

LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

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Abstract

The Study examined level of education and women involvement in politics; implications for counselling in Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study with one hypothesis tested using t-test at .05 level of significance. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 300 women in Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra State. The sample of the study consists of 100 women drawn from the population of the study using multi stage procedure. Women Education Level in Politics Questionnaire (WELPQ) was developed and used to collect data. Three experts validated the instruments. Cronbach Alpha was used to ascertain the reliability co-efficient of the instrument and this guided overall coefficient of 0.73. The researchers together with six research assistants, who were properly briefed, administered and collected the questionnaire after completion from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentages to answer the research questions while Pearson Correlation was used for determining the relationship of the variables. The findings of the study showed among others that women involved in politics are very few. Although the number of women who can read and write are many, but their qualifications are low. Based on the findings, conclusion was made. The study recommended free education and establishment of schools as it will help to change women's irrational thought about politics that politics is only meant for men. It will also change women's irrational thought and make them understand that women can contribute to social and economic development of their nation.

Keywords: *Counselling, politics, women education.*

Introduction

It should be well known that both men and women should have equal rights and opportunities in everything worldwide, most especially to participate in all aspects and at all levels of political processes. This is because women constitute over half of the world population and contribute in vital ways to social development. Women are mothers, producers, home-makers, and community organizers, socio-cultural and political activists. Of these many roles mentioned, the last has been engendered by women movement, yet women constitute nearly half of the population of the country. They are yet to be recognized and given their duly recognition in politics. This is due to patriarchal societal structures, traditional practices against

women. It has been observed that in spite of all steps taken by international conference on women in Beijing in 1995, which enhanced the effective participation of women in politics, women are still lacking behind in education as that may be affecting their participation in politics. The major factor is still the issue of men's dominance in access to political opportunities (Punch, 2016).

Women involvement in politics in Nigeria has come a long way, since the pre-colonial period to present, in which Nigerian women have been organizing themselves to redefine their position in the society. The National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS), comprising a network of independent women organization was founded in 1959. The goals of this organization included the improvement of welfare, progress and standard of living of women and increasing the role of women in political life for more access in decision making (Olojede, 2000). Therefore, women should be duly recognized and allowed to participate fully, for politics is how people who live in groups make decisions. It is all about making agreements between people so that they can live together in groups such as tribes, cities or countries.

There were significant roles played by women in anti-colonial struggles, the struggle during the national independence and social modernization (Mazur, Mcbridge & Hoard, 2016). Many women have shown interest in politics and have emerged into prominent positions, women like Funmilayo Ransome kuti, Sambo Gambo and Margret Ekpo refused to accept that the place of a woman is in the kitchen, although these women recognized their role in the kitchen as well as their role in contributing to the social, economic, political and educational development of their country, these women persisted since politics is like a competitive game Momoh (2017). People like Prof. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (former Minister for Finance), late Prof. Dora Akunyili (former director general of NAFDAC), Dr. (Mrs.) Uche Ekwunife (Iyom) (member of the Senate), Mrs. Virginia Etiaba (first and only female governor of Anambra state) have shown interest in politics and have occupied some various prominent positions in government. Politics is the set of activities that are associated with making decisions in groups or in other forms of power relations among individuals. Politics is a competitive game, a game of who get what, how and when, once you are into it, you will always aspire to get to the top, it is the survival of the fittest and who will take the bull by the horn; It is a task of high performance and most prominent women in it refuse to accept that their role ends in the kitchen. These women wished and struggled to contribute to the social economic and educational development of this nation and refused vehemently to accept that the place of the Nigerian woman is in the kitchen alone (Youtya, 2014). This notwithstanding, it was noted that the women recognized their roles in the kitchen as well as their roles in contribution to the social , economic and educational development of Nigeria..

