THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSAL FACTORS AND PERSISTENCE OF WOMEN'S MARGINALIZATION IN NIGERIA: A CHALLENGE TO THE NIGERIAN STATE, 2007-2010

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Abstract:

The topic of Nigerian women's marginalization has been thoroughly covered in a lot of current literature, but there is still a gap as seen by the scarcity of academic discourses on the underlying causes of gender power differences and the resulting disadvantages for Nigerian women. In this light, the paper explores the causes and historical evolution of the social, economic, and political factors in Nigeria working against women's empowerment. This is in the context of the obstacles these forces posed to achieving the goals of President Yar'Adua's Seven-Point Agenda, as they affected women's empowerment. This paper explores how sex roles, biological disparities, and some historical events interact to explain why women have been disadvantaged in Nigeria since the pre-colonial era. Given the lackluster antecedents to the needs for gender equity of the Nigerian female gender, the paper asserts that the ramifications of women's historical marginalization provide a significant challenge to Yar'Adua's administration, and to date, the plight of Nigerian women has remained the same, more or less.

Introduction

Nigeria is a heterogeneous and secular country located in West Africa. Typical of most African countries, it has grappled with significant challenges related to gender equality and the marginalization of women for decades. Despite considerable progress that has been made towards women's empowerment worldwide, the Nigerian state has struggled to address and rectify the deep-rooted factors that perpetuate women's marginalization within its society. This paper aims to explore the fundamental causal factors that contribute to the persistent marginalization of women in Nigeria between the years 2007 and 2010. By examining this specific time frame, we can gain a deeper understanding of the existing issues, challenges, and policy approaches in the context of women's development. The focus on the Yar'Adua's administration is germane given that his presidency has been touted as the most humane in the annals of democratic governance in recent times.

Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, the candidate for the People's Democratic Party, established a seven-point agenda as his platform for action in the run-up to Nigeria's 2007 presidential election. Energy supply, agriculture, income creation, and transportation were all addressed in the outlined plan of action. Land reforms, security, and the eradication of poverty through education were also implemented. Musa Yar'Adua took an interest in the other four areas because they presented developmental challenges as Nigeria's president. These groupings included the Rule of Law, the Niger Delta, due process, and disadvantages.

The issue of women's empowerment is crucial to this study since it is one of the policies that the Yar' Adua's government prioritized since Nigerian women are a subset of the underprivileged groups in the nation. The President's resolve to address women's issues was a clear affirmation of the claim made by female activists and concerned non-governmental organizations that previous Nigerian governments had taken the issue of women's marginalization for granted. If the efforts of women activists, organizations, international agencies and some token government efforts since the colonial era were taken into account then, President Yar'Adua's national gender policy was not created in a vacuum.

A relatively few studies provide some insights into the administration under focus. Anthony (2014) examined the involvement of women in the amnesty programme that was introduced by President Yar'Adua to put a stop to the decades of agitation by the youths and militants in the Niger Delta. The violence unleashed by the militants was a major setback to the implementation of the Seven-point Agenda of the Administration. Findings indicated that female members of the militant groups were marginalised in the process of their rehabilitation in terms of the total number of activists trained

domestically and internationally. Idowu (2018) realised in the assessment of the participation of Nigerian women in governance since 1999 that their impact on the empowerment and development of women generally was inadequate, despite some gains, which appeared elitist in nature.

Osuji, (2010) asserted that the Federal administration laid down the Seven Point Agenda to establish a reform thrust in governance and enhance development in Nigeria. It was argued that there was a verifiable nexus between rising insecurity and policy failures in Nigeria. It highlighted the role of resources and their inappropriate distribution. Another work is centered on Nigerian civil society, leadership regression, and silence that emanated from the late President Yar'Adua's medical trip to Saudi Arabia. It turned out that the Save Nigerian Group (SNG), the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), as well as the Nigeria Liberty Forum based in London, supported the President's silence. The work recommended the promotion of electoral reforms, constitutional amendment, and attitudinal change among African elected leaders (Ani & Dada, 2017). The case illustrates the reality of illiberal democracy in Africa. The important lesson is that in the face of regime-threatening development, a vibrant and united civil society can make a significant difference. This article also evaluated the role of various actors in management and mismanagement (Shola, 2011). The 7-Point Agenda is one such policy statement meant to impact Nigeria's quest for sustainable development.

