Review

Bridging gender equity gap in Africa: A psycho-historical exposition of Efunsetan Aniwura

Ilesanmi Oluwatoyin Olatundun

Behavioural Study Department, College of Management Sciences, Redeemer's University, Mowe, Ogun State, Nigeria.
E-mail: toytundun@yahoo.com. Tel: +2348052236377

Efunsetan Aniwura is an example of an African woman who stood against male chauvinism and gender inequity in her time. She wielded economic power in that she owned her own household full of slaves. As her name depicts "*Aniwura*" meaning "*owner of wealth*", was a woman of wealth and spiritual depth in power and authority. A psycho-historical exposition of her personality will reveal the male chauvinistic character of the African society as well as its traditional role of silencing women in the past. This psycho-historical exposition of the personality of Efunsetan Aniwura will no doubt assist in the creation of enabling environment for the present African women to participate in the national development of low-income earning nations of Africa. Realizing Africa's androcentric cultural and social leaning, this study will also aid in suggesting some extra and special measures that are required to enhance equitable participation of women in national development. Through the pains and agony of Efunsetan Aniwura, this paper identifies the root of gender inequity and discusses issues relating to gender equity in national development in Africa. It suggests practical approaches to equitable participation of women in nation building

Key words: Bridging, gender, equity gap, psycho-historical exposition, Efunsetan Aniwura.

INTRODUCTION

The basic principles of equity states that: all persons emerge from the same human family. However, the history of humanity is replete with records of man's inhumanity to man, so much that it seems that most human societies must be considered inequitable. Ilesanmi (2006) stated that an equitable society is "one that allocates its resources equally to all its members without prejudice, privilege, or consideration of class, status, power, strength, race, or sex". It is such a society in which all positions are open to unhampered, equal opportunity. Inequality between women and men in Africa has generated different conditions with respect to their capacities (legal, financial, and so on) for an effective participation in governance which simply implies right to decision-making by a range of interested people (or 'stakeholders') including those in positions of power and ordinary citizens. These decisions have a huge impact on the ways in which women and men lead their lives, on the rules they are expected to abide by, and on the structures that determine where and how they work and live. They also shape how public resources are allocated and whether services take account of both women's and men's needs and interests. The first governance institution is government. In Africa, government decisions do create and perpetuate gender inequalities. Despite this, governments remain a crucial part of the solution. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and citizens can mount pressure on governments to take action to challenge gender inequalities, as well as hold them accountable for commitments made Gender equality is essential to advancing development and peace in Africa. However, the equal participation of men and women in policy-making, economic and sectoral analysis, and project design and management may be impeded by cultural and legal constraints against women's participation and by women's relative lack of time and mobility caused by their workload and multiple roles (Women's Roles in Africa, http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu37 we/uu37we0t.htm). Traditionally, African women have always been active in agriculture, trade, and other economic pursuits. Nowadays, a majority of them are in

the informal labour force. In 1985, women's shares in African labour forces ranged from 17%, in Mali, to 49% in Mozambique and Tanzania (World Bank, 1989). African women are guardians of their children's welfare and have explicit responsibility to provide for them materially. They are the household managers, providing food, nutrition, water, health, education, and family planning to an extent greater than elsewhere in the developing world. This places heavy burdens on them, despite developments such as improved agriculture technology, availability of contraception, and changes in women's socioeconomic status, which one might think would have made their lives easier. In fact, it would be fair to say that their workload has increased with the changing economic and social situation in Africa. Women's economic capabilities, and in particular their ability to manage family welfare, are being threatened. 'Modernization' has shifted the balance of advantage against women. The legal framework and the modern social sector and producer services developed by the independent African countries have not served women well.Most African women, in common with women all over the world, face a variety of legal, economic and social constraints. Indeed some laws still treat them as minors. In Zaire, for instance, a woman must have her husband's consent to open a bank account. Women are known to grow 80% of food produced in Africa, and yet few are allowed to own the land they work. It is often more difficult for women to gain access to information and technology, resources and credit. Agricultural extension and formal financial institutions are biased towards a male clientele' despite women's importance as producers (this has spurred the growth of women's groups and cooperatives which give loans and other help). Women end up working twice as long as men, 15 to 18 h a day, but often earn only one tenth as much. With such workloads, women often age prematurely. Harrison correctly observes that: 'Women's burdens - heavy throughout the third world are enough to break a camel's back in much of Africa' (Harrison 1983).