Counselling is an essential part of women education. The knowledge and skill of counselling, can help women gain awareness. FRN (2016) clearly spelt out the objectives of primary and junior secondary education, but its implementation has not met the stated objective as far as guidance and counselling is concerned. Counselling is a helping service provided by a professionally trained counsellor to his/her clients with the target to assist, help and pilot the client to better understand himself, his circumstances and environment, as this will help him take more rational decisions and improve his functioning in his society. Okonkwo (2014) opined that Counselling is a process in which one person assists another in a person-to-person or face-to-face encounter to solve bugging problems. Counselling is characterized as a dynamic relationship of trust and confidence between the counsellor and the client. It is often conducted on individual basis or in small groups, but it is more usual to organize group guidance services.

The challenges are in various forms. They could come from within the women because of their emotional stability or physical strength to face the rigor. It could as well come from around the women because of marginalization, discrimination and savagery in politics. They all create obstacles to women's participation in politics. Okonkwo and Obineli (2011), agreed that women are creature that co-habit the earth with men. Furthermore, they stated that women are different from men, because of their nature, roles and physiology and so, women should be described as indispensable group in the development of any nation .The Nigeria women have been seen and found as a very crucial factor for development and production. They have assumed high status and are responsible for the bulk production of crops agro-based food processing, preservation of crops, and distribution of yields from farm centers to urban areas .It is also believed that women help to shape, reshape, direct, correct, re-mould and refine the child, and at the end help the society by bringing out the final best in the child, The importance of women can be perceived from their roles as

managers of homes, and that the peace and stability at homes depend largely on the managerial abilities of women folks.

Education level of women is a crucial issue that requires to be given attention. If women's education level is high, it enables the women to face any challenge head log. She will depend on her knowledge and wisdom and that will be done to make them economically strong and stable. The knowledge of strategic planning is always high and so, she is always able. Education enable women to develop a very high self-esteem. Suleiman (2017), noted that at Chief executive officer levels, there are only nine to ten percent who are women, while women with political appointment are less than ten percent. This prompted the researchers to investigate into the education level of women and their participation in politics.

Bolu, Adegoke and Dada (2015) remarked that socio-economic role expected of women should be more proactive than their male counterpart in job seeking which invariably affect their leadership position within the society. In Nigeria, 33% of appoint able positions are expected to be occupied by women through affirmative action. The import of this affirmation connotes that the job seeking across gender divides will be different. However, the National assembly has recently passed a bill of 30% of every appointment in any organization shall be seeded by women. If only the bill will see the light of the day.

It therefore, becomes very vital that women should take education seriously, so that they can perform their roles in national development. If women are capable of bearing children and taking care of them, women will as well find politics an easy enterprise. An educated woman will know how to handle the local prejudice which has always acted in obstruction to the democratic involvement of women in political development of their nations. This study therefore will investigate the level of women education and their involvement in politics in Njikoka L.G.A. of Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

To find out what should be done to improve the education level of women, the problem is how can the education level of women be elevated? The researchers are worried because of the absence of women in politics particularly in Njikoka Local Government area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the level of education of women involvement in politics. Specifically, this study sought to;

1. Identify the women education level in Njikoka L.G.A. of Anambra State
2. Ascertain the educational challenges of women in politics
3. Determine the implications for counselling in women involvement in education

Research Questions

1. What is the education level of women's in Njikoka L.G.A of Anambra State?
2. What are the challenges to women education?
3. What are the implications of counselling in women involvement in politics?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the education level of women and their participation in politics

Research Method

The researchers adopted descriptive survey design. This design aims at collecting and describing data in a systematic way, the facts about a given population and characteristic features. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey is the design which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics features or facts about a given population. This design is appropriate for the study because it tends to collect information from the population of the study in order to describe them in a systematic manner the women education level in politics participation in Njikoka local government area of Anambra state. This study was carried out in Njikoka L.G.A. of Anambra State.

