

IMPACT OF UNITED NATIONS-SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325, ON THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

In recent times, the most cherished and most desirable amongst the contemporary challenges in Nigeria cultural milieu, are the issues of peace and security. Worried by the numerous communal crises and conflicts in central senatorial district of Cross River State this paper therefore, is an attempt to critically evaluate the role of women involvement in peace building in Cross River State, with the aim of providing effective mechanism for conflict Resolution. To achieve this, one research question and a hypothesis were formulated thus: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution and peace building in Cross River State. A survey research design was used for this study. A properly structured Likert-scale questionnaire was designed for data collection and collation. A total of 300 respondents were randomly sampled to represent the population of the study. Data for the study was analyzed using simple percentages and the hypothesis tested using the t-test statistical tool. The result of the test revealed that: there is a significant relationship between conflict resolution and women involvement in peace building in Cross River State. The result of the findings, are so significant because there could add to the mirage of information in Knowledge Bank concerning women involvement in peace building.

Key Words: Conflict Resolution, Peace-building, Security-Council Resolution, Women

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a normal natural phenomenon and like change will always occur given the dynamics of human nature. It occurs amongst families and within families, among workers, colleagues, monitors at work or homes, among communities and within communities even among nations and within nations. This is quite obvious as human beings largely pursue divergent interests. The paradox of conflict is that it is a two-way thing, it is both the force that can tear relationships apart and the force that brings them together. Meaning that conflict can be either (constructive) or (destructive). It is also worthy of note that it is the (destructive) conflict that is widely measured as a phenomenon in modern societies. This is observable in the light of the numerous communal violence and breakdown of peace as can be read in news reports on radio, television, newspaper etc. the consequences of these crises are the numerous dotted internally displaced people, camps built almost across every constituency in Nigeria. Wanton destruction of property, looting and plundering as well as senseless bloodletting not to mention the destruction of properties and livelihood of citizens, and senseless killing and bloodletting. This has made the desire for peace among individuals and groups in evitable.

The desperate means of involving women participation in peace building across the world, therefore, prompted the enactment of UN Security Council resolution 1325. The signing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (here after referred to “Women, Peace and Security” in October 2000, which is described

as the most significant political success of women peace activists and a mile stone in women's peace work) Anderlini, 2007; Cockburn, 2007 maintained that extensive lobbying by women's groups, have paved way for the first time that women's role in maintaining peace and security was recognized by the Security Council (ibid). SCR 1325 (2000) states that the Security Council is:

“Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution”

Resolution SCR 1325 (2000) made it very clear that: -

“Women's full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security”

However, Potter, 2008; Taylor and Mader, 2010 lamented that nineteen years after the signing of the resolution, in Nigeria like many other parts of sub-Saharan Africa there have been difficulty in translating words into concrete action. Despite being a landmark for women, peace and security field, there is still a large gap between SCR 1325's normative international framework and the effectiveness on the ground when it comes to the involvement of women in peace building. this is a great loss both for women and the processes of building peace.

In spite of making up half the population and experience violence in their households and communities in a very much gender way, women and girls have very limited participation in peace building and conflict management in Nigeria. Women are crucial in bringing down tensions, promoting dialogue for peace and rebuilding the country: yet they are more often than not consistently excluded in formal peace processes at every level. Nigerian women are always absent in dialogue on violence reduction and peace building as observed by Ward, J. and Marsh, M. (2006) being confronted by so many^{1 2} limiting variables Ladbury³, S., 2011 postulated⁴ that political leadership prepared to argue the case for redressing pervasive gender inequalities. Norms of seclusion in many parts of Nigeria deny the majority of women opportunity to meet with each other and their male counterparts, to discuss their needs and priorities and learn about available service and their rights. Women's Civil Society Organization (CSOs) exist and are keen to do more, but have lacked the capacity and funding to adequately reach out to secluded poor women ass to represent their views and interests.

Furtherance to the analysis of SCR 1325 the Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programmer's (NSRP) (2017) Annual Perception Surveys provide evidence of women's limited participation in conflict management and peace building. Amongst all respondents, there was a far lower number of female than male respondents involved with any of the institutions listed. On average, over the years, only 3-4% of female respondent are involved with any listed institutions, whereas male respondents' participation in these institution ranges between 13-19%. Women's participation in these groups was clustered around youth groups (13% in 2017) and women's groups (30% in 2017). However male participation is higher than female participation (35% in 2017).

Considering the role of women in Africa and Nigerian in particular women can play significant roles in peace building, The United Nations women's agency UNIFEM (2005b) writes that a common argument why women should be included in peace building is that men and women often have different experiences from war and therefore usually also different priorities and expectations in peace processes. Consequently, it is argued that sustainable peace can only be reached if both women and men are heard (ibid). women's peace building work would also often originate from their daily struggles connecting the matter of their participation to issues of socio-economic inequalities and exclusions which disproportionately affect women (Reilly, 2007). When women are not democratically represented, neither are their interests and their exclusion hence affects the whole society, threatening justice, development and political stability (Ringers, 2007). Supporting these views Bubenzer and Stern, 2011 opined that women's exclusion from social, economic and political processes limits their ability to voice their concerns which in turn further alienates them from political class and the state, thereby limiting the wholesomeness of peace building processes.

Statement of the Problem

In a State like Nigeria, marred by violent conflict and incessant communal crises, peace building has become an irretrievable instrument for preventing and managing continued crises. Peace building efforts in the past have traditionally focused on emphasizing such factors as dialogue and governance which are under bias to prevent potential volatile situation from erupting into full fledged wars. This approach, as always recorded neglects the gendered dimensions of peace building. That is, it does not even recognize the particular needs of women during the peace building process, nor does it appreciate their role in contributing to peace building. It is this gap that this paper seeks to address.

