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AFRICAN WOMEN AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF ETSAKO WOMEN
IN EDO STATE OF NIGERIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 2000
ABSTRACT

POLITICAL SCIENCE

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AFRITCAN WOMEN AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF ETSAKO WOMEN IN
EDO STATE OF NIGERIA

Advisor: Dr. Hashim T. Gibrill

Dissertation dated May, 2000

This dissertation draws attention to covert efforts directed at African women that seek to negatively affect the family structure and the historic cultural value systems, thereby destabilizing the African family setting, and destroying the society through a process of depopulation in Etsako in Edo State, and by extension, Nigeria and Africa.

The researcher employed the African philosophy of politics and government as the conceptual framework most suitable for this research. The American woman's knowledge of the African woman was investigated. Equally, the African woman was examined to determine what she thinks of her womanhood role.

The findings established that the struggle for political development of the African woman is pregnant with meaning, as it is a vital aspect of some of the covert and overt influence of the West directed at the Africans' root of existence. Other findings include the following: 1. That
the Western World has targeted the entire population of Etsako, Nigeria and Africa by extension, for a political resocialization that is alien to the people of Africa.

2. That the American woman has limited knowledge of the African woman. 3. That in the efforts to adversely influence the African woman, some African American women of the intelligentsia are unknowingly being used to facilitate some of the covert efforts. 4. That the African woman appreciates her womanhood roles in the home front and her external relations; and, 5. That the African woman's political efficacy, from a Western political framework, in the African political systems, will destroy the traditional family structure, the cultural and moral basis of the people. This will further destroy the historic African cultural value systems and, eventually lead to a moral void and the collapse of these societies. Deviant behavior and deliberate depopulation will trigger the collapse.

The study, therefore, recommends among other things that to prevent such cultural destabilization, the Etsako people and possibly, Nigeria need to educate and politically socialize their women, from an African socio-cultural political framework. This is a major way by which Etsako and Africa by extension will command Western political respect.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, of the benefactors of this acknowledgment is my family, who has gone through so much since I began this program. My family has been very supportive, therefore, I am grateful, and most especially to my wife, Emota who is ONE in a million. I am equally grateful to Professor W. J. Oyaide of the University of Benin for words of encouragement at the time I was planning to embark on my quest for my doctoral degree. My debt of gratitude goes to the Department of Political Science at the Clark Atlanta University for the opportunity offered me. Equally, my debt of gratitude goes to the members of my Doctoral Committee, Dr. Hashim T. Gibrill, now the Chair of the Department, and Chair of my Doctoral Committee, Dr. Kwaku Danso-Boafo, the current Ghanaian Ambassador to Cuba, and Dr. Hamid Taqi all of whom helped to make this task a necessary and enriching experience. To my mother Madam Imayowa Tsatsaku Ojior, my deceased father, daughter and wife, Pa Tsatsaku Ojior, Adenomo and Uyeimhe, I also express my heartfelt thanks. I am also very grateful to my friends at the Atlanta University Center who offered me their useful advise.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Many African nations became independent in 1960. During the political agitations for independence in colonial times, it was with the full hope and aspirations that political independence would usher Africa into an era of stability and political development, economic and industrial growth. The people, led by the nationalists, had hoped for a New Africa\(^1\) in which there would have emerged a new political freedom devoid of imperial control; a New Africa in which the people would have once more taken their proper place in the scheme of things in the modern comity of nations as progenitors of the first homo erectus and world awareness.\(^2\) But contrary seems to be the case. First of all, political independence never came as many scholars have now

\(^1\) Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* (Accra, Ghana: The Author, P.O. Box 478 1937), 17. In the author's concept, "New Africa" was a state of society where the mind was brought into harmony with matter, and in such co-operation, the old order in which matter was master of the mind would have passed away. Interpretatively, "New Africa" could have referred to Africa of tomorrow; that is Africa in post independence, in other words, Africa after independence. Unfortunately, the children of Africa still await the New Africa of "Zik's" conception.

\(^2\) Africa as the mother of the first human kind and world "civilization."
agreed. Instead, it was "flag" or symbolic independence in which almost all the hopes, aspirations and yearnings of the African people have become a nightmare with successive years since the 1960s.

Suffice it to say that although the agitation for African independence was carried on by both the men and women of Africa, in Africa and the Diaspora, upon independence, the stage seems to have been held onto only by the males. In other words, to a large extent, the males appeared to have taken over the reigns of governance from Great Britain, and the other colonial powers - the Portuguese, the French, the Germans, the Spanish and the Belgians. The majority of the women of Africa, as seen by foreign observers, appeared to have been left out or relegated to the background. With political participation, a vital factor and a determinant of social and economic power, denied to females, a male chauvinistic phenomenon was soon seen to prevail in the continent in the view of some observers.³

Recently, one of the United Nations' periodic human

³ An American female classmate in the 1992/93 academic year, in an assignment she presented in one of the classes in International Relations, produced some figures she claimed to have obtained from a United Nations data bank. According to her, the figures show that as at 1993, Nigeria did not have a woman in any important position, either in politics or in the civil service. She supported her claims with some information she obtained from the UN, and are contained in the document “Indicators on Women In Public Life,” World’s Women 1970-1990, 1991.
development reports published by a national daily, The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, stated that "Equality still elusive in most poor countries", and "In the world's poorest places, the only category in which women seem to have an edge over men is life expectancy". Of course, Nigeria may be regarded as one of those poor countries in many respects.

Although, a majority of the ruling class have been men, there have been women who have been on the stage serving in various capacities in Nigeria. There are women lawyers and judges in the judiciary; cabinet ministers, a senator, vice chancellor of a university, permanent secretaries in the civil service, and executive directors and chairs in the banking industry, who work along side men in Nigeria and the rest of Africa. This was so even before and after the departure of the colonial powers, and continues to be so. However, in the eyes of some foreign observers, as well as some Africans, women in the continent, represented in this study by Etsako women, have been relegated to the background for too long. They are always treated cruelly by men are made to lose their lives if they stand up for their rights.

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According to Lynch-Hudson, "The meek, timid, withdrawn aura of Egyptian women, combined with their resentful looks, initially made me think, 'Sister, get a life', but securing what I would consider a 'life' often leads to assassination for women of Egypt and other areas of Africa". It would appear that women in Africa, just like almost everywhere else in the world, outnumber men. Despite this, it seems that only the men have political power and/or hold administrative positions.

The role of women in Africa, as seen by some foreign African observers, remains that of procreation and increasing the already over populated Africa. For an example, the United Nations (UN) reports, have claimed that Nigeria has population of 108.54 millions by 1990, but Nigeria’s population was actually 88.5 million according to the 1991 census figures. African women generally, view themselves as being in charge of home independent of other

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societal obligations that they may have.⁹ African women generally play roles that are vital to the society; their role as mothers is the most important function because it is through their procreation and nurturing that the future of the nations and their peoples is assured. Africans are known to have viewed their women like gods because of their ability to bear children.¹⁰ No doubt, there were cases wherein women were not allowed to exercise voting rights or perform civic duties or roles. For example, in some Moslem areas of African countries like the Sudan, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Niger and in the northern part of Nigeria, women who are in purdah (a seclusion meant to shield women away from men, in Islam) were with respect to their religious obligations expected to forfeit their rights to their civic duties, such as voting in an election.

Some might argue that the advent of colonialism in Africa generally, did not offer any room for women to develop politically, which itself was a reflection of their attitude toward women of their own countries. As a result, it was hard to come by women in political leadership positions in colonial times. However, Nigeria and Ghana

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The map below shows all the states to date, with their capital locations indicated by dots. **Fig. 2**
Fig. 3
MAP OF EDO STATE
SCALE 1:1,000,000
appear to be few of some of the countries where one finds few women in political circle(s) in Africa.

With the 1992 figure of 88.5 Million people, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa but it has produced only two women senators since independence. They are Mrs. Wuraola Esan in the First Republic 1960-1966, and Francisca (Franca) Afegbua who was the only woman elected to the Senate in the Nigerian Second Republic of 1997-1983. These have been regarded as very few occasional feats on the Nigerian political scene upon which nothing substantially positive can be claimed to have been achieved by the women in the Nigerian polity. Is it probable that such political relegation of women in Africa may have impacted on the general political terrain of the continent? In other words, since a majority of the women in Africa were not holding any important political positions, is it an improbability to think that African women could have had the advantage of ensuring that there must be a general conducive welfare including that of political sanity in Africa?

From the western perspective, African women do not seem to measure up to the standard of their counterparts in the United States of America or the western world. Is there a basis to compare African women with European women since both are two different persons in many respects, especially with regards to the issue under consideration?
With some unexplainable characteristics, African males do not seem to have done well in the management of political affairs of their states, but they seemed to have excelled in their mismanagement of their nations' human resources, economic viability, and infrastructure. Persistent political instability, deteriorating economy, and general insecurity of life and property appear to be the order of the day in the continent. Most of the nations are in debt which rose from $200 billion in 1993 to $211 billion in 1994. In 1996, the figure stood at $313 billion, but as of the time of this study, World Bank says that Africa's total debt stands at $332 billion. It appears there is nothing much to show for the debts they owe international creditors on behalf of the states in Africa. For example, the one time richest nation in Africa, Nigeria, in 1974 loaned money to the World Bank. The World Bank had announced then that it took a loan of $240 million from Nigeria at an interest rate of 8% per annum, repayable in ten annual installments.


13 Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior, "The American Students' Basic Knowledge About Nigeria": a Master's Thesis (Malibu California: Pepperdine University 1975), 36. Also, see Africa Report, (January-February 1975), and the loan was also announced by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Morning Service, 25 November 1974.
installments of $24 million per year. Nigeria today is not only indebted to the same World Bank, like many of the other countries in Africa, but is unable to meet its financial obligations to the Brentton Woods institutions.

Ironically, while many of the nations, especially Nigeria, seem unable to pay government workers' salaries effectively, and cannot meet other state financial obligations, many of the individuals, government officials, and a few private corporate leaders and few emergency contractors, in their personal capacities are unduly financially affluent: evidence of probable abominable official impropriety, corruption, and fraud. These apparent aberrations among others, have resulted in constant military interventions in Africa's politics.

Consequently, a democratic political direction seems to have become a mirage as Etsako, and the whole of the continent is almost under siege from the unpatriotic men in uniforms. As a result, instead of economic security, African children are faced with a hyena which howls and growls, and threatens Africans' very existence. Instead of social security, Africans are faced with divisions and

14 Ibid.
15 Nnamdi Azikiwe, Renascent Africa (Accra, Ghana: The Author, P.O. Box 478, 1937), 39-40.
ethnic prejudices which make it impossible for Africans to work together in harmony. The recolonization of Africa appears to be the current subject-matter among the international creditors because African leaders have failed to meet international political expectations. The current debates in foreign circles insinuate that African men have ruined Africa, therefore, there might be a need to shift the political power base to the women.

PROBLEM

The problem that this study confronts is a perceived western covert attempt to affect African women with a view to affecting the African family setting, destabilize the African historic cultural value systems, destroy the society’s moral fabric and more importantly, undercut the

16 Ibid.

17 Horace Campbell, "From the Gulf to Somalia," AAPS Newsletter, New Series No.14, March, 1994. See also, Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior, "Beyond Ethnicity and Burundi," UJAMAA Vol.II No.3 (Georgia: Department of Political Science, Clark Atlanta University, Vol.II No.3, 6 December 1994), 2.

18 Although, there had not been direct debates that the women of Africa should take over the mantle of political leadership since the men appeared to have failed. But the indictments of African leaders or rulers (most of who happened to be men), at all the summits of international creditors such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the G7; and the direct resolve to destroy, that "inequality" between African men and women, at the World Population Conference in Cairo early September 1994, through the "development" of women, are a clear implication to the effect that African men have failed, therefore, women must be developed politically to take over from the men. The survey conducted in Atlanta, Georgia supports this view as shall be seen later in this study.
population of Etsako community and eventually the African society. Perceptively, this problem will be brought about through "mercy" policies and programs engendered to "assist" African women. Arguably, such programs as the "International Training In Women And Development Project" and the "Study Abroad Program" which exist in some of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), in the guise of liberating or politically developing the women of Etsako and others, if allowed will provide a fertile ground for the perceived problem that will follow.

This covert plan might be understood when properly considered against the background that (1) in 1987, while the UN had projected or estimated the population of Nigeria to be 108.45 million,\textsuperscript{19} and was already applying pressure on Nigeria to control its birth rate, Nigeria's population with the 1992 census was actually 88.5 million.\textsuperscript{20} (2) The use of contraceptives by women now in Nigeria, for example, appear to have become more pronounced; the spread of the contraceptive pills in Nigeria is funded by the Population

\textsuperscript{19} Country Profiles: Africa Recovery 29, UN Africa Recovery adapted from (a) FAO Production Year Book, 1989, (b) UN World Population Chart 1990 (Country Profiles on Africa Recovery is a UN publication).

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
Council of New York and the International Planned Parenthood Federation. The use of the pills has become more pronounced and rampant to the extent, their distribution by a western university and use, was extended to men in Nigeria. Meanwhile, the use of Viagra for virility, potency and fertility by male and female is on the rise in the United States. Generally, while other humans such as the Orientals or Asians, the Europeans and the Americans will always protect and preserve their human population, including their values with whatever it takes to do so, it appears the Africans and their rulers are being intimidated by Western-European imperialism, to control their birth rate and to abandon their cultural value systems which include traditions and customs, without any meaningful reciprocatory response from African rulers aimed at stopping such intimidation. How else will agitative and perceptive minds explain all the forms of conditionalities usually attached to most of Africa’s political and economic

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bargainings with the superpowers? What can be more intimidating and covert than these western activities against Africa. In a recent chastise, the Democratic Congresswoman of Georgia 4th District and a member of the International Relations and Armed Services Committee of the US Congress, reminded us of the long history of Western covert activities against Africa when she stated:

How dare they propose a Marshal Plan for Europe and continue to neglect Africa which has been decimated by the covert and overt actions of the West led by the United States? From slavery to colonialism, to neocolonialism and the Cold war, Africans have been hurt by their interactions with the West.  

Furthermore, colonial legacy such as its education and idea of education which have not been re-evaluated by the people since independence; and neo-colonial activities that seemed to have undermined the sovereignty of the people, are a problem that this study is attempting to highlight so that the people of Etsako and Nigeria may need to become conscious of the serious situation. It could be argued that Africa is now a political liability to its peoples and the world. Consequently, Africa’s rulers, most of whom are men to a larger extent, at least from the Western perspective,  

appear to have failed in the utilization of their nature endowed ability and political acumen in the interest of their people and that of the rest of the world who were being periodically called upon to provide relief and aid. Upon the colonial invasion, the peoples' former mode of living was affected. A few years after the departure of the colonial masters, the western method of political administration that was introduced, was in disarray as military juntas over-ran the systems. There were no apparent legitimate constitutional governments of elected representatives; military regimes became the order of the day in many of the nations in Africa.

The continent of Africa of which Nigeria represents a major part, appeared to have been pervaded with all sorts of social ills, such as corruption, nepotism, frauds in their highest form, and at their highest level of society. Consequently, a state of anomie, political anarchy and decay appeared to have rented the continent with some ineffective rulerships. For example, such social political turbulence in Nigeria led the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, George Moose, to declare that social decay and government malaise could, if unchecked, lead to the collapse of civil and social structures in the long term and harm the interest of the United States and U.S. business, as well as those of the entire West African
region. He further declared that Nigeria's significant involvement in drug trafficking and business fraud poses security risks for Americans both at home and abroad.

Equally it could be argued that more importantly, it appears to be the perception that the population of the continent is under a threat that calls for caution.

How else could any objective analyst have explained away anomie following the impact of political, socio-economic instability, the carnage that had gone on in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda/Burundi, and Nigeria for quite sometime, as evidenced by world media reports? Although, it could be argued that these crises are externally directed, but arguably too, it is a philosophical axiom that "man is a major factor in most events that affect


26 Ibid.

27 Eugene Linden, “More Power to Women, Fewer Mouths to Feed,” TIME, 26 September 1994, 64. The U.N. Population Conference was held in Cairo, Egypt. The conference resolved that gender equality is a key to curbing population growth; and The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, Sunday, August 28, 1994, in its PERSPECTIVE puts it succinctly: “Equality is Best Contraceptive”. Also, see Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior, Politics of Feminism and Over Population in a paper, “Women in Africa and African Diaspora: A Need for Positive Collaboration”. The paper was prepared for the 25th Silver Jubilee of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS) held from March 9-12, 1994 at Hampton Virginia; the paper was not presented because the panel could not hold but it was presented at the New Orleans conference of NCOBPS, March 12-14, 1999. The paper had argued against the concept of equality of both sexes as it was a covert plan unfavorable to the society.
him". In other words, African countries cannot shift all of their blames to external actors. Also, that Nigeria the most populous country and the one time richest of the nations in Africa was not represented at the recent 50th anniversary celebration of the United Nations, may be an indication that all is not well with the country. In addition to the aforementioned political problems, an impending catalyst capable of tearing a cultural society apart, is being directed at the root of Etsako family, through African womanhood by the West who seems to hold the view that women of Africa need to be liberated from their African cultural ways of life.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to draw attention to a perceived covert attempt by the West, to negatively impact African women with a view to disrupting the African family setting, destabilize and destroy the historic African cultural value systems, affect the society and thereby, undercut the population of Etsako community and eventually, the population of Nigeria and Africa. Consequently, it is the purpose of this study to highlight the issue as it affects Etsako community in Nigeria, with a view to emphasizing the need to foster a positive educational drive and political socialization that recognize the culture and
tradition of the people of Etsako, as the central focus of such education. Furthermore, this study will show the need to ensure the protection and preservation of the historic, and cultural identity, and maintain a progressive population growth by ensuring the protection and preservation of the women from foreign cultural idiosyncracies. In other words, This study aims to ensure that Etsako women are insulated from foreign political influence.

In pursuance of this goal, there is an urgent need for a reflection on an African political thought, in other words, a need for original thinking of what politics is or comprises, in an African sense; what politics is not, and what it should accomplish for the people of Etsako, Nigeria and Africa generally. The need for Africans to nurture their thoughts and glorify their ethos instead of allowing themselves to be teleguided, have been loudly expressed by some of Africa's nationalists of old before now. They included the late The Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Drs. Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, and Chief Anthony Enahoro, who is one of the few living Pan-Africanists of old. But it appears contemporary leaders of Africa have forgotten what independence meant to those who were it's agitators on behalf of the people. It does not appear justifiable enough to borrow other people/nation's ideals and values when these contradict one's existence, and especially when such
borrowed cultural products might infringe on the survival and well-being of the borrower.

Consequently, this research will attempt to examine the importance of culture in the development of political consciousness. This is with a view to properly place the invalidity of the claims by foreign observers, that adherence to traditional customs and male dominance, are the bane of women's political development in Etsako, Nigeria, and Africa generally.

Furthermore, this study will attempt to establish the relationship between culture and political survival with a view to emphasizing the need to ensure that only the relevant political awareness, for the women of Etsako particularly, Nigeria and Africa generally, is necessary if political survival is desired for Africa. In this sense, a relevant political awareness for Africans, arguably, is one from an African cultural perspective. This is necessary because the dethronement of the cultural tradition of a people could lead to the end of those people. For obvious reasons, therefore, this research will among other things, attempt to examine: the traditional political, and social structure of Etsako viz-a-viz, (1) the social structure, (2) family setting, (3) marriage, (4) political decision making, and (5) traditional cultural title, and other traditional
infrastructure that all combined constitute the foundation of the culture and moral values of the people of Etsako.

However, it may appear clear that men may have failed the people of Africa as a whole in political and economic development, but does the blame belong to what seems to have been characterized as chauvinistic tendencies of the African males? Relatively, it might be arguable that there was no single nation in Africa at this time that seems viable in terms of political development and understanding, socio-economic advancement, industrial growth, and the general well-being of the people. A counter argument from the west may be that, if both males and females have had equal opportunity to steer the political affairs in Etsako, today's political debacle and economic bankruptcy in the areas would not have occurred; and the same argument applies in the case of Nigeria, and Africa as a whole.

SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

The scope of this study is Etsako women in Edo State of Nigeria. For the avoidance of doubt, the phrase, "Etsako women" and "African women" will be used interchangeably in this study because no matter how we look at it, Etsako people are Africans, but for the size which is rather marginal in comparison to Africa as a whole, it is not possible to say that the findings of this study, whatever
their nature, can adequately represent or apply to the entire continent of Africa on the subject-matter. However, on the other hand, as a pioneering effort, it is the vision that the findings of this research will ignite the need for more research by other scholars, not only within Nigeria, but throughout Africa; either to controvert or corroborate the findings of this study. It is only in this sense that this study relates to Africa using Etsako as a case study.

Etsako, means the people who file their teeth.\textsuperscript{28}

Etsako was a division or province during the colonial era, but it has now been constituted into three local government areas of Edo State. They are Etsako East, West and Central Local governments created in December 1991 and February 1996 respectively by the General Ibrahim Babangida and the late General Sanni Abacha’s administrations. The three local governments had come from what used to be Etsako Local Government of Bendel State having emerged from the former Mid-West, upon the departure of colonial administration in Nigeria. Its headquarters then was at Auchi, while Benin City has continued to be the Headquarters of the State.\textsuperscript{29}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}

\bibitem{28} Thomas Hodgkin, \textit{Nigerian Perspectives: An Historical Anthology}, (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 60.

\end{thebibliography}
One of the reasons some people claimed to have opted for the creation of more local governments and states was for even or more development because it had appeared that development and urban life styles, were only available in most headquarters of the states and local governments in many, if not in all over the Federation of Nigeria.

Though, many scholars have argued that the decentralization through the creation of more states and more local government areas might appear as an expansion of more financial burden for the Federal Government, they felt that it was a preferred option for even development. In the same vein this opinion holds that the presidency should be rotational in Nigeria.30 Other scholars hold that the foregoing view might assist what may appear an even economic development, but that more states and local governments may make a political mockery, as it might drive the country into a situation where every ethnic group is a state government, thereby compounding the political disunity and a one-peopled country philosophically.31 A third view of this scholar


31 William J. Oyaide (Professor) and Omoh Tsatsaku Ojiore (Lecturer, University of Benin). This was in a joint contribution in the Great National Political Debates of August 1986, on the political order for Nigeria, called for by the then president, General Ibrahim Babangida.
also, had been that since it appears that there was an absence of a charismatic leadership whose vision of Nigeria and Nigerians transcend ethnic barriers, i.e., the leadership does not see Nigeria and Nigerians as one country and one people, in terms of social and economic even development and distribution, this decentralization exercise of state creation may look to be a major necessity to ensure even development. The validity and non-validity of these views are not the focus of this research, and they do not nullify the merits that may be contained in either of the three positions.

The entire focus of this study is limited to Etsako East, West and Central Local governments of Edo State in Nigeria. There might be one or two reasons for this decision. It is not possible to conduct the study to cover the whole of Nigeria and the continent of Africa within the period available for this research. The resources available could not also ensure the realization of such a study, but on the other hand, as a pioneering effort, it is envisioned that the result of this research will ignite the need for more research, not only within Nigeria, but throughout Africa either to despite or corroborate this study. And it is in these senses only that this study is of Africa using

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Ibid.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The significance of this study derives from the fact that, the proper and adequate development of African women is critical to Africa for the purpose of the overall development and survival of the people and Africa. Equally, the significance of this study lies in the direction and elements of the discussion of the subject matter, African women and political development. Equally significant is the fact that this study will be seen as one of a kind conducted by an African, on the subject of African women and political development, strictly from African moral, social, and cultural perspectives. The significance equally derives from the fact that this study is being conducted by a committed African, on-behalf of many Africans who have serious concerns for the survival and upliftment of the moral, social, and cultural fabric of contemporary Africa, the Older or the First World, in terms of the beginning of the universal plane of our present physical expression.

Furthermore, the significance of this study derives also, from the fact that it takes cognizance of Africans' understanding of the esoteric (the unseen) and metaphysics (first causes of all existence and knowledge) of life which form the basis of their cultural practices, sometimes, to
the annoyance of others. More importantly, in spite of the size of Etsako people (2,703.30 square kilometers or 1,043.4738 square miles, and 464,000, 1992 census figures\(^{33}\)) in relations to the whole of Africa, this study shall serve as an eye opener upon which more research on the issues, will be undertaken by other concerned African scholars.

However, much appears to have been written about the African woman and her seemingly problems of being subordinated and undeveloped. Arguably, some of the writings, are either by foreigners or by some Africans who seem to have been unduly alienated and converted from their own culture to that which they do not appear to know much about. Also arguably too, many of the foreigners working from a disadvantageous point of inadequate information, have written and presented what seems to be the opposite of what the situation and facts actually are, concerning womanhood in Africa. Some Africans who have been overwhelmed by some propaganda and religious indoctrination of western educational system, appear to be hard on the promotion of African traditional customs as they apply to womanhood in Africa through some of their writings as well.

The need to sustain the cultural traditions of Africans

has never been more urgent and apparent. A peoples' culture does not have to be undermined, and the foundation of the African society, the family needs to be guided. Consequently, inspite of what may have been written about African womanhood, this research appears to be one that strives to call attention to some of the ill-effects inherent in foreign political indoctrination of the African woman.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this study, in parts, is based on the African philosophy of politics and government as expounded by the late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. The essence of the philosophy is both pragmatic and idealistic.\(^{34}\) The philosophy’s pragmatism may be explained in the concept that food, shelter, and clothing constitute the necessities of life which every individual must share one with another.\(^{35}\) In the words of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the political idealism is based on the idea that in addition to the material necessities of life, a spiritual outlook on the rights of man also is an essential element to the corporate existence of the State hence this philosophy seeks to safeguard the


\(^{35}\) Ibid.
citizens’ so that the security of the many may not be usurped and transgressed by the few.\textsuperscript{36}

In addition to this philosophical base as a conceptual framework, is our guiding principle, the study’s minor premise which is that "the political efficacy of African women in African political systems, will change the African traditional family structure and will affect negatively, the historic African cultural value systems". In other words, the implication and contention of this guiding principle, hold that African family structure, marriage, child rearing and development, the orderly growth of population, and the control of anti-cultural behavior of Etsako society, would be affected negatively if the women are politically indoctrinated from western idiosyncratic political perspectives.

These conceptual frameworks, established above are further supported by Rodgers-Rose’s understanding that:

\begin{quote}
The woman in West African societies played roles that were vital to the survival of the group. Her role as mothers was her most important function. It is through her that the future of the nation is assured. Kasbury (1952) says that women were viewed like gods because they bear children. Without her, there would be no future. Because of this crucial role, we find that Africa is defined
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
as the motherland.37

And finally, this study will strive on among others, a conceptual framework that the family is unique in providing continuity of social life38 of a society, and that this continuity will be affected if the woman as the source of the family is negatively affected by a foreign culture other than her own.

POLITICS

Our attempt at this point is to explain what politics is and what it is not. In this instance, we are not concerned with theoretical or academic concepts or definitions, rather our concern relates to the realistic and pragmatic explanation of this ancient art and science, called politics. Our attempt is to allow Nigerian leaderships to understand the need to stop and reflect on Africa; reflect on the need to stop being teleguided by African adversaries. A State ought not to allow dictations as to what form of politics it desires for its citizenry; what its citizens, women and men, ought not to do or do, and how they should do it; especially when doubts becloud the moral sanctity or capacity of the dictations and the


sincerity of some of the external dictators, such as some African adversaries. What is the sanity in an advice which goes for the killing of the goose that lay the golden eggs; the heart and Spiritual Minds and Soul of a State, the women? Yowery Museveni said:

He was tired of the 'shallowness' of Western thinking that demands that Uganda instantly model its politics on the U.S. 'Unless you say all the societies in the whole world are uniform, then you cannot say their political management must be uniform.'

Apparently, the same problem is what this study is having with the idea that African women must behave like the western woman to be accepted as a political animal. From the Euro-American perspective, the African woman must become a European or an American, wear the American blue jeans to be accepted as equal with the African man. This study does not appear to see any sense in such a demand under the sea of cultures pervading the human universe. The African woman does not have to become a European or an American, if she does, then she is not an African which she is, but an American that she is not. The differences in human beings are the attraction that makes it possible for an American to go as far as to Vietnam to marry a wife; which makes it

possible for Oriental or Asian women getting married to some American men of recent, and makes it possible too for some White women to get married to some Africans. Variety is said to be the spice of life.

Before independence, patriots and freedom fighters who agitated and fought for the nation’s independence until it came, appeared to have known and understood what politics and independence meant and entailed. But upon independence or when freedom came, those who knew what politics and independence meant were not in power to run the affairs of the State. Consequently, the Nigerian State was left with those who could not differentiate between the needs for internal political solidarity from external political stupidity and exploitation. Wrong advise from “expatriates” were preferred to national experts’ sound advise who knew the need for progressive development; such expatriates’ so called recommendations seemed to have led the entire region to where it has found itself today.

Therefore, what is this game called politics?

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During the pre-independence periods in Nigeria, like in most other countries of Africa, a British, German, Dutch or French citizen, in Africa was an expatriate. An expatriate was said to be a specialist or expert from Europe who must be paid an “expatriate” allowance plus an already exorbitant super scale salary from the natives’ treasury. A close examination has just shown to me that the word “expatriate” meant to banish from one’s native land, to exile or one who has been forcibly removed from his own country, especially in time of war. See Collins English Dictionary, p.364. Yet, Africans were being cheated by the colonial masters.
Academically, politics is the authoritative allocation of values; who gets what, how, and when. Shively explains politics as "The making of common decisions for a group of people through the exercise of power by members of the group over other group." Hitchner and Harbold see politics as the framework of society, and they explain:

> Political order, then, is the framework within which other more particular aspects of human life may go on; it is the framework of society. Politics is activity concerned with the creation and maintenance of such an order.

A standard reference relates politics as the art or science of government or governing, especially the governing of a political entity, such as a nation, and the administration of and control of its internal and external affairs. Although I do accept the African philosophy of politics as propounded by the donyen of African politics and Father of modern Nigerian nationalism, the late, Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, which states that:

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The African philosophy of politics and government is both pragmatic and idealistic. Its pragmatism may be explained in the concept that food, shelter, and clothing constitute the necessities of life which every individual must share one with another. Its political idealism is based on the idea that in addition to the material necessities of life, a spiritual outlook on the rights of man also is an essential element to the corporate existence of the State. Call it what you may - popular communism or communistic nationalism - yet, the African State does not reckon greatness on material values alone; rather, it seeks to safeguard the citizens, so that the security of the many may not be usurped and transgressed by the few.  

The above is the African philosophy of politics; it represents the characteristics of the African minds and its traditional cultural democracy. The African philosophy of politics shows that the acquisition of material realities, the mundane and selfish outlook on life alone, are not the goal that Africa seeks in the existence of humans. There is spirituality underlining every action of the African because he knows and believes that without the benefits of the Ultimate Reality of all that is, nothing can be, for nothing cannot give rise to something. This understanding is the result of the ups and down of politics in Africa from time. But in contemporary times, there seems to be more to the game of politics than can be appreciated as it is played

with the Africans. It is one of the reasons we need to know practically, what we called politics.

There is a need to examine this issue philosophically because political philosophy holds that man must comprehend his natural, social, and national privileges. An ancient philosopher once said:

He who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men. He who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes. But he who knows all that can be known by intellectual energy, is God among men.

Consequently,

Man’s status in the natural world is determined, therefore, by the quality of his thinking. He whose mind is enslaved to his bestial instincts is philosophically not superior to the brute; he whose rational faculties ponder human affairs is a man; and he whose intellect is elevated to the consideration of divine realities is already a demigod, for his being partakes of the luminosity with which his reason has brought him into proximity.

Therefore, philosophically, politics is mind-power in the context of human affairs. In other words, politics is the

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46. Ibid, xiii (17).

