Women, marginalisation and politics in Africa and Asia

Amaka Theresa Oriaku Emordi[1]*, Papia Sengupta[2] and Hope A. Ikednma[1]

[1]Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.
[2]Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi-110067, India.

*Corresponding author. Email: amakaemordi@oau.edu.ng/amakaemordi@gmail.com; Tel: +234 (80) 3573 7410.

ABSTRACT: Across the world, women are on the fringes in all facets of life endeavours- economy, education, governance, and politics compared to their male counterparts. Irrespective of the geographical location, women are culturally and socially disadvantaged. They are systematically deprived of individual choices, economic opportunities, political rights, political power as well as intellectual recognition. Women are on the lower incomes ladder compare to their male counterparts. Feminists have argued that women's fivefold role – mother, wife, home-manager, informal educator, and family nurse is responsible for women's impediments in life. As a beast of burdens, women have obstructed them from pursuing their aspirations at the same speed as their male counterparts. Consequently, women are marginal in the scheme of mainstream issues of life as politics and economy. Using secondary data and applying the radical feminist theory, women marginalization in Nigeria and India was investigated. The paper revealed some forms of women marginalization in these countries and their similarities to show that women marginalization is a universal phenomenon, cutting across culture, race, and continent. While the concept of marginalization may vary according to the historical and socio-economical context of societies like Nigeria and India, its impact on the marginalized remains the same across cultures, peoples, and continents. To address this gender imbalance and disparity in opportunities between men and women, there is a need for a rotund education for a large majority of women in these continents to accelerate the empowerment of women in every aspect of life.

Keywords: India, marginalization, Nigeria, politics, women.

INTRODUCTION

Yomi (2018) posits that the World Poverty Clock (2019) shows Nigeria and India in cyclic poverty races as they exchange positions each year without going far from each other. From the global lens, the two continents are also synonymous in their culture of women marginalization positions although Nigeria has overtaken India as the country with the most extreme poor people in the world. This position underscores the fact that India has a population that is seven times larger than Nigeria's. UNECA (2009) report indicates that women in Nigeria and India still constitute the underclasses.

The women are systematically deprived of opportunities in various areas of life and are less able to contribute to issues that will positively impact their lives in the development process than their male counterparts. Factors such as education, class, ethnicity, kinship, marital status and religion play a role in curbing or escalating the effect of this denial or inequality experiences in some societies in Nigeria and India (UNECA, Africa Women's Report, 2009). The experiences of Nigerian women to a large extent are replicated in the life of women in India. This confirms why Vijayavani (2018) stressed that often time in "India women who might be more qualified than their male counterparts in most of the organizations are considered inferior being, arguing that women marginalization has been fostered by different economic conditions, and under the influence of specific historical, cultural, legal, and religious strongholds which are revealed in the social status of women. Women marginalization whether structural, technological or any other form is one of the key indicators of gender inequality in Nigeria and India.

In general, women are marginalized relative to men in most cultures especially in Nigeria and India. In both countries, as feminism holds, women are systematically denied economic opportunities, political power, and intellectual recognition (Smita, 2012). Consequently, gender inequality, marginalization, and discrimination have been some of the major problems hindering the economic growth and political development of women, hence, women are not able to contribute their own quota in development agendas as their male counterparts (Emordi, 2019). The situation is so because marginalization is the powerlessness and outlaw by a group or groups experience as a result of inequality to control of resources and power structures within society (Vijayavani, 2018). World Economic Forum (2015) contends that the marginalization of women has been a long-term and universal problem with enormous social and economic implycations. Its intensity and consequences vary according to countries and cultures (WEF 2015).

Collins's (2015) defined marginalization as an act of prejudice against certain groups in formal and informal settings such as discrimination in job recruitment, promotions, and performance appraisals in organizations and stereotyping in social settings. To him, marginalization keeps and places such people in disempowered positions. While the concept of marginalization may vary according to the historical and socio-economical context of societies like Nigeria and India, its impact on the marginalized remains the same across cultures, peoples, and continents. To address this gender imbalance and disparity in opportunities between men and women, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was ratified in 1979. However, despite the triumphs of bringing the concerns to the spotlight, its impact has no toga of uniformity across states. This incongruity is, to an extent, elucidated by the postulations among states towards the implementation of the objectives of UN Conventions on women empowerment. As suggested by Zwingel (2005), inter-governmental dialogues and national programs affect the ideas and application of gender parity and development enshrined in CEDAW.

Nigeria and India are examples of democracies where the constitutions recognize freedom and equality of its citizens. Articles 17(1) & (2) of the Nigerian constitution and article 14-16 of the Indian constitution explicitly confirmed these assertions in both countries (Constitution of India 2007). However, the factors that underpinning, perpetuate and sustain women marginalization in the two countries located in different continents merit some investigations by scholars in both countries with relevant and primary experiences as women. This paper therefore took rigor to uncover the inherent epiphany of marginalization of women across the two continents to establish the United Nations (2014) Women World Survey Report that women marginalization is without borders with Nigeria and India representing the continents of African and Asian examples.

