

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the roles of women in technical education (WITED) towards achieving sustainable development and good governance in a developing nation like Nigeria. The paper identifies factors hindering the involvement of women in technical education towards the drive for sustainable development and good governance in Nigeria. Women are faced with issues of gender inequality both in the society and places of work. The aims of this paper is to identify critical areas of women's contribution, challenges, limitation and proffering solution so as to enhance sustainable development of the nation through an active involvement of women. The paper is qualitative in nature and relies on secondary sources for data collection and the discussion that followed. It is in line with the foregoing, that this paper concludes that women should be supported and encouraged for active participation in developmental processes. The study recommends that women should be empowered in processes of development in a developing society like Nigeria in order to have a sustainable development and good governance.

Keywords: Women, Sustainable Development, WITED, Good Governance

1. INTRODUCTION

The role women play is very vital in enhancing the dynamics of a growing society. The argument about the relevance of women to their immediate environment has been settled long ago. The settlement of this argument would have led to the declaration of the 1975 and 1985 decades as the decades for women. In line with this declaration, was an adoption of the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) initiated by the United Nation (UN) (Ode, 2013). Nigeria was a party to this convention. Ever since the signing of this pact, Nigeria as a country has made little or no efforts to domesticate the provisions of the convention through any form of legislation either at the federal or state levels of government. Although feeble efforts have been made to mainstream the feminine gender especially with particular reference to governance. The involvement of women in areas such as education, health, technology etc., is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development in Nigeria. The uniqueness of this involvement is that it creates a participatory sense among women. Women feel involved in decision making processes when they are allowed to participate in deciding issues that has to do with the general public (George, Fagbohun, Olonade & Aderoju, 2018). Women make up half of the world's population and despite their achievement of equal citizenship status to men; they remain vastly under-represented in governance. In most nations of the world, there is a clear absence of women involvement in decision-making processes at the regional, local and national levels. Gender gap in governance can be found in countries of the world not just Nigeria regardless of their economic status, religion or institutions. Factors contributing to the lack of women participation in decision-making process include their low labour force participation and time poverty in relation to men as well as stereotypical attitudes towards the societal roles of women and men. In parliamentary decision-making, women are outnumbered by men in all nations (OECD, 2008). In Nigeria, it is morally believed that men are at the helm of controlling the economy because they have better managerial skills (World Bank, 2001). Nevertheless, in 2015, governments unanimously endorsed the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda: the fifth Goal emphasized on ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment thus, the role of gender equality and inclusive administration and institutions in achieving more peaceful, prosperous, equal and sustainable societies is paramount. The aims of this paper is to identify critical areas of women's contribution, challenges, and proffering remedial solutions so as to enhance sustainable development of the nation through an active involvement of women. After the introduction, the paper reviews relevant

literature on sustainable development and good governance which presents the concept of women, sustainable development and the concept of good governance and thereafter, it takes a look at the challenges that hinder the involvement of women in decision-making processes in Nigeria. The last section makes recommendations and concludes this study.

2. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The main concepts to be clarified in the context of this paper are the concept of women, sustainable development and good governance and the development of Nigeria.

2.1 Concept of Women

In line with the current debate on the girl child marriage bill in the Nigerian national assembly on who is exactly a woman, it would be difficult to give a concise definition. This is because the girl child marriage proponents declared that any girl who is married automatically becomes a woman. A woman can be defined as human species that belongs to the female class and has attained the age of puberty (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2013). Similarly, Wikipedia (2013) noted that the term 'woman' is reserved for adult females while a young female is a girl. A woman can simply then be referred to as any female who is matured enough to handle matters that pertain to livelihood. For a person to be referred to as a woman, she needs to be a female who can handle the challenges of life and take appropriate decisions (Eseyin; Okafor & Uchendu, 2014). She may or may not however be married since a female who is advanced in age would not be addressed as a girl but also a woman.

2.2 Concept of Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development was first popularized by the United Nation's World Commission on Environment and Development in the year 1987 (Cuillerier, 1997 in Okoye, 2018). The publication of this commission titled "Our Common Future" has made sustainable development become of utmost importance. To the commission, sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). The concept of sustainable development is subjected to different definitions according to scholars and purpose of use. Sustainable development to some requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life. Sustainable development calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet. In order to achieve a genuine sustainable development, it involves three areas of interest; economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection (Unachukwu & Ijeoma, 2017).

Sustainable development refers to a system of operations to delivers on goals and objectives and that guarantees consistent level and increasing level continuously. Sustainable development is defined as a process that is continuous in impacting positive improvement, growth and social change for the well-being of everyone today and creating a fair level playing ground by making life better for the future generation. In simple terms it means as you eat today make sure you don't eat everything today but reserve for the future so that those yet unborn will have something to leverage on tomorrow. Sustainable development means that present developmental needs are met without jeopardizing future needs of other generations.