Female education affects family health and nutrition, agricultural productivity, and fertility, yet there is a wide gender gap in education. Lack of resources and pressures on time and energies put enormous constraints on the ability of women to maintain their own health and nutrition as well as that of their children. As a result, women are less well equipped than men to take advantage of the better income-earning opportunities that have emerged in Africa. Although food and nutrition are women's prime concerns in Africa, and they are the principal participants in agriculture, independent farming by women has been relatively neglected. Women's family labour contribution has increased, but goes unpaid. In industry and trade, women have been confined to small-scale operations in the informal sector however vibrant these operations are and despite the trading empires built up by the most successful female entrepreneurs; women's average incomes are relatively low. Women are also handicapped in access to formal sector jobs by their lower educational attainments, and those who succeed are placed in lower grade, lower paid jobs. Elite women who wish to improve their legal and economic status must expect to lose honour and respect (Obbe, 1980). There is often sexism in job promotions and unpleasant consequences if women stand up to men. There is often more respect for male professionals (even from women themselves) than there is for female. Women often suffer employment discrimination because they need to take time off for maternity leave or when a child is sick. Career women often have to work harder at their jobs to keep even with their male counterparts. Despite all these obstacles, women continue to move into different professions, including those traditionally seen as male jobs, such as engineering and architecture. Women can be found at senior levels in many organizations in many countries. They are also taking up various different professions, such as law, medicine, politics, etc. These women may be in the minority now, but things are changing all over Africa.

Social attitudes to women are responsible for the gender differences in both the education system and the labour force, as we will see below. Differential access to educational and training opportunities has led to low proportions of women in the formal sector and their subsequent concentration in low paid production jobs with limited career prospects. So, although women play an important role in African society, they suffer legal, economic and social constraints.

WOMEN'S LEGAL RIGHTS

The inferior status of women is entrenched in history, culture and tradition. Through the ages, national and religious institutions have been called upon to justify violations of women's rights to equality and enjoyment of fundamental human rights. Even now, women are subject to discrimination in all stages of life; in income, education, health and participation in society and they are particularly vulnerable to specific violations such as gender-based violence, trafficking and sex discrimination. Various international bodies have been established with the aim of eradicating policies, actions and norms that perpetuate discrimination against women and violate women's human rights. One of which is the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a body of 23 independent experts on women's issues from around the world established in 1982 to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Committee watches over the progress for women made in those countries that are the States parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. A country becomes a state party by ratifying or

party by ratifying or acceding to the Convention and thereby accepting a legal obligation to counteract discrimination against women. The Committee monitors the implementation of national measures to fulfill this obligation.

After the Second World War, a number of treaties on the protection of women were drafted and both the UN Charter and the International Bill of Human Rights proclaim equal rights for men and women and ban discrimination on the grounds of sex. Examples are;

Article 3 ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) *the States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant* and;
Article 3 ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) *the States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.*

In addition to instruments relating to discrimination in general, a whole series of instruments have been developed specifically for the protection of women, the elimination of discrimination against women and the promotion of equal rights. These serve to create a broad, international framework for future developments and the establishment of general norms for national policy.

One of the most important instruments for the protection of women is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the UNGA on 18 December 1979, following consultations over a five-year period by various working groups, the CSW and the UNGA. It entered into force in 1981. The 30-article Convention and Article 76 Protection of women set out the internationally accepted principles and measures to achieve equal rights for women everywhere.

Article 76, protection of women

Women shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected in particular against rape, forced prostitution and any other forms of indecent assault.
Pregnant women and mothers having dependent infants who are arrested, detained or interned for reasons related to the armed conflict, shall have their cases considered with the utmost priority.
To the maximum extent feasible, the Parties to the conflict shall endeavour to avoid the pronouncement of the death penalty on pregnant women or mothers having dependent infants, for an offence related to the armed conflict. The death penalty for such offences shall not be executed on such women.

Many African governments have ratified such conventions and international legal instruments on women's rights. Often, however, these have not been enacted into national law. Also many women are ignorant of the existence of laws that recognize their rights and can be invoked for their protection. Various systems of customary law, religious ideologies and cultural stereotyping have been used to treat women as minors in the law and household, with few women able to inherit property in their own names or have equal access to political offices and positions. Socialization and educational processes reinforce this situation; women are raised to believe that they are inferior to men.

Traditional women leaders have not been given the same recognition as male chiefs who have been co-opted into new positions of power in their societies. In Ghana, attempts to admit queen-mothers into the National House of Chiefs have been repulsed by powerful chiefs and their allies. In African traditional practice, women keep their eyes lowered demurely. This traditional practices and attitudes toward women have carried over into public life. Women are under-represented in high offices of state and positions of decision-making in government, the military, central banks, finance and planning ministries and African regional organizations.

Average female representation in parliaments is less than 8% in Africa, and many of the women are nominated, not elected. In only two countries, the Seychelles and South Africa are women more than 25% of elected members in parliament or in ministerial positions, thus approaching the 30% minimum threshold in decision-making for women recommended in UNDP's 1995 Human Development Report. Although they are active in community affairs, women also are not adequately represented in regional and local structures, except where conscious efforts have been made to guarantee a quota for them, as in Uganda, Ghana and Namibia (www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/bpaper/maineng.htm).

GENDER EQUITY GAP IN AFRICA

Gender equity gap refers to states of unfairness and injustice assigned to the social and non-biological differences between male and female roles, clothes, interests, attitudes, behaviours and aptitudes. In Nigeria, gender roles and behaviours are acquired from family, friends, peers, school system, political and economic system. Gender equity gap is the principle and practice of unfairness and inequitable allocation of resources and opportunities to both males and females; the belief and practice of preference for male child over and above the girl child. It entails discriminatory practices that prevent the full participation of either gender in nation building. Through gender equity gap, opportunities, resources and power become unequally accessible to all.

