

## Ethical Assessment of Women and Violence in Nigeria

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**Abstract.** This paper examines the various forms of violence and discrimination against women in Nigeria which includes sexual violence, domestic violence, political violence etc. it pointed out that women are subjected to various inhuman torture (physical, emotional and psychological) in the past and presently they are still under various form of oppressions. This account for the reason why we rarely find them in core area of decision making and in places where they are, they are given little or no recognition. This paper criticizes all the forms of violence against women most especially sexual violence and argues that it is degrading, dehumanizing, and therefore it should be totally discouraged. It argues that women has an epistemic privilege that may be useful in developing African nations more specifically Nigeria, reason being that they see from a unique viewpoint and they played many roles in various societies throughout the history. She has been a wife, a mother, a farmer, a laborer, business executives, a teacher, a volunteer worker; no doubt women can successfully combine two or more of these roles without one lagging behind. But unfortunately, their ideas do not go well with their male counterparts. This paper opines that there is a need to make a conscious effort to see to the urgent needs of women so that this could serve the purpose of a psychotherapeutic to redeem victims of violence from continuous deprivation.

**Keywords:** Violence, Oppression, Women, Discrimination

### 1. Introduction

Until recently, violence against women has been overlooked in the society. It was ignored and neglected because it was believed that women are the architect of their own misfortune. With the advent of the feminist, it is seen as a global problem and a serious violation of women's right. The advent of the feminist led to women organizing consciousness, raising campaigns, writing books and advocating reforms in laws regarding domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. As a result of these, violence against women has come to be recognized as a legitimate human rights issue and a significant threat to women's health and well-being. Despite the large number of women and their crucial functions, the division of roles between the male and female assign the subordinate position to the women. As a consequence, women have long suffered various forms of discrimination, inequality, exclusion and violence. Violence has influenced the lives of women so that they are impeded to exercise their human rights and reduce their contribution to the development of their societies socially, economically and politically. This reflects that women are discriminated and place at the bottom of ladder in relation to power and decision making within the political, social, economic and cultural sphere of life.

### 2. The Nature of Violence

Violence is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that transcends racial, ethnic,

culture, gender and age boundaries. Violence can be defined as physical, psychological, emotional and economic assault or coercion occurring in the family, work place and in the community. Violence against women can be said to mean a violation of women's right to dignity and self-esteem. It has been defined as any behavior that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to a woman. Such behaviors include acts of physical aggression, psychological abuse, forced intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion, various controlling behavior such as isolating a person from family and friends, monitoring her movements, and restricting access to information or assistance (Kaltrina, 2013: 559).

The United Nations defines Violence against women as any gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm. It also includes threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (UN, 1993). Violence against women is about power relations between men and women, it covers those incidents in which men asserts power or force to achieve submissiveness and fear in women and in the process commits an offence against the dignity or privacy of the woman. This behavior exhibited by men is the result of men's desire to exercise power and control women. This reflects the real patriarchal power structure within contemporary society.

The World Health Organization which defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being describes violence by male partners as the most common health risk in the world for women (World Health Organization, 2002). Violence against women is multi-faceted and reflects the unequal power relationship of men and women in virtually all societies. Violence against women is global and based on the inequality between men and women. It is rooted in gender inequality and male dominance. It is obvious and aggravated in any society where man is given the right to dominate and subordinate his partner (Johnson, 1995: 283). In a society where patriarchal terrorism that uses violent to show power and control over female is evident, violence against women is increased.

The abuse of women by their male partners is among the most common and depressing forms of gender-based violence. Gender based violence encompasses all forms of violence that perpetuate and exploit the dichotomy between men and women in order to assure the subordination and inferiority of women and everything associated with feminine (Copelon, 1994). Violence against women is the most brutal manifestation of women's oppression. It violates a woman's right to her body and liberty to be free from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, and in most acute form, it violates a woman's right to life (Hare, 1999: p.304). It is any acts or threat of acts intended to hurt or make women suffer physically, sexually or psychologically, and which affect women because they affect women or affect women disproportionately (Richters, 1994).