Still, in the public sector, the broadcast media in Nigeria and during the administration of the government under focus is considered to be largely elitist and heavily commercialized. Factors such as deregulation, liberalization, and commercialization of the broadcast media have impacted negatively how public broadcast media are perceived by the audience and other players in the industry (Ibrahim, *et al*, 2019). Examining the food sub-sector, it was the contention of Gadzama (2013) that Nigerian agriculture parades a large array of staple crops, made possible by the diversity of agro-ecological production systems. This paper noted that the effects of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's 7-point agenda on agricultural development and food security have b een average and tentative. In the face of the global poverty epidemic, it has been most severe in the underdeveloped world, particularly in Africa. Yar'Adua's seven-point plan to combat poverty and its accompanying indicators had enormous hurdles on account of the political inertia and corruption of some earlier governments, as observed by Oke (2011). It is argued that there is a verifiable nexus between rising insecurity and policy failures in Nigeria. According to Victor, (2017), resources are important, but their inappropriate distribution under the administration of the democratic government that was headed by Yar' Adua did not allow for adequate development of the country. Another work interrogated the two core policies of the three R's and general

amnesty adopted Yar'Adua and asserted that Nigeria's critical governance challenges lie in poor service delivery, lack of faith in the integrity of civil servants and public officeholders, and the political and bureaucratic processes. The paper recommends that the Nigerian government should have a crop of highly skilled administrators, technicians, engineers, managers, accountants, doctors, and so on (Okoye, 2009). As shown in the works reviewed, Nigeria has a strong capacity for growth but has failed to achieve its potential due to bad leadership and mismanagement. Meanwhile, it is obvious that extant works on the Administration were concerned about issues outside the context of women's development; which is the focus of this paper.

Since the colonial era, several women activists and groups have focused on the issue of women's quest for empowerment. Women like Margaret Ekpo, Elizabeth Adekogbe, and Olufumilayo Ransome Kuti have made well-known efforts to mobilize local and national governments as well as women for the empowerment of women (Mba, 1982; Ojewusi, 1996). Since its founding in 1957, the National Council of Women's Societies, Nigeria (NCWS), the national umbrella organization for all women's organizations, has worked to bring the concerns of women to the attention of the Federal Government of Nigeria. The wives of the nation's heads of state have been selected as the organization's patrons as a matter of strategy. Despite the efforts of Nigerian women activists, the country's government has not, since independence, enacted any specific measures to promote the advancement of women. However, as evidenced by various government activities, the nation has taken inspiration from international conventions and other UNO projects.

Since the UNO's founding in 1945, it has advocated for countries all over the world to begin implementing measures aimed at reversing the unfavorable trend of gender disparity. In contrast to Nigeria's gender-neutral constitutions, the UNO Charter has reiterated "trust in fundamental human rights... in the equal rights of men and women" since its creation (United Nations Information Service, 1995). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was passed in 1979, and the Beijing Platform for Action was passed in 1995.Neither of these had much of an effect on Nigeria. The September 2000 Millennium Declaration by world leaders, had a significant impact on the Federal Government of Nigeria. As a result, it established eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with corresponding targets and indicators that must all be met by the 191 UN member states by the year 2015. The MDGs' principal goal was to encourage a global alliance to fight poverty and provide a common vision of a better society by the year 2015. The priority of the world leaders to abolish discrimination against women and ensure that the gender parity target was established, to be attained a full ten years earlier, was more significant to this study.