47. Ibid.
mind’s power to dissect issues, so as to produce desired results either for personal satisfaction or for the satisfaction of the group or community. But ideally, politics is a game of survival of the fittest; a game or an avocation in which, to some, “the end justifies the means”; and to others, it is an avocation in which the “fastest gone alive”; the game in which what one gets determines the behavior. In all, we must surmise that politics is cunning, wary, judicious, sagacious, diplomatic, watchful, discreet, prudent, calculating, farsighted and perceptive. Stupidity is not politics and it is not shallow, nor is it a dull avocation in which one expects others to think for them. It appears Africans seemed to have been allowing others to think and dictate to them what they have to do; plan their future for them, and think out thoughts for the continent. That is rather apolitical because in the game of politics survival is the essence. There are two forms of politics, internal and external. The internal political dynamism arising from internal cohesion


51 Ibid.
or togetherness of the citizens of the State, propels into orbit a vibrant and dynamic external relations policy; and in international politics, which a State ought to play with dexterity, there is no permanent friendship, but permanent interests. Permanent interests mean the national interests of the State in terms of the peoples’ desires, aspirations and needs.

For a further illustrations, we refer to the French’s attitude toward American pop music on its (French’s) Radio. The French describe or equated American pop music on French Radio, as another form of cultural imperialism over France, and it banned the playing of such music on the French Radio.52 Two years before, the French government had tried to enact a law which would have sent a broadcaster, advertiser or government official to jail for using English words.53 These were politics and political sagacity because such acts will protect the culture of the French from being diluted, and it will prevent economic exploitation of the youth and protect the continuous employment of the French musicians. Nigerian musicians are out of business and employment which also include the promotion of African


53 Ibid.
cultural legacy; most of them appeared to have switched to playing evangelical music or church music. One would argue that this was an ominous sign of political demise and social decay. The youths of the country and the people seemed to have stopped the buying of indigenous music, in preference for pop and soul music from foreign land. Contestably, the liquidating attitude is a political and cultural suicide for any conscious society; as such a state could only occur where there was absence of alert leadership and consciousness in the citizenry.

Furthermore politically, it could be argued that an equivalent of the French attitude towards the U.S. pop music, is the United States’ attitude in the protection of its air space against others’ air waves. Contestably for example, the United States’ Voice of America VOA, is received in almost every home that has a radio set in Nigeria and the entire African subregion. The CNN, also of the United States, is also now received in many homes of many affluent Nigerians. But the United States protects its air space against in-coming electromagnetic signals or radio waves from other lands, especially Africa. In other words, radio signals from Nigeria and some other countries in Africa, are not received in the U.S. irrespective of the time zone difference. Although, it is not impossible that Nigeria and the other African states may not possess the
technological energy or power, such as requisite transformers or transmitters to boost their radio signals. But it could also be argued that it appears more political than anything else because shortwave radio sets are a rare luxuries in the United States of America by design. Consequently, more Americans have limited access to other information about Africa and Africans except what they are preferred and guided to know. Although, a friend claimed that a shortwave radio set found on him by the U.S. Customs and Immigration at the port of entry, brought much interrogation to him like some with contraband goods that he almost left the set with them. However, one is not sure that this was a common practice or it was an isolated case and a coincidence.

One would further argue that one of the few foreign radio stations that are sometime periodically received in the U.S. is obviously the British Broadcasting Corporation BBC. The BBC due to the "special" relationship between the U.S. and Britain, its World News is received, timed because it fades out as soon as the "major news" are read. But it could be argued that News of the African World which, is not read with the World News, is not received. The VOA is strategically installed in Monrovia in Liberia, and Kenya, in East Africa in addition to other portable and powerful transmitters strategically installed in strategic cities.
like Lagos in Nigeria and Abidjan in Cote d’Ivoire to further ease the VOA receptions in Africa. Arguably, due to the powerful nature of these sophisticated and enhanced electronic devices, they appear to interfere with local broadcast electronic signals. Consequently and contestably too, it appears to be one of the reasons that some of the transmissions from local stations, such as the Nigerian Television Authority, NTA and Federal Radio Corporation Nigeria, FRCN are not well or properly received within the Nigerian air space. For example, the Voice of Nigeria, the Nigerian external broadcast organ is hardly received in the U.S. However, while the VOA is a household word that almost every Nigerian know in Nigeria, only very few Americans probably know what VOA stands for; this appears to be the reason why my computer continued to fail to recognize the acronym or the abbreviation.

It can be argued politically therefore, that while the VOA is meant to capture, enslave and colonize the auditory sense of Nigerians and Africans generally, the CNN captures, colonizes and enslaves the visual and cultural psyche of many of the Nigerian elites with whom the electronic satellite discs are now a new status symbol. It can be argued, that it is from these elites that their children pick up some un-African strange foreign attitudes and characteristics with which they influence other children who
are not aware, and unmindful within the Nigerian polity. Politically, it could also be argued that the United States appears to love its nationals more and will do every thing possible to protect them from foreign corruption or influence of any kind from outside. The total implication therefore, of this politics of the air-waves and cultural warfare, arguably, is the protection against political influence and cultural imperialism of others.

Contestably, the political systems in Nigeria and other African states do not appear to be aware or understand such politics and its cultural implication. The other adduceable reason could be the African benevolent open door policy which Africans have toward others and non-African states. On the other hand, America understands the politics, power and implication of cultural imperialism, and the need to protect its nationals against such influence from other nations. Understandably therefore, it is a culture and political warfare between the imperialist powers and the unpolitical and non-imperial, but communal and cultural states of Africa.

Another example is the United Nation’s Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which imposed a ban on the sale of Ivory knowing very well that the people of Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia live and survive on the selling or trading on their animal products.
Nigerian Women Legislators Visit

STORY ON PAGE 16

Sitting (L-R)
Mrs. Mercy-Isie, Mrs. Florence Aya, and
Mrs. Iquo Minimah

Standing (L-R)
Ms. Temi Harriman, Ms. Lynda Ikpeazu &
Mrs. Patience Ogodo
Was that good politics for these countries who were victims of international treachery? I leave the answer alone. But during the last Convention’s meeting in June, 1997 in Harare, Zimbabwe, the Environmental Minister, Mr. Chen Chemutengwende decided to play the smart game of politics, and he informed the Convention that Elephants were killing his people and destroying their habitats. “We have too many elephants and we must be able to earn some money from them”. But the UN officials of the Convention were not prepared to listen to the Minister’s plea nor were they sympathetic with the need of the Zimbabwean people who needed to sell ivory to have money to buy food. Of course, arguably, they were more concerned with preserving the jungles of Africa and their wild animals from extinction while the humans on whose land the animals dwell were dying. But the Minister was not prepared for that, so he decided to let them know that he understood their political and racist game and he remarked openly that:

Some are just fanatical animal rights activists who will not accept any reason no matter how valid, then there are others who are just racist and do not like the urbanization or development of Africa because they like Africa to be one big zoo where they will just come as tourists and see poor

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blacks practicing traditions and living with wild animals.\textsuperscript{55} This remark made it uncomfortable for the non-African delegates from Europe and America at the conference. Even though some European delegates threatened that the fiery remarks would backfire on the Minister, it never did for the shot rang in their psyche, with what appeared to be an appropriate political remark under the circumstance. They could not repeat the unholy political game any more, but had to grant the Zimbabwe proposal which allows Zimbabweans to sell their ivory. One would want to regard the sharp remarks of the Minister of Zimbabwe as a smart political move which made it possible for the country to regain the freedom to sell their own ivory.

Africans must have and maintain their own thought. The traditional political democracy which guided by the cultural precepts of the Africans is a phenomenon that should not be parted with. Europe created its own aristocratic democracy out of this African traditional political democracy. Contestably too, the West molded its own form of liberal democracy out of the same African system, and turned around intimidating the Africans to abandon what is African. This study contends, it is apolitical to part with the source that makes one’s survival possible; it is apolitical for

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
Africans to do away with their own marriage system, polyoharmony, and to try to embrace a foreign system that tends to create insurmountable problems for society, such as we see in the system of monogamy. Another apolitical cloud under which African states have lived for sometime now that could be cited, is the policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of member states of the OAU. This study would argue that it was apolitical because the policy was in direct contradiction and in violation of the African cultural philosophy of "we are our brother's keepers". That policy must have been externally inspired and imposed on the OAU members. This study would make the point, that it is unwise to copy an idea or a system from Africa, and turn around to ask Africans to throw away that from which these foreigners have gained their knowledge. Arguably too, the marriage and family system is African, therefore, Africans should not accept being told to do away with nature's inheritance. The point that this study would endeavor to drive home is best made by Woodrow Wilson when he said, "We borrowed rice from the Chinese, but we do not eat it with chopsticks. We borrowed our whole political language from England, but we leave the words 'king' and 'lords' out of it"; and Wilson asked the obvious question: "What did we
ever originate?". The idea that this study is emphasizing, is that the Africans are not in the same position as President Woodrow Wilson and his people because Africans are originators of those ideas and things; they are not borrowers, so they do not have any need to make amend to what is theirs that was already enviable and marketable.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study's general research problem is stated as follows:

AFRICAN WOMEN AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF ETSAKO WOMEN IN EDO STATE OF NIGERIA.

For operational definition or interpretation, the research question is restated in the following order: Are African women not functioning within the political set up, in other words, are they not efficacious in the African political system? More importantly, what is, and what does not constitute political efficacy of the African woman? Furthermore, is there an indication that there are needs for the development of political efficacy of Etsako women in Edo State? The notion is that politics socializes, therefore, liberates the mind. There cannot be an argument over this, but the argument might be: Does the African woman's mind

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need liberation? If it does, what type of elevation of the mind does the Etsako woman require; should such liberation or transformation be indigenous or foreign? In other words, should women of Africa be introduced to foreign idiosyncratic political behavior in order to be accepted as efficacious within the African political system; and should African women not develop their political minds within their related cultural characteristics or ethos?

Furthermore, for the purpose of elucidation, is the need to develop the political awareness of African women necessitated by men's prejudices against them? Do African men have prejudices against their women? Is the quest to develop Etsako women's political acuity from a general political necessity in the life of the people of Etsako viewing the current political upheaval prevailing in that part of the state, the country, and Africa generally? Additionally, is the need to develop African women's political acumen necessitated by an external ill-motivated drive? Could it be from the idea that since men have politically failed the continent, that African women should now be developed politically to take over the political power-base in the continent? Still, how sustainable is such an option since there seems to be another view that every successful man has a woman behind him in Africa? Therefore, it would appear that positive or negative responses to these
questions, and many others perhaps, will be very vital to
the disconfirmation of the hypothesis of this research.

THE PREMISE

The premise of this discourse is based on the null
hypothesis that:
THE POLITICAL EFFICACY OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN AFRICAN POLITICAL
SYSTEMS AS DEFINED IN THIS STUDY TENDS NOT TO CHANGE THE
AFRICAN TRADITIONAL FAMILY STRUCTURE AND, TENDS NOT TO
AFFECT THE HISTORIC AFRICAN CULTURAL VALUES.

The minor thesis presumes that
THE POLITICAL EFFICACY OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN AFRICAN POLITICAL
SYSTEMS AS DEFINED IN THIS STUDY WILL CHANGE THE AFRICAN
TRADITIONAL FAMILY STRUCTURE AND, WILL AFFECT NEGATIVELY,
THE HISTORIC AFRICAN CULTURAL VALUE SYSTEMS.

It is presumptuous to so state or back the major
premise of this discourse until the research's alternative
premise may presumably have held an un-attestable ground,
therefore, the disconfirmation or the confirmation of either
hypothesis may become compelling on what will be said or
stated in this study.

The minor premise is built on a preemptive or rather,
on an intuitive knowledge, without an empirical or
scientific foundation. Hence it appears a matter of
speculation at this time, that African family settings will be destroyed if the African women mount the political soapbox at the level of the socialization of the women being called for by some foreign observers. At least, the United States appears to be serving as a good example of what the over-involvement of women away from the home may cause to the well being of the family.\textsuperscript{57}

ASSUMPTIONS

The nature of this study, in terms of the subject-matter and its focus, the women of Etsako East, West and Central local governments, presupposes that there could be many assumptions that could be made of the situation that this research had proposed to study.

The people of Etsako generally, including the women are considered a minority in the broader perspective of the former Bendel State of Nigeria, but with the newly created Edo State, Etsako people, as a linguistic cultural and political group may not be considered in the former light as it becomes a powerful political bloc in consonance with the

\textsuperscript{57} In 1994, the U.S. Census Bureau disclosed that half of the nation's children live in 'non-traditional' families, a hodgepodge of household types created by an era of frequent divorce, remarriage and out-of-wedlock births (see \textit{The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution}, Tuesday, August 30, p.D1). The situation could have been the result of women activism brought about by many years of oppression, that has historical precedence. Also, read Adebisi Aderounmu, "Political ambition should not rock the marital boat", \textit{The Guardian}, Nigerian, Wednesday, July 12, 1989 page 13.
Fig. 5a

ETS AKO WEST L.G.A.

REFERENCE

- L.G.A. BOUNDARIES
- ROADS
- RIVERS
- L.G.A. HEADQUARTERS
- SETTLEMENTS

SCALE: 1:400,000
Fig. 5b

ETS A K O E A S T & CENTRAL L. G. A.'s

REFERENCE
STATE BOUNDARIES
L. G. A. HEADQUARTERS
SETTLEMENTS
ROADS
RIVERS
SCALE: 1:400,000
Fig. 5c

ETSUKO EAST & CENTRAL L.G.As

REFERENCE
STATE BOUNDARIES
L.G.A. II
L.G.A. HEADQUARTERS
SETTLEMENTS
ROADS
RIVERS
SCALE: 1:400,000
other ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and political groups in the State.

Before the recent split which brought about Etsako East, West and Central local governments, the entire subregion of the State was assumed to have been left uncared for in terms of political allocation of national resources and infrastructure. The people of Etsako generally, were victims of maladministration as well as they were considered minority of the minorities in the larger context of the Nigerian Federation, and they were marginalized. For many years, the proper original name of the people which is "Etsako" meaning the people who file teeth, was lost following the Nupe inter-ethnic wars in the area. A derogatory slogan used by the warring enemies in the subregion became the name until the departure of the British administration in Nigeria. There has been a transfer of a general attitude of disregard and discrimination of women from Europe to the colonial administration in Africa, and Etsako women were not spared in this process. It is assumed that since the men had not such an opportunity to be heard as such in the colonial regimes in Africa, the women could not also be heard. To some extent, the historical experience and the political marginalization, was assumed to have been the source of agitations for the compartmentalization of the Division into
more than two local governments of our recent past.

Within the above historical analysis, this study will assume that resulting from the historical and political experience, the women of Etsako have not enjoyed their existence, but not because of their historical experience, rather, it is the abandonment of their cultural political past, and the general political confusions in Etsako and in most nations in Africa. Rather than anything else, this study assumed that both the men and women of Africa today have to share the blames for the political conditions of Etsako and the continent.

The foregoing assumption is based on historical aphorism in some societies in Africa and elsewhere, that every successful man has a woman behind him, and vice versa. In Nigeria, for example, the feeling is there that every successful man must have a strong woman behind him and so it is in the case of a successful woman as well. This study will therefore, assume that since some of the women were behind some of the men of affairs who have mismanaged the political economy of Africa, there would be no difference should the women take over political control. Furthermore, among others, this study assumes that the quest to develop the political acuity of Etsako women particularly, Nigerian and African women generally, is an ill-conceived idea of some African observers. And this study assumes that the
quest to develop the political acumen of African women may be connected to a covert international plan to depopulate Africa through the indoctrination of the women with foreign idiosyncracies.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the procedures and methodology employed in this research; it contains the methods, and technique employed in the gathering of data, including the statistical methods of analysis used in this study.

Research Design And Data Gathering Method

This study was designed to be descriptive and employs both normative and positive theories combined with effective analytical and interpretative skills backed with primary and historical data. Essentially, an African society is relatively embedded in norms and cultural traditions encompassing the philosophy of the people, hence the philosophy of the politics and government of the people of which this study takes strong cognizance.

The study was carried out in two phases. The first phase took place in Nigeria, while the second phase took place at the Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. During the first phase, a two and half month stay in Nigeria beginning late November, 1996 and ending in the second week
of February 1997, was necessary for the purpose of data gathering. In Nigeria, we had discussions with a number of individuals: opinion leaders, elders, men and women in Etsako community. We also met and discussed with local government officials, and officials of the local branch of the Family Support Programme in Edo State of Nigeria. The Family Support Programme is a women’s organization founded by Mrs. Maryam Abacha, the wife of the late former Military ruler of Nigeria. The organization had enjoyed the support of the late General Abacha’s regime. More will be said of this women’s organization later in this exercise.

While in Nigeria, with two of my research assistants we travelled from the Edo State capital, Benin City, to the three Etsakos, East, West and central Local Government areas of the State. We distributed the questionnaires prepared at the Clark Atlanta University to Etsako women. The recipient population were adult elementary and secondary (high) school teachers, and senior secondary (high) school female students. The names of respondents were not sought because the study was blind to names. While carrying out this exercise, it came to our knowledge that another new local government, known as Etsako Central Local Government Council, had been created from the then two existing ones, Etsako East and West. The new local government comprising Ekphei Clan, Uzairthue, Alegbete, and Avhianwu Clan, has its
headquarters at Avhianwu (Fugar). This news did not disturb our activity as the three Etsako local government areas remained one cultural and linguistic family, in spite of the Nigerian political dialectics and the artificial divide or the continuous fragmentations that have been going on in the country.

The survey instruments were left with the teachers who participated and were collected an hour later. Student participants were assembled in open halls, by each respective school authority while the instruments were administered. The research director and two research assistants were on hand to answer questions.

Before departing for Nigeria to work on the first phase of this research, a set of questionnaire was designed to poll American female students on college campuses in Atlanta. They comprised Atlanta University Center (CAU) which houses Spelman College, Clark Atlanta University, Morris Brown College, Morehouse College, and Morehouse School of Medicine. Other colleges were Georgia State University, and Georgia Perimeter College, South Central Campus. The focus populations were all females. A total of three hundred (300) students were surveyed.

The aim of the poll was to find out how much knowledge of the African woman the American woman has. The choice of
the method of polling was considered adequate because college campuses provided an adequate admixture of people from the different parts of the United States. This was felt necessary for a truly random sampling, IF a generalization statement may be made during the course of this study. The second phase which took place in Atlanta, Georgia constitutes this entire treatise which included all the proposed elements as contained in the approved dissertation proposal.

The Data Gathering Instrument

It was a relatively difficult task conducting and gathering the data that were the concern of this section of this study. But it was good that we opted to physically distribute and collect our instruments back from the respondents, rather than conduct the survey by mail or by telephone. Some of the people in Georgia were not interested in the study, therefore, would not complete a questionnaire. The case was different in Nigeria where respondents were very much interested in the study, and some requested to be notified of the outcome upon the completion of this study.

The first set of questionnaire consisted of short simple sentences concerning the knowledge that American
women have of the African woman, in other words, how much
the American women know of the African woman. Of the thirty
simple questions, (15) fifteen requested for a "yes" or "no"
answer. The other (15) fifteen asked for an agreement or
disagreement to each of the statements. Each of the two-
page questionnaires carried a paragraph of an explanation of
the purpose, and an appeal to assist in the completion of
the survey. The second set of the survey instrument was
segmented into four broad categories, and each questionnaire
had a total of sixty-six (66) simple direct and short
questions bordering on office employment, politics, family
values, and culture and traditions.

The survey instrument was five pages each. Each of the
questionnaires carried an introduction and an explanation of
the purpose of the study, and asked for participants'
assistance in completing the questionnaires. Each
questionnaire carries a promise that the responses so
provided would be used solely for this study. The list of
tables include a more detailed description of the responses
from the respondents pertaining to each question, and each
of the questions is restated before the description. A copy
of each of the instruments used including the map of
Nigeria, and the maps of the three Etsako local government
areas, are included appropriately in this study.
Statistical Method Employed

Statistical methods employed in this research were both quantitative and qualitative for obvious reason. The importance of this study, in terms of its outcome, as it affects Etsako and Nigeria, viz-a-vis African peoples, called for a non-omni/uni-directional analytical examination of the data. Consequently, there was the need to examine the data from dual angles for clarity of understanding of the results. For this purpose, the statistical testing of the premises and the qualitative descriptions, analysis and interpretation were deployed.

Statistical Premise

Test Statistic: $X$ (Chi-Square test)

Level of Significance: 5% and 1%

Degrees of Freedom: $(c-1) (r-1)$

Decision Rule: Accept $H_0$ if $X_{cal} < X_{tab}$
Reject $H_0$ if $X_{cal} > X_{tab}$

The Null Hypothesis ($H_0$):

The Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems as defined in this study does not change the African Traditional Family Structure and, does not affect the Historical African Cultural Value Systems.
The Alternative Hypothesis (Hi):

The Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems as defined in this study will change the African Traditional Family Structure and, will affect negatively, the Historical African Cultural Value Systems.

Test-Statistic:

\[ X_{\text{cal}} = E(O_i - E_i) \]  

\[ 1 - 1 \sum E_i \]  

The \( O_i \) = Observed frequency (responses)

\( E_i \) = Expected frequency is given by the formula

\[ E_i = T_c T_r \]  

Where, \( T_c \) = Column Total

\( T_r \) = Row Total

\( T_g \) = Grand Total

\( c \) = Column

\( r \) = Row

The following figure shows the Test of Hypothesis.
Figure 6

Test Of Hypothesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>$X^2$ cal</th>
<th>$X^2$ tab 5%</th>
<th>$X^2$ tab 1%</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ON WORK*</td>
<td>2790.03</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>6.63</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON POLITICS*</td>
<td>2593.77</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON FAMILY VALUES*</td>
<td>1768.76</td>
<td>9.49</td>
<td>11.34</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURE AND TRADITION*</td>
<td>2176.46</td>
<td>9.49</td>
<td>13.28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINOR PREMISE**</td>
<td>795.81</td>
<td>9.49</td>
<td>13.28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAJOR PREMISE**</td>
<td>1666.89</td>
<td>9.49</td>
<td>13.28</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data 1997.

* All $X^2$ cal values are significant at both 5% and 1% levels of probability.

** The Null Hypothesis, that the Political efficacy of African women in African political systems as defined in this study does not change the African traditional family structure and, does not affect the historical African cultural value systems was rejected as disconfirmed, therefore, the hypothesis is not acceptable. Consequently, the Alternative Hypothesis, that the Political efficacy of
African Women in African Political Systems as defined in this study will change the African Traditional family structure and, will Affect Negatively, the Historic African Cultural Value Systems is accepted.

The significance of this rejection and disconfirmation of the hypothesis including the meaning or implication for this study will be discussed at an appropriate section in this study.

This Study

This study had expressed in unmistakable terms that this is an experimental study, its outcome cannot be said to go beyond Etsako. But with the result hopefully, other scholars might follow to conduct similar exercise, as this will serve as an indication of what might be confronted in future studies that are geared toward the same direction or goal, of which this research is a small, but an integral part.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this section is a list of, terms, phrases, and some unfamiliar words that have been used frequently, and have been defined for the purpose of this study.

African leaders: Rulers and heads of regimes including their handpicked collaborators in the mismanagement of
Etsako, and for that matter Nigeria as a whole and its human and material resources.

**African political systems:** The totality of Etsako peoples' lifestyle, ways and manners, merit and procedure of doing or managing day-to-day affairs, based on the traditional political, and social structure of Etsako.

**African Women or Women of Africa:** Refers to all the adult females, above the age of eighteen years, and are natives of Etsako East, West, and Etsako Central Local government areas of Edo State of Nigeria.

**Etsako:** The area that lies in the northeastern part of Edo State of Nigeria, and covers approximately 2703.30 square kilometers or 1,043.4738 square miles of hilly semi-savannah grassland. The population is estimated at 464,000 people. Etsako is bounded on the west by Owan and Akoko-Edo local Government areas, and on the east by the Okpebho and Agbazilo local government areas and, on the east, by the River Niger. The people who live in the area are known by their tradition of filing their teeth, which is the meaning of the word, **Etsako**.

**European political values:** Any of those ideas of state and its affairs, common among some Europeans, and having

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58 Lindsay Barrett, Ibid. 159.
their origin in Europe and the West, and are appreciated.

Feminism: Conceptually from an African perspective, feminism is a social idiosyncracy whose principles, upon its success, destabilization is the social and general consequences in the home and society where such principles are operative. It is a Euro-American myopic mundane principle of female personal autonomy and a modern dilemma, that cuts young women off from those aspects of life which are distinctly female desires, such as being a wife, motherhood, raising children and commitment to a man. But from a general Western and European perspectives, feminism is “The doctrine - and the political movement based on it - that women should have the same economic, social and political rights as men”.

Another name for feminism is “Women’s Liberation Movement”.

Foreign: Anything whatsoever having its origin outside Africa, and or any idea, interests and values conflicting or incompatible with Etsako peoples’ lore, idea, interests and values; and especially those behaviors and characteristics that are considered immoral and an abomination to the people of Etsako.

Indoctrination: The deliberate encoding of the mind of a person or persons with information and knowledge that may be lacking and are meant to either bring the person or
persons to the realization of him/herself or themselves or to alienate the self of the receiver without realizing; or a deliberate act to brainwash with political and religious materials capable of affecting positively or otherwise and harm or liberate or affect the psychological make up of the one who is being indoctrinated.

Political Development: the understanding and appreciation of state and or its affairs, ideas and principles, other behaviors and characteristics, all, foreign to the people of Etsako particularly, Nigerians and other Africans generally; any of such orientations that tend to inhibit or are capable of undermining the preeminence of the tradition, culture and customs of the people of Etsako; and any of such undertaken, avocation or vocation, meant to influence the character and behavior, so as to make the Etsako women behave and compare, so to say, "equally" with European and American women.

Political efficacy: The ability and power to function within and, of appreciation of the state and its affairs, be it traditional or modern, foreign or native.

Un-African: Any of those foreign idiosyncracies that the people of Etsako, and the Nigerians or Africans, are not familiar with because such are not of Africa. Such idiosyncracies include the idea of a female, especially a
married female working outside the home, smoking, and the wearing of male dresses.

*Polyoharmony:* (po-ly-har-mo-ny) A marriage system in Etsako and Nigeria, in which a man is expected to marry more than one wife; the man may marry as he is able to maintain while he retains the leadership or head of the family. To the people of Etsako in this polyharmonic tradition, monogamy is a sign of irresponsibility on the part of the man and a sign of selfishness on the part of the woman in such a marriage.59

*Mate:* A fellow wife.

*Adegbe* (a-de-gbe): The first wife and "mother" or head of the home of a man in Etsako.

*Amhoghia* (a-mho-ghia): The second wife of a man in Etsako.

*Urthuaamhi* (u-rthu-a-mhi): Initiation to manhood, and in the case of a young female, the rite of wedding.

*Egwuogo* (e-gwu-o-go): A young man who has passed through the initiation to manhood.

*Obetsu* (o-be-tsu): Okhe Title holder in Etsako.

*Ogbhari* (o-gbha-ri): A non-Okhe Title holder in Etsako.

*Ogidigba* (o-gi-di-gba): A traditional center for

59 Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior, 1983 Ibid.
public meetings in Etsako; a town-hall in modern time.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS STUDY

This research contains five chapters. Chapter one contains the Introduction, The Problem, The Purpose of The Study; Scope of This Study, Significance, Theoretical Framework, What is Politics?, Research Question; The Premise, Assumptions and Methodology in which the following were discussed: Research Design and Data Gathering Method, The Data Gathering Instrument, Statistical Method Employed, Statistical Tests of Premises, the Hypothesis (HO), The Alternative Hypothesis (Hi), Test-Statistics, Statistical Table and The Study. This chapter also presented the Organization of this study. A section on the Definition of Terms is also provided in this chapter. This is to enable all such unfamiliar words, technical and foreign, and such other terms used in the study, to be understood through their definitions and explanation in the sub-section.

Chapter II, the Literature Review, presents a brief introduction of the topic under study, history of contemporary women in Etsako, as well as history of African women, and African women in history; and concludes with a general review of literature.

Chapter III consists of Presentation and Analysis of
Data. The Analysis is divided into Part I and II; the Chapter also contains the Survey Data, Responses to Questions and Statements on Survey Instrument, the American Women's Knowledge of the African Woman, Etsako Women: Analysis of Response to Questionnaire, Summary of the 300 Questionnaires Administered to Etsako Women, Response and Analysis on Major Issues, and Summary.

Chapter IV comprises the Interpretation and Conclusion. In the Chapter’s Introduction, it presents The Traditional Political, and Social Structure of Etsako Society which includes the Family Setting, Marriage, Political Decision Making, Traditional Titles, "Ogidigba" (Town Hall), and Discipline and Social Control. This chapter also includes Political Observation on the Findings, Western Assumptions, The Case Against Population Control in Etsako, Family Structure in Etsako, Feminism and Etsako, Family Values, Relations Between Woman and Man, Culture and Tradition, and the Conclusion.

Chapter V encompasses the Summary, and Recommendation Chapter VI presents the Bibliography.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This research is uncovering a fact that not much work, if any, appears to have been done in the area of focus of this exercise. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the concern of this research that when Etsako women, as well as African women required any form of human development, in any endeavor, it will be wiser to do so from an African perspective. That is, such enlightenment, for the purpose of survival, must be done within the African cultural guidelines. In this review, effort will be focused on the following issues: the status of African women, political history of African women; Pharaohnic period, pre and post-European invasion of Africa, African culture, Woman, and the problem of African women. It is important to keep in mind that in this study, the phrases "African women" and "Etsako women" are used interchangeably; they both imply Etsako women especially that an Etsako woman is an African. Consequently, this study, "African Women and Political Development" may well be one of a kind of a research to have
been conducted on the subject strictly from a profoundly different angle, and from an African perspective. Some of the materials available have been written only from the consciousness of western Euro-centric idea, and western feminist perspectives. In other words, some of the writings appear biased about the true position of the African woman in Africa, and most of such writings do not appear to have considered the culture and traditions of Africa.

While many of such writings and discussions claim that African women have always been excluded from political participation, we have very few ones including this study, that are begging to dissociate themselves from such unfounded and incorrect claims about African women in matters pertaining political participation. For example, Nina Mba has done a major work on the subject to invalidate some of the biased claims made concerning the awareness and ability of the African woman. Her research covers pre-independence and post independent periods (1900-1965) in Nigeria. Mba’s contribution shows that African women in Southern Nigeria were heavily involved in political activities from 1900 to 1965.¹ In her work, titled “Nigerian Women Mobilized”, she broadly defined politics as the

process by which resources and values (human, material, and spiritual) are allocated within a social unit (nation, region, town, or village) for the purpose of meeting the needs and desires of its members; and she said that Politics occurs within a political system, which is the organized pattern of interaction among the people in the social unit for achieving the allocation of objectives.²

Mba’s study shows that in Benin society, women were not left out in the political arena, since there were women among the thirty-one Ogiso (kings) that are known through oral traditions to have reigned in the Edo kingdom.³ The Etsako people are in Edo State as it is known today in Nigeria.

Arguably, the predicament of the African woman appears to be that she seems to be alone in her quest to be recognized and respected for what she is. Those who should have probably come to her aid or were expected to do so, appear to be on the other side. Many of the able-bodied African women of the Diaspora seem to be working, not for the preservation of the lore and ethos of what makes an African woman, due to lack of adequate and correct

² Ibid. vii.
information including the disinformation and misinformation which has been out there about women in Africa.

Consequently, a Pan-African Women’s movement is currently in operation working to “liberate” (emancipatory development)\textsuperscript{4} the African woman from the African male controlled oppression. In their journal, “NETWORK”, we read:

We do not even have to give examples of how women were treated in 18th and 19th century Africa to show the sexual oppression of African women and the hard labor they performed in their community work force. In the rural economy of present day Africa, women still perform hard labor and African men enjoy higher privileges and higher social status”. ... The concept of the African woman’s role being limited to mothering and wifery might serve the interests of upper income men and women. As a result of this practice, higher income women will be limited only to their role as mothers and wives thus giving their husbands social status.\textsuperscript{5}

The above categorizations, in the opinion of this research, could only have come from those who have had no affinity with the African woman, but these statements are coming from African women in the Diaspora under the auspices of the International Resource Network of Women of African Descent (IRNWAD).