Violence against women covers those incidents in which men asserts power by using sexual or similar acts to achieve submissiveness and fear in a woman and in the process commits an offence against the dignity and right of the woman. Such behavior is the result of the men's strong desire to exercise power and control over women. The violation of the human rights of women that result from violence emanate from a virtually universal history of power relations between men and women. These inequalities are rooted in a combination of social, economic, political, cultural and psychological conditions (Imasogie, 2001: 44). It is believed that the heart of the problem is the exclusion of women's voices from the public world.

Convention on the elimination of violence against women (CEDAW) in 1979 represents violence against women as a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. It is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. It is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. Violence against women is condemned, whether it occurs in a societal setting (such as female mutilation) or a domestic setting (such as spouse

abuse). Violence against women is not acceptable whatever the settings may be.

Violence affects women in different ways; in particular on their mental and physical health. It leads to stress, depression, loss of self-esteem, reluctance to join wider world, and more severe psychological and physical problems. It causes serious short and long term physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health problems for women. Sexual violence leads to risky sexual behavior, unwanted pregnancies, induced abortions, gynecological problems and sexually transmitted infections. Domestic violence in pregnancy increases the likelihood of miscarriage, still birth and pre-term delivery. It can also lead to psychological and mental issues like behavioral disorder, depression, post-traumatic stress, and anxiety disorder, feelings of isolation, poor self-esteem, fear, suicide attempt, homicide and death. It consequentially affects their children; these children are likely to become survivors or they can even perpetrate violence.

### 3. Forms of Violence

Violence against women comes in various forms which include domestic violence, sexual violence, physical violence, psychological violence, women trafficking, honor killing, girl-child marriage among others. Some of which are explained below:

#### 3.1 Domestic Violence

This is when a partner in a relationship uses violent or intimidating behavior to control or dominate the other. It is the use or abuse of power and authority by force with the intent of inflicting not only the physical or psychological pain but also humiliation or demoralization. It consists of intimate violence committed against women in the domestic sphere by their partners. This form of violence involves physical, sexual and even psychological battering in the home, it cut across all races, culture, as well as social and class division. Domestic violence is an abuse of power always perpetrated by the member of relationship against a less powerful member in order to gain control. Domestic violence is a

deliberate act which is most often perpetuated by men against women and children; it is overwhelmingly initiated by men and inflicted on women.

Domestic violence against women is systemic and structural, a mechanism of patriarchal control of women that is built on male superiority and female inferiority, sex stereotyped roles, and economic, social, and political predominance of men and dependence of women (Copelon, 1994). Domestic violence is a function of the belief fostered in all cultures that men are superior and that the women they live with are their possessions or chattels that they can treat as they wish and as they consider appropriate (UN report 2005). Through violence, men seek and confirm the devaluation and dehumanization of women. Despite the civilization, patriarchal system continues to express and replicate itself through violence in the home. The prevalence of wife battering unmask the prevailing concepts of normalcy and functionality of domestic violence.

Theresa Akumadu asserted that the Nigerian society treats women a little better than beasts of burden, more likely donkeys than human being (Akumadu, 1994: 29). Discriminatory burden are placed on women which include burden of making marriage work at all cost, even at the detriment of women. Domestic violence is less visible and more pervasive because some societies believe that it is not a criminal act rather it is perceived as an acceptable form of social control in the family. They felt there is nothing wrong in husband beating up his wife especially when injury is not inflicted, it is regarded as a normal marriage affair. Even in societies where domestic violence is criminalized, there is a widespread failure of the law enforcement agencies to prosecute offenders thereby making it seems normal and acceptable. The Nigerian law enforcement agent is always reluctant to investigate or prosecute offenders. Instead, they advise to settle the issue at home.

More so, there are some of the Nigerian law that tacitly encourage the penetration of domestic violence. For instance, section 55 (i) (d) of the penal code legalizes wife battering as a form of

chastisement in as much as grievous harm is not inflicted. It classifies wife battering as an exercise undertaken for purpose of correction. Also, sections 353 and 360 of the criminal code, which classify assault on a male as felony that attracts a seven year jail term while assault on a female is regarded as misdemeanor punishable with only a two year jail term. These discriminatory laws serve to unduly and wrongly re-emphasize the underdog status the society has assigned to women, making the realization of their rights a mirage (Ray and Jimmy, 2002: 29). By and large, it can be asserted that many Nigerian women get killed, mutilated, battered, severely bruised by their partners with the perpetrators not prosecuted or punished, making them feel more comfortable violating their wives.

