equal opportunity for men and women to develop their individual capacities. Political participation is crucial to the determination of the control of power and the extent to which individual members of society share, take part or get involved in their governance.

Political participation can take many other forms besides voting, such as joining a political party, standing as candidates in elections, joining a non-governmental advocacy group, exercising control over which issues should emerge on the political agenda or participating in demonstration (Adamu, 2017). The essence of political participation in any society, either civilized or primitive, is to seek control of power, acquisition of power and dispensing power to organize society, harness and distribute resources and to influence decision making in line with organized or individual interests (Arowolo and Abe, 2008). All groups (including those of women) seek to influence the dispensation of power in line with their articulated interests as a fundamental motive of political participation.

Isaac and Samuel cited (2023) in Simbime (2003), sees political participation as those voluntary activities by which members of the society share in the selection of rulers and indirectly or indirectly in the formation of public policy. He thus opines that political participation is a civic right of all citizens. In considering its relevance to national development, George-Genyi (2010) describes political participation as the ability of an individual citizen to initiate and participate in legislative policies and laws that are germane to national development.

Theoretical framework

Theory of sexism used to illustrate causes and effects of women underrepresentation in Nigerian politics. The theory of sexism according to Uwa, et al (2018), sexism is the attitude and institutions, often unconscious, that judge human worthy on the grounds of gender or sex roles or it could be prejudice or discrimination, against women based on their genders (Uwa, John, Daudu, & Oyindamole, 2018). The proponents of this theory include Karl Marx, Peter Glick, Susan Fiske, Mary Anstell etc. The sexiest theory has the following tenets:

1. Fundamental, physical and psychological differences between men and women, in part, account for the ascribed masculine supremacy and paternity in the societies.
2. Cultures and societies are deciders of

- gender roles.
3. Women oppression is in connection with production.

Cultural gender determinants notably Oakley and Orther (2010) espoused the view that culture and society are the deciders of gender role. In their respective analysis, they opined that culture is the sum total of human societies accumulation of traditions, values, norms prescription of behavior, among other things, over the years of their existence (George, 1990) in (Uwa, John, Daudu, & Oyindamole, 2018). The materialist (Marxist) analysis of the women question takes a different dimension on the feminist question. It examines the status of women in relation to the economic system, rather than the relationship between men and women. The end point is that, women's oppression is in connection with production and distribution of material wealth (Uwa, John, Daudu, & Oyindamole, 2018).

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design using quantitative research strategies. A survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals; and it is the most frequently used method for collecting information about people's behaviors and attitudes in a variety of social issues. According to Mugenda and Mugenda in Abubakar (2019), survey design is the best method available to social scientists who are interested in collecting original data for the purpose of describing a population which is too large to observe directly. Thus, the researcher made use of only quantitative approach to research by means of administering questionnaire to sampled respondents. Therefore, the study employs survey design since the researcher intends to get precise information and produce conclusive results regarding gender inequality and women political participation in Jibia Local Government.

Population of the Study

Population is the designated part of a universe from which a sample is drawn (Abubakar,

2019). Since it is not possible to study the entire population, the sample size selected is the representative of the population. The data needed for this research work was generated directly from both males and females (for useful and meaningful information). Therefore, the entire inhabitants of Jibia Local Government constitute the population for this study; whereas only the adult dwellers form our sampling frame (from whom the sample will be drawn).

Sample Size

In determining the sample size of the study area, Yamani (1967) formula was used. The formula is given as follows: $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

- Where; n = Sample size
- N = Population size
- 1 = Constant
- (e)² = Margin Error

Note: this study allowed ten (10) percent margin of error in calculating the optimal sample size (i.e. 0.1). Noting that the population size (n) in this case is 9262, the estimated sample size is calculated as:

$$n = \frac{9262}{1 + 9262(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{9262}{9263(0.0)}$$

$$n = \frac{9262}{92.63}$$

$$n = 99.989204$$

Approximate sample size will now be
N = 100

Total number of interview administered was 100 for the purpose of this study.

Sampling Techniques

The researcher has adopted the random sampling techniques in selecting the respondents under the topic title “*Gender inequality and women participation in politics; a study of Jibia Local Government Area*”.