WOMEN MARGINALIZATION IN NIGERIA AND INDIA

Women's marginalization is predominant in almost all spheres of the economy. Adegoke et al. (2016) contend that the reason for the marginalization of some groups or individuals can be attributed to cultural and structural challenges. Owoyemi and Olusanya (2014) made it known that women have continuously faced massive inequalities in the labour market. They believe that in working life, women experience higher rates of unemployment, fewer opportunities for a career, and lower wages. Although women's marginalization is a worldwide phenomenon that is prevalent in economic development and pervades every society, it is worse and more intense in developing countries such as Nigeria and India (Dormekpor, 2015).

Scholars like Bennett (2002) and Mama (2003) argue that women and men experience higher education differently and that social relations within educational institutions depict inequalities in the operations of power, as is evident in the statistics of access to power, employment, decision-making bodies, welfare, and capacity to access research and professional opportunities (Bennett, 2002; Mama, 2003). It is hard to fathom that women whose population stands at approximately half of the world's population, have remained marginalized in most societies. However, marginalization does not reckon with peoples' numerical or qualification status but their position in the political and economic structure of the society. Confirming Karl Marx's (1818-1883) assertion in his historical materialism that changes in economic development are a result of economic conditions alone rather than ideas. Women may therefore be educated but not occupying rightful positions in politics and other strategic areas of life will still keep them marginalized. Hence economic determinism is the beginning point in his perspective which includes the process of production, distribution, and exchange of goods and services. Also, the way in which human beings respond to material challenges of their existence. This is why highly educated women still struggle to attain higher positions as they face untold and unwritten difficult processes in their attempt to access power. Olugbemi (2004) stress that as early as the colonial era, the marginalization of women has been standard practice in Nigeria's patriarchal political system until 1976 in most commonwealth nations. In the early years of independence, women were not even allowed to vote in Northern Nigeria, and women marginalized in developing countries like Nigeria continued into the 4th republic.

In India, women were granted enfranchised between 1919 and 1929 in all of the British Provinces, but with some stringent conditions and limitations such as restrictions on property right, literacy, and their marital status, this allows 2.5% of the women in India to vote. This pronouncement was incorporated into the Government of Indian Act 1935. In Nigeria, women's marginalization and exclusion from mainstream politics and political development have remained a reoccurring feature of Nigerian and Indian politics and political development. In India, Madras was

the first to grant women's suffrage in 1921, but only to those men and women who owned landed property according to the British administration's records. The rights granted in response to the movement towards suffrage was limited to qualifications of literacy and property ownership, including property ownership of hus-bands. This excluded the vast majority of Indian women and men from voting, because they were poor. This changed in 1950 when universal suffrage was granted to all adult Indian citizens. However, women are still marginal in mainstream politics and leadership positions

Johnson (2014) maintained that there are about 15% of women in the academic faculty and they reportedly expe-rience discrimination, harassment, and, in some cases, violence. Similarly, Bakari and Leach (2007, 2009) confirmed that in Nigerian higher education institutions, women are not just marginalized but are also sexually harassed by male lecturers and staff, and despite the complaints, the authorities took no action. Consequently, women in academics often become complacent and compliant, scarcely heard and rarely occupy juicy positions in the higher education system and are therefore content with what the system hands down to them.

COMPARISON OF WOMEN MARGINALIZATION IN NIGERIA AND INDIA

Syed and Van Buren (2014) adduced that gender inequality varies in countries and societies due to different cultural and societal practices and ideologies. Nigeria like India is very diverse in terms of religion, caste, class, languages, and culture. The cultural diversity of Nigeria and India and gender disparity are reflected in all spheres of life. Women in these countries have remained marginalized since the countries' independence although some progress has been made much remained to be achieved in Indian's seventy years and Nigeria's 60 years of statehood. To explain women's marginalization in these two countries, this section therefore will compare women's marginalization in Nigeria and India using six parameters. These are: (1). Patriarchy and advocacy, (2). Political representation, (3). Positive discrimination and economic independence, (4). Women education, (5). Government involvement and policy instruments, and (6). Customary laws discriminate against women.