### 3.2 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is defined as coercion in sexual act, force or coercion is the central elements in defining sexual violence. World Health Organization defines sexual violence as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (WHO, 2002: 149). It is also defined as any sexual act performed on an individual without their consent. Sexual violence takes different forms such as rape, incest, sexual abuse, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation and sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual violence which implies abusive, uninvited and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, especially at work or school which may include intimidation, bullying, coercion, or the inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. It can be verbal or physical, and it is often perpetrated by a person in a position of authority against a subordinate. Sexual harassment is defined by the Council of Europe convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the

purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment and refusal by women to cooperate or accede to unwanted and illicit sexual advances could lead to the termination of the woman by the disappointed or frustrated boss. The woman subjected to such harassment at work could also become depressed, unstable and lacking in confidence.

Rape on the other hand is defined as physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration, even if slight, of the vulva or anus, using a penis, other body parts or an object (Ibid: 149). Rape is one of the gravest attacks on human integrity, life and dignity. Mari Mikkola explores rape as a paradigm case of dehumanization. She defines dehumanization as an act or treatment which is indefensible setback on our legitimate human interests, and constitutes a moral injury (Mari: 2011:141). The only crime that women fear more than rape is murder. This fear is based on the fact that rape involves sex, a taboo, and the guilt and anger is directed at oneself.

Section 357 of the criminal code says "Any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or a girl with or without her consent, if the consent is obtained by force or by any means of intimidation of any kind or by fear of harm or by means of false and fraudulent representation as the nature of the act or in the case of a married woman by impersonating her husband, is guilty of an offence which is called rape". The punishment of the offence is stated in section 358 as follows; "Any person who commits the offence of rape is liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor. Those who attempt rape are by 359 of the same code liable on conviction to imprisonment for fourteen years. With the punishment recommended for offenders, one will expect that rape would be a rare occurrence in the Nigeria. But this is far from being the case as rape continues to be committed on an almost regular basis. In Nigeria, most women have been assaulted, abused and attacked sexually.

Though rape is being committed on a daily basis, the victims of rape are usually complacent and will not want to lodge complaint against the

perpetrators to the police. This is so, because of the stigma usually on a victim of rape by the society. The victim of rape are often suspected of seducing the perpetrators or consented to the act and the question of consent put the onus and the burden of proof on the victim. How can someone proof that he or she did not consent? Does a victim need to physically hurt the aggressor in order to express lack of consent, thus exposing herself to physical violence and maybe death? If the perpetrator affirms that the victim consented, then the victim must demonstrate that this was not the case, and that the perpetrator is lying; if the victim is vulnerable or in a relationship of dependence with the aggressor, such a demonstration can be extremely difficult (Bouvier, 2014; 567).

Even where complaint is lodged, the victim may not want to go to the court to give evidence because they cannot withstand the cross-examination. In some occasions, the victim will break down in tears, unable to give necessary evidence that would lead to conviction of the perpetrator (Kolawole, 2001: 60). Most of the victims find it difficult to talk about the trauma, suffering, the feeling of dehumanization and death experienced by them. Talking about a traumatic event requires caution because it may either makes the victim becomes miserable or fierce and brutal, seeking for vengeance instead of resilience. Besides, criminal trials seem to care more about punishing those who have committed crimes than the personal experiences of survivors, their pain and suffering and their struggle for survival and healing (Richard, 2006: 212).

Victims of rape are often blamed, considered as dishonored, undignified, and stained with evil and moral fault. They are often treated by their families and communities as if they have committed a crime (Ibid, 230). They no longer feel themselves, they feel like strangers to themselves, their bodies, their personal lives, and their community. They feel soiled, having lost their dignity and their value as humans, and that they are not part of human anymore (Brison, 2002: 9). Victims are isolated, alone and misunderstood, in a world which has become insecure, violent and threatening for them.