In the educational realm, women are still lagging behind than men. In Africa, women and girls tend to receive less education and training than men and boys (Herz, 1989).

This is not surprising because in the absence or poor enforcement of legislation on compulsory education for all children, coupled with the tendency to value sons over daughters, girls are less likely than boys to go to school. Investments in education continue to be higher for sons than for daughters. This is in spite of studies showing that the education of girls tends to produce far-reaching socio-economic benefits for the girls and women themselves, their families, and the society in general (Bellew, Raney and Subbarao, 1992; Hadden and London, 1996; Herz, 1989; Summers, 1992). No country could develop if it failed to tap women's talent for full participation in society. Hence, the adage, *"If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate the nation."*

At the occupational and employment level, combating gender inequalities would require equal access to social protection. African governments need to create ena-bling environment by extending national social security systems more widely. Social security is primarily a social insurance program providing social protection, or protection against socially recognized conditions, including poverty, old age, disability, unemployment and others. Social protection refers to a set of benefits available (or not available) from the state, market, civil society and households, or through a combination of these agencies, to the individual/households to reduce multi-dimensional deprivation. This multi-dimensional deprivation could be affecting less active poor persons (e.g. the elderly, disabled) and active poor persons (e.g. unemployed). This broad framework makes this concept more acceptable in developing countries than the concept of social security. Social security is more applicable in the conditions, where large numbers of citizens depend on the formal economy for their livelihood. Through a defined contribution, this social security may be managed. But, in the context of wide spread informal economy, formal social security arrangements are almost absent for the vast majority of the working population. Besides, in developing countries, the state's capacity to reach the vast majority of the poor people may be limited because of its limited resources. In such a context, multiple agencies that could provide for social protection is important for policy consideration. The framework of social protection is thus capable of holding the state responsible to provide for the poorest sections by regulating non-state agencies. Social security may refer to: Social insurance, where people receive benefits or services in recognition of contributions to an insurance scheme. These ser-vices typically include provision for retirement pensions, disability insurance, survivor benefits and unemployment insurance.

Income maintenance—mainly the distribution of cash in the event of interruption of employment, including retire-ment, disability and unemployment Services provided by administrations responsible for social security. In different countries this may include medical care aspects of social work and even industrial relations.

More rarely, the term is also used to refer to basic security, a term roughly equivalent to access to basic necessities—things such as food, clothing, shelter, education, money, and medical care.

On the political scene, very few women are granted access to decision-making processes in governance institutions in Africa. That is there are still far fewer women than men with the power to make decisions. In Africa, persistent barriers to women's entry into positions of decision-making still persist; therefore, equitable parti-cipation remains a challenge. All over Africa, women's political participation is also still resisted by male politicians, although the extent to which this is overtly expressed now varies, becoming more constrained only where there is a strong countervailing discourse from the leadership. Underlying these inequalities is the pervasive idea that a man's place is in the 'public' realm, while a woman's role is to manage the 'private' domain of the home.

The absence of women from political life and leadership positions undermined democracy and women's empowerment in Africa. Even when women are involved, they are often kept on the margins of decision-making – confined to 'soft' policy areas such as health and education, while the important decisions are made by men in closed 'inner circles'. Once women gain entry into political spaces, they face many further challenges when it comes to sustaining their careers as politicians, not to mention pursuing feminist agendas within political structures and systems that remain inherently antagonistic to substantive gender equality. An example is Professor Dora Akunyili, a woman who emerged as the Director General of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) during the Obasanjo's Administration and current Minister of Information who almost lost her life to fake drug dealers. For women in Africa, the seat of power is usually made hot, but equal access to decision-making and leadership at all levels is a necessary precondition for proper functioning of democracy. Equal participation in political affairs will make Governments more representative, accountable and transparent. It will also ensure that the interests of women are taken into account in policymaking. The reason why women should be engaged in politics at all levels in Africa is not for them to emulate men, but to bring a unique feminine perspective to bear on the decision-making process. The human right to full and equal participation in power and decision-making included, among other things, the right to participate on equal terms with men in shaping and implementing decisions and policies affecting them, their families, communities and societies. Hence, the presence of a few women in the halls of power is not sufficient. In psychological term, this is known as mere "tokenism". The important issue here would be the effect of their presence. Here in Africa and Nigeria in particular,

achievement of true democracy would require a balanced participation of men and women in politics at all levels.