Patriarchy in Nigeria and India

Nigeria and India are patriarchal, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multicultural, and religious countries. However, one of the major factors responsible for the subordinated position of women in both societies is patriarchy. Patriarchy is much embedded and enshrined in the mindset of men starting from childhood through socialization. In India, regardless of caste and religious affinities, there remains a huge preference for the male child. The female child is considered a burden due to spending on marriage and dowry. The Economic Survey of India (2018) reiterated the son meta-preference as interlinked to women development and equal position in India. In Nigeria and India, the son meta-preference also mount a great deal of pressure on women's health and economic empowerment as women are pressured to continue giving birth until they have the desired number of sons (Economic Survey of India 2018). Patriarchy in India leads to a skewed sex ratio. Table 1 gives a comparative analysis of the sex ratio in India. The sex ratio as shown in Table 1 reveals that the sex ratio has steadily declined over the last century but it has not been able to challenge patriarchy. On the other hand, Nigeria is a strongly patriarchal society that subjects women to male dominance and female subservience. Women are seen to belong to the home and are incapable of making sound decisions. Emordi (2016) argues that indigenous conjectural narratives such as *nwanyi si na azu anywu mamiri* (women that urinate from the back) and *ama onye ozo* (those that belong to another person's compound) are used to depict that women have smaller reasoning faculties than men, and are therefore deprived of property rights and inheritance in their father's estate in some communities in Nigeria especially the southeastern part. Conjectural perception of women and their capability to function emanates from patriarchy. This explains why it is difficult for men to have women in mainstream political positions as leaders (Iloh and Ikenna, 2009). Oyelude, in an interview with the Emordi, in 2019 stressed that women should be given the opportunity to contribute their quotas in national development, after all, both men and women are endowed with brains and there is no small or big brain, male or women brain rather a brain is a brain.

Furthermore, the patriarchal mindset and the skewed sex ratio coupled with son-preference in India, male child preference in Nigeria have escalated and permeated women's marginalization. Again, crimes against women have witnessed a steep rise over the years. Incidents of rape, molestation, sexual harassment, and dowry deaths, cruelty by husbands and relatives, and assaults on women have increased in both countries. In most of these cases, justice for women is oftentimes truncated and women are often blamed for their abuses.

The worst condition is that even education which should have been empowering people has not helped much in changing women's position in India and also in Nigeria (Sengupta 2014). Table 2 also showed that with time even though the literacy percentage of women has increased from 25.68 in 1981 to 62.98 in 2015 (Statistical Portal of India, 2018). This data shows that crimes against women have increased rapidly, even though the percentage of women literacy has also increased from 8.86 percent in 1951 (including rural and urban areas) to 64.63 percent in 2011 (Government of India, 2017; 47). This situation is not different from the Nigerian experience. Women in both

Tables 1. Gender distribution in selected political offices in Nigeria (1999 – 2015).

| Years | Political Offices | | | | | |
| | Senate | | House of Representatives | | States of Assemblies | |
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
1999	106 (97.2)	3 (1.8)	347 (96.4)	13 (3.6)	966 (98.8)	12 (1.21)
2003	105 (96.3)	4 (3.7)	318 (94.2)	21 (5.8)	912 (96.0)	39 (4.0)
2007	100 (91.7)	9 (8.3)	333 (92.5)	27 (7.5)	936 (94.5)	54 (5.5)
2011	101 (92.7)	8 (7.3)	335 (93.1)	25 (6.9)	922 (93.1)	68 (6.9)
2015	102 (93.6)	7 (6.4)	346 (96.1)	14 (3.9)	NA	NA

Adapted with modification from Aina (2012).

Table 2. Sex ratio in India.

Year	Females per 1000 males
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933

Source: Constructed by the author from Census of India 2001, Statement. 18. http://censusindia.gov.in/Data_Products/Library/Provisional_Population_Total_link/PDF_Links/chapter6.pdf.

countries and continents are perceived as subordinate to men leading to unequal rights, opportunities, and roles. Supporting this opinion, Okpalaobi (2011) and Perryman et al. (2016) report that patriarchal cultures tend to frustrate the efforts of women activists who are striving for women's rights.

In Nigeria, patriarchal culture limits women's roles to domestic chores. Makama (2013) references the common belief in Nigeria that "the best place for women is in the kitchen". Osunde and Olookoba (2014) argue that the Nigerian culture perceives and portrays women as weak and inferior to men and have their roles limited mainly to domestic chores and in most cases are often undervalued and underpaid at work. Collaborating this, Emordi (2016) argues that Nigeria is a patriarchal society with lots of conjectures that depict women as having small brains. Dlamini and Adams (2014) noted that the patriarchal system in higher education institutions is evident in the disempowerment of women who are portrayed and treated as inferior to men. According to Johnson (2014), women are confined to studying humanitarian courses and are relegated to care jobs and secretarial support services which are accorded less academic or professional value.

In another study, Bakari and Leach (2009) report an alarming gap between women and men in 'literacy, school enrolments, a share of national income, and participation in the labour market and public offices'. The authors report that the patriarchal system prevails in colleges because women are perceived as inferior to men and also due to 'the absence of a national or local policy or legal framework on gender equity, and weak enforcement of existing regulations and procedures'.

