

Gender and Traditional Occupations in Nigeria: A Study of Warife Community in Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines gender debate as it affects the choice or availability of traditional occupation before colonial incursion of Africa and Nigeria in particular and introduced the new economic relations (capitalism) which has ushered in some inevitable changes. Warife community in Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria is used as a case study. The Post Modern Feminist Theory that was made popular by the works of Chafe (1992), and Gilles and Lavine (1990) was adopted as its theoretical framework. The method of study is qualitative. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and In-depth Interview (IDI) methods were adopted. The FGD consisted of ten (10) participants, and one research assistant. The researcher purposively selected the participants who were all above sixty years based on the research objective. The study findings were that: i) there was demarcation between what constitutes women's activity and also that of the men ii) The study also found out that men access to economic and political resources made them more powerful and in turn limit and humbled the women before the men in the area of traditional occupation in Warife community; iii) Another finding of the study was that, Warife community was male dominated such that the females were always taking orders from their male counterparts. Women are discriminated against especially in schools, work places, homes and some professional occupational areas. Therefore, to reverse this, this study recommended that women must be part of local, national and international development aspirations as being advocated for by a good number of world development agencies. In addition, that this advocacy should be the concern of all those saddled with these functions both locally and internationally for the liberation of women across the globe.

Keywords: Gender, post-modern feminism, traditional occupations, warife community, women empowerment

1.0 Introduction

The term gender has attracted a lot of commentary in the attempt to conceptualize or operationalize it. However, there is now a common understanding among traditional views on gender that it is not a design of any man but a category made possible by birth. There is also the knowledge that it is not also a direct product of an individual biological sex, but psychological, social and cultural differences between a male and female. No human has the prerogative of chosen his or her gender category, every individual is born male or female at any social location on this planet earth. Therefore, gender according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2000) is the role behavior, activities, attributes, opportunities that many societies consider appropriate for girls and boys, and women and men.

Gender is not an accidental category, and it is important to note that the socio-cultural milieu of any society has a significant role in terms of defining gender roles and outcomes. For instance, cultural and traditional value system can go a long way to put some restrictions on the operational strength of either gender for the male or female. However, in most cases, especially in African societies, females tend to face systemic restrictions occasioned by cultural belief systems.

Nigeria is one of the countries that is highly patriarchal, where men dominate all spheres of women lives, where the socio-cultural milieu tends to influence gender behaviors. This is because of the fact that Nigeria is more of a patriarchal society with a male dominated leaning that largely pose some restriction on the socio-economic functionality of females. Among the socio-economic activities being influenced by gender are occupations such as fishing, farming, weaving, blacksmithing, palm wine tapping, hunting, carpentry, etc. Hence, the cultural hold on gender has significant impact on the gender distribution of occupation in Nigeria.

The term, occupation has been as a job or a profession of an individual in a society. In other words, occupation is what an individual does for survival or livelihood. Ekong (2008) defined it as a complex of learned activities performed on a temporary or regular basis providing goods and services to others in exchange for means of support. Hence, traditional occupation is therefore the socio-economic activities that within a family normally handed down by the ancestors of such families and performed from generation to generation. Some of these occupations are ones with special skills such as artisanship, craftsmanship, palm wine tapping, goldsmithing, etc. Traditionally, men and women had completed opposing occupational role; men were seen as the providers for the family, while the women were on the other hand, seen as caretakers of both the home and the family.

1.1 Problem statement

There is plethora of literature on different areas relating to gender discourse across the globe such as Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender in Development (GID) and Gender and Development (GID). All these point towards the position of men against their women counterparts in all human societies. Emphasis has always been expressed on oppression, subjugation, exclusion, dehumanization, discrimination and all forms of marginalization against women at all levels. Discrimination against women manifests in all spheres of human relations.

In Nigeria, women are not considered in many work ventures that could have enhanced their economic and social status. For example, from a religious perspective, women are not allow to be ordained as priests in many churches such as the Anglican communion, the apostolic church, the catholic church, Salvation Ministries etc. yet, women constitute the highest number of worshipers in these churches. Again, from the property holding point of view which influences their economic condition significantly, females are denied the ownership of land in almost all traditional African societies. Land holding right is seen as a prerogative entitlement of the men. According to Raimi, Ogadi, and Wabah (2013), the exclusion of women in land management and inheritance is generally a dominant issue in the region, especially in the customary systems where land tenure related issues are largely informed by a patriarchal orientation. Women only have access to land via their husbands or the elderly male in the family for cultivation. In fact, this act has hindered the female folks from ascending to positions where they can influence decision-making that could help to transform their subservient culturally induced positions in life.