\textsuperscript{5} Ibid. 1.
Writing under the heading "The African Woman Today", Ama Ata Aidoo said that in most countries of Africa whole sectors of the economy, such as internal trade, agriculture, agro-business and health care, are in the hands of women. Aidoo went further to paint the image of the African woman of today as she is seen in the mind of the world.

She is breeding too many children she cannot take care of, and for whom she should not expect other people to pick up the tab. She is hungry, and so are her children. In fact, it has become a cliche of Western journalism that the African woman is old beyond her years; she is half-naked; her drooped and withered breasts are well exposed; there are flies buzzing around the faces of her children; and she has a permanent begging bowl in her hand.

More of such writings will be cited in the next sub-section discussing the status of African women.

Most of the dialogues only refer to the African woman as the wretched of the earth subjugated and exploited by primitive traditions propelled by African males. Some of these writings are by some Africans as well, but the authors and some entities seemed to have mainly focused their attention on how to "transform", or remake the

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7 Ibid.
Fig. 7


African women of the nineties
personality of the African woman to become what she was not supposed to be: that is, a European or an American. The discussions tended to see African women as those who are only open to diseases and death. As a result of this unfortunate circumstantial notions, this research might just be one of the very few pioneering efforts directed to remind the Africans, that there might be an urgent need to ensure that the African woman, is allowed to develop within her cultural periphery which is in the area of concern of the subject matter.

THE STATUS OF AFRICAN WOMEN

Most Africans will argue that African women or Etsako women have a God given status in the society within which they command respect, and with which they are able to function and perform tasks which men cannot dare. First of all, the status of the African woman was never in doubt before the Africans because they knew too well that the African woman's status was pre-ordained by nature through the virtue of motherhood. Every other thing, no matter what it may be would appear secondary. For an example, campaigning for the legalization of polyharmony or

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8 Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior, "The Press As The Fourth Estate of The Realm" (Final Draft), July, 1983. The paper was presented at the annual conference of the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Bendel State Chapter. In the paper Ojior asserted that, the word "polyharmony" is the appropriate word to be used to describe the Nigerian system of
polygyny (polygamy) in Cote d’Ivoire, Susanne Sango asked women in Cote d’Ivoire to think of the children first, and forgive their husbands for the stupid things they may do. "That’s love. That’s what our parents did in the village”. Sango says if polyharmony was legalized, husbands would not leave their wives for lovers and the family unit would remain intact. Susanne Sango is the President of the National Association of Single Women in Cote d’Ivoire.  

Secondly, to the Africans, in terms of the greater majority of the people, no other status will ever be more important than that of motherhood with all that it encompasses.

Arguably, the importance of motherhood to the Etsako woman, and generally to the Nigerian woman, can never be over-stressed as it is expressed in this study. Discussing the sources of women’s political powerlessness in Nigeria, Mrs. Ada Okwuosa states:

For the young Nigerian woman, marriage is a primary life-ambition whose responsibilities can carry over into the generation of grandchildren when she, as a grandmother, has to shuttle from the home of one married daughter to another as nanny. The degree of marriage in which a group of two or more women with a man. are bond together by a common natural force of marriage rituals with the man as the head of the house, and are in harmony with one another in the same confine. Polyharmony is a derivative of the phrase “poly-homo-harmony”, meaning, “many-people-in-harmony” hence “polyoharmony”.

moral obligation with which the average Nigerian woman views her role as mother, is such that non-fulfilment of that role carries with it high psychological and emotional sanctions, which can and do affect productivity and performance in any other novel role such as politics.\textsuperscript{10}

On marriage and procreation, Mbiti states:

Marriage is a complex affair with economic, social and religious aspects which often overlap so firmly that they cannot be separated from one another.\textsuperscript{11}

And he continued that:

For African peoples, marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all the members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. All the dimensions of time meet here, and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized. Marriage is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator. Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwise, he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a law-breaker, he is not only abnormal but 'under-human'. Failure to get married under normal circumstances means that the person concerned has rejected society and society rejects him in return.\textsuperscript{12}


\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
Professor Mbiti further stresses that marriage and procreation in African communities are in unity: “without procreation marriage is incomplete”. “This is a unity which attempts to recapture, at least in part, the lost gift of immortality”, and hence it is a spiritual obligation that this study seems to continue to stress on this issue.

But consequently, many people in the new world, western Europe, and a minority of Africans appear to see Africa differently. From their perspective, the African woman has been denied of her status in life due to the culture of the Africans to which men seem to want the women adhere. Writing under the heading, "Women's Burden", Oye-Adeniran, an African, wrote: that the health risks faced by women in childbearing in 118 countries, home to about 94% of the world population, has revealed statistics that are as chilling as they are instructive. The study says that the risks vary enormously from country to country, with women in the industrialized countries faring best, in sharp contrast to those in the developing nations. Sub-Saharan Africa is the worst.\(^\text{13}\) "The implication of this, are more

deaths and diseases for millions of women and families"\textsuperscript{14}, in Africa.

There appears to be some Africans to whom Kwame Nkrumah referred to as colonial students; they tend to reason and see from a foreign perspective that is not their own. Speaking on colonial students, Dr. Nkrumah noted:

Many of them had been hand picked and, so to say, carried certificates of worthiness with them. These were considered fit to become enlightened servants of the colonial administration. The process by which this category of student became fit usually started at an early age, for not infrequently they had lost contact early in life with their traditional background. By reason of their lack of contact with their own roots, they became prone to accept some theory of universalism, provided it was expressed in vague, mellifluous terms.\textsuperscript{15}

Dr. Nkrumah concluded that a colonial student does not by origin belong to the intellectual history in which the university philosophers are such impressive landmarks.\textsuperscript{16} Nkrumah may be right because it may appear difficult to argue, that an intellectual would advocate for the

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
abandonment of his or her own culture, for a foreign one, as some Africans whom one may associate with an element of intellectualism seem to be doing.

Arguably, one may agree with Nkrumah’s conceptualization of a colonial student, and might add that a colonial student includes an African with a colonial mentality and, through whom and with whom the West and European entities or corporations attempt to validate their conceptualizations on Africans, their traditions and their culture.

Contestably, the United Nations Organization, UN tele-guided by the West appeared to have an undisclosed agenda for Africa and its cultural hegemony. Consequently, it is believed that women appear the avenue through which Africans will be subdued since other previous efforts appeared to have failed. UNDP’s August 1995 Report represents UN’s ongoing efforts to assess Africa’s performance in the advancement of women before and after 1980, as well as to collect data for monitoring progress in addressing Africa’s gender issues.  

UNDP’s analysis was based on a review of 38 national reports from Africa that were facilitated by UNDP and

prepared for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), offering a comprehensive account of the experience in implementing the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies (NFLS). The document among others, seeks to examine causes of major constraints that have proved difficult to address in spite of intensive efforts on the part of governments and development agencies.

It appears that in its most "sincere effort", the UN found that African culture is the major obstacle because the people of Africa belong to a cultural society, therefore they adhere to the culture of the land of their origin. Referring to this human power, culture, the UNDP states, "most countries in this region are having difficulties addressing gender-based discrimination against women in a holistic manner, mainly because of society’s pervasive cultural belief in women’s low status relative to men....." "Society’s belief in women’s low status relative to men, validated through law and particularly customs, has resulted in low levels of commitment of governments to gender concerns. Consequently, the poor responsiveness of government to women’s issues has, in many ways, perpetuated or ‘feminized’ poverty among women and indirectly

18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
encouraged increased violence against them, especially within marriage and family contexts". It is rather doubtful that the above is a correct reflection of African culture in its relations to women.

In its own right, the U.S. Department of State wrote under women, in its 1995 Human Rights Report, that spousal abuse is common, especially wife-beating in polygynous families.

Police do not normally intervene in domestic disputes, which are seldom discussed publicly. In more traditional areas, it is questionable whether the courts and police actively intervene to protect women who formally accuse their husbands if the level of alleged abuse does not exceed customary norms in the area. Purdah, the Islamic practice of keeping girls and women in seclusion from men outside the family, is prevalent in parts of Nigeria's north.

It would appear also, that foreign visitors to Africa, even for two weeks, also do not spare Africa and Africans either in matters pertaining to the women of Africa and the culture of their land. In her own report, Regina Lynch-Hudson wrote: "In a society where women shut up and put up with total disrespect (from men), my talkative nature,

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20 Ibid. Also see page 7 of the same report.

self-assurance and confident body language drew dagger stares from men and women alike”; she continued, “The meek, timid, withdrawn aura of Egyptian women, continued with their resentful looks, initially made me think, 'Sister' get a 'life'. But securing what I would consider a 'life' often leads to assassination for women of Egypt and other areas of Africa”.  

Many western media correspondents and writers outside Africa are not different from those tourists who seem to have paid only limited periods of visits to the continent. The question is: Is it so easy to learn and understand a people within such limited periods, enough to write to criticize and condemn the cultural practices of the people, as it appears in the above-cited instance? In one of his reports, Charles Holmes wrote: "Africa and the Middle East are rife with examples of oppression against women in the form of social and legal inequities and physical abuse".  

Some people tend to see women's problems as global. In fact, some of the female activists in Europe, the United States, and Africa, appear to see women's problems as the same. A "specialist" or spokeswoman on women affairs at

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the University of Benin in Nigeria declared to me that "women's problems are the same all over the world, except that in Africa there are variations: the degree of importance is also different". Although, I do not hold any grudge against this eminent professor's assertion or opinion, because she has a right to her own opinion, I will however beg to disagree with the opinion. The reason will be made clear as this study progresses because it appears questionable as to why others should be so concerned with the fertility status of an African community. In Etsako, for example, it is sensitive as it is likely an offence to ask a woman or of another woman: how many children do you have or how many kids has she?

Upon their return to the United States, from some parts of Africa on a filming expedition, Alice Walker and her colleague wrote a book, titled Warrior Marks. The book could be described as one of the most critical on African culture and practices as they concern women in Africa. She wrote:

Throughout Africa, one can see mothers who barely have enough to

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24 Dr. (Mrs.) C. E. E. Okojie is an Associate Professor at the University of Benin in Nigeria. She is acclaimed to be an expert on women's affairs at the University, and she is said to have done a number of studies on women; one of them being "Women's Status And Fertility in Bendel State of Nigeria" 1989. The study was a Report for the Rockefeller Foundation, New York. I spoke with her during my research trip to the Country.
eat spending their last cent on synthetic hair and bleaching creams. (They will also spend all their money to have a child mutilated and thus made 'attractive' and marriageable). 25

It appears fair to say that not many people outside Africa seem to give a fair assessment of the status of the African woman in her relations to the male in Africa. In their book, *A History of The World*, McKay, Hill and Buckler wrote: "African women had long been treated as subordinates, if not inferiors, by their fathers and husbands". 26 For example, on the campus of the Clark Atlanta University, an African oftentimes runs the risk of being embarrassed with unexpected questions by female faculty staff and students, who sometime charge that African males do not respect women because of what African males are used to in Africa with women.

The U. N., in its effort to "assist" the women of Africa, in terms of "enhancing" their status in the African society and the world, has an African Bureau that coordinates many programs and projects, such as the UN


Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Also, the UN in its long range efforts to "develop" the African woman, under the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), has established, many programs and projects through some of the UN programs and independent agencies in Africa, such as UNICEF and UNIFEM to liberate (develop) the women of Africa. Especially, the UNDP is responsible for seven pilot projects valued at $14.4 million, to raise the productivity of African women in agriculture and the informal sector. In essence and reality, one would argue that the goal of these "development" programs of these UN agencies appear suspect as the goal might be to divert African women's attention away from her cultural settings. Some of the programs and projects include: Women in Development and Gender in Development; some of the projects are technical, such as its agricultural project in many of the African countries.

Obviously the UN is interested in the development of African women. But it is surprising that the world body is not serious about committing its attention, let alone funds, towards a more serious issue of political instability that


28 Women and Gender In Development, *UNDP IN THE '90*, A publication of the U.N.
has continued to hound the continent since many of the countries gained their independence in the 1960s. Arguably, it is this political instability that makes it impossible to have meaningful economic development, including the ability of the people (men and women) to live a decent and meaningful life and especially that this instability conceptually too, appears to be externally directed and controlled within the orbit of the United Nations.

What is the purpose of the UN, and has it met that purpose as far as Africa is concerned? Article 1 under the Charter of the United Nations Organization, shows that the purpose and principles of the UN is to maintain international peace and security, and to that end:

> to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.\(^5\)

With the above as the primary purpose of the UN, African nations should not have been in their current state

of political predicament IF the UN had lived up to the world’s expectation. The UN, either by omission or commission, collusion or delusion, appeared to have dodged or shirked its responsibilities to Africa while perpetuating political instabilities on the continent. For example, Great Britain, France, and the United States are members of the Security Council. They possess veto power; whenever any of them use this veto, it nullifies or neutralizes whatever objection any one-else or group in Africa may have on the issue before the United Nations. On countless occasions, this veto was used at the regret of African states to obstruct their efforts to dismantle apartheid when that obnoxious regime was tormenting indigenous Africans in South Africa. Also, almost every political or economic problem in Africa appears to have direct or indirect links with these former colonial imperialists in Africa. These links conceptually, appears to relate to the former imperialists’ desire to continue to exploit resources of their former colonial dominions. It appears, therefore, reasonable to conceptualize, that economic exploitation is almost a rarity in an atmosphere of political cordiality in the former colonists while exploitations thrive and prevail better in a chaotic political environment. For this reason, it would appear
that ex-colonial overlords of the continent preferred to have the political atmosphere in continuous, intermittent turmoil.

Furthermore, the United Nations' involvement in political questions in the continent would appear to have been self-serving. The UN's activities in the Congo, its role in Angola and Mozambique backed by what appeared as the United States' influence, in opposition to the preferred solutions to those crises and wars in Africa; the unenforced sanctions against the dehumanizing apartheid regime in South Africa, all would appear to serve as an important reminder that the UN may have its own agenda for Africa. More importantly, the World Health Organization, WHO, an important agency of the UN, was found to be connected with the development and production of the deadly HIV virus, AIDS.

Evidence appears to show that this United

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32 "The Strecker Memorandum" was published by Robert B. Strecker, MD and Ph.D. who practices internal medicine and gastroenterology in Los Angeles. He is a trained pathologist and holds a Ph.D. in pharmacology. In 1990, he and his brother Ted, an attorney came out with their investigation report which shows that the HIV virus AIDS was manufactured in the US. The Memorandum was published by The Strecker Group, 1501 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock, California 90041 Tel.(213)344-8039 or 1-800-548-
Nations' agency, the WHO was aware of a yearning for the acquisition of a human killer virus, the virus was developed into an inoculation vaccine which was taken to East Africa, and African children were injected with the human killer virus unknown to African authorities. Dr. William Campbell Douglass, M.D. states:

The London Times should be congratulated for uncovering the smallpox-AIDS connection. But their expose was very misleading. The article states that the African AIDS epidemic was caused by the smallpox vaccine "triggering" AIDS in those vaccinated:

He continued that,

Dr. Robert Gallo, who has been mixed up in some very strange scientific snafus, supports this theory. Whether the infection of 75 million Africans was deliberate or accidental can be debated but there is no room for debate about whether the smallpox shots "awakened the unsuspected virus infection". There is absolutely no scientific evidence that this laboratory-engineered virus was present in Africa before the World Health Organization descended upon these helpless people in 1967 with their deadly AIDS-laced vaccine. The AIDS virus didn't come from Africa. It came from Fort Detrick, Maryland, U.S.A. 33

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3198.

33 William Cambell Douglass, M.D., *WHO Murdered Africa*, (Clayton, Georgia: P.O. Box 1568, 30525 or call 1-800-227-6269). Also read, Third Report From the Social Services Committee, Session 1986-87 regarding *Problems Associated With AIDS: Volume III*, which constitutes Minutes of Evidence (8 April-13 May 1987) and Memoranda,
It would seem apparent that against the reality of this background, Africa, more than ever might need to be wary accepting any UN project that may involve the idea of human "development", especially when it has to do with African women.

Consequently, this study would argue that under an unmitigated hysteria, that African womanhood is said to be going through the most humiliating human degradation brought about by African men and their ancient culture and traditions, some American institutions of higher learning, have embarked on a collaborative effort to "rescue" African women. In this direction, for example, a project known as "Women and Development International Training Project" has been developed. Some of the collaborating institutions are: Clark Atlanta University, Emory University, Georgia State University, Morehouse School of Medicine, Prairie View College, Savannah State College, Spelman College, and Tulane University. The purpose of the Project, which is sponsored by the "National Security Education Program (NSEP)" and Clark Atlanta University are: (a) "To increase

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ordered to be printed 13 May 1987 by the House of Commons, London.

34 The program description of the “International Training In Women And Development Project,” is obtainable at the Department of Africana Women's Studies, Clark Atlanta University, and the "Study Abroad Program" of the HBCU Study Abroad Resource Center, at Morris Brown College, both in Atlanta, Georgia.
students' overall understanding of women's roles in national development, democratization and production in Africa"; (b) "Provide students with the opportunity to directly appreciate the constraints that African women face and the interrelated nature of these restraints in students' areas of specialization"; (c) and "Provide students with the opportunity to receive training in women in development and apply their skills via an African internship with research"; (d) "Introduce students to language instruction and cultural awareness that are specialized for women and development fieldwork", among others.

In the same direction of working to liquidate the African culture through miseducating the women of Africa, some powerful African American women working under a shady influence they seem not to know or understand, organized themselves to network under a Pan-African women’s forum. Their target of attack, arguably and unfortunately too, is the culture of Africa. Their tools appear to be some social formulations or concepts, that when philosophically and sociologically analyzed, in terms of the purpose of a society and life, do not seem to hold any enviable result.

For example, in their analysis of population, gender

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35 Ibid.
and labor force participation in Zimbabwe, the Pan-African
Women’s Forum tried to query that:

Presently, women constitute 21 percent of all professional workers, 15 percent of all skilled workers and, 11 percent of semi-skilled workers. The NMS also revealed that most women workers are primarily located in clerical, professional and sales (i.e. feminized sectors) and not in production-related work.  

Analytically, the Forum is contending that there should not have been a women’s sector in the economy of Zimbabwe as is in many other economies in Africa; this they called “feminized sector”. It would appear, the Forum overlooked the Zimbabwean’s cultural eye which sees clearly the philosophical diversities in nature. The diversities appear to be responsible for the non-monotonous uniformity or equality of all things, physical and non-physical or metaphysical including plants and animals, but all relating and working together in harmony for whatever the purpose may be. The Zimbabweans seem to be aware that women are specially differently created for a special purpose, that of being the Mother of the human race being the most special. In addition, the men appeared to have been created differently too for certain things which do not seem to be suitable to the female. In other words, there

36 Ibid.
appears to be those things or tasks that do not appear or viewed as proper for the female because of the special cultural regards and an exulted position accorded to the female by the people. It is one of the reasons that some women who happened to have found themselves in the industries, were earmarked for clerical duties and other non-physical draining tasking or sectors. It is a recognition of women's experience during pregnancy, the experience which an African man cannot face because of the differences in the nature and the make-ups of man and woman. Furthermore, the concept of division of labor, obviously, did not begin with human, rather, human borrowed it from nature since man is a byproduct of nature; especially that mundanely we are unable to claim the author of nature, it is the other way round.

Equally too, the African is aware of the process of continuity or immortality and the role the African woman plays in the process. This responsibility is recognized at all times by the people of Zimbabwe as the other African people, in their allocation of tasks. The foregoing consideration may not be known to those in the Diaspora who appeared convinced that the African woman needs to be liberated from the African "archaic" cultural traditions.

But at the appropriate time in this discussion, we shall examine whether or not some of these efforts, as they
concern women in Africa, are appropriate and desirable.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF AFRICAN WOMEN

In the preceding section of this review, we have stated some of the allegations and non-positive remarks about the status of African women, as seen in the minds and eyes of some non-Africans, and how they are viewed. We have also stated some of the collaborative efforts directed to "liberate" or develop the African women by some U.S. institutions of higher learning. Our attempt here, therefore, is to trace the political history of African women. A political historical overview of the subject is imperative. The political history will tell what the status of African women has been, where it is now, and with a view to knowing where the status must proceed. Such an exercise is considered crucial to debunk the myth that the African woman has long been marginalized. This historical survey will be brief to conserve space and time because there are too numerous outstanding females if one is to cover everyone, but this study will spotlight few females who were rare gems in the annals of Africa as the cradle of human civilization.  

Therefore, we will take a panoramic spotlight on Pharaonic period, pre-European invasion of Africa, and post independence era of Africa. In this light, we look at Etsako as a microcosm of Africa in this study. By this we mean that Etsako is a small Africa having many, if not all of the similar characteristics of Africa macrocosm. In other words, Etsako is viewed as a window to the larger Africa. Therefore, we shall examine the political history of African women through this window, especially since the people have the same physical features, the same familiar characteristics and traits common to all Africans. By political history, we mean the past political activities and the sum total of socio-economic status of African women within Africa.

Some questions that might be asked will be: Have women in Africa ever had any socio-economic status, and have they ever participated in the political affairs of Africa? Are the women functional and effective within the systems? By the systems, we mean the cultural political and traditional systems of Africa. We need to be reminded, that Africans were considered incapable of political autonomy because before now, they were alleged to be lacking in cultural capacity. Discussing the cultural

argument while asking Britain to grant political independence to Nigeria, The Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe had this to say:

One reason why we had been denied political autonomy was because we were alleged to be lacking in cultural capacity, due to heresies which had been disseminated by pseudo-science in the guise of anthropological scholarship. The myth of the mental and physical inferiority of the African has been rationalised and proselytized by racialists so that the world had been hoodwinked to believe that the African is incapable of exercising political power.\(^{38}\)

However, the questions we are compelled to ask now are: Do the women participate in the system that dehumanizes women, and do the women understand what politics is or what it entails? Does the system recognize the women, since, according to some foreign observers, African men have always held the women down with the traditions and culture? Obviously, these kinds of questions do not seem to be uncommon enquiries being raised by those who are of the opinion that African males have been chauvinistic and are still suppressive even in our contemporary times. Unfortunately, a "yes" or "no" answer may not suffice for these hypothetical questions.

PHARAOHNIC PERIOD

We must begin this survey with the pharaohnic era of Africa as a base in a meaningful discourse such as this. The pride (human awareness or enlightenment) of Africa has to have a root because nothing cannot give rise to something. African pride or glory must have had a root. For example, the social and cultural systems of the Western and European world are traceable to the Greco-Roman world. Similarly, the African pride and existence has its root historically in the Ethiopian-Egyptian awareness which is second to none in the annals of human history. As a result, a look into the ancient past, reveals that the origin of democracy had its root in Africa.\(^{39}\) But the African democracy was different from that of the Athenian because "In a well-known scholarly debate, Michael Rostovtzeff among others linked the confinement of women in the home to the rise of Athenian democracy".\(^{40}\)

The reverse appeared to have been the case in Africa. That is to say that everyone, including women, have been functioning within the African system without any


A colossal statue of Pharaoh Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye, mother of Pharaoh Akhenaten. Queen Tiye is wearing a vulture headdress with a vulture head between two uraei.
A slate statue of the goddess Hathor with the husband at the middle. An indication that a man and his wives were venerated together?
ideological or social inhibition from time immemorial. In his book, *History of Religion*, Charles F. Potter says that Akhenaton, Pharaoh of the 4th Dynasty was 'the first pacifist, the first realist, the first monotheist, the first democrat, the first heretic, the first humanitarian, the first internationalist, and the first person known to attempt to found a religion, and he concludes that Akhenaton was born out of due time, several thousand years too soon. First and foremost, history shows that Africans have venerated the status of some of their women to that of goddesses. When the Egyptian priests mapped out the stars into the constellations and divided up the zodiac into twelve signs, 3000 B.C., two women, Virgo and Gemini were among the signs. Also, history shows that the beloved wife of Akhenaton, Queen Nefertiti, played prominent roles during the reign of Akhenaton. In the "Son of the Sun" we see a statement: "Another, specially designed for the worship of God in the glory of sunset, and in which Queen Nefertiti presided over the sacred rites, called the 'House-of-putting-the-Disk-to-rest'." In her own right,

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41 Ibid.  
43 Savitri Devi, *Son of the Sun: The Life and Philosophy of Akhnaton, King of Egypt*, (San Jose, California: Supreme Grand Lodge of *A.M.O.R.C., Inc., 1946), 76. Also, see
Reay Tannahill writes, "There was a First Dynasty queen of Egypt, Meryet-nit, around 3000 B.C., sovereign in her own right, who is believed to have been important in the precarious political situation that followed the unification of northern and southern Egypt." She further noted that "Fifteen hundred years later came Queen Hatshepsut, a widow who reigned from 1505 until 1483 B.C. and did much to expand Egypt's trading activities; for political reasons, Eighteenth-Dynasty artists usually represented her in masculine costumes and poses, even wearing the symbolic royal beard." Other women who exemplified themselves in the annals of ancient Egyptian political history, as contained in Reay's record included: Queen mother, Tiye, Nefertiti, Arsinow, Berenike, Queen of

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44 Reay Tannahill, Sex In History, (Scarborough House Publishers, 1992), 61.

45 Ibid.

46 Queen Tiye was the mother of the World's first individual to conceive of one Supreme Divine Being. That individual was Pharaoh Akhenaton, the first individual and first democrat in history who exhibited his administrative ability in the governing of a great nation, Egypt. Our democracy, (not western democracy) took its initiation from Pharaoh Akhenaton. With regards to Pharaoh Akhenaton being the first in history to conceive of One Divine Being, one may need to cross-check by reading the Blackman of the Nile, by Yosef Ben-Jochannan, (Baltimore, Maryland: Black Classic Press, 1989; Chancellor Williams, The Destruction of Black Civilization, (Chicago: Third World Press, 1987), 110; Cheik Diop, The African Origin of Civilization, (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1974), 1970), 6; Manly P. Hall, The Secret Destiny of America, Los Angeles, California, 1944), 27-36; and H.G. Wells, Outline of History, (New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1956), 180-183.
Sheba and Cleopatra. Of course, Ethiopia's Queen of Sheba, 960-930 B.C. made what is regarded as a celebrated visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem. The news is unfolding about the discovery in Nigeria, of the Grave and Kingdom of Bilikisu Sungbo, popularly known as Queen of Sheba of the Bible fame. A team of Nigerian and British scientists led by Dr. Patrick Darling from Bournemouth University in England made the discovery. Dr. Darling said of the discovery: "What is exciting about this for me is that we are beginning to bring out the tremendous political and cultural achievements of Black Africa". In the Christian's Book of Books, the Holy Bible, her visit is noted (see 1 Kings Chapter 10 Verses 1-14 and 2nd Chr. Chapter 3, Verses 1-17). Another notable Ethiopian Queen cited in the Bible was Candice (see The Acts of Apostles Chapter 8:27: "And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candice Queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasures, and had come to Jerusalem to worship").

Within the perspective of political radicalism and activism, we came to know an African woman whose name was

47 Ibid.

Kimpa Vita. The name Kimpa Vita meant "Mystery Trap" in Bakongo, East Central Africa. Kimpa Vita was a mystic. She is also known by a Christian name, Donna Beatrice. In his Television Program, "The African Religion" 1991, Ali Mazuri narrated that in 1706, in Central Africa, a young woman, Kimpa Vita openly and passionately accused the Catholic Church of divide-and-rule tactics; she healed the sick and predicted events, things that the Roman Catholic Church was against. Kimpa Vita who heralded the return to the Golden Age of Congo also preached the return to unity and the fight against moral confusion and slavery under the Catholic Church.

Also, according to Ali Mazuri, Kimpa Vita is claimed to have asserted that many of the apostles accompanying Jesus who were not Hebrews at all were Africans; that the patron saint of Portugal was an African; that Jesus never prohibited "polyharmony" (polygamy); and that the Virgin birth was not a monopoly of the mother of Jesus; that an African with God's intervention was as capable of producing

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51 Bernard, 134.
a child while still a virgin as anybody in Bethlehem or Nazareth. Mazuri added that when Kimpa Vita sought to demonstrate the virgin birth theory by having a baby son of her own, that became too much for the Portuguese authority, and Kimpa Vita died on the stake with her son on her arms\textsuperscript{52}.

Helene Bernard, a French Mystic and writer, appeared to have corroborated Mazrui’s assertions in her Book, \textit{Great Women Initiates}, 1984 pp. 131-137. Helene Bernard states that before Kimpa Vita gave up her last breath on the stake July 2, 1706, "Her last cry was a total surrender to Jesus, who she was convinced, was a Black African Savior, the brother of the people she had loved and liberated".\textsuperscript{53}

Kimpa Vita was crucified with her baby son on her arms at the stake, just as Jesus Christ\textsuperscript{54} was because they were Africans who were teaching and healing people, practices which others did not want them to carry out.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Mazuri 1991.
\item Bernard, 1984 p.137.
\item Amechi Njokanma, “What Is The Ethnicity of Jesus?,” \textit{Nigerian And Africa}, New York, February 1997, 23. (Njokama asserts that despite the reasons given in the Bible, on why Jesus was abusively crucified, it is also an important fact, that the primary reason, was because of his ethnicity as a Black man).
\end{enumerate}
This period did not historically see less of women's dynamic role in the kingdoms and empires of Africa. The period included the era of colonial invasion and eventual independence. There seems to have been continuity in a non-sporadic manner. In this era also, we read of Queen Nzinga of Ndongo, now Angola who not only ruled from 1623 to 1663, but also revolted and led an army that fought and defeated the Portuguese army. Record states that "Since it was clear to her that White power in Africa rested squarely on the use of Black troops against Black people, she understood the first and only carefully organized effort to undermine and destroy the effective employment and use of Black soldiers by Whites - the first and only Black leader in history who was ever known to undertake such a task".55

There are many more African women of historical importance whose lives' work cannot be separated from the political and economic life of their communities in Africa. But for some unknown reasons, many of the earlier foreign

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historians\textsuperscript{56} could not recognize the women in their

\begin{center}
Fig. 12
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\begin{center}
\textbf{Emotan Statue in Benin today}
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(Source: The Hidden Treasures of Ancient Benin, B.N.C., Jan., 1977)

\textsuperscript{56} Most of the historians and writers referred here were those from the home base of the former colonial masters of Africa before its "flag independence".
writings. The women are not forgotten heroines, they include: Queen Estha of Ethiopia, 937-997; Queen Dahia Al-Kahina of North Africa, 667-702 A.D.; Queen Nerfertiti of Egypt, 1379-1362 B.C.; Queen Hatshepsut also of Egypt, 1478-1457 B.C.\(^5^7\) and we remember Queen Amina;\(^5^8\) Queen Emotan who was an indispensable companion to her husband, king-to-be;\(^5^9\) and we remember one of the most powerful women, Queen Yaa Asantewa of Ghana who confounded the British of the then Gold Coast by organizing an army of Asante men to fight the colonial forces who had in 1900 captured and exiled the Asante King Agyeman Prempeh I to the Seychelles.


\(^{58}\) Queen Amina was a warrior and an activist for her people. She ruled Zaria Empire in what is today known as Kaduna State in Nigeria.

\(^{59}\) Queen Emotan was a woman of grace and beauty; the wife of an Ogitso (King) Euware (C.1440) of the Edo ancient empire which is today known as Benin in the Edo State of Nigeria. Emotan is said to have been an individual who loved to help those who have not. She assisted Prince Ogun, her husband to ascend the throne as Oba Euware amidst a political battle for the throne. She also helped her husband to rule the ancient Edo for many years. The Ogitso Akenzua II, who was now known as Oba Akenzua II informed me in a story he told me upon the family's visit to the Palace in 1977. Oba Akenzua was surprised that my wife's name is the same with the great Queen. He said that it was the kind nature of Emotan that enabled the Edo people in Benin City today, to continue to pay homage to Emotan's Statue at the Oba Market every evening till this day. The Statue was erected by the British Consul during colonial period. Emotan was an admirable woman, a humanist, Oba Akenzua said. She was also a very successful trader who was admired highly by Oba market women. See also, Henrietta Ekene Omoshie. "The Changing of Women In Benin: From Empire to Modern Time: A Master's Thesis," (Benin, Nigeria: University of Benin, August, 1992). 9.
A replica of the ivory head of Queen mother Idia which was accepted by Nigeria as the FESTAC symbol in 1977. The original is the British museum.