Sources of Data

This research employed the use of both primary and secondary methods of data collection. This

includes information derived directly from the field or physical observation, use of questionnaire administration, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that it suit or corresponds with the aim and objectives of this research. The questionnaire concerned about the *Gender inequality and women participation in politics in Jibia Local Government Area.*

Method of Data Analysis

The statistical procedure that the researcher uses will be descriptive statistics in analyzing the data obtained as a result of administering the questionnaires. Therefore, frequency

distribution table and simple percentage will be used to address the research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section focused on the presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings from the collected data in order to examine the relationship between gender inequality and women participation in politics in Jibia Local Government Area. The presentation of data is based on the responses from one hundred and thirty-one (131) respondents whose completed copies of questionnaire were retrieved by the researcher.

Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Categories	Responses	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	47	36
	Female	84	64
Age	Below 18	00	00
	18 – 25	41	31
	26 – 35	56	43
	36 – 45	11	08
	46 and above	23	18
Marital Status	Single	27	21
	Married	94	72
	Separated	02	02
	Widow	07	05
	Divorce	01	01
Educational Qualification	Primary	08	06
	Secondary	56	43
	OND/ND/NCE	44	34
	HND/B.Sc.	18	14
	M.Sc./Ph.D.	02	02
	Others	01	02
Total		131	100%

Source: Field Reports 2023

Data in the above table make it clear that 64% of the respondents were female while the remaining 36% were male. This is a clear indication that female, despite their number, are dominated from every angle in the societal life compared to their male counterpart. The age distribution of the sampled respondents showed that none of the respondents was below 18 years. 31% were within the age bracket of 18 and 25; 43% were between the age of 26 and 35; 8% were within the age of 36 and 45 and the remaining 18% of the respondents were 46 years and above. This shows that majority of the respondents were between 18 and 35 years. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to

gather very useful information since individuals between these ages are experienced and are expected to have a substantial knowledge about the field of study in the local government.

Majority of the respondents were married (72%) as confirmed by the information generated. 21% were single; 2% were separated i.e. they were married but no longer together as spouse at the time of compiling this research work; 5% were widows(er); and the remaining 1% were divorced. It is also clear from the data generated that only 6% of the respondents had primary certificates; 43% had secondary certificates; 34% had OND/ND/NCE; 14% were HND/B.Sc. holders;

as 2% of the respondents were M.Sc./Ph.D. holders, the remaining 2% had qualifications other than the ones mentioned above. This shows a high level of literacy among the respondents; hence they understood what the study was about and therefore able to contribute to the issue of low women's political participation in the local government.

Causes of poor participation among women in politics

S/n	Causes of poor participation among women in politics	Categories	Responses	%
1	Family responsibility and childbearing hinders women political participation	SA	22	17
		A	74	56
		UD	07	05
		DA	23	18
		SD	05	04
2	Religious practice restricts the involvement of women in matters of leadership	SA	21	16
		A	69	53
		UD	10	08
		DA	29	22
		SD	02	02
3	Women are seen as domestic beings with their place in the kitchen only	SA	41	31
		A	50	38
		UD	11	08
		DA	18	14
		SD	11	08
4	Poverty in Nigeria is a major obstacle to women's active political participation.	SA	09	07
		A	32	22
		UD	02	02
		DA	51	39
		SD	37	28
5	Lack of adequate education is a major hurdle for women political participation	SA	41	31
		A	17	13
		UD	21	16
		DA	39	30
		SD	13	10
6	The political party discrimination against women in politics in Nigeria is often a deliberate effort to humiliate and frustrate them into losing focus and excluding them from active participation in politics	SA	22	17
		A	28	21
		UD	38	29
		DA	29	22
		SD	14	11
7	Negative labeling; derogatory names and abusive language are expressions use to describe Nigerian women in politics which discourage many of them from active participation in the nation's politics	SA	32	25
		A	29	22
		UD	25	19
		DA	24	18
		SD	21	16
8	Lack of family support is one of the major causes of women inactive participation in politics	SA	09	07
		A	17	13
		UD	41	31
		DA	63	48
		SD	01	01
Total			131	100

Source: Field Reports 2023

The foregoing table makes it clear that only 17% of the respondents strongly agreed that family responsibility and childbearing hindered women political participation in the study area. 56% of the respondents agreed; and 5% were undecided; 18% disagreed and the remaining 4% of the respondents were strongly disagreed. It is obvious that majority of the respondents

agreed that family responsibility and childbearing restricts women from participating in the political activities of their communalities.