Drawing from these positions therefore, this study is designed to examine whether gender debate affects choice or availability of traditional occupation before colonial incursion of Africa and Nigeria in particular with the introduction of the new economic relations (capitalism) which has ushered in some inevitable changes. The study is also to interrogate some job chances that were available for the women of traditional Nigeria with specific reference to Warife community in Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

1.2 Conceptual Clarification

Gender: Gender is the significance that the society attaches to the biological categories of male and female. Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated to being male or female by society. It applies to women and men, as well as their relations with one another and to their environment (Miller & Razavi, 1998). Gender is usually determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to men and women in society.

Occupation: Occupation according to Ekong (2010) is a complex system of learned activities performed on temporary and regular bases, providing goods and services to others in exchange for means of support. Put differently, occupation is any form of employment engaged into by an individual for any form of rewards.

Traditional occupations: Traditional occupations are the forms of occupation that are based on the custom of the people that is handed down to generations. ILO (2000) defines traditional occupations as those occupations that have been followed by successive generations of indigenous people and their communities, and are rooted in custom and practices that are established prior to the colonization of the African territories in the nineteenth centuries.

2.0 Literature Review

Discussion on gender discrimination remains very pervasive in many dimensions of life the world over. It is a known practice among nations, but with varying degree within and between the continents. Similarly, this draws us to the concept of gender gaps, which is because of widespread access to, and control of resources, in the economic and political spheres, eminently associated with attitudes, religious beliefs, and of course, cultural practices of the people are the outstanding factors that enhance all gender related discourse across the world. Surveys, case studies and opinion polls carried out by researchers (see; Giddens, 2006; Ekpo, 2008; Ojalammi, 2010; Shamna,2016) have shown that there are prevalence of gender discrimination in and across regions and continents on the earth. Historically, women in pre-colonial Nigeria differed greatly in a number of ways due to their ethnic and socio-cultural groupings. Their positions varied based on two major factors: a) the structure of a particular society, and b) the kinship practice that is dominant in the society.

Notwithstanding, there are common factors that make women different worldwide and more so in Nigeria. These factors are the domestication of their responsibilities ranging from economic activities that the society reserved for the female folks. Women in pre-colonial Nigeria held positions of prominence and played some critical roles socially and economically as well as contributed to farming by processing food, weaving, making of pottery and above all cooking. African households were ruled by patrilineal descent where men were the heads of the household and women were the managers of the younger family members. Nevertheless, in the twentieth century, women lost their influence and their complementary power when patriarchy and colonial activities changed gender relation that was in existence for centuries before the arrival of the colonial leaders. The role of women decreased, as men were the ones negotiating with the colonial merchants in the oversight of taxes and economic governance of the region. As the economy of Africa started tilting towards cash crops, women were at this point pushed to the background and made to solely depend on their male counterparts for their survival. This practice invariably altered the custom of land ownership that usually provided women; access to land was exchanged for land commercialization, which is entirely in favor of the men.

Giddens (2006) in his study opined that an increasing number of women now work as full-time employees outside their home. Notwithstanding, he maintained that a good number of them concentrate in part-time employment. In addition, that part-time job offered much great flexibility to employees than full-time work. According to him, part-time work favored women who are usually attempting to balance work with family-life obligation (Giddens, 2006).According to Scott and Marshall (2005) in Ajua and Bassey (2011), occupation was viewed from the point of economic, not as household activity simply due to the growth of labor. Because of this understanding, it is clearly indicated that the market of African had not developed during the period under discussion. Instead, economic system in traditional African setting was based mainly on reciprocity, gift given, trade by barter, etc. as discussed in (Alagoa, 1973; Anele, Rodney, 1973; Charles, 2014; Bieh & Iheriohanma, 2018). There is no doubt that even at the time in focus, there were medium of exchange among the traditional people of Africa such as beads, cowries, salt, etc. these were the dominant medium of exchange in the old society including Warife community.