The population of the study comprised all educated women in Njikoka Local Government area of Anambra State. The sample of this study consisted of 100 women drawn from the population of the study using stratified proportionate sampling techniques. A questionnaire developed by the researchers captioned “Women Education Level and their Participation in politics Questionnaire (WELPPQ) was used for data collection. WELPPQ has four sections i, ii, iii, and iv which focused on three research questions. Section (I) has three items on women education level in Njikoka Local Government Area, section (II) has eight items on educational qualification of women in Njikoka L.G.A. section (III) has six items on challenges to women education level in politics participation in Njikoka L.G.A., section (IV) has five items on counselling implications. The instrument has a total of twenty two items. Sections I, II, III were structured on frequency and percentages, to answer the research questions while Pearson correlation was used for determining the relationship of variables.

The face validation of the instrument was determined by three experts who are lecturers, two specialized in guidance and counselling and one specialized in Measurement and Evaluation, all from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The suggestions and inputs of the experts were reflected in the final draft of the instruments. WELPPQ was verified by administering copies of the questionnaire to Aninri local government area in Enugu state that share common characteristics of challenges like lack of awareness and irrational thoughts, lack of interest, over attachment to business and ignorance of relevance of western education. The data obtained were subjected to test for internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha. The reliability indices for the four parts of WELPPQ were 0.71, 0.72, 0.74, and 0.75 respectively with overall coefficient of 0.73.

Six research assistants and the researchers collected data for the study. The researchers with the help of six research assistants who were briefed on the procedures of administering and collecting of copies of the questionnaires collected back the completed copies. It lasted one day at Njikoka Sectariate at Abagana during the Njikoka women festival celebration 1n 2019. One hundred copies distributed were completed and used for analysis. The researchers and six research attendants were able to do that because the women stayed according to six towns that made up Njikoka L.G.A. viz; Abagana, Enugwu-Ukwu, Enugwu-Agidi, Nawfia, Nimo and Abba. The six research attendants shared the six towns, each attended to 18 women, while the researchers helped when difficult issues arose.

The data from the 100 respondents were used in the analysis. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentages to answer the research questions while Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis.

Results

Research Question 1: what is the Education Level of Women?

Table 1: Education Level of Women

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Literate	77	77%
Semi-literate	20	20%
Illiterate	03	3%
Total	100	100%

Table 1 answers to Research Question 1. The total number of literate and semi literate women is 97. (These are women who can read and write. Three women were uneducated. Although the number of women who can read and write are many, but their qualifications are low.

Table 2: Educational qualifications of women in Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Prim. School leaver	12	12
Sec. school leaver	25	25
Diploma	11	11
NCE	14	14
Higher National Diploma(HND)	10	10
1 st Degree	15	15
2 nd Degree	10	10
Doctorate	--	--
Total	97	97

Table 2 shows the educational qualifications of women in politics. Majority of those interested in politics are 25 in number and they are secondary school leavers. The total number of primary school leavers to NCE is 62(62%) while HND to 2nd degree holders are 35 (35%). the table shows that educational qualification of women in politics is low.

Research Question 2: what are the hindrances to women education?

Table 3: Hindrances to women education in Njikoka Local Government Area

Hindrances	Frequency	Percent
Lack of awareness	33	33
Lack of interest.	21	21
Over attachment to business	06	06
Ignorance of relevance of western education.	03	03
Other problems	37	37
Total	100	100

The data in table 2 indicates the lack of awareness recorded 33 (33%), lack of interest 21(21%), ignorance 03 (03%), too attached to business 06 (06%) and other problems 37 (37%) represent factors serving as hindrances to women education

Research Question 3: what are the implications for counselling?