With regard to the religious practice as a barrier to women involvement in leadership affairs, data generated from the sampled respondents showed that 16% strongly agreed to the assertion. 53% agreed; 8% undecided; 22% disagreed and the remaining 2% strongly disagreed. It is understandable that majority of the respondents (a cumulative of 69%) were of the opinion that religion played a vital role in restricting the opportunities available for women to take part in the political activities during the 2019 general elections.

Responses of the selected respondents with regard to the statement that women are seen as domestic beings with their place only in the kitchen show that 31% of the respondents strongly agreed. 38% agreed; 8% undecided; 14% disagreed and the remaining 8% strongly disagreed. Therefore, one may conclude that it is the societal division of labor between men and women that undermines the position of women – thereby placing them (female) in the lower rung of the social ladder.

Generated data in the above table shows that only 7% of the respondents strongly agreed that poverty was a major obstacle to women active political participation in 2019 general elections. As 22% agreed to the claim, 2% did not decide. 39% of the respondents disagreed and the remaining 28% strongly disagreed that poverty and women poor political participation are related. Based on the responses above, it is obvious that poverty did not restrict women from taking part in the politics of their localities during the general elections of 2019.

Lack of adequate education as a major hurdle for women political participation received the endorsement of a cumulative of 44% of the respondents (31% and 13% strongly agreed and agreed respectively). As 16% of the respondents did not decide, a cumulative of 40% objected to the assertion. I.e. 30%

disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. In spite of the slight gap between the percentage of those who supported the assertion and those who resisted it, one can conclude that illiteracy played a role in reducing the chances of women, and men alike, in taking part in the politics of their communities.

The table above shows that 17% of the sampled respondents strongly agreed that the political party discrimination against women in politics in Nigeria is often a deliberate effort to humiliate and frustrate them into losing focus and excluding them from active participation in politics. 21% agreed; 29% undecided; 22% disagreed and the remaining 11% strongly disagreed. Women poor political participation is seen as a deliberate effort by the political parties to put men in the higher positions. This means that political parties are the causes of poor women representation in steering the machinery of government.

The foregoing table shows that 25% of the respondents strongly agreed that negative labeling, derogatory names and abusive language are expressions use to describe Nigerian women in politics which discourage many of them from active participation in the nation's politics. 22% agreed; 19% did not decide; 18% disagreed and the remaining 16% strongly disagreed. From the above information, it is clear that women poor participation is related to the insults they receive from people. This means that negative labeling, belittling names and rude language that are used in describing women in politics can be counted as one of the causes of their poor representation.

Lack of family support cannot be counted as one of the major causes of women inactive participation in politics. This is true as a cumulative of 20% of the respondents opposed to this assertion. While a cumulative of 49% testified to it. The remaining 31% did not decide. Thus, the support family give to its members does not alter the extent at which women participate in politics.

Effect of women poor political participation on political development

S/n	Effect of women poor political participation on political development	Categories	Responses	%
1	Women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establishing democracy in its real and practical manner	SA A UD DA SD	43 33 01 26 28	33 25 01 20 21
2	Validity and trustworthiness of democracy can be in question if females, who constitute a significant number of the population, stay marginalized or segregated from the political and public institutions	SA A UD DA SD	16 59 14 25 17	12 45 11 19 13
3	The degree and level of women's representation in government has considerable and significant impacts on the lives of the people in any operational political and public setting	SA A UD DA SD	10 72 0 34 15	08 55 00 26 11
4	Participatory, accountability and transparency in governance that ensure political, cultural, social and economic priority goals of the wider society is difficult to achieve if women representation in parliamentary, executive as well as judiciary is low	SA A UD DA SD	25 12 28 46 20	19 09 21 35 15
5	Women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women	SA A UD DA SD	44 51 0 07 29	34 39 00 05 22
6	Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of their perspective at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved	SA A UD DA SD	04 19 20 74 14	03 15 15 56 11
Total			131	100