Adebayo (2012) sees sustainable development as the effort at improving the environment or natural resources for the purpose of improving the quality of human life in such a way that the needs of future generations are not jeopardized. Mohammed (2013), in his submission, sees sustainable development as the ability to preserve the existing resources of the state for the collective use of the citizens while conscious efforts are made to conserve the resources for the use of future generations. The role of women in ensuring sustainable development in the country cannot be over emphasized. Development in a country is a product of the effort of the productive members of the country. As such, women in the society have important roles to play in sustaining the development of the nation. This role can be effectively achieved when women are given equal opportunity to contribute to the standard of the economy like their male counterpart. Contrary to this, the level of sustainable development that will be recorded in the country will remain far below the optimum capacity of the entire sectors of the nation.

2.3 Concept of Good Governance

Good governance as a question, has gained the interest of international institutions, like the World Bank and few between legislative associations such as the Great Countries of the world. These two Institutions have made the issue of good governance a major necessity in terms of donations, aids and gift strategies to nations that are challenged on the issue of good government.

So as to make this study more significant, theoretical elucidation on administration will be made and the significance of the idea to the entire study will be plainly identified. McGinnis (1999) in his work defines governance as a platform which society, as an entity manages the large group of its political and socio-economic concern.

Oyovbaire (2007) in his definition strengthens by declaring thus; good governance involves the use of authority and power in such a way that it affects the human condition. It empowers societies to keep up, manage and enhance the personal satisfaction including the change of the physical environment. The idea "society" emerges obviously in McGinnis and Oyovbaire on administration. Kaufmann (2006) opines that administration epitomize the custom and establishment by which power in a nation is practiced to the benefit of everyone. According to him, a good administrative framework is defined by its relationship to some key prerequisites, including Accountability, Transparency, Participation, and Predictability. These key prerequisites cannot exist without an educated, politically important, well informed and ready to solve problems for group of people. A situation whereby the group of people are not well prepared against their involvement in these under listed categories. There is no doubt; basic skills of good governance will readily be damaged by the government in power. These stresses further the view that a society gets its deserved government. Furthermore, in the writings of Kaufmann (2006) recognized some basic measurement of administration; these have been classified into the above classifications. The few basic measurement of administration according to Kaufmann (2006) are:

Voice and Accountability: This applies to the length citizens of particular nation are allowed to actively participate in choosing those who govern them, so also flexibility of expression and opportunity of affiliation.

Political Stability and Absence of Violence: This explains to what chances government gets frustrated and might be forcefully removed unconstitutionally or through other violent means which includes political violence and other criminal vices.

Effectiveness of Government: involves top notch deliveries of government services which determine the length of its non-interference by public office holders. The government's effectiveness is judged by the qualities of its policy formation and execution including the presumption of the steadfastness of administration to those formulated policies.

Regulatory Quality: Is Government's capability of making and administering good regulations and rules which allows, elevate and reinforce growth in the private sector.

Rule of Law (RL), is to what length the citizens and political office holders have trusted and obeyed laws that exists in a society and in such a way that the qualities of agreement requirement in the officers of the law.

Control of Corruption (CC), clarifies to what extent public power are open and used for selfish interest, which are little and grand forms of corruption. It also explains how the state is being captured by the elites and private interests.

3. METHOD OF THE STUDY

This paper adopts a qualitative research approach. To achieve the objective of this study, data were sourced from secondary materials including relevant books, journals and internet resources.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is Feminist theory. Feminist agreed that there are deep rooted social, economic and political inequalities between the sexes, which need to be change but they fundamentally digress in their analysis of why this situation has come about and how far it could, and should be altered through government policies. The socialist feminist traditions stretch in a complex and evolving tradition from classic work by Karl Marx.

Frederick Engels, August Bebel and Alexandra Kollontai in more recent to their theories such as Sheila Rowbotham and Juliet Mitchell. Equality of opportunity which is primary demand of classical feminist while useful is only one stage of change. The Feminist theory also focus on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's interest and advocate gender equality for women campaign for women's right and interest although the terms "Feminism" and "Feminist" did not gain widespread use until the 1970s they were already being used in the public parlance much earlier. Feminist and scholars have divided the movement's history into three; the first-wave, the second waves and the third waves.

The first wave refers mainly to women's suffrage movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth century (mainly concerned with women right to vote) however at the end of the nineteen century, the activist focused primarily on gaining political power, particular the right of women suffrage. The word coined respectively when the second wave feminist began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities as well as political inequality.