Government policy instrument

The decade of the 1990s was very eventful for the women's movement in India. In 1990, the National Commission for Women was established with a mandate "to investigate and examine all matters relating to safeguards provided to women under the Indian Constitution and other law" (National Commission for Women Act, 1990). The Domestic Violence against Women Bill was drafted in 1999 by the Women's Rights Initiative (Ghadially 2007: 22). This bill became an Act after the Indian Parliament passed it in 2005. On the work front, the Sexual Harassment of Women in Workplace, Prohibition, Prevention and Redressal Act was passed in 2013. This was after a delay of twenty years as India was a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993 (Sexual Harassment Act of India, 2013). The passage of this bill saw the initiative of starting gender cells called "Women Development Cell' in colleges and universities to spread awareness among the youth about sexual harassment and how to redress it. Despite the passing of legislation on Domestic Violence 2005, Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technique Act 1994 and Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013, Nigeria and Indian women still live life in an environment full of insecurity and violence. In these countries, it is not the inadequacy of laws but its effective implementation coupled with corrupt administration and police that forces women to live a life as second-class citizens but effective laws that will encourage gender equality. The constitutions of Nigeria and India guarantee equal rights to men and women but they are only on paper the real situation is far different (Sengupta, 2014: 1-2).

Table 3. Crime against women in India 2001-2014

Year	Rape	Kidnapping and abduction	Dowry deaths	Assault on women modesty	Cruelty by husband/relatives	Cases under dowry prohibition	Indecent representation
2001	16075	14645	6822	44098	49237	3222	1052
2004	18233	15578	7026	44568	58121	3592	1378
2006	19348	17414	7618	46583	63128	4504	1562
2010	22172	29795	8391	50574	94041	5182	895
2014	36735	57311	8455	91970	122877	10050	---

Source: Constructed by the author from National Crime Record Bureau data 2001-2014.

Customary laws and cultural practices

Olateru-Olagbegi and Afolabi (2011) observe that both customary and religious laws in Nigeria have fallen short of protecting women's rights. For instance, the Islamic Sharia law and Igbo customary law discriminate against women in several ways. Although the issue of female subordination to males was also noted by the Minister for Women Affairs and Social Development in a message in the National Gender Policy FRN (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2006), there she persists that discrimination exist in national and state statutes, customary and religious laws. Anyoha et al. (2015) identify cultural and religious customs and norms as causes of gender discrimination that restrict women's ability to develop and utilize their full potential. Another cause for women marginalization embedded in societies' culture is child-marriages of the girl child in Nigeria and India which also stalls girl-child education in these countries.

Again, in Nigeria, customs, traditions, sexual stereo-typing of social roles, and cultural prejudice are barriers to women enjoying their rights and full participation on an equal basis with their male counterparts in national deve-lopment. As earlier stated, cultural traditions and religious ideologies play a significant role in women's marginalization. This is a result of the patriarchal mindset that promotes female subordination to men and limits their active participation in employment and broader society. Both in Nigeria and India religion is intricately intertwined with the cultural, socio-economic, and political lives of people. Dormekpor (2015) notes that religion is a complex issue that has a strong influence on the behaviour of the individual which stems and links to traditional norms, the formulation and enforcement of national and regional laws. In a study of gender equality in Nigeria, Para-Mallam (2010) stressed that Christianity and Islam, the two predo-minant religious beliefs, penetrate all aspects of the life of the people through social, cultural, and political traditions.

The interplay of religion, politics, and laws

Emordi (2016) maintained that women's exclusion and marginalization lead to underdevelopment of the full potentials of womenfolk and their contributions in development process of their societies. Owoyemi and

Olusanya (2014) state that gender segregation and seclusion in Islam or submission to men in Christianity are factors that promote discrimination against women. Both religions define the acceptable roles for women and limit their active participation in society thereby fostering marginalization and inequality, impeding the implementation of CEDAW and women's development.

The media

The media is another sphere that depicts women's marginalization. Oyinade et al. (2013) observed that since the inception of Nigerian mainstream media, men have dominated it. Anyanwu (2001) notes that 'in Nigerian newspapers, women are seen, not heard as media still churn out stereotypical female issues that limit the power of women in society. Also, their voices are not aired or heard on matters like 'politics, economy, technology, commerce, and industry, or even crime. Pictures of women found in the Nigerian media, primarily and most times promote their domestic and sexual qualities. For instance, in the print media particularly, in the use of content and placement, women are portrayed as something to be trivialized or sexualized. They are usually presented with negative or inappropriate images. Amobi (2013) argues that Nigerian media is devoid of gender parity, as women are typically ignored or denied and those that strive to be visible; are confronted with biases and negative stereotypes. They are usually offered 'supportive roles for natural order' with little voice, thereby making them vulnerable. Referring to Fab-Ukozor (2004), Amobi (2013) reports that media coverage is gender-biased because women are not part of the group responsible for setting the agenda in media.