Source: Field Reports 2023

The foregoing table contains data on the effect of women's poor political participation on political development. The table shows that the generated data from the respondents make it clear that 33% of them strongly agreed that women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establishing democracy in its real and practical manner. 25% agreed; 1% not decided; 20% disagree and the remaining 21% strongly disagreed. Therefore, women active political participation contributes immensely in legitimizing government and smoothening the process of consolidating democracy.

It is also strongly agreed by 12% of the sampled respondents that validity and

trustworthiness of democracy can be in question if females, who constitute a considerable number of the population, stay marginalized or segregated from the political and public institutions. 45% of the respondents also agreed to the statement. As 26% of the respondents did not agree, the remaining 11% strongly disagreed. This makes it clear that the more women participate in the politics, the more valid and trustworthiness democracy will be. This is as a result of the large number they constitute in the society.

The generated data in the above table also shows that only 8% of the sampled respondents strongly agreed that the degree and level of women's representation in government has

considerable and significant impacts on the lives of the people in any operational political and public setting. As 55% agreed to the assertion, 26% did not agree. The remaining respondents representing 11% strongly disagreed. This means that if a significant number of women are among the appointees and elected representatives the lives of people will improve economically, socially and politically.

It is also understood from the data in the above table that only 19% of the respondents strongly agreed that participatory, accountability and transparency in governance will be difficult to achieve if women representation in parliamentary, executive and judiciary is low. Only 9% agreed. 21% did not decide. 35% disagreed and the remaining 15% strongly disagreed. It is thus concluded that no matter the level of women representation in governance, the accountability and transparency in governance won't be affected.

The generated data also showed that 34% of the respondents strongly agreed that women's

equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. As 39% of the respondents confirmed the statement as true by agreeing to it, 5% disagreed and the remaining 22% strongly disagreed. It is therefore understood from the generated information that if women are allowed to actively participate in politics as their men counterpart, they will positively alter the lives of their fellow women.

Majority of the respondents (56%) strongly disagreed that without the active participation of women and the incorporation of their perspective at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. Also 11% of the respondents did not agree. As a cumulative percentage of 18% agreed that women participation creates equality, development and peace, the remaining 15% did not know. Thus, whether women are active participants and their views are incorporated in the decision making or not have nothing to do with the achievement of equality, development and peace in a country.

Relationship between gender inequality and inactive political participation of women

S/n	Relationship between gender inequality and inactive political participation of women	Categories	Responses	%
1	Existence of gender inequality reduces the level of citizens' participation in politics	SA	48	37
		A	41	31
		UD	02	02
		DA	08	06
		SD	32	24
2	Political Participation occupies a vital place in democratic governance to the extent that its denial to substantial part of the population can create some negative reactions	SA	55	42
		A	29	22
		UD	03	02
		DA	21	16
		SD	23	18
3	Under-representation of women in decision making and implementation processes is directly related to the societal division of responsibility	SA	11	08
		A	80	61
		UD	05	04
		DA	33	25
		SD	02	02
4	Gender inequality undermines democratic process by restricting a considerable segment of the citizens from taking part in the political activities of the society	SA	61	47
		A	46	35
		UD	02	02
		DA	14	11
		SD	08	06
Total			131	100

Source: Field Reports 2023

Data in table 4.2.4 above makes it clear that there is a relationship between gender inequality and inactive political participation of women in the study area as 37% of the selected respondents strongly agreed that existence of gender inequality reduces the level of citizens' political participation. 31% agreed; 2% did not know; 6% disagreed and the remaining 24% strongly disagreed.

Also 42% of the respondents strongly agreed that political participation occupies a vital place in democratic governance to the extent that its denial to substantial part of the population can create some negative reactions. 22% agreed; 2% undecided; 16% disagreed and the remaining 18% strongly disagreed. It is also clear from the data generated that only 8% strongly agreed that under-representation of women in decision making and implementation processes is directly related to the societal division of labor. Majority of the respondents (61%) agreed. As 4% of the sampled respondents did not decide, a cumulative of 27% disagreed. Thus, the way society divides roles to be played by its members affects the political zeal of females.