Furthermore, literature on Nigeria's national development is relatively silent on the contributions of women (Ogunsheye, 1988) http://www.onlinenigeria.com/links/LinksReadPrint.asp?blurb=150. In fact, Awe and Olutoye (1998) stated that literature on Yoruba warfare provides example of historical writings in which "*women and their roles are often glossed over, underanalysed, or absent from all but the edges of description*" in African history. Part of the problem is methodology and focus of study, but not of source materials. Awe and Olutoye (1998) stated that the sources are readily available and abundant in oral traditions of the Yoruba's which are replete with examples of women playing crucial roles in the survival of their people in times of war. Moremi of Ife, Arise of Ilesa and the Yeyelogun (mother of war) of Akure are some of the examples which suggest active participation of women in warfare in Yoruba land.

Methodological wise, the silence of research literatures on the contributions of women to national development could stem from the tendency to impose western conceptual framework by male oriented researchers on the rich source of oral traditions, eyewitness accounts, remembered histories, songs, and praise poems. Although, Ogunsheye (1988) noted that 1975 (the International Women's Year) was a period of ferment in ideas about the status of women, till date in Africa, research literature has not sufficiently assess the contributions of economically active women in national development.

In the kingship system of administration in Yoruba land, the principle of representation is well established among Yoruba people (Awe and Olutoye 1998). The Yoruba women constitute a major interest group and had certain inalienable rights as citizen. Among these were the right to discuss polices and to be represented in decision-making bodies. According to (Biobaku, S.O. Madam Tinibu in Dike K.O. Eminent Nigerians of the Nineteenth Century; Also Ajayi and Smith op.cit. p 118 and Ajisafe A.K.: A History of Abeokuta, London, 1924) the Ogbonis and Erelu (a society of wealthy and influential men and few old women who can be relied upon to place duty on sentiment) are the real rulers of Egba Land. In some other Yoruba society like Ibadan, the Iyalodes who were often outnumbered by the men represent the women in the affairs of the town. In 1880s the Iyalode of Ibadan land was a member of the body that went to Ikirun during the reign of Aare Latoosa (the leader of Ibadan) when Reverend J. B. Wood investigated the possibilities of a peace settlement in 1881, Iyalode Lanlatu was a signatory to the peace agreement which Ibadan signed with the British government.

Besides, Efunsetan Aniwura together with some notable women traders like Tinubu and Jojoola in Abeokuta, Yade, Efundunke and Olojo (Awe and Olutoye1998) participated significantly in import and export trade along with men like Abu in Okeho, Itiola at Omofe in Ilesa and Jadu in Isona who were dominant in the long distance trade. The contemporaries of Efusetan Aniwura imported guns and ammunitions through the ports of Lagos, Badagry and Porto Novo along trade routes which traversed the Egba and Ijebu territories. These weapons gradually replaced the traditional usage of swords, cutlasses and spears in warfare. The women also engaged in exportation of locally woven cloths, palm oil, palm kernel and ivory in exchange for tobacco, textiles, beads and liquor.

These women traders were wealthy and traded on a large scale, their slaves went to all parts of the country to trade on their behalf. Even during periods of hostility, they traveled in caravans escorted by armed soldiers. Clarke (Awe and Olutoye, 1998) noted that these caravans were made up mostly of women

WHO IS EFUNSETAN ANIWURA?

Efunsetan Aniwura, the Iyalode of Ibadan was a woman of Egba ancestry who migrated to Ibadan. She became a very powerful and prosperous rich trader at Oja-Oba. Oral evidence reveals she had three large farms in each of which no less than 100 slaves worked. She extended credit facilities in the form of ammunition to the warriors when they were going on their military expeditions in 1872. She fielded 100 slaves as soldiers under her head slave, Ogidan, to join the Ibadan forces on their expedition to the Ekiti country.

Even before then, she had been made the Iyalode of Ibadan in recognition of her contribution in this and other fields. As the leader of the women in Ibadan and a successful trader in arms, she was therefore in a position to contribute to the debate on the issues of war and peace. She soon became the spokesman of the antiwar group in Ibadan. She was against the expansionist policy of Aare Latoosa which brought many towns under Ibadan jurisdiction.

Efunsetan Aniwura was a powerful, rich and influential High Chief of Ibadan. Her only child and daughter died during child labour. With terrible sense of loss and the stigma of not having a progeny to inherit her legacies, Efunsetan blamed God for her tragedy and she in turn, vent her anger on the very society she swore to defend while taking oath on her installation as the Iyalode of Ibadan. She became a wicked, cruel, callous, bitter, heartless and a monster dreaded by the society. It took the concerted efforts of Ibadan warriors led by Latoosa to loose her grip of terror on the city.

EFFECT OF AFRICA'S ANDROCENTRIC CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LEANING ON EFUNSETAN ANIWURA

The androcentric cultural and social leaning of the Yoruba race has rendered women invisible in the governing process and challenged their decision-making roles in

the economy (Ilesanmi, 2006).

Even though, quite a few women have risen to prominence and became icons (Funmilayo Anikulapo-Kuti, Margaret Ekpo, Gambo Sawaba, Dora Akunyili, and Ngozi Okonjo Iweala) the growing disadvantage of the general female population in Nigeria in national development planning has become a sore point, particularly in the South.