(Source: The Hidden Treasures of Ancient Benin, B.N.C. January 1977)
Queen Idia was the mother of Oba Esigie who ruled Benin Empire in the 16th century, and as Queen mother, she was said to have had a great influence on her son, Oba Esigie. She was said to have personally, in C.1515-1516, led the Benin army against an attack when Benin was invaded by the Nupes in Idah. Queen Idia's statues erected by the State Government, stand today at two strategic locations in Benin City; one on a highway and the other at the compound of a college dedicated to her memory.

Another notable female of extraordinary character and political will was Queen Iden of the 16th century Benin Kingdom; Iden was the wife of Oba Ewuakpe who reigned from about 1700. History relates that the Binis had revolted against the Oba for an alleged human sacrifice he performed during his mother's burial. History relates that he was ostracized to the extent that all his other wives and

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60 Dr. Kwame Dankwa in an oral history of Asantewa, "The Woman King Who Fought the British". It should be noted that most History books written about Africa and Africans, by others have always failed to give account of African women of pre-eminence because these other writers' women did not appeared to have had any value in the eyes of their men folks, who are in majority of these writers. Also, read Dr. John G. Jackson's complete account of the "Yaa Asantewa War" in his Book, Introduction To African Civilizations, (New York: Carol Publishing Group), 1990, 32-33.


62 Ibid.
children abandoned him, except for Iden who stood by him. History has it that when the Oba was told by oracle to perform another human sacrifice to regain his lost glory because he became so poor, the only member of his family left with him was, Queen Iden. She gave up herself for the sacrifice. The sacrifice was performed and Oba regained his lost glory. Was that politics of love? Can there be such a thing in today's "feminists" world?

The preceding event was not the only time in which an African woman has shown total commitment and political patriotism by giving her life in order that her husband may live. In her own historical account of pre-colonial Nigeria, Mrs. Bolanle Awe states:

In the very early period, where history was in the realms of myths and legends, the women were present and the accounts showed that they played crucial and decisive roles in the politics of their societies. For instance Princess Inikpi of Igalaland and Moremi of Ife played the role of saviours of their societies at critical periods when those societies were besieged by invaders and were subjected to constant warfare. Warfare is politics in another form and they stepped most decisively into the breach and saved those societies by sacrificing their own lives. Moremi’s escapade was perhaps the first account of espionage.

63 Ibid.
in our history.

For obvious reason, we move our search light. In recent past, we remember that women were not cut off from the fight for Nigeria's independence. It is on record that there was the Lagos Market Women's Association, and the "Womens Union" which formed as a counterpart of the Peoples Union, and it was led by Mrs. Olajumoke Obasa, wife of Dr. Orisadipe Obasa. In the first Nigerian political delegation of seven to London, was a woman. They were sent under the auspices of the N.C.N.C. to the United Kingdom, in August 13, 1947 to demand the repeal of some ordinances passed by the colonial administration in March, 1945. The ordinances included the Minerals Ordinance, 1945; Public Lands Acquisition (Amendment) Ordinance, 1945; Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs (Amendment) Ordinance, 1945, and Crown Lands (Amendment) Ordinance, 1945. The lady member

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66 N.C.N.C., a secondary school students' movement that became the first national political party in Nigeria. The abbreviation stands for National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons.

of the delegation was Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, the mother of Fela Anikulakpo-Kuti, a famous Nigerian musician. We would at this point remember an indomitable female politician of the 20th century. She is Winnie Mandela, the ex-wife of the former prisoner No.466/64 who became the first Black President of South Africa. There is no doubt that the world recognized the power of this woman who fought the Apartheid regime by bringing the matter to the focus of world opinion. No one will argue that Winnie's fight helped to free Mandela, and the eventual downfall of the ill-famous regime of the then South Africa. Also, we have recently witnessed her political ability and power once more. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was one of the key note speakers and the most renowned at the Million Women March which took place at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the United States of America, October 1997.

She was striped of her political position by the African National Congress (ANC), a party she had tremendously helped to sustain during the most turbulent political era of South Africa and apartheid, and this was

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68 Ibid. p.15.

the era in which her beloved and powerful husband languished in incarceration. Winnie Mandela could be considered as a victim of socio-political intrigues and circumstance under which very few humans may escape. However, when everyone thought that she was finished politically, especially that she lost her marriage through divorce in the process of party political intrigues and maneuvering, Winnie bounced back to win the presidency of the party’s Women’s Wing. Winnie's now former husband, Nelson Mandela came out of incarceration to become the president of South Africa through the efforts that Winnie mustered around the world for 27 years. But she lost her husband in a political dilemma. In a dramatic and charismatic show of political acumen, Winnie recently surprised everyone by winning a re-election as the president of the ANC Women’s League.\footnote{“Landing on Her Feet”, \textit{The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution}, Sunday, May 4, 1997 p.B2.} The ANC, African National Congress is the ruling political party in South Africa.

Equally, we would like to remember the tenacity of the famous Aba women’s riot of 1929 in which Igbo women dealt with the British authority and its staff, who were charged
with the responsibility of tax collection. The British colonial administration in the area, East of the Niger, had imposed the payment of tax on the Aba women, but the women refused to pay charging the colonial authority as disrespectful, autocratic and dictatorial. The colonial officials and agents who went to effect the collection of taxes were met with a terrible riot planned and hatched by the women themselves. Aba women never paid the tax.

It is important to note that there was no one part of Africa in which women were excluded either by omission or design, from participating in the process or system. Most of the states were either kingdoms or empires, and the women within appeared to have functioned well along with the males. For example, in the Benin Empire which is now Edo State in which Etsako is situated: there have been women of high caliber, and amongst them were Queens Idia, Itohan, Adesuwa, and Iden, just to mention but a few.

Women of high honor in the political and social life of the people of Edo State have never been far fetched. It would appear, if there was a time in the life of the people when silence occurred in matters of women and their relations with the societal activities, it might have been

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during colonization. This could be self-evident judging from the number and level of the caliber of African women in history before the advent of foreign invaders on the continent. However, we will postpone this aspect of this treatise until an appropriate time in this discourse.

There are still other women that one cannot easily pass over in matters of this nature because of their weight in the society in this part of Africa. They include Chief Madam Christiana Boyo, the founder of the National Council of Women, and the first president of the National Council of Women's Societies in 1960. Mrs. J. O. Iyoha, a one-time president of the Young Women Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.).

Nigeria is claimed to be the most populous nation in Africa with over 107 million, but with the potential to be the richest country in Africa. However, in modern polity, and in very recent times, Nigeria appears to be wanting, and is now being considered far behind in the scheme of things. But in spite of Nigeria's need to improve its proficiency in the modern art and science of governing and politicking, Nigeria will continue to be recognized in

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72 Omoshie, 36-45.

73 Ibid.

Africa as a force that cannot be overlooked.

In sub-Saharan Africa, it can be said that the Nigerian females are a force to be reckoned with. The country had a female in its House of Representatives upon independence; Mrs. Wuraola Esan a parliamentarian in 1960-1966. This period is tagged the First Republic in the country. In the Second Republic, 1979-1983, another female, Francisca (Franca) Afegbua, who is a native of Etsako was elected to the Senate. When one considers the size and population of Etsako in comparison to the size of the country as a whole, to have a female senator was a feat. Although, these two outstanding females were considered to have performed a feat respectively because the political landscape, under which these two women were elected to the legislatures respectively, was quite different from the cultural systems of kingdoms and empires of Africa of yesterday where women did whatever they were able to do.

These African politically active women of honor may have appeared "exceptional to the rule", but in the absence of any previous formal rules set to limit or prevent anyone, from political participation, would tend to negate the idea of exceptionality. Those who sought for the political development of the African woman, the United States for example, have not produced a female president in
its over two hundred year history of political democracy. It could be argued that it took the 19th Amendment of the US Constitution ratified in 1929 to enfranchise women in the US, both White and Black. Another bizarre example of Western political democracy and the right of citizens to participate in the process, is the fact that at this time in the history of democracy in the West, a large number of American citizens, 34.370 million or 12.7% Blacks/African Americans,\textsuperscript{75} could lose their right to vote if the Voters Rights Act of 1965 is not extended by the year 2007.\textsuperscript{76} This is because “The Voters Rights Act signed in 1965 by Lyndon B. Johnson was just an Act. It was not made a law. In 1982 Ronald Reagan amended the Voters Rights Act for only 25 years.”\textsuperscript{77} This is to say that 34.370 million Americans are yet to have a permanent right to vote.

AFRICAN CULTURE

In the preceding sub-section, we have shown that African women were very visible as many of them are shown to have made invaluable political contributions


\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
immortalizing their names in the annals of time.

This study has stated clearly and unequivocally, that this over-all exercise is a pioneering effort, in the sense that no similar work of this nature has been done on the subject matter. It would appear therefore, that none of the available literature and discussions, whether written or verbal, cited or uncited so far in this study, have focused on the same angle and on the genuine concerns of the African woman. These concerns include the survival and well being of her family, as well as the stability of her home including the development of Africa and Africans, from within Africa and African cultural perspective. This central African moral concern is the pivot of this study. Most of the existing discussions are merely queries to the Africans as to why the African woman has been allowed to remain an African and not what she is not, and should not be. In other words, most of the existing discussions seem to center on why the African woman is not like or does not behave like her Western or European counter-part.

At this point, there is the need to look at the culture of the system in which the African woman is an integral part. In doing so, there is the need to know what is culture; its relationship with the subject matter of this research? What is culture to a system, and what role does it play in any human system; furthermore, what is the
service of culture in the human personality?

To begin with, culture is diverse, wide and complex as the human species in our universe. It is therefore, not easy to explain what culture is not and what it is. It is easy to see what culture is and what it is not through behavior, patterns and artifacts than explaining what it is and what is not. But culture is a sea of attributes in-born in an individual; culture is the essence of a human being and it is what makes one person different from another. There are two known kinds of culture, they include family and environmental culture. Culture is not universal in essence hence it is in-born and environmental. What is anti-cultural to one group, might be a way of life to another. This, not withstanding, several authorities have attempted some conceptualization, which represent what they appear to have considered to be the true nature and characteristics of culture.

The political development of African women is the theme of this exercise. It is my conviction through understanding that women are known to be the carriers of culture because it is from a mother a child gets to know the first things the child need to know; and cultural well being of a people is the political success of that people, and hence cultural activities and practices are embodiment of politics and political practices. It is a Ghanaian
saying, according to Dr. Kwame Dankwa quoting Dr. J. E. K. Aggrey, that "if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation". The ancient dictum of Plato, that man is a political animal is a well established fact, but the relationship between politics, culture and man conceptually, lies in the fact that man being a political animal and an embodiment of culture presupposes that culture is politics, and politics is power and power is the ability to make binding decision for those who are members of that culture. Therefore, the importance of culture and its preservation cannot be over stressed in this study.

Those new nations that have emerged at our global arena and survived, and appear now stronger than others in terms of their material well being, are claiming superiority of their culture upon which they seem to be arrogating their success. Of course, the socio-political strength of any group, state or nation, ancient or modern, depends on the cultural force of that group, state or nation.

Culture is as old as the age of human species, and will continue to be here as long as there will be humans

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78 Dr. Kwame Dankwa teaches at the Sociology Department, Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1999.
dominating their socio-political affairs. In his essay, "The Clash of Civilizations?", Samuel P. Huntington reminds us that the next global war arena will be culture, a warning that each people should hold onto their culture. Huntington states that the fundamental source of conflict in the new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic any more. Rather, he believed that the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. His notion is that states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics, according to him will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. It is clear from the foregoing that culture is very important, as a result, the need for every one to attempt to preserve his or her own culture has never been more important and urgent.

However, it seems surprising that in his treatise, Samuel Huntington failed to mention or recognize the ever living culture of the African peoples among some of those powerful cultures of the world that he cared enough to mention. One may not be sure whether this was a deliberate omission or commission, or was it a result of racial

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prejudice, or a phobia of the African culture which is the oldest of human cultures. Whatever it was that weighed on the learned Samuel Huntington from recognizing the first most powerful culture of the human race, it appears pertinent and important to remind the scholar just in case it was an oversight, that African culture is ever living and an immutable phenomenon found in all pre-historic times. Reflecting on the enduring power of the ever living presence of the African culture, Amilcar Cabral asserts:

In spite of colonial domination (and perhaps even because of this domination), Africa was able to impose respect for her cultural values. She even showed herself to be one of the richest of continents in cultural values. From Carthage to Giza to Zimbabwe, from Meroe to Benin and Ife, from Sahara or Timbuktu to Kilwa, across the immensity and the diversity of the continent’s natural conditions, the culture of African peoples is an undeniable reality; in works of art as well as in oral and written traditions, in cosmological conceptions as was in music and dance, in religions and belief as well as in the dynamic balance of economic, political, and social structures created by African man.\(^{80}\)

While asserting that the universal value of African culture is now an incontestable fact, he reiterated that:

it should not be forgotten that African man, whose hands, as the poet said, 'placed the stones of the foundations of the world', has developed his culture frequently, if not constantly, in adverse conditions: from deserts to equatorial forests, from coastal marshes to the banks of great rivers subject to frequent flooding, in spite of all sorts of difficulties, including plagues which have destroyed plants and animals and man alike.  

Hirsch, Jr., Kett, and Trefil state of culture, "The sum of attitude, customs, and beliefs that distinguish one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art, from one generation to the next".  

In their own right, the Theodorsons held of culture as "The way of life of a social group", that is, the social group's total man-made environment, including all the material and non-material products of group life that are transmitted from one generation to the next. But the Theodorsons state that a classical definition that most sociological definitions have followed was that of Edward B. Taylor which saw culture as "That complex whole which

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81 Ibid.


includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".  

Also, Vasily Nalimov in his thoughts expressed in "The Rise of Comfort, The Fall of Culture: Recovering Spiritual Values in a Technocratic World": he explains that culture is a system of values that should be implemented at every moment of one's life; and he states that "A system of values can be constructed in different ways".  It would appear that this different way in which a system of values is constructed might be one of the reasons that Africans are resisting and requesting to be allowed to live the ways nature had designed for them and made them to know as well.

In Hunt's number of explanations of culture, I have singled out a few which are those that state, that culture is the "human-created environment; the learned portion of human behavior; the psychological prescriptions that structure human behavior; and that which sees culture as "a blueprint for all human behavior"."  The importance of culture is well explained by Cabral, and it seems quite

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84 Ibid.


appropriate at this time that we recognize what he considered culture to be. In his own words, Amilcar Cabral reflects:

In fact, culture is always in the life of a society (Open or closed), the more or less conscious result of the economic and political activities of that society, the more or less dynamic expression of the kinds of relationships which prevail in that society, on the one hand between man (considered individually or collectively) and nature, and, on the other hand, among individuals, groups of individuals, social strata or classes. 87

In a way, Cabral appears to show why the imperialists seem to have always been politically afraid of the African culture and were seemingly interested in the dilution of it. He explains:

The value of culture as an element of resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation on the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated. 88

Furthermore, Cabral examines and explains the totality of what culture entails, and he expounds:

87 Cabral, 41-69.

88 Ibid.
Fig. 14

Women celebrants in a Traditional Festival in Etsako
(Source: Eddy Erhagbhe's collection)
Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people's history and a determinant of history, by the positive or negative influence which it exerts on the evolution of relationships between man and his environment, among men or groups of men within a society, as well as among different societies. Whatever may be the ideological or idealistic characteristics of cultural expression, culture is an essential element of the history of a people. Culture is, perhaps, the product of this history just as the flower is the product of a plant. Like history, or because it is history, culture has as its material base the level of the productive forces and the mode of production. Culture plunges its roots into the physical reality of the environmental humus in which it develops, and it reflects the organic nature of the society, which may be more or less influenced by external factors. ⁸⁹

Comparatively, Cabral looks at History in its relation to Culture, and he further reflects:

History allows us to know the nature and extent of the imbalances and conflicts (economic, political and social) which characterize the evolution of a society; culture allows us to know the dynamic syntheses which have been developed and established by social conscience to resolve these conflicts at each stage of its evolution, in the search for survival and progress. ⁹⁰

Rightly deduced, Cabral conceptualizes that it is as a

⁸⁹ Ibid. ⁹⁰ Ibid.
result of the above that the imperialists have always denied the development of the history and culture of the subjects of a colonial dominion; and also, for the safety and security of the imperialists, the elements of culture of the dominated subjects are a target to be repressed and liquidated.

Dr. Nkrumah said that:

In every society, there is to be found a morality; this hardly means that there is an explicit set of statements defining the morality. A morality is a network of principles and rules for the guidance and appraisal of conduct. And upon these rules and principles we constantly fall back. It is they which give support to our moral decisions and opinions. Very often we are quite definite about the moral quality of an act, but even when we are so definite, we are not necessarily ready with the reasons for this decision or opinion".  

Analytically, I will submit that culture is to a people what ideology is to a nation. Culture is the basis, and the determinant of a people’s morality, which is a network of principles and rules based on the culture that guides appraisal of conduct.

In his cultural argument against British’s denial of granting self-government to Nigeria which resulted from

Britain’s claim that Nigeria was lacking cultural capacity, Dr. Azikiwe emphasized that:

Not only is culture a unique heritage of man, but it is a possession of all men. Culture is now, in so far as we can trace human history, has always been, universal. No people known, past or present, is culturally naked. A folk’s culture may be very simple, as that of the Veddahs of Ceylon; or very rude, as that of early man; but, simple or complex, culture has been an ever-present fact in the human world....Culture is indispensable to human existence. Through it man adjusts himself to, and orders, his human and natural environments. Culture has thus emerged in the course of man’s effort to live, and it is perpetuated because through it man’s collective existence is secured.\(^2\)

In a nutshell, culture is the totality of a human being; that is, culture is what makes us who we are, what we are, how and why we do what we do. Culture is the motor behind the inner drive of a person, it identifies and introduces us to those who may desire to know us. Culture helps the prediction of our characters by those who have never met us before, but knew from which culture we emanated. Culture is a dynamic tool for the unification of a society, and better munitions for the defense of one society against another. In some societies, (Africa is one

Fig. 15

Ladies from Etsako
such society) culture is the best policeman because it is self-conscious and self-directive.

AFRICAN WOMAN

We have in the above, explained through the eyes of some authorities, and through our personal experience and introspection, as to what culture has been understood to be. In this section, we will attempt to identify and explain the African woman. That is, who is an African woman; what is her role as a daughter, as a mother; what is her role as a wife, and what does she stand for? Consequently, it is in the best interest of this research to show what the problem is that confronts the African woman, and what woman is.

WOMAN

In an attempt to explain woman as the African woman, it is necessary to state from the onset that she is one whose ancestors has one and the same original attributes and characteristics from origins with that of the Ethiopian/ Egyptian women; just as we have been able to link the women of Western and European worlds to the Greco-Roman world. By this statement it is meant that most, if not all, attributes and idiosyncracies of the women of the Western and European world had their roots in the Greco-
Roman world. With regards to the above statement, we must keep the picture as clear as possible, we have to keep on remembering that at various periods in ancient times, the 'Land of the Blacks' meant all Ethiopia, all Ethiopia meant all Africa, and all Blacks were Africans or Ethiopians or Thebans, etc. There were numerous independent states in the Western Land of the Blacks (Western Sudan) that may have claimed a membership alliance with the Ethiopian Empire as an expression of pride - nothing more than a symbolic gesture to the great state that was the 'Mother of the Race' and which bore the race's name, Ethiopian'.

However, when we look into an ancient manuscript, of "woman" it states: "...thou art man's reasonable companion, not the slave of his passion; the end of thy being is not merely to gratify his loose desire, but to assist him in the toils of life, to soothe him with thy tenderness, and recompense his care with soft endearments."

"Who is she that winneth the heart of man, that subdueth him to love and reigneth in his breast?"

"Lo! yonder she walketh in maiden sweetness, with innocence in her mind, and modesty on her cheek."

"Her hand seeketh employment, her foot delighteth not in gadding abroad."

"She is clothed in neatness, she is fed with

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temperance; humility and meekness are as a crown of glory circling her head."

"On her tongue dwelleth music, the sweetness of honey floweth from her lips."

".....Happy were the man that should make her his wife; happy the child that shall call her mother".94

The above would probably represent, and might continue to represent the attributes of the African woman throughout the next century IF Africa, presumably, is allowed to preserve its way of life as some other human kind are allowed. Anthropologically, the African woman may have been the first mother if, as we speak the intellectual world had agreed that the first homo erectus was an African.95

Furthermore, it may be argued that the African woman's state in the human evolutionary process imposed on her an active nature, in other words, she is an active participant in her society. Defining the African woman, Dr. Oriaku Nwosu states that the African woman "was seen as a co-leader, co-achiever, co-governor working side by side with her menfolks". "Socio-politically, economically and

94 The Oriental Literature Syndicate, Unto Thee I Grant, (First ed.) (San Francisco, California: Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, 1925), 21-22.

culturally, Nwosu, a Professor of Foreign Languages at Delaware State University continued, that the African woman was seen in four persons" because "she wore four different crowns" and "the four made her a wholesome being".96

In the African society in which Etsako is an integral part, the woman was first and foremost seen and perceived as a WOMAN, then as a DAUGHTER, then as a WIFE, and finally as a MOTHER. In all of her four roles, according to Nwosu, she exercised specific duties97 In the words of Nwosu, as a WOMAN she belonged to the very strong association of initiated adult women whose societal roles the community could never afford to neglect if progress was to be achieved. We must remember that earlier in this study, it has been clearly stated, that in Etsako society, an unwed (uninitiated) female is not a woman, but a girl until initiated. As a DAUGHTER the African woman's role was of a dual nature because as a daughter she had commitments both to the village of her birth and the village of her marriage. She intervenes in disputes between the two villages.98


97 Ibid. p.15.

As a WIFE she fulfills the specific roles like other wives in the world's larger societies. But aside from fulfilling her specific roles like other wives, she has some other different attributes which are seldom found in other wives, especially in the Western world. As a WIFE, the African woman is selfless, and non-selfish; she cares about the other woman; possessing a profound spirit of live-and-let-live. For an example, I remembered that it was my mother who was instrumental in the marriage of (her mate) my father's second wife. Most importantly, the African woman is a MOTHER. Massey stated that "The most profoundly primitive of all the ancient mysteries was that of the Mother-blood". At the same time it was the most profoundly natural. Massey continued that, "By this mystery it was demonstrated that blood was the basis of womanhood, of motherhood, of childhood, and in short, of human existence. Hence the preciousness of the Mother-blood. Hence the customs instituted for its preservation and the purity of racial descent". Furthermore, As a Mother, the African woman was recognized as an educator, a protector and conservator of culture and tradition, a

99 Nwosu, 16.

sacred hostess in whose body the family security and continuity rested. It could be argued that this may be one of the reasons Dr. Aggrey had said that if one educates a woman he or she has educated a nation.

Also, the African woman, as a leader within African society does not compromise her roles as a wife and mother. In Nwosu's words, it is important to note that within this system, women's leadership and organizational roles were never in dispute. They organized themselves and achieved positive results. No woman was ever isolated. There was room for self-fulfillment and self-identification because the same woman was seen as a woman, daughter, mother, wife - all in one.\textsuperscript{101}

In spite of these enormous responsibilities, the African woman still has an unequal and unmatched responsibility which to a larger extent surpasses all of her other roles. In carrying out her responsibility of ensuring continuity of existence, as a MOTHER, an African MOTHER has virtues that are inborn. Some of the virtues are instinct, intuition, tolerance, and selflessness. These virtues combined constitute a very rare personality found in the African woman. This personality energizes the African MOTHER with the capability of being able to be in

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid.
two places at the same time, so-to-say because a mother in Africa may be in the room busy, and be able to instinctively respond to her child who may be threatened or in danger, far outside or at the playing ground, alone or with others. Two illustrations might suffice to understanding the foregoing point.

On May 23, 1996 in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, a mother left her 8 month old baby in her crib, but the baby lodged a cockroach in her mouth, and could not swallow it. The baby choked and died in her crib. Reports indicate that the mother of Tameka, the baby, was in the same room.102 Tameka's mother had filed a suit claiming 2.5 million against the Atlanta Housing Authority for lack of maintenance causing the death of her baby. With an African mother's developed perception and instinct, could baby Tameka have died?

A similar incident was also reported on June 4, 1997 by the National Public Radio in Washington, D.C. In this case, the child died on her mother's lap. The baby had pulled down the rope of a nearby window-blind and wrapped it around her neck without the mother knowing.103 The child

102 Kathy Scruggs, AJC (May 26, 1996), 1st page, "G" Section.

was "gone" by the time the mother remembered that she was carrying her baby. Arguably, with African mother's divine instinct, this type of accident would be rare. The African woman as a mother takes this responsibility as a spiritual obligation that cannot be shirked, but must be performed to lay claim to womanhood and motherhood.

PROBLEM FACED BY THE AFRICAN WOMAN

However, it is contestable that the African woman of today, differs to some extent from that of yesterday, and does have a problem. Although the problem in question does not seem to be peculiar to the women because the African men also do have it. The problem appears to be lack of self-worth. It is arguable that the African woman and man of today do not seem to understand themselves, and as a result they appear not to recognize their potential within the scheme of things in the present human societies.

Also, it may be argued that the lack of self-worth and self-cognizance are the source of the other factors or experiences that are what the African woman is going through today, just as the man seems to be wading through one socio-political instability to another; the socio-political instability that seems to be robbing him of his manhood.

Although, it is contestable, that there is unmitigated
bombardment by external forces who seem to marvel at the undying spirit and enduring strength for continuity of the African woman. But a close analysis will reveal that the source of the African woman's problems may not only be external, but largely the problem relates more to lack of appreciating self and absence of self-cognizance. Our conceptualization is not a negation of the evidence of facts that there are external factors creating some of the problems of the African woman. Rather, it appears, it is the understanding of the issues relative to self-worth and self-cognizance. It may be debatable to state, that once the African woman discovers herself, her current problems will cease. However, this aspect of the African woman's problems will be discussed further within the appropriate segment in this discourse.
CHAPTER III
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

PART I

The findings of this research are the subject of discussions in this chapter.

A descriptive analysis of the data which were obtained from the survey executed in respect of this study, will be presented.

The general research question was: what nature of political development is desired by African women: was it the western inclined or an African inclined political orientation? The data are based on Case Study of Etsako Women in Edo State, Nigeria. The guiding concept in this instance is the Null hypothesis, which contends that "The Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems as Defined in this Study Tends not to Change the African Traditional Family Structure and, Tends not to Affect the Historic African Cultural Value Systems". The Alternative Hypothesis is that the "Political Efficacy of African Women in Africa Political Systems as Defined in this
Study will tend to Change the Traditional African structure and, will Affect Negatively, the Historic African Cultural Value Systems". It is appreciated that a descriptive study does not generally require a hypothesis.¹ The premise was deliberately selected to give us a conscious spirited guide.

THE SURVEY DATA

Issues Analyzed

Questionnaires were designed around specific issues that formed the basis of this study. The first of the issues was the effect of the active involvement of Etsako women in Euro-American or Western, modern form of politics in Africa, on the African Traditional Family Structure and the indigenous Cultural Value Systems. Consequently, the questions were designed to assist in the investigation, to know what effect the active, western form of political involvement by African women will have on the Traditional African Family Structure and the Historical African Cultural Value Systems.

The other set of questions was designed to investigate the basic knowledge of the American women about the African woman. The reason for this is simple: (1) The American women seem to be in the forefront, leading the crusade to

"liberate" (develop) the African woman. (2) Since many American women (like other Westerners) seem to view the African women as having been suppressed and in bondage, there was a need to investigate their knowledge of the African women.

The two sets of questionnaires were different in content for obvious reasons: the two persons, (African and Western or European women) are quite different in many perspectives, such as in history, culture, traditions, customs, outlook on life, behavior and character. Furthermore, this research was not designed to bring attention to the problems of women world wide, rather, it sought to confront the problem of the women of Etsako.

On the basis of the premise of this study and its findings, it would have been an anomaly and inappropriate, to develop the same type of questions for the African women, European and/or American women regarding the general research question of this study. However, the major premise which implied that introducing African women to western form of politics, will not negatively affect their efficacy in African political system and the Traditional African Family structure was rejected statistically. Consequently, the Alternative Premise which states that "The Political Efficacy of African Woman in African Political System as
Defined in This Study Will Change the African Traditional Family Structure, and will Affect Negatively, the Historic African Cultural Value Systems was confirmed or accepted. See Chapter III, Statistical Test of Premises.

Although, this exercise was a descriptive study that did not require a Hypothesis, the Null Hypothesis was deployed to further strengthen the case presented in this research. Descriptive studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena; and they are directed toward determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study, with a view to seeking information that will assist in decision making.¹

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS ON SURVEY INSTRUMENT

This section of this study encompasses the results of the respondents who were American women in Georgia and Etsako women in the Edo State in Nigeria concerning the general research question of this study. The responses will be analyzed within the context of the premise stated in this study. The responses will be discussed with brief commentaries on the statements contained in each question.

¹ Ibid.
THE AMERICAN WOMAN’S KNOWLEDGE OF THE AFRICAN WOMAN

Note: The figures in parentheses represent respondents.

Question 1

The number of respondents to the statement: "I know the African woman".

Very well: 8.0%, (24)
Fairly well: 41%, (123)
Not at all: 51%, (153)

The above figures show that only 24 persons out of 300, representing 8% of the studied American women in Georgia appeared to have very good knowledge of the African woman. This percentage response is low compared with the 153 or more than 50%, who do not at all have a knowledge of the African woman; and the 123 who have a fair knowledge of the African woman.

Question 2

The respondents to the statement: "African Women who are university degree holders are about 10%, 20% or 40%"

10% (138) = 46%
20% (93) = 31%
40% (69) = 23%

The number of 69 or 23% of persons who believed that
about 40% of educated university women can be found in
Africa relatively is low when compared with the 138 or 46%
who believed that only about 10% of women hold university
degrees. Although, it was usually and generally claimed by
some American academics and non-academics that African women
were not being given the opportunity to educate themselves
as much as the men. One would think that such a statement
was no longer valid to be said of Africa generally or of
Nigeria specifically. Upon independence, most nations of
Africa including Nigeria, took an aggressive posture towards
the education of their citizens including the women who were
of school age. It is important to note that after
independence, education was not free in most countries of
Africa. Therefore, many families were not able to send all
of their children (male or female) to school all at once.
Culturally, it was considered an investment for a family to
send their male children to school since the females would
eventually end up in marriage. But as primary and secondary
or high school education became free, many families began to
send all of their children, male and female to school. As a
result, in Nigeria for example, by 1985, female illiteracy
rate was 69%\(^3\) of the population of 107.90 million.\(^4\) By 1990, the rate further dropped from 69% to 61%\(^5\), an 8% or 8.632 million increase in the population of literate female in Nigeria. At the literacy growth rate of 8% in five years, it would seem to imply that in 1995, 37% or 39.9 million females were literate, and by the year 2000, there would be 42% or 45.3 million literate women in Nigeria. Equally, it should be noted that many African nations except for Ethiopia\(^6\) which was never colonized, became independent only in the 1960s. Therefore, the education of the citizens generally, was not a priority of the colonial government. However, the 1996 UN Report, states that, of the African total population of 669.29 million, 39% of the female were literate by 1995\(^7\). This seems to suggest that the population of literate women in Africa as at 1995, appears to be more than the population of the U.S. which according to the last census, is put at 248,709,873.\(^8\)


\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) Ibid.


\(^7\) Social Indicators of Development, 1996.

\(^8\) The TIME Almanac 1998, 827.
Question 3

The number of respondents to the question: "Are there many educated African women?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(144)</td>
<td>(156)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 48% or 144 who responded positively is high enough and encouraging in spite of the 52% or 156 who seem not to know the African women as educated individuals.