As a case in point after the communal war ensued between Nko in Yakurr LGA and Onyadama in Obubra LGA, both in the Central district of Cross River State, the State government constituted a judicial Commission of inquiry as a step in the direction of peace building. The panel was made up of six members namely; Rev. Hon. Justice Eking O. Effiong (Rtd)-Chairman, Chief (Dr.) Anthony A. Abuo, Oon- Member, Chief owali Ilem-Member, Chief Barr. Micheal Ekpo Cobham, Ksm-Member, Barr. Eyo Umo Eyo-Commission Counsel and Mr. Micheal K. Egim – Commission secretary (Judicial Commission's Report on Nko-Onyadama communal clash Vol.1;2009).

Of all six members of the commission of inquiry none was a woman. This very trend has been seen in commissions of inquiries prior to and subsequent to the above mentioned example. It therefore raises the question as to why women were not represented in or appointed to these commission, were women in the area not affected by the conflict? Were there no competent women in the state that could be appointed to the commission? Why the conspicuous marginalizing of women on the commission and appointment of only men? Having been so neglected and at the peak of the commission's activities. The Christian association of women groups in Nko mobilized and with their sack cloths matched in a large group carrying leaves and trees branches crying to the good people of Mkpani community to hold their peace, the visitors were later joined by crowd of women from Mkpani community also lending their voices and calling for calm in a common rally staged at Mkpani market square both groups condemn and rejected all that happen and call on their male and youth groups to please call off the aggression which yielded a positive result, a similar joint rally was also organized in Nko community which finally brought the crises to an end. It is therefore based on the aforementioned premises that the present study focuses on women involvement in peace building in crises area of Cross River State.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to evaluate women involvement in peace building in crises areas of Cross River State. From the broad aim, specific objectives were to;

- I. evaluate the state of women's participation in peace building across Cross River State.
- II. Assess the cultural and structural barriers to effective participation in peace building in the state.
- III. examine the strategies that women in Cross River State adopt in conflict resolution and peace building.
- IV. investigate the level of awareness of and whether UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women's participation in peace building is being implemented in Cross River State.

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution and women's involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

Assumptions

The assumption of this article could include the following:

- I. That the variables of this research study can be measured quantitatively.
- II. That the research instrument employed for this study is reliable and valid.
- III. That responses obtained from field survey from the sampled population reflects the general view of the people of the area.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical Framework

A theory is more or less a verified, established explanation of a known fact or phenomenon. It is a step by step explanation of a phenomenon or principles which have undergone some validation and which therefore may be applied to many similar situations (Inyang, Abia, 2001). For the purpose of this study the following theories relevant to this work are examined;

Feminist Sociology theories

Feminist sociology is a conflict theory and theoretical perspective which observes gender in its relation to power, both at the level of face-to-face interaction and reflexivity within a social structure at large. Focuses include gender inequality, discrimination, race, economic status, and nationality.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's (1860-1935) work helped formalize feminist theory. According to Gilman One of the most celebrated work that lend credence to the feminist theory is the 1860-1935 Charlotte Perkins Gilman's publications went against traditional holds that were placed on her by society by focusing on reading and learning concepts different from women who were taught to be housewives. Her main focus was on gender inequality between men and women along with gender roles placed on by society. Where men go to work secure proper income for the family while women stay at home and tend to the family along with house hold chores. Her "emphasis was how differential socialization leads to gender inequality" (Crossman 2018).

The study of sociology had been mostly androcentric up until the 1970's, when sociological thinking began to accommodate women, as well. In 1963s, the Equal Pay Act, which was signed by John F. Kennedy, outlawed the wage disparity based on sex (Edles, 2010). The Equal Pay Act was one of the first ways that the United States began to shift its mentality about women's rights, and how women should be treated in their workplaces, and in society. While the Equal Pay Act focused solely on equal pay for equal work regardless of sex, the Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed in a fight against discrimination of any kind in the workplace. Although there is major form of discrimination many women face in their workplaces such as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of illegal discrimination based on an abuse of power which can range from "inappropriate jokes" to "outright sexual harassment" and more (Conley, 2017). While sexual harassment is not a form of discrimination faced by women, when it occurs in the workplace it often involves the subordinates of women by a male superior or co-worker (Sapiro, 2018). The Equal Pay Act and Title VII were some of the first ways that the United State began to shift its mentality about women's rights, and how women should be treated in the workplace, and in the society. In the 1970s, according to (Grady, 2018) many women fought for the right to dictate what happens to their body, such as establishing legal abortions, as well as making forced sterilization illegal. This scenario shifted how Americans saw women, and the country began to allow women to have more control over their bodies.