Even in the case of Efunsetan Aniwura, Akinwumi Ishola (1964), who wrote the famous play on her, tinted the work with the aura of this androcentric cultural and social leaning of the Yoruba race. His focus was more on the psychotic and sadistic states of this woman rather than on her heroic exploits and economic achievements. He presented her as a wicked, cruel, callous, bitter, heartless monster dreaded by all and saw her as one whose grip of terror on the society was loosed through the concerted efforts of Ibadan warriors led by Aare Latoosa.

Efunsetan Aniwura was a woman of substance and great wealth. Rather than helping her, the society declared her wanted and eventually got her arrested. In her heroic bravery and self pride, Efunsetan Aniwura committed suicide to avoid open disgrace by the Are Latosa.

ROOT OF GENDER INEQUITY IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The roots of gender inequities experienced by Nigerian women in national development are deeply embedded in social and legal institutions. Men and women play different roles, have different needs, and face different constraints in responding to macroeconomic or sectoral policy changes and to the specific opportunities and limitations provided by particular projects and programs. Systemic gender biases often assume a number of forms. First, many laws and customs impede women's access to property ownership, credit, productive inputs, employment, education, information, or medical care. In addition, many customs, cultural beliefs, societal norms and attitudes confine women mostly to the domestic sphere. Other significant factors are: women's workload, which imposes severe time burdens on them; and imbalances in the division of labour between men and women. Discriminations in access to education and productive resources also have important implications, not only for equity, but also for economic output, productivity, food security, fertility, and child welfare. They also profoundly affect men and women different capacities and incentives to participate in economic and social development.

SOCIALIZATION PROCESS FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

Socialization is a general learning process of acquiring

language and the fundamentals of our culture. It is also the process by which much of human personality (normal or abnormal) takes shape. This process begins shortly after birth. Human are born without any culture. From infanthood till death, humans are transformed by their parents, teachers, significant others and experiences into cultural and socially adept beings.

Socialization is important in the process of personality formation. While much of human personality is the result of our genes, the socialization process can mold it in particular directions by encouraging specific beliefs and attitudes as well as selectively providing experiences. This very likely account for much of the difference between the common personality types in African men and women. For instance, the African women are usually taught to be cautitious, reserved, gentle, non-outspoken, while the men may be tough, violent, aggressive and full of strong emotions

During socialization, African girls learn the language of the culture to which they are born into as well as the roles (such as daughters, sisters, friends, wives, and mothers) they are to play in life. In addition, they learn about the occupational roles that their society has in store for them. In traditional African setting, teasing, scaring, fear and physical punishment were often used to socialize children. Experiences teach humans lessons that potentially lead them to alter their expectations, beliefs, and personality. For instance, the experience of being raped is likely to cause a woman to be distrustful of others.Globally, different cultures use different techniques to socialize their children. There are two broad types of socialization methods: formal and informal. Formal socialization is what primarily happens in a classroom setting through formal education. It usually is structured, controlled, and directed primarily by adult teachers who are professional "knowers." In contrast, informal education can occur anywhere. It involves imitation of what others do and say as well as experimentation and repetitive practice of basic skills. This is what happens when children role-play adult interactions in their games.

Africans also use norms for the socialization process of the children. Norms are the conceptions of appropriate and expected behaviour that are held by most members of the society. While socialization refers to the general process of acquiring culture, anthropologists use the term enculturation for the process of being socialized to a particular culture. African girls are usually enculturated to their specific culture by their parents and the other people who raised them. In all societies, however, there are individuals who do not conform to culturally defined standards of normalcy because they were "abnormally" socialized, which is to say that they have not internalized the norms of society. These people are usually labeled by their society as deviant or even mentally ill. Those who internalize the norms of society are less likely to break the law or to want radical social changes.

Most of the crucial early socialization throughout the

world is done informally under the supervision of women and girls. Initially, mothers and their female relatives are primarily responsible for socialization. Later, when children enter the lower school grades, they are usually under the control of women teachers.

African societies are usually composed of many ethnic groups. As a consequence, early socialization in different families often varies in techniques, goals, and expectations. Hence, socialization practices varied markedly from society to society. They are generally similar among people of the same society. That is people from the same culture and communities are likely to share core values and perceptions. Since these complex societies are not culturally homogenous, they do not have unanimous agreement about what should be the shared norms. Not surprisingly, this national ambiguity usually results in more tolerance of social deviancy--it is more acceptable to be different in appearance, personality, and actions in such large-scale societies.

ISSUES RELATING TO GENDER EQUITY IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

In most African countries, women remain poorly represented. Where women are present in the political arena, their capacity for pursuing gender agendas remains severely constrained, in ways that reflect the inherent biases of political systems that have historically excluded women.

Women's political participation is also still resisted by male politicians all over Africa, although the extent to which this is overtly expressed now varies, becoming more constrained only where there is a strong counter-vailing discourse from the leadership. Once women do gain entry into political spaces, they face many further challenges when it comes to sustaining their careers as politicians, not to mention pursuing feminist agendas within political structures and systems that remain inherently antagonistic to substantive gender equality.

