

International Journal of Arts and Humanities (IJAH)

Bahir Dar- Ethiopia

Vol. 5(4), S/No 19, September, 2016: 94-110

ISSN: 2225-8590 (Print) ISSN 2227-5452 (Online)

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ijah.v5i4.7>

Patriarchy, Women's Triple Roles and Development in Southwest Nigeria

Alliyu, Nurudeen

Faculty of Social and Management Sciences
Olabisi Onabanjo University
Ago Iwoye, Nigeria

Abstract

The study was conducted to establish the root of the various manifestations in the labour process that tend to value men and what they do than women and what they do. This was done against the background knowledge that fingered patriarchy as a contributory factor. The paper therefore examined what happens at the household level between the respondents and their husbands in terms of decision-making processes. One hundred and ninety-five (195) out of 225 sampled propertied women who owned landed and movable properties were selected for the study. It is strongly believed that whatsoever happens at the household level between husband and wife (wives) has a way of replicating itself in the other sphere of the society including the process of production. In its concluding remarks the paper submitted that patriarchy was not only a fundamental cause of the slant relationship between men and women, it has become highly institutionalized with the support of women folks to maintain the status quo over the years. The imbalance relationship between men and women in the social relations of production and, indeed, the whole super-structure of the society could however be changed gradually through the use of the social reproductive role of women

Introduction

Increasingly women are becoming a special interest-area for scholarly research and policy making. Women have been keenly studied most especially in relation to men concerning a number of phenomena in many societies. The general consensus in

the literature is that “men [and things men do] have been valued a lot in every place and time, and women [and things women do] have been valued less” (Gray, 1982; Aina, 2012; Nwokocha 2013).

It is widely believed that women are disadvantaged in most things if not all. According to Joss (1990), the disadvantaged life of a woman starts at birth when everyone (men and women alike) is disappointed that the baby is not a boy. Boys are valued than girls in most societies and this attitude and preference have severe consequences on the entire life pattern of the female sex. As a girl she is often not educated as the boys; as a young woman she moves from dependence on her father to dependence on her husband and how to submit to “family expectations”; as an adult, she is expected to reproduce and work, albeit stereotypic, mostly at home and sometimes outside, for either unremunerated and/or unequal pay; as an old woman, when she must have passed menopause, she is more likely to depend on her sons and brothers (Taylor, 2012).

To that extent, women have been trapped in a world of men - a world where they could hardly imagine another world outside; a world dominated by men and controlled by men through structures and cultures created by men. The common label for such a world in the literature is PATRIARCHY (Young, 2013). Whatever the nature of the relationship among and between any group of people, of individuals in any social formation, it is believed, it must have been premised on long standing interaction process. To that extent, it can be said that, apart from the biological meaning of male and female sexes, the society has its own meaning for both sexes (Alliyu, 2013).

For (Pearson, 1992; Alliyu 2007), the social meaning of being female or male will be the result of the history of that society, influenced by the nature of the local economic (material conditions) that evolved over time, religious beliefs and political system. This view readily reminds us of Karl Marx’s analysis of social progress and change even though Marx did not go beyond class differentiation in his own analysis. It could however serve as a point of departure in understanding gender differences in the society.

The Study Area/Methodology

A total sample of 225 modern and indigenous propertied women was drawn from the population of study. Out of the 225, only 195 were adjudged useful for the purpose of the analysis. The 195 propertied women cut across women who reside in both Lagos and Ogun States areas of the study. They own properties ranging from land, houses, and small-scale businesses and manufacturing industries. The researcher was able to locate 32 women who actually own lands/houses for the survey through some Community Based Organisations (CBO) like, Thrift & Credit Societies. The

chances of sampling were limited here. Hence propertied women purposively identified by the CBO executives for the study were surveyed. Contrariwise, a sample of 67 women was drawn from a population of propertied women dealing with indigenous items such as timber and planks. Since they were well organized into stalls, the systematic random sampling was used to arrive at the sample population of 67. In all, a total number of 99 indigenous propertied women were gotten.