Question 4

The number of respondents to the question: "Is the African woman still suppressed?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(243)</td>
<td>(57)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although a high proportion of the number of respondents appear to have the opinion that the African woman is still suppressed, it does not appear reliable enough, since only a meager 8% of the respondents claimed to know the African women very well (see Table 1). Also, the "yes" result cannot be correct if the Africans have raised the status of some of their women to that of goddesses 3000 B.C.⁹

Question 5

The number of responses to the statement: "They

⁹ Wells, 212.
(African women) get married before the age of 15":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>174</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of respondents, 126 out of 300, representing 42% who disagreed with the assertion, is quite a significant difference, considering the fact that only 8% of the total respondents appear to know the African woman as revealed by this study, (see Table 1A above).

Question 6

The number of responses to the statement: “African women need to abandon African traditions and culture”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>159</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is arguable that the 53% “yes” is reliable because 47% “nay” appear relatively high or significant enough. The respondents who seem to wish that African women abandon their culture and tradition appear to have much of a lesson for every African. That lesson seems to be that Africans will probably need to hold on to what is theirs because for one person to wish another to abandon themselves, may not be a prayer for continuity of that individual. The culture of an individual is the totality of that individual, and tradition is the process or method by which the culture is propagated for continuity, therefore, culture and tradition
are a combined phenomenon too important to be abandoned.

**Question 7**

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you think African women have office jobs":

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(192)</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high percentage of (No) to the question correlates with the relatively few number of American women who know African women very well as shown in table 1 of this study. African women are many in the work force. Available data show that in Nigeria alone, for example, percentage of women in economic activity was 45 in 1994 and the female percentage of male in the same year was 51.\(^{10}\) The data for Sub-Saharan Africa show 52% female, and female percentage of male in economic activities was 58 in 1994.\(^{11}\) There are women in the military, in the private and public sectors, the judiciary, and in the legislatures in Nigeria where Etsako is an integral part.

**Question 8**

The number of responses to the question: "Do you think

---


\(^{11}\) Ibid.
there are women judges in Africa?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(129)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(171)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nigeria alone as a country in Africa has 50,000 women lawyers of which about 5% of them are judges. In Lagos alone, which is a state capital, is home to more than 50% of the women judges, right from the Magistrate Court to the High Court of Appeal.

Question 9

The number of responses to the question: "Do African women have political rights?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(144)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(156)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is arguable that the relatively high percentage "no" response, compared with the 48% "yes" response to the question, is not significant enough, but it shows a reflection of the low understanding of the European and American women about the African woman and her cultural

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12 This information was obtained from the office of the Nigerian Bar Association, Abuja, Nigeria. Reconfirming this figure, Mr. Emmanuel West, a Nigerian Lawyer and an Associate Legal Counsel at H. J. Russell and Company in Atlanta, said that Nigerian women lawyers could be more than what the figures suggest because there are about half of the given figures of Nigerian women lawyers in London and the United States of America, and that Nigerians are everywhere in the World. With the rate Nigerians are interested in the law profession and with the rate Nigerian universities are producing women graduate lawyers, Nigeria, at home alone could boast of having 50,000 women lawyers with not less than 5% of them as women judges, but in all, Nigerian women lawyers could be more than 50,000, Mr. West further said.
environment. There is no known enacted law banning any African woman from participating in politics in Africa. As this study has shown, there are many African women who have participated in public affairs in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era in Africa, and there are still many women as men in politics today since there is no control as to how many should enter politics in Africa today, but how many succeed as men may be the question. They have always been in politics. This study has shown that there was a woman in the first Nigeria political delegation to London to ask for independence in August, 1947. In Nigeria, for example, there were two women elected to the Senate and House of Representatives during the Second Republic, and there are six Nigerian women legislators touring the United States at this time of this study. They include Mrs. Mercy-Isie, Mrs. Florence Aya, Mrs. Iquo Minimah, Ms. Temi Harriman, Ms. Lynda Ikpeazu and Mrs. Patience Ogodo. There are women public officials appointed to serve in both the state and the federal governments in Nigeria. In military eras as well, women have been appointed to high offices; there is a woman army general. The wives of heads

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13 Nnamdi Azikiwe, 15.

of regimes, as first ladies, have been well known internationally due to their public activities as First Ladies and in military officers' wives' associations.

Question 10

The number of respondents to the question: "Are African women seen as equal to their men?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high percentage of "no" responses seemed to have been imagined rather than a reality or an actuality. The result here can be argued that what equality really is, is highly debatable. For example, all the fingers are equal even though they do not look the same. They are equal because each finger plays its own unique role in the body. Should there occur an affliction to one finger, it causes the entire body to ache in pain as if the whole body was afflicted.

So it would appear, human beings are limited in their ability to see or perceive natural phenomena correctly. Those who seem to complain of inequality appear to be expressing their inability to see or perceive what makes an African woman equal to the man in Africa.

Question 11

The number of respondents to the question: "Are
African women sold into marriage?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(162)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>(138)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would appear that the respondents were merely speculating because to them, African women are uneducated, have no choice, and are at the mercy of the chauvinistic culture. This belief seems erroneous because many of the American women lack a thorough knowledge of the African woman as Table 1 above indicates.

Question 12

The number of respondents to the question: "Do African women have governmental positions?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(138)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>(162)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be argued that for 138 American women in Georgia representing 46%, to believe that African women have government positions is encouraging and surprising. It is surprising because in their view, since an American woman hardly gets to a position of political authority, it should be impossible for an African woman to get to a position of authority in her country.

Question 13

The number of respondents to the statement: "The African women are not allowed to contest elections":

...
The 58% affirmation to the statement is a clear indication of the lack of information about Africa and its women by many American women; and the response is a further confirmation that the American women of Atlanta, Georgia have no knowledge of the African women. The review of African women presented in Chapter Two of this study, shows clearly the history of African women in political positions. Some of them even held those positions long before Africans were introduced to western democracy.

Question 14

The number of respondents to the statement: "The African woman needs to be like an American woman so she can become knowledgeable."

The seventy-five percentage "Yes" response would appear a sad situation because it seems to show the level of understanding of some American women. Knowledgeable persons would not necessarily expect others to be like themselves. Furthermore, this response tends to show why America likes to impose its "ideals" on others whether the others like it or not. Is this not a high mark of ethnocentricity and
insensitivity to others?

Question 15

The number of respondents to the question: "Are African women timid?":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sixty-three percent "Yes" to the question only shows that the American woman appears to be erroneously convinced that the African woman is timid hence she allowed herself to be dominated by the male; it seems a mentality which may not be surprising because it appears to have continued to reflect a level of the standard of the mind, through some of the responses provided to some of the questions.

Question 16

The number of respondents to the statement: "The women do not have the same/equal access to school as men":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>162</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It could be true that in the 1930s and early 40s, few girls were allowed to go to schools. Prior to the 1930, western educational system as we know it today, was not in place in Africa. In the late 1940s when western education was being introduced, boys and men were the focus. However,
there was no law prohibiting girls from going to school because there were some families who allowed their daughters to go to schools. The colonial administrators were all males because in their home country in Europe, women were underclass and had no value beyond being house wives, a legacy from their progenitor, Greece. Although, to some men in Greece, women were of less value, even as house wives, this may have led to a practice known as pederasty.

Although, Classical scholars are unable to agree about the origins of pederasty in ancient Athens, though the majority consensus is that it was imported from the neighboring state of Sparta, where military organization and segregation of the sexes had made it something of a commonplace. In fact, it would have been necessary to import no more than the germ of the idea-if-that-for the political and social structure of Athens was such as to favor the rapid spread of any new fashion among the upper classes. It is easy to forget that the civilization that was to have such a deep and abiding influence on all Western culture was created and perpetuated by a population smaller than that of Newport, Rhode Island, or the cathedral city of Canterbury today. Athens had its foreign residents and its slaves, but it was the 30,000 accredited citizens who shaped the development of the state.


16 Tannahill, 85-95.

17 Tannahill, 86.
It suffices to say therefore, that history seems to support the idea, that either in Greco-Roman or in the entire West-European world, women were not treated quite fairly. With this type of situation, however, their wives were housewives or home makers because the European women were not allowed to do domestic jobs, such as cooking of the food and washing of the clothes. These domestic jobs were performed by African males, who were employed as domestic servants by the colonial administration for the individual colonial officials probably because to the Europeans, an African male was still less in value or appreciated than a White woman.

By 1955, it became mandatory for all to go to schools in many parts of Nigeria including Etsako, as free primary education was the order of the day, enforced by government. University education for young people followed, but not all have the means to go just like in any other place including the United States of America where in the year 2000, we will still find some people who are unable to obtain a university education. For example, among the "top 10" universities in the US only one of them, the Cardinal Stritch University has 60% rate of graduation of enrolled students. The rest have between 40 and 50% rate of graduation. This suggests that there are many US citizens (men and women) who do not posess

a university degree, in other words, there are many citizens who are not educated. So it would appear incorrect that African women do not have the same or equal access to schools as men; the UN Development Report for 1996 shows that 39% or 261 million African females were literate by 1995\(^1\); there appears not to be a formal law banning girls and women from attending schools in Etsako.

**Question 17**

The number of respondents to the statement: "Men, Culture, and Tradition are African women’s political problems":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(231)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>(69)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One is not surprised at the result because African tradition, customs and culture appear to be the envy of the people of the new world, probably due to their undying nature and beauty of Africa culture in spite of all odds. African ethos and lore have been unsuccessful targets of many wars. The Christian and Islamic religions failed to combat the powerful hegemonies of African ethos and lore no matter how hard they tried. One is not surprised that another attempt may be aimed at it once more through African women as carriers of African culture, like every other

\(^{19}\) UN Development Report for 1996.
nation. The 77% response on this question may be an indirect way of saying that American women are ready to push on to indoctrinate Africans through their women and their culture.

Question 18

The number of respondents to the statement: "African women like to have many children":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these responses it becomes evident that the American woman has very limited knowledge of the African woman. Naturally, every African woman, with the exception of very few ones, in the western and European world, would like to be a mother. The urge and need for an African woman to have children appears natural; to her, having children is a spiritual obligation. The unquestionable desire and need to be a mother seems to compel others to use some artificial means in some technologically developed countries which had sometimes result into multiple births.

Question 19

The number of respondents to the statement: "The African women are very much oppressed by their men":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would appear that African woman is not known and
understood therefore, anything could be said of her. This is like the issue of African continent and the Imperial powers. To the Imperialists and the new world, Africa was a dark continent, and this was taken literally for many decades, even to this day; but the imperial powers did not mean that the African continent was actually a "dark" continent either in terms of the complexion of the people or the color of the land, rather Africa was a dark continent to them because they were ignorant of the continent and of what Africa entailed, before 1444.  

Therefore, not knowing what makes African women tough as they appear to be there are bound to be all kinds of speculations and innuendos about them.

**Question 20**

The number of respondents to the statement: "African women do not have positions of authority in office employment":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(159)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>(141)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are women in the position of directors in both the private and public sectors in Nigeria. I can attest to it that my wife was a director in a public sector in Nigeria; an equivalent of such an office will be called

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Department of Trade and Industry in the United States. Furthermore, the 47% disagreement only contends the validity or unreliability of the 53% agreement because 47% or 141 people appear to be relatively significant, in other words, the percent and number are high to show that the 53% agreement to the statement does not appear reliable enough to cause a stir. Arguably, the percentage of agreement, appears simply a reflection of the inadequate information about the women of Africa. This include a lack of interest of those concerned, who seemed not to have searched for some correct information about the women of Africa. Available data shows that in Nigeria, 6% of women in the work force in 1990 were in the Administrative and managerial cadre; 35% were in the professional cadre and 46% were in the clerical and sales, while in the service sector there are only 13%.\footnote{Ibid.}

Question 21

The respondents to the statement: “There are no women lawyers in Africa”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(174)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>(126)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above result can be explained thus: The 42%, an equivalent of 126 American women in Atlanta, Georgia who believed that there are women lawyers in Africa, is fairly
encouraging compared with the 58%, an equivalent of 174, who believed in the incorrect statement. Nigeria alone, a country in Africa, has 50,000 women lawyers and 5% of them are judges\textsuperscript{22} which constitute the professional and technical cadre in the UN's Human Development Report of 1996. The report shows that 35% of this segment of work force is available in Nigeria. Unfortunately, many Americans do not seem to know that Africa is not a country, but a continent. This lack of adequate and correct information appear to be partially responsible for the erroneous beliefs of any thing about the African Women.

Question 22

The number of respondents to the statement: "An African woman cannot be a university president in Africa":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(162)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>(138)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response is rather close and, it gives room for hope that one day, the entire American women folk will eventually gain more insight into the affairs of women in Africa. Strictly compared against the views expressed in Table 1 of this study, 46%, an equivalent of 138 American women disagreeing with the assertion that an African woman

\textsuperscript{22} A comment of the Nigerian Bar Association Secretary at Abuja, November 1999.
cannot be a university president, is an encouraging sign that African women are not totally in the dark. The disagreement is more correct and accurate because two African women have already served as university vice chancellors (president) in Nigeria. Professor (Mrs.) Grace Alele-Williams served as a vice chancellor at the University of Benin, where I began my teaching career early in 1983 while Professor (Mrs.) Jadesola Olayinka Akande headed the Lagos State University in the early 1990s, both in Nigeria. They both served until their terms expired. Professor Alele-Williams later became the chair of the Nigerian University Commission.

Question 23

The number of respondents to the statement: "The women in Africa are only elementary school teachers":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result appears to be quite clear because the huge 47%, an equivalent of 141 women, out of 300 women, seems to be more reliable than the 53% of the 300 American women in Atlanta, Georgia who believed that African women are only elementary school teachers in Africa. Since a woman had already been shown or known to have been a vice chancellor of a university, it presupposed that there must have been
other women among whom one was appointed to become a chief executive of a university.

Question 24

The number of respondents to the statement: "African women do not have political positions":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>162</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be argued that the 54% of the respondents in agreement with this incorrect statement may need to open up in search of more accurate information. Nigeria has 14 women holding parliamentary positions in 1994 and has 3 positions of executive or ministerial level held by women by the same period\textsuperscript{23}. The 46% of the 300 women who disagreed with the incorrect assertion, appeared to be more significant in the sense that they are closer to the truth, and the difference between 54% and 46% appear insignificant. Chapter Two of this study had revealed a number of prominent women political activists, both in pre-historical and historical times and in contemporary period; and there are still very active women in politics at this time. When this study states of women in politics, it does not mean feminists, but women who are very much concerned about the total survival of the communities where they reside.

\textsuperscript{23} UN Human Development Report 1996, 62.
Question 25

The number of respondents to the statement: "African males have actually failed Africa politically considering the number of military rulers in Africa":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(222)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>(78)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result seems like a case that clearly nullified the axiom, "that majority is always right", and it supports the occasional outcry of a minority who have always asserted that a majority is not always right. The result can also be argued that since women in Africa have always been in politics, it stands to reason that the number of military rules in Africa is a collective responsibility of all concerned in those countries where military regimes are the order of the day. Furthermore, even if African women were not actively in politics, it can still be contested that it is not only those who campaign and contest elections that are politicians or are in politics. The bedroom advisers and the executive board room political strategists, are all politicians and in politics. Arguably, the "bedroom adviser", for what it has always been and still what it is today, are very powerful. The African women, like any other woman on earth, falls within this category of a bedroom adviser; so, they have always been in politics and are
effective in persuading and dissuading. Therefore, it would appear illogical to exclude the African women from being part of the problem of military coups in Africa.

**Question 26**

The number of respondents to the statement: “Women should now be allowed to rule Africa”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(204)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 27 and this result are not poles apart. This result of 68% of 300 American women in Atlanta concurring with the statement not important or significant: (a) Table 1 of this study shows how unreasonably low the American woman knows the African woman, and (b) it has been made clear that majority is not always right, and the 204 women who agreed that African women should now rule Africa have missed the point. To further contest this result, one will propound that politics and leadership are games for the fittest or else, it is not a game; it is not a situation where one is just allowed to rule.

**Question 27**

The number of respondents to the statement: “The African women are allowed to vote in elections”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(171)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>(129)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this result, 57% or 171 American women agreed that African women are allowed to vote in elections while 43% or 129 Women in Atlanta, Georgia disagreed with the statement. The issue of women being allowed or not to vote in political elections in Nigeria or Africa, will be discussed later in this study. Africa still might remain blameless on the matter.

Question 28

The number of respondents to the statement: "The African woman has the same problem of oppression that American women have":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes, there is a literal significant difference between 73% and 27%, as there seems to be no essence or substance in the difference, as it is arguable that majority may not always be right as it appears to be in this case. The 219 women out of 300, were wrong in their assessment of the African women on this particular issue. This study has established that women’s problems are not global and cannot, and should not be globalized. In other words, we cannot globalize the problems that women faced in the world for a number of reasons. Women are not the same everywhere, thus the American woman is different from the African woman as
well as from any other woman, from the Orient or Asia. The culture of the American woman is not quite the same as that of the African woman. Yes, they belong to the same human group, but they belong to varying nationalities of different environments, traditions, customs and lore. They do not speak the same language, they do not act the same way; do not have the same beliefs nor do they have the same faith, and what is more, they live thousands of miles apart from each other. Therefore, their problems cannot, but be different. It would be erroneous to hold that the African woman's problem is the same as that of the women of America.

Question 29

The number of respondents to the statement: "The United Nations should now help to enlighten African women through workshops and seminars conducted by American and British women":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(273)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result appears to be overwhelming; 273 out of 300 American women say that there is a need for the United Nations (UN) to create a programme to enable American and British women to educate the African women through workshops, as against only 27 women who see no need. What is the cultural implication? The result is arguable in
spite of what looks like a great difference between 91% and 9%, but when this result is weighed against the fact that American women do not have enough knowledge about the African women (See Table 1) upon which to pass a judgement on them, it becomes apparent that the 91% agreement with the statement, would appear irrelevant. However, one may not be sure of what will be the contents or subject-matter upon which the American or British women will lecture the African women. These women have different behaviors, manners, outlooks on life, cultural attitude and beliefs. Arguably, the African women are not unenlightened because they know who they are and what they need. The meaning that may be read into this result will be discussed later in this study.

Table 30

The number of respondents to the statement: “African men do not seem to respect women”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(192)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There appears to be a significant difference between 64% and 36%, but does the significance explain any real fact about the African males’ behavior toward women, considering the fact that the American woman does not know her counterpart in Africa? Is there any reason for the American woman to know the African man, when she is unable to know
her African counterpart? Clearly, the result appears as an opinion that American women may not be able to validate as a result of what seems like a poor understanding of the African woman or man.

Part II
ETSUKO WOMAN

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

(1) Preamble

Number of Questionnaires given
out to respondents............ = 335

Number of Questionnaires retrieved
from respondents....... = 323

Percentage Retrieval (323/335x100) = 96.42

Number of Questionnaires
used for analysis............ = 300

Percentage of useable questionnaires
are............ (300/335x100) = 92.88%

Reason for non-usage of 23 questionnaires are:
I) Contained defective answers, respondents did not understand the questions

ii) Contained missing data (no response) to a large extent

iii) Impossible answers to questionnaires (multiple responses

iv) Spurious answers
SUMMARY OF THE 300 QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED ON ETSUKO WOMEN USED IN THIS ANALYSIS

a) Number of response to Religion = (0.67%)
   I) Education: 1 Elementary; 1 Completed Secondary School
   ii) Marital Status: 1 Single; 1 Married.

b) Number responding to Religion as Traditionalist = 7 (2.33%)
   I) Education: 2 Elementary; 4 Completed Secondary School; 1 University Graduate
   ii) Marital Status: 3 Married; 3 Single; 1 Divorced.

c) Number responding as Christians = 163 (54.33%)
   a) Education: 1 Elementary, 5 no response; 40 university graduate; 108 completed secondary school.
   b) Marital status: 1 Separated; 87 Married; 74 Single (Senior Secondary students);
   1 no response.

d) Number responding as Moslems = 128 (42.67%)
   i) Education: 4 no response; 14 university graduates;
   16 Elementary; 94 Completed Secondary School.
   ii) Marital Status: 3 no response; 1 Separated; 1 Divorce; 36 married; 87 single (Senior students).

Level of Educational Attainment

e) Elementary = 17 (5.67%)
On Work Issue

Question 1

The subjects of our analysis here, are the responses to questions that relate to the employment of women outside the home in Etsako.

The first question was: "Do you have an office work?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(270)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the result it was clear that 270 women out of 300 do not have office employment for one reason or the other. The difference between 90% and 10% appears rather great to warrant a question or contestation. This might have been due to a fact that most etsako women, naturally, are not used to the nature of work that is performed in the office. Also,
what it takes to qualify to have an office employment was not readily available. They are used to their traditional roles as house wives, mothers and as complimenters of their husbands.

Question 2

The number of respondents to the question: "Would you have preferred not to have an office work?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(227)</td>
<td>75.67</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>24.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of 300 women that were surveyed in the three local government areas of Etsako - Etsako East, West and Central, 227 women gave an affirmative response. The difference between 75% “yes” and 24.33% “nay” appear conclusive.

Question 3

The number of respondents to the question was: “Is your husband working in an office?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(229)</td>
<td>76.33</td>
<td>(71)</td>
<td>23.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of “yes” respondents were 229 or 71% as against 87 or 23.67% who replied "no". This result appears to suggest that the practice which used to prevail before the advent of the colonial master and the modern office work, was still going on. Before now, it was the tradition for males to go out and do whatever they had to do to fetch
what the family would live on, such as agricultural produce and hunting for games while the women engaged in trading while they stayed at home to look after the children, and performed domestic chores. So, it is not surprising that 76% of those surveyed responded that their husbands have office employment.

Question 4

The number of respondents to the question: "Is your husband a government worker?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(202)</td>
<td>67.33</td>
<td>(98)</td>
<td>32.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidently, many people in most cities in Nigeria are civil servants as government is the chief employers of labor in the country. This may be traceable to the colonial set up before independence. The above responses show that 213 Etsako women responded that their husbands have government employment, in other words, they are civil servants. Civil service includes public school teachers (primary and secondary), federal universities faculty and staff and government parastatals employees.

Question 5

The number of respondents to the question: "Is he self employed?"
The significant difference between 70% "no" and the 30% "yes" may be explainable, thus: There are not many self-employed persons in Etsako as can be seen from the above figure; this is owing to the fact that it is not easy for one to set up personal business. This phenomenon has a colonial history that may be related later on in this study. Although many among the civil servants are petty farmers, just enough to augment government civil service salaries.

**Question 6**

The number of respondents to the question: "If your husband is able to cater for the needs of the family, would you still prefer to work?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26.69</td>
<td>(80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>73.33</td>
<td>(220)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the women, 220 or 73.33% responded that they would not work. The implication appears to be clear; these Etsako women will stay at home and be mothers, housewives and complimenters of their husbands, if their husbands were able to ensure that the women were provided their needs. Only 80 Etsako women or 26.69% said they would still like to work even if their husbands were able to provide their needs.
Question 7

The number of respondents to the question: "Is it easy to work and raise children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(120)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>(180)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although, the picture appears clear here, but it may be argued that the 120 or 40% affirmative responses are related to the fact, that many African women are used to relatively working very hard. The argument may go further that as a result of the early childhood preparations, received through to the time of marriage, by the girls from their mothers, do not make it appear hard or difficult to have an office employment and at the same time, be able to raise children. Therefore, the 180 or 60% women appeared justified by the difference in the percentage which is fairly significant.

Question 8

The number of respondents to the question: "If married, do both of you work?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(109)</td>
<td>36.33</td>
<td>(191)</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference is significant; 191 or 63.7% respondents are not having employment while their husbands do, against only 109 or 36.33% women who are working with their husbands. It may be contestable that the 109 women who are working at the
same time as their husbands do, may be the by-product of modern day behavior of some African women who have some education. On the other hand it could be argued that poverty may be responsible for the 36.33% women who work. This is because, in many African homes, it is usually when the bread winner, the male’s, income appears unable to take care enough of the family needs that the woman tries to augment with whatever she is able to do, as the complimenter of the man. Relatively before now, it was usually an insult to the man as it constituted a sign of his incompetence and poverty, to subject any of his wives to hardship by allowing her to go out and have employment.

Question 9

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you prefer petty trading to office work?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>62.69</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>37.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(188)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(112)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of 300 women of 62.69 of them agreed that they would prefer trading than office work. The difference is significant enough. It further confirms Etsako women’s desire to remain close to the home where they are able to respond to the home at any time. It can be argued that engaging in petty trading provides the freedom that a working mother seldom has if she has a formal employment.
It is also possible that the 112 or 37.33 of the women who responded “no” to petty trading may just be those who wish to be just housewives. It used to be honorable, and it still is, to be a housewife, especially in Etsako and in Nigeria as a whole.

**Question 10**

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you think that working disturbs proper management of the home and the children?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(186)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>(114) 38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result also seems clear. Of the 300 Etsako women polled, 186 or 62% know and believe, that having an office employment will disturb the proper management of the home and the rearing of the children. It could be argued that the 114 women whose response was nay, might not to be aware of what is happening in some developed, western countries, where children are such a nuisance to their parents and society owing to both husbands and wives working. Furthermore, there may be no way by which a working woman

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24 Defending the African's institution of marriage in his book, *The Lonely African*, Colin M. Turnbull explained that “We have several wives, and we are faithful to them all, and we care for all their children until we die. You people cannot even be faithful to one wife, and your children are such a nuisance to you that you send them away from home almost as soon as they can walk”. See *The Lonely African*, (New York: Simon And Schuster, 1962), 27.
can bring up her child properly and manage the home well enough to ensure proper harmony in the home and society as experience is showing in some western countries.

On Politics

In this section Etsako women spoke their mind on the issue of politics as it relates to women or their participation.

Question 1

The number of respondents to the question: "Have you ever participated in a political campaign?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>(223)</td>
<td>74.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result may be arguable, that the women were not interested in politics as politicking represents a novelty avocation for women compared with their traditional role of authority in the home where they are mothers, first and whatever they may wish to become. The difference between 74 and 25.67 percents is significant enough to accept the verdict of Etsako women.

Question 2

The number of respondents to the question: "Have you ever voted in an election?"
This result clearly shows that the Etsako woman understands her civic responsibility by voting, and it also shows that she is free to exercise her right of choice of who governs or who represents her in the organized society. The difference in the responses in the above result is great enough to warrant a comparison of the Western women and the African women. In the modern art of governance, the African women are relatively fresh or new in it, while the western women had been exposed to the system of governance for more than a century before they were able to vote in political elections. The African women have only known the system barely forty years and they have been participating by voting responsibly. Therefore, it is very encouraging that 56.67% were exercising their civic responsibility.

Question 3

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you have interest in politics?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>170</td>
<td>56.67</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>43.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result here appears to be self explanatory, in the sense that the difference in the result does not appear to be quite significant. Of the 300 women 47.67% of them appear
to be interested in politics while 52% or 157 of them expressed some apprehension about politics. The result can be argued, that owing to the fact that no one may actually deny having interest in politics, because humans are political animals in nature, the 143 women appeared to have expressed what they understood to be true of all humans. On the other hand, the 157 or 53% of the women who appeared to be uninterested in politics, may be one of the reasons that women in Nigeria held only 14 seats in the parliament, as shown in the UN Human Development Report for 1996. Also, they could have been unconscious of their interest while failing to relate the role of the family, as the unit of society, to political participation. Without the family there is no society, and without a society there is no political arena.

Question 4

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you like those who engage in party politics?"

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>47.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(159)  (141)

This result is quite clear; it may be argued that the party political experience in the region of Africa is self instructive. Also, one may like those who play party politics without being interested in playing party politics.
Equally too, the 159 or 53% who expressed their like for those who play party politics may not necessarily mean that they themselves may be interested in party politics.

Question 5

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you think that party politics is for men?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(196)</td>
<td>65.33</td>
<td>(104)</td>
<td>34.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority affirmative response to this enquiry is supportable with the notion that the women understand the stress or enormous experience involved in party politics. It appears correct to say also, that in Africa, a tough or rough job is reserved for the men. The women do not claim equality with men to that extent. The difference in the percentage response, therefore, seems justified culturally also.

Question 6

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you think that party politics is for women?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>24.67</td>
<td>(226)</td>
<td>75.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response here is clear. Etsako women believe that party politics is not for women probably because it appears a rough job that should not be confronted by women, especially
that it appears to be a job for the men as they have always believed. The difference in the responses, therefore, is not surprising as it is encouraging.

Question 7

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you think politics is for both sexes?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>(220)</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference is such that a contention was impossible for those who may want to do so against the nay responses. The women appeared to be consistent in their resentment for women's active participation in western form of politics in Africa. The significance of the differences between 220 or 73.33% and 80 or 26.67% is great and sets a basis for hope on the issue.

Question 8

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you think women would have done better in politics than men in Etsako":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(141)</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>(159)</td>
<td>53.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result above seems quite interesting, in spite of the majority of 159 women who believed that women would not have done better, over the 141 who opined that women would have
done better. It could be argued that the 141 women who thought that women could have done better, may have forgotten that there could have been no other reason for women to do better in politics if the men could not. The reason may be that the women, having failed to ensure that their husbands excelled while in politics through advice, could not do otherwise if, they the women, were in politics themselves. In other words, the women would not have done differently from what the men, their husbands, have undone or could not do.

Question 9

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you think men have done well in politics?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.67</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>54.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(137)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(163)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result is equally fascinating in the sense that everyone seems to know and agree that the males in Africa have not done well in politics. Therefore, 163 women out of 300 said that the males have not done well should not appear an indication that the women will do better nor is it a call for the women to take over the African political arena. Also, it could be argued that the 137 women who believed that the males have done well politically in Africa, may have had someone who was in politics, therefore, may not
wish to condemn the ugliness of the politics the males have played which may be equitable to the politics of self-centeredness usually played in Africa.

Question 10

The number of respondents to the question: “Could men have done better than they have?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>(201)</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result appears interesting. Majority affirmed that the men could have done better in politics, and only 99 or 33% of the women contended that the men could not have done better. One may agree with the minority opinion in this instance because under the conditions in which the men played the political game, there appeared to have been several obstacles under which political success appeared to have been impossible. The instrument of power was misplaced from the beginning. A polity or state would seem to function better under an appropriate leadership. The 99 women could have carefully reflected on their responses, were as, the majority merely appeared to have been carried away by popular sentiment.

Question 11

The number of respondents to the question: “If any failure, was it men’s alone?”
The above result, with regards to the 214 women out of 300, who answered “No” to the assumed statement, it could be contested that the result had merely represented or depict the general opinion that politicians, males and females have failed politics in Nigeria and specifically in Etsako. On the other hand, it could be argued also, that, the affirmative response of 86 women was an indication since mostly men were actually participating in politics, it could only be the fault of the men if any failure had occurred.

**Question 12**

The number of respondents to the question: **“Have both sexes failed in politics in Etsako?”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gap or difference between the two responses seems to support the argument that might be possible in this instance. Only 135 or 45% of the 300 women affirmed that both of the sexes or genders actually failed in politics in Etsako while the majority, 165 or 55% rejected the notion that both males and females failed politics in Etsako. The argument is that the 165 women merely assumed that since they, the women were not interested in politics anyway, and
had not played with it, it could only have been the men who failed, especially that majority of the 300 women affirmed their non-participatory stance in politics.

**Question 13**

The number of respondents to the question: "Have both sexes played politics well in Etsako?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(159)</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>(141)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, from the above result, the 159 women out of the 300, appeared to be representing the general discontent in politics as a game of survival in Africa because all political actors, males and females appeared to have failed their generation. The 141 or 47% of the 300 women appear to have been airing their opinion irrespective of whether such opinion was popular or not. Such is the essence of democracy.

**Question 14**

The number of respondents to the question: "Should every woman be involved in party politics as a matter of national policy?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(130)</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>(170)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What appears an apparent way to view the responses above seems to be that it only represents the African woman’s
continued contention, that politics in the western styles is not for the African woman. The affirmative response cannot present any contending view, either implied or otherwise, in view of the very distinct significant difference in the figures.

Question 15

The number of respondents to the statement: "Women should vote, but should not be voted for".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(172)</td>
<td>57.33</td>
<td>(128)</td>
<td>42.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears apparent that the views expressed through the above result may only be seen as a consistent demonstration of the women of Etsako, that political participation, in the western styles, is not for the African woman. The affirmative response of 172 or 57.33%, as against 128 or 42.67% of the 300 women, further demonstrates that everyone being a political animal, ought to exercise their rights, be it civic or inalienable. One could only argue that it appeared to have accounted for the significant difference.