According to the 1991 census in Nigerian women were reported to represent about 49.7% of the population (1992 provisional population census report issued by the federal government of Nigeria office of Statistics). Despite being almost half of the population, this numerical strength of the Nigerian women has not affected the age-long inferior status the society bestows on the women. Several factors have been adduced for the degrading position of women in the Nigerian society most of which can be traced to the patriarchal system being operated and the gender insensitivity of not only the male folk but the entire society including the women who have been socialized to accept the inferior status.

It is intriguing to note that the subordination of women knows no boundaries or barriers and is not dependent on the social, educational or economic status of the Nigerian women. Consequently one finds that an uneducated and

poor woman in the rural community suffers as much subordination as an educated and rich woman in the urban center.

Gender inequality is experienced by the woman and is manifested in almost all aspects of human endeavour in Nigeria. Some of these beliefs have been practiced for so long that they are embedded in the societal perception almost as legal norms. Such that the laws of the Land and International Instruments, which protect the rights of women, are flagrantly infringed in the guise of these age-long cultural and/or religious beliefs.

Although African women's fundamental contributions in their households, food production systems and national economies are increasingly acknowledged, within Africa and by the international community, this is due, in no small part, to African women's own energetic efforts to organize, articulate their concerns and make their voices heard. At both grassroots and national levels, more women associations have been formed during the 1990s, taking advantage of the new political openings to assert their leadership roles. They are also pressing for an expansion of women economic and social opportunities and the advancement of women rights. By improving their own positions, they are simultaneously strengthening African society as a whole, as well as enhancing the continent's broader development prospects.

Despite these, women in Africa continue to face enormous obstacles. The growing recognition of their contributions has not translated into significantly improved access to resources or increased decision-making powers. Neither has the dynamism that women display in the economic, cultural and social lives of their communities through their associations and informal networks been channeled into creating new models of participation and leadership. Among the majority of rural and low-income urban dwellers, women perform all domestic tasks, while many also farm and trade. They are responsible for the care of children, the sick and the elderly, in addition to performing essential social functions within their communities. They seek to manage the environment, although their struggle for survival often results in environmental damage from activities such as fuel-wood collection. Many of these rural and urban women belong to women-only mutual-aid societies, benevolent groups in churches, cooperatives and market women groups. Some of these groups allow them to pool resources to reduce their workload and to invest in savings societies or cooperative ventures. Cooperative societies have provided many of them access to resources, for example, the Corn Mill societies in Cameroon, the "Six S" associations in Burkina Faso and the General Union of Cooperatives in Mozambique, which supplies most of Maputo's fruits and vegetables. In Benin only 8% of rural women belong to formal co-operatives, but an estimated 90% participate in traditional women savings and credit groups (Manuh, 1998). Informal rotating credit associations in Ghana, Tanzania,

Gambia and Zimbabwe have been used by the estimated 25% of economically active women in the non-agricultural informal sector to invest in businesses and farms, home improvements and school costs for their children (Manuh, 1998).

Traditionally, African women had their own age-grade associations and leaders and wielded power in spheres regarded as exclusively feminine, guaranteeing them some leverage in political processes and allowing them to negotiate with men. Through their involvement in the birth and care of children, some women developed extensive knowledge of herbs and healing powers and had important religious roles and achieved fame and recognition. Many of these women's power and spheres of influence largely disappeared under the impact of colonialism and external religions, which upset existing economic and social complementarities between the sexes. New "customary" laws on marriage created in response to men's anxieties about the independence of women transformed the previously fluid and negotiable relations between them into rigid duties and obligations of wives and women. Women came to be regarded as primarily dependent on men, making it unnecessary to plan and provide for their needs; they were to work in the fields and home to produce food and other crops to support their men, who worked in visible, documented activities. Finally, the introduction of new forms of marriage that granted enhanced property and inheritance rights to a minority increased the dependence of the majority of African women on men.

African women initially shared in the promises of independence and saw gains in their access to education, formal sector employment, health care and nutritional profiles; their life expectancy at birth rose from 37 to 50 years by the end of the 1960s. But development plans continued to be formulated and implemented without an adequate understanding of women's contributions to African economies. Women were also absent from formal positions of decision-making and power. Even in countries like Zimbabwe and Guinea-Bissau, where women had participated in armed struggles for national liberation, they have tended to be marginalized and few have attained formal positions of power or gained rights to land and resources in their own names.

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP IN NIGERIA: PRACTICAL APPROACHES

To successfully bridge the gender equity gap, it is critically important for policy-makers in Nigeria to listen to and work with women to improve their positions and thereby accelerate Africa's development. Gender-sensitive governance requires that gender equality and the realisation of women's rights are at the heart of the goals and practices of governance. Policies and legislation should address the differing needs, interests,

priorities and responsibilities of women and men, as well as their unequal economic and social power. As already noted, establishing clear, gendered understandings of the principles associated with effective governance is important, but these principles need to be incorporated into the kinds of concrete approaches such as the:

Making of gender-sensitive reforms in national and local government – in the form of electoral quota systems and the establishment of women's ministries.
Making of a thorough gender analysis of everyday institutional practices, conducted through internal and external assessments, is a good way to uncover attitudes, behaviour, thinking and policies that are discriminatory or gender blind.
Breaking of the existing ideas of governance as the domain of privileged men – removed from the realities of ordinary people – and Inspiring both women and men to identify their own potential roles in bringing about a transformed, more equal society.