Beginning from the early 1990s, several instances of sexual harassment and abuse became well known and created a push for women to open about their own encounters with harassment. The allegation by Anita Young that Justice Clarence Thomas had sexually harassed her was one of these instances. After Thomas was confirmed as a justice on the supreme court regardless of these allegations, more women began to speak out. In surveys taken after the hearings, it was reported that "between 40 and 65 percent of women claim to have experienced sexual harassment on the job" (Sapiro, 2018). This social shift led to a change in attitude over bodily autonomy, and boundaries between workplace, and throughout life. Beginning in the mid-1990s, women began to come forward with sexual harassment complaints and sexual assault allegations against their male counterparts, leading to a movement of a drastically increased number of women taking a stance against sexual violence, leading to society recognizing that there is a fundamental problem concerning sexual harassment (Grady, 2018). This, in turn, led to another movement in recent years called the "Me Too Movement" that led many women to coming forward with their own stories and encounters, showing the scope that sexual harassment affects women across the world

Many feminist theorists argue that the inter-sectionalist of women, especially when it comes to race, can no longer be ignored by the growing feminist movement. Due to the increase in popularity in this outlook, there have been a rise in transnational feminist, and greater stress on the idea that feminism is not a western-centric idea, and must be able to adapt in order to incorporate the context and complications of individual cultures, and their traditions (Okin, 1998). The relationship between feminist and race was largely

overlooked until the second wave of feminist produced greater literature on the topic of 'black feminism'. The second wave of feminist incorporated a "new feminist theory" known as including race, gender, and class to express the oppression women of color face. This inter-sectionalist approach on feminist sociology allows for a type of "marriage" between the "gender/race/class dynamic," rather than excluding individuals of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, social classes, gender, sexual orientation, or any factor (Okin, 1998). Women who suffer from oppression due to race may find themselves in a double bind. The relationship between feminism and race was largely overlooked until the second wave of feminists produced greater literature on the topic of 'black feminism' (McCann, 2016).

Paradoxically, the feminist movement, which was led by middle and upper class women from predominantly white backgrounds, caused the social trends of the movement to largely pass over the issues faced by women who do not fit in the tropes. This disregarding of the issues of intersectional women throughout the history of the feminist movement is due largely to the ignorance of the issues that these women face, and the assumption that the problems of white women within middle and upper-class homes are the problems of all women (Sapiro, 2018).

Historically, several African American women within the field of feminist theory have been crucial in revolutionizing the field in which they work. An instrumental contribution to the field was Kimberle' Crenshaw's seminal 1989 paper, "DE marginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" (Crenshaw, 1989). In it she outlines the manner in which black women have been erased from feminist pedagogy. Black women must be as having multiple identities that interest and reinforce one another, the two key experiences of being black and of being women. Furthermore, black women suffer on both racist and sexist fronts, marginalized not only by larger systems of oppression but by existing feminist discourse that disregards their intersectionalist (Crenshaw, 1989). Crenshaw's work is integral to facets of life; education, politics, decision making processes, other formal sectors, business, etc. women with great potentials have been forced to take back seats and remain silent. The cultural practices in Nigeria which mostly patriarch has isolated the women folk occupied the backward seat only to be seen and not heard. By these cultural activities women are grossly marginalized, they are in turn not adequately represented even on peace table, where their own definition of protection should be heard in other to achieve a more sustainable approach towards building lasting peace, being that they constitute a significant portion of the population and the most affected during conflicts.

Research has proved that women have unique opportunities for conflict resolution due to the different roles they play in society' Muntunga (2004 p.369), maintained that women are also uniquely and adversely affected by armed conflict because of their gender especially during and after conflict. In realization of these all important role played by women globally that the United Nations Security Council adopted the UNSCR 1325 in 2000 a 'Landmark resolution that exposed women activities in peace building, in line with these Resolution the Nigerian government committed itself to the inclusion of women in the resolution of conflict and peace building. This feasts becomes prominent with the launch of the National Action Plan of the UNSCR 1325 which is very crucial, commendable and a long awaited one because Nigeria just like any other Sub Saharan Countries is mainly patriarchal, thus understanding feminist sociology, as it advocated for black feminist thought and set the building blocks for future feminist sociologist such as Patricia Hill Collins

Remarkably, Anna Julia Cooper and Ida Bell Well-Barnet are African American women who were instrumental in conducting most research and making valuable contributions in the field of black feminism. "Cooper and Well-Barnet both consciously drew on their lived experience as African American women to establish a "systematic consciousness of society and social relations". As such, these women foreshadow the development of a feminist sociological theory based in the interest of women of color.

Concept of Peacebuilding

The concept of peace building is quite a recent phenomenon which took its root from the works of Johan Galtung in 1975 where he developed three approaches namely peacemaking, peace keeping and peace building as a model for stabilization of conflict. Emphasis were placed more on peace building in 1987 the then secretary General of the United Nations, Boutrous Boutrous-Ghali introduced the concept of peace building to the UN and indeed the international arena in 1992 defining it as 'Action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict. The 2000 Report of the panel on United Nations Peace Operations (also known

as the Brahimi Report) defined it as “Activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations that is more than just the absence of war”(un.org).

In line with the strategic plan of reduction of conflict among humans Schirch (2000 P.16-17) opined that for peace building to be effective and sustained, the activities targeted towards it should focus on the people concerned; those affected by conflicts especially the women should be considered and involved. ‘in simple terms, peace building is all activity aimed at improving the quality of life. Peace building prevents, reduces, transforms, and helps people to recover from violence in all forms. In light of these definitions, the UN Secretary General described peace building as

‘A range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peace building strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized sequence, and relative narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives’ (un.org).

Reacting further Michelle Maiese (2003), maintains that ‘peace building is a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation’ Maiese (2003). Elizabeth King also contended ‘In general, the term peace building referring to policies and programs to restore stability and effective social, political, and economic institutions after a war or serious upheaval. An extremely broad concept which encompasses democratization, gender, human rights, and development, peace building can be thought of as a bridge from conflict resolution to ‘positive peace’ it should however be noted that the concept of peace building is a new innovation and an introduction into the stabilization of society and avoidance of conflict hence, it may for now lack an acceptable definition of concept.

