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Gender, Politics and Governance: Assessment of Women's Attitude towards Political Participation in Ekiti South Senatorial District of Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to examine the gender power relations in leadership in Nigeria by assessing the women's attitude towards political participation at different levels of political activities and investigate the factors sustaining gender inequality in politics in Ekiti South Senatorial district in Southwestern Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the study. Results showed that women had poor attitude towards political activities (40.3%) and the women's level of political participation at contesting for political posts was low (22%). However, inferences drawn from the analysis of the study showed that there were significant association between women's membership in political parties ($\chi^2=17.292$, $p<0.001$), age ($t=3.272$, $p=0.001$) and occupation ($\chi^2=13.592$, $p=0.004$). The study identified inadequate finance, insecurity, gender roles, lack of policy implementation as challenges causing gender inequality in politics. The study concludes that improving women's attitude as crucial for bridging the gender gap in politics.

Keywords: Gender roles, gender inclusive language, political participation, women emancipation, gender equality, political attitude

1. Introduction

Attitude is expressed through a person's disposition to issues, environment and challenges. Attitude describes who we are, what we do, and the choices we make as individuals. According to Ogbona (2016), since the moment we are born, we are being shaped into the being the society wants us to be, and the way people behave and think is seen as the final product of socialization which informs our attitude and the place occupied by people in the society. The attitude of women and men in the society is to a large extent influenced by the societal prescribed gender roles and socio-cultural expectations of people. (Ogbonna, 2016) These roles are inculcated from childhood as the people's way of life and later become one of the major determinants of the level of women and men's involvement in public spheres in the society. Also, social roles that encompass gender roles are passed down from one generation to another through family socialization and orientation practices as well as learning processes that could be formal or informal. (Eagly & Wood, 2016; Wane, 2019)

Participating in politics goes beyond just voting, it entails full citizen's participation in every aspect of political activities. This stresses citizen's participation that entails the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. (Arnstein, 2019) Thus, emphasizing gender equality in decision-making processes. Women's political attitude is reflected in the level of women's political participation as women are considered as passive participants in political affairs. This is exemplified in the last two rungs of the ladder of political participation identified by Arnstein (2019) that are non-participation and tokenism. Women participate mainly at these levels not as decision-makers or opinionates but as political supporters, participating to champion the course of others, especially their kinsmen. Therefore, the social roles that thought women expressive behavior is perceived to be instrumental to the political activities practiced by women in the society. This behavior also aligns with the women's career choices and their disadvantaged position in political affairs.

The twenty-first century politics is experiencing increased visibility of women in politics in the global South, most especially, in the African countries and despite the obstacles faced by women politically. Africa had been able to democratically elect women as Head of States and Government as in the case of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former Liberia president and the first female democratically elected president on the African continent. In addition, Joice Mujuru was the Zimbabwe Vice President between 2004 and 2014, Aja Fatoumata Jallow is the current Gambia's Vice President, Sophia Abdi Noor is the Kenya's first elected female Member of Parliament. (Africa.com, 2019) Lately, in the 2018 Ethiopia presidential election, a woman was elected as the country's president. Nigeria is also not left out in this development as the nation's political arena is experiencing increased female participation in political activities. More women are taking option in politics by contesting elections alongside men by becoming federal and states house of assemblies' members, political parties' executives, deputy governors and also serving as Local Government Areas executives, both elective and appointed. However, there is still gender imbalance in the different levels of political participation as these appointments were done

at a disproportional rate and some of the electoral positions are still reserved for men. A typical example is Sarah Nnadzwa Jibril who had run for presidency four times; so also, is Oluremi Comfort Sonaiya, who contested in 2015 general elections under KOWA party as the party's presidential candidate.

According to a statement credited to the UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is the unfinished business of our time, and the greatest human rights challenge in our world.(United Nation, 2019)The political empowerment scores are poor for women globally. In the past fifty years 85 state have had no female head of state or government, in parliamentary representation in 2019, women have secured just 25.2 percent of parliamentary lower house seats and 21.2 percent of ministerial positions.(World Economic Forum, 2020)According to the United Nations report (2017), women constitute 49.6 percent of the world's population, but the level of women's political participation and representation globally does not commensurate with men. Likewise, in the International Parliament Union report, the world average of women in parliament stood at 24.9 percent in 2020 up from 11.5 percent in 1995 and in lower and single houses of parliament, the percentage of seats held by women increased from 11.6 to 24.9 percent.(Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2020) In the Human Development Index report on gender inequality, Nigeria ranked 152nd out of 188 countries and in 2017, Nigeria was 118th out of 188 countries.(UNDP, 2018) In addition, the national average of women's political participation in Nigeria has remained at 6.7 percent in elective and appointive positions, which is far below the global average of 22.5 percent, African regional average of 23.4 percent and West African sub-regional average of 15 percent. (Oloyede, 2015) Nigeria, presently, is having less than six percent of women in parliament and the only woman (Patricia Etteh) in Nigeria that held the highest political position in the federal lower legislative chamber had her tenure truncated through impeachment and was replaced by a male colleague.

International and local efforts had been made towards bridging the gender gap in political participation, but globally, women still represent the politically marginalized group. This is because these efforts had been made to tackle the explicit factors affecting women's level of political participation, thereby neglecting the implicit factors. Thereby forgetting in the process that gender justice between women and men can only be attained through ideological and practical approach. The ideological factors widening the gender gap in political participation is reflected through women's disposition to political activities. This therefore necessitates the need to look beyond the explicit factors inhibiting women's attainment of equality with men in politics. Studies exist, but these studies had focused on analyzing attitudes towards women's political participation by analyzing attitude as a separate entity from the subject (women) by not focusing on the women's personal views and experiences. Most of these studies had presented women's views as a homogenous group without due consideration to the influence women's political and social differences. This study will therefore assess the women's attitude towards political participation, how these attitudes influence the levels of women's political participation in Ekiti South Senatorial District in Ekiti State and the challenges inhibiting gender parity in politics.