Under President Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria approved the MDGs in 2006 and started implementing them with money obtained from debt relief it received from foreign financial organizations like the Paris Club. Yar'Adua had mostly kept his commitment to the MDGs and their focus on women's development. In the same spirit, Vision 2020, the Federal Government's comprehensive plan to speed up growth and take the nation from the 41st to the first twenty economies by the year 2020, was in line with President Yar'Adua's emphasis on women's empowerment.

The previous Federal Executive Council approved the National Gender Policy in 2006 (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2008), but Yar'Adua had already made concrete preparations to actively promote the empowerment of women based on the following goals, as reflected in the Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan at the time of publication (2008). Reorienting and sensitizing the culture to alter gender norms and prejudices; promoting women's human rights, with a special emphasis on ending sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV); and backing new laws that uphold and defend women's legal rights. Women's political participation and engendered governance, including gender and conflict management; promoting the empowerment of women and integrating gender within sectors as highlighted within the NGP (agriculture/rural development; environment/natural resources; gender and HIV/AIDS; health and reproductive health/rights; education/training; labor/empowerment); and fostering institutional growth, utilizing ICT, and establishing strategic alliances, including finding new collaborations with men's groups, faith-based organizations, and established institutions.

The Yar'Adua administration's zeal was demonstrated by these goals and the administrative framework being used to achieve them. How effectively did the government understand the effects of the Nigerian woman's historical helplessness on its contemporary initiatives? In light of this, the goal of this study was to highlight the numerous historical constraints that have made it challenging for women to access developmental opportunities on an equal basis with men. Additionally, the study will look at the strain that these efforts placed on Yar'Adua's administration in its efforts to close the gender gap in development.

The analysis will be based on the framework of the twin concepts of sex differentiation and patriarchy, which holds that the natural differences between the sexes, within which female people were constrained by their biological functions, were the fundamental basis of women's relative marginalization. Women's opportunities for development were limited as a result of the gender roles that had been assigned to them for so long. This was despite men's aggressive pursuit of socioeconomic and political dominance. The below-discussed sub-themes will look at how historical forces combined to affect Nigerian women's chances for equality. The conclusion would em-

phasize their significance for the current government's national policies.

Powers and the Gender Difference Factor

Gender relations have always been influenced by biological and cultural factors, which have implications for gender roles and the opportunities that come with them for both sexes. The influence of sex differences on numerous indigenous and foreign cultural institutions and beliefs that have molded gender power relations in Nigeria since the pre-colonial era led to the necessity of exploring sex differences as a determinant of women's marginalization.

The fundamental predictor of gender differentiation between men and women across all cultures was sexual differences (Hutt, 1992; Archer & Lloyd, 1980). In general, men were faster, stronger, and heavier than women. Additionally, they were not constrained by women's biological needs for nursing, conception, or pregnancy. Being born a woman or a man had historical significance in every era's reproduction and production operations. The existence of the human race depended on this. Since the beginning of time, women in Nigeria, like women in other countries, have been accountable for these biological functions due to the biological distinctions between the sexes. Men and women were given diverse yet complementary duties as a result of the inherent differences between the sexes.

The various jobs that every civilization assigns to males and females are referred to as "gender roles," whereas this is known as the "sexual division of labor" (Angrist, 1969). Since each community is accountable for allocating these responsibilities to its younger members through the pattern maintenance of values and customs, the importance of culture in reinforcing the natural causes of gender disparity becomes clear. Here, the term "gender differentiation" is primarily used to refer to how men and women are assigned different responsibilities and how the two genders develop their personalities in constantly different ways. The steady ascent of men to global supremacy throughout human history was unavoidable for the reasons listed below. First off, the typical woman could not simultaneously be as actively involved in economic output while enduring months of pregnancy.