Question 16

The number of respondents to the question: "Should women be involved in politics more than they have always been in Etsako?"
This result appears very close in the sense that the apparent difference looked insignificant. It can be argued that the slight difference might have been brought about by the unwarranted mounting pressure on the women from the Western and the European world, to abandon their African tradition. It is the toll that appeared to have been reflected in the above response. The response is not surprising, but it appears encouraging that African women seem to be resisting the attempt to be recolonized by the imperial powers.

The Issue of Family Values

In this segment of our exercise, African family values are the subject of this enquiry. The total number of questions were fourteen.

Question 1

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you think there is honor in being a wife?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(294)</td>
<td>98.00</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above result appears to be overwhelming as it is almost 100% for the idea expressed in the enquiry. Ninety-eight percent believe that it is honorable to be a wife. It can
be argued conveniently that not to be a wife in Africa, when one is at the right age, is a crime against the people and the state while a grievous offence against nature. This is primarily due to the fact that marriage ("urthuamhi") is the rite of passage into adulthood which is a major stage in the adult life course, and the primary social institution governing childbearing and parenthood\(^{25}\). Therefore, the 6 women or 2% of the 300 African women who were not sure if being a wife was honourable may require to further examine their soul with a view to purging themselves on the issue.

**Question 2**

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you have children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>77.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(69)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(231)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result appears to be encouraging because out of the 109 women who were married at the time of this enquiry, only 40 do not as yet have children. Among the 40 women could have been some newly weds, therefore, the figure seems understandable. It could be argued as well, that out of the 231 whose response was nay, included some 187 single women yet to be married. Assumably, if 63% of the 109 that were

\(^{25}\) "To The Point: Rutgers Study Shows a Dramatic Decline In Marriage Rates and Increased Pessimism among Teens About Marriage", *Rutgers New York*, Office of Media Relations and Communications, July 1, 1999.
married women, out of the 300, have children, it might be possible that more than 80% of the singles among the 300 women would probably have children when they get married. This might be the case, because it is rare to have a girl or woman who does not wish to have children in the African society, hence to be fruitful appears as the general and specific aspiration of an African woman. Therefore, the over-all response on the question appears quite encouraging.

Question 3

The number of respondents to the question: "Would you have a nanny raise your children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(94)</td>
<td>31.33</td>
<td>(206)</td>
<td>68.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significant difference in this result appears obvious as 68.67% or 206 women of the 300 rejected the notion to have nannies raise their children while only 31.33% or 94 of the 300 women said they would have nannies. The importance of this result must be viewed from the uncompromising value that the African woman places on children and family.

Question 4

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you prefer not to marry if you have a choice?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>(223)</td>
<td>74.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This result may only be analyzed from the background that the issue of marriage to the adult in Africa is a first obligation, therefore, it would be difficult to see any reasonable number of Africans, male and females who may opt for a life without marriage. It can be argued here that the above result appears an indication of what to expect, should one set out to look for many African women who do not wish to marry. This might probably have been due to the currently feared impact of some foreign and strange cultural influence that may be affecting the African environment at this time. The number of "nay" in this result might be a confirmation that almost every African woman looks forward to marriage as she becomes an adult. On the other hand, the 77 or 25.67% of the women who may have decided that they may not marry, could have resulted from the same currently feared foreign and strange cultural influx impacting on the African traditional society.

Question 5

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you like marriage, but would prefer not to have children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference in this result seems significant. Only 30 women representing 10% of the 300 women polled had said that
they would like marriage but would not have children. It can be argued that this "yes" response appeared rather insignificant compared to the 270 women representing 90% of the females who would not have anything to do with marriage if they cannot have children. The result further shows the high premium placed on children by African women. From an African perspective, it can be contested that children are the essence of marriage in Africa, and Africa expects that it should be so in any human society because without children, there would be no society and there would be no marriage.

Question 6

The number of respondents to the question: "Would you have children, but do not want a husband?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>(294)</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The "no" response appeared to be overwhelming as the difference appeared greatly significant. Only 6 respondents representing only 2% of the 300 women said that they could have children without a husband. It can be argued that African culture may have played a role in the response because it is against the culture of Etsako for a lady to become pregnant without having a husband. It is equally offensive to the culture for a girl to become pregnant
There appeared to be a significant difference in this result. Two hundred and thirteen women representing 71% of the total number of respondents, asserted that the role of women at home was more important while only eighty-seven or 29% rejected the notion that the role of a woman at home was more important. It could be argued that the cultural norms may have influenced the result because in Etsako, it is considered that the home is a safer place for a mother of the children instead of exposing her to any unhealthy or hostile condition.

Question 9

The number of respondents to the question: "Is a woman's role in politics as important?"

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(138)</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td>(162)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result could be explained thus: Those who saw the importance in politics as in home are 138 representing 46% of the total respondents, and those who could not compare the importance of the home to that of politics were 162 or 54% of the total number of respondents. Although, the difference is there, but it could be argued that the "Yes" response recognized the politics that seems embedded in the home as comparable to any other form of politics, and in their opinion, one must outweigh the other. On the other
hand, the 162 women who refused to see the equality in the two forms of politics, recognized the home politics as supreme because without the home any other form of politics cannot survive, therefore, the home politics cannot be compared to other external political activities.

Question 10

The number of respondents to the question: "Are men’s roles more important in politics than women’s?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(188)</td>
<td>62.67</td>
<td>(112)</td>
<td>37.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result above shows an apparent significant difference. Majority of the respondents believed that men’s participation in politics was more important than that of women. It can be argued that this result was informed by the fact that to the women, politics was a tough game or avocation that could only be played or undertaken by men, since men by nature and cultural precepts, should take-on more complex and tougher assignments or such political avocations. On the other hand, those whose response was "nay" to the question, could have been influenced by the on-going war of cultural imperialism by the West, which is the fear at the moment, including the level of mis-education in the African environment.
Question 11

The number of respondents to the statement: "Women should play politics and raise children".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(95)</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>68.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analytically, the difference in the result appeared significant. Out of 300 women, only 95 women representing 31.67% suggested that they could play politics and raise children. The majority of the women, 205 or 68.33% rejected the notion that they could play politics and raise children. The majority assertion appeared to have been informed by the supreme value placed on the children and the method by which they must be prepared to face life's challenging experience.

Question 12

The number of respondents to the question: "Are men able to play politics and help to raise the children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(191)</td>
<td>63.67</td>
<td>(109)</td>
<td>36.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result is explainable in the sense that the difference is significant. One hundred and ninety-one women or 63.67% of the 300 of them say that it is easy for the men to assist with the raising of the children while they play politics. In Africa before the White man, it was the man's responsibility to go out and fetch what the mother of the
home will use to prepare food for the family. Evidently, the one who went out into the wild to fetch what is needed to prepare food and the one who prepared the food are both in their respective degrees assisting in the rearing of the children of the home. In the same or similar manner, the man can still play politics and assist in the raising of the children. In Etsako, the culture dictates that the man and his wife or wives together, will raise their children.

Question 13

The number of respondents to the question: "Can a woman having an office employment be the same to a home as playing party politics?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(270)</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result appeared to be overwhelming because the significant difference is obvious. Out of 300 women 270 or 90% of them said that playing politics was equivalent to holding an office employment; this can be explained by the fact that since neither of the two will keep the woman close to home where they can be with the children, the two activities appear to be the same. It can be argued that the women appeared to have been consistent in their desire to remain house wives. The 10% 'no' response appears insignificant to warrant an attempt to explain what it meant.
more than what it obviously seems to represent.

Question 14

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you think more women would prefer to be home makers than office job holders if they have a choice?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>155</td>
<td>51.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>145</td>
<td>48.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This appears an interesting result. Although, the race was close, but there was a majority, and the race could be explained. The “yes” responses represented those who stand by the cultural dictates no matter what, and at the same time there appeared to be an unseen force mounting pressure on the cultural norms. The 155 women representing 51.67% appeared to be maintaining that the women ought to be at home to nurture the future political society. The 48% representing the 145 women who responded “no” to the question may be few of the Etsako women who have exposed themselves to some reading materials from the West.

CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Question A

The number of respondents to the question: “Do you cherish your culture and tradition, or who you are and what you do, and how you do them?”
This result here is very clear, the difference rather very significant. Out of 300 women 225 or 75% of them said that they do cherish their culture, tradition, who they are, the way they do what they have to do, how, when and why. Only 75 women representing 25% said that they did not cherish their culture and tradition including who they are, what they do, and the way they do what they do. The difference appeared significant, but it may be debatable that the 225 women actually know what it entailed for one to be himself or herself, while the other group of 75 women representing only 25% may not be aware of what it means for one to be himself or herself. In other words, ignorance might or could have been responsible for the response. Also, one may want to assert that this result means that the 225 women who outnumbered the other group of women, implies unbroken consistencies in many of these results.

Question B

The number of respondents to the question: “Culture and traditions are very important”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(242)</td>
<td>80.67</td>
<td>(58)</td>
<td>19.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above result, it appeared visible that there is a
significant difference between those who agreed with the statement and those who disagreed. Of the 300 women 242 representing 80.67% agreed that culture and traditions are very important. Only a small percentage of 19.33% appeared to disagree that culture and traditions are important. It appears possible to say that the 242 women know themselves very well and what culture and traditions are; at the same time, one may argue that the other 58 women of the 300, do not appear to know who they are and what culture and traditions entail.

Question C

The number of respondents to the statement: "Culture and traditions are no more important:"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(98)</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>(202)</td>
<td>67.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above result, 202 women representing 67.33% of 300 women disagreed with the suggestion while only 98 women representing only 32.67% agreed with the suggestion that culture and traditions are no more relevant. It could be contested that at no time would there ever come a time when man and his ways or his artifacts will not be there nor would they ever be less important. It can be argued therefore, that it would take ignorance for one to insinuate in proposition that culture and traditions are no more
important in our ever-growing world.

Question D

The number of respondents to the question: "A woman is the mother of the home, and a man is the father of the house".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(169)</td>
<td>56.33</td>
<td>(131)</td>
<td>43.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this result 169 women representing 56.33% of the total agreed that a woman is the mother of the home while the man is the father of the house. However, 131 women representing 43.33% of the 300, disagreed with the suggestion. It can however, be argued that the majority in this enquiry, undoubtedly is correct because in Etsako society, it is axiomatic that the man is the father and head of the home while the woman is the mother of the household. The coming together of this fatherhood and motherhood of the home lies the continuity of our existence in an orderly progression. Each individual in this union understand his or her own responsibility within the union. It is necessary to defer further elaboration on this point until the appropriate section of this study. The result was, nonetheless, encouraging.

Question E

The number of respondents to the statement: "Would you
have preferred to have a surrogate mother to have a baby for you?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(42)</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>(258)</td>
<td>86.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implication of these responses are clear. It would appear that Etsako women would not accept a surrogate mother as they appear willing to have their babies. It is arguable that such a notion, such as having another woman to have a baby on their behalf will appear strange to them, and will be inconceivable. No matter how meager, the 42 women or 14% who prefer a surrogate mother, is part of the feared cultural dilution of some strange foreign idiosyncratic influence.

(1) "Would you prefer a surrogate mother to have a baby for you because: Pregnancy will disturb your career development?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>29.67</td>
<td>(211)</td>
<td>70.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be argued that with this result, the Etsako woman was not ready for what is called career development. She will not accept a surrogate mother because she was by nature a mother, therefore, to become pregnant is a Divine blessing and pride that cannot be compromised or undermined for any reason.
(2) ...because: "you do not want to miss work"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(63)</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>(237)</td>
<td>79.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result here indicates that the Etsako woman was ready to miss work if pregnancy was not allowed in a work place. The difference between the scores appears significant to assume that the implication as stated is correct.

(3) ...because: "pregnancy is too painful"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>(201)</td>
<td>67.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be argued that in spite of the assumed painful nature of pregnancy by most people, the women of Etsako would prefer to endure the pains as such a pain was God ordained. The result here implied this assumption as 201 women representing 67% of the 300 women did not accept that the pains of pregnancy were such that would prevent them from becoming a mother. It could be argued that the 99 women who suggested that the pains of pregnancy may scare them away from becoming pregnant, are the fearful and weak type of women. Such African women may have, in addition been influenced or affected by post-colonial impact and western cultural imperialism that pervade the African environment, hence their rejection of the idea. It is not abnormal to nurture fear, but what may have appeared abnormal in this
matter was the type of fear this set of women may be victims of because an African woman as the first mother of the human race was not incapable of motherhood. The fear expressed was therefore, strange.

**Question F**

The number of respondents to the question: "Is it a woman’s duty to cook for the husband?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(280)</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this result 280 women representing 93% of the 300 women responded "yes" to the question; the implication is that the Etsako women would cook for their husbands because it is only a natural thing to happen. It is arguable that in Etsako society, there is what the western society called division of labor. In Etsako society, like in most African societies, there are those things that are inherently natural for a woman to do as there are certain things that are inherently a man’s activity. As shown in these results only 20 women out of 300 rejected the notion that a wife should cook the food for her husband. It is therefore encouraging that there is that great difference between the two responses.

**Illustration G**

The number of respondents to the statement: "Is it more
beneficial for the home and society for a woman to raise children?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(234)</td>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>22.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this result, it can be understood that the women of Etsako are saying, that women should raise children because to them in Etsako, the good of society with a future free of crime, but full of responsible citizens, rests there. There is a significant difference in the result as 234 women representing 78% of the 300 women responded "yes" to the statement; and only 66 or 22% of the women rejected the idea. The positive response is therefore a hopeful sign in Etsako and for Nigeria as well.

Question H

The number of respondents to the question: "Are you proud of who you are?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(276)</td>
<td>92.00</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It could be argued that Etsako women were not proud of themselves, but with the results here presented, it may be difficult to contest such an argument. Two hundred and seventy-six women (276) representing 92% of the total polled, said they are proud of who they are, while only a meager number of 24 women representing only 8% said that
they were not proud of who they were. The "no" response appears insignificant, therefore, it does not deserve much comment.

**Question I**

The number of respondents to the question: "*Marriage and having children are a primary obligation*"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(249)</td>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>17.00</td>
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</table>

The above result appeared to have presented a significant difference in the two groups' responses. Two hundred and forty-nine women representing 83% of the 300 total surveyed, responded "yes" to the statement, concurring that marriage and having children were a primary obligation for a family, woman and man. The verdict appeared incontestable with the nay percentage response to the enquiry, therefore, it would appear needless to further comment on it.

**Question J**

The number of respondents to the statement: "*Household chores should be shared between husband and wife*"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>19.67</td>
<td>(241)</td>
<td>80.33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In this result, the majority of respondents, 241 out of 300 females declared that household chores were not for sharing between men and women, and 59 women representing only 19.67%
of the respondents are contesting that household chores were for husband and wife. The argument could be that majority of the women are opposed to the proposition because in the first case, such a proposal appeared anti-cultural and unfair in the eyes of the women. The reason being that men go out into the wild walking on thorns, tilling the soil, and hunting for food which appeared a cultural mandate, the woman therefore was the one who was placed in the home to nurture the home and the family. Also, another very important reason appeared to be that the female, being culturally the possessor of the apparatus for nurturing the "seed of life", it was very dangerous to expose her to any harsh condition of living for which she may not be compatible.

Question K

The number of respondents of the statement: "Are household chores the responsibility of both sexes?"

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(134)</td>
<td>44.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(166)</td>
<td>55.33</td>
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</table>

Household chores are not the responsibility of the man as this result seems to show, that a man and his wife should not share the household chores. Out of 300 women, 166 representing 55.33 disagreed with the notion that a man and his wife should share the responsibility of taking care of
the household chores. There is a difference of 32 between 166 and 134, but this difference does not appear great enough to cause any serious concern.

*Question L*

The number of respondents to the statement: "A man can as well cook for his wife"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>44.33</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>55.67</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the above result, majority of the 300 women, 167 representing 55.67% believed that a man cannot as well cook food for the wife because it falls within the household chores which women predominate culturally. The 133 women out of the 300 responded that a man can as well cook food for the wife. There is no doubt that there exists a significant difference between the two responses. However, it could be argued that since the woman cannot be exposed to such harsh and stressful conditions of life which are sometime daily routine for the man, a man should only cook for his wife when she is ill-disposed and/or for the purpose of entertainment.

*Question M*

The number of respondents to the statement: "Should an African woman dress in western trousers (pants)"
In this result it could be seen that 203 women out of the
300 respondents, rejected the idea of an African woman
dressing in trousers or pants. In other words, the women
had said that African women should not put on trousers or
pants. It could be contested that culturally, women in
Africa, have their own clothings and their own methods of
dressing which appear to be strange to the westerners just
as the western trousers or pants appeared strange to the
Africans. Some of their styles appear offensive to the
tradition as well as uncomfortable in the climate of Etsako.
The difference in the responses appeared significant,
therefore, it seems there was no need to offer any further
judgement differently from that of the women as expressed in
this poll results.

Question N

The number of respondents to the statement: “Payment of
dowry should be abolished”

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(83)</td>
<td>27.67</td>
<td>(217)</td>
<td>72.33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The above result is very interesting, in the sense that one
would have thought, the women would unanimously approve for
the abolishment of the payment of a dowry because it
supposedly places man’s influence over the woman in marriage, but contrary seems to be the case with this result. Two hundred and seventeen (217) out of 300 women, rejected the notion to abolish the payment of a dowry on a wife. Only 83 out of the 300 seemed to have accepted the proposal to abolish the payment of a dowry. Again, it can be contested that the culture of Etsako people, having prescribed or dictated that a man must pay a dowry on his wife or wives, makes it impossible to see how the women may want it abolished, especially since such money goes to the father and the mother of the girl to be married. Therefore, it becomes necessary to appreciate the impact of culture in some, if not all of the responses in this study.

**Question 0**

The number of respondents to the statement: “A woman should pay dowry on the man so she can have equal rights with the man”

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<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(137)</td>
<td>45.67</td>
<td>(163)</td>
<td>54.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result, like some of the others before it, has indicated that majority of the women of Etsako would reject the notion to allow women begin to pay dowries on men with the sole purpose to get equal with men. In this enquiry, 163 out of 300 women representing 54.33% of them objected to
the idea; but 137 out the total polled acceded that women should pay dowries on me to get equal with them. It can be argued that the payment of a dowry on a woman was not what makes a woman a complementary partner in a marriage institution in Etsako, rather, it was the kind of roles traditionally and culturally ascribed to the nature of a woman which appeared delicate and deserving the protection of a man. A dowry is a symbol of the high premium placed on the importance of a wife in Etsako. It is not paid to the bride, but to the parents in appreciation for producing a woman who would eventually help the bridegroom to start his own family. This is because without a wife in Etsako, a man cannot start a family. Furthermore, the argument may continue that if a dowry was what makes a woman what she is to an Etsako man, then it would be correct to say that Etsako people sell their girls to their men, but the contrary appears to be the case. The culture forbids the trading on human beings.

Question P

The number of respondents to the question: "Should a man seek permission first from the wife as a matter of courtesy before he makes a decision or does whatever he may wants to do?"
The result showed that the women would want their husbands to take permission first from them as a matter of courtesy. This was exactly what the 178 out of 300 women said. The 122 women out of 300 or 40% of them who answered "nay" to the question, can be considered to be those who are traditionalists among the women. They know traditionally, that a man in Etsako, should be able to do whatever he wants and report or inform his wife or wives later.

Question q

The number of respondents to the statement: "A woman should seek permission first from the man as a procedure?"

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<thead>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>289</td>
<td>96.33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The result of the enquiry was really overwhelming. The majority of 289 out of the 300 women responded "yes" to the statement; in other words, these Etsako women prefer that women take permission first from their husbands as a matter of procedure, before they attempted to do whatever it was that they may have had in mind. Arguably, one would contest that Etsako women being wise ones, regarded the idea as reasonable because one ought to respect her husband, since he was the one who seems to be in charge of the affairs of
the home while the women support with advise where necessary, especially that the culture and morality dictated these precepts. Any opposing idea would probably fail, indicative of the number of opposing respondents, 11 out of the 300 women representing only 3.67% opposed to the idea or notion.

**Question R**

The number of respondents to the question: "Should women give the traditional respect to their husband as the head of the house?"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>289</td>
<td>96.33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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</table>

Those who gave affirmative response to the question were 289 women representing 96.33% out of the 300 polled. Those who rejected the notion were only 11 women representing only 3.67%. The difference between the responses was quite significant. Moreover, it could be contested that the women of Etsako, being some of the most culturally enlightened people of Edo State, would not have answered otherwise because those who gave traditional respect to those who deserved such, are in themselves highly regarded and respected among the people as the worthy ones.

**Question S**

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you
prefer a husband to boss you?"

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<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>152</td>
<td>50.67</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>49.33</td>
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In the above result, 152 women out of 300 polled representing 50.67% agreed to the idea that a husband should boss a wife. On the other hand, 148 women representing 49.33% rejected the idea. Although, the results were close, it could be argued that the concept "boss" may have affected the result because the women have agreed to the leadership of the man in the house; in other words, the Etsako woman accepts that the man is the leader and head of the home as dictated by the culture of the land, therefore, the "boss" idea was idiosyncratic idea and foreign.

Question T

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you prefer to boss your husband?"

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>86.67</td>
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</table>

In this result, the majority of the 300 women, 260 representing 86.67% rejected the idea that they should ever boss their husbands. The implication is that a woman should not boss her husband. Only 40 women out of the 300 women affirmed that they could boss their husbands. Moreover, it is arguable that such may not happen in Etsako. Culturally,
it said that "ebe okpotso efio omha", meaning that the cutlass of a woman cannot cut-down an omha tree. "Omha" is a giant native tree in Etsako, (its leaves were the only ones normally used to plant the placenta and the remains of the umbilical-cord of a newly born baby in Etsako).

Question U

The number of respondents to the question: "Should Africans replace their tradition with non-African traditions?"

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<th>%</th>
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<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
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</table>

In the this result, by their nay response, 276 out of 300 Etsako women who represented an overwhelming 92% majority, had rejected the notion of replacing Etsako people’s traditions, with some foreign traditions. The difference between the 8% yes appeared so significant that it might not warrant any further comment. However, it could be argued that the responses were influenced by the women’s knowledge, total commitment and adherence to their culture, in which case, the result was encouraging.

Question V

The number of respondents to the question: "If married, do you have a "mate"?"
This result shows that 215 out of 300 females representing 71% responded nay to the question, while only 28% seemed to have given affirmative responses. However, this result appear to be very encouraging and promising because there were a total of 109 married women among the 300 females. Therefore, if 85 of the 109 married women were having a mate each, it meant that 78% of the total polled were having mates, and the significant difference could not have been, but very prominent and encouraging. For the avoidance of doubt, the implication is that if the 300 Etsako females were married, it was possible to have more than 78% of married women having mates. In other words, “one man, one wife” idea was incompatible with the culture of the people in the province of Etsako in Edo State of Nigeria. The greater significance and implications of this particular result shall be further disclosed appropriately within this study.

Question W

The number of respondents to the question: “Will you accept a mate?”

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>68.33</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>31.67</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In this result, 205 out of 300 females representing 68.33% affirmed that they will have a mate, in other words, these females which included 187 girls affirmed that they will allow their husbands to take a second wife if they so desire. Only 98 out of the 300 females objected to the idea by giving a "no" response to the question. There appeared to exist a significant difference in the scores. Therefore, contestably, it could be argued that Etsako will not have the problems associated with monogamy as witnessed in some western societies, if the trends demonstrated in this research were continued.

*Question X*

The number of respondents to the question: "If unmarried, will you accept to marry a man who already has a wife?"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>231</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implication of this result is clear; the females in Etsako are not opposed to the culture that allows a man to have more than one wife. The demonstration here allows for this assertion because 231 out of 300 females representing 77% of the lot affirmed that they will marry a man who has a wife. It was only 69 or 23% of the females that frown at such a system, and it could be argued that among such few
number of the females may have been influenced by what they may have heard from external sources. However, the wide difference gives much room for hope in the women of Etsako as those who will preserve the ethos and lore of Etsako in Africa.

Question Y

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you accept visits of your husband's parents without your prior invitation?"

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>74.67</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25.33</td>
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</table>

In this result as well, the females in Etsako appeared to have continued to show that the peoples' ways of life are important, therefore, such aspects of a people hold much to be desired. The scores here are an indication that Etsako females would preserve the open door policy of the people hence in these polls, 224 females of the 300 representing 74.67% will not mind to receive their in-laws, (mothers and fathers) in their homes without prior invitation. In other words, traditions appeared to be highly respected by Etsako people, especially the women. Only 76 out 300 or 23.33% females frown at the idea of the "intrusions" of in-laws, so to say. The response seems encouraging as a result of the performance of these women of Etsako in terms of their
desire to preserving their identity.

Question Z

The number of respondents to the question: "Do you believe that every successful man has a woman behind him, and vice-versa?"

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.67</td>
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</table>

In this final question, the females of Etsako, like other females or like other persons in the world, have overwhelmingly demonstrated their belief in the world wide axiom, which holds that every successful man has a woman behind him, and vice-versa. In this result, 280 out of 300 females representing 93.33% have given their affirmative responses, while 20 females representing only 6.67% gave a negative response. The margin appears too wide to warrant a debate; it appears to be an encouraging windfall in this study, and this shall be further analyzed later in this study.

SUMMARY

This Chapter was divided into two parts. Part I contains data on the American woman, and Part II contains data on the Etsako woman. The Chapter has also presented the data for analysis in this study, the analysis of response to questionnaires, the summary of the 300 questionnaires
administered on Etsako women that were used in this examination, and the responses and analysis on major issues were presented and analyzed.

The next chapter will present a discourse on the findings, interpretation of them, summary and conclusion.
CHAPTER IV
INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter will present discussions which might include some fundamental dicta on some of the findings of this study in the course of our interpretation and conclusion, which are the subject matters of this particular chapter.

In our attempt to interpret and conclude on this study, we must not do so by rationalizing ONLY with our mundane exoteric intellectualism. In other words, this interpretation must NOT be done only from our day-to-day worldly and materialistically structured knowledge because such knowledge cannot withstand the test of time. There are other two reasons for this choice. (1) African women and Africa as a whole live in two worlds and have knowledge or believe in the two worlds, the visible and invisible worlds. (2) The visible world recognized by others as the only man's abode dependently coexist with the invisible, mystical and spiritual world which the Etsako people cherish very much from time immemorial. It is for these reasons Etsako
people's life specifically, Nigerians' and Africans' generally are embedded in the African cultural norms, traditions, philosophical consciousness and glorification. Apparently, for these same reasons the framework for this study has to be grounded in the African philosophy of politics and government. This being the case, it becomes important to see why we must reflect as well from the two worlds. The reasoning may be simple. Philosophically, Africans understand that man is dual in nature and so his trials and worldly encounters for profound experience, must not only be understood, treated or examined myopically or from a single dimension.

Consequently, modern day polities in Africa will not achieve the desired goals of achieving the greater goods for the greatest number by having ONLY an exoteric intellectual understanding. To understand and gain much from our total environment with its socio-political and economic complexities, our understanding must include that of the metaphysics and the esotericisms (the ontological or science of being and within self or spiritual understanding) of our finite political environment. Therefore, our reflection and rationalization, inclusive of the understanding of these dimensions, will include in this chapter: The Traditional Political, and Social Structure of Etsako Society, a general
Political Observation on the findings, Western Assumptions, The Case Against Population Control in Africa, as well as Nigeria and Etsako Communities, Family Structure in Etsako, Etsako and Western Feminism, Relations Between Woman and Man, the Impact of Culture and Tradition, Politics and Conclusion.

THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF ETSAKO

Social Structure

Etsako is politically composed of three local government areas; Etsako East, West, and Etsako Central local governments of Edo State of Nigeria. Etsako area lies in the northeastern part of Edo State of Nigeria, and covers approximately 2,703.30 square kilometers or 1,043.4738 square miles of hilly semi-savannah grassland. The population is estimated at 464,000 people by the latest 1992 census figures. Etsako is bounded on the west by Owan and Akoko-Edo local Government areas, and on the east, by the River Niger. Etsako East has its administrative headquarters at Agenegbode situated by the River Niger while the administrative center of Etsako West is at Auchi. Etsako people may be able to lay claim to being the original Edo people who are today known as the Binis in Nigeria. Edo was the original name of the land and people of the present Edo
State and its people, before the now Etsako people migrated to where they are today. Historical oral tradition relates, that Etsako people left Edo in protest after joining with other Binis in an unsuccessful bid to dethrone the Ogisso of Edo, Oba Ozenua, who was oppressive and cruel over his subjects. The war was known as Okwu-Oba, but the year it took place is in doubt. It is strongly felt that this war and Etsako's emigration from Edo were earlier than 1500 A.D.. For a number of reasons this debate over the exact date of the war is beyond the scope of this exercise.

Intelligence Reports on Etsako state that its people migrated from Benin in about 1500 A.D., although, it is doubtful if the migration had not taken place earlier. This doubt is further supported by the fact that the Intelligence Reports were not firm on the issue of the date.

The population of Etsako today is put at 464,000 by the latest census figures of 1992. As is always the case, women are more than men. Historically, Etsako people are traditionalists. In contemporary time, there are as many

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2 Ibid., 01.

3 Ibid.

Moslems as there are Christians. In spite of this cultural dilution or intermingling, the traditions of the people seem to have continued to have an edge over other things in the area.

Etsako as an ethnic group in Nigeria, has one language with about eleven (11) dialects. Most of the people, with very few exceptions, understand each other without any problem. The minor differences in the dialects do not affect the cultural similarities, in other words, the culture of the people is the same in spite of the slight differences in the dialects. Although, the two foreign religions, Christianity and Islam, are fighting for domination in the area, the traditional culture still has its hold on the people. Christianity canvasses for monogamy while Islam mandates the marrying of four wives. The traditional people are "polyharmonious", in other words, they marry as their ability allows. It is within this co-mingling that the society of Etsako exists. Etsako is a microcosm of Edo State just as the Edo State is a microcosm

\[5\] "Polyharmony", a derivative of "poly-homo-harmony", pronounced like in "polyharmony" is a coined word, and defined as the marriage system of Etsako and Africa generally, by Omoh Tsatsaku Ojior. This was in a paper, "The Press As The Forth Estate of The Realm" presented at the Annual Conference of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Bendel State Chapter, July 20, 1983. Ojior defined Polyharmony as a system in which a group of two or more people bound together by a common traditional matrimonial force (marriage rituals), and are in harmony with one another in the same confine under a man's leadership as the husband of the women involved.
of Nigeria. The politics in the area is a reflection of the politics of Nigeria at large. The difference, if any, may be found in the cultural behaviors that are fast vanishing within the urban metropolis of Nigeria; but in the hinterland, of which Etsako belongs, the cultural values are still upholding.

Family Setting

The family structure is based on Etsako people's cultural tradition, and family ties are very strong. As a result of the attachment to their culture and traditions, the husband/father is the head of the house irrespective of the religious affiliation of the man, Christians and Moslems alike. This is an evidence that culture transcends religion in this respect. The religion of the man is the religion of the wife or wives.6

In Etsako, the woman is the mother of the home and she is in charge of its day-to-day management while the man, as the husband/father of the home, is the head of the family. The mother is the divine shield of the family. "Odo-ogho", meaning, "A wife is a shield"; it is through her that the riches or poverty of the man will be known to the public.