Table 4: Implications for Counselling

S/N	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Seeking for counselling in political affairs will be great value.	48	46	5	1	100
2	Guidance counsellors would be of help to women involvement in politics.	46	50	2	2	100
3	Through counselling, women's potential can be discovered.	38	60	1	1	100
4	Counselling will help to eradicate moral incorrectness in politics.	44	53	2	1	100
5	Having counselling units in districts, local government, state and federal level will help to improve the women's education level.	47	46	2	5	100

Table 4 revealed that 94% of the respondents agreed that seeking for counselling in political affairs will be of great value, while 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. A total of 96% of them agreed that the guidance counsellors can be of help to women involvement in politics, while 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 98% agreed that through counselling, women's potential can be discovered, while 1% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. Counting, 97% agreed that counselling will help to eradicate immorality in politics, while 2% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. Counting, 93% agreed that having counselling unit in districts, local government, state and federal levels will help to improve the women education level.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between women education level and their involvement in politics.

Table 5: Relationship between Women Education level and their Involvement in Politics

Variables		Education level	Participation
Women's Education Level	Pearson correlation	1	.203(*)
Women's Involvement	Sig. (2-tailed)		.043
	N	100	100
Women's Involvement	Pearson correlation	.203(*)	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.043	
	N	100	100

Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5 showed that the calculated p-value of 0.043 which is lower than the correlated significant level at 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between women education level and their involvement in politics

Discussion

Table 1 of this study revealed the total number of educated and semi educated to be 97%. Those with primary, secondary, diploma/NCE are majority, about 62% of the respondents while 37% were educated. This indicated low women education level involvement.

Okonkwo (2014) opined that counselling is a developmental process whereby an individual is trained by a professional counsellor to understand, accept and utilize personal abilities, aptitudes, interest in the attainment of aspiration. This is targeted to help the women understand themselves, their circumstances and environment better, as this will help women take more rational decisions and improve the functioning of women in the society. Women are mothers, nation builders and developers. Since it is still observed that some women are still being denied the opportunities of enjoying their full potentials in politics, social and political rights, counsellors should come out in mass and make guidance and counselling services available to all women in the communities. These services will bring into focus the benefits that are imbedded in the provision of equal rights and opportunities to all irrespective of sex, religion, age and other differences.

The research has revealed that the educational qualification of women in politics is low. Therefore, Counsellors should be currently knit to the educational policy to reflect the various phase of educational development. Thus, counsellors should orient women in their educational environment, provide all the basic essentials for their future development in politics. Federal government of Nigeria (2016) clearly spelt out the objectives of primary and junior secondary education but the implementation has not met the stated objectives as far as guidance and counselling is concerned.

Counsellors facilitate educational counselling activities which should include appraisal services using test and non test instruments to help women analyze their potentials in relation to academic task ahead for there are accepted standard of education in the political appointment that some of the women may be aspiring for, letting women know that there is no age barrier in education for some women are already feeling that it is too late for them to be educated. Here, the counsellor should use their expertise knowledge and skills to encourage women to further their education so that women can participate in politics, especially those with low qualification. Yatuya (2014) supported this where he opined that these women wished and struggled to contribute to social, economic and educational development of this nation and refused vehemently to accept that the place of Nigerian women is in the kitchen alone, although that not withstanding, for it was noted that the women recognized their role in the kitchen as well as their role in the contribution to the social, economic and educational development of Nigeria.

Research question three showed that the factors militating against women education include lack of awareness, mind full of irrational thoughts, lack of interest, over attached to business, ignorance of relevance of western education and other problems. FGN (2016) clearly spelt out the objectives of primary and junior secondary education but implementation has not met the stated objective as far as guidance and counselling is concerned. Counselling is a helping service provided by a professionally trained counsellor to his/her client with the target to assist, help and pilot the client to better understand herself, her circumstances and environment, as this will help her take more rational decisions and improve her functioning in the society. Thus, counselling is an essential to women education. Cognitive behavioural therapy, group counselling, individual counselling and other approaches can help women to gain

awareness. REBT can help women change their irrational thoughts to rational thoughts. Government efforts at eradicating illiteracy in Nigeria should be commended, although a lot still needs to be done, the counsellors can help bring awareness of this ugly situation to the government, then the government can then help and improve women's education level by setting up a free adult school for those who because of their irrational thinking, thought that education is only for men and their place end in the kitchen, bearing children and taking care of children.