Women in Peace Building

The argument established above point to the fact that peace building could be seen as a post-conflict initiative that attempts to bring back, some form of normalcy and peaceful co-existence which can be sustained in conflict-torn areas over a long period thereby avoiding the reoccurrence of violence, after violent conflicts has come to an end. This usually through intervention by Religious Organizations, Commission of Enquiry, arbitrations, NAVS, Military, negotiations, etc. it will also suffice to add that while some of these definitions look at the process of peace building emerging only during the post conflict situations, other definitions include that peace building initiatives exist even during pre-conflict period for the avoidance of violent conflict erupting in the first instance. Because this process involves series of transformation efforts, ranging from economic empowerment, political inclusion and participations, social and psychological transformation, which usually takes a long time to achieve, commitment from all parties involved. For peace building to be effective in Nigeria, transforming the lives of women whether victims or not, as well as building their capacity to participate in the process of providing peace must be the focus. This is because when women are included into the peace process at any level, without having the capacity to participate meaningfully, their inclusion will be limited and remain insignificant.

Capacity building aims to strengthen parties’ ability to work together for their mutual benefit by providing skills and tools needed to solve problems. By way of support, Maiese(2005) maintained that women in peace building have found popularity within Nigerian environment only very recently. In a country like Nigeria where patriarchy is entrenched, a change of attitude towards women empowerment and inclusion in peace building processes is key and fundamental. At different levels of the processes, men and women should be seen to participate in the processes. This is because, men and women are both affected differently by conflict, and thus their definition of protection will also differ. Therefore, considering women’s opinion in peace building is very important as it provides a more holistic approach towards achieving peace. Quite a number of reasons abound as to why the capacity of Nigerian women should be stimulated towards their full participation in peace building. First, more than any group, women and children are the most affected; hence their experience becomes inevitable in building peace. Secondly, from the 2006 census in Nigeria, women

constitute almost half of the total population, and so such a large group should not be ignored otherwise an essential ingredient shall be missing in the peace process.

The country's total population of 140,431,790(2006) comprises of 71,345,488 males and 69,086,302 females (total-facts-about-nigeria.com/population-of-nigeria.html) hence they form a significant percent even as victims. Thirdly, women have been excluded in opportunities that could enhance their inclusion in formal peace processes such as education, politics, policy making, governance, etc. finally that women have been able to show through informal means their ability to promote peace, it only shows great potentials waiting to be harnessed, hence developing such potentials increases their ability to deliver meaningfully. 'Capacity building goes well beyond the provision of basic needs. It is a matter of development at all levels of society and includes; institutional, community, and economic developments Maiese (2005). Nigeria pre-colonial history provide an answer to this details in 1929 for example, Utim Etim Ekpo crises, of women confrontation with the colonial masters on their refusal to pay tax and allow them participate in the affairs of their community decision making. This is what today is referred in history as ABA women riot of 1929, led by Chief (Mrs.) Margaret Ekpo.

Capacity building according to the United Nations Development Programmer is the ability to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve objectives at three levels: individual, institutional and societal'. The UNDP also added that capacity building 'is much more than training and includes the following: human resources development, the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively'(gdrc.org/gem/capacity-define.html). clearly, this does not reflect the position of most Nigerian women in terms of their ability to participate in formal peace building processes, especially those in the conflict torn Northern Region. Hence, the obvious need for their capacity development since they form an important part of not just grass root actors in peace building, but potential actors on peace tables. If 'development' in this definition will mean an increase in their capacity to make their inclusion in the peace processes becoming meaningful, then that is the way to go. Both peace building and capacity building are deliberate attempts towards a build up for peace, better and more productive lives towards building peace. Joan .B. Kroc outlined a number of strategic peace building principles; one of them is that 'peace building requires capacity and relationship building at multiple levels' Alliance for Peace building (2013). Therefore, consciousness and consistent efforts must be made to realize this goals.

Women and Peace building in Nigeria

Ever since violent conflict became a matter of concern in Nigeria particularly in the past two decades, with the incessant bombings/attacks on innocent Nigerians in their homes, market place, worship centers, viewing centers, motor parks, offices like the UN office bombing in Abuja (Federal Capital of Nigeria), the massacre of school boys in Buni, Yadi ,Yobe state, as well as the abduction of the over 200 Chibok girls in Borno 7 years ago; the government of Nigeria alongside the international community, civil society groups have been relentless in the pursuit of lasting peace as well as the search and safe return of the Chibok girls. Several initiatives have been taken by the government in collaboration with other countries such as the United State, United Kingdom Etc, International Organizations, and the military both at home and abroad, Non-Governmental Organization, Civil Society Groups, and Faith-based Organizations. However very little progress been seen in terms of contending with the boko haram insurgency, nomadic pastoralists and farming communities' clashes, ethno-religious clashes as well as the rescue of the Chibok girls from their boko haram abductors. Indeed, for many Nigerians until these girls are found and bought back to their parents alive, the government is yet to win the war against insurgency in the country.

In Nigeria, women and girls are represented in every family either as grandmothers, mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, daughters-in-law, mothers-in-law, Aunts, sisters-in-law, nieces, cousins or even maids. The culture in Nigeria is such that most families are made up of more than just the immediate family members of the extended families also live with them because of one reason or the other. Unfortunately, this special group of people do not enjoy the same privileges that their male counterpart enjoys. The patriarchal culture in the Nigerian society and indeed Africa is largely responsible for this, which hitherto forms the foundation of their exclusion in all formal peace processes. This discrimination manifest itself across all. Women have been marginalized across various divide and their voices always almost not heard or represented on peace tables. Although since the domestication of this resolution in 2013 not much has been

achieved in terms of full inclusion of women in peace building and even save pocket of inclusion have been noticed, the little effort has not been evidential.