The table also shows that 47% of the

respondents strongly agreed that gender inequality undermines democratic process by restricting a considerable segment of the citizens from taking part in the political activities of the society. 35% of the selected respondents agreed to that; 2% did not decide; 11% did not agree and the remaining 6% strongly opposed the assertion. Thus, as a cumulative of 82% of the respondents confirmed the claim, it is concluded that gender inequality is directly related to inactive political participation of women.

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis test is the formal procedures that statisticians use to test whether a hypothesis can be accepted or not. This hypothesis was formulated in order to guide the conduct of this research. This hypothesis was tested and the result presented below using chi-square method.

H₀: Culture does not have any impact on women's political participation in the politics of Jibia Local Government.

H₁: Culture affects women's political participation in the politics of Jibia Local Government.

Chi-square

Negative labeling; derogatory names and abusive language are expressions use to describe Nigerian women in politics which discourage many of them from active participation in the nation's politics					SA	24
					A	21
					UD	25
					DA	32
					SD	29
Categories	O	E		(O - E)²		
Strongly agree	32	26	6	36	1.38	
Agree	29	26	3	9	0.35	
undecided	25	26	- 1	1	0.04	
Disagree	24	26	- 2	4	0.15	
Strongly disagree	21	26	- 5	25	0.96	
Total	131				2.88	

$\chi^2 = 2.88; P = 0.05; df (\text{number of categories minus } 1) = 4; X^2_{\mu} = 9.488$

In testing this hypothesis, chi-square goodness of fit test was used, observation after testing showed that the calculated chi-square value of four degree of freedom (df) of 0.05, level of significant was 9.488.

The researcher will reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and accept the alternative hypotheses (H₁) if the calculated Chi-square is greater than the table value; thus:

$X^2 < X^2_{\mu}$ (Reject H₀ and accept H₁)

$X^2 > X^2_{\mu}$ (Accept H_0 and reject H_1)

Conclusion: X^2 calculated value = 2.88; X^2_{μ} (0.05, 4) = 9.488

Therefore, the research null hypothesis fails to be accepted since X^2_{μ} is greater than X^2 ; i.e. culture affects women's political participation in the politics of Jibia Local Government.

Discussion of Findings

Data collected from survey on gender inequality and women participation in politics in Jibia Local Government aimed at examining the causes and effect of women lack of participation in politics as well as identifying the relationship between gender inequality and women participation in the politics of Jibia Local Government. The foregoing objectives of the research are discussed based on the information contained in 131 copies of questionnaire retrieved from the respondents.

The causes of poor political participation among women in the politics of Jibia Local Government

The findings of this research in respect of the above objective show that childbearing and nurturing are one of the major causes of poor political participation among women as 73% of the respondents attested to that. Religion is another cause of factor that restricts women from being active political participants in their localities. This is true as a total of 69% of the sampled respondents were of this view. Limiting the role of women to performing only domestic activities such as cooking, taking care of children and keeping the house clean contributes a lot in making them less participants in the politics of their communities. This was made clear by the data generated from the respondents where 69% agreed to the assertion. Moreover, Negative labeling; derogatory names and abusive language as expressions use to describe Nigerian women in politics discourage them from participating in the politics of their communities. Thus, culture strongly affects the level of political participation.

Therefore, the findings of the research shows that child bearing and nurturing, religious practices and the roles play by women, as

assigned by the society, are the major factors that cause poor political participation among women. While factors such as poverty, illiteracy and political party discrimination, though restrict the chances of women in taking part in the politics of their communities yet, cannot be associated with women only as they affect men alike. This was evidenced in table 4.2.2 above. Also lack of family support does not cause poor political participation among women. These were evident as the data generated from the respondents attested to that – majority of the respondents did not accept the claim.

Determining how poor participation of women in politics affects the political development of Jibia Local Government in the Fourth Republic.