Women and political representation in India and Nigeria

In the area of politics; In 2014 and 2015, Nigeria had only 6.7% and 5.6% respectively of women's representation in parliament (World Bank, 2016). Statistics show that party politics and governance throughout post-colonial Nigeria have been marked by a striking exclusion and marginaliza-tion of women in politics (Table 1). It is quite paradoxical
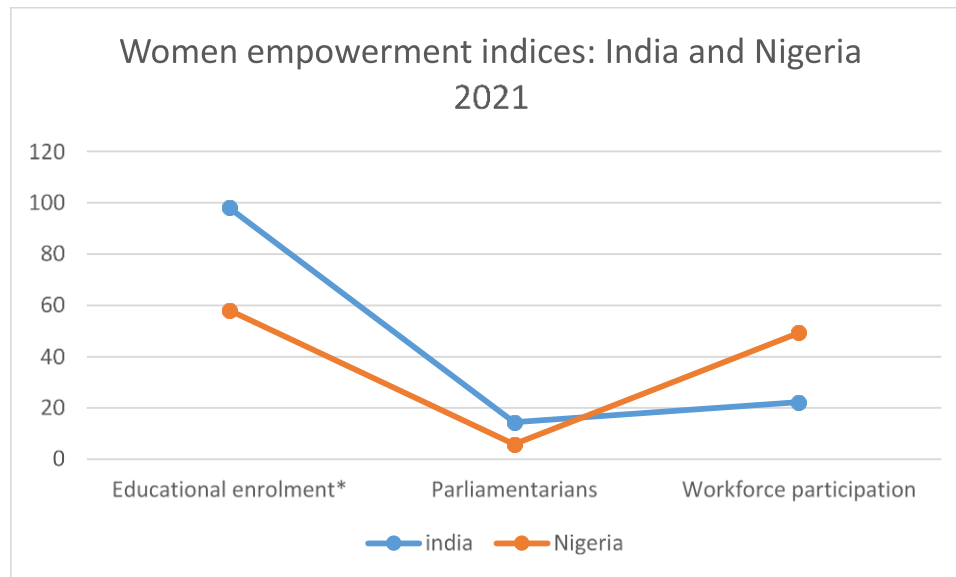
Figure 1. Women empowerment indices: India and Nigeria 2021.
Source: Constructed from Global Gender Gap Report 2021. World Economic Forum.

that the number of women contesting elections has gone up from 45 in 1957 to 668 in the 2014 general elections to the Indian Parliament but the winning percentage has declined from 60 percent in 1957 to 9.3 percent in 2014. (Government of India, 2017: 101). This trend shows that women in decision-making positions have declined steeply. The scenario is even worse in state assemblies of India and also in Nigeria. The highest percentage share of women ministers in the state assemblies is 14 percent in Haryana, Rajasthan and Bihar whereas it is least at zero percent in Nagaland, Mizoram, and Puducherry where there is not been a single women minister and member since the last elections between 2013-2016 (Government of India, 2017: 104). Consequently, the role of women in Nigeria's post-independent politics has not been reflected adequately, considering appointments in policy-making posts and other political offices. In support of this claim is the statistics released by the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2014) which depicts a wide gender gap in Nigerian politics. The dominance of patriarchy in political parties is made manifest in godfatherism, indigeneship, intra-party rigging, political violence, thuggery as well as a high level of intimidation (INEC, 2006).

Supporting the argument of INEC (2006), Mofoluwawo (2014) notes that women are marginalized in Nigerian politics. According to him, the act of discrimination against women is a waste of human resources as women constitute about half the population of Nigeria and play essential roles in society. He further laments how in recent times, the notable roles played by women in pre-colonial and pre-independence Nigerian politics have 'come under severe strain leading to a complete relegation if not total absence of women in the political sphere in Nigeria'. Oyinade et al. (2013) maintained that women failed almost

woefully in politics as few women have gained access to the highest, male-dominated level of legislative activity in Nigeria. Despite the massive support given by women to various political parties in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria women were relegated to the background until recently when very few women benefited from political patronage and not really in elective positions.

Similarly, in 1992, the Indian Parliament passed the Panchayati Raj and the Municipal Corporation Act. These two Acts implementing grass-root elected offices in rural and urban regions respectively reserved 33 percent seats for women. This condition of reservation which was initially called a '*pati-raj*' (or husband rule) in the name of the wife as she can only stand for elections from seats reserved for women candidates has in the past two decades shown quite a positive result, with women finally emerging out of the wings of their male counterparts-husbands, fathers, etc, and feeling empowered. Yet the 'patriarchal constitution of the Indian society has not been crushed (De Costa, 2010: 99). The women wing of almost all political parties, feminist groups, scholars have been struggling to get a 33 percent reservation to extend up to the state assemblies and the Indian parliament which will enable at least 33 percent of women will be members of parliament but this bill has been in the doldrums with no political party interested in passing the reins of power to women.