Since the upsurge of violent conflicts in Nigeria, the participation of Nigerian women in peace building represent a very insignificant proportion which shows that women taken the initiative for peace building only within the non-formal sphere at the community level. To buttressed this assertions Speake (2013) as cited in Diaz (2010, p.1) ‘However formal peace building and conflict resolution initiatives continue to ignore or marginalize issues of gender, and women’s involvement in formal missions and talks remain low’

A study by the NSRP showed that ‘The usual response to violent conflict by the Federal Government of Nigeria is to send in security forces to quell the conflict followed by a setting up of a panel or commission of inquiry’ (nsrp-nigeria.org) which is usually gender bias Whether this panel or commission’s report is being used for effective conflict resolution and peace building is another issue altogether. The point here is that, it is expected that since women constitute almost half of the population, they should have as much representation as the men do especially in formal processes of peace building like in the panel of commission of inquiry.

Resent research has shown that ‘No woman in Nigeria has led a panel of inquiry for 20 years, when Honorable Justice Rahila Hadea Cudjoe headed in Zango-Kataf (market), Kaduna State Riot Judiciary Commission of Inquiry in 1992(nsrp-nigeria.org). it is however, sometimes very sympathetic to observe that during conflict the most affected are always women and children who suffer hardship, yet most often have no say in the peace building process.

Worthy of comments is the place of a woman in political participation. Research further reveals that women participation in politics is extremely very low at different times. A study by Zahrah Nesbitt-Ahmed (2011) ‘Of the 7160 candidates that contested election in the April 2007, only 628 were women, 25 candidate vied for the office of president and only 1 was a woman, while 5 women contested for the office of the vice president. Also, only 9 of the 109 senators were women. Also for 2015 presidential elections contested in Nigeria, only 1 was a woman, Prof Oluremi Sonaiya from the Kowa party who lost in the election to the APC presidential candidate, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari. Records extrapolated from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) further shows that of all the 109 senators elected in 2015 elections only seven were women (inecnigeria.org) and out of the 36 ministers in the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari only 6 are women. This pattern at the national level reflect clearly what happening in the state and local levels too similarly speaking at the first Annual Kwara State Gender equality conference in Ilorin on the 7th of September 2020 as reported in Vanguard newspaper of 8/9/2020, Sidle Mohammed Tunis said ECOWAS as an institution has made a significant program in addressing women involvement that women accounts for only 16.1% legislators in West Africa parliament twelve (12) out of sixteen (16) countries had an average that is far below the world average of 23.3% with Senegal having 42.7% of its parliament being women. More so, article 63 of ECOWAS treaty on development calls on member states to formulate, harmonize, coordinate and establish appropriate policies and mechanisms, for the enhancement of the economic, social and cultural conditions of women.

Women Capacity Building and Peace Building in Nigeria

Capacity building according to Maise (2005) includes the development of institution for instance local government, judiciary, schools and so on which allow society to handle conflict without it turning into violence”. This initiative must not only take place after conflict but before, thereby preventing violent conflicts from erupting in the first place.

A common observation has shown women involvement in peace building from time immemorial. This can be seen in the home front, between children and children, women and fellow women and women, children and fathers and other cases in the homes, market place, in the community as neighbors and so on. This is further stressed by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who said ‘Women have served as peace educators for years in the family situation and in the society and have proved to be instrumental in building bridges rather than walls supporting the argument Mutunga (2004 p.369) said this is because women are naturally inclined towards peaceful means as Simon Baron-Cohen added, ‘More women than men value the development of altruistic, reciprocal relationships, which by definition require empathizing’ Cohen(2006). There however exists a huge gap between women’s involvement in peace building at the home/ community

levels and in the boardrooms of peace tables. If indeed women are expected to assume their roles as active partners in all peace building process, then certainly mechanism should be put in place that will enhance their participation towards meaningful contribution as to give them a sense of belonging. These mechanisms must work towards the development of women's capacity for conflict resolution and management and the building of lasting and sustainable peace, across board.

For women to build their capacity towards peace building, an enabling environment is key in which an effective democratic society provides the option. 'This is because such environments have more of the crucial political "space" which goals are pursued. Although Nigeria's democracy is still nascent, a study by Afro barometer shows that 'Nigerians have not yet lost faith in democracy. Indeed, they seem to regard the deliberate procedures of this form of government as possibly helpful in arriving at the peaceful resolution of disputes' Afro barometer (2002).

'One of the core features of democracy as opined by Heywood (2007 P.72) is the principle of political equality, the notion that political power should be distributed as widely and as evenly as possible'. This political equality increases women's participation in politics and invariably in decision making at all levels, which enhances women's ability to make gender sensitive laws in Nigeria and empower themselves, this was further examined by Haynes (2002 p.185) who postulated that as Nigeria consolidates its nascent democracy this will pave the way for capacity building and also in human rights education, which in turn will improve their democratic values as women.

As long as democracy promotes freedom of association, women should have the opportunity to form social networks that will become channels through which their voice are heard, and their participation in political processes enhanced. In democracy human rights are not abused, even though not enough women are seen in Nigeria's political space, it is hoped that as democracy is being consolidated, more women would be given the opportunity to participate in politics at the Federal, State and Local government levels.

Oluyemi-Kuta (2004 p.217) provided in Abuja declaration of 2003 and 35% affirmation plan for women in governance is a safe place to begin encouraging women's participation in governance. True democracy provides an environment that is conducive for gender equality.