Interest of the women should also be spurred up by counselling using vocational techniques and skill, using some of the women who have made it in politics to talk to other women. This interaction with the educated women could be very useful. Counsellors could set up counselling sessions for women individually and also in groups in their community. For as nation builders, they have taken up a preventive role by introducing the women to a whole lot of study habits, establishing goals forgoing to schools, developing experiences essential for their future development, letting them know that counselling and education is for everybody both young and old for everyone is political in nature and so a fair play should be attainable. This potray's how women rate themselves and supports the view of Okoiye (2014) which observed that in many cases, self-esteem and spousal domestic violence go hand in hand. Challenges of women education level rose from lack of awareness, lack of interest, too attached to busy, ignorance of western education. 35% furthered their education without any challenge; they possess 1st and 2nd degree. This in other hand is showing that counselling is vital for them.

Table 4 revealed that counselling units is important in districts, local government, states and federal levels to help improve women's education and their involvement in politics. The hypothesis also revealed that there is no significant relationship in the education level of women and their involvement in politics. The findings revealed that. If the education level of women's involvement in politics is high, their involvement will be more meaningful, effective and productive. This is true, for it has exposed the importance of counselling intervention. Therefore, machineries should be put in place to improve education level of women involvement in politics.

Counselling Implications

Counsellors are currently knit to the educational policy to reflect the various phase of educational development. Thus, counsellors should orient women in their educational environment, provide them with the basic essentials for their future development in politics Counsellors facilitate educational counselling activities which should include appraisal services using test and non-test instruments to help women analyze their potentials in relation to academic task ahead, for there are accepted standard of education in the political appointment that some of the women may be aspiring for, letting women know that there is no age barrier in education for some women are already feeling that it is too late for them to be educated. Here, the counsellor should use their expertise, knowledge and skills to encourage them to further their studies so that they can participate in politics. The women should endeavor to understand that roles of women do not end in kitchen, rather that women should fight against domestic violence as a global issue (Youtya, 2014). As stated in this study, the factors militating against women is lack of awareness, mind full of irrational thoughts, lack of interest and other factors. Government efforts at eradicating illiteracy in Nigeria should be commended, although a lot still needs to be done, the counsellors can help bring awareness of this ugly situation to the government, then the government can then help and improve women's poor education level by setting up a free adult school. This interaction with the successful women could be very useful. Counsellors should organize counselling sessions for women individually and also in groups in their various communities. For as nation builders, they have taken up a preventive role by introducing the women to a whole lot of study habits, establishing goals for going to schools, developing experiences essential for their future development, letting them know that counselling and education is for everybody both young and old for everyone is political in nature and so a fair play should be attainable.

Conclusion

Women involvement in politics is very vital. Therefore, counselling implications can never be over emphasized. The counsellors who are in position to help should never forget that Counsellors are the nation builders, thus, should set up their machineries in motion for the full realization and actualization of the need in the society. This will reduce the discrimination, marginalization and ignorance, lack of

awareness and lack of interest. The women would now stand firm to life challenges as their education level has met their challenges.

Recommendations

- Government should set a free education school for women to create awareness in politics
- Government should send and sponsor Counsellor's on seminars, workshops and conferences to study and master Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy Techniques which will enable them to change the irrational thoughts which blindfold the women's mind.
- Counsellors should be employed by the government in the school to use their expertise knowledge in changing irrational thoughts to rational thoughts and encouraging the women to wake up from slumber.
- Government should set up counselling units in districts, local government areas; state and federal levels to enable women have access to being enlightened in the area of politics.
- Government should sponsor conferences and seminars for counsellors in training the skills to counsel challenges that has to do with politics.

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