A REVIEW OF POLICY RESPONSES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Policies are embarked upon for the benefit of the people in order to solve issues, to clarify functions and responsibilities. Plan growth gives the chance to engage with the public on issues of significance to the public. Apart from developing a policy for the public it is also necessary to do a survey by evaluating the performance and the usefulness of the policy execution. A review of the plan is also very necessary because it will promote consistency of the policy execution, it will help to maintain or meet the standard required as well as making the decision making transparent. Policy responses on gender mainstreaming in Nigeria is considered to be good because the execution of the policy reduced the violation of females' rights, improved the scope of females' participation in politics, increased literacy rate among women to mention a few. The study relied on minor method of data collection from records periodicals, articles from internets and from policy reports using content examination. The study concludes that it is essential to undertake a review of policy to maintain a record and to ensure the progress of the policy. The study recommends that policy review should be done to ensure that the objective of the policy is achieved as well as the desired impact on the community.

Keywords: Policy, Gender, Gender Mainstreaming, National Gender Policy, Nigeria.

Introduction

Plans are made to explain purposes, tasks and also encourage uniformity in an organisation. For an organisation to be up to date and viable it has to appraise its policies regularly. Policy review is very important in any organisation or institution. This is because policies that are reviewed and are current help the organisation in meeting its obligations thereby ensuring compliance with the law. Apart from this, policy review assists in setting standards, keeping the managers accountable and set expectations for the workers in the organisation. Gender policies are made to ensure obedience to the law, meet their obligations, set standards and expectations and above all make an impact. The National Gender Policy was formulated to ensure that the various commitments of women were implemented which included gender equality, women empowerment and development to mention a few. Gender mainstreaming has been a contemporary issue discussed across international, regional and national spheres, generating great concern for various organisations in different countries. It is therefore seen as an important concept in facilitating women's movement towards equality because it integrates a gendered perception into all policy and decision making. Over the centuries many countries all over the creation including Nigeria have been enacting gender related policies. The Nigerian administration has enacted gender associated policies in several areas of the economy such as health, education, agriculture as well as gender policy to improve the welfare of its growing female population. Ogundele et ai, (2011) noted that good policy interferences like the enablement program existed but with the aim of reducing the sufferings of women. Though, these commendable creativities still existed, there were intrinsic problems with the execution of such plans in traditional male-dominated communities. (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013, and Oyiana,2021) ,.

The Nigerian government had enacted and implemented various gender related policies in different sectors including the national gender policy. Scholars like Onwumah et al (2019), Oyiana (2021) & Archibong et al (2018) noted that the purposes for the formulation of the plans were occasionally not met while some were attained due to some challenges. This must be as a result of either poor or good process in implementation of policies or possible challenges militating against their execution. Orisaremi (2022) noted that there were factors militating against the gender mainstreaming, but argued that though the factors existed, that gender mainstreaming would be successful and attainable in Nigeria. Generally, policies are representations made in order to outline the activities to embark upon in resolving a problem or an issue. This is only after the conclusion of various stages or processes of formulation that must be involved in enacting a particular policy. Moreover, all enacted policies are supposed to be reviewed or checked to ensure that they are serving the purpose of the creation or formulation. In view of the fact that policy review is very necessary for an effective implementation, the aim is to determine if the gender policy is no longer effective or if the policy has achieved the desired impact.

Unfortunately, some of the formulated and enacted policies do not work well and require review. Gender related strategy review process should be managed to improve

the policy effectiveness for the benefit the people. Though, it is not clear if a review of policy responses on gender mainstreaming in Nigeria has been carried out. It is on this basis that this study carried out a review of policy responses on gender mainstreaming in Nigeria. It intends to undertake a review of policy responses on gender mainstreaming in Nigeria to ascertain the efficacy of the national gender policy implementation. This study used the qualitative research design to gather relevant information. Data was collected through content analysis of textbooks, journal articles from the internet and from policy reports.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Gender

The world of women is full of stories and their plight is often pathetic. This is because of the subordination, discrimination and the humiliation which a large number of this gender undergo in the society. Gender is a broad concept that discusses the collection of socially built parts, relations, behaviour qualities, arrogances, actions, ethics, relative power and impacts that civilization ascribe to the dual genders on a discrepancy base (Angya, 2009). It is a sociological look of specific features and parts that are related with certain assemblies of peoples with regard to their sex and sexuality. Gender is defined by numerous civilisations as societal or social constructed, suitable, behaviours, and parts which diverse civilisations ascribe to females and males. In several cultures globally the matter gender depends on females and their perception about themselves and most importantly the acceptance of being a female.