Victims of rape suddenly find themselves in a situation of high vulnerability, with increased risks of further sexual violence, rejection or desertion of children born of rape, forced marriage, or loss of their means of subsistence (Charli, 2007).

### **3.3 Physical Violence**

It is any act which causes physical harm as a result of unlawful physical force. This includes hitting, punching, slapping, biting, kicking, hair pulling, strangulation, the infliction of fractures and burns, throwing things and the use of weapons. Physical abuse tends to get worse over time, with attacks becoming more frequent and more savage.

### **3.4 Psychological Violence**

This is a form of abuse in which a person subject or expose another person to behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, and post-trauma stress disorder. It is an emotional abuse which includes anything from verbal abuse, constant criticism, manipulation, intimidation, denial, insults, blaming, shaming and name calling. Women are psychologically abused thereby making them feel inferior and useless. It affects women self-esteem and self-image.

### **3.5 Honor Killings**

This form of violence is common in certain parts of the world. Honor killings are perpetrated by family members against women in the family who are believed to have placed dishonor to the family. These killings are rampant in a society where an allegation against a woman can be enough to defile a family's reputation. It is believed that the death of a dishonorable woman will restore the honor. Women are killed for reasons such as; refusal to enter an arranged marriage, being in a relationship that is disapproved by the family, sex outside marriage, becoming victims of rape, dressing in ways that are deemed inappropriate.

### **3.6 Forced or girl-child marriage**

This is a marriage in which one or both parties married against their will. Girls are sold by their families to older men for financial benefits even before they reach their puberty stage. To the older men, these young brides act as symbols of masculinity and accomplishment. Child brides endure forced sex, causing health risks and growth impediments. Bride kidnapping, marital rape and forced pregnancy is often found in forced or girl-child marriage. Primary education is usually not completed for young girls in forced marriages. Married and pregnant students are often discriminated against, expelled and excluded from school (Ezer, 2006). This consequentially debars these girls from becoming what they want to be, they are excluded from utilizing their potential.

#### **4. Factors that cause violence against women**

There are numerous factors that cause violence against women. Regardless of the age, race, ethnic, color, socio-economic status, religion or personality, women are exposed to abuse and violence which emanate from social stratification and other factors which include individual factors that are found in men that violate women rights. It was discovered that male perpetrators are characterized by factors such as psychological and personality disorder like low self-esteem, low impulse control, stress, frustration and child abuse. A man who has been abused as a child may not see anything wrong in abusing a woman. He has always been looking for an avenue to prove himself, any slight opportunity to prove his superiority will be disastrous. Such men see women especially their wives as their belongings which they can use as they please. They do not consider women's ideas because they are seen as incapable of comprehending any complex issue, that is, they are of limited mental capacity.

Some factors in the family can also lead to violence against women; these factors include poor problem solving skills, poor communication skills, economic dependence of women and poverty. Poverty exposes women to

violence; it limits women's choices and options when violence occurs. Significant interpersonal disparities in economic, educational and employment status which lead to dependency of women on men in the family are major cause of domestic violence. The fact that the husband is the bread winner makes some husband feel like lord that need to be worship. They believe that being more educated or earning more than the wives makes them superior, they exert unnecessary dominion on their wives; treating their wives as slaves. To maintain peace and harmony in the house, women submit to the superior will of their husband. Even in a family where the wife is more educated or earn more than the husband, the woman have to be extra careful so that she will not affect the self-esteem of the man. Any attempt from the woman to make a decision contrary to that of the husband lead to domestic violence because the man is already feeling inferior to the woman, so instead of dealing with the issue amicably, he resort to force and violence.

Social structural factors such as high level of illiteracy, high level of social and economic disempowerment of women, women trafficking, lack of redress for victims of violence, lack of provision and protection for victims of violence have tolerate and legitimize violence against women. High level of illiteracy has instilled the ideology of women being seen as 'objects' to be used in men and make women to accept this inferiority as a norm. Lack of redress, provision and protection for victims of violence has made many of the victims to prefer to suffer in silence than to speak and end up stigmatized and blamed for the violence. Women trafficking, employment of beautiful women as marketing officers with target to meet, which states how much and whom they must bring as customers within a time frame has aggravated the violence faced by women in the society.

