Political Culture and Women's Participation in Politics: Assessing Citizen's Perception on the Role of Men and Women in the Political Process

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A B S T R A C T

Women account for about 49 per cent of global and national population, yet their access to political decision making power is low. This is owing to some hegemonic perception of what should constitute sex roles in the society which invariably undermine the women folk. The study aims at investigating citizens' perception towards the roles of men and women in the political process. Adopting a mixed method of data collection, the study sample was put at 600 covering three senatorial districts in Enugu state, Nigeria. Results indicate citizens' non support for women active participation in politics. Some of their perception ranges from men and women should not participate equally in politics, politics should solely be men's business, and majority of women who go into politics are irresponsible among others. The paper recommends for citizens' change in orientation to allow women access to governance and use of quota to enhance women's presence in governance for better legislation and national development.

1. Introduction

Culture implies people's beliefs and values towards the style of life. It refers to all values and orientations displayed by people that determine their behavior (Adler, 1997; Matsumoto, 1996; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). The People's culture affects their political, social and economic lives. The

Americans' strong feelings of patriotism, the deference towards political elites expressed by the Japanese, and the proclivity towards protest displayed by the French show how cultural norms shape politics (Almond, Powell, Dalton & Strom, 2007).

In African for instance, women are recognized to execute domestic functions and men take decisions and provide family needs (Sadie, 2005). An implicit and explicit effect of culture suggests that culture transcends from the family and household domain to the social, economic and political life of a people. It denotes "all attitudes and beliefs held communally by the people, which inform the base for their political conduct" (Shively, 2008, p. 193). Political culture connotes the responsibilities of individuals in the political space (Almond & Verba, 1965). In essence, cultural orientations and values are central factors that shape citizens' commitment in politics. Whether people engage in politics or not, how they participate, and the magnitude of their participation depend to some degree on the prejudices of cultures.

Notably, the world over and particularly in Africa, women are regarded as weaker sex who give support to men. In terms of economic power and politics, men are seen to be in control and dictate the rules while the women follow. This behavior of men has implications on the place of women in the society especially as it relates to positions of authority. The number of women in positions of political authority worldwide shows that women have limited support to participate in politics. This position is supported by the comment made by the Inter Parliamentary Union's (IPU) Secretary-General, Martin Chungong that "discrimination against women prevents them from becoming parliamentarians" (Schlein, 2021, p. 1). Recent report from IPU reveals that women in top positions globally stand at 22, with nine heads of State and 13 heads of government. In terms of ministerial portfolios, only about 21.9 per cent of women are ministers worldwide (IPU, 2021). Although, there may be progresses in some counties but achievement of parity is still farfetched. The United States after the recent elections which brought the emergence of a female Vice president has had an unprecedented increase in women in decision making as the number of ministers increased from 17 per cent in 2020 to 46 per cent in 2021. This advancement is the highest in the history of the country. Among countries with more than 50 per cent female ministers include Nicaragua which has the highest number worldwide and stands at 58.82 per cent, followed by Austria with 57.14 per cent; Belgium has 57.14 per cent and Sweden has 57.14 among others. In spite of these achievements by women in some countries, high disparity still exists in many countries as some countries have no women in their government. These countries include D.P.R. Korea, Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Thailand, Armenia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Brunei Darussalam, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Yemen, Tuvalu, and Viet Nam (IPU, 2021). In the legislature, women account for only 25.5 per cent representation worldwide.

In Africa, in spite of few countries' progresses in the number of women legislature, there still exists a wide gap between male and female representation in greater number of countries. Apart from Rwanda, South Africa, Namibia, Senegal, Mozambique being the top five countries with more than 40 per cent female representation in parliament, some African countries have 10 per cent or less number of female parliamentarians. These countries include Eswatini with 10 per cent, Central African Republic- 9 per cent, Gambia- 9 per cent, Benin- 8 per cent, and Burkina Faso and Nigeria- 6 per cent respectively among others (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, [IDEA], 2021). In Africa, only Rwanda and South Africa have more than 50 per cent women in their cabinet while countries such as Cameroon, Libya and Egypt have less than 15 per cent women ministers, and Nigeria has 19 per cent (IDEA, 2021). In sub-Saharan Africa, in spite of slow progress in many countries in terms of female parliamentarians and ministerial portfolios, Namibia made astonish progress

increasing its female ministers from 15 per cent to 39 per cent in the past year while Rwanda remains the highest in both female parliamentarians and ministerial portfolios in the region, and Nigeria remains one of the least counties in that regard in the region and the world as well.

The level of women activism in politics and governance in Nigeria especially as it reflects on their numeric strength in the decision making position remains very low. It is on this premise that this study investigates citizen's perception on the role of men and women in the political process to ascertain the link between citizens' perception and the level of women's participation in politics using Enugu state, Nigeria as a point of reference.