Internationally, there has been a division in relations of gender matters and gender parts as well as gender characteristics. But in Nigeria, the public gender problems include gender disparity, abuse of females' human rights ferocity against females and discrimination. The idea of gender roles includes societal duty, bond, obligation, engagement, responsibility or agreement assigned to either women or men. Gender roles involve roles allocated to a particular sex by the society. Gender roles are societal and social standard that are deemed suitable by a particular society for either males or females in any social or interpersonal relationship, the perception of which may add attitudes, actions, reactions and personality traits associated with a particular gender within a known culture (Dozie et al 2015). The responsibilities and actions that were assigned to males and females by the civilisation are viewed as gender parts. The males gender parts are regarded as influential in government and industry, heads of churches and are dominant in professions such as law, engineering and science. While the female gender roles are the centre for homes and the families, the caretakers of children and also take care of the sick in most societies globally.

Sometimes, the female gender roles are not appreciated and valued as much as the male gender roles. Though there are significant variances in the individual parts of males and females in various societies, there is no society where females are considered more

authoritative than men. People generally feel that females everywhere are mainly concerned with the maintenance of homes and child bearing, while the men are busy with politics and strenuous activities. The idea of gender identities fundamentally manifests in the differences we experience between both sexes especially from the point of view of a particular society. Gender identity is conceived as what an individual feels of oneself of being a male or female. This is due to the fact that human beings are basically divided into two as according to sexes as male and female, resulting in gender inequality and discrimination.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming provides the chance to talk about the anxieties of females' and males' development in all facets of life as well as in the offices. This guarantees the evaluation of the effect on both male and female of all enterprises as well as plans and programmes crosswise stages. The general goal of gender mainstreaming is to interpret policy aims into concrete activities, introducing principles that will request equivalent privileges, equivalent accountability, equivalent chances, and equivalent contribution of women and men in the plan procedure. Generally, policy creators use gender mainstreaming to promise that plans and practices within organisations convey outcomes fairly amongst females and males. This involves an examination of plans and practices to recognise any form of gender discrimination. Thus, suggesting that plans should of necessity take care of the various involvements of both males and females thereby readdressing emphasis from the old-style gender parity story to an administrative change outlook (Alonso, 2017). Gender mainstreaming currently has tilted from organisational emphasis to recognized policy from the procedures essential to establish it. This transformation in emphasis gave the women better opportunities to become employed with less efforts and with the aid of the policies formulated.

Consequently, the parts of females in Nigeria have changed from the old-style view of not only taking care of children to being also a helper to the family. Gender mainstreaming is an approach for bringing the difficulties and knowledge of male and female into the plan, execution and evaluation of plans as well as packages in order to achieve gender parity (UNDP, 2013). The idea organises matters concerning gender not with the purpose of finding the problems separately but with the dynamic aim of creating targeted interferences wherever needed (Staudt, 2018). Gender mainstreaming involves integrating gender perspective and plans to earlier acceptable conducts of employment and the predicament is whether organisations profit after having cooperative than viable labour ethos (Meter & Celis, 2011). These scholars assert that attaining gender parity required similarly accepting the differences among females' and males' parts in the society. The differences in gender roles affect the behaviour of women as far as mothering and motherhood is concerned. Mothering meant taking care of children while motherhood meant the state of being a mother. According to Bugden et al (2021) gender hegemony within Australian society, the women saw motherhood as an oppressive

socially constructed institution which allows the male domination in the society. The scholars noted that hegemonic gender had influence on the women as regards mothering. They found that many young women advocated for motherhood as a result of women's movement and also because of the reinforcement of motherhood as central to adult female.

Gender mainstreaming can highlight the systems and performances in organisations that encourage disparities. It can help as a positive method of imbuing a gender outlook into the labour measures of organisations as a transformation that could help to address gender parity problems. Gender mainstreaming takes care of relevant matters concerning disparity, such as gender wage breaches within organisations that recognise more the output of males than that of females. It remained conceived with the only aim of advancing gender parity and equivalent chances. Gender mainstreaming has subsequently become a leading idiom in the globe gender parity parlance and could propose a method to describe females as well as males to plan creators universally (Alonso, 2017).

Policy

Policies stand as integrated pronouncements engaged by political performers which involve the choice of the aims and resources of attaining them within definite conditions. The policy is typically a administration's proposal that is placed after seeing several replacements, as a reply to the requests of the civilization in diverse areas of the economy such as instruction, fitness, gender, farming as well as safety and includes expenditure of public capitals and the use of power where necessary to attain the established purposes (Ughulu & Nwokike 2020). Plan stands as established concept or strategy of what to do in specific circumstance that has been accepted formally by an assembly of individuals, government, administration or a political party. Policies are not unplanned things, rather they are thoughts planned for and put into action by human beings for particular reasons. Policies can be adapted or formulated by private or public organisations. While the government shapes and controls the destiny of the nation, it formulates civic plans, for commercial and manufacturing establishments and individually owned establishments and institutes formulate independent plans. The distinction between a public and a private concern in relation to consumer good is that a public good is a benefit for the whole society whereas a private good can be rationed so as to prevent other people from enjoying the benefits of the good. Public goods are goods which once they have been provided for one individual can be provided for others without extra cost, while private goods benefit specific social or economic groups so that not everyone would share the reward (Eminue,2009).