For the Lagos area, a total of 20 women who own small-scale industries were gotten through the services of Market Facts Limited a research and marketing firm operating in Lagos. The firm has first-hand contact with manufacturers of diverse products for purposes of marketing research. From a list of their clients, another list of industries owned by women was compiled and, out of which, a sample of 20 was drawn. Women who trade in modern or foreign items abound in Lagos. However, the study sample was limited to areas where they are most concentrated hence Lagos Island and Ikeja Local Government Areas of Lagos State were used. From both locations, a total of 76 commercial propertied women in the Lagos area were gotten at their market stalls using, also systematic random sampling method. In all, a total of 96 modern propertied women were drawn. The total of both the Lagos and Ogun respondents amounted to the 195 respondents sampled and selected for the study. In addition to the questionnaire, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Semi Structured Interview (SSI) were also used to 'get behind the scene' of some of the responses in the questionnaire. A total of four FGDs sessions were held for all the respondents in Ogun State and twelve SSI sessions were held for respondents in Lagos State. The data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The same package was used to arrive at various frequency tables and cross tabulations in the study. This was followed by qualitative analysis that revealed the underline social processes and realities. Specifically, the qualitative data were analyzed by a manual content analysis taken into consideration the detail process in (QDA).

Discussion of Findings

Patriarchy, Women and Reproductive Role

The contribution of women to development can be divided into the three major roles they perform in the society. These are: Reproductive Role, Productive Role and Community Development Role. The reproductive role comprises of every activity ranging from biological reproduction of new life; child rearing and caring responsibilities and all domestic tasks required guaranteeing the maintenance of all persons who comprise the household (Malami, 2009). Reproductive roles can further be sub-divided into three:

- Simple biological reproduction;

- Reproduction of object of labour; and
- Social reproduction (which is the induction of new members into the dominant ideologies held within the society. Even though both sexes contribute to social reproduction societal expectation and demand in this regard is more on women than men particularly among the respondents).

The discussion on reproductive role will be based on social reproductive role because it is within this context that change can be effected in the imbalance relationship between men and women in the social relations of production and, indeed, the whole super-structure of the society. In this regard, the study starts by examining what happens at the household level between the respondents and their husbands in terms of decision-making processes. It is strongly believed that whatsoever happens at the household level between husband and wife (wives) has a way of replicating itself in the other sphere of the society. More so when it had been argued earlier that the society is a creation of men and for men. An understanding of the power relation between husbands and wives at the household level may serve as a pointer to the nature and dynamics of power between and among men and women in the society. This is particularly germane to this kind of study on propertied women who have economic power but still deficient in other aspects of power in social relationships in the society. The areas of strength and deficiency are presented in Table 1 below under the title: Household Decision Making process on housing, leisure, children, education, family size, domestic expenditure, domestic menu and sex.

The paper is of the view that whatever happens at the level of social reproduction determines the status of both women and men under the 'first relations of production'. Also whatever happens at the level of decision-making determines where the authority/power lies. And as far as authority or power is concerned Dahrendorf (cited in Karanja, 1983) forcefully argued:

If either nobody or everybody had authority, the concept would lose its meaning. Authority implies both domination and subjection and it therefore implies the existence of two distinct sets of position or persons. (Karanja, 1983, p. 240).

Table 1: Household Decision Making process on Housing, Leisure, Children, Education, Family Size, Domestic Expenditure, Domestic Menu and Sex

	Housing		Leisure		Children		Education		Family Size		Domestic Expenditure		Domestic Food Menu		Sex	
	Freq	%	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Independent	51	26.2	127	65.1	51	26.2	63	32.3	71	36.4	135	69.2	146	74.9	74	37.9
Dependent	127	65.1	44	22.6	124	63.6	119	61	111	56.9	29	14.9	37	19	106	54.4
Undecided	17	8.7	24	12.3	20	10.2	13	6.7	13	6.7	31	15.9	12	6.1	15	7.7
Total	195	100	195	100	195	100	195	100	195	100	195	100	195	100	195	100

The research finding in table 1 shows that the 'position' of women with regard to prescribed norms of decision-making is somehow inferior to that of men in the context of the study. This is evident in the quantity and quality of areas of household life that men take superior decision on. Although, women in this study are economically independent they still seek their husbands' opinion in decision-making within the household on issues such as –housing, children, education, family size, and sex. This is part of the cultural attitude subtly used by the respondents to gradually pull down the dominant nature of patriarchy. This is so because where a decision needs a financial back up, which could only be provided by the propertied women, seeking for husbands' opinion becomes a mere traditional respect to the husband.