2. Theoretical Frameworks: Liberal Feminism, Social Role Theory and Moser Gender Analysis Framework

Liberal feminism is a reformers theory whose intent is on the view that the uniqueness of human persons is in their capacity for rationality and this is what differentiates human beings from animals.(Tong, 2018) Liberal feminism's primary goal is gender equality in the public sphere by ending public-private divide that hinders gender equality. Liberal feminists' school of thought identified the individual's inherent differences that may hinder fear accumulation of resources and opportunities in the society based on initial advantage and liabilities. According to Mill and Wollstonecraft (2018), a woman's inability to do something an average man can do, does not justify a law or taboo barring all women from attempting that thing. As a result, liberal feminists perceived the state as the protector of individual's rights, and support affirmative actions to gain political rights and gender equality. According to Mill and Wollstonecraft (2018), a woman's inability to do something an average man can do, does not justify a law or taboo barring all women from attempting that thing. The nature of Nigerian politics is characterized by gender inequality and this is as a result of the importance placed on a particular gender. The place of women in Nigeria is mostly believed to be the home. The discrimination against women goes as far as the day they were born and their involvement in politics. While men started voting in Nigeria in 1922, the right to vote was extended to women in 1957, a difference of 57 years. As a product of patriarchal society with ethical double standard, women are not given equal access to opportunities and resources that could spur their presence in political activities. Thus, according to the liberal feminists, the right to be treated fairly and justly is basic and universal, and inequalities due to gender, and group identity.

The social role theory is precipitated on the principle that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, due to the expectations that society puts upon them including gender stereotyping.(Eagly & Sczesny, 2019)Social role theory recognizes the historical division of labor between women and men as a result of the associated sex differences in social behavior that leads to divergence in the expectancies of men and women in the society. Thus, male is nurtured to develop agency traits by being independent, assertive and competent. Females are nurtured to develop traits that manifest communal or expressive behavior like friendliness, unselfishness, and quietness. These expectations are transmitted to future generations and this later influence the social behavior of each gender thereby sustaining the division of labor through socialization of gender roles. Nigerian women are groomed in a male dominated society where women are groomed through socialisation not to be aggressive and assume leadership positions in most cases, so few women become politically ambitious. Thus, the cultural distribution of women and men into social roles within the society are transmitted into political culture and manifests in the levels at which women participate in politics.

Moser gender analysis framework focused on the emancipation of women through personal development by identifying the root of inequalities inherent in gender relations in the society. The framework made all work, both paid and unpaid visible. This was done through the identification of women's tripartite roles that are productive, reproductive and

community service roles. The framework classified women's needs into two, the practical gender needs and strategic gender needs. In order to assist in identifying the activities that sustain unequal gender relations and activities that could change the status of women in the society. The framework examines the power relations starting from the household level by assessing the decision-making structure, and how this shape the gender relations in the family and its impact on other institutions. The institutions in the society are not independent of one another, a change in one could lead to a change in the other. As a result of this, the framework took into cognizance the activities in the household level, community level and organization level as well as the power relations in these institutions and how they influence the attitude of women in the public sphere.

3. Methods

The study was conducted in Ekiti South Senatorial District in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Ekiti State is one of the 36 states that constitute the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Ekiti was an independent state prior to the British conquest. It was one of the many Yoruba states in what is today Nigeria. The state was carved out of the old Ondo state on 1st October 1996, and covers the former 12 local government areas that made up the Ekiti Zone of old Ondo State. On creation, Ekiti state had 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs), having had an additional four carved out of the old ones and three senatorial districts that are Ekiti South, Ekiti North and Ekiti Central. Ekiti South Senatorial district comprises of 6 Local Governments Areas that are Ekiti South West, Gbonyin, Ikere, Emure, Ise/Orun, and Ekiti East Local Government. The local government's administration has between 10 and 11 political wards with an elective local government chairperson, elective counsellors and appointed supervisory counsellors representing each ward. The district is mainly inhabited by people of the Yoruba tribal origin, though other ethnic groups such as the Hausa, Idoma, Tiv, Igbos, and Urhobos may be found. The main religions are Christianity, Islam and traditional worship. Their major occupations are farming, trading, craft-making and civil service. The senatorial district had been known for their active participation in the state's politics both at the grassroot level and central level. There are different political parties in the district, and these parties represent the platform with which the political activities take place and the district had been able to produce candidates for electoral positions with few women have political representatives.

The study adopted descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the study. The population for the study was people of voting age in Ekiti State. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample size for the quantitative aspect of the study while the participants for the qualitative aspect of the study were selected purposively. At the first stage, simple random technique was adopted to select three Local Government Areas (LGAs) out of the six Local Government Areas in the senatorial district with the use of ballot system. Two political wards were selected from the 10 political wards in each of the selected Local Government Areas by simple random technique at the second stage. The minimum sample size calculated was 106 using the proportion of women in elective and appointed positions (6.7%) in Nigeria according to Oloyede (2015) but 300 respondents were selected for the administration of questionnaire. One hundred and fifty respondents were chosen from the women that are active in politics by being a registered member of political party, while the remaining 150 respondents were women that are not active in politics by not having affiliation with any political party. Registered women with political party were selected at their regular meetings using simple random method with their attendance register as the sampling frame. The unregistered women with political party were selected using systematic random sampling technique from their household listing in the chosen wards. Six Key Informant Interviews were conducted individually with six political party executives comprising of three men and women selected purposively in the randomly selected Local Government Areas, while two Focus Group Discussions were conducted separately for registered women with political party and women that were unregistered with political party in each of the selected Local Government Areas. Twenty-five registered women with political party and 27 unregistered women with political party, thereby making a total sum of 52 female participants that participated in the focus group discussions in the randomly selected three LGAs for the study. Two Political Parties that are People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All People's Congress (APC) were adopted for the study out of the political parties in the state because they are the major political parties that dominate the political arena in the state.