2. Political culture

The concept of political culture dwells on the attitudes, beliefs and ethics of the people toward governance and politics. Ikpe (2010) conceived political culture in expression of people's attitude of the character of state. Principally, "political culture" has presumed the reality of a "*national* position". In essence, to credit a "political culture" to a given people connotes that there is similarity in the behavior of people within such area (Silver & Dowley, 2000). Almond and Verba elucidated that "the political culture of a nation is the precise dissemination in the root of 'political objects' among people of the nation" (Almond and Verba, 1965, p. 13). Political culture in brief indicates a constituent of the common culture in connection to the distribution of citizen's orientations to the political environment - government, the regime and the political community. It also assumes the ideas, customs, norms and way of conduct in the political arena (Okeke & Ugwu, 2013, p. 87). In the same vein, Pye (1968) refers to political culture as the upshot of both the collective antecedent of a political system and the past life of the members of that system. The political culture of a people can change over time as new experiences can alter the attitude and orientations of a people. However, cultural norms changes slowly and reflect enduring patterns of political actions.

Almond and Verba (1963 in Ikpe, 2010, p. 321) denotes political orientations "as feelings focused to the political system, and to individual responsibilities to the system. This orientation is embedded in cognitions, subjective feelings and assessments of a population". Among the classifications of political culture, the most prominent is the work of Almond and Verba (1963, pp. 17-21). There are three ideal types of political culture by Almond and Verba established from their study in five countries (United States, Britain, Germany, Mexico, and Italy). These political cultures include parochial cultures, subject cultures, and participant cultures. Parochial cultures are likened to traditional African societies with low cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation. These societies have no specialized roles, and with minimal anticipation for political change. Individuals are engrossed with their family pursuit preferably than public good. Unlike the parochial cultures, there is high cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation to political system in the subject cultures. However, citizens are passive in participation and input object such as the political parties. Subject cultures are mostly found in centralized, authoritarian political structures. Here, citizens are not entangled in governance but pay obedience to laws. The utmost remarkable is the participant culture with input objects, and high cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation. Citizens participate in law making and equally obey the law. Common in all the categories of political cultures is the behaviour of citizens to political system in relation of being committed or inactive in participation, among others.

Almond, Powell, Dalton and Strom (2007) obviously submitted that political culture operates on three levels. These consists the political system level, the process and the policy outcome levels. According to them, citizens' orientations involve the citizens' and leaders' evaluations of the values and

organization that encompass the political system. Some examples of this are ones pride in the nation, national identity and approval of the broad system of government ie legitimacy of government. The second level is the political and policy process and involves the responsibilities of citizens and the awareness of their privileges in the political procedure. The third level is designated the policy level and involves both citizens' and government commitment in achieving policy goals.

In this study, the second level of political culture is relied on especially as relates to women. It bothers on all orientations of citizens towards women in the political process. Therefore, political culture here can be measured by citizens' orientations towards women participation in politics.

3. Political participation

Political participation entails eligibility and willingness to vote and be voted for in a democracy. It offers adult individuals and groups the capability to exert their civil rights which in effect produces the government. Munroe (2002) posits political participation to focus on the exertion of citizen's rights in accord with the doctrines of state. The author further noted that political participation is classified under conventional and unconventional. Conventional political participation takes place within the rules and conducts of a society. The author views it as being normal, conventional, and customary. The best examples here are engaging in voting, membership of political party and attending party meetings. The unconventional political participation takes a more aggressive pattern reflecting irresponsible conduct and lawlessness. The best examples are protests and demonstrations that are confrontational rather than peaceful (Munroe, 2002, pp. 4- 5).

Political participation is the heart of democracy and a medium through which citizens decide their political leaders and make them accountable for their actions and inactions in government (Mayer, 2011). Falade (2014) suggests that the effective involvement of citizens in public engagements creates a form of political stability and development of a political system. In a political system, indicators of participation manifest in form of party membership, voting in an election, electoral campaign, among others. In essence, Falade (2008 in Falade 2014, p. 19) identified six categories of political participants namely- "the inactive, voting specialists, parochial, communalists, campaign, and complete activists participants". The inactive participants refers to people who are indifference in politics; voting specialists are those who have interest only to vote in elections; parochial participants are citizens who irregularly participates in elections, communalist participants are those who constantly vote in elections and participate in community affairs but do not engage in campaign activities; campaigners participants are people who are fascinated with political rallies but inactive in community affairs; and complete activists are those who are vigorously involved in political undertakings such as political campaign, electoral voting and community activities (Falade, 2014). Booth and Seligson (2010) argue that political participation is crucial in political system. It is a forecast of opinions, preferences and wants of citizens towards government.

4. Political culture and its impact on participation

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a people can change over time. Thus, new experiences can alter the attitude and orientations of a people, although cultural norms changes slowly and reflect enduring patterns of political actions.

Almond and Verba further denotes political orientations as feelings focused to the political system, and to individual responsibilities to the system. This orientation is embedded in cognitions, subjective feelings and assessments of a population. Among the classifications of political culture, the most prominent is the work of Almond and Verba (1963, pp. 17-21). There are three ideal types of political culture by Almond and Verba established from their study in five countries (United States, Britain, Germany, Mexico, and Italy). These political cultures include parochial cultures, subject cultures, and participant cultures. Parochial cultures are likened to traditional African societies with low cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation. The subject culture according them exhibits high cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation to political system. Although, 'citizens are passive in participation, rather than participate actively in governance they prefer to pay obedience to laws. Subject cultures are prominent in centralized, authoritarian political structures. The utmost remarkable is the participant culture with input objects, and high cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation (p. 18). Here, citizens are active in governance activities and contribute in law making as well as pay obedience to laws. Common in all the categories of political cultures is the behaviour of citizens to the political system in relation to being active or inactive in governance affairs, among others.