In Nigeria, men constitute a large percentage of party membership, which in turn tends to affect women when it comes to selecting or electing candidates for elections. Since men are usually more prominent in the political party hierarchy, they tend to dominate the political hierarchy and are therefore an advantage in influencing the party's internal politics (Leadership Sunday, 2010). To maintain the gender gap, the legislature which is dominated by men

in 2016, rejected the gender and equality opportunities bill on the argument and pretext that it was inconsistent with the religious and cultural beliefs of Muslims and Christians in Nigeira. This bill included provisions such as women 'shall not be subjected to inhuman, humiliating or degrading treatment and 'shall have the right to an equitable share in the inheritance of the property of her husband'. It also affirmed the commitment to women's right to be actively involved in political activities including the right to vote and be eligible for all publicly elected offices without any restrictions (Payton, 2016). Arowolo and Aluko (2010) concluded that based on culture and tradition, women face resistance to participating in politics.

However, women seem to acquiesce themselves to the situation by exhibiting the pedagogy of the oppressed and become consenting parties to their marginalization as they police their marginalization (Emordi 2010). Arowolo and Aluko (2010) also stressed that women believed that politics would prevent them from taking care of their families. The significant reasons preventing them from going into politics were identified as follows; fear of broken homes, breeding irresponsible children, and the need to perform their domestic activities. Also, other reasons include violence, thuggery, intimidation, and money politics (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010). This is the reason women would need a special kind of support and encouragement to overcome the seemingly insurmoun-table challenges facing women and their involvement in politics.

Women and education

Education for women is a very veritable instrument to bridge the inequality of the sexes. Education is power and should be made available for women and girls even for free if the stakeholders must achieve the agenda of gender mainstreaming in all life endeavours. In India, the government started a pilot program called *Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao* (Educate the daughter-save the daughter scheme) under the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare. In summary, women constitute about 50 percent of the population both in Nigeria and India therefore, marginalizing them in any form is equivalent to missing the veritable contribution they would have brought to the table for the development of their countries. Consequently Emordi (2019) argued that any country that marginalizes women is like an airplane flying on one wing and such aircraft can easily be crashed.

Positive discrimination and economic independence of women

Men and women in Africa and India were not franchised at same time and equally. Men have been long in politics before the entrance of few women in politics, men are therefore early starters compared to their women counterparts. To bridge this gap in politics there is need for

positive discrimination. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2016), between 2010 and 2016, women's unemployment rate was 4.7% compared to men's 5.6% in 2010. In addition to this, in the second quarter of 2016, the rate of unemployment for women was 15.3% compared to 11.5% for men. These statistics explain the steady rise in the gender gap for unemployment. To complement this stance, Olaogun et al. (2015) decried gender imbalances at both national and regional levels in different professional sectors. Ezeifeka and Osakwe (2013) note that women are generally sidelined on national issues and are not hired in senior posts in government offices. Similarly, Ekpe et al. (2014) lament the under-representation of women in the national legislature in Nigeria in addition to their poor economic and social representation. Today, the number of women in the top job is still insignificant

SUMMARY

Women Marginalization in Nigeria and Asia has shown that factors such as patriarchy, political representation, government involvement, policy instruments; customary laws that discriminate against women, Positive discrimination, and economic independence, affect women's empowerment in politics another facet of life endeavor. However, the role of education in the empowerment of women cannot be overemphasized. Education is power and well-rounded education can be seen as a bridge that will connect women to all other areas of power. With good education for the majority of women, they will be able to form a formidable force against all other forms of women marginalization. The men also need to understand the enormous benefits of women's empowerment. This step is urgent because even in India regardless of caste and religious affinities, there remains a huge preference for the male child. The female child is considered a burden due to spending on marriage and dowry. Emordi (2016) argues that indigenous conjectural narratives are used to depict that women have smaller reasoning faculties than men their male counterparts. Patriarchal mindset and the skewed sex ratio coupled with son-preference in India has had escalated women marginalization. Crimes against women have witnessed a steep rise over the years. Incidents of rape, molestation, sexual harassment, and dowry deaths, cruelty by husbands and relatives, and assaults on women have increased. The worst condition is that even education which should have been empowering has not changed women's position in India (Sengupta 2014). Women's education should be encouraged. The female girl should be properly educated. The education of women and girls needs to be taken seriously but both parents and govern-ment and other stakeholders of women empowerment.

Recommendations

Some of the recommendations to improve women mains-

treaming in all life endavour include the followings:

Economic independence: is one of the most significant tools for women's empowerment but to date, women are not provided with the opportunities to rise and develop. As mentioned earlier, India did introduce a women quota i.e one-third seat in the local government mechanisms i.e. Panchayati raj and municipal corporations, are reserved for women. But a similar kind of reservation has been stalled for representation in state and centre legislatures. None of the political parties in India has been keen to introduce this bill.