Semi-structured questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) were used to elicit information for the study. Six Focus Group Discussions were conducted among participants (separate sessions) that were active women in politics and women that do not participate actively in politics. Six Key Informant Interviews (three males and three females selected purposively) were conducted among political parties' executive's both past, present and political aspirants in the 2019 general elections in the state. The males were used as the control group (this is done as a way of hearing the voice of women from men) because in gender research women are not studied in isolation without giving due consideration to the views of men as women coexist with men. A p-value of < 0.05 was taken to be statistically significant in the quantitative aspect. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics while the qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis.

4. Findings and Discussion

The study was conducted to assess the attitude of women towards participating in politics and to assess the effect of women's attitude towards political participation at different levels of political activities. Data from the qualitative socio-demographic characteristics had 25 registered women with political party and 27 unregistered women with political party for the Focus Group Discussions. Three women and 3 men were recruited for the Key Informant Interviews in the 3 selected Local Government Areas in the senatorial district. The total sum of 55 female participants and 3 male participants participated in the study. The participants were predominantly Christians with only two women out of the discussants

who identified themselves as Muslim. All the participants are literates with primary school education as their minimum level of education and tertiary education as their highest level of education. Only three discussants did not belong to the Yoruba ethnic group, and identified themselves as from Igbo, Ebira and Idoma ethnic group respectively. The information gathered provided more evidence on the relationship between level of political affiliation and the women's attitude towards political involvement. Majority of the women in both groups identified themselves as self-employed, married, and Christians. It is also evident that the political group considered politics as their secondary source of livelihood as majority of the discussants had another job as their primary source of income.

Findings from the quantitative demographic data showed that the participants were predominantly Christians with Muslims and Traditional worshippers representing the minority group for the study in both groups. This is an indication that Christianity poses little or no restriction to women's political engagement as there was no aspect of the religion according to the respondents that barred women from participating actively in politics. This is supported by the findings conducted in Enugu that religious commitment significantly correlated positively with political participation. (Nwankwo & Agu, 2018) Results from the distribution of the age of respondents in the quantitative data showed that both group were dominated by middle-aged women. What this posits is that the patriarchal set-up that restricts women to the private sphere is weakening in the southwest region as more women are now engaged in public activities that could sustain their family financially and socially. Married women also represent the highest proportion of the participants adopted for the study as this could mean that marital status is not a condition barring woman from political engagement.

Variables	Registered Women N (%)	Unregistered Women N (%)	Statistics
Age group Less than 20 21-40 41- 60 61 and above (The minimum age is 18, the maximum age is 66 and the mean age is 35)	11 (7.3) 100 (66.7) 36 (24.0) 3 (2.0)	5 (3.3) 109 (72.7) 35 (23.3) 1 (0.7)	LR= 3.754 Df=3 P= 0.289
Level of Education Primary Secondary Post-secondary Others	2 (1.4) 34 (23.9) 89 (62.7) 17 (12.0)	13 (8.7) 19 (12.7) 95 (63.3) 23 (15.3)	X ² =13.198 Df= 3 P= 0.004
Religion Islam Christianity Traditional	12 (8.0) 137 (91.3) 1 (0.7)	12 (8.1) 136 (91.3) 1 (1.0)	LR= 0.000 Df= 2 P= 1.000
Employment Status Employed Unemployed	117 (78.5) 32 (21.5)	145 (96.7) 5 (3.3)	X ² =22.692 Df= 1 P<0.001
Occupation Trading Farming Artisan Housewife Student Civil servant Private Sector	33 (22.9) 9 (6.3) 20 (13.9) 19 (13.2) 22 (15.3) 28 (19.4) 13 (9.0)	28 (18.9) 11 (7.4) 7 (4.7) 9 (6.1) 4 (2.7) 87 (58.8) 2 (1.4)	X ² =61.195 Df= 6 P<0.001

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Variables of Respondents

Source: Author's Field Survey (2019)

Study Factor	Registered Women (mean ± SD)	Unregistered Women (mean ± SD)	T test	Df	p-value
Income per month (Naira)	33807.9 ± 48112.0	72610.5 ± 55426.0	-5.487	218	<0.001

Table 2: Level of Income

Source: Author's Field Survey (2019)

There is no significant difference in the proportion of respondents that had tertiary education as their highest level of education between the women with political party affiliation and unregistered women with political party as shown in Figure 1 below. This finding showed that there is reduction in gender discrimination in women's access to education in the southwestern region. This could mean that the programs that are targeted at improving girl child

education in Nigeria is yielding positive result and the influence of urbanization and civilization. This is substantiated by the findings from a related study where education was particularly identified as predictor towards influencing women's political participation. (Dim & Asomah, 2019)

Figure 1: Level of Literacy of Respondents
Source: Author's Field Survey (2019)

The nature of the respondents' occupation as presented in Fig. 2 showed that there is higher concentration of civil servants among the unemployed women with political group while the than the political group. However, the respondents that are unemployed are higher among the women with political party affiliation likewise the self-employed and housewives.

Figure 2
Source: Author's field survey (2019)

4.1. Level of Women's Political Participation

The level of women's political participation was assessed at three levels that are; the gender parity findings in political activities; the level of political involvement among the political and apolitical group; the level of women's political participation at different levels of political activities among the registered women with political party; and the intention to join political party among the respondents in the unregistered women with political party.