On housing for instance, about 65.1% of the respondents claimed they are dependent on their husbands on issues of housing. Although the majority of them have built houses they could, however, not choose to reside in their houses without their husband's consent to do so (except where he is dead, or there is separation or divorce). Indeed, it is customarily not honourable for a woman to 'do any big thing' such as build a house without informing the husband or before the husband does so. In the past, wealthy women build houses in their husband's name so as to be seen as obedient to the customs. The question is whose custom? And in whose interest is it? When the respondents were asked why couldn't they do some 'big things' without informing their husbands. They simply confirm again:

We cannot do that. A man can take decision because they are the head of household. Some would have built a house and completed it before telling their wives. They do not regard us as much. If it is the other way round the woman (wife) will be accused. Some women have been ejected from their husband's house because of similar issues in the past.

In fact, if anything bad should happen to the household members particularly when a woman (wife) is building or 'doing any big thing' without the consent of the husband, she would be accused of all things including witchcraft according to some of the respondents particularly those from Ijebu area of the study. Though women are not to do 'big things', they can however do all the 'small things' to sustain the household. When they fail in the 'small things' such as cooking and caring, they are not good wives and can be replaced at will by the husband. Whereas if the husband fails in the 'big thing', such as, providing accommodation for the household, women should endure with him, support and encourage him. He should not be replaced! The question here is where is the place of equity in such relationship despite the economic power of the respondents.

On the issue of leisure, about 65.1% of the respondents claimed they are not dependent on their husbands on this. They decide on their leisure. This may however

not completely be without the knowledge of the husband. Perhaps since leisure involve some extra expenditure and where the husband is not forthcoming to release money, the propertied wife may not bother. She would still have her leisure somehow. Again, perhaps leisure is also part of the 'small things' women are freely allowed to do by men. In fact, Yoruba women, that form greater percentage of the sample, are quite noted for revelling, especially at the end of the week in all kinds of party.

The issue of children is central to any union, marriage or family in Africa, including Nigeria. Apart from the need for a family to reproduce itself, for the purpose of sustainability, other values are also attached to having children in Nigeria. Among the Ijebu-Yoruba for instance, Edewor (2001) stated that:

The expectation of parents regarding children's economic help affect their fertility preferences and behaviour. Children's productive value --- is a major component of their instrumental benefit to parents, --- they are [also] expected to provide their parents, old-age security and other financial assistance (Edewor, 2001, p. 105).

For any family to have children in the light of the above viewpoint, it places a higher expectation on couples, particularly the woman, to perform her three levels of reproductive roles very well. If a woman is not able to conceive and give birth, she has failed in her simple biological reproductive role. If she is not able to train a child for economic benefit for the household, she has failed in her reproduction of object of labour. And if she is unable to properly socialize the child into the prevailing dominant ideologies held in the society, she has failed in her social reproductive role. Each of these failures is severely sanctioned among the Yoruba in Nigeria (Aluko, Onabanjo & Alliyu 2011). Failure to give birth attracts shame, reproach and replacement by other women who are fertile! In other words, the woman who is unable to give birth is culturally considered infertile whereas it may be the man who is not able to impregnate the woman! Attention is never directed at men particularly when bad things occur within the household, such as not having children. This is part of the manifestation of the culture that value men more than women. A culture where men cannot be at fault; a culture where women are more often than not, faulty and as such accused of all sorts of 'evil' yet she should cooperate with the man and obey the social expectation that devalued her and whatsoever she does and sometimes whatsoever she fails to do. Failure to give economic induction to children attracts abuses and sometimes rejection and battery from the husband. Lastly, failure to socialize or indoctrinate children into the dominant ideologies held in the society attracts abuses, and mockery on the woman (Aluko et.al 2011). The implication is that much is expected of the woman (wife, mother) concerning the reproductive roles by the society. Indeed, if women must be valued as the opposite sex, concerted efforts must be made at the level of social reproductive role to improve on the present value placed on women by the society. Interestingly, Bryson (1992) noted that it is through this social reproductive role that

women have maintained their own oppression. Their attainment of freedom could possibly be sought within the same context.