According to Todorov (2011) political participation hinged on beliefs and ideas an individual has about politics which are simultaneously an inherited experience of one political culture to another. It is in form of political values, self-consciousness about politics and public life. Chikerema and Chakunda (2014) contend that political culture has repercussions on governance and has encouraged an astronomical level of instability of states. In their work on political culture, Silva, Clark and Vieira (2015) described political culture as the 'pattern of orientations' to political environment, treaties, and customs, including parties, constitutions courts, and the past of the country. According to Silva, Clark and Vieira, orientations are dispositions to political act which are informed by issues like norms, tradition, emotions, historical memories, and symbols. Such orientations are the aftermath of cognition (knowledge and awareness of political objects), affection (emotions about the object), and evaluation (judgments about those objects).

Norris and Inglehart (2001), contend that in developing world that women's employment and educational stance may adversely influence their opportunities of attaining political leadership. It is likely the rationalization for the upshot of comparative studies of established democracies insinuating the essential of women in administrative, professional, and managerial positions which would boost their financial capacity and enlarge their social webs to compete in elections. In agreement, Ugwuja (2015) affirms that political participation is guaranteed by psychological and socio-economic characteristics of individual. The author submits that people in the higher stratum in society have more chances of engaging in politics and public life than their counterparts. Discussing the psychological factor of political culture, the author further posits that political observers have often reconciled man's political activities to his need for attaining power, money, prestige, recognition, status etcetera.

Writing on the consequence of parochial culture on national development in Nigeria, Anazodo, Agbionu and Ezenwile (2012) emphasized that the character of political culture in Nigeria is responsible for the absence of responsiveness and commitment to the political scene, perhaps culture gives direction to political actions. However, relying on the three levels of political culture as described by Almond and Verba above, the study also aims to unravel the type of political culture most prominent in Enugu state, Nigeria by evaluating citizens' perception of the role of men and women in

the political process.

5.   Materials and method

The study was carried Enugu state, Nigeria. The population of the state at the period of the research was put at 3, 267.837 (National Population Commission [NPC], 2006). The state is made up of 17 local government areas and divided into three senatorial zones, namely Enugu East, Enugu North and Enugu South senatorial zones (Enugu state government, 2021).

The sample size for the study was derived using Cochran (1963) formulae and approximately 600. The target population of the study was arrived at applying the cluster, stratified, and the purposive sampling techniques. While data were generated using questionnaire and In-depth Interview (IDI) guide. Four scale measurement of Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Disagree = D and Strongly Disagree = SD were used to generate information through the questionnaire while 10 persons selected from two government agencies namely, the Department of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and Enugu State House of Assembly formed the IDI.

Research personnels were recruited to assist with the distribution and collection of copies of questionnaires as well as the IDI. Thus, 579 copies of questionnaires were satisfactory and used for the study. Results were analyzed using descriptive statistics for the quantitative data while interpretations were given to qualitative data and discussed as they relate to figures presented.

6.   Results and discussion

Results are presented using bar charts and simple percentages. Using the four scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, for purpose of clarity, the strongly agree and agree responses were merged as agreed while disagree and strongly disagree responses were merged as disagreed. Questions and responses of respondents are presented below:

6.1 Presentation of data: Respondents' perception on the role of men and women in politics
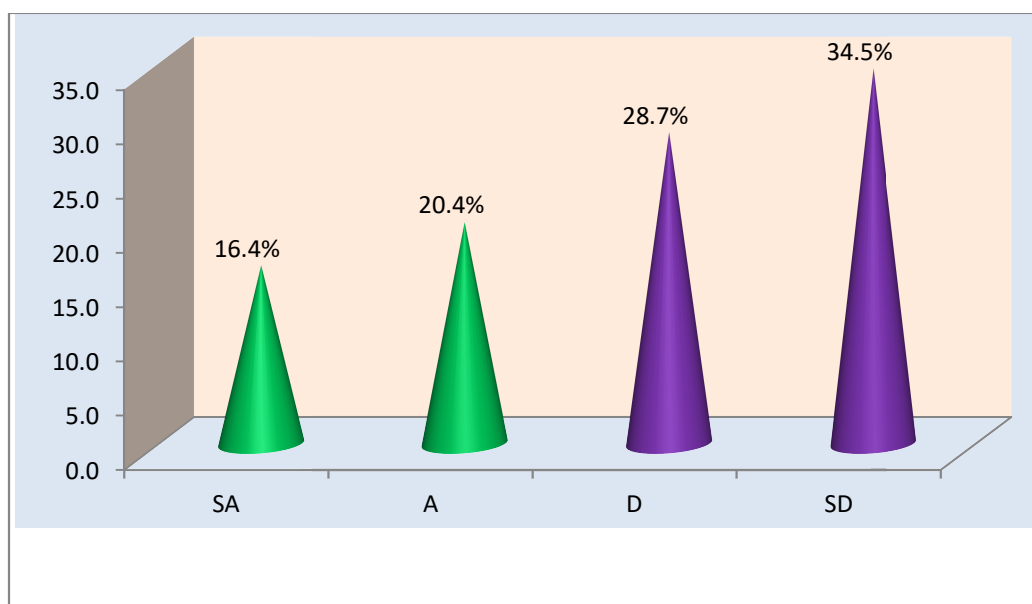
Figure 1: *Men and women should participate equally in politics*
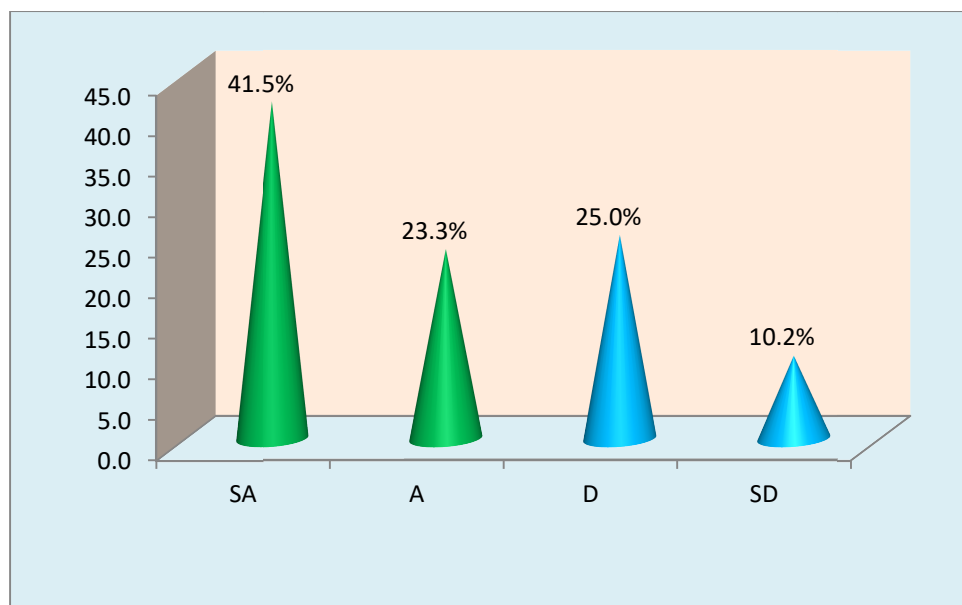
Source: The author, 2018

The Figure 1 shows the responses of respondents' on whether men and women should take equal part in politics. Responses show a decline towards men and women equal participation as the agreed responses stood at 36.8 per cent while disagreed responses stood at 63.2 per cent.
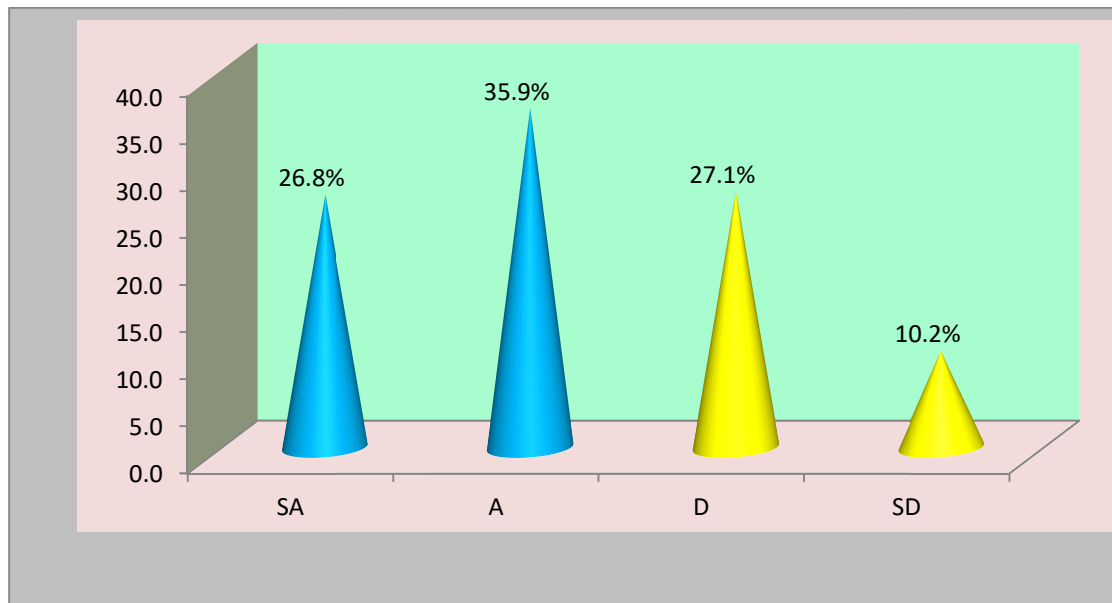
Figure 2: *Politics is solely men's business*
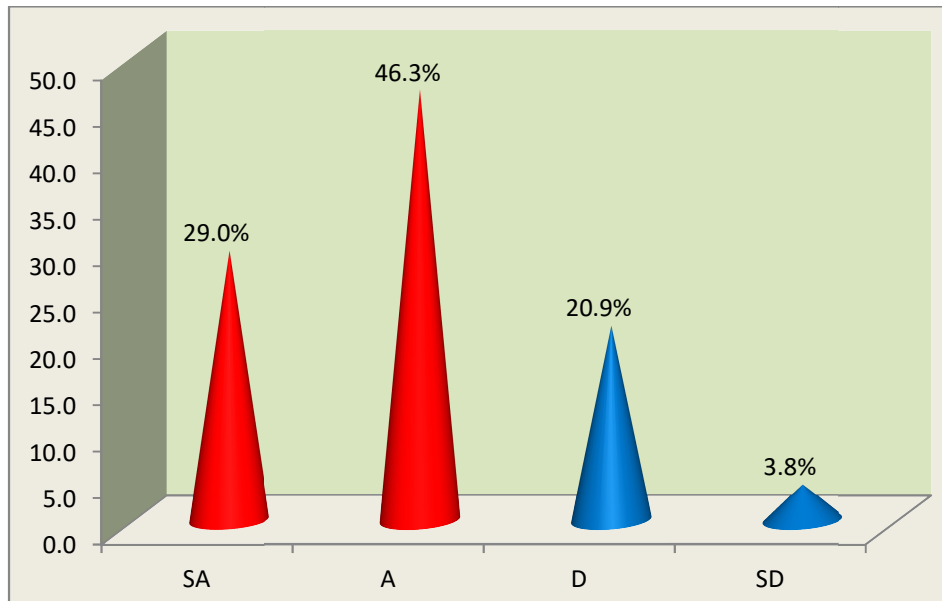
Source: The author, 2018