The long-term reliance of children on adequate care only made their conditions worse. This was the cause of women's dependence, while men's ubiquitous function as "breadwinners" for the typical family was explained. They were comparatively better suited for that function due to their physical characteristics. As a result, over multiple millennia, the performance of masculine duties by men and their increased contributions to production signaled the ascent of male dominance. According to De Beauvoir (1953), men's collective domineering nature has greatly contributed to their

advantages over women in human society. In the same vein, Engels (1942) argued that the average man's rise was driven by his desire to seize control of the surplus in production to perpetuate inheritance in his male descendants. Engels was attempting to explain the origin of male hegemony in the family. Since ancient times, male dominance has expanded outside the household to include sociopolitical institutions, as shown in the examples below. There is a wealth of historical evidence that male dominance was present in Nigerian communities. A typical example was the patrilineal system, which has historically been a stronghold of male family headship. Before the colonial era, male control of the home was the forerunner to their near monopoly of power in Nigerian towns and empires. The debate that follows serves as proof of this claim.

The Roots of Male Domination

Males predominated both at the household and communal levels in each of the more than 300 ethnic groupings that the British colonial administrators combined into the Nigerian colonial dependence in the 1914 merger. Nigerians, despite having diverse cultural traditions, developed all the key components of patriarchal institutions and beliefs except for a small number of tribes in the Igbo community that practice matrilineal familial descent. The Northerners were divided into three major political groupings under the British occupation. The Shehu of Bornu ruled over the Lake Chad region and the Kanuri people of Bornu in the northeast. The Fulani-Hausa tribe in the Northwest was structured into a sizable empire made up of semi-autonomous emirates ruled by emirs who acknowledged the nominal rule of the Sultan of Sokoto. A system of titled chiefs under the direction of the Emir existed in each emirate. Since the average emir had the discretion to choose whether to give hereditary and non-hereditary titleholders fiefs linked to most of their jobs, the system of fief-holding guaranteed him the allegiance of his chiefs and people (Temple, 1922; Hogben, 1930). The Tiv, the Birom, the Gwari, and more than 200 other pagan tribes, who also had male hereditary kings, comprised the third group in the middle Belt (Coleman, 1971).

In the southern parts of Nigeria, the Edo, Ijaw, and Yoruba peoples of Western Nigeria were ruled politically by traditional government officials. For instance, the Yoruba had a monarchical government with male chiefs and *Oba* (king) at the top. Kingship and the majority of chieftaincy positions were inherited (Lloyd, 1954; Atanda, 1972; Johnson, 1921). In the case of appointment into chieftaincy position, although each chief had a hereditary claim to the position, the Oba still had the final say. Chiefs were lineage representatives, highlighting the value that the Yoruba placed on strong family ties and representational administration (Lloyd, 1955). The Igbo ethnic group had a decentralized political structure and dominated lesser tribes like the Ibibio, Efik, and Ijaw tribes. The Igbo tribe's smallest political unit in the East was the typically

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male-headed family, while the largest political organ in most cases was the village (Forde & Jones, 1950). Although there were different Igbo political institutions, power in the Igbo community was distributed among elders, age groups, and titleholders. Communities in the Eastern Region's traditional government depended on the general will of the component segments of the groups (Nwabara, 1977). During the colonial era, the imbalance of power between men and women was clear, as were the effects of this imbalance.

Colonialism and Gender Inequality, Section

During the time of colonial control, the problem of women's inadequate access to sources of power grew worse. The groundwork for the imposition of Western gender ideology was laid, while the British were in charge of affairs and missionaries were sowing the seeds of Western culture among Christian converts in Nigeria. It is not implied that the missionaries from Europe and Great Britain worked together in this instance. In general, their goals on the subject of women's roles and positions in society were different. Their ideas combined to highlight the passivity of women. A quick examination of the Western gender theory that Nigeria's colonial rulers and missionaries both adopted would put their treatment of women in the correct context.