When women are educated, it becomes easy to train them in peace building skills they are able connect and engage at community levels and on the peace tables with experts. Once women are educated and equipped with the necessary skill, government should ensure an increase in the number of women appointed to ministerial portfolios, other government offices (federal, state and local), in businesses and other organizations especially those of international repute like the UN, Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS), African Union (AU), African Development Bank (ADB), etc. "To break the cycle of violence and the oppression of women, it is essential for more women to work and make the changes within formal government structures" Oluyemi-Kuta(2004 p.216-217) when women are educated, 'The benefits are evident across major indices, including infant mortality, health status, family income' King (2005 p.31).

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and women's participation in Peace build.

2000 was a remarkable year for women globally, as the Security Council of the United Nations signed resolution 1325 giving women's right to protection and recognizing role in maintaining peace and security in the world. The Security Council had previously only dealt with women peripherally as vulnerable groups and the resolution is therefore significant in the way it treated women as a subject in their own right, highlighting their under-valued role in conflict resolution. SCR 1325 is also unusual in the sense that the groundwork, lobbying and drafting was almost entirely the work of civil society and mainly the work of women (Cockburn, 2007).

Since the formation of UNO in 1945 women have been in constant and continuous campaigns for the recognition of gender issues which paved way for the 1979 convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) the recognition further provided the framework for more demands as to enhance women empowerment.

The emphasis is one of the role of women in peace building and conflict resolution by the UN which was negligible started waving a new approach and there was an increase focus on the impact of conflict on gender relations and the need for the inclusion of women in decision-making processes in international debates and resolutions became prominent in international discourse. The groundwork leading to the signing

of SCR 1325 was laid by women attending series of World Conferences on women, of particular importance was the fourth conference in Beijing in 1995 that resulted in the 'Platform for Action' in which 'Women and Armed Conflict' was presented as one of the twelve 'critical areas of concern'. Instead of just highlighting women's victimization, the Chapter on 'Women and Armed Conflict' addressed women's agency in promoting peace and calling for increased participation of women in conflict resolution (Cockburn, 2007; Anderlini, 2007).

Following the success recorded, regional and international networks started taking shape and women's capacities for promoting peace began to be supported by NGOs and donors (ibid). In 1998, the Chapter on 'Women and Armed conflict' was debated and reviewed at CSW (The Commission on the Status of Women) conference in which hundreds of women discussed how the proposal in the Chapter could be operationalized (Cockburn, 2007). Coordinated by WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom), a group of international NGOs called 'Women and Armed Conflict Caucus' led a process of drafting an outcome document (ibid). At this point, the emphasis shifted from "getting armed conflict on to the UN 'women agenda' to getting 'women and armed conflict' on to the main agenda" (UNIFEM, 2005). In 2000 the caucus became the 'NGOs Working group on Women and Armed Conflict' (NGOWG) a group that carried out intensive lobbying during the month leading up to signing of SCR 1325 and that continues to provide analysis and recommendation on the implementation of the resolution, so the so called 'Beijing Plus Five' in 2000 was an important event in which a global appeal for a Security Council resolution was launched (Anderlini, 2007).

Schirch and Sewak, 2005, opined that SCR 1325 is unique in the sense that it is the first building international law endorsing issues regarding women, peace and security, hence providing a "critical legal and political framework through which, for the first time in history, women worldwide can claim their space and voice their views on peace and security matters". Reacting further, (Anderlini, 2007) sent an important message which alters the relationship between the civil society and the international system, in particularly between women's organizations and the Security Council (ibid). Perhaps being the most significant political success of women peace activist, SCR 1325 has become a tool for women's advocacy and empowerment, enabling women to mobilize globally and assert a place in the peace building process.

This problem is applicable to Nigeria where knowledge of SCR 1325 is reported to be very limited, both on the grass root level and among leaders (Karamé and Prestegard, 2005). In order to implement 1325 in Nigeria, government agencies, international aid organization, United Nations organs, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) civil society organization etc. need to pursue vigorous awareness-raising to ensure political commitment to the full implementation.

Security Council Resolution 1325 and Women Participation in Peace Building

The much talked about SCR 1325 (2000) consist of 18 articles, which is summed into four areas of concern; namely, women's participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution; the use of gender perspective in peacekeeping missions; the protection of women and girls in armed conflict and the main streaming of gender in the UN reporting and implementation system.

Besides the SCR 1325 of the year 2000, the Security Council has adopted other related resolution to, with specific mandates to achieve its goal. There include; - Resolution 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008) and 1960 (2010), all focusing on sexual violence in conflict and more important for this study: 1889 (2009) was billed to strengthen SCR 1325 concerning women's increased participation in peace building processes (Operation 1325).

The resolution is also emphasizing the need to involve and support local women's peace initiatives as well as value indigenous processes when negotiating and implementing peace agreements (SCR 1325 Para. 8, 2000; UNIFEM, 2005).

Paragraph 8 of SCR 1325:

"Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: [...] b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements..."

UNIFEM (no date) notes that "importantly, this paragraph suggest that the content of arguments need to reflect gender issues, regardless of who is doing the negotiation or implementation" (p.8). UNIFEM

(ibid) points out that, negotiations persist throughout the various stages towards peace and agreements can therefore include issues of power-sharing and human rights as well as education, health and the empowerment of the civil society. Hence, peace agreement can “provide a unique opportunity to transform institutions, structures and relationships within society, and can affirm gender equality through constitutional, judicial, legislative and electoral reform”

SCR 1889 states as follows:

“Effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their [women’s and girl’s] protection and full participation in the peace process, particularly at early stages of post-conflict peace building, can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security” (united nations security council (S/RES/1889), 2009).