Socio-cultural practices and belief make women vulnerable to violation; these violations are justified as norms and tradition. These practices are influenced by values and beliefs held by the members of the society, some of which are even propagated by women themselves. Women are always at the receiving end of these harmful

traditional practices and they suffer a lot from them. Some of these socio-cultural factors are cultural norms and traditions that promote violence against women are genital mutilation which is one of the practices perpetrated on the ground of tradition. In Nigeria, this harmful practice erroneously called female circumcision is believed to curb promiscuity. Though, it is widely believed that female genital mutilation is a mechanism for the control of female sexuality, there are consequences such as infections, acute pain, obstructed labour, vestico-vaginal fistulate (VVF) and so on (Ucheoma, 2004 :86).

Widowhood practice is one of the worst ordeals a woman can pass through in Nigeria, she suffers the most inhuman and obnoxious rituals. Despite the trauma and pain of a lost husband, much more problems await a woman that survives her husband in Nigeria especially in the eastern part of Nigeria. The widow could be subjected to a trial by ordeal to prove that she has no hand in the death of her husband, sometimes, the corpse will be washed and the woman will be compelled to drink the bathing water to prove her innocence which is not done for a widower. They may scrape hair from all parts of her body and keep her a secluded place for a long period of time.

Early and forced marriages also expose women to violence. Girls are sent forth to their husband house at a very tender age when they need to still be going to school and growing up in their father's house. This infringes on the right of girl-child education, these girls are deprived of their right to education. They are forced to get married without their consent, some parents see this as a means of alleviating poverty, and they consider their girl-child as a property to be sold to make money and the husband also treat them like object to be used. This practice exposed these girls to severe health risks in addition to physical, emotional and psychological trauma.

Patriarchal system in Nigeria is one of the ancient factor that cause violence against women. Kinship is acknowledged only through association with the male line and excludes the descendants of the female line from property right and even from recognition. Patriarchal

signifies male dominance, it grant the male nearly total ownership over the entire family, including power of physical abuse. Male dominance as the supremacy of the strong over the weak, is in essence, the source of all forms of oppression, suppression, exploitation, in fact barbarism, in its civil form. It is an evidence of imperfection in mankind (Ucheoma, 2004: p.viii). Patriarchal societies typically link feelings of cruelty with sexuality; physical force is restricted to male who alone is psychologically, physically and technically equipped to perpetrate violence. Patriarchy's greatest psychological weapon is simply its universality and longevity. Patriarchy still has more tenacious or powerful hold through its successful habit of passing itself off as nature (Ibid: 54).

Acceptance of gender stereotype by some cultures that is the preference for male children is another ground for violence against women. The high premium placed on male children on the grounds of continuity of lineage in patrilineal society has led many women in search of male children at all cost. Women have been maltreated and divorced for having only female children; some have had health issues, even died as a result of complications from childbearing, all in search of male children. Though it has been medically proven that women have nothing to do with giving birth to male child, it all revolves with the man. But women have suffered a lot for this, even when it is not their fault. The most surprising is that the mother-in-law who is a woman as well makes the matter worse by victimizing the woman because having a male child has been seen as a blessing while female child are just burden.

Religion has added to the discrimination and violence faced by women in Nigeria. The religious leaders and institutions acted as the inexorable guardians and guarantors of the patriarchal system in Nigeria. The three major religions in Nigeria believe that women are inferior to men. Christianity holds that woman is made from a man's rib which signifies that women are subjected to men. The divine proof of women inferior nature, which justifies her subordination to man is manifested in the

epistles of Apostle Paul. Paul forbid a woman to pray with her head uncovered, while a man ought not to cover his head, for man is the image and glory of God but woman is of the man (1 Cor. 11:7-9). He also admonished wives to submit to their husbands, for the husband is the head of the wife (Ephesians 5:22).