Figure 2 shows responses of citizens on whether politics should solely be men's business. Responses of respondents show a positive view supporting that men should solely carryout the business of politics as 62.7 per cent agreed while 37.3 per cent disagreed that politics is solely men's business.

Figure 3: *Preference to vote a male candidate than a female candidate*
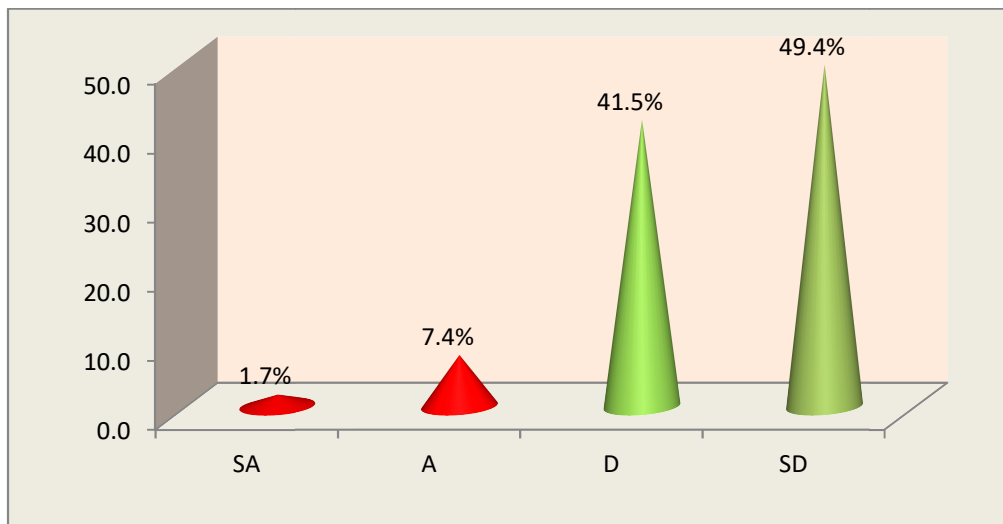
Source: The author, 2018

Figure 3 shows respondents' views on their preference to vote a male candidate against a female candidate. Responses of respondents show a positive result with regards to citizens having preference to vote a male candidate. Result show that 64.8 per cent agreed while 35.2 per cent declined with regards to the question.

Figure 4: Majority of women have negative view about politics

Source: *The author, 2018*

The Figure 4 above shows responses of respondents on whether majority of women view politics negatively. Responses of respondents show a positive view indicating the majority of women do not have positive view about politics. 75.3% of respondents agreed while 24.7% disagreed that more of women have negative view about politics.
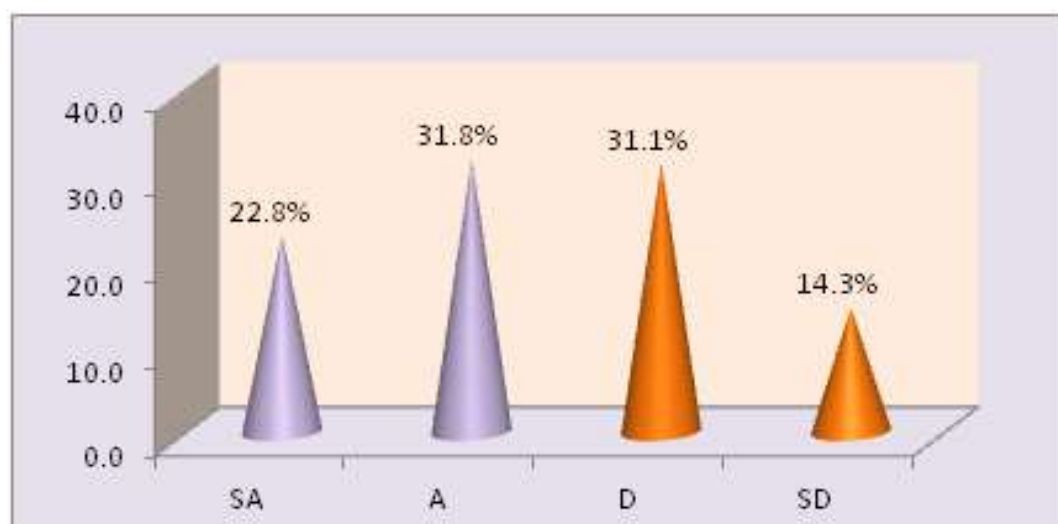