From the foregoing, it is therefore not surprising that about 63.6% of the respondents are dependent on their husbands on issues concerning children despite their economic independence. And besides the economic power of the respondents, the fact that they have to perform the three levels of reproductive role, one would have expected a greater level of influence from them as far as decision-making on children is concerned. Rather, it is the other way round. This strong ideological social fact that is external to the individual has power of cohesion on her; and it is passed from one generation to another, through the process of socialization. Within this process, women are valued-less and men are valued-high. The two levels of values carry along with it the power that determines all relationship between girl-child and boy-child in the family of orientation; the school, the work place; the family of procreation and, of course, the entire social formations.

Nevertheless, about 26.2% of the respondents claimed that they are independent of their husbands on issues around making decision on children. This is quite lesser than those dependent (63.6%). This is not unexpected because some of the respondents are widowed, divorced or separated. Some respondents in this category claimed that they are abandoned by the husband's family and as such carry the entire responsibility of care for the children. The possibility of independent decision-making on children by married respondents is doubtful. This is corroborated by Karanja's data that 'both men and women in the Lagos sample feel that, when it comes to decision-making the husband should dominate the wife'. This is also similar to what obtains between the Bangada of East Africa and a host of other people in West Africa (Karanja, 1983).

The issue of education and family size is both pertaining to children. It is obvious from the above table 1 that the husbands of the respondents are yet dominant in decision-making in this regard. About 61% claimed that they are dependent on their husband's decision on children's education and 56.9% are dependent on their husband's decision on family size. The more highly educated women are, especially more in favour of joint decision-making in such areas as family-size – the more they are likely to have control over their body. Even, where they are not highly educated the respondents claimed they used family planning to prevent pregnancy without the knowledge of the husband.

This indicates that if the right knowledge, information, education and communication are made available to women in addition to improved economic status they may begin to have and exercise a higher degree of control on some hitherto no go areas like family size. In effect, the degree of dependence on husband's decision on family size could be manipulated openly or secretly by women depending on the kind

of husband they have. However, where it is secretly manipulated it may sometimes lead to problem for the woman and her loyalty to the union may be called to question.

Contrariwise, about 32.3% and 36.4% of the respondents claimed that they are independent of husbands' decision on children's education and family size respectively. This could be as a result of the fact that some of the respondents (17.95%) are actually educated up to tertiary level. This may enhance the process of joint decision making as opposed to sole decision making common to the not-so-educated ones. More so, those who are widowed, separated or divorced may also have sole authority to take decision on such issues.

Yet another area the respondents said they are dependent on their husband's decision is sexual intercourse. About 54.4% of them are in this category. The decision to have sexual intercourse seems to be at the instance of the husband mostly irrespective of the fact that women could also be sexually aroused. Indeed, for a woman to demand for sexual intercourse could amount to her being labelled as wayward and may become a 'suspect' in an illiterate male dominated community. According to Harris (1984):

Women are commonly portrayed ... as commodities and/or chattels to be given away, traded for, sold, taken, owned and possessed ... There is --- an extremely disturbing picture painted of woman as a sex object who can, in certain circumstances, be rightfully given over by her husband/owner (unconsulted and with no choice of her own) for sexual use ... (p. 61).

For Harris, husbands do not only use their wives as sex objects, some even give their wives out for one reason or another for sexual use or abuse. Fathers also give out their daughters for one bargain or another with other men for same sexual use and abuse (Alliyu, 2006a). This perhaps must have informed the inability of women to also determine the family size discussed earlier. This is a clear indication of the inability of women to define and make binding decisions about their body. Nevertheless, about 37.9% of the respondents expressed a contrary view. They are independent of their husbands' decision on sexual intercourse. The educated ones among the respondents may fall into this category. They are more likely to jointly make decision on issue regarding sex with their spouse than uneducated women. It is not unlikely that the 37.9% may also include women who are old and have reached menopause. They may also claim to be independent since they are no longer having coitus.