As stated above SCR 1889 members are encouraged to implement Resolution 1325 as they are worried about the under representation of women in peace building process.

Resolution 1889s

Explains the important role women play in building by stating thus:

“Reiterating the need for the full, equal and effective participation of women at all stages of peace processes given their vital role in the prevention and resolution of conflict and peace building, reaffirming the key role women can play in re-establishing the fabric of recovering the society and stressing the need for their involvement in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies in order to take into account their perspective and needs ”(united nations security council (S/RES/1889), 2009).

SCR 1889 also described the problems that women face in their different communities, which includes lack of security and rule of law, cultural discrimination and stigmatization, socio-economic factors and lack of equal access to education by highlighting the fact that:

“This marginalization of women can delay or undermine the achievement of durable peace, security and reconciliation” (united nations security council (S/RES/1889), 2009).

The resolution also expressed concern for women in post-conflict situations by recognizing:

“The particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations, including, inter alia, physical security health services including reproductive and mental health, ways to ensure their livelihoods, land and property rights, employment, as well as their participation in decision making and post-conflict planning, particularly at early stages of post conflict peace building” (united nations security council (S/RES/1889), 2009).

Methodology of the investigation

To determine the role of women in Peacebuilding in the Central Senatorial District of CRS, all the war tone zones in the State were targeted ranging from students, teachers, civil servant, public servant, farmers, artisans, hoteliers and market women etc., in the Senatorial District.

Instrumentation

For the purpose of data collection, a structured Likert scale-questionnaire was designed and administered. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section one contains demography details and section 2 contextual framework.

The instrument used for data collection was subjected to rigorous security and was validated by test-retest method, after two Trier test, and corrections made the instrument was administered.

A pilot test exercise was carried out by the researcher on 20 respondents from the sampled population to established test-retest reliability. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and then asked to complete it again after two weeks. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was then computed for the two sets of responses for the reliability of the overall score. The high value of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient indicates that there is a correlation between the two pre-test responses, and hence the reliability of the instrument.

The administered questionnaire served as the primary source for data collection while internet sources served as the secondary source. The collected data especially on the questionnaire were collected, classified, processed and subsequently analyzed.

Data analysis was undertaken using qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics such as simple frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, means, proportions etc., were employed in most of the analysis in summarizing trends, changes and comparisons across certain characteristics. The hypotheses formulated were tested using T-test statistical tool for differences in responses by respondents.

T-Test is expressed algebraically using the formula below:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \bar{u}}{\frac{SD}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

where:
 \bar{x} = observed mean
 \bar{u} = expected mean

SD = standard deviation

n= number of respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Source: Field survey, 2019

SEX	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	168	56
Female	132	44
Total	300	100

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by LGA

Source: Field survey, 2019

LGA	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Abi	50	16.7
Boki	50	16.7
Etung	50	16.7
Ikom	50	16.7
Obubra	50	16.7
Yakur	50	16.7
Total	300	100

Table 3: Lack of equitable political representation limits women’s ability to effectively involve in peace building and conflict resolution.

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	150	50.0
Agreed	139	46.3
Disagreed	6	2.0
Strongly disagreed	5	1.7
Total	300	100

The results as shown in table 3 above revealed that 150 (50) percent of the respondents strongly agreed, while 139 (46.3) of the total sample just agreed that lack of equitable political representation limits women’s ability to effectively involve in peace building and conflict resolution, on the other hand, 6 (2.0 percent) of the total respondents disagreed, while 5 (1.7 percent) strongly disagreed that lack of equitable political representation limits women’s ability to effectively involve in peace building and conflict resolution.

Table 4: Capacity building of women is imperative for women’s involvement in peace building.

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	160	53.3
Agreed	130	43.3
Disagreed	10	3.3
Strongly disagreed	-	-
Total	300	100

As shown in table 4 above, 160 (53.3 percent) of the respondents strongly agreed while 130 (43.3 percent) merely agreed that, capacity building of women is imperative for women’s involvement in peace building. On the contrary, 10 respondents representing (3.3 percent) of the total sample disagreed capacity building of women’s involvement in peace building.

Table 5: Civic society engagement plays an important role in awareness of SRC 1325, and hence women’s participation in peace building.

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	90	30.0
Agreed	85	28.3
Disagreed	65	21.7
Strongly disagreed	50	20.0
Total	300	100

Table 5, showed that 90 (30.0 percent) respectively strongly agreed and agreed respectively Civic society engagement plays an important role in awareness of SRC 1325, and hence women’s participation in peace building. On the other hand, 65 (12.7 percent) and 60 (20.0 percent) respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed with Civil society engagement plays an important role in awareness of SRC 123, and hence women’s participation in peace building.

Table 6: Civil society lobbying of the local government, state and federal executive for the implementation of SCR 1325 will influence appointments of women to peace mediation panels thereby enhancing women’s participation in peace building and conflict resolution

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	150	50.0
Agreed	130	46.3
Disagreed	6	2.0
Strongly disagreed	5	1.7
Total	300	100

Table 6 above, revealed that 150(50 percent)of the respondent strongly agreed, while 139(46.3 percent) of the total sample just agreed that Civil society lobbying of the local government, state and federal executives for the implementation of SCR 1325 will influence appointments of women of peace mediation panels thereby enhancing women’s participation in peace building and conflict resolution, on the other hand, 6 (2.0 percent) of the total respondents disagreed, while 5 (1.7 percent) strongly disagreed that Civil society lobbying of the local government, state and federal executives for the implementation of SCR 1325 will influence appointments of women to peace mediation panels thereby enhancing women’s participation in peace building and conflict resolution.