Ekpo (2008) argued that African people were subsistence farmers – farming for family consumption with little exchange. He further maintained that in occupation both men and women were working together for the survival of the whole society. He also agreed that because the society was patriarchal, men dominated all areas of social and occupational activities, and women were being perceived to be weak, and only good for domestication and home comfort, with men being considered to be strong, independent, adventurous, active and rational thinkers. Since this beliefs rooted in culture, it is still in existence in all African societies including the study area.

Ekpo (2008) also said that occupation in traditional Nigerian society was not classified into categories as it is done in this modern time. Therefore, he maintained that “White and Blue collar”, “artisans”, and professional classes as popularly known and addressed today were not a common practice in a African society due to near absence of division of labor which breeds expertization, differentiation and specialization in work places in this modern days (Durkheim, 1893; Ritzer, 1998).

By the said arrangement, women were made to be loyal and humble to their male counterparts who then take decisions and impressed on them for compliance. Women were only allowed to stand in for a family meeting where there is no male child. Male dominant and independent position according to Scott and Marshall (2005) in Bassey and Ajua (2011) is that the culture of traditional African society, made women submissive to their husbands and any other elderly male in the family. This control mounted on the women by the men has extended to other aspects of social, economic and political life, which in turn manifested into work performance and occupation. Amidst all these, Witz (1992) claimed that men’s professional status and their all-round inclusion in social, economic and political access to resources and the male gender training are the causes of male domination of the society and its attendant control over their female counterparts.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Gender differentiation and discrimination are popular global narratives that have attracted the concerns of many. However, some gender theorists have propounded theories to systematically and logically explain gender related issues such as cultural, sexual, biological, and socially constructed power relations. According to Haralambus and Heald (1981), gender roles are culturally determined and the inequalities between sexes emerge from socially constructed power relations.

Thus, this study hinges on the Post Modern Feminist Theory as its framework. Postmodern feminism is said to be a mixture of structural, postmodernism and French feminism. Post modernism is a body of scholarship that questions and rejects traditional essentialist practices, as established in, and by modernity. The focus of the theory is to destabilize the laws of patriarchy that have become part of the gender oppression discourse. To achieve this, there must be a serious war against essentialism- the notion that differences between men and women are innate, rather than socially and experimentally constructed.

The theory was made popular by the works of Chafe (1992), and Gilles and Lavine (1990). The theory is fully in support of liberation, restoration and equality, and in the contrary removing all forms of social discrimination on the part of women. The theory appears to be the most appropriate framework for this study because it exposes all the socio-cultural principles that have been working against women freedom, development, empowerment and of course participation in all forms of social life in the traditional African society such as Nigeria and with reference to occupation which is an essential aspect of human life.

Drawing inference from the framework above, women in traditional African societies should not be restricted to a particular occupation, thereby subordinating them to their male counterparts; rather they should be allowed access to occupational choices like their male folks. An attempt to restrict women would amount to a gross negation of the postulations of feminism. Feminism also maintained that no society could be developed if not all the social segments are being carried along. Furthermore, feminism also recognized two segments of the society- the men and the women segments. To theorist therefore, these two segments must be integrated equally so as to achieve a sustainable development trajectory in the African traditional society.

3.0 Profile of the Study Area

The study area is Warife community, which is the only Ogoni-speaking settlement in Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The community was founded by a great hunter Menebene, whose courageous and adventurous expedition took him from Ko (Opuoko) across the then narrowed Imo River to the current location in the early sixteenth century. Its original name is Wiisue-Ko (farm bush of ko). This name which is still known and used by many Ogonis was changed to Warife, an Ibani dialect meaning home market (Dubitur) for linguistic convenience by the hinterland traders who settled at Wiisue waterfront commonly referred as Bornoryii (the fearful cannot enter), for ease of business during the reign of King Jaja of Opobo.

The community is one of largest and enlightened in Ibesit Nnung Ikot clan of Oruk Anam Local Government Area.