Figure 5: Majority of men allow their wives to contest for political positions
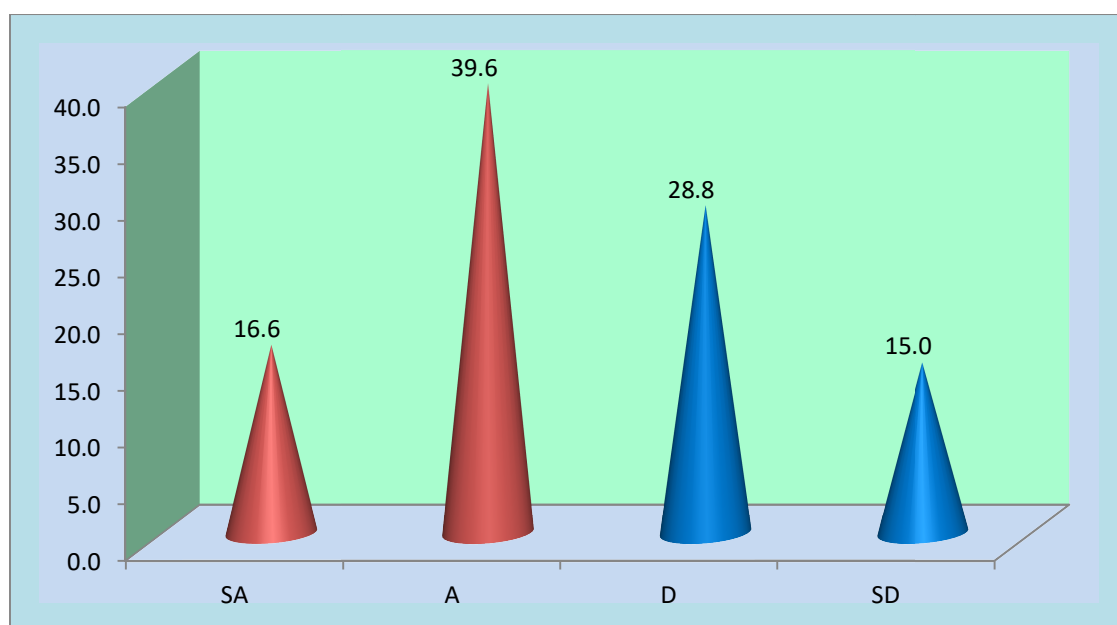
Source: *The author, 2018*

The above figure 5 shows that 9.1% agreed while 90.9% disagreed that men most often allow their wives to contest for political positions. The result is of the view that most men do not support their wives to contest for political positions.

Figure 6: Women are weaker sex so cannot withstand the hurdles of political activities

Source: *The author, 2018*

Figure 6 above shows responses of respondents on women being weaker sex who cannot withstand the hurdles of political activities. Responses show a positive view indicating that women are not strong enough to withstand political hurdles. From the figure above, 54.6% agreed while 45.4% to this question.

Figure 7: Majority of women who stand in electoral contests are irresponsible

Source: *The author, 2018*

The figure 7 above shows respondents' view on whether majority of women who stand in electoral contests are irresponsible. The data reveals that 56.2% of respondents agreed, while 43.3% disagreed that women who stand in political competitions are irresponsible. Most respondents are of the view that majority of women who contest with men in election are irresponsible.
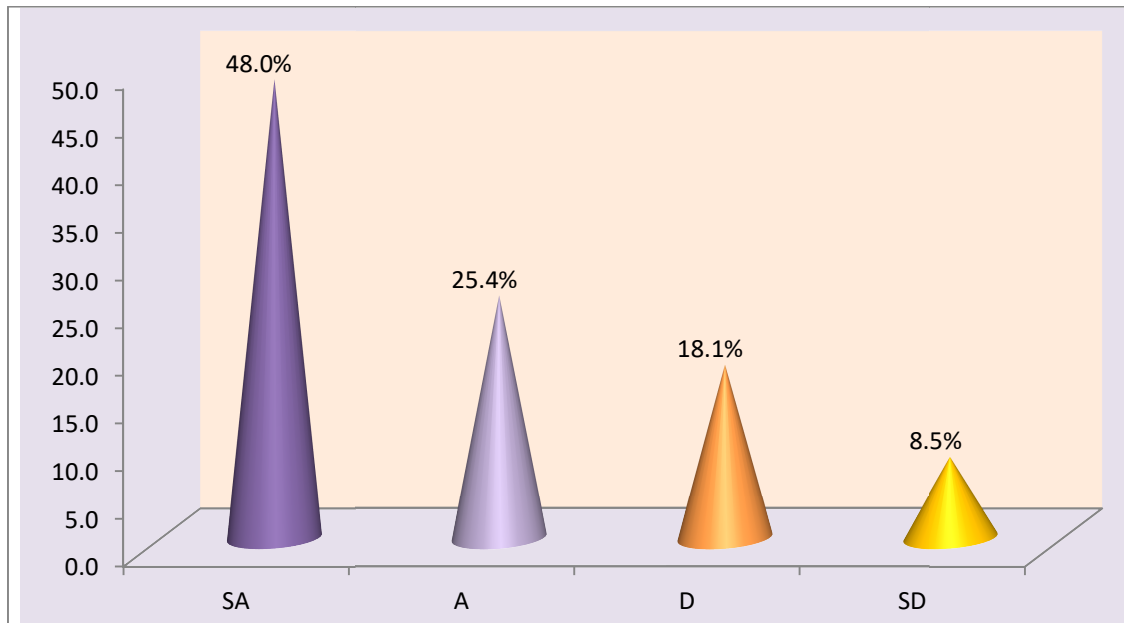
Figure 8: Men make better leaders than women