The Koran admonishes that “men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one to them to excel the other...” (Sura 4 ayah 34). Women’s right under Shariah legal system are largely abused; Shariah law in Islam admonish women to keep shut, their rights are violated in the interpretation of Koran. Early and forced marriage enjoy legal backing in Sharia law, marriages can be concluded for infants and virgin daughters (jabr) by their parents. Women were meant to believe the interpretations of the Koran that they are not free to participate in public life or acquire education except that of Islam, that they are not equal to men in the sight of Allah. They are to accept wives without seeking their consents in as much as it is in accordance with the sunnah. Also, in the traditional religion, women are subjected to men, sometimes, they are seen as unclean which are not meant to touch sacred objects so as to avert abomination. Female genital is explained in terms of a wound that bleeds thereby women are considered as sinful, unclean and debilitating. All these are nothing but discrimination against women.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that women have suffered various forms of discrimination, inequality, exclusion and violence and there is a need to stop them. To prevent violence against women, some measures have to be taken, some of which are; women should be empowered economically and socially through a combination of microfinance and skills training to promote gender equality, reduce poverty and dependency of women on men. Cultural norms and tradition that promote violence against women should be abolished and transform through community sensitization. Community members should be educated to generate critical reflections about unequal gender and power relationships.

Government should develop national policies to address violence against women. Laws should be enacted and enforced to develop and implement policies that promote gender equality. Legislature should end discrimination against women in marriage, divorce, custody laws, inheritance laws and ownership of assets. Women access to paid employment should be improved. Jobs must be available for both sexes on the basis of individual capacity and skills, without the presumption that a capacity is more likely to be in a member of a sex. Educational sector should also teach and promote egalitarian gender norms. Curriculum that promote male to be active, explorative and mechanical with leadership roles while female are passive, home-centered, expressive with maternal roles should be expunged.

Health sector should provide comprehensive services, sensitizes and train health care providers in responding to the needs of survivors holistically and empathetically. Victims of violence should be treated humanely with respect and sympathy, promoting the autonomy and dignity of the victims beyond their traumatic experience and feelings of dehumanization. Women should be encouraged to speak about any form of discrimination or violence against them and seek redress. Victims of violence especially sexual violence should be protected to prevent stigmatization, for this is one of the reasons they keep mute about it and prefer to suffer in silence. A fair exercise of justice, implying the persecution of suspected perpetrators in a fair trial will help the victims to overcome trauma and build resilience. It will also serve as deterrent and help the society to move away from vengeance to indignation.

## 5. Conclusion

Women experience violence in virtually all aspects of their daily lives. They experience violence at home, on the street, at work, in institutions, in prison and in conflict situations. Women workers face discrimination and violence at the hands of their employers with little or no legal redress. For the fear of losing their jobs, most women keep quiet on their rights and when they report, there is a lack of

accountability for such abuse. Despite the fact that violence against women is a serious offence, yet, the perpetrators are acquitted or punished lightly, while the victims are ignored, rejected, ostracized, or blamed for the violence they have suffered. As a result of this violations and discrimination, women have been reduced to nothing, in fact; they are categorized as being subordinate in the general scheme of things. Women are place at the bottom of ladder in relation to power and decision making within the political, social, economic and cultural sphere of life. It is believed that women have no business outside the home either for the purpose of politics or economy because the discernment of reason predominates only in man as argued by Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant.

By virtue of their sex, women suffered from inequality that has nothing to do with their contribution to the well-being of human race. Despite her contribution to the family, society and nation at large, she is relegated to the background in issues concerning national economy, politics, and development. If we want our country to mature fully and quickly progress, it is essential that women live on terms of full equality with their fellow citizens who are men. It is essential to involve women on equal basis with men in all phases of the socio-economic development process, including planning policy making and decision making for women are naturally versatile and can easily multi task. This necessarily involves equal access to education, training and employment of women. The full and equal participation of women in the political, civil, economic, social and cultural life in Nigeria will project Nigeria into a higher height. Hence, appropriate measures should be taken to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices, norms, custom and other practices which are based on the idea of inferiority of women and the superiority of men.

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