It is bounded by four Anang-speaking communities of no cultural and linguistic affinity-Ikot Akpanse at the North, Utu Ikot Obio Ekpe at the East, Ikot Osute at the South-East, Utetuk at the South-West and the Imo River at the West end. According to Nkwoyobe (1969), the population of Warife community is said to have been two thousand inhabitants in the nineteenth century. However, today, the population is far above three thousand five hundred inhabitants. History has it that those that blotted up the community in the 19th century were those traders that settled at Bornoryii waterfront and when King Jaja of Opobo business collapsed the settlers all migrated to other locations seeking for better greener pasture.

The people are traditionally and predominantly farmers. The community is known for all traditional occupations such as farming, fishing, wood carving, and palm wine taping, local mat weaving, herbalists, oil milling livestock breeding, etc. They are subsistence farmers known for cultivating Zia (Yam), Tuu (Three-leave yam), Nkpakuru (Cassava), Kere (Local beans), Nya-ee (fruited pumpkin), Geere (Cocoyam) etc. They also breed Pee (Goats), Naana (Sheep), Gbo (Dogs) Koor (Hens), etc.

Warife people practice patrilineal or agnatic descent, where descent is exclusively traced through males from a founding ancestor. The community is made up of seven autonomous villages with each headed by a chief in council. These autonomous villages are: Zongo Menebene (Mene Akpah Biri), Zongo Gbenemenebene (Mene Needam Bere), Zongo Meneogu (Mene Iniebe Gbarakae), Zongo Deemaa (Mene George Nkwoyobe), Zongo Luewii (Menen Jerry Needam), Zongo Keebe (Mene Uedum Kpabee Nwiiko) and Zongo Bornoryii (Mene Idamkue M. Idamkue),

Warife people are Christians and traditional believers. Traditionally, the community has Loo (shrines) criss-crossing the villages, where they gather and worship their deities and gods at different times within the villages. Similarly, there are churches and church halls (Tor-Bari) scattered all over the villages as worship centers, where Christians also gather and perform the rituals associated to their faith such as Christmas, Easter, Communion, etc. The people of Warife are known for some unique and different types of entertainment such as community watch-dog and female dreaded traditional masquerades. For example, entertainment category involves, Ilubani, Tumbee, Ikoni, Simeseng etc. While the watch-dog category include, Nwii-beebana, Nwii-yormaabana, and the dreaded category are Zim, Kazim idé, Ofiokpo, Onumungag, etc.

4.0 Methods of research

The method of study is purely qualitative. In the study, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and In-depth Interview (IDI) methods were adopted. The FGD consisted of ten (10) participants, and one research assistant who took the researcher round the participants. One of the FGD group was designed for males and the other for females. The participants in the FGD discussion group were purposively selected by the researcher based on the researcher's objective. Because of the nature of the study, participants in the FGDs were all above the age of sixty (60). Similarly, in the IDI, two key personalities within the community constitute the interviewees. The Menebue (paramount King) was purposively selected also for his traditional knowledge of the community to represent the males. The wife of one of the late chiefs in council, who had been a women leader before was also selected because of her age-long experience and her knowledge to represent the females. The community paramount king was seen here as one who is in charge of material and non-material culture of the community including occupation. Hence, any information given by him in this regard was said to be authentic and reliable. The researcher carefully divided the FGD and the IDI into two separate groups for gender equity and for ease of comparative analysis. The data generated were analyzed purely based on the questions and responses gotten from the field using the thematic method. The ten (10) participants in the FGD groups were represented by Roman numeral i-x, while that of the IDI group were presented with i-ii respectively.

5.0 Findings and Discussion

5.1 Findings

The table below shows the demographic characteristics of participants in the FGD and respondents in IDI ranging from 60 years and above. The participants and respondents in both FGD and IDI were literate enough to respond to the questions posed to them by the researcher. They were individuals with various forms of occupations such as farming, trading, retired civil servants, nursing, etc. A total of 17 (75.25%) out of 20 participants were Christians, 3 (15%) out of the 20 participants were worshipers of the African Traditional Religion (ATR). The Apostolic church has 5 (25%), Methodist church has 12 (60%), Deeper Life Bible Church has 3 (15%) participants respectively.