Second wave feminist refers to the period of activity in the early 1960s and lasting through the 1980s. The feminist saw women's cultural and political inequalities as extricable linked and personal lives as deeply publicized and as reflecting sexist power structure. The Feminist mystique (1963) criticized the idea that women could only find fulfillment through childbearing and homemaking. In Friedans hypothesis that Women are victims of false belief system that requires them to find identity and meaning in their lives through their husband and children. Such a system causes women to completely lose their identity in that of their family. Friedans specifically locate this system among post- World War II middle class suburban communities.

The third wave began in the early 1990s, arising as a response to the perceived failures of the second wave and also a response to the backlash against initiatives and movement created by the second wave. It seeks to challenge or avoid what deems the essentialist definition of Femininity, which (according to them) over emphasize the experience of upper middle class white women. The third wave Feminists often focus on "Micro-Politics" and challenge the second wave's paradigm to what it is good and not good for Female. The third wave also contained internal debates between different Feminist such as psychologist Carol Gilligan (who believed that there are important differences between the sexes) and those who believed that there are no inherent differences between the sexes and contend that gender role are due to social conditioning.

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION (WITED)

Technical and vocational trainings are both ways women can be empowered for good governance and sustainable development. These trainings helps women acquire the power to think and act freely as they want thereby fulfilling their potentials to be equal members of the society. Women empowerment involves the adequate provision of abilities, skills and competences of mental and physical nature inclusive thereby enhancing their productivity in the society. Acholonu (2006), in his work empathized that the acquisition of necessary skills by women is essential for their appreciation and will also change the traditional status quo that subjugates and marginalizes them in the society. However, empowering women helps to bring them into the main stream of the development process. Adetope (2004), expressed that emphasis should be place on the need to empower women to gain economic independence through entrepreneurial development programmes with a view to exposing them to different areas of understanding, controlling and directing their financial affairs. In similar opinion, vocational and technical education is seen as the root of empowering women for self-productivity and reliance. However, women involvement in technical and vocational education will help in achieving sustainable development and good governance in Nigeria as women now participate in technical courses as their male counterpart (Zuga, 1998). Women have various ways of contributing to the development of a nation. Women have some special qualities; a lot can be benefitted women if they are given the opportunity to be educated. Below are benefits of women education towards sustainable development are;

1. **Quality Leadership:** Women in technical education can ensure quality leadership in each of the area of their jurisdiction. This was in line with Shinaba (2008) that human rights violations, abuse of power, mismanagement of the nation's resources and underdevelopment are trending issues in past decades by men who are in power. These periods have been characterized by violence and gross gender inequality. Therefore,

women as managers of homes can implement their managerial skills in managing the affairs of any sector they find themselves if given the opportunity. Leadership qualities that would be provided by women will focus more on peace, equality, protection of fundamental human rights and peace (Eseyin; Okafor & Uchendu, 2014). With all these qualities, it is important that a nation can build a stable and achieve sustainable development.

2. **Management of Resources:** Around the world, women are known for their better management of resources than men. The good management of resources will help reduce waste and thereby create room for an increase in the economic benefits of these resources. The education of women helps put their managerial skills into use and will add to the ways they manage the nation's economic resources. Based on this, it is advised that women should be educated and empowered so they can harness their management skills and competences for the benefits of the nation at large.
3. **Healthy Nation Building:** Health status of the citizens is among factors that determines the lifespan of the masses. Similarly, the citizen's lifespan is also a factor that determines the level of development of any nation. Orji (2004) emphasized that girl child education is one of the potent tools for reducing girls' vulnerability. A healthy nation to scholars is a wealthy nation. Women in the society are usually known for their cleanliness and have the capacity of building a healthy nation. Gender is important in efforts to extend life expectancies since differences between men and women start at birth. Women live longer than men due to genetic factors but also to different behavioral, lifestyle and working patterns.

Women in technical education need to be vibrant and up standing in all areas of life if they are to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and good governance in Nigeria. Furthermore, women should ensure they have one and loud voice in any sector they find themselves. Women should again ensure they contribute their quota to areas they can help the education of a girl child. Women shouldn't feel that they can't help if they aren't lecturers or teachers, they can be of help especially in the admission processes in Institutions.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This paper concludes that women should be supported and encouraged for active participation in developmental processes. Women's contribution to sustainable development must be recognized. Women have a strong role in education and socializing their children, including teaching them care and responsibility with regard to the use and protection of natural resources.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that women should be empowered in processes of development in a developing society like Nigeria in order to have a sustainable development and good governance. More should be done to increase women's voice in environmental decision making and to enable women to seize opportunities in the "green economy". More capacity building programmes and training tailored to the needs of women are needed. In order to build women as catalyst for sustainable development, their role in family, community and society at large has to free from socio-cultural and religious traditions that prevent women participation. There is need for change of mindset, especially of the males who dominate the scene.

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