Expectedly, and in accordance with the literature, decision on domestic expenditure and domestic food menu is exclusively reserved for women (Karanja, 1983, Sesay; Odebiyi 1998; Malami 2009). As high as 69.2% and 74.9% of the respondents are independent of their husband's decision on both domestic expenditure and domestic food menu respectively. It is only 14.9% and 19% that are still dependent on husband's decision on domestic expenditure and domestic food menu respectively.

This seems to represent the stereotyped sexual division of labour between men and women in the society. It is an area in which men would not want to interfere and, interestingly, it is an area no woman (wife) will welcome any form of intrusion from any man. Surprisingly, all forms of activities that take place at this domestic level is taken for granted and thus labeled 'natural' role of women and it is not seen as work. In fact, women who do this role (work) very well are ideologically perceived and described as a 'good wife'.

So, as long as the woman is performing her reproductive role very well by keeping the house and rearing the children under an acceptable ideology (that value men and devalue women) and to the interest of the husband, she is qualified to be a good wife. Yet, all these efforts are not described as work particularly in capitalist conception of 'work' or 'labour' and therefore not remunerated (Alliyu 2006b). This has remained for so long and will remain so until there is a wider and equitable conception of what activity constitutes 'work'. Let me present here the views of a rural man and woman about the concept of 'work' in order to appreciate the strength of the ideological institution at work in a male dominated society.

Table 2: Interview with Rural Men and Women

Interview with Rural Man	Interview with Rural Woman
<p>Researcher: Does your wife work?</p> <p>Respondent: No, she is just a house-wife.</p> <p>Researcher: What does she do all day?</p> <p>Respondent: She gets up before dawn to fetch water and firewood. She takes care of the goats and chickens and then goes to the farm to help me on my plot, then takes care of her own crops. She takes some of her produce, as well as my own to the market to sell, while she processes others into gari, palm oil, pap and yam flour. She dries some of the produce to store for the household. She threshes and grinds the grains used for the family's food. She</p>	<p>Researcher: What is your occupation?</p> <p>Respondent: I don't have an occupation; I'm just a housewife.</p> <p>Researcher: Do you work on the farm?</p> <p>Respondent: Of course, I help my husband with his crops and I grow some cassava and vegetables on my own plot that he lets me use.</p> <p>Researcher: What do you do with what you grow?</p> <p>Respondent: I process the cassava into gari. Most of the gari is for the family to eat but I usually have a little to sell. The leafy vegetables I grow are mostly for sale, since it is difficult to store them - although I sundry some produce for the household and we eat some fresh.</p> <p>Researcher: Do you process any other products?</p> <p>Respondent: I make palm oil and local soap from the palm fruits of my husband's trees. I sell it later and give him part of the profit. I also make 'iru' from the locust beans I gather from the bush.</p> <p>Researcher: Do you gather anything else from the forest?</p>

<p>gathers locust beans and other products from the forest, processing some and selling some. Of course, she also takes care of the children and prepares food for the family.</p> <p>Researcher: But, she doesn't have a job?</p> <p>Respondent: No, she's just a housewife</p>	<p>Respondent: Of course, I gather firewood every day and I collect snails, fruits, nuts and mushrooms, depending upon the season. I also get materials I need to make baskets and mats.</p> <p>Researcher: Do you use these products at home or sell them?</p> <p>Respondent: We use a lot of what I gather for the home, but I sell some if there is extra, particularly the firewood, snails and mushrooms that can bring more money.</p> <p>Researcher: Do you have any chickens, goats or sheep of your own?</p> <p>Respondent: Of course, everyone does. I keep them for festivals or ceremonies or in case of emergencies.</p> <p>Researcher: So, with all that you are doing, what did you say is your occupation?</p> <p>Respondent: Oh, I'm only a housewife.</p>
--	--

Adapted from FAO Trainees *Manual for Gender Sensitivity*. Rome.