All the participants were individuals born and groomed in Warife community except two women that were married into the community from Ukanafun and Ntak Ibesit communities. The researcher's choice for selection of participants was to ensure that those selected would have fair knowledge of the past and present especially in the area of occupation of the people of Warife.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of FGD Participants (male)

Participants	Age	Level of Edu.	Occupation	Religion	Domination	Place of birth	Ethnic
I	82	University	Rtd Teacher	ATR	Apostolic	Warife	Ogoni
Ii	63	Secondary	Farmer	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Iii	67	Secondary	Farmer	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Iv	60	Primary	Taper	Christian	Apostolic	Warife	Ogoni
V	60	Primary	Farmer	ATR	Deeper life	Warife	Ogoni
Vi	72	Primary	Rtd civil serv.	Christian	Deeper life	Warife	Ogoni
Vii	73	Primary	Trader	Christian	Deeper life	Warife	Ogoni
Viii	68	Primary	Trader	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Vx	65	Primary	Farmer	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
X	63	Secondary	farmer	ATR	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni

Field survey, 2020.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of FGD Participants (Female)

Participants	Age	Level of Edu.	Occupation	Religion	Domination	Place of birth	Ethnic
I	66	Primary	Farming	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Ii	63	Primary	Farming	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Iii	67	Primary	Farming	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
Iv	70	Primary	Trading	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni
V	67	Primary	Rtd Civil Serv.	Christian	Methodist	Ntak Ibesit	Anang
Vi	60	School of Nursing	Rtd civil serv.	Christian	Apostolic	Warife	Ogoni
Vii	66	Secondary	Rtd civil serv.	Christian	Apostolic	Warife	Ogoni
Viii	82	Primary	Farming	Christian	Apostolic	Warife	Ogoni
Vx	69	Primary	Farming	Christian	Methodist	Ukanafun	Anang
X	61	Primary	farming	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni

Field survey, 2020.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of In-depth Interviewees (Male & Female)

Respo ndents	Age	Level of Edu.	Occupation	Religion	Domination	Place of birth	Ethnic	Position in Community
I	83	M	RTD Civ. Serv	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni	Chief
Ii	74	F	Farming/Trading	Christian	Methodist	Warife	Ogoni	Farmer/W/L eader

Field survey, 2020.

From the table above, only two women were born outside the community, but they have grounded and broad knowledge of the period and area under investigation. There is no participant that has not resided in the community for over 46 years.

The FGD guide questions were coined thus: “before now, what were the roles of women and men in this community?” Here, the participants responded that there were distinctive roles between men and women in the community under study. The male FGD participants said “men activity were to work in the farms, supplies food for domestic consumption, provide accommodation for the domestic unit and maintain it as may be necessary. While the females were responsible for taking care of the homes, cook, tend the livestock and care for children. Women were not allowed to speak for themselves, but were being represented and spoken for, by their husbands in public places”. The participants clearly indicated that the women were always taking order from their male counterparts.

On the other hand, the female FGD group was asked of their role in the then community. The FGD women participants responded that: women were not allowed to be part of any decision-making body such as Boganaloo pia gha (kindred gathering), Boganaloo pia Bue (village gathering), Gbo pia Zuguru (Association of Youths), etc in the community. They maintained that women were not allowed entrance into any of the said associations (*FGD, Female Participants*).

The women were equally asked, “If there is any special group that was mainly theirs?” All the women in the FGD group answered “Yes”. According to them, the only women association that existed at the time as a group was called bonganaloo Nwiinaale (Child is no more Association). Furthermore, the women added that Warife community was known and recognized by the role this association played in the effective management of misconducts among the women and the community at large. This association according to them acted as a traditional instrument for the enforcement of women’s rights. The Nwiinaale Association introduced some punitive measures against any woman that violates the traditional norms of the community. One of such measures was tying the individual offender to a stick and sourced for some wild ants, introduced it to bite the person. At this worthless and hopeless point of the individual’s suffering, the individual will swear for desistance and she will be untied. The FGD group maintained that the Association is still in existence, but their extreme activities have been relaxed because of the unfolding Human Rights Laws blowing across the globe. The leadership of the association was strictly selected by members based on age and charisma of the individual in the group. The female FGD group further maintained that “women were not recognized for any headship position in the community but were generally seen as God-given mothers”. The role of leadership was purely an exclusive function of the elderly male child born, breath and well known individual in the community.