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant relationship between women’s capacity building and women’s greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State

Table 4 t-test analysis of the difference in the mean responses of the relationship between time women’s capacity building and women’s greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cat	t-crit
Male	132	2.13	0.19	3.83	6.42	1.96
Female	168	2.82	0.18			

The summary of the t-test analysis on difference in the mean response of the relationship between women’s capacity building and women’s greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State showed that the calculated t-value of 6.42 is above the t-critical of 1.96, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is significant relationship between women’s capacity building and women’s greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

Discussion

The result obtained showed women marginalization in politics is an impediment to women’s effective involvement in peace building within the study area. The result showed a view that, that lack of equitable political representation limits women’s ability to effectively involve in peace building and conflict resolution. The result also showed an over whelming view that marginalization of women in policy making limits women’s role in peace building and conflict management. Further investigation also revealed that, that lack of equitable representation in the legislature, limits women’s ability to participate in peace building and conflict resolution. The results showed complete agreement that lack of women’s equitable appointment into cabinet level (executive) positions acts as a hindrance for women’s effective involvement in peace building.

Further examination of the results showed that there is a positive correlation between capacity building of women and women’s involvement in peace building. The study also showed that a good proportion of respondent agreed with the notion that the girl child education is imperative for effective involvement of women in peace building and conflict resolution. It is also revealed that economic empowerment will promote greater involvement of women in peace building efforts. The study further revealed women’s vocational skills acquisition program will aid greater involvement of women in peace building and conflict resolution. It also shows that grants and micro credit schemes will help ease women’s economic marginalization and enhance women’s involvement in peace building.

Also shown in the result was the relationship between women’s awareness of SCR 1325 and women’s active involvement in peace building in the study area. Meanwhile, the result revealed that many respondents agreed that Civil society engagement plays an important role in awareness of SCR 1325, and hence women’s participation in peace building, furthermore, results showed that there is moderate agreement on fact that Civil society engagement with vulnerable women groups will aid greater involvement of women in peace building. The result shows that civil society lobbying of Local, State and Federal legislatures will act as an essential catalyst to changes in law that will enhance women’s involvement in peace building. It also revealed that Civil society lobbying of the Local government, State and Federal executives for the implementation of the SCR 1325 will influence appointments of women to peace meditation panels thereby enhancing women’s participation in peace building and conflict resolution within the study area.

- I. There is no significant relationship between women’s political representation and women’s involvement in peace building in Cross River State.
- II. There is no significant relationship between women’s capacity building and women’s greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State
- III. There is no significant relationship between civil society engagement, information dissemination and lobbying for implementation of SCR 1325 and women’s involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

A survey research design was use for this study. A well-structured likers-scale type questionnaire was constructed. A total of 300 respondents were randomly sampled. Data for the study was analyzed using

simple percentage tables and hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistical tool. The result of the test revealed that:

There is a significant relationship between women's political representation and women's involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

There is a significant relationship between women's capacity building and women's greater involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

There is a significant relationship between civil society engagement, information dissemination and lobbying for implementation of SCR 1325 and women's involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

Conclusion

This study assessed women's involvement in peace building in crises areas of Cross River State. The involvement of women in peace building and conflict resolution was the main investigation of this study therefore; variables such as relationship between women's involvement in peace building, women marginalization in politics and academic women's effective involvement in peace building, lack of equitable political representation and women's ability to effectively involve in peace building and conflict resolution, significant relationship between women's capacity building and women's greater involvement in peace building, relationship between civil society engagements, information dissemination and lobbying for implementation of SCR 1325 and women's involvement in peace building etc. were captured and used to test their relationship in the study area. From the result obtained it was established that women's political representation wields significant influence on women's peace building in the study area. Furthermore, the result also indicated that there is significant relationship between women's capacity building and women's greater involvement in peace building in the study area. Finally, the result also revealed that there is a significant relationship between civil society engagement, information dissemination and lobbying for implementation of SCR 1325 and women's involvement in peace building in Cross River State.

Recommendations

Since women constitute approximately half the population of the nation, they constitute a vital demographic group in the federation and in indispensable human resources in the quest for lasting peace in society. It is therefore critical at this stage to improve women's involvement and contribution to peace building efforts in Nigeria. It is based on this premise and the findings of this study that the following recommendations are made:

- 1) That the government through the ministry of Women's Affairs and other MDAs should proactively engage with women civil society organization in order to sensitize women and indeed the general public on the merits of women's greater involvement in peace building and conflict resolution in Nigeria.
- 2) Civil society organization should organize periodic seminars and workshop for public enlightenment on the normative framework of SCR 1325 with emphasis on translating the normative framework into concrete action on the ground.
- 3) Efforts should be made by government at all levels to ensure that there is equitable appointment of women to cabinet level of position and vital decision making portfolios in order to encourage greater participation of women in governance and hence peace building efforts.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future research on this subject should consider expanding the population coverage of the study. The extension of the study area to the whole of the Cross River State and indeed the entire South-South geopolitical Zone would promote more robust findings. Similar studies should be carried out in other geopolitical zones of the country to ascertain the trend of women's involvement in peace building and conflict resolution. Poverty and literacy ramification should also be examined to determine their relationship with women's participation in peace building and conflict resolution.

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