It is obvious that the above interview is self-explanatory in revealing the strength of ideology in male dominated society that devalues women and what women do. Regrettably, a lot of women as shown above are yet to realize the strength and power of this ideology that have been institutionalized to keep them in this low status. It is only a realization of this that could enhance any meaningful process of re-definition of lots of concepts such as 'work' and 'nature' that have been used to the advantage of men and disadvantage of women in the society.

Patriarchy, Women and Productive Role

Productive role would comprise of all activities performed by both women and men for financial or other rewards. For the purpose of this study, propertied women would not only engage in such activities, for financial reward, they must actually own, use, control and benefit from a means (tools) of production. The respondents fall within this category. About 10.2% are manufacturers; 16.4% have land/house for production purposes and services; 34.4% engage in indigenous businesses and 39% deal in modern (foreign) items. Those in manufacturing produce household items such as soaps, candles, creams etc. Those that have houses hired it out to others while they reside in their husband's house. Lands, of course, were used solely for the production of crops ranging from maize, cassava and vegetables. A majority of the women however engage in businesses, trading in both indigenous and foreign items such as cosmetics, creams, woods/planks, textiles like lace materials, aso-oke etc. While those who trade in indigenous items like planks/woods travel into the hinterland to source for logs, those who trade in foreign items travel as far as Bangkok, Dubai, Bombay, Thailand,

Indonesia, Korea etc., to source for items to sell. They sell in wholesale and retail to other women who may not be able to travel that far and/or those who do not have the cash required by such business. Indeed, research has shown that in Lagos 85 percent of the traders are women (Odumosu, 1999, p.99). This account is not different from the respondents' experiences in their various areas of business. The 'big' women help the 'small women not only to start off businesses. They also put up 'resistance to the attitude of men' that may likely hinder them in their business. Others however enjoy an appreciable level of support, not only from their husbands but, also from other men. Yet, another category simply get support from their parents or sometimes outright inheritance.

The contribution of women in productive role is by no means a small one. Unfortunately, their contributions in this regard, have not really received the attention it deserves in the various economic planning policy and accounting in the developing countries. If the population of women is almost half of men's in Nigeria and the 'majority of employed women in Nigeria are engaged in informal sector activities', it is only imperative that any development effort that neglect the sector will be incomplete and unprogressive. It is, indeed, a sector that, if properly managed, could assist in accelerated development in the developing countries such as Nigeria with a very high rate of unemployed youth (male and female).

An interesting feature of this sector is that it does not require huge capital to start and 'much of their trading activities are classified as "petty" but many women have however evolved to be successful big traders" (Okojie, 1998).

However, the success recorded by the respondents in the informal sector is not without some hindrances. This is broken down in table 3.

Table 3: Hindrances to Women's Productive Role

	Capital	Time	Male Attitudes	Mismanagement	Others	Total
Freq.	78	48	20	16	33	195
Percent	40	24.6	10.3	8.2	16.9	100%

In the table above, about 40% of the respondents claimed that capital only still constitutes a major setback in their business. This is in consonance with existing literature. Women generally are reported not to have access to financial assistance as men particularly as it concerns loans for small scale business (Aina, 2012). Apart from capital, time was considered by about 24.6% of the respondents as constituting a hindrance. This is not unexpected because women engage in triple role of reproduction, production and community management role. The time expended on reproductive role is so enormous such that it limits whatever time available for productive role. This in

effect limits what finally accrue to women in their productive role. In addition to the above, “the male attitude” is also considered a hindering factor to women’s productive role by about 10.3% of the respondents.

I will tell you what happened to me - because I am into second marriage now. When I first built my first house, my husband was not envious, when he noticed that I have bought another land and started building on it, initially he co-operated with me and participated. But as I said that it is not in our culture for women to do such big thing. It is man that does it. So, I was giving him money to be doing everything but because he has not had his own (house) at that stage, he withdrew his involvement to the extent that I did everything on my own. When I was being cheated, I called him to assist, all to no avail until I completed the house.

From the above, it is evident that access to and control over resource actually depict some degree of power and status relevance within a family. The two instances above represent situations where husbands felt threatened by the changing status of their wives and, of course, the power shift and its use. It is important to note that not all husbands or men actually hindered their spouses from their productive role despite the changing status of their wives.