The evolution of gender relations in Europe resulted in a clear separation of men's and women's areas of responsibility. This was especially the cultural roots of most Christian missionaries and colonial rulers, who were English. English women were brought up in a puritanical and Christian environment and categorized individually as wife, mother, widow, and old maid. Despite decades of effort since the middle of the 19th century to bring about social and political reforms; the tradition of confining English women to the homestead persisted until the Second World War (1939–1945).

In Nigeria, colonial officials and missionaries upheld a Western form of gender segregation, where the private sphere of the house was only for women and the public domain was for men. Mba (1982, 39) explained what Western ideas about gender meant in the context of colonial rule by British officers in Nigeria:

The British administrators from 1900 on were the products of late Victorian, then Edwardian middle-class society wherein the men looked upon "home" as a refuge from the vicissitudes of public life; it was the woman's duty to preserve that home and the man's duty to insulate the woman from the pressures of public life. Women were considered unsuitable for the rigors of public life.

The colonial administrative structure in Nigeria was primarily a man›s world. Several constraints hindered women›s advancement despite the potential of Western education to foster revolutionary changes, notably in salaried jobs. First off, the colonial

administration›s meager contribution to the construction of schools in Nigeria was an example of their ambivalent approach toward education. The admission requirements and educational curriculum varied. In Nigeria, the proportion of girls enrolled in school was constantly lower than that of their male counterparts. Records show that there were few women enrolled in government schools before 1930, which were first created to teach clerical officers and technicians. The bias in favor of male education might be partly attributed to British Victorian ideals, which prohibited women from working outside the home. Both missionaries and colonial authorities did not anticipate that women would work outside the home, so their education focused on skills that were only necessary for mothers and housewives. Given that the goal of a decent education for girls in Europe was to produce good housewives, girls› education at that time mostly concentrated on domestic science, marriage education, and cookery. Girls were taught both traditional and contemporary cooking techniques (Denzer, 1992).

The economic growth pattern of the nation had sustained structural disparities between the sexes. The colonial overlords' encouragement of male-dominated cash crop production increased the gender divide even more. Women had to take the lead in market trading as a result of their marginalization. The few educated people had their issues. The difficulty of balancing employment with household duties and child care, for example, disadvantages the few wage-earning women in southern Nigeria. Even after Nigeria gained independence, women still faced obstacles.

Gender Power Disparity after Nigeria's Independence

Women were unable to compete well with men for income, power, and influence due to a variety of issues. After Nigeria obtained independence, women had the opportunity to close the enormous gap between themselves and the highly educated population in terms of career options and social standing. According to Loutfi (1980), "The higher a woman's percentage of engagement, the more financially and psychologically gratifying they are compared to those with less education." However, there were still considerable gaps, as evidenced by the considerably lower rates of female attendance across all educational levels.

Male enrollment in elementary schools in 1960 was 1,829,000, while female enrollment was 1,083,000. In secondary schools, there were 134,000 students overall, but only 106,000 males were enrolled, compared to 28,000 females. Out of a total of 2,911,000 students in primary schools, there were 2,300 men and 1,120,000 women in Nigerian universities over the same period. There were 62,000 girls and 146,000 boys enrolled in secondary schools. In 1965, there were 6,900 male students and just 800 female students in Nigerian universities. Out of the 3,515,000 students enrolled in primary schools in 1970, 1,299,000 were girls. The traditional male dominance in

secondary schools was maintained at 205,000 males, with 104,000 female students enrolled at the time (Federal Ministry of Education, 1971). The information above made it clear that few people continued their education beyond secondary school. The issue of gender stereotyping of girls, which made the average Nigerian woman feel secondary and submit as spouses and mothers who were less expected to be competitive human beings, was a major contributing factor to the lack of gender parity in school attendance. Children ensured social stability for women in Nigeria's patriarchal communities, leading to women maturing to value these duties above all others. As a result, families are hesitant to send their daughters to school because it was once thought that they did not require an education to carry out their designated motherly duties of insemination and socialization. As can be seen in the Table below, female education significantly improved by the 21st century, as more people became aware of the advantages of Western education:

Enrolment of Girls in the Three Tiers of Education, 2005

Girls' Share of Primary Enrolment	Girls' Share of Secondary Enrolment	Girls' Share of Tertiary Enrolment
Year Percentage 2005 44	Year Percentage 2005 44.6	Year Percentage 2005 40.7

Source: UNESCO (2008). Institute for Statistics, Tables 5 and 14

As previously said, Nigerian women were getting closer to achieving gender parity in education by the year 2005 primary level. Compared to those who continued to higher education, more females attended primary and secondary education. Early marriage was one of the factors that contributed to the lowest number of girls enrolled in postsecondary institutions. A UN estimate in 2008 states that in 2003, 33.3% of Nigerian girls aged 15 to 19 were married compared to 1.1% of men. Since it is traditionally men's job to support their spouses, relatively few men were married before turning 20. Early marriage had detrimental effects on Nigerian women's efforts to achieve empowerment. First, the average woman's ability to advance her development to the same degree as a man was typically constrained by the enormous responsibilities of being a wife and mother. Due to their need for help during pregnancy and child care, women during this time were more semi-autonomous and submissive. Additionally, women at this time had a never-ending list of tasks to complete, like ensuring a fuel and water supply and caring for elderly family members.

The typical Nigerian male avoided such humiliating tasks because he was always aware of his dominant position in marital relationships. Nigerian women also experienced economic disadvantages. In the public or private sectors, women held low-paying employment at a higher rate than men. In the former, the majority of

women served mostly males as clerks, office assistants, and secretaries while working as subordinate officers. Women dominated trading in the private sector. Women continued to concentrate on professions that were extensions of their traditional caregiving responsibilities. Nursing and teaching are two examples. In primary schools, female teachers made up 51% of the workforce in 2005 (UN Statistics Division, 2008).

Poverty, a sign of Nigeria's underdevelopment and official corruption, has been a major contributor to the marginalization of women. According to recent statistics, 70.2% of Nigeria's population made less than $1 each day (World Bank, 2005). In metropolitan areas, girls worked as domestic helpers, street vendors, and beggars alongside other children. In the majority of Nigeria, female, young, and elderly children frequently beg for food. Many young women turned to prostitution as a means of escaping poverty. The "sex-for-money" behavior of many female students at Nigerian post-secondary schools was typical. In a similar vein, child sexual exploitation was a problem in numerous places, with Nigeria serving as a source, a transit country, and the final destination for children who were trafficked for forced labour and forced prostitution (U.S. Department of State, 2005).

Politically, women's disgracefully low participation in government was one factor preventing them from having a significant impact on the nation's decision-making process. There were just two female senators under the First Republic (1960–1955): Wuraola Esan of the Action Group (AG) and Bernice Kerry of the National Congress of Women (NCNC). Margaret Ekpo and Mrs. Janet Mukuolu were elected to the Eastern House of Assembly (Ude, 2003). At both the state and federal levels, men were predominant in the Civil Service throughout the same period. One notable exception was Mrs. Tejumola Alakija, the first female permanent secretary in the erstwhile Western Region. The Gowon/Obasanjo military governments of 1966–1979 then selected Miss Miller and Mrs. Folake Solake as commissioners in the old North-Central and Western states, respectively. Out of 57 senators elected during the Second Republic (1979–1983), Franca Afegbua of the Nation Party of Nigeria (NPN) became the first and only female senator. President Shehu Shagari nominated Mrs. Janet Akinrinade as a junior minister.