The paramount ruler in the indebt interview submitted that “the leadership of the community was the sole responsibility of the male child. He added that the stool of the village head was meant only for the male folk. Similarly, the second group of questions in the FGD bothers on the traditional occupation of Warife people before the introduction of colonial occupation in which women are now into. Question such as “what were the kinds of occupation in your community before now? In responding to this question, both FGD and IDI male and female groups mentioned the following occupations- Farming, trading, taping, weaving, woodcarving, pottery, etc. In the FGD, it was mentioned that:

Women occupied an important place in the tradition of the community under discussion. They were the cultivators of food crops for home consumption and they assist in preparing cassava, pepper, maize and vegetables. Retail trading was done by females while the men were those who buy goods from the hinterlands and sell to the coastal businessmen for easy shipping” (*FGD, Male participants*)

From the discussion above, one can see a clear occupational role between men and women in the study area, as women played the role of managing their husband’s wealth. There is also a clear indication that women were not in charge of themselves particularly in the area of occupational choice, but were working and obeying their male counterparts for the survival of the household. This view by the female FGD group was largely supported by the outcome of IDI with the former woman leader who responded thus:

Women, no doubt worked under their male counterparts, they were divinely chosen by the gods as priests by some well-known deities in the community such as Yor- Beka, Yor-Igu, Yor-maa, etc. The women’s role in this area was not considered an occupation because the deity specially called them for the unique service. This indeed goes a long way to show that it is only in this area of traditional occupation that women’s rights are not violated (*IDI Female Participant, former Women Leader*).

However, the ownership and control of occupation as it was in traditional Nigerian society have changed because of the new economic order characterized by the laws of demand and supply. The reality is that the traditional Nigerian society is still dominated by patriarchy, but presently the women are no longer being tailored and controlled for a specific occupational choice as it was in the past, they can now choose a given occupational area of expertise.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study corroborates that of Girigiri (2005), who found that there was demarcation between what constitutes a woman's activity and that of a man. According to him, among the rural folks especially the non-literate ones, a woman takes care of the home, cook, tends the livestock and care for children. The husband works on the farm, supplies food for domestic consumption, provide housing for domestic unit and maintain it as may be necessary. However, today, women participation in the economy of Nigeria has transcended the traditional sector. He maintained that an increasing number of women graduate from educational institutions yearly, and this is reflected in the composition of the labor force in the country. Women are now found in high level manpower employment in the general White and Blue Collar jobs. Again, women have taken to various modern occupational areas such as lawyers, teachers, engineers, builders and even pastors in churches. This supports Ukeka and Raimi (2016), who argued that women's occupational roles have evolved over the years with more women accepting the role of paid employment in their lives.

Furthermore, the study found out that men access to economic and political resources made them more powerful and in turn limit and humbled the women before the men in the area of traditional occupation in Warife community. Additional finding of the study corroborates Ekpo's (2008) finding, which revealed that there was restriction on women from leadership positions and also from attending important meetings where decisions were reached against the women having access to occupational choice in the community. Finally, it was also found that Warife community was male dominated such that the females were always taking orders from their male counterparts.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Gender discourse is a universal issue. Nigeria and indeed Warife community is not excluded from the discussion involving women discrimination and exclusion as have shown in this study. The occupational line between men and women appeared to be complementary, but women were seen as the gender that is always taking instructions from their male counterparts. In the past women in Warife were not allowed to assume equal status with men due to the patriarchal nature of the then society, however, they were allowed to head shrines controlled by different deities because the call for that occupation was divinely done by the community deities. This pointed to this divine function to women and highlighted their functional importance in the society. In the recent time, women are discriminated against especially in schools, work places, homes and some professional occupational areas, which calls for immediate response in economic and sociopolitical empowerment of women in Warife and elsewhere in Nigeria where they are marginalized.

To achieve this, women must be given opportunity to participate in decision making processes and political and economic activities in local and national levels. They should be advocated for by a good number of world development agencies and given necessary tools and opportunities to achieve their potentials. This also require serious advocacy that with purpose of enshrining the various concerns of women in Warife and Nigeria in whole, in all local, national and international strategies for achieving the sustainable development goals.

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