4.2. The Level of Gender Equality in Political Participation

The gender parity findings on the levels of women's political participation showed that women's level of political participation has improved, but at a disproportional rate as there is still wide gender gap in some levels of political participation as women participate more at the lower level of political participation. Findings also showed that political participation is shaped by gender power relations; the situation where some positions and roles in the political parties are given based on gender preference. The political leadership positions like the post of political party's women leaders are reserved for women because it aligns with the women's cultural roles and expectations in the society while in most cases, men are the party leaders both at the ward, local government and state level because it also aligns with men's sociocultural roles and expectations. It is, however, noteworthy from the findings that women are now breaking the male jinx by venturing into some levels in politics that were initially reserved for men and contesting political posts alongside their male counterparts. It is also pertinent to note from the study that the level of education of the female politicians is also a determinant factor in the level of women's political participation, as the majority of the female politicians with low level of education participate not to challenge their subordinate position by meeting their strategic gender needs but participate to meet their practical gender needs. However, women's roles in deciding who wins in an election cannot be ignored. This is supported by the excerpt below:

IDI with Honorable Olumide, a 46-year-old male politician in Emure LGA in Ekiti State

"... the participation is low although it is getting better... in just about 5, 6 or 7 years ago, it's very rare to see women in politics but now... although, the percentage is still low compared to that of men... when you look at the area of elective ... when I say elective, I mean those who contested and were voted for... then, when you look at the percentage... so the percentage of women there is almost around 10 or 20 percent to men... or relative of the opposite... when you also look at the appointed positions, it is the same thing... even recently, with all the clamoring for 35 percentage of the elective and political posts yet the government both at the national, state and local level, they have not been able to meet up with that 35 percent... the women are rather been short changed..."

4.3. The Level of Political Involvement among the Registered and Unregistered Women with Political Party

Findings on the level of political involvement among the registered women with political party and unregistered women with political party showed that the level of political affiliation of women impacts on their level of political involvement as the active women in politics by being a card-carrying member of political party participate more in political activities. This finding is substantiated by this excerpt:

Honorable Jegede, a 72-year-old male politician in Ekiti South West LGA in Ekiti State

"...women are participating... during election and even in voting... right from the ward to the local government, and to the state, women are now participating, the awareness is good, they are more aware than before... and even the economic hardship is also pushing women to participate more in politics... the monetization of the election processes by which you vote and get paid..."

Figure 3: Frequency of Participating in Voting
Source: Author's Field Survey (2019)

Variables	Political N (%)	Apolitical N (%)	Statistics
Possession of PVC			$X^2=23.741$ Df= 1 $P<0.001$
No	0 (0.0)	22 (14.7)	
Yes	150 (100.0)	128 (85.3)	
Ever participate in voting exercise			$X^2=32.561$ Df= 1 $P<0.001$
No	0 (0.0)	29 (19.6)	
Yes	150 (0.0)	119 (80.4)	
Intention to vie for political post in future			$X^2=60.926$ Df= 1 $P<0.001$
No	49 (32.9)	114 (78.1)	
Yes	100 (67.1)	32 (21.9)	

Table 3: Level of Political Participation among the Registered and Unregistered Women with Political Party
Source: Author's Field Survey (2019)

4.4. Level of Women's Political Participation at Different Levels of Politics among the Registered Women with Political Party

Results on the level of women's political involvement in political activities at different levels among the active women in politics as shown in Table4 below indicates that the women participate more in political party meetings, rallies, congresses and decision-making exercise but participates less in vying for political parties and contesting for political positions in their political party. This finding is substantiated by the findings from the qualitative data that women's participation is no longer limited to dancing at political rallies, voting and canvassing for votes but the status quo is changing as women also vie for political posts and contest in elections; this may not have been done at the same level with men, but the women are doing more than being political supporters. It was gathered from the participants that they had one time or the other held political posts in their various political parties and also vied as well as contested for elective posts within their political party. The participants also affirmed that there are some gender specific posts in their political party like the post of woman leader that is specifically reserved and made for women while some posts are sacred for men. The interview below expounds further on the findings:

KII with Honorable Bose, a 51-year-old woman, a former political party state woman leader, and a political aspirant in Ekiti South West LGA in Ekiti State

"... I have served as a state woman leader, as I am talking now, I am contesting but it was not easy at all before I could win the primary election... I didn't find it easy all... I didn't find it easy; men are not ready to leave anything for us... at all level, they are not ready, they don't believe in that... women should lead them... but we women had prepared our mind, we are not even ready to take things on the platter of gold... we are ready to work for it... women are ready to occupy such position, we are ready to rule, we are no more ready to be inferior anymore..."

Variables	N (%)
Participation in congresses and meetings	136 (90.7)
Yes	14 (9.3)
No	
Involvement in party's decision making	113 (75.4)
Yes	37 (24.7)
No	
Contest for post within the party	33 (22.0)
Yes	117 (78.0)
No	
Ever vie for political office	34 (22.7)
Yes	113 (75.3)
No	3 (2.0)
Unknown	

Table 4: Level of Women's Political Participation at Different Levels of Politics Among the Registered Women with Political Party
Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

4.5. Intention to Join Political Party among the Unregistered Women with Political Party

The assessment of the respondent's intention to join political party among the unregistered women with politics showed that the women's intention to become actively involved in politics is very low and the explanation for the majority of the respondents' lack of interest in political participation could be precipitated on the gendered nature of the roles of women in the family as well as the society. Political involvement according to the women was not perceived as occupation by the women but as a practice to fulfill some socioeconomic purposes. Women are saddled with the responsibility of caring for their husband as well as rearing and nurturing the children while men's major responsibilities are to provide economic and financial support to the family. The gender roles expectation impacts greatly on the level of women's political participation as women prioritize their domestic duties than any other activities in the society. Therefore, it is difficult for women to abandon their primary role, that is, home care for any other activities. This is further clarified by some of the focus group discussants in the unregistered women with political party in the excerpt below:

Mrs. Adebayo, a civil servant and a 49-year-old FGD participant in the apolitical group in Ikere LGA, Ekiti State

"...most of the women that are involved in politics...they don't have home... they don't usually have settled home and they don't have respect for their husband... so for me, I don't think politics have advantage for women... women should not be involved in it".