Source: *The author, 2018*

The above figure 8 shows respondents views on whether men make better leaders than women. The result shows a positive view in support of men being better leaders than women with 73.4% agreed responses against 26.6% disagreed responses. The finding denotes that men are viewed as better leaders than women.

6.2. *Discussion and analysis of findings*

The figure 1 revealed that over 2/3 of the respondents (*63.2 per cent*) declined that men and women should have equal participation in politics. The finding indicates that vast population of respondents decline support for women equality with men in politics. This discovery is unconnected with male dominance ideology for which greater percentage of citizens have ascribed to. Culture imbeds on women unequal relationship with men, and majority of citizens do not encourage women active engagement in political activities. What this implies is that women lack maximum support to actively participate in politics due to the patriarchal notion that is deep rooted in the society. The implication lies on poor policy articulation and execution since women will hardly be represented during policy legislation as well its implementation thereby resulting to poor governance. A study by Ugwu & Ekekwe (2018) affirmed this position when they revealed that having few women in governance results in poor legislation and unfavorable to gender sensitive issues such as women and children's welfare. The study further posits that it leads to poor governance and underdevelopment. Thus, women adequate representation in governance would indisputably enhance policy legislation, economic development, poverty reduction and gender sensitive issues thereby leading to the overall development of a nation. This is because women make up about 49 per cent of global and national population.

Engaging and tapping knowledge and initiatives from a good per cent of this population would undoubtfully make positive changes in any nation.

The result from figure 2 revealed that near 2/3 of respondents (*62.7 per cent*) admitted that politics is solely men's business. This result finds relationship with the former which is basically patriarchal ideological element which is persistent in the society. Many citizens reject the notion of women playing politics. They believe in specified gender roles of sexes in society which was created by patriarchy which ascribes domestic functions to females and males as breadwinners in the family and as well entitled for public life including politics. This finding collaborates Okoronkwo-Chukwu (2013, p. 42) who posits that "the general perception that politics is only conserved for men …….. constitutes a major challenge to women in politics". More so, Norris and Inglehart (2008) revealed that traditional attitudes towards gender fairness in governance remain a major hurdle to the election of women to legislative office. The consequence of this is that women who may have intent to via for political leadership may not satisfactorily generate the backing of citizens to surface triumphant in election consequent on peoples' belief system. The implication is that men would remain dominated in political domain and make policies that may not sufficiently protect the interest of all citizens especially the female folk.

Result from figure 3 reveals that a high proportion of respondents representing 64.8 per cent have preference to vote male candidates than female candidates during elections. The result from IDI with the two organizations also goes in the same direction. Further information from the IDI revealed that despite the number of women interested in running for political office, they are hardly supported by majority of citizens including their fellow women. They maintained that women display jealous attitudes and lack trust towards fellow women and these contribute to account for their setbacks in achieving their political dreams. Women rather than support each other with their numeric strength, prefer to galvanize support for male candidates. One of the interviewees specifically stated thus:

women irrespective of their numeric strength most often do not come out victorious in elections due largely as a result of jealous attitudes of fellow women and lack of confidence on women's leadership capabilities. This explains why most citizens prefer to vote males than females candidates in elections.

The consequences of which is continuous dominance of men in governance and dictates of state's affairs.

The result from figure 4 shows that an overwhelming proportion of respondents (75.3%) affirmed that most women view politics negatively. This is not far from the prevalent patriarchal ideological element for which women have ascribed to. The specific gender expectations play an undesirable influence in the consciousness of women as it concerns politics. Culturally, men assume heads and main source of income for families, they are considered to be strong to assume responsibilities which are termed masculine such as playing politics while women should perform domestic roles such as bearing children, making food and home care which are considered less stressful. Such ascribed roles have conditioned the minds of women that political activities are not within their responsibilities and so have limited interest. This reason invariably affects the number of women in governance.

The finding from figure 5 revealed that 90.9% affirmed that men hardly give their wives free hand to contest in elections. Information from the IDI affirms with those from respondents. . These views are not far reached from the patriarchal gender roles with which men have ascribed to. Further information revealed that females who contest for office are often seen by society as irresponsible, and are subjected to sexual demands by men as a condition for support to emerge as party bearers or win

elections. However, this assumption of the irresponsible nature of women by society may not expressively be true. Some women have good family upbringing, educated and financially capable and have good intent to bring positive changes in governance. Another reason noted by the interviewees is that majority of men entertain fear of loss of respect from wives if they eventually occupy political positions and may as well become unfaithful to them as they work with male politicians. Based on these points, many men do not permit their wives to engage in electoral contests. The consequence of these attitudes by men is that male (politicians) would continue to dominate the apparatus of government with the attendant consequence on satisfactory policy legislations.