Source: Much of the volume of information contained in this section, "The Traditional Political, and Social Structure of Etsako", were obtained from series of oral narrations during discussions the author had with community elders and other interviews and consultations with leaders of Etsako society.
The man takes responsibility for everything and for whatever the family becomes. He ensures that no member of the family is an embarrassment either to the family or to the community. The misbehavior of a member of a family rubs on the entire family either in good light or its opposite.\textsuperscript{7} It is traditional that women compliment the men in whatever they set out to do. Hence in Etsako, the aphorism is that in the life of every successful man is a woman; that is, there is a woman behind every successful man.\textsuperscript{8}

There is no room for juvenile delinquency in Etsako because the cultural setting has no room for delinquency. For example, a child belongs to all in the community. A child is corrected at once by whoever is present when the child may have misbehaved, and the child is commended also by whoever is present when the child performs well in whatever it was that the child was doing. This is to say that an adult cannot stand by and watch in silence while a child misbehaves, whether he or she knows the child or not. This is why it is an African philosophy that it takes a village to raise a child. This philosophy is also guided by another philosophical axiom that "Umie Ua gwere, lo gbo Okpishia, ata khuso, lo gbo ogomo", meaning "if an elder

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
sees danger and fails to warn the young, the elder is guilty of death; but if the young is warned but fails to heed the warning of the elder, the young is guilty of death".  

Marriage

Marriage institution in Etsako is very strong and it is the base of its cultural hegemony. In Etsako, marriage is the joining together of two families; it is never a contract only between the couple. Polyoharmony predominates in Etsako, and it is the root of the lack of divorce, a check on broken homes and juvenile delinquency, which in many respects, is associated with children from broken homes common in other societies.

It is a cultural stipulation that a man should have not less than two wives. A man can have more if he has the ability, and he is expected to meet the requirement. The first wife, "Adegbe", is the mother of the home regardless of the number of other wives. The second wife is "Amhoghia", and she has her special position with her children as she is not supposed to remarry outside the family in the event that the husband passes through transition, unless with the blessing of the husband's

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9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.
In Etsako, it is a traditional custom for a female to marry before she can become pregnant. In other words, a girl should not become pregnant while unmarried, and a girl is not a woman until she is wedded by a man.

Chastity is a pride and honor to a girl and her parents, especially to her mother who is rewarded highly by her daughter's suitor over her purity, and it is usually made known to the community by the husband. Dressing up in a skirt and blouse was a sign that a girl has been defiled. "Urthuamhi" is the marriage rite which a female ready for marriage must go through in the seven days preceding her going to the husband's home. There are traditional activities within these seven days marking this state of transition from girlhood to womanhood. It is an abomination for a family to have an unwed daughter as a mother.

To become a man, a male child must be circumcised to go through the Rite of Initiation to Manhood or he is yet a boy and not a man. A man who fails to meet the needs of his wife and family opens himself up to the ridicule of the community. A young boy qualifies to contend marriage when

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
he becomes an "Eghuogo", a young man. A man of age who is not married, stands disrespected before the community. A man who is unable to have more than one wife is considered as one who has not fulfilled his cultural obligation, and it is customary for the first wife to assist in getting a second wife, "Amhoghia" for her husband, if it appears the man is unable. A first wife is considered selfish if she is the only wife in the household; for this reason some first wives fish-out the "right" second wife that they would like for their husbands. This is one reason why it is hard to find an adult female without a husband, and there not are many bachelors.

Political Decision Making

Decision making processes in Etsako are complex as well as procedural. It is complex to those who have not the understanding of the culture and its systems, but it becomes simple to someone who has a complete knowledge of the cultural pillars of the people. These pillars are the traditional titles that give those who have taken some of these titles, or been initiated in others, the rights and privileges that go with them in the society. The men have

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13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.
four key titles and the women's are also four.\textsuperscript{15}

Traditional Cultural Titles

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Men's Titles

"Urthuamhi": In Etsako, a young boy who has not performed his initiation to manhood, is, but a young boy. He becomes a young man after his initiation known as "Urthuamhi". This initiation is the beginning of a man's adult life which qualifies him to be called upon for community assignment. Such assignment could be day or night watcher, public work exercise, attendance at community meetings where he may speak, but cautiously, and any other matter involving the general community.\textsuperscript{17}

A young man, (Eghwuogo) must be initiated at the age of (21) twenty-one. At this age, the young man is entitled to be heard, and to vote at the state and national elections.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
He also qualifies to seek a wife at this stage of his life even though he is yet living with his parents. When a young man takes Okhe Title in Etsako, he advances his status in the society.¹⁸

"Okhe" Title: Okhe Title is an important traditional rite for a male child in Etsako, it may be taken from both the mother's and the father's families respectively. This is to qualify him to enjoy the rights and privileges on both sides if the individual prefers. A young man qualifies to take a second wife, (Amhoghia) after taking the Okhe Title, but this is not mandatory. With Okhe Title, he is able to speak without any hesitation at gatherings either of his age group or at community or town hall meetings. A young man with this title will participate in community works until his age permits him not, in other words, age determines who may be excluded from community manual labor. Men in the community organize themselves into age groups, and whatever is to be done is apportioned to the age group that is determined by a class of advanced men known as "Ekhaemho". Each age group has a patron through whom directives may be communicated to the age group concerned.¹⁹

In Etsako, Okhe Title helps to determine seniority

¹⁸ Ibid.
¹⁹ Ibid.
among members of the same age group. A non-Okhe Title holder is an "Ogbhari", and Okhe a Title holder is an "Obetsu". An "Ogbhari" cannot choose before an "Obetsu" in the event there is something to share in the community. Age is not considered in this respect. An Ogbhari cannot advance to take an Amhoghia wife. An Okhe Title holder who marries a non-native or a foreigner has married an Amhoghia; he is entitled to marry an Adegbe if he chooses.\textsuperscript{20}

"Ikpelo" Title: Ikpelo is an advanced rite to be taken by a man at the age of sixty years. Ikpelo qualifies a man to become an Ekhaemho in the community. It is second to the highest title held by men in Etsako. This group of elders in any community in Etsako are the ears and eyes of the community. Their duty in the palace is to advise the "Enagwena" on any issue before the council of elders. It is their advice that the Enagwena will process to the Oghie or Clan Head who presides on all matters brought before the Palace.\textsuperscript{21}

"Ibaki" Title: Ibaki is the highest cultural Rite, and it is next to the highest life initiation to the other world, the last for any man in Etsako, taken at the age of sixty-six years. Members of Ibaki Title holders and Ikpelo

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
Title holders constitute members of the Council of Elders in the Palace of the "Zaiki" the Clan Head or King. Their role is to assist the Clan Head in settling issues, formulating and streamlining traditions and customs, and other day-to-day affairs of the community and the people. The advice of the Enagwena on a matter determines the decision of the Zaiki or the Clan Head. In other words, it is hard for a Zaiki to flout the advice of the elders in Council. A Zaiki leads while the Enagwena in council guides him to succeed in all affairs, and he rules by the confidence reposed on him by the people through the council of elders. A "Zaiki" is subject to removal once the elders lose their confidence in the Zaiki.22

"Oghie" (King): King is Oghie in Etsako language, and Oghie rules a community in each clan in Etsako. Oghie has a Town-crier who informs all, of whatever the information the King may need to be brought to the attention of the people. There are ten clans in Etsako. The clans include: Auchi, Ekphei, Uzairthue, Uweppa-Uwano, Avhianwu (Fugar), Ibie-Aape Ibie-Ughieda, Okphella, Agbede, and Anegbete. There are traditional ruling houses in each clan. Whenever the need arises, each ruling house must produce a candidate, who is then evaluated and voted for by the elders in the council.

22 Ibid.
The winner is installed and rules with the Council of Elders. Each clan has a traditional title name for its kingdom, and a new “Oghie” is installed with the title name of the kingdom while his name becomes secondary; for example, the new Clan Head of Ekphei is the Eghiegbai of Ekphei, Igietemho Ilegoghie. Each of these levels in the societies, as enumerated above have several elements of sacred rites and rituals that are beyond the scope of this study.\textsuperscript{23}

Women’s Titles

The women’s titles serve similar purposes in the society as do the men’s titles, but as can be seen from the above, a young man in Etsako, throughout his life has so much societal obligations and responsibilities that he must meet to remain with dignity. Although, functions of the women’s titles are similar, but they are less complex. Anukpe: Anukpe is an ancient special traditional drum, its sound signifies wedding; that is, whenever and wherever it is played it is an indication that a young lady has just passed through the wedding initiation. A mature girl with whom Anukpe has not been played in her parent's home has lost an invaluable credibility among the people and her

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
peers in the society. Anukpe is only played in a girl's home if the girl goes through the ancient traditional initiation rite of wedding. It is Anukpe that signals the beginning of a life of a young woman for an adult life in Etsako.24

_Alamhoka_: The Title of "Olamhoka" can only be bestowed on a woman after she becomes a woman. Akhikhio: Akhikhio is a title a woman celebrates after "Alamhoka". It is Olamhoka Title that qualifies a woman for Akhikhio. Alamhoka and Akhikhio Titles may be acquired by a woman as soon as she is able to do so because it qualifies their children to partake of any of the food arising from such titles' ceremonies. The parents of the woman are responsible for "Oka-Ulamhimhi", and the husband assists in ensuring that his wife has acquired the Title of Akhikhio. It is the custom.

_Emanaurhemhi_: A woman's last title is "Emanurhemhi" Title in which "Ikpogho" is the ritual's instrument, and this Title is acquired only by a woman after the preceding ones, and at the age of sixty.25 At this time such a woman is known as "Iyomha" (our mother) by all in the community and is considered an elder who may be able to meet with the

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid
Etosha Women Initiates in a Traditional Festival
(Source: Eddy Ethaghe's Collection)
men if necessary or her opinion on issues is sought for when
the need arises.

These traditional titles and their sacred rites and
rituals, and the peoples' understanding of them, serve as a
means by which the society and the people are kept in check.
In other words, appreciation of the lore is the measure by
which the society is controlled for general equanimity and
equilibrium.26

"Ogidigba" Town Hall

The Town Hall concept of our time, has its root in
Ogidigba. Ogidigba is a large community shelter built only
for community meetings in Etsako, like in any other African
town in ancient. It has been an ancient forum for serious
public discussions on matters concerning the people and the
community. Its location is always at the center of the town
or village. Ogidigba has an arrangement of its seats like
what we have in today's football stadia. The height of
seats are graduated from the top to the ground, to enable
all seated persons have a clear visibility of those who are
presiding without any hindrance. The seats are made of long
woods with the thickness of about five or six inches in

26 Ibid.
All the young men, (Eghwuogo) normally will go to the top of Ogidigba to enable their seniors sit in front, the seniors will sit next to them to the bottom of the Ogidigba. In the front, directly facing the audience in the Ogidigba are the elders (Enagwena), who preside over whatever the matter was to be decided. Normally, fines are imposed on those who fail to attend Ogidigba meetings, especially on the young men upon whom the elders expect will learn, and take direction from such meetings. The town-crier is always in attendance, and he is the one to "broadcast" or tell the people what was decided at such meetings. There is also a public "defender" or a disciplinarian who ensures that a meeting is orderly. He imposes an "agreed-upon" fine on a person who misbehaves or talks improperly during such meetings. Adult males are expected to attend all meetings, unless if an excuse was taken previously or someone explains the absence of an absentee, and it is accepted. An intending speaker will signify his intent to speak by raising up his hand until they are recognized to speak. Speaker after speaker will speak their minds on an issue, contributing to ensure that the true light is obtained on a matter before the gathering. It is after almost every one

27 Ibid.
has spoken, that a vote is taken to assist in making the final decision. Votes are taken by the raising of hands. It is the will of the majority that a decision will be based.\[^{28}\]

The Ogidigba concept illustrates the true democracy as it originated in Africa, and practiced by the people. No serious matter is disposed of without the presence of the most elderly women in the community, to give their motherly wisdom on such a matter. Ogidigba is an ancient venue where the people themselves assembled from time to time, and the will of the majority was always the determinant of what had to be done, where, and who-and-who was going to do what had to be done on-behalf of the people.\[^{29}\] This practice or tradition is still alive in the village communities in Etsako and else where among the Nigerian communities.

Private matters are not likely to be brought to Ogidigba as they are always taken to the Palace. Public concerns are always decided by the people at Ogidigba. The most elderly woman in a Community, as a symbolic mother of all represents the women at some meetings both at the Palace and at Ogidigba. She must be called upon to come to such meetings before a decision on such matters. Such a mother

\[^{28}\] Ibid.

\[^{29}\] Ibid.
has her own cadre of elderly women through which she gets advice, and through which a decision she witnessed at the Palace and at Ogidigba are passed on down to all who should hear of such matters.\textsuperscript{30}

**Discipline and Social Control**

In Etsako, there are three major traditional systems and methods of maintaining social discipline and control in the community. The three systems are (a) "Ukpedor" (Palace) (b) a host of traditional festivals, and © the age group. Ukpedor in this sense is a form of judiciary system built around the Royal and the "Ekhaemho" and "Enagwena" or the Council of Elders. Matters of various kinds and degrees are settled at the palace by these groups of elders-in-council with the King. Fines are imposed on those who are guilty of any matters decided at the palace. There is an arm of Ukpedor whose activities are nocturnal (nightly). This is the highest court of the land, one may say because matters of more serious nature, that is, some matters that need more than mundane efforts to solve are handed over to this arm known as "Ikwagwa".\textsuperscript{31} Ikwagwa is a nocturnal order of the community. It takes special initiations of mature adult men

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
to belong to the Order. It has its own leadership and chain of command. It has a male patron known as Ogakpogu, and a Matre or Mother who must be an elderly woman with some special understanding of life, and is loved by the community. The other leaders are the Order's "Emhosesowuno" (lead singer), and Akanwutse (the mystic dancer). The Ogakpogu functions at both the nocturnal (night) and at the diurnal (day) activities of the community at the level of the council of elders.32

Ikwagwa deals with matters that are non-mundane or mystical and mundane or worldly that concern the community. Ikwagwa is responsible for any form of law or curfew (Usi) the Order may find necessary to impose at any time during the year. Any imposition by Ikwagwa is known as "Usi" in Etsako. For example, the Order ensures that no one quarrels within the community after certain hours of the evenings. Should there be any form of epidemic or plague, or any form of social hardship, such as drought, whose origin is unknown, it is the duty of Ikwagwa to pacify the ancestors and purify the community with certain series of rituals and nocturnal mystical dances.33 Any violator of any of the curfew imposed by Ikwagwa is subject to a fine that has been

32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
predetermined for such offence. Such fines are in the form of a live domestic animal, bird, and other edible products; and the collection of such fines are in a manner that ensure that the imposed fine is collected as at the time that the matter has been investigated and the accused has been found guilty by Ikwagwa, whether the accused has the means or not. But in any situation whereby Ikwagwa is unable to collect a fine, the one who is concerned will be ostracized (Asilo) until the fine is paid. There is no appeal under Ikwagwa system because the "court's" decision is final.³⁴

The host of traditional festivals serve as periods in which local traditional artists release newly composed songs to chastise or in praise of member(s) of the community who may have misbehaved or excelled in their deed during the preceding period of the festivals. The age group helps to discipline any erring member(s) as long as such matters were brought to its notice by whoever may be aggrieved, or any of the relatives or the community.

Traditional Festivals

Traditional, social festivals and dances in Etsako, serve as a means to control conduct and behavior of the people. The festivals include Ukpe, Abukpe, Otsa, Ukele, Aghiela, Adaobi and Isel while the dances include Agbi,

³⁴ Ibid.
Igboba, Iko, Ikphebo, Izi, Egweighala and Egwemosi. Each of these festivals has its own different dances and songs, and each has its own cultural and social significance in the life of the people.\textsuperscript{35}

Each year, traditional music and song composers watch and compose their music and songs based on what they heard and saw; and on whatever it is that deserves to be composed into a song or music. Such song may have to do with the good conduct or misconduct, of someone in the community within the year. It is during the festivals that such songs are released for the information and enjoyment of the people. The one who misbehaved, either a male or female, is insulted with a song. Commendation and praises are the reward for good deeds, during such festivals. This is why everyone is a police or a watch dog in the community, and this is how the festivals serve as a means of controlling the people's emotion, conduct and behavior.\textsuperscript{36}

Anyone who becomes a victim of this type of community's way of discipline or reprimand for a culturally dishonorable behavior has no other avenue to seek redress.\textsuperscript{37}

The foregoing is the structure of Etsako society before

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
the advent of colonial invasion. It is worthy of note that to the regret of some learned citizens of Etsako, some of these hegemonies and lore are fast deteriorating to the concern of well-meaning Etsako indigenes. It is one of the reasons, that this study, *African Women And Political Development*, represents a timely study to probe, whether or not the eradication of African culture and tradition should be allowed to continue on the continent.

**POLITICAL OBSERVATION**

**ON THE FINDINGS**

For a better understanding of some of the observations we will make, it is reasonable to recapture briefly the background of this study.

The problems among others for which this research was embarked upon was what looked like some intimidating insinuations, coupled with what looked like deception, to introduce the African women into "un-African" political methods and behaviors with a view to further affecting negatively the African moral norms, traditions, as well as the cultural legacy of the African peoples. Already at this time of writing, most African societies are yet to decolonize their mentality from European colonial impact. Some of the African legacy are on the brink of extinction, having been adversely affected through psychological
brainwashing by the imperial apparatus in the continent. Arguably, this European menticial impact on the African peoples appears to be a phenomenon which this generation of Africans ought to have challenged, or at least, allow the imperial powers know that what they did to the continent is now known. The devil that one knows ceases to be a devil, as The Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe once wrote:

Blessed are the youth of Renascent Africa, who are mentally emancipated, for they shall know who knows and know that he knows, and he who knows not and knows not that he knows not, and he who knows and knows not that he knows, and he who knows not and knows that he knows not.\(^{39}\)

The African youth today cannot claim ignorance of what the imperial powers have done, and are continuing up to this time. Of course, the Imperial powers have not stopped in their bid to undo Africa and its peoples. Is it not contestable that while African nations are trying to find their political destiny and stabilize their political entities, with a view to controlling their economic wealth,

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\(^{38}\) Menticide, “An organized system of psychological intervention and judicial perversion, in which a powerful tyrant synthetically injects his own thoughts and words into the minds and mouths of the victims he plans to destroy”, “.....an attack on man’s very mind, on his sovereign will and conviction”, and “menticide is popularly known as brainwashing”, (see Leland E. Hinsie and Robert Jean Campbell, *Psychiatric Dictionary* 3d ed, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 457.

\(^{39}\) Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, (Accra, Gold Coast, now Ghana: The Author, P. O. Box 478, 1937), 48.
the United Kingdom is researching and working on how to recolonize Africa. Reporting from the Manchester Guardian, a U.K. newspaper, Sarah Ryle writes:

Accusing international aid organizations of failing to improve economic conditions in Africa, the Institute of Economic Affairs, a London think tank, suggests the ultimate in privatization—selling off whole countries. Visions of 'Mozambique Inc.' are conjured by Robert Whelan's article in the IEA's latest journal as he argues that corporate takeovers are the best option for countries unable to invest in any other way....He proposes that multinational should be given the right to run whole countries. Companies would have to bid for leases of up to 21 years, pledging specific services in return for pre-set tax revenue....'Foreign aid has created too many wealthy dictators for us to have any very high expectations of what can be achieved by making cash grants to Africa'\textsuperscript{40}.

Whelan writes.

He criticizes official aid, saying that much of the money that passed through the international organizations during the past 40 years has done little to stabilize African economies or alleviate poverty.\textsuperscript{41}

It would be unwise for African intellectuals to take such thoughts as expressed above leisurely or as nothing important especially when the origin is either American or British research organization, and such is published in any

\textsuperscript{40} The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, Sunday, October 6, 1996 p.9.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
medium. The question that this study will ask is: Was it not through a newspaper article written by Lord Lugard’s girlfriend, Mary Kingsley describing “Niger area” where she visited on the West African Coast of Africa, that created the name “Nigeria” as we know it today? Of course, we know that policies are proposed or called for from the bottom up or from the grassroots of society before the leaders of that society proceed to make law in accordance with the yearning and wishes of the people. Therefore, Mary Kingsley was merely making an input which the leaders of her country found acceptable and they acted accordingly. One does not query the method of how Nigeria got its name knowing that policies actually emanate from the lower bottom upward for formulations and enactment in most progressive societies.

Although, some positive remarks and pronouncement were made recently by the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton. The President said that the United States was ready to help Africa, and he stated:

First, my fellow Americans must leave behind the stereotypes that have wrapped our view and weakened our understanding of Africa. We need to come to know Africa as a place of new beginning and ancient wisdom from which, as my wife, our First Lady, said in her book, we have so much to learn. For centuries, other nations exploited Africa’s gold, Africa’s diamonds, Africa’s minerals. ....for peace and prosperity and democracy to prevail, you must protect your magnificent natural domain. Africa is mankind’s first home. We all came out of Africa. America has good reason to
work with Africa: 30 million Americans, more than one in ten, proudly trace their heritage here. Through blood ties and common endeavors, we know we share the same hopes and dreams, .........America needs Africa.\textsuperscript{42}

It was one of the reasons the President wanted to introduce the people of the United States through his trip to Africa, although we are yet to see Americans’ reactions to the President’s proposal on Africa. It is a proposal that should not be put aside by any one; the media ought to assist and make President Clinton’s pronouncements on Africa house-hold words as we move towards the new millennium; so that according to the dreams of Mr. Clinton in his trip to Africa, “together we might do the things so that 100 years from now, your grandchildren and mine will look back and say this was the beginning of a new African renaissance”.\textsuperscript{43}

Although, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton, the current U.S. President may not be the first to have had the kind of his vision for Africa because there may be many other major U.S. corporations, public and private think tanks who may have had similar vision. But Clinton, being the first U.S. President to nurture such a vision, and to make such vision known publicly in spite of the political and racial climate,

\textsuperscript{42} Office of the Press Secretary, “Remarks By The President To The People of Ghana”, White House Press Releases, March 23, 1998.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
makes the difference.

However, the general research question, with the major problem in mind, was "African Women and Political Development: A Case Study of Etsako in Edo State of Nigeria". This has constituted the dissertation and analysis or examination of this study.

Our guiding spirit, the Null Hypothesis which has been disconfirmed, had stated that, the Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems as Defined in this Study tends not to Change the African Traditional Family Structure and, Tends not to Affect the Historic African Cultural Value Systems. Upon the disconfirmation of this premise, our spiritual guide had been the alternative premise which states that, The Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems as Defined in this Study WILL CHANGE the African Traditional Structure and, Will Affect Negatively, the Historic African Cultural Value Systems.

The contention of this study has been that, to politically socialize the African woman from anti-African cultural framework is unfavorable to African survival. This proposition or contention has been validated and upheld by our alternative premise, and it led us to present the traditional, political, and social structure of Etsako (see
Chapter 1 of this study). The structure encompasses all the elements which included the social, family setting, marriage, political decision making, traditional titles, "ogidigba" town hall or the assembly, discipline and social control mechanism. These elements contained principles and precepts constituting the checks and balances which have been borrowed and have been infused into the modern political democracies of western and European world.

Consequently, our attention in this study was focused on Etsako women of Edo State of Nigeria, and we have used these two phrases, "Etsako Women" and "African Women" interchangeably, without any other imputation or implication other than what it was defined to mean in this study. That is, African women or African woman implies Etsako women or woman.

Due to the nature and the fundamental goals of this study, subjective axioms and intuitions were delayed, but will become part of this section of this study. Such axioms and intuitions may be supported with some evidence and illustrations as academically permissible.

Having given the foregoing background, some of the political observations appear to be appropriate at this time looking at the findings of this exercise; and especially that our subject matter has been the political development of African women. In this study, there were two themes that
seemed to have permeated throughout the exercise resoundingly. The first theme has been that African women or Etsako women should be allowed to develop within the cultural framework of Africa or Etsako Province of Edo State in Nigeria. The second theme, though indirectly stated or spoken of, but was also implied, has been that there is an unidentified external force or movement to destabilize African cultural settings and the family through the women. In the general findings of this study, there exist an implied correlation between the second theme, the research findings and the data generated from the poll conducted among American women in Atlanta, Georgia.

To illustrate: One have some concern trying to understand the underlying or ulterior motives, behind "The Women and Development International Training Project" that is being sponsored at some institutions of higher learnings in the U.S. by the National Security Education Program (NSEP)". (See Chapter II, of this study under "The Status of African Women"). What could be the primary purpose of collaborative efforts of this magnitude? This project focuses only on women of the so called poor countries of Africa, Asia and South America.44 Why? Students are being enticed to go to Africa and understudy the languages, the

culture and the women’s cultural behavior, with a view that they (the students) might come to appreciate the constraints that African women face and the interrelated nature of their constraints in the students’ specific areas of specialization. Contents of the project curriculum of the Women and Development International Training Project, arguably are revealing. For example: The goal of one of the courses, *ITWD 201 Political History of South Africa and the Region* is:

> to provide a context for understanding the problems and challenges that women, their governments and aid donors face in the creation of policies and projects. Another goal is to encourage students to identify ways that could reduce the economic, political and social obstacles to women and development and, broadly speaking national development.

A major topic for examination in another course, “*ITWD 100 Xhosa/Zulu Language and Culture*” in the same project is “the role of culture and values in determining the place and activities of males and females in society”. Do these targeted women appear to be the same women and the nations that are the ones being charged for over populating the earth? This study contends that there is more to it than

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45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
meets the eye because these are the same women of the South (poor countries of the world) for which the U.N. 1994 conference on population in Cairo reached a consensus that "gender equality is a key to curbing population growth". That conference Report published by TIME magazine has as its headline: "More Power to Women, Fewer Mouths to Feed". 47

Is it possible that the Study-abroad Program may serve as intelligence gathering venture for the use of others at the regret of the native women of Africa? In other words, is this program not suspect because those who designed these study-aboard programs are the same women of African descent in the United States of America who are fighting, so to say, to "liberate" the African woman from her "primitive" African traditions and culture. Some of them appear to query the African marriage system of polyoharmony whenever there is an opportunity. Some of them seem to complain that African women were over worked48 by their males, and some of these women do not see how an African woman can enjoy her husband sexually since the men are always marrying more than one wife. Also, they are over-burdened by too many children that they are compelled to have, such appear to be some of

47 Eugene Linden, "More Power to Women, Fewer Mouths to Feed," TIME, 26 September 1994, 64-65.

the claims and complaints. From this background, therefore, one may be apprehensive about the study-abroad program. What seems to attract more concern in this matter is the fact that academic women of African descent and Black institutions of higher learnings are being deployed in this project. Moreover, the projects' objectives do not seem to be clear, they appear too delicate and sensitive, and it is suspected to be ones that may hurt Africa. What is more ironic, is that the women and the institutions seem to see themselves as those on a mercy mission to liberate the Motherland, Africa, the home of their ancestors, and the African woman. Is this really the case?

On the other hand, it should be understood that we live in a free world, therefore, any one may gather whatever information he or she may need so long as the purpose of such information is meant will not be at the expense or detriment of the provider of such intelligent information. The reason for this may be the fact that it appears the world seems to be moving toward securing a moral world since cultural war appears imminent in the approaching millennium.

The impression is given that the African woman and the American woman are the same, therefore, have the same problems that require the same solution because they are all women. As a result of such a notion that the two women are the same, an erroneous impression to have women issues are
being globalized. The contention here is that this notion or impression cannot be sustained because it is farther from the facts. For the purpose of argument: The Western woman is liberated and a feminist, but the African woman is neither of the two. The African woman loves herself as a woman hence she loves to marry and have children and a husband with whom she considers herself a subordinate.

It is true that there is only one human race, but still, European men and African men are not the same nor can they be classified as the same. Propositionally, the two men have different strengths, characteristics and behaviors; they have no resemblance of emotional responses to situations, and the divergency of personal comportment appear obvious. If this can be the case or facts about men, Black or White, the women’s dissimilarities cannot be argued, therefore, women’s issues propositionally, should not be globalized except there is some other ulterior motives for the general classification of women as one and their problems as same. If there are any similarities between Western and European women and African women, it is that they breath-in the same Life-Force and are sustained by it, have blood, and have same human flesh. Apart from these vital triunal phenomena which are necessary for identification and sustenance of the human species, there are no other apparent social similarities. Arguably the two
women, African and Western-European women are different in many respects: in personalities, behavior, characteristics, action, emotion, attitude, culture and orientation, traditions and history.

Take two simple examples: (1) It is natural and traditional for an African woman to keep her baby on her back, no matter what she is doing. She transports her baby on her back if she is going from her home to any other place, no matter the distance, and her baby sometime sleeps on her chest but always the baby sleeps by her side on the same bed, night or day. On the other hand, an American or a European woman transports her baby in a stroller, and she keeps her baby in what is called a baby-bed more than a mother would normally carry her child on her self in Africa, also, most White women do not sleep on the same bed with their babies. Also, she prefers bottle feeding with cow milk and formula to her babies. The different effects of both practices on the children are quite known, but the discussion of the effects of the practices on the different children are not within the scope of this study. (2) The Etsako woman, like most other African women, breast-feeds her babies. Most African women will breast-feed their babies from the time of birth for up to a year and more before the babies are taken off from breast-feeding. They know it to be the greatest responsibility of a mother to a
baby. This Study contends that most Western and European women do not see it as a responsibility to breast-feed babies, rather, due to their feminist stance they elect and prefer to give cow milk and formula to their babies to their convenience. However, this could be contested that industrialization in the West is responsible for the situation in which the White women were compelled to feed their babies with cow milk instead of their mother’s milk; that African women faced with such a situation will employ cow milk for the feeding of her children. The situation cannot be the same in Africa because in many of the industrialized cities in many parts of Africa, there are women and mothers in the workforce, and there have been provisions for the African woman to ensure that the babies received the mother’s personal cares for the first six months of their life. Also, there are many African women who refused to give cow milk or formula to their babies on the ground that it was improper to feed animal’s milk to a human baby. Therefore, it can be argued that industrialization alone may not have been responsible for some of the practices of most western women. It would appear the western woman does not see herself as a mother, but sees herself more as a career woman who must, as a matter of priority, pursue material wealth and worldly status. Discussing the problems of the Western women today,
Crittenden states:

They are the women who postponed marriage and childbirth to pursue their careers only to find themselves at thirty-five still single and baby-crazy, with no husband in sight. They are the unwed mothers who now depend upon the state to provide what the fathers of their children won't -- a place to live and an income to support their kids. They are the eighteen-year-old girls who believed they could lead the unfettered sexual lives of men, only to end up in an abortion clinic or attending grade twelve English while eight months' pregnant.  

The various negative impact on a child arising from failure to suck his or her mother's milk are well known, but are not within the scope of this discourse. It is wrong and unfair with the obvious prevailing disparities, to say that African women and Western and European women are the same, therefore, have the same kinds of problems.

The question however, that comes to mind is: Why are these American students going to learn some African languages and culture? Is the U.S. now to be seen as tolerating another language in the Union? Was it not recently that the U.S. compelled Puerto Rico to adopt English as a national or its official language, a

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condition rejected by Puerto Rico? In California, a case has just been instituted in court by some Latinos, against the state’s educational authority for the abrogation of bilingual education. Puerto Rico’s national language is Spanish, their natural tongue. But was it not being made a pre-condition by some members of Congress, that the Puerto Ricans adopt English as opposed to Spanish, if it was their desire to be admitted as a state into the United States? So what could be the other motive for sponsoring students to Africa for the purpose of understudying African women, their languages and culture relating to the women’s reproductive ability? It cannot be claimed that the U.S. was seeking another way to reintegrate or reintroduce African Americans to the culture of their African progenitors. Could this be a possible answer, one would doubt it because it may not be correct.

Furthermore, it is understood that the U.S. has global interest because “slowing world population growth also benefits our country as part of a long-term strategy which promotes economic development abroad, thereby improving trade opportunities for Americans”.

However, is it contestable that the desire to seek to know African women’s reproductive ability has a direct relation to the Western desire to control Africa’s population for its own interest as against the human interest of Africa? Consequently, this study would argue that the U.S. has no genuine desire to improve the reproductive ability of African women in this world because the United States cannot be having a genuine desire to sterilize African women and at same time nurture a desire to improve the reproductive ability of the same women. A report of a 10-year study of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was recently released. The CDC found that Black women are almost four times more likely than White women to die from complications of pregnancy and, it considered it as one of the sharpest racial disparities in public health in the US. The study also shows that in 26 states including Georgia, the risk run by Black women would die while producing a living child ranged from twice that of Whites for young women to six times the risk run by Whites for

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women older than 40.\textsuperscript{52} This study would therefore, further argue, that the U.S. would have no other better reason to treat African women in Africa differently from the way African American women are treated in the U.S.