Intention to Join Political Party	N (%)
No	122(81.3)
Yes	21(14.0)
Unknown	7(4.7)

Table 5: Intention to Join Political Party among the Unregistered Women with Political Party
Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

4.6. Assessment of Women's Attitude towards Political Participation

The respondents' attitude to political participation at different levels among registered and unregistered women with political party was measured using five-point Likert scale and the score ranged from 1 to 5 to the respondent's responses. The average score for good attitude was 50 and scores below the average score was assumed to have poor attitude towards political participation. The overall score of women's (both group) attitude towards political participation was poor.

Figure 4: Women's Attitude towards Political Participation

Source: Authors Survey

4.7. Assessment of the Women's Attitude to Political Participation at Different Levels of Political Activities

The attitude of respondents is assessed at three different levels that are attitude towards political activities, attitude towards political environment and socio-cultural influence on the respondents' attitude towards political participation.

Variables		Registered Women N (%)	Unregistered Women N (%)	Statistics
Attitude towards political activities	Poor	51 (34.0)	81 (54.0)	X ² = 12.175 Df= 1 P<0.001
	Good	99 (66.0)	69 (46.0)	
Attitude of women towards political environment	Poor	76 (50.7)	55 (36.7)	X ² = 5.976 Df= 1 P= 0.015
	Good	74 (49.3)	95 (63.3)	
Sociocultural and gender roles influence on women's attitude towards political participation	Poor	79 (52.7)	60 (40.0)	X ² = 4.839 Df= 1 P= 0.028
	Good	71 (47.3)	90 (60.0)	

Table 6: Measurement of Respondents Attitude towards Political Participation at Different Levels of Political Participation among Registered and Unregistered Women

Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

Findings from the qualitative data gathered for the study showed that the level of women's political status influences the women's attitude towards political activities in the political arena. The registered women with political party are more exposed and inclined to the political activities than the women that have no affiliation with political parties. In furtherance to this, findings showed that participation in political party congresses, rallies, ward meetings, canvassing for votes and voting are perceived by the female politicians as their duties towards their political parties rather than just an obligation to fulfill one's civil right. Likewise, findings on women's attitude towards accepting and performing some welfare role like catering services and cleaning during political meetings, congresses and other important functions in their political parties showed that women are comfortable with these roles because it aligns with their roles as women in their families and the society. This finding could be substantiated by the social role theory's explanation on the sex differences in social behavior and how the behaviors of women and men generally support and sustain historical gender division of labor in the society. (Eagly & Wood, 2016)

Information gathered from the qualitative data showed that the environment where the political activities occur was perceived to be insecure, and exposes women to a lot of negative practices like physical and sexual assault. This is supported by the findings from a related study that women are exposed to character-damaging practices and wrongful perception of female politicians as insubordinate women, prostitutes and irresponsible mothers (Agbalajobi & Agunbiade, 2016). It was also shown that despite the gender neutrality in the attitude of the male participants towards women's active involvement in politics, the cultural gender roles of women in the family are held in high esteem and the sustainability of these roles is paramount to the political involvement of women. This reservation was based on the notion that since husbands are the head of their wives and head of their families, men should also be the leaders in the society. This view is supported by this submission:

Excerpt: IDI with Honorable Asaolu, a 61-year-old male political appointee in Ikere LGA in Ekiti State

"... Women are supposed to participate in politics... if a woman wants to participate in politics... it will be an agreement between her and her husband to be involved in politics... but if a woman participates in politics without her husband's consent... it can destroy her home... but if a woman is unmarried and she is participating in politics... it

is not good at all... so before a woman could be considered for political posts like senator, governor... she must have a husband... that will show that she is responsible... so, maybe before she leaves home at all, she would have cooked, care for the children and the rest of the family... if she can do that, then she is qualify to go outside to participate in politics...?"

Thus, it could be deduced from the above that men and women are being fixated on their expected gender roles where nonconformity with the cultural gender roles may lead to their rejection or disapproval by their political counterparts. This finding is supported by Sandra Bem (1985) on how cultural practice transforms male and female into masculine and feminine adults. (Bem, 1985) Thus, for a woman to be respected as a politician that could be considered for political positions in the society, she should be married and also fulfill her expected responsibilities at home as a woman.

4.8. Association between Hood-Demographic Characteristics and Attitude towards Political Participation

Inferences on the association between socio-demographic characteristics and respondents' attitude towards political participation showed that there is no significant association between respondents' marital status, level of education and attitude to political participation.