Over twenty years later, the situation remained unchanged. Nigeria had fallen short of the 30% threshold for elected representatives suggested by the UN as of 2008. Only 3% of the nation's lawmakers served in the legislature in 2000, 6% did so in 2005, 6% again in 2006, and 7% did so in 2007 (UN Statistics Division, 2008: Table 6a). According to all indicators, Yar'Adua's administration would have its greatest difficulty when it came to the political marginalization of women. Given the wide spectrum of forces generally arrayed against them, Nigerian women politicians have generally faced hard battles in electoral campaigns. First off, Nigerian men have long held a disproportion-

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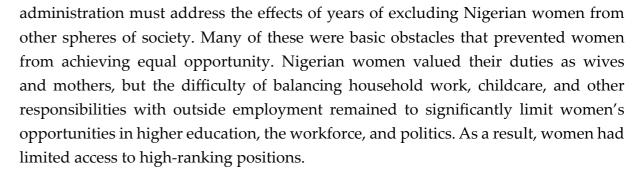ISSN: 1885-3625

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ate amount of power in party politics and its administration. They had advantages that the majority of female politicians lacked, thanks to their life experiences and extensive social networks. Second, as was already mentioned, traditional gender ideology in Nigeria urged women to be submissive and passive. Local women did not perceive any justification for competing with men, according to Bolanle Awe (Personal Communication, August 21, 2016). She claims that when some educated women activists asked some market women leaders to join them, they responded "Without their husbands' involvement, women spend the entire day selling in the market." "What would they stand to gain if they joined any organization looking to compete with men for public office?" Women politicians who were required to attend and plan political gatherings and campaigns were frequently labelled as outcasts or rebels.

Nigeria's political environment was unstable and violently inclined. Only a select few strong-willed women were consistently willing to assume the risk associated with active political participation. The overwhelming domination of party supporters in Nigeria's political arena was the biggest challenge for any aspiring female politician. The challenges facing the Yar'Adua government in its efforts to empower the female populace are both fundamental and significant. So far, their influence on the political system hasn't helped women get ahead in political races and jobs, nor has it made it easier for most women to overcome the disadvantages they've had in development for centuries.

Conclusion

Despite having a diverse population, ancient Nigerian communities had patriarchal attitudes, customs, and institutions that gave women relatively little access to wealth and power. Women were treated as second-class citizens in the sociopolitical system and the economy. The reason the situation continued for so long was because gender stereotypes in roles had long encouraged the internalization of the ideals associated with male rule over women's subjectivity. It was accepted as natural for women to be excluded from important roles in both the public and private spheres because it was a long-standing practice.

Nigerian women had developed strategies to pursue advancement through maneuvers within the context of existing opportunities in a male-dominated culture, as opposed to protesting. In the social sphere, where female education was typically improving, and gender parity was being attained, progress had been accomplished. Additionally, any traces of gender bias against women would progressively disappear with education and knowledge. In the economy, growing labour force participation still requires a lot of leverage. In addition to these encouraging achievements, Yar'Adua's

administration must address the effects of years of excluding Nigerian women from other spheres of society. Many of these were basic obstacles that prevented women from achieving equal opportunity. Nigerian women valued their duties as wives and mothers, but the difficulty of balancing household work, childcare, and other responsibilities with outside employment remained to significantly limit women's opportunities in higher education, the workforce, and politics. As a result, women had limited access to high-ranking positions.

Additionally, in many areas of the nation, women were still subject to long-standing customs and cultural norms that cultivated female subjugation and dependence. Generally speaking, poverty has slowed down socio-cultural transformation, especially in rural areas where impoverished people have little opportunity for a better life. The Seven-Point Agenda was to be put into action, and more power was to be given to the fight against economic distress. The biggest difficulties, however, were posed by Nigerian women's poor political fortunes. How would Yar'Adua's administration deal with the persistent issues of electoral fraud, political violence, and the public's lack of interest in sound democratic values and effective government? A complete political reform would be a great place to start if you want to make sure that 30% of the government is made up of women.
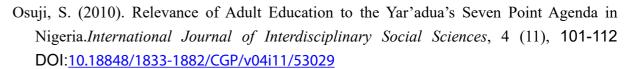
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