Consequently, the motives of the US National Security Education Program (NSEP), therefore, appears to have a hidden agenda unholy to the women and children of Africa. The NSEP "award scholarships up to $8,000 per semester or $16,000 per academic year for study in regions of critical importance to U.S. national interests", about which knowledge may be lacking". It is okay that United States would protect its national interests at any cost, but is it equitable and fair to invade and jeopardize others' lives and their national interests? Politically, the answer may be 'yes', but ethics and universal equity demand justice and fairness. The U.S. President, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton reechoed it recently when he said: "President Milosevic should make no mistake - the United States takes care of its own".\textsuperscript{53} It could be argued that for the sake of national interest, the U.S.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

has failed to seize, impound or freeze any of the illegitimate personal accounts and property of leaders of military regimes in Africa, in the interest of the world and of the masses of the victim-nations; such U.S. action alone would have brought down those regimes. Is it doubtful therefore, that the U.S., in its national interest, could create serious impediments to forestall the upliftment of the historic African cultural values, family growth and stability, including population growth rate, through western idiosyncratic indoctrination and brain-washing of African women? The answer is NO. These factors appear to have become a serious western concern as the United Nations led by Western powers has continued to look for ways to depopulate unmindful African nations in the guise of concern for the well being of African women and over-population.

This study - by way of analysis - has found no one U.S. legitimate reason for wanting to intimidate the African woman, especially that the findings revealed in this study, historically and politically, do not support Western claims and charges against the African man. Their charges and claims are that African women were being denied their political rights which included
the right to vote by the males. The charges and claims were made clear in the polls conducted. These charges and claims could not be justified because it is on record that American women won their right to vote on August 26, 1920 when the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified.\textsuperscript{54} British women got the right to vote in 1927. The Nigerian woman in the South of the country had her right to vote with the introduction of elective process in 1959, and in the North, the women got the voting right with the local government reforms of 1976\textsuperscript{55}. Furthermore, the charges cannot be fair because:

In the United States Congress, out of 100 senators only 2 are women, and there are 29 women in its 435 member House of Representatives. The House of Commons in the United Kingdom has only 28 women out of 635 members (1978). In Nigeria, we had only one female member of Parliament in the First Republic. In the Second Republic, from the period October 1979 to September 1983, we had 3 female members of the House of Representatives, then in October 1983 to December 1983 we had one female


Senator and 4 members of the House of Representatives. Thus the Nigerian woman is not alone in being underrepresented in national legislatures.\(^5^6\)

In our estimation, Nigerian women are relatively and adequately represented considering the period that political elective process started in the country. Incidentally, it was only in 1927 that Britain, Nigeria’s colonial master granted the freedom to vote to its women, and Britain had already secured Nigeria in 1900 as its colonial subject. In spite of the British colonization of Nigeria, it cannot be said that it brought political democracy to the people of Nigeria. Rather, it may be correct to say that the British brought with them an elective process. This can only be correct because in 1929, the Aba Women’s Riot against the British took place. The women challenged the Imperial agents for attempting to carry out a census count for the purpose of taxation. The Aba women were more aggrieved because they were not party to the decision making, in other words, it was like taxation without representation.\(^5^7\)

Understandably, the British had not known that the Africans originated the human behavior known today as

\(^{56}\) Ibid.

political democracy. An African was the world’s first
democrat, first humanitarian, and first internationalist. Democracy by collective discussion at the “Ogidigba”, the
Assembly or the Hall of the people is not new to the people of Etsako or Africa. If any thing was new, it has been the
Western form of democracy which seems to grant every child
absolute freedom. Secondly, the British had thought that they could impose taxation on the African women since women in their own country, were objects of less value, but they soon learnt that Africa was a democracy, a fact that they had failed to recognize. In view of this episode, it appears right to state that the Aba women were politically conscious, and they knew how to play it too ever before the British came to Nigeria. Politics is who gets what, when and how. In view of these facts, do the Nigerian women or the Etsako women need political development from British-American perspectives?"

The political nature and understanding of the people of Etsako have been visible looking at their traditional, political, and social structure. Politics is known to be the making of common decisions for a group of people through the exercise of power by some members of the group over

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other members. Politics is also personal survival, of the fittest, who gets what, when and how. This is part of the implied meaning of the concept - authoritative allocation of values. These attributes are embedded and exhibited right from the family settings and up to the highest traditional social institutions of marriage, community decision making, all the titles, their rites and rituals, all combined constitute the system of an Etsako community. Against this background, can it be said that the Nigerian woman which Etsako woman is an integral part has been left behind politically? In the preceding chapter, the data were presented and their analyses were executed with an objective consideration of their relations with the premise of this study.

The data gathered from the respondents, who were American women in Georgia and Etsako girls and women in Edo State of Nigeria, appear to show greater divergences. The American woman in Georgia claimed that the African woman was suppressed by her male counterpart in Africa, consequently, it was the desire of the American woman to see that the African culture and traditions were abandoned by the women of Africa because to the American woman, the culture of the land was the instruments with which the African women were degraded. Although, it turned out that the American woman
did not appear to know much about the African woman, to make such claims and wishes, as revealed in the results of our survey conducted within the Atlanta metropolis.

On the other hand, the Etsako woman was conscious, and she appeared innately married to her culture and traditions unwilling to part with any part thereof. This is what the results of the survey conducted in Etsako in Edo State of Nigeria reveal as the findings of this study. What shows up therefore, is a clear non-convergence of ideas and opinions of the American woman in Georgia and the Etsako woman in Edo State of Nigeria, about character and mode of living a lonely life in our world. This further challenges the notion or claim that the Etsako women and Western women are the same.

The Null Hypothesis upon which the study was carried-out failed to hold, due to a number of factors: 1. The premise was without a foundation because there was no reason to think that the African society will be enhanced politically, if western style of politics was introduced to the women of Africa. Of course, we might need to understand that culture is the most serviceable vehicle through which an enduring political socialization and stability is better achieved. Arguably therefore, to negate the importance of such a factor in a premise of the nature of the subject matter of this study is a strategic omission. 2. Culturally,
the premise was baseless because no people may survive without a culture of their own as will be properly shown as we proceed in this chapter. 3. The premise appeared to be an ill-motivated principle or argument because fragments of the colonial masters' culture or character that have found their way into many African societies today were already taking a toll on the African traditions and culture. In Africa today, it is hard to find an African with a complete African name. The names have been adumbrated with Arabic, Irish, German, French, English and American ones. If Africans do not hold their names firmly, there might come a time when one may not know who is an African or not because the names are also being targeted for obliteration. In America for example, Africans who are new comers are sometimes requested to take on American names for ease of pronunciation by some Americans. Although, Russian, Chinese, or German names, relatively, are not hard or difficult to pronounce, and they do seem to get employment easily. In fact, there are many African/U.S. naturalized citizens who are unable to secure meaningful employment because of their names. Some Americans married to some Africans do find it hard to secure employment if they have their husband’s name as their last name.

The importance of the disconfirmed hypothesis, therefore, cannot be over stressed, weighed against all the
possible non-positive impact on the future of African life, if contrary was the case. In as much as we know that this hypothesis was not really necessary in this type of a study, it became a guide in addition to our intuitive and perceptive knowledge of the issues coupled with the survey findings of this study. While the American women made unfounded claims about the conditions under which the African woman lives, the poll conducted showed that out of 300 women, only 8.2% of the women seemed to know the African woman. Over 50% did not even know the African woman at all, as the result revealed in this research. (See Chapter IV, Table 1A). Weighed against these results, and the American desire to liberate or "develop" the African woman, it becomes increasingly important to know how the American woman could develop or liberate the African woman. Is it possible for a physician to diagnose, prescribe and administer treatment onto a supposedly sick person whom the physician does not know or understand the nature of the symptom, the ailment?

In all of the 30 questions that were put to the American women, there were relatively just too many in which they exhibited limited knowledge of the African woman. The popular ideas and opinions among the Americans, seem to suggest that the African woman is still in bondage and suppressed by the males and the cultural traditions as
reflected in the results of our poll, (See Chapter IV, Table 4). The opinion seems to be incorrect as it appears to be a by-product of ignorance, mis-information, and dis-information. It might be argued that some of these views cannot be held by some of the educated American women; but a counter argument is that education or not, they seem to hold such views, otherwise the educated ones would not have designed such programs as the “Study-Abroad Program” aimed at liberating or making a feminist out of the African women. The history of the African woman, of ancient and modern, demonstrated an unblemished status as demonstrated in Chapter II, “The Status of African Women”, of this study.

This study shows that many Americans hold the belief that African young girls are married out before they are mature. From an African perspective, marriage is not for children, therefore, before going any further, there is a need to explain the African concept of marriage because Africans and the Europeans or Americans do not view marriage the same way. For Africans:

Marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all the members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. All the dimensions of time meet here, and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized. Marriage is a drama in which every one becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator. Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a
rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwise, he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a law-breaker, he is not only abnormal but 'under-human'. Failure to get married under normal circumstances means that the person concerned has rejected society and society rejects him in return.\textsuperscript{59}

Looking at the above with its perceived importance, it means that the American belief which seems to be pregnant with meaning, like many others revealed in this study, appears to be an assumption rather than a belief born out of lack of knowledge. By way of interpretation, it would seem as if the "American woman", is envious about the African woman's stability in terms of her reproductive capacity which to the American woman, might need to be stopped. In this treatise, there might be a need for us to attempt to ascribe a reason or reasons to the results of the poll among the two sets of women that were connected to this study. The reason appears to be that there is no fire without smoke. Every occurrence has a reason. In other words, the thought to response in any kind of way must have a reason or reasons embedded behind the nature of an answer or a question. Therefore, it would appear appropriate to ascribe a reason if only for the purpose of this academic exercise.

To claim that African women get married before the age of 15, which is not the case in Etsako, would appear enough reason in itself for one to think otherwise. Most Etsako families marry out their daughters when they are 18 years of age or more. From our knowledge, “babies are not having babies”, nor do they get pregnant outside wedlock in Etsako, Edo State, Nigeria due to the cultural up-bringing and its grips on the people. There is nothing like “young-adult” in Etsako; a situation brought about by promiscuity in many cities in the United States, due to excessive rate of divorce which gives room for inadequate and improper parenting. One could trace this unhealthy state of affairs to feminism and its principles. Most Etsako girls get mature before they are given out in marriage to suitors who are equally mature, and sometimes, more mature than the female. This kind of a practice could not be an indication that young children are given out or sold out in marriage. However, the kind of faith of many Americans, and about other human beings (Africans precisely) with the perceived reason behind it, will be addressed as we proceed in this chapter.

The importance of culture and traditions has always been unmistakably high in the minds of intellectuals.

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60 *The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution*, Tuesday, August 30, 1994, D1.
throughout the world. Yet at this period of man’s growth, and with the level of human consciousness, American women are suggesting that the African woman abandons her traditions and culture. The implication could not be clearer; any human who could request of his or her neighbor to do away with their culture must not be a friend, but the opposite of a friend. The end of one’s culture is the end of that person’s ability to propagate his or her existence, and that is the end of the individual. In Ralph M. Lewis’ words, “The greatest culture of any age is one that contributes to the perfection of humanity”, and he said, “Before such can be accomplished, a thorough analysis of human nature must take place”. Furthermore, according to Lewis, history from the remote antiquity to the present contained many states and people who have by military might and domination imposed what they considered an exalted ideal upon others. The French did this in some parts of Africa where they ruled during colonial invasion of Africa through a system known as assimilation. The United States used a similar method on Africans who were brought to its territory during the slave trade era.

For an example, take the culture of the American woman which she wishes could be transposed on that of the African

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woman in Africa: can the American woman's culture be said to be one of the greatest cultures of the age, capable of contributing to the perfection of current humanity in Etsako by any comparable means, based on our current observation and experience? Obviously, mundane infrastructural development alone is not the type of a cultural civilization, nor does it possess the capacity to cause the upliftment of human esoteric or spiritual intellect and morality.

Furthermore, and from an African perspective too, the European or Western woman appeared to have had a history of neglect because she was taken by her progenitors as an object of less value. The African woman inherited a deified stature of goddess and nobility until the advent of imperial powers. In the book, *A History of Women*, we read of the western woman:

Poets, philosophers, and physicians from Homer (Eight century B.C.) to Galen (First century A.D.) speak with remarkable consistency of women as object. Merely listing the obsessions of this learned discourse about women will not get us very far: women are passive, and even the best of them are inferior to men - the unquestioned standard of comparison - in anatomy, physiology, and psychology. Much has been written about Plato's supposed feminism in the Republic, but the case is undermined by the fact that, even if Plato conceived of a city in which women ought to be educated like men, and even if he would allow women to do
whatever they wish, they would nevertheless perform the same tasks less well than men. The Hippocratic physicians, though prepared to concede that all individuals, male and female, produce identical, androgynous seeds, nevertheless maintained that the female portion of the seminal substance is intrinsically less strong than the male portion. Aristotle, for his part, held that women are systematically inferior to men in every respect - anatomically, physiologically, and ethically - and that this inferiority is a consequence of their metaphysical passivity. For us, this certainty, this unanimous belief in the inferiority and inadequacy of women, in their shortcomings, deformities, and incompleteness makes the thinking of the Greeks distinctly unpalatable.62

This inherited attitude of the European and Western males seems to have in turn made European and western women develop some attributes and characteristics which to an African, are unlady-like or unwomanly in the eyes of mature souls of today. These virtues or qualities included being man-like, deviant, agile, willed, and independent. She might be perfect for her culture and her political environment, but one may have some doubts too considering the seemingly astronomically high rates of broken family life, wrecked homes, divorce, single parentage syndrome, babies giving birth to babies; high crime, general indiscipline and disrespect to others, low morals and less

virtues, high rate of births out-of-wedlock by teenagers and
the attendant general degeneration of high morals, which
appeared noticeable in some highly technologically
developed western societies.

On the other hand, some individuals may become nearly
perfect physical beings and yet be lacking in necessary
control of their emotions and passions to the extent that
they could menace the psychical and intellectual expression
of others. In other words, it could be argued that western
society seems to feel that everything it does is perfect due
to its material development. They therefore believe they can
impose their cultural values on other societies, thereby
becoming a menace to the psychic and intellectual expression
of others. As one writer remarked:

The Western World has attempted to
subdue the rich diversity of experience
by suppressing or controlling alien
cultures and religions, women and
children, the wilderness, animals, and
even our basic instinctual drives. This
has not made us more secure, only more
impoverished.

Although, it could be argued, the American society is an
egalitarian polity, but its ideas and theories do not appear

63 Ibid.

64 Ehud C. Sperling, “Aboriginal Spirituality and the Modern World: Ngurra: A
Sense of Place, The Rosicrucian Digest, Vol. 71 No. 3, Fall 1993, 8.
to be universally applicable, because they only reflect western cultural ideals. One of the findings of the study, with respect to the American women, indicates that African women do not have political rights. Meaning that the Africans have not given political rights to their women. With history of American political process as it affects its women staring in our face, and with what has been revealed in the data presented in Chapter IV of this study, it does not appear proper for the West to make any allegation against Africa in its relations with its women. Therefore, the charges and claims that African women are denied their political rights appear very unfounded and unfortunate. The African woman seems to have always been in politics from an African perspective. It would appear that it was the Western and European women who were not allowed to participate in politics because America and the western European world appeared to have inherited the ancient legacy of the Greeks, which gave no regard to its women folks. This inherited tradition, appears to be the problems that

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the women in Western Europe and America are going through. This study also found that the American women believe that African males have failed Africa and Africans politically considering the number of military rulers in the region. Therefore, they wish or are calling that the African woman should be allowed to rule in the region instead. It is contestable that the American women’s proposition has a fault. 1. It is not a matter of allowing the women to rule since the selection process is performed through electioneering processes, else it will not be a democracy. In both precepts of African democracy, political actors are selected democratically by discussion and decision, and the western democracy by electoral process and decision. 2. One cannot be compelled to do what he or she may not want or need to do, especially a novelty or an avocational calling like politics. No one precluded or excluded the African woman from political participation. For example, the Nigerian Constitution of 1989 grants every Nigerian the right to participate in the political process; the Constitution’s stipulation on the issue is clear. It states:

A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex religion or political opinion shall not by reason only that he is such a person —

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67 Tannahill, and Pantel.
(a) be subjected either expressly by, or in the practical application of any law in force in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government to disabilities or restrictions to which citizens of Nigeria or other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex, religions or political opinions are not made subject; or

(b) be accorded either expressly by, or in the practical application of, any law in force in Nigeria or any such executive or administrative action, any privilege or advantage that is not accorded to citizens of Nigeria or other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex religions or political opinions.

(c) No citizen of Nigeria shall be subjected to any disability or deprivation merely by reason of the circumstances of his birth.  

In her own explanation as well, Mrs. Ada Okwuosa states that:

Politics and political leadership are not like any eight-to-three office job. Certain formal and informal demands of a career in politics, conflicts totally with the normal life-style of a Nigerian woman, whatever her status or social conditions. One thinks immediately of situations like consulting with party members and constituents and meeting their demands at odd hours and odd days, going on the campaign trail even through the most difficult terrain where there may be no adequate accommodation, and appearing in public places such as hotels and local joints to cultivate electoral solidarity. These constraints will continue to constitute unavoidable societal constraints unless alternatives are found to

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them in Nigerian politics; finding those alternatives will only add to the extra anginoid required of the woman politician.\(^6^9\)

From the foregoing, it appears clear that the issue of someone denying the African woman her rights to political participation is out of the question. Furthermore, the African woman cannot be said to have been out of touch with politics. If there was any break, it was the period of colonialism when the imperial masters were in control. Apart from this period, Etsako women or Africa women have always been in politics. For example, the African or the Etsako political traditional environment is a natural phenomenon. By this, it is meant that no one else created it as a system called a political system for them. It can be contestable therefore, that the people have always known that there is order in doing things. Children listen to their parents, their elders, their age groups and the community to do what they have to do. We have labeled it a political democratic system by discussion. Also it can be argued, that if the women were out of politics, how else did Etsako had a lady senator in the upper house in the Nigerian Second Republic? Many have held political positions, and the many who have not, have always advised their husbands. It seems to be one of the reasons for the aphorism or axiom, \(\ldots\)

\(^6^9\) Ayoade, Nwabuzor, and Sambo, 17.
that every successful man has a woman behind him, and vice-versa. If this may be correct, which I suppose it is, it would be correct to say that, if Africans have failed politically, it is all of the people, male and female, who have failed in their duties to redeem the Motherland, Africa.

It can be argued that the colonial masters are the origin of the failure of their political system in Africa. The scars of injuries from the political trenches appear ineradicable. Consequently, the idea that the women should now be allowed to rule in Africa, whereas women have not been allowed to rule in the same type of system in the West, appears a political miscalculation and suicide for Africa. The current neo-colonialists business leaders and political actors of the sub-region, are both male and females of Africa; they all appear guilty of the current debacle, political immobility, social confusion coupled with economic hardship and general human failures of Africa. Silence is not the best answer to a fool for it makes one a collaborator in the foolishness of the fool. As Benjamin Franklin once said: you cannot call someone an illiterate if you have not previously given the individual the opportunity to know what you knew. Letting the individual know of their shortcomings constructively is a contribution to the development of the individual. In an administrative system,
constructive or not, criticisms are inputs within the system that assist policy makers greatly in the process of administration and management. One will argue that it is by this process that political governance like management and administration are a collaborative effort of all, if the corporate polity must succeed. So if the women kept silent while their male husbands in positions of authority, syphon away the wealth and loot treasuries of the nations of Africa, the women were party to the deprivation and the looting. Therefore, it could be argued that a collaborator in a crime cannot be free of guilt in that crime in which he or she collaborated or encouraged.

THE WESTERN ASSUMPTIONS?

Some of the major assumptions against African woman by many Americans as revealed by our findings in this research, in relation to African women's perceived backwardness, are the subject of our discussions here. Some of the claims and charges were such that they might not attract any further attention. Some of such claims and charges were dealt with during the analysis in Chapter IV. An Etsako proverb relates that "it is not every fly that perches on a sore that one kills", some are ignored. But to others, attention must be given.

The American women also had alleged that men, culture,
and tradition are African women’s problems. These factors cannot be left without adequate analysis of the issue involved. The desire of many American women therefore, seems to be that African women must “take care of” their men, take care of the culture and traditions since these elements, to the Americans appear to have constituted political problems, or in other words, have denied the African women their political participation. Although, it would be anti-cultural for Etsako women to abandon their men for politics. At this point also, there is a need to explain that the phrase, “takes care of”, implies to “do away with” or to “get rid of” that which appears as a problem. In other words, African women should do away with African men or get rid of the culture and the traditions.

However, it will constitute a disaster for the Etsako community if their women were to be compelled to do away with or get rid of Etsako men for whatever reason. It is an aphorism that it takes two to tango. In the absence of a coherent family unit organized around a man and his wife or wives, the family structure will be disorganized and would eventually lead to a disorderly society. According to Billy Graham, “The foundations of civilization are no stronger and no more enduring than the corporate integrity of the homes on which they rest. If the home deteriorates, civilization
will crumble and fall".70

For some illustrations: In the West today, careerism has taken hold of most women; the institution of marriage does not appear to be attractive any more. Many young females of college and non-college age do not want to get married because almost every marriage, according to them, ends up in a divorce. Many of them have spoken in the classes I have taught, therefore, this supposition may not be argued because according to the U.S. Census Bureau reports, 23 million people in the United States, representing nearly a fourth of the nation’s house-holds, live alone.71 This report shows that many of these people are elderly, and the group is among the fastest growing groups in the "living-alone" category'. According to the March 1992 issue of the U.S. government’s Monthly Labor Review, persons classified as young people are those in in their late teens and 20s.72 Unfortunately, the Review reveals that a growing number of young people come from broken homes and do not relate well to the opposite sex, while others get divorced after a few years, and still,

70 Dee Danner Barwick, Great Words of Our Time, (Kansas City, Missouri: Hallmark Cards, Inc., 1968), 17.


72 Ibid.
others do not want to marry because they fear divorce. It is arguable, that the culture of violence in the young ones in America today is traceable to a manifestation of the breakdown of the family brought about by divorce arising from many American women’s attitude toward men and marriage; and the violence in the youths has become a ‘cultural disease’.

For example, “illegitimate children” are not in Etsako because every child has a father who ensures that his entire family members, no matter how many wives or the number of children he has, are taken care of. In the words of Colin M. Turnbull:

We have several wives, and we are faithful to them all and we care for all their children until we die. You people cannot even be faithful to one wife, and your children are such a nuisance to you that you send them away from home almost as

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73 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
soon as they can walk. Reporting the death of the former and late President Mobutu Seseko of Zaire, the National Public Radio, Washington, D.C. recounted Mobutu’s patriotic attempts in his early days in Zaire as President. In recounting, the Radio remembered Mobutu’s statement, that there were no illegitimate children in Africa. Mobutu may have been correct if he made such an assertion that (there were no illegitimate children in Africa) because Africans care for the children they were responsible for their pregnancy by taking home their mothers as wives.

To advocate or suggest that African women do away with their men, is to request that the women get rid of that which nothing else can replace. Discussing her interviews with some young American ladies, Crittenden affirmed:

Virtually every young woman I interviewed put her job aspirations ahead of any hopes for marriage or children (even if she claimed to want those things eventually). Each one of them worried that too serious an attachment to a man or, worse, to children might compromise her sense of who she was."

Some women who appeared to have abandoned or divorced their


77 Ibid., 18.
husbands - either because they felt they do not need men since they could pay their bills and move on with their lives alone - have soon found out that a woman is not a complete woman without a man. Evidence abounds now in the U.S., in situations where older women with their wealth, are looking for much younger men to marry\(^7\); an important life achievement for ladies which they just realized they have missed. Corroborating in her review of Ms Danielle Crittenden’s book, “What Our Mothers Didn’t Tell Us”, a reader in Charlotte, Philadelphia lamented and said:

However, as a single Lawyer, I have found in Ms. Crittenden’s book a straightforward and blunt (almost to the point of being painful) description of where I and many of my contemporaries find ourselves. My friends’ marriages are foundering, or they remain single, and, like me, wondering “where all the men are”. I have come to believe that the real problem, as Ms Crittenden agrees, is not that there are no men, but that we have sought independence for our entire lives, to the exclusion of almost all else, and we deeply feared the radical change in our-

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\(^7\) \textit{JET}, “Pam Grier Talks About Her Engagement To A Younger Man”. “At 48, she is engaged to marry a special, younger man”. “And she hopes to one day have a baby”, April 13, 1998, 36. Also see \textit{JET}, “Terry McMillan Says People Worried That She Would Be ‘Used’ By Dating Younger Man”, August 31, 1998, 54; \textit{JET}, “Angela Bassett Plays Older Women In Love With Younger Man In ‘How Stella Got Her Groove Back”, August 17, 1998, 28. And see \textit{JET}, “Terry McMillan Weds Younger Beau, Jonathan Plummer, During Private Ceremony In Hawaii”, October 5, 1998, 32. It should be noted that before most ideas are turned into movies in Hollywood, such ideas have already been experienced in this world.
selves that marriage might bring.\textsuperscript{79}

How, and what do we say in such a situation where a 47 or a 50 year old woman is just falling in love with a 28 or a 30 year old young man, and expecting to have a baby too by him? Does it sounds physically risky on the part of the women of such age? These type of situations are prevailing\textsuperscript{80} in many cities in the United States where women, in their own rights, seem to have succeeded in their many years of agitation for fair share and recognition as human beings. This study has consistently maintained that the issues of women are not global; that the western females have axe to grind with those who brought about those issues; that the African woman also, has her own peculiar issues which are quite different from that of the western woman, therefore her issues should not be equated with that of the western, especially since the western and European world seem to have ulterior motives for their desires in Africa.

At the same time, the American women expect also that the women of Etsako abandon their culture and traditions


\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
because to the American women, these things prevent the Etsako women from participating in the politics of the community. It would appear suicidal for one to abandon his or her culture and traditions, and no sane and conscious human being would need to abandon his or her culture and traditions. A culturally liquidated human group cannot play any meaningful politics in today’s societies. For this reason, a number of countries ensured that their culture and traditions were their guide in their national policy and administration. Some of these countries include Tanzania, Zambia, Senegal, Kenya, Cote d’Ivoire, Morocco, China, Japan, and India. To illustrate: Tanzania: Introduced its home grown socialist democracy as its political system immediately it gained independence from Britain in 1961.\(^\text{81}\) The political system which was primarily fashioned along Tanzania’s culture and social understandings has been operated successfully and peacefully till date without any problem. Zambia: Also introduced its own political system after independence from Britain in 1964, and successfully operated the same way, until external forces started to interfere with the system. However, as a result of the maturity displayed by Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, the centrifugal forces were defeated, and

\(^{81}\) See Tanzania.
the country still remains stable.  

Senegal: Senegal has been stable since its independence from France in 1960 due largely to its political system, designed to meet the cultural values of its citizens.  

Kenya: Kenya under Dr. Jomo Kenyatta introduced a people oriented system of government after its independence in 1963. The system was successfully operated even after the death of Dr. Kenyatta. Problems started coming on the way of the people when westerners started clamoring for the introduction of their system of democracy.  

Cote d'Ivoire: Cote d'Ivoire, former Ivory Coast, has also successfully run its own political system since independence in 1960 to date with relative political success.  

Morocco: Morocco runs a system of government that is rooted in its culture since 1956 when it gained independence, and became a kingdom in 1957 with the king as the head of government. The system has been successfully operated without interruption.  

China: China is the most populous country in the world, with its 1997

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82 See Zambia.  
83 See Senegal.  
84 See Kenya.  
85 See Cote d'Ivoire.  
86 See Morocco.
estimated figure of 1,221,591,778 Chinese.\textsuperscript{87} China, in spite of initial world isolation because of its cultural revolution and communist ideology of the government, has grown to be a world power.\textsuperscript{88} Japan: Japan has remained and lived within its cultural framework since 1867.\textsuperscript{89} Japan and Japanese are a power to be reckoned with in almost every human endeavor including economics and politics. Japan appears to be one of the few economic powers that is able to stop America. Japanese have introduced some new concepts into the human work environment. Theory Z which recognizes the spiritual aspects of a human in the performance of prescribed tasks is relatively a new concept in management, and it appears a by-product of the Japanese culture and tradition. After some periods of political turbulence and wars with some external forces, Japan, upon regaining its full sovereignty in 1952 introduced a type of western democracy with bicameral legislature, but highly blended with Japanese cultural values, and for the past 46 years, Japan has successfully operated the government.\textsuperscript{90} India:

\textsuperscript{87} Borgna Brunner, (ed) \textit{TIME Almanac 1998}, in cooperation with Information Please LLC, 214.

\textsuperscript{88} See China.

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{90} See Japan.
India has operated its homegrown democracy based on Indian cultural values since independence in 1947, and India is commonly referred to as the world’s biggest democratic country.

In appreciation of its culture and traditional values, the nation of Israel and its people ensure that its politics and matters pertaining to family affairs are not discussed. Political culture is different from that of the family culture, which appears sacred and inviolate to most of the older world communities. This is because the family is the seat of culture and traditions, therefore, must not be mingled with nor defiled with political chicanery. It could be argued that this might be one of the reasons it is not known or clear to this study, if the Israelis do marry more than one wife. For example, Linda Gradstein for NPR, reporting from Israel states of the former Israeli prime minister:

Today Netanyahu is very much the family man. Even after his confession, his third wife Sarah (sp) often campaigns with him. In Israel politicians rarely

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91 Ibid.

92 See India.

individual wills of some five billion individuals? The answer is culture, and the social science equivalent to the Boson is culture, embodied in social institutions, mores, folkways, and law. \(^{95}\)

In his thought-provoking treatise, "The Clash of Civilization", Samuel P. Huntington theorized in proposition, that the fundamental source of conflict in the new world order will not be primarily ideological or primarily economics. Rather, in his vision, the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural, and he states:

> Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics". \(^{96}\)

It is our belief that this cultural war or conflict has begun with western institutions of higher learning invading Africa with the sole purpose of acquiring those African cultural skills as a weapon to undercut Africa and Africans. It seems this cultural war might be between Africa and the West and, it appears the conflict has already begun. How do we explain what is already going on in Nigeria where male

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contraceptive pills known as “Gossypol” are currently being distributed? The Johns Hopkins University in the United States has been reported to be responsible for the sterilization pills.\textsuperscript{97} It would appear the purpose of distributing male contraceptive pills to Nigerian males, is to sterilize the males; since it appears the “one man one wife” concept appeared to have failed to put that country’s population growth rate in check, in that part of the continent. Is this not part of the cultural war or conflict?

There have been some perceptions all along in this exercise, that the control of population is one of the factors responsible for the siege on Africa to liberate its women or cause them to become “developed”. Develop, as used here implies to become like a western female in terms of character and callings. Consequently, therefore, this study’s findings indicate very strongly, that there exist a relationship between the siege on the African woman to become a modern feminist and a western woman and population control in Africa. Similarly, the study’s findings indicate too, also very strongly, that there exists a correlation between the call on the African woman to abandon her male

counterpart, embrace some foreign idiosyncracies, and western nations' concern for population control, also in Africa.

THE CASE AGAINST POPULATION CONTROL IN ETSAKO

This study will argue that the case against population control stems from facts that while other humankind from different geopolitical settings, are busily uniting their people and promoting the development of active population, Africa, having been fragmented by colonialism and aided to continue to disunite (Eriteria being a recent case in point), is being hoodwinked to embark on a depopulation drive within its geopolitical setting. Europe has united its people in what is now known as the European Union (EU) or the European Community (E.C.), for example. This study will point out that because of this union, the EU population by January 1, 1994, as reported by the Commission of the European Communities, was the third in rank of world demographic power, with a population of 348.5 million after China (1.188 billion) and India (870 million). Although, the population of Africa is over 600 million. In its 1997 Report, the EU's Commission on Demographic trends noted

that:

A. Whereas, if present demographic trends continue in the coming years, there will be a substantial increase in the number of people aged over 60, a fall in the number of adults under 60 and an even greater drop in the number of young people under 19,