There are as many policies as there are many issues areas. There are two main types of policy namely: Foreign policy and Domestic policy. Domestic policies include agriculture, health, education, housing, transport, welfare, energy, defence to mention a few. Foreign policies are international trade, international investment, international

aid/technical assistance, immigration, diplomatic relations, emigration and security involving many ministries and agencies. The classification of policies according to capabilities depends on the government. The performance of a party-political organisation depends on the degree to which it possesses certain capabilities. The political system has a number of policies which include: extractive, regulative, distributive, redistributive, symbolic as well as responsive policies. For extractive policies, the government may formulate policies which may involve it in extracting things from its citizens like the payment of taxes, rates, development levy, compulsory military service, and patriotism.

Through regulative policies, the government of a state may lay down rules and regulations to govern or regulate how the people may have to conduct their affairs. This may come as rules prohibiting crimes such as theft, extortion, burglary, murder, drug trafficking, libellous or licentious, publications, the sale of pornographic or indecent photographs, the sale of food/materials injurious to health and many others. The distributive policies pertain to policies which allocate or dispense benefits, favours aa well as sponsorship of persons. Having rules and regulations that cut across sections of the society and organisations will always prevent discrimination, biases and prejudice in applying distributive policies and thereby adhere strictly to some laws or standard of uniformity, impartiality, equality and consistency.

Redistributive policies involve the transfer of resources or benefits from some categories of people and giving same to others. For instance, we could point to progressive taxation which takes a greater percentage of money from the rich and a smaller percentage from those who are not so well to do for the provision of facilities which benefit the predominately rural poor. Responsive policies can be seen as the reaction of the government towards the demand of its citizens for their wellbeing. For example, the increase in the price of fuel by government in 2023, and police brutality affected everybody thereby resulting in protests and strikes by the people to demonstrate their anger. Also, the tensions of females in Nigeria for gender policy and other commitments made the federal government to formulate the National Gender Policy. It is in reply to a problem. It is often intended to solve prevailing difficulties.

Policy Responses on Gender Mainstreaming

Various governments react differently toward the issues of gender inequality and fundamental human rights. The problems of gender disparity and human privileges of women have created a lot of worry globally, regionally and nationally and have become contemporary. Numerous appropriate global regional and nation-wide instruments and procedures have been signed by various bodies including Nigeria to deal with the problems of gender disparity, violation of human rights and discrimination against women (FMWASD, 2006). It was anticipated that these strategies /instruments would assist in solving the problems of gender parity and females' human privileges globally and also in the country since Nigeria signed and endorsed as agreed. These tools have

continuously highlighted that associate nations put in place all the essential devices required to eradicate gender discrimination, guarantee fairness and human self-respect to all males and females (Agbalajobi & Oluwalogbon, 2019).

The initial plan of gender parity strategies started between 1950s and 1960s by some organisations such as the National Council for Women Society, Women in Nigeria to mention a few (Abdul et al 2011, Afolabi 2019). These proposed plans had helped the wellbeing arrangement of making females to be improved mothers thereby making females to be inactive participants towards development. Nevertheless, the constant agitation of females led to the formulation and presentation of the National Gender Policy of 2006. This gender policy represented the document formulated by the central government of Nigeria to advance the welfare of females. and achieve gender parity, enablement as well as human rights (FMWASD,2006) According to FMWASD (2006) the policy was established to build a society free of gender disparity, with the aim of encouraging the benefit of human rights and preserving the wellbeing, societal, financial and political wellbeing of all citizens to attain fair and fast fiscal development. Also, it was formulated to initiate a condition that attracts more attention to the protection of children and on matters that encourage full involvement of women in nation-wide growth.

Scholars like Tamunosaki and Opuene (2019) revealed that there was slight advancement in gender mainstreaming in Nigeria between 1999 and 2015. This was mainly owing to overall consciousness created on the complaint of females by the formulation of the national gender policy using gender mainstreaming as a core strategy. The study found that there were appearance of females non- governmental organisations and other stakeholders demanding for healthier condition for females for socioeconomic and political party growth of Nigeria. However, it revealed that in spite of improvements made in this area, there is still an extensive inequality between males and females in the nation in relations to access to socio-economic chances together with contribution in government and decision making. Though gender mainstreaming appeared to be active in Nigeria, this has not fetched any comparative increase in women political presentation in the nation. To buttress this fact women political representation has continued to decline between 2015 to 2023.