Other factors raised as hindrance could be described as not gender specific. It could apply to any sex. For instance, 8.2% of the respondents claimed that mismanagement is a factor and 16.9% claimed other unspecified factors as hindrance to women’s productive role.

Patriarchy, Women and Community Development Role

The role of women is not limited to household or productive sectors of the society alone. They also play a role in community development however small. Indeed, a Community Development programme would not be regarded as such if it is not in the best interest of the community members (an interest they determine themselves); if it is not sensitive to gender, class, gerontological issues and so on. (Indabawa, 1994). The role of women in development therefore would include all activities (voluntary, unpaid work and/or otherwise) undertaken at the community level by them to contribute to the development of the community.

The respondents (particularly at Ogun state) claimed that they have contributed a lot to the community through the creation of casual jobs for men and women in the lumbering business. This they argued has helped to sustain some families where government has not been able to give meaningful jobs to the people. They have also helped in training other women in the plank business and otherwise and sometimes give financial assistance. All these have impact on their immediate community.

Social obligations are also performed through the various associations some of them belong to. The social clubs and the age-grade associations perform purely social functions. This is particularly true of women in Yoruba land and they have been able to give a lot of psychological support to members in this regard. In fact, the strength of a social woman, is sometimes, measured by the caliber, the number, and the nature of support she is able to get at such days of celebration. Social party, through the activities of women, has become an enterprise in that there have developed, in the recent times, different specialists sometimes called 'Party Managers'. They specialize in different areas such as cooking of all forms of delicious foods, well dressed servers at parties, well dressed undertakers in terms of burial ceremonies, coverage of events, decoration of party venue, occasion dancers and masters of ceremonies, etc. All these are sustained by the special attributes of women to celebrate events with all seriousness and attention. By this singular act, a lot of people in those specialties mentioned above are sure of getting some financial uplift at least at the end of a week and sometimes within the week.

The religious associations also constitute another avenue through which the women contribute to the development of their community. Apart from giving financial and material assistance to church/mosque members and community generally, the women also engage in praying and preaching/teaching about morals and values of the society. Closely related to this activity is the involvement of the respondents in enlightenment programmes for the benefit of the community. These programmes, sometimes, are channeled through women associations in the churches and mosques. They thereby become an easy access to educate families about a new idea or project in a community. Through them, as well, support are often sought for projects or programmes. However, the extent to which women are involved in initiating, planning, executing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating community development projects or programmes is still very insignificant. Commenting on community education programmes, for example, (Zwandor, 2001) argued, "even with best of negotiation some groups, especially women, will be naturally precluded as the other household activities (i.e. reproductive role) means they cannot attend to these trainings" (i.e. community education which may indeed empower them and improve their social status).

On the issue of politics, the respondents claimed that they do not really have enough time for politics. Many of them are simply apolitical. *We do not involve in political associations. We do not have the time. There is no gain in politics and moreover, it is too much of rascality.*

Others however claimed that they have involved themselves in politics before but 'we lost out so, we are no longer interested'. *Men are too greedy. They introduce money we cannot afford. We cannot go and lose our business money. They are not*

honest and trustworthy. They will collect your money and still disappoint you when they get bigger money from another person.

The experiences of women as concerning political association have actually discouraged the propertied women to want to seek political power. To this extent, women may be precluded from the arena of decision-making where policies, that even affect women, as a social category, are formulated.

Conclusion

Against the general trend of repression suffered by women in a majority of patriarchal societies the world over, some women have experienced a remarkable change in their status (Alliyu 2014). This experience is a consequence of 'their mastery of the patriarchal structure and their own successful combination of both attitudes of submission and achievement (Alliyu 2014).

The attitude described above by Alliyu is called 'Diatude'. The attitude has therefore engendered greater achievements for the improvement and development of the society. This is reflected in their three levels of roles discussed in this paper. If the triple roles of simple biological reproduction, reproduction of object of labour and social reproduction are evaluated correctly, it will place women in a position of great contributors to the development of any society, which unfortunately is not often captured as such in the literature that tends to locate greater part of what women does in the sphere of nature.

Women in this study area have been able to demonstrate that women can actually affect the development process positively. Unfortunately, some factors such as time, capital, mismanagement and male attitude are still limiting the level of contribution of these women to the development process of their society.