The need to elimination and amendment of harsh cultural practices: There is a need to eliminate harsh cultural practices that are against women and their development. Some cultures in Nigeria are made with good intentions to strengthen homes like the female genital mutilation meant to discourage marital infidelity yet they have no social and economic benefits neither does it fulfill the purpose but are therefore hurtful to women. Such practices should be banned through legislation. Such practices should be discouraged and declared illegal and the female child should be encouraged to go to school or learn a vocation. Compulsory primary and secondary school education needs to be encouraged. This period of schooling and learning a vocation will enable the girl child to be matured before being married to a man. Maturity will also help to eliminate the incident of Visco Virginal Fistula (VVF) from immature girls getting married to men like their fathers.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

Adegoke, B. F., Adegoke, O. J., & Oyedele, J. B. (2016). Factors influencing women participation in home ownership in Nigeria. *Property Management*, 34(1), 67-78.

Amobi, I. (2013). Portrayal and participation of women in Nigerian media. *Political Culture, Cultural Universals and the Crisis of Identity in Africa: Essays in Ethnoglobalization*, Pp. 393-415.

Anyanwu, C. (2001). In Nigerian newspapers, women are seen, not heard. *Nieman Reports*, 55(4), 68-71.

Anyoha, N. O., Chikaire, J. U. & Nwakwasi, R. N. (2015). Effects of gender based discriminatory practices on poverty reduction and women empowerment in Ngor–Okpala area of Imo state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Development and Emerging Economics*, 3(1), 39-48.

Arowolo, D., & Aluko, F. S. (2010). Women and political participation in Nigeria. European Journal of social sciences, 14(4), 581-593.

Bakari, S., & Leach, F. (2007, March). Hijacking equal opportunity policies in a Nigerian college of education: The micropolitics of gender. *Women's Studies International Forum,* 30(2), 85-96.

Bakari, S., & Leach, F. (2009). 'I Invited Her to My Office': Normalising Sexual Violence in a Nigerian College of Education. In: Heyneman (ed.). Buying your way into heaven: Education and corruption in international perspective in higher education (pp. 9-21). Brill Sense Publishers.

Bennett, J. (2002). Exploration of a 'gap': Strategizing gender equity in African universities", *Feminist Africa* 1.

Collins, J. C., McFadden, C. Rocco, T. S., & Mathis M. K. (2015). The problem of transgender marginalization and exclusion: critical actions for human resource development. *Human Resource Development Revie*w, 14 (2), 205-226.

Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria. Retrieved 27th December, 2018 from http://lawnigeria.com/CONSTITUTIONHUB/Constitution.html.

Constitution of India (2007). Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India. Retrieved 24th December 2018 from http://doj.gov.in/sites/default/files/Constitution-of-India_0.pdf.

De Costa, D. (2010). Development dramas: reimagining rural political action in eastern India. Delhi: Routledge.

Dlamini, E. T., & Adams, J. D., (2014). Patriarchy: a case of women in institutions of higher education. *Perspectives in Education*, 32(4), 121-134.

Dormekpor, E. (2015). Poverty and gender inequality in developing countries." Developing Countries Studies, 5(10), 76-102.

Economic Survey of India (2018). Empowering women. Retrieved from https://www.insightsonindia.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Insights-IAS-Summary-of-Economic-Survey-2017-2018.pdf.

Ekpe, D. E., Alobo, E. E., & John, E. I. (2014). Women, gender equality in Nigeria: A critical analysis of socio-economic and political (gender issues). *Research in Peace, Gender and Development,* 4(1), 15-20.

Emordi, A. T. O. (2016). Unveiling gender conjectures as bridles on the development of the full potentials of women in peace-building in Nigeria. African International Journal of Contemporary Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSSSA) 2016 third edition by HPC Books USA.

Emordi A. T. O. (2019). Gender Inequality, the exclusion of women in governance and security issues: Establishing the cost and role of women in inequality: *A Journal of Opinion on World Affairs,* 40, 3-4.

Ezeifeka, C. R., & Osakwe, N. N. (2013). Gender representation in the 1999 Nigerian constitution: A critical discourse analysis for socio-political equity. *Discourse & Society*, 24(6), 687-700.

Fab-Ukozor, N. T. (2004). Gender, politics and conflict resolution in Nigeria: Beyond rhetorics. In: Nwosu, I. E. (ed.). *Communication, media and conflict management in Nigeria.*

Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2006). National gender policy. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. Retrieved from http://www.aacoalition.org/national_policy_women.Htm.

Ghadially, R. (2007). Urban women in contemporary India: a reader. Delhi: Sage Publications.

Government of India (2017). Women and men in India 2017. Ministry of Statistics and Programme. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

Iloh, E. C., & Ikenna, M. A. (2009) Electoral process and gender discrimination in Nigeria: a case study of 2003 and 2007 general elections. Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa. 10(4), 113-128.

INEC (2006). Proceedings of the INEC National Forum. Abuja, Sheraton Hotel and Towers, August 29-31.