In 2015 and 2019 7 women were in senate, respectively while 22 women were in the House of representative in 2015 while in 2019 the number of women came down to 11 women. In 2023 election out of 15000 candidates who contested for the presidential, governorship national assembly, House of Representative, and State Assemblies women were only 10% of the population. (Elor 2023) Also, it was revealed that women representation in national Assembly has fallen to 19% compared to to 2019 election with females having 3% seat in senate and 4% in House of representation (Elor,2023). The scholars noted that despite the improvements achieved certain factors still prevented women from full participation in various aspects of life especially in male-controlled organisation in the country, bad attitude of females towards the political process and

absence of support for fellow female candidates. The study recommended that female politicians must support one another in order to generate a self-governing space for themselves.

Moreover, Enworo and Njemanze (2022) pointed out that the national gender policy did not propose any measurable standards for real assessment of the objective before and after the formulation of the gender policy in Nigeria. They noted that admittance to the worried community facilities has been unbalanced in goodwill for males, mainly as a consequence of management disappointment in terms of nonexistence of politically aware will to execute the requirements of the national gender policy. Also, other challenges like bribery and organisational lapses as well as community and social matters connected to male-domination were noted. The study recommended that women empowerment programmes and special women initiatives among others should not be made issues of politics (Enworo & Njemanze, 2022). Oyekanmi and Majekodunmi (2016) had revealed how gender-blind policies disempowered the authority of females and perpetuated gender disparities in the Lagos State Civil Service. The work also exposed that the display of transformative enablement was being risked by obedience with prevailing plans and practices that were harmful to achieving gender equality in the office.

With formulation of gender policy, it is expected that institutions should embrace the equity policy in enrolment, employment and decision making in higher institutions. Muoghalu and Eboiyehi (2018) found that there was slight increase in feminine matriculation, in feminine engagement and in choice creation compared with the previous data. The scholars found that the plan has not encountered the exact goal of attaining 60-40% ratio of men and women in scholar matriculation, feminine academic staff engagement and verdict creation by 2010, and this was credited to the non-execution of the gender policy in the campus. These scholars identified the main challenges for the non-execution of the gender policy as patriarchal beliefs, capital and performances which do not inspire women to contest with their men complements in top managerial locations.

The issue of gender inequality was visible in farming activities as. Ogunlola and Muktai (2009) revealed that although women constitute 60-80% of the labour force in agriculture, their contributions appeared not to be recognized, not to think of being rewarded. These scholars criticised the situation in which women do not have any contribution in verdict making about agriculture, indicating there were lapses in the gender policy implementation. Also, it was reported how the Esan women farmers of Edo State were not empowered, notwithstanding the numerous empowerment initiative programmes by the federal government of Nigeria (Ozoya, 2016). Oyiana (2021) buttressed how in spite of international achievements, gender mainstream interferences in areas controlled by men in Nigerian manufacturing companies continue to highlight plans regarding the care for children and without including more demanding matters on gender.

Looking at the various policy responses on gender mainstreaming in Nigeria and their implementation, scholars like Nnajiofor, et al (2014) Orisaremi (2021), Oyiana

(2021) buttressed the fact that for years, many clear plans had been articulated. Nevertheless, the contradiction has been that, an insignificant portion of these policies had been executed due to some challenges. Moreover, Elor (,2023) noted that there were no ostensible and important developments in women political representation in Nigeria and revealed that women representation in the national assembly has declined in 2023 with women having 3% seats in senate and 4% seats in house of representatives. This indicates that the 35% affirmative action is yet to be attained as far as women political representation is concern Nnajiofor et al (2014) had suggested that mere devising of policies should not constitute the main matter in Nigeria but rather their actual execution, because it is only successfully executed plans that can guarantee desired influence of gender equality, women empowerment as well as national development. Nevertheless Orisaremi 2022 noted that though there were human factors militating against the implementation of gender mainstreaming that gender mainstreaming would be achievable in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Policy appraisal entails assessing the efficiency of the exact plan which is the gender policy. It is necessary to undertake a review of the policy to maintain a record and to ensure the progress of the plan. It is anticipated that any plan formulated for the benefit of the people would work well. Nevertheless, it was discovered that some institutes did not adopt the fairness strategy thereby opposing the aims of gender policy. The major constraint towards the non-implementation of the gender policy included patriarchal beliefs, capital and performances which did not inspire females to contest with their male counterpart The present level of execution of the National Gender Policy that has reduced the violation of women's rights, stages of poverty, and violence against women should be sustained This is because it has improved the scope of females' involvement in government, admittance to primary and secondary healthcare, admittance to education and increase literacy rate among women. However, more efforts should be made by management to address illiteracy, poverty, money politics and unemployment among women. The study recommends that policy review should be done to ensure that the objective of the policy is achieved as well as the desired impact on the community. This will ensure accountability, consistency, and transparency on the part of the government to its citizens.

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