Variables	Attitude Toward Political Participation		Statistics
	Poor N (%)	Good N (%)	
Marital status			
Single	33 (39.3)	51 (60.7)	LR=7.442 Df= 3 P= 0.059
Married	116 (56.6)	89 (43.4)	
Separated	3 (50.0)	3 (50.0)	
Widowed	2 (40.0)	3 (60.0)	
Level of education			
Primary	5 (33.3)	10 (66.7)	X ² =4.625 Df= 3 P= 0.201
Secondary	22 (41.5)	31 (58.5)	
Tertiary	97 (52.7)	87 (47.3)	
Others	23 (57.5)	17 (42.5)	
Employment Status			
Employed	142 (54.2)	120 (45.8)	X ² =6.150 Df= 1 P= 0.013
Unemployed	12 (32.4)	25 (67.6)	
Occupation			
Unemployed	10 (29.4)	24 (70.6)	X ² = 13.592 Df= 3 P= 0.004
Self employed	66 (48.5)	70 (51.5)	
Private sector	6 (40.0)	9 (60.0)	
Civil servant	72 (62.6)	43 (37.4)	
Membership in Political Parties			
Registered member of political party	59 (39.3%)	91 (60.7)	X ² =17.292 Df= 1 p>0.001
Unregistered member of political	95 (63.3)	55 (36.7)	
Local Government Area			
Ikere	42 (27.3)	58 (39.7)	X ² = 6.511 Df= 2 P= 0.039
Ekiti South-West	52 (33.8)	48 (32.9)	
Emure	60 (39.0)	40 (27.4)	

Table 7: Association between Respondent's Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Attitude towards Political Participation
Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

In furtherance to the above, findings also showed that there is significant difference on the age of the respondents and attitude of women towards political participation as shown in Table 8. Likewise, as shown in Table 9, there are higher odds for older women to participate in politics.

Study Factor	Poor (mean ± SD)	Good (mean ± SD)	T test	Df	p-value
Age (years)	37.0 ± 8.9	33.4 ± 9.9	3.272	298	0.001
Income per month (Naira)	53714.6 ± 57.034.8	56628.7 ± 53894.5	-0.384	218	0.701

Table 8: Association Between Some Respondent's Selected Characteristics and Attitude towards Women's Political Participation
Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

Variables	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I	P value
Age			
Less than 20	Ref		
21-40	0.191	0.041- 0.900	0.036
41-60	0.117	0.023- 0.585	0.009
61 and above	0.779	0.049- 12.485	0.860
Level of education			
Primary	Ref		
Secondary	0.821	0.233- 2.898	0.759
Tertiary	0.576	0.178- 1.868	0.358
Others	0.555	0.147- 2.099	0.386
Occupation			
Unemployed	Ref		
Self employed	0.587	0.243- 1.417	0.236
Private sector	0.867	0.234 - 3.213	0.831
Civil servant	0.321	0.135- 0.765	0.010

Table 9: Binary Logistic Regression Analysis of the Association between Respondents Characteristics and Their Attitude towards Political Participation

Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

4.9. Women's Attitude towards Political Participation

Results on the influence of motivating factors on women's attitude towards political participation showed that women participate in politics to meet both their practical and strategic gender needs but the women's ability to meet their practical gender needs takes precedence over other needs. This could be the reason for the women's dominance at political ward meetings, rallies, congresses and voting levels of political participation. This finding is supported by this excerpt: Madam Rhoda, a farmer and a 47-year-old FGD participant in the political group in Emure LGA, Ekiti State

"... if a politician reaches greater height in politics... occupying elective or appointed political positions... it makes women to realize that they are wanted in the party... we also participate to help our husbands to get contracts with our connection... we also participate to secure our children's future..."

Similarly, findings showed that some gender-sensitive programs had been designed and implemented in the senatorial district to bridge gender gaps in political participation and motivate women towards participating actively in politics. The programs are gender equality sensitization programs and free nomination forms for women vying for elective positions in the political parties. Though, according to the participants, these initiatives are not enough as the women are still confronted with inadequate economic resources that are needed to compete at equal level with the male politicians. Results also showed that the level of awareness on the gender equality tools and policies that are geared towards increasing women's political involvement and supporting the attainment of gender parity in political participation is very low in the senatorial district. According to the interviewees, there had been some gender equality sensitization programs conducted to improve women's political participation by encouraging men to support their wives and daughters by highlighting the moral, economic and social benefits in attaining gender equality in political participation in the society. Examples are, women's sympathetic nature as a good leadership quality and the ability to give room for gender comparison in leadership but the importance of maintaining the cultural gender division of labor status quo were highlighted in these sensitization programs. Women were told not to neglect their domestic roles as wives, mothers and also maintain the gendered place of their husband at home as the head of the family. This is espoused in the submission from the excerpt below:

KII with Honorable Bose, a 51-year-old woman, a former political party state woman leader, and a political aspirant in Ekiti South West LGA in Ekiti State

"... that is the 35 percent affirmative action... there are so many other bills that were passed even at the state level but the thing is ... the governors are not implementing the bills... they are not implementing the policies... we have so many bills but they are not embedded in the Nigerian constitution... the women in politics at the grassroots level are also aware of the policies even at the local governments and ward levels... even as a leader we are making sure that we implement that 35 percent at the ward level, in the area of selection of ward executive... that is woman leader and it is because they don't have alternative than to put woman there...we also have sensitization programs where we encourage men in the party to allow their wife's to participate in politics and also advice the women not to neglect their duties to their as wife and mother at home..."