It was generally agreed that women active participation in the politics of their communities enhances political development and the other way round. This can said to be true as 58% of the respondents agreed that women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establishing democracy in its real and practical manner. Also the claim that the validity and trustworthiness of democracy is in question if females, who constitute a significant number of the population, stay marginalized or segregated from the political and public institutions received an approval of majority of the respondents (57%). The claims, women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women and the degree and level of women's representation in government has considerable and significant impacts on the lives of people in any operational political and public setting were considered true by the majority of the respondents - 73% and 63% respectively.

Thus, the findings of the research with respect to this objective is that women's active political participation has positive impact on democratic consolidation while poor participation on their parts stagnates the process of democratic development. However, the claim that without the active participation of women and the incorporation of their perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved and the assertion that says

participatory, accountability and transparency in governance is difficult to achieve if women representation in parliamentary, executive as well as judiciary is low regarded as false by the respondents. This is to say that whether women representation in administering the activity of government is high and their views are incorporated at all levels of decision making or not, accountability, transparency, equality development and peace can be achieved.

Relationship between gender in equality and women inactive political participation among women in Jibia Local Government

Data generated from the sampled respondents as regards the above objective show that there is an obvious relationship between gender inequality and inactive political participation of women i.e. gender inequality causes poor political participation among women. This understood to be true as 68% of the respondents agreed that existence of gender inequality reduces the level of citizens' participation in politics. This means that the higher the gender inequality, the lower the citizens' participation in politics and the vice versa. Also 66% of the respondents agreed to the assertion that denial of right to participate in the politics to substantial part of the population can create some negative reactions. Thus, women under-representation in decision-making and implementation process is directly related to the societal division of responsibility as confirmed by 69% of the respondents.

Conclusion

The study 'gender inequality and women participation in politics in Nigeria' was carried out in Jibia Local Government area of Jibia state. It aimed at finding the causes and effects of women poor political participation in Jibia Local Government. The findings of the research show that child bearing and nurturing, religious practices and the role of women as assigned by the society are the major factors that cause poor political participation among women. While factors such as poverty, illiteracy and political party discrimination, though restrict the chances of women in taking part in the politics of their communities, cannot be associated with women only as they affect men too.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study the following recommendations were made.

Discriminatory socio-cultural and religious practices against women active participation in politics in Nigeria should be positively reviewed by stakeholders (particularly traditional/religious rulers and government) who should be educated to be gender sensitive and encouraged to protect women political and other rights and ensure support of their political ambitions. These stakeholders should ensure that cultural/religious practices that discriminate against women are discouraged and their perpetrators are adequately punished to serve as deterrent measures.

Family members (especially husbands of married women) should give women political aspirants the relevant consent and support to venture into politics and governance. Through awareness campaign and voters' education programs, women should be informed of their political rights to participate actively in politics not only as voters but also to be voted for in the numerous political positions and be encouraged to support and vote for their fellow women political aspirants/politicians. Furthermore, media should support Nigerian women political aspirants/politicians by publicly projecting their positive images; emphasizing their important roles and contributions to national development; raising their participation awareness in politics and governance; deploring discriminations against them; among others. The gender stereotypes in the media should be discouraged.

There should be equal representation of Nigerian men and women in governance to ensure that enacting laws of the land and making policies particularly those affecting gender issues will always remain equitable. There should be enabling constitutional amendment to ensure equitable appointive and elective positions in governance for meaningful national development. The national legislations should comply with international standards established in various international treaties and instruments for elimination of discrimination against women and to capture the interest of women through adequate representation. Political empowerment, especially through the

strengthening of affirmative action and allocation of quota for Nigerian women in politics and decision making positions should be strictly implemented to encourage their active participation in politics.

The use of negative labeling, derogatory names, abusive language and expressions to describe women in politics should be discouraged through sensitization and public enlightenment campaigns in Nigeria. The campaigns of male political opponents that portray Nigerian women as acting against the Nigerian culture of not accepting leadership roles of women just to marginalize them should be discouraged. In Nigeria, women in politics should be properly perceived as partners of their male counterparts in politics and governance of the nation.

Lastly, it is recommended that subsequent researchers should conduct research on same or similar topic in other part of the country to confirm or falsify the findings of this research.

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