Johnson, A. T. (2014). Performing and defying gender an exploration of the lived experiences of women higher education administrators in Sub-saharan Africa. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership,* 42(6), 835-850.

Leadership Sunday (2010). Women as underdogs (Editorial). *Leadership Sunday*. Pp. 24-25.

Makama, G. A. (2013). Patriarchy and gender inequality in Nigeria: The way forward. *European Scientific Journal,* 9(17), 115-144.

Mama, A. (2003). Restore, reform but do not transform: The gender politics of higher education in Africa. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, 1(1), 101-125.

Mofoluwawo, E. O. (2014). Social, cultural and economic discrimination to women participation in African politics: The case of Nigeria. *International Journal of Learning and Development,* 4(1), 2164-4063.

National Commission for Women, India (1990). National Commission for Women, India. Retrieved form http://ncw.nic.in/Acts-and-rules/nationalcommission-women-act-1990-act-no-20-1990-govtof-india.

National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2016). National Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved form http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/

Okpalaobi, B. N. (2011). The dynamics of sexual politics in Nigeria: A catalyst for gender bias. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies,* 2(6), 471-478.

Olaogun, J. A., Adebayo, A. A., & Oluyemo C. A. (2015). Gender imbalance in the academia in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(10), 294-306.

Olateru-Olagbegi, B., and Afolabi. A. (2011). Actual situation in Nigeria. Retrieved form www.wildaf-ao.org/spip.

Olugbemi, K. (2004). Women and political development in Nigeria since 1960. In: Agagu A., & Ola, R. (eds.). *Development Agenda of the Nigeria State*. Ibadan, Fiag (Nigeria) Publishers.

Osunde, C., & Olokooba, S. M. (2014). Managing diversity in the workplace: Legal and theoretical perspectives in Nigeria. *Advances in Management*, 7(6), 1-6.

Owoyemi, O., & Olusanya, O. (2014). Org gender: a precursor for discriminating against women in paid employment in Nigeria. *American Journal of Business and Management,* 3(1), 10-14.

Oyinade, B., Daramola, I., & Lamidi, I. (2013). Gener, media, and politics. A case of Nigeria. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics and Management Studies,* 1(10), 25-34.

Para-Mallam, F. J. (2010). Promoting gender equality in the context of Nigerian cultural and religious expression: beyond increasing female access to education. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 40(4), 459-477.

Payton, M. (2016). Nigerian senate votes down gender equality bill due to 'religious beliefs'. The independent, March 17. Retrieved from http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/nigerian-senatevotes-down-gender-equality-bill-due-to-religious-beliefs-a6936021.html.

Perryman, A. A., Fernando, G. D., & Tripathy, A. (2016). Do gender differences persist? An examination of gender diversity on firm performance, risk, and executive compensation. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(2), 579-586.

Sengupta, P. (2014). Whither equality and justice: Rawls's theory of justice and violence against women in India, Social Action. Volume 64, April-June. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/34994853/Whither_Equality_and_Justice_Rawls_Theory_of_Justice_and_Violence_against_Women_in_India.

Sexual Harassment Act of India (2013). Sexual Harassment Act of India. Retrieved from http://www.iitbbs.ac.in/notice/sexual-harrassment-of-women-act-and-rules-2013.pdf.

Smita S. (2012). *An introduction to political ideology*. Kindersley, D.(ed.). India Pearson Education.

Statistical Portal of India (2018). Literacy rate in India. https://www.statista.com/statistics/271335/literacy-rate-in-india/.

Syed, J., & Van Buren, H. J. (2014). Global business norms and Islamic views of women's employment. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 24(2), 251-276.

Umukoro, N. (2014). Democracy and inequality in Nigeria. *Journal of Developing Societies* 30(1), 1-24.

UNECA (2009). Africa Women's Report. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british-council-gender-nigeria2012.pdf.

United Nations (2014). World survey on the role of women in development: Gender equality and sustainable development. New York. Retrieved from http://www.unwomen.org/en/digitallibrary/publications/2014/10/world-survey.

United Nations General Assembly (1979). *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women*. United Nations General Assembly.

Vijayavani, A. (2018). Marginalization of women in social, cultural and family relationship in Kamala Das's my story. *Shanlax International Journal of English*, 6(s1), 108-111.

World Economic Forum (WEF) (2014). The global gender gap report 2014. Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org.

World Economic Forum (WEF) (2015). The global gender gap report 2015. Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf.

World Bank (2006). World Development Report (2006). Equity and development. New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank. Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2005/09/6297411/world-development-report-2006-equity-development.

Yomi K. (2018). Nigeria has become the poverty capital of the world. Africa Reporter, Published June 25. Retrieved from https://qz.com/africa/1313380/nigerias-has-the-highest-rate-of-extreme-poverty-globally/

Zwingel, S. (2005). From intergovernmental negotiations to (sub) national change: A transnational perspective on the impact of CEDAW. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 7(3), 400-424.