Political Group (FGD)	Variables		
	Ikere LGA 9	Emure LGA 8	ESW LGA 8
LGA and Number of discussants			
Motivating Factors towards Meeting Practical Gender Needs			
Politics is an avenue for me to provide food for my family	+++	+++	+++
Participating in politics gives me opportunity to secure employment for my children	+++	+++	+++
Politics is a source of income generation for me	+++	+++	+++
I get social support from my political party to meet the needs of my family	+++	+++	+++
Politics gives me social connections to provide for my family	+++	+++	+++
Motivating Factors towards Meeting Strategic Gender Needs			
Women are given free nomination forms for elective positions in my political party	+++	+++	+++
I believed that what a man can do, a woman can do better	+++	+++	+++
Men and women are accorded equal opportunities in my political party	+	+	+
I am currently a political office holder at the state or local level			
There had been gender considerations in the political appointments within the party and state level	++	+	++
I am aware of the gender equality tools and policies that supports female political participation	-	+	-
Women's population has a lot of prospects for female politicians	+++	+++	+++
I am participating in politics to achieve gender equality for women in governance and decision-making activities	+++	+++	+++

Table 10: Assessment of Factors Motivating Participants Attitude in FGD Among the Political Group towards Political Participation

Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

Key: + = Where an opinion was expressed by 1-2 participants

++ = Where an opinion was expressed by 3 - 5 participants

+++ = Where an opinion was expressed by 6+ participants

- = Where that opinion was not expressed at all

4.10. Challenges Confronting Women's Participation at Equal Level with Men in Politics

4.10.1. Socio-Economic Challenges Affecting Women's Political Participation at Equal Level with Men

The challenges confronting women towards the attainment of gender equality was assessed using the socio-economic challenges facing women and challenges in the political environment. As shown in Table 11 below, women are faced with socioeconomic problems due to inadequate access to finance which is an important factor in excelling politically in Nigeria. In order to change the power structure in terms of gender equality, women need money which they have limited access to due to women's long years of economic disadvantaged position in the country. This finding is corroborated by the submissions of the following studies: Awofeso (2014), Agbalajobi (2010), Akpan (2015), and Amu (2016). It was shown from the study that men have the highest control of economic resources in the country and the cultural practices garner them political support from their families and the society. This is supported by the excerpt below: KII with Honorable Jegede, a 72-year-old man and PDP party executive in Ekiti South West LGA in Ekiti State

"... Politics involves a lot of risk and women don't want to lose... like in any election. If they lost any election, they will not come to make any other attempt... I cannot see any woman who can contest for the same position for four times, different times without losing courage but man let me try again... so the courage is not there ...women are also afraid of sexual harassment... they termed it "bodily commitment" among themselves because of the idea that women cannot excel politically without engaging in sexual relationship with the male politicians... then education... men are more educated than women... our culture, women are not free, they have many things to do at home, to take care of their husband, to take care of their children, women don't want their home to break...."

Variables	Political Group (FGD)			Apolitical Group (FGD)		
LGA and Number of Discussants	Ikere LGA 9	Emure LGA 8	ESW LGA 8	Ikere LGA 9	Emure LGA 8	ESW LGA 10
My marriage poses a barrier to my level political involvement	-	++	++	+++	+++	+++
Domestic duties limit my level of political involvement	-	++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Financial constraint affects my level of participation in politics	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Men are our husband, they are our crown, they are the head of the family, therefore, they are supposed to be our leaders but women too can still rule	+++	++	+++	+	-	+++
Negative perception of female politicians as prostitutes and irresponsible women	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Societal practices that limit the support enjoyed by women from men and their fellow women to attain leadership positions	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Nigerian politics involves a lot of money and been a spendthrift but women are prudent with money, this limits their level of political attainment	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Some religious practices that place women under men limits the attainment of gender parity in politics	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++

Table 11: Socio-Economic Challenges among the FGD Participants

Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

Key: + = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 1-2 Participants

++ = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 3 - 5 Participants

+++ = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 6+ Participants

- = Where That Opinion Was Not Expressed at All

4.10.2. Challenging Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation at Equal Level with Men in the Political Environment

Results on the challenging factors in the political environment showed that women are faced with some ill practices in the political environment. The fear of being sexually harassed influences the women's attitude towards political participation because majority of the participants in the qualitative aspect expressed that there is a limit to the level a woman can attain politically without being sexually harassed; the women used the language "bodily commitment" to express this view. Culturally, women are expected to possess certain qualities to be respected, and maintain their dignity in their families as well as the society. A situation where a woman allowed herself to be sexually harassed for political reasons or other related purposes, she will be adjudged to be promiscuous, thereby losing her dignity as a virtuous woman in the society. Also, the nature of the political environment is also considered to be gender neutral with limited considerations for female politicians as the disadvantaged group in politics. This is corroborated by the findings from a similar study that the nature of Nigerian politics, particularly in the past, scares women from actively participating in politics; so also, is the long years of male dominance of the political arena which had provided the men lots of opportunities and advantages over the women. (Obiyan & Akindele, 2002) In furtherance to the above, the women gendered nature of being weaker than men socially and biologically as regards risk-taking and political hooliganism were also seen from the study as reasons for the women's inability to participate equally with men in politics. The findings from a study conducted by Afigbo (2005) corroborate the finding of this study. The finding elucidates further that the practice of Nigerian politics involves taking a lot of risk financially and physically, and women are perceived to be good at-risk avoidance and also have very low tolerance for failure. Unlike men who have the courage and the resources to contest severally without winning any election, women get discouraged and easily withdraw from activities that do not benefit them. The women's orientation through socialization process could be responsible for the women's political attitude and this limits the realization of political gender justice. This is explained in the submission from a discussant:

Mrs. Arowolo, a farmer and a 47-year-old FGD participant in the political group in Emure LGA, Ekiti State

"...like me, I am the woman leader in my ward... we have women's group and we also hold our own separate meetings but I don't encourage women that are still giving birth to participate in politics because to me... politics is not meant for young mothers but women with grown up children...even apart from that... money... men can make money more than women because of the freedom they have ... though there is no way women can meet with the financial in-depth of any man... like what is happening in the street now, if you get... 10 yahoo boys, 8 will be men... and if any woman is caught, they will ask... what brought her there? Doesn't she know that she's a woman?"