These comprehensive approaches must be taken by governments in conjunction with development agencies and women themselves to remove the social, economic and legal constraints on women. Utilizing women to the extent of their potential in all spheres of life is not a matter of doing them a favor, but engaging the enormous human resource of one half of humanity for the betterment of communities and nations. As a bird cannot fly on one wing, no society can make progress unless its women too join men in all activities" (Bhattacharya and Bose, 1995).Women's leadership skills in their communities, groups and associations need to be harnessed and formalized to give them political and decision-making power. Women's commitment to their households, to local and national food security, local production and the environment should be reflected in equitable representation on all bodies that make decisions in these areas, as well as in broader economic programmes that affect women's lives. In addition, implementation mechanisms must harness women's own energies, through their associations. Technical units in government departments and ministries should be established, along with data banks and resource centers at local, regional and national levels to support actions on behalf of women and they should be adequately funded and staffed. The viability of women's institutions and mechanisms for decision-making in the community, market places and trades must be recognized, and they should be utilized to increase women's participation and decision-making power in society. Concerted efforts must continue to be put in place to ensure that the plight of women in general remains a topic of serious research, discourse, and action worldwide. African governments should continue to cooperate with international agencies to initiate gender sensitive policies and programs. Dissemination of information is crucial and cannot be overlooked in any effort

to eradicate gender disparity and improve the status of women in general. Information dissemination will not only reduce the common practice of reinventing the wheel, but will also speed up the adaptation and replication of successful programs as needed in different locations. Furthermore, extensive improvements in gender equality are possible if the replication of successful projects is executed in tandem with other strategies. Famous professional women can be enlisted as role models in a multifaceted strategy especially to inspire young women to pursue academic education and careers in traditionally male-dominated fields such as technology, education, engineering, and computer science. Even in the United States where parity in literacy rates has been achieved between the genders, women still constitute a very small percentage of students graduating with bachelor's degrees in engineering and computer science. Only 9 and 29% of students who earn bachelor's degrees in engineering and computer science, respectively, are women (Rengel, 2000). Using famous women engineers, technologists, and scientists as role models, young women can be encouraged to enroll in related majors.

Also, socialization in traditional societies often includes risk aversion for women. The march toward gender equality will be better served with strategies that assist women to unlearn years of belief that risk-taking is improper for the female gender. Being able to give up what one "is" for what one "could become" is the essence of risk-taking. Women are by tradition and mores more likely than men to avoid taking risks for fear of failing. It is important to point out here that failure is itself an important aspect of the learning process.

Properly managed, failure can be a positive guide to success. The notion of doing things for instead of with women, the result of the social and cultural orientation in most communities, presents a problem in that it denies them the chance to acquire vital knowledge and contacts. To sincerely work toward a society of gender equality and equity, women have to have access to political and economic networks in Africa. Speeches and reports that extol the benefits of gender equality are nothing more than empty rhetoric if they are not followed up with commensurate action. As Jacobson (1993) aptly remarked, "development strategies that limit the ability of women to achieve their real human potential are also strategies that limit the potential of communities and nations". Women in science and technology need to become involved through scholarly papers and presentations to lend credibility and a sense of urgency to the plight of Third World women and girls. In a "shrinking" world made possible through advances in transportation and communications technology, regional problems tend to quickly extend beyond regional boundaries. Similarly, special measures may be needed to ensure that women have equal access to project information and are not prevented from communicating their concerns or partici-pating in decision making by illiteracy or relative lack of

education. This may involve, for example, targeting women in promotional campaigns, training project staff in gender awareness, hiring female community workers, ensuring that meetings are conducted in the local dialect, or finding creative ways (akin to the techniques used in participatory rural appraisal) for illiterate women to take responsibility for project monitoring and evaluation. The quota system could be employed to break down barriers and to further women's political participation and integration. This would be one of the key roles of political parties in enhancing women's participation in decision-making processes; the need to eliminate gender stereotypes; and the untapped potential of the private sector in providing employment for women. With regards to the field of work, gender equality legislation, standards and accountability mechanisms for protection and promotion of women worker's rights should be adopted and enforced, regardless of the sector of employment or place of work. The creation of an enabling environment for enhancing women's participation would more than likely require transforming current institutions and structures, in addition to better policies and programmes that would respect women's rights, needs and concerns.

EFUNSETAN ANIWURA: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

This psycho-historical discuss on Efunstan Aniwura has socio-demographic, diagnostic, aetiological, prevalence and therapeutic implications for clinical and counseling psychologists as well as psychiatrists.