Generally, however, going by the findings of this study it can be concluded that the change in status experienced by these women have enhanced their status, which in turn have improved their contributions to the general development of their society.

References

- Aina O.I (2012). Two Halves make a whole: Gender at the Cross roads of the Nigerian Development Agenda'. *Inaugural Lecture Series 250*. Faculty of Social Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
- Alliyu, N. (2007). *Gender and career development: Within the media industry in Nigeria*. Lagos: Triumph Publishers.
- Alliyu N (2006a). Patriarchy: How women are devalued from the Beginning'. *Ijagun Journal of Social and Management Sciences Vol. 1, No 1*.

- Alliyu, N. (2006b). The limit of Karl Marx concept of mode of production in the analysis of women's double exploitation. *International Journal of Development and Policy Studies. The Global Fund for Women 1(1)* 451-460.
- Alliyu, N. (2013). Understanding sex and gender. In Aborisade R., Omobowale, A. O. & Akanle, O. (eds.) *Essential of sociology*. Ibadan University Press
- Alliyu, N. (2014). "Diatude": How some women escape from men's domination in Southwest Nigeria. *The Journal of International Social Research*. Ordu, Turkey: Ordu University.
- Aluko, Y. A., Onabanjo, D. O. & Alliyu, N. (2011). The centrality of women in moral teaching in Yoruba family system. *The Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*. Volume 9,
- Bryson. V. (1992) *Feminist Political Theory*. The Macmillan Press Ltd., London.
- Edewor, P. A. (2001). Perception of the value of children among the Ijebu – Yoruba. In Olubomehin, O. O. (ed). *The Ijebu of Western Nigeria: A historical and socio-cultural study*. Ibadan: College Press and Publishers Limited.
- Figes. E. (1970). *Patriarchal attitudes: Women in society*. (Reprinted in 1978 and 1986). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- Gray, E. D. (1982). *Patriarchy as a conceptual trap*. wpliesley, Messacluise Hs.: Round Table press,
- Harris, K. (1984). *Sex, ideology, and religion: The representation of women in the Bible*. Bames and Noble Books New Jersey.
- Indabawa, S. A. (1994). Community development and local government empowerment in Nigeria. *Journal of Social and Management Studies*, Vol. 1.
- Joss, S. (1990). Your husband is your God. *GADU Park No. 2*, OXFAM, Oxford.
- Karanja, W. (1983). Conjugal decision making: Some data from Lagos. In Oppong, C. & Allen, G. (eds.) *Female and male in West Africa*. London: Unwin Publishers Limited.
- Malami H. U. (2009). Muslim Women's Contribution to the Economy, Gender and Behaviour. Ile Ife, Nigeria: The Ife Centre for Psychological Studies.
- Sesay, A. & Odebiyi, (1998). *Women, culture and society. Nigerian women in society and development*. Ibadan: Dokun Publishing House, p.3-32.

- Odumosu, T. (1999). Location and regional setting of Lagos State. In Balogun, Y., Odumosu, T., Ojo, K. (eds.) *Lagos State in maps*. Ibadan: Rex Charles Publications.
- Nwokocha, E. E. (2013). Implications of gender inequity for achieving the millennium development goals by 2015: Is Nigeria really making progress?
- Okojie, C. E. E. (1998). Women in employment and Labour. In Sesay, A. & Odebiyi, A. (eds) *Nigerian women in society and development*. Ibadan: Dokun Publishing House, Pp. 135-154.
- Pearson, R. (1992). Gender matters in development. In Allen & Thomas (eds.) *Poverty and development in the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, S. (2012). Why men oppress women in out of Darkness: The science of post-traumatic growth.
http://www.Psychologytoday.com/blog/out_the_darkness/201208/why_men_oppress_women.
- Young, C. (2013). Yes, Patriarchy is dead, the feminist prove it.
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2013/09/23/yes_patriarchy_is_dead_the_feminist_prove_it_120031.htm/#ixzz2gCXHvWom
- Zwador, A. (2001). Community education: The lesson so far. A Paper Presented at Benue Health Fund, October 2001 in Benue State.