Variables	Political N (%)	Apolitical N (%)	Statistics
Godfatherism No Yes	11 (7.3) 139 (92.7)	38 (25.3) 112 (74.7)	$X^2=17.782$ Df= 1 P<0.001
Unsecured political environment No Yes	11 (7.3) 139 (92.7)	32 (21.3) 118 (78.7)	$X^2=11.972$ Df= 1 P=0.001
Men unfriendliness to women in political arena No Yes	35 (23.3) 115 (76.7)	68 (45.3) 82 (54.7)	$X^2=16.101$ Df= 1 P<0.001
Lack of mentorship to attain leadership position No Yes	16 (10.7) 134 (89.3)	40 (27.2) 107 (72.8)	$X^2=13.282$ Df= 1 P<0.001
Nocturnal nature of political meetings No Yes	15 (10.0) 135 (90.0)	3 (35.3) 97 (64.7)	$X^2=27.459$ Df= 1 P<0.001
Influence of gender division of labour No Yes	16 (10.7) 134 (89.3)	30 (20.0) 120 (80.0)	$X^2=5.033$ Df= 1 P=0.025
Religious perception of place of women in the society No Yes	29 (19.3) 121 (80.7)	52 (35.1) 96 (64.9)	$X^2=9.398$ Df= 1 P= 0.002
Child bearing and child rearing No Yes	16 (10.7) 134 (89.3)	33 (22.0) 117 (78.0)	$X^2=7.049$ Df= 1 P= 0.008
Time constraints No Yes	23(15.3) 127(84.7)	33 (22.0) 117 (78.0)	$X^2=2.196$ Df= 1 P= 0.138
Women's view of level of political involvement No Yes	23 (15.3) 127 (84.7)	35 (23.3) 115 (76.7)	$X^2=3.078$ Df= 1 P=0.079
Women's disposition towards active female politician No Yes	38 (25.3) 112 (74.7)	36 (24.0) 114 (76.0)	$X^2=0.072$ Df= 1 P=0.789

*Table 12: Factors Affecting Women in the Political Environment towards
Attaining Gender Equality in Political Participation
Source: Author's Field Survey 2019*

Further assessment on the challenges militating against the attainment of gender balance in political participation showed that women are confronted with limited access to and control of resources that could increase their level of political involvement as seen in the Table 13. Likewise, the decision-making structure appropriates more power to men socially and politically than women in the society. This is exemplified in the last two rungs of the ladder of political participation identified by Arstein (2019) that are non-participation and tokenism where women participate mainly at these levels not as decision-makers or opinionates.

LGAs and Number of Discussants	Political Group		
	Ikere LGA	Emure LGA	ESW LGA
Access to Resources			
I have served (or currently serving) as a political representative in my LGA	+	+	+
My political position had earned me financial security	-	-	-
I have political mentors	-	-	-
I can access fund to contest in elections through loans from financial institutions	-	-	-
I have access to money and property inheritance	+++	+++	+++
I am financially secured without my husband's support	++	+	+
Control Over Resources			
I have full control over my finances	+	-	-
I own lands and other properties	++	-	+
I own the collaterals that are required to access financial loan	+	-	+
Women's landed properties are supposed to be registered in their husband's (or father's or male children's) name	+++	+++	++
I have full control over my family finances	-	-	-
Women are in charge of the political affairs in my community	-	-	-
Decision Making Structure			
Women are the leader in my community	-	-	-
I have autonomy over my decisions	-	-	-
I became a politician without my husband or my father's consent	-	-	-
The level of my political involvement was decided by my husband or my father or my children	+++	+++	+++
My political decisions are always influenced by my husband or my male children	+++	+++	+++

Table 13: Challenges Confronting Women's Attainment of Gender Equality in Politics Using Tool Three of Moser's Framework – Access to Resources, Control of Resources and Decision-Making Structure among the FGD Participants in the Political Group

Source: Author's Field Survey 2019

Key: + = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 1-2 Participants

++ = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 3 - 5 Participants

+++ = Where an Opinion Was Expressed by 6+ Participants

- = Where That Opinion Was Not Expressed at All

5. Conclusion

Deductions from this study have shown that women's attitude towards political participation had improved but more still need to be done in positively improving the attitude of women, generally, towards participating actively in politics. It was found that attainment of gender equality in education does not directly translate to gender equality in politics and improved attitude toward women's political involvement. There had also been some improvements in the level of women's political participation as compared to the previous reports on the level of gender disparity in some levels of political activities as women are now vying for political positions and contesting alongside their male counterparts in elections. Likewise, the domination of married women in the political group and the women's ability to multitask themselves by maintaining their tripartite roles and actively participating in politics is an indication that the gender roles and sociocultural expectations that limit women's freedom are weakening and patriarchy is being renegotiated.

However, despite all the positive improvements in the women's attitude towards political participation as well as the level of women's political participation, "home management" and unequal gender power relations in access to resources and decision-making still remain the major influencers of women's attitude towards political participation. Lastly, this study had shown that women occupy important positions in the society and that the roles of women in political activities as well as in governance are enormous. Hence, the need for improvement in women's attitude towards political participation as a way towards improving the level of women's political participation and attaining gender parity in the governance. The study therefore recommends that there should be laws backing the attainment of gender equality in political participation by enforcing the implementation of the policies and appropriation of gender equality bill in political participation into the Nigerian constitution. There is need for an all-inclusive gender responsive policy covering all stakeholders in political practice and this policy should be designed to respond to the cultural gender role differences and challenges in the society. The academic and research institutions should adopt and apply gender analysis tools and frameworks in carrying out research and development programs. Likewise, there should be inculcation of gender inclusive language that is void of gender bias and stereotypes that can influence people's attitude in the society. Lastly, there should be returns on investment for women's political commitments through financial aids, nomination for political posts, moral and economic compensations.

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