At the socio-demographic level, Efunsetan Aniwura hailed from Egba but migrated to Ibadan in search of greener pasture. She was a woman of substance. She was rich in gold. She had slaves and wielded power with men of nobility in her days. She had a daughter who died at child birth. Occupationally, her main lines of business were import and export trade.

On the diagnostic plane, Efunsetan Aniwura was a woman traumatized by the death of her only child. Hence she became callous against any woman of child bearing age who got pregnant. Her brutality was as severe as getting the pregnant women beheaded. Psychologically, she could have been diagnosed with first grade sadism which today is often seen as any behaviour that is designed to hurt or humiliate others but the classic mea-ning refers to phenomena that are way more extreme. The term sadism in its classic and clinical sense refers to the derivation of pleasure as a result of inflicting pain and suffering or watching pain inflicted on others. Aspects of it include: sadomasochism, sadism and masochism as medical terms (sadism and masochism as paraphilia) and sadistic personality disorder (nonsexual sadism). The word sadism originally comes from the name of the French philosopher and writer the Marquis de Sade who authored several sadistic novels

(http://info.addictions.org/index/Addictive+Behaviors/Sadism+-+What+Is+It%3F). It was provisionally in the appendix of *DSM-III-R,* but was subsequently omitted, in part because psychiatrists worried that its inclusion, its "medicalization," might be used by defense attorneys to get sadists exonerated from their criminal acts.

Germaine to diagnosis of sadism are issues of signs and symptoms. The tendency towards sadistic behavior normally begins in adolescence or early adulthood. It may start with obsessive thoughts and sexual fantasies coupled with the desire to inflict physical or psychological torment or humiliation on another. It tends to be chronic in nature and usually increases in severity over time. (http://info.addictions.org/index/Addictive+Behaviors/Sadism+-+What+Is+It%3F)

Aetiological wise, there is however no known blanket cause for sadistic behaviour, although it appears to be linked with the desire to dominate and control one's victim as well as the urge for revenge. This desire is more often than not acted out in a sexual context and varies in the degree of violence from mere role-play to actual restraining, bondage, beating and torturing. Revenge against the god who allowed her daughter to die in child birth was assumed to be the major cause of Efusetan's sadism.

With regards to prevalence, sadism is practiced more by men than by women. Sadistic behavior in men is thought to be the result of a distortion of the aggressive component of the male sexual instinct and sadistic acts are known to cause heightened levels of the male hormone, testosterone. Endorphins also play a part in the biology of sadism. The infliction of pain on others releases the same "feel good" chemicals that are released during any intense exercise session. According to Stone (2002) serial killers and psychopaths are the types of people who often engage in sadism. Out of the 100 serial killers he studied, more than 90% were psychopaths. Psychopaths are extremely narcissistic, impulsive, sensation seeking, and deceitful. They also lack goals, compassion, and remorse, and sponge off others. In Stone's opinion, the most depraved people who commit homicide are psychopathic murderers who enjoy torturing their victims. Apart from serial killers and psychopaths, people who function otherwise "normally" in society can be sadistic as well. These may include that tyrannical, mildly abusing husband down the street or the bully in one's class.

Treatment wise, Stone (2002) asserted that sadistic persons rarely seek treatment and are generally untreatable. However, "some do have the capacity for remorse and self-reflection". Therefore those involved in helping need to note that its treatment is highly individualized and must include psychotherapy as well as cognitive and behavioral therapies. They therefore need to engage the services of professionals, psychologists and psychotherapists for a more holistic care of persons suffering sadism. Hormonal therapy may be successful in reducing levels of aggression.

For those researching archeological and historical facts, the Nigerian androcentric cultural and social presentation of Efunsetan Aniwura in a narrowed myopic methodology and view is an issue of great concerns which demands further digging into the heroic deeds of similar women who had been rendered invisible literary wise.

Conclusion

An equitable society is a society in which all positions are open to unhampered, equal opportunity. However, the history of humanity is replete with records of man's inhumanity to man, so much that it seems that most human societies must be considered inequitable. One of which is the silence of literature on Nigeria's national development on the contributions of women like Efunsetan Aniwura (Awe and Olutoye, 1998). Efunsetan Aniwura, the Iyalode of Ibadan was a woman of Egba ancestry whose only daughter died in child labour. With terrible sense of loss and the stigma of not having a progeny to inherit her legacies, she blamed God for her tragedy and in turn, vented her anger on the very society she swore to defend while taking oath on her installation as the Iyalode of Ibadan.

The Nigerian androcentric cultural and social presentation of Efunsetan Aniwura leaned more on her psychotic and sadistic states than on her illustrious and industrious personality. Her personality has socio demographic, diagnostic, aetiological, prevalence and therapeutic implications for clinical and counselling psychologists as well as psychiatrists. It also has implications for archeologists and historical researchers.
If participatory development is to benefit from women's contributions and meet the particular needs of women, a range of proactive strategic and practical measures must be taken to tackle the root causes of gender inequalities and to remove the constraints to women's involvement in public life.

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