The data from figure 6 revealed that marginally more respondents accepted that women are weaker sex so cannot withstand the hurdles of political activities. Women are considered by society as weak, passive, emotional, dependent and submissive whereas men are labeled strong, positive, forceful, aggressive, intelligent, dominant and objective (Burris, Barry, Moore, Delor, Parrent & Stadelman, 1973). On the bases of these distinctions, many lack confidence in women's capability to withstand political pressures from the period of campaign through elections and discharging leadership responsibilities. The consequence of these orientations is women's continual underrepresentation in governance unless there is re-orientation of citizens towards women's capability in governance.

The finding from figure 7 revealed that 56.2%of respondents attested that women who stand in electoral contests are irresponsible. However, information from in-depth interview with both organizations considered that women who engage in politics are viewed by most people as being irresponsible. This view is related with information in figure 5 and as well conforms with the view of Okoronkwo-Chukwu (2013, p. 42) when he noted that "women who go into politics are regarded as indecent". Specifically, one the interviewees submitted that, "attending political party meetings at night with men, and sometimes sexual harassments received from men are some reasons women are regarded as irresponsible." Thus, information from IDI agrees with data obtained from respondents and may be answerable for why most men hardly permit wives to contest elections. The consequences of this societal believe and orientation is that it would pose threat for many women to surface triumphant in elections which means that men would maintain control in the political scene.

The information from figure 8 shows that over 2/3 of respondents (*73.4 per cent*) affirmed that men are better leaders than women. This orientation is not far-fetched from the gender roles created by patriarchy which presents men as intelligent, strong, courageous dormant, day, positive, forceful etcetera and women as being emotional, passive, weak, unintelligent, quarrelsome, childish, dependent etcetera (Burris et al., 1973). Based on these specific qualities believed by majority of citizens, they do not think that women posses such leadership attributes that can make them good leaders, thus, prefer to support men than women in elections. Evidences of this are obvious on results of various elections in Nigeria both at the national, state and local government levels as well as appointments of women into various decision making positions. Citizens here have parochial attitude towards women participation in politics and governance. This political culture attitude is detrimental to women's political advancement, good governance and overall development of the state and nation as well. This is so because, since women make up about 49 per cent of the nation's population, undermining their contributions in terms of political ideas and initiatives during legislation and in the development agenda of government would have negative impact on national growth and development.

Way forward for women participation in politics

The importance of women active participation in politics cannot be overemphasized. Empowering

women in nation's polity and governance have overwhelming positive consequences. Since women make up about 49 per cent of the nation's population, it is imperative they contribute positively in development agenda and capacity building. Their contribution can be possible by engaging them in governance of the state. Women play enormous roles in family building and as so can use their natural gift of family management, academic knowledge and experiences to contribute positively to building a better society.

It is important that men and women explore the benefits of inclusive governance for nation building and have a reorientation on the need to accommodate women in the political scene. Patriarchal orientation of male superiority and alleged women's incompetent nature or what is referred as weaker sex have continued to undermine women's active participation in politics. Therefore, a drastic change in peoples' orientation and attitudes towards women in politics would promote their participation and enhance development, reduce poverty and entrench good governance. Democracy is a necessary attribute of good governance. If citizens are not properly integrated in the affairs of the state, equity, good governance and development would be eluded. It is important to note that development is not just infrastructural development but people centered addressing the issue of poverty, unemployment and educational attainment. These aspects of development can only be achieved through inclusive and good governance.

In a bid to improve the status of women in politics, urgent measure such as quota is eminent. Electoral quota has remained a positive factor enhancing women's representation in governance across nations and has proved to be the immediate solution to women's underrepresentation in governance. Since, the famous Beijing conference of 1995 which recommended 30 per cent quota for women representation in governance at all levels, many countries of the world have adopted one form of quota system or the other in filling their legislative seats. Countries such as Rwanda, Cuba and Bolivia have attained more than 50 per cent women representation in their parliament and Rwanda remarkably is the highest in the world having more than 60 per cent women parliamentarians. It is pertinent to note that over 95 per cent of countries that have achieved 30 per cent or more women in their parliament apply one form of quota or the other in the selection or election of candidates in their parliaments. This is to say therefore, that the use of quota in electoral politics has proved to be an efficient and immediate means of enhancing women's representation in politics and governance in nations and should be adopted by national, state and local governments in Nigeria to increase women's presence in the governance of the state.

Conclusion

Women have continued to be undermined in active participation in politics and governance of nations especially in Nigeria. The political ideology of male culture in politics has continued to dominate the political arena and limiting women's chances of securing decision making positions in Nigeria but particularly in Enugu state. Responses of respondents indicate poor support for women participation in politics which invariably reflects on the level of their representation in governance. The status of women in governance in the state is low. This however, calls for positive changes to enhance women's status in the political space. This change can be achieved by change in value system and support for women in politics. The adoption and implementation of women's quota backed by law and the use of reserved seats for women to increase their number in governance is very paramount. These mechanisms would enhance women's status in governance necessary for achieving better policy legislation, good governance and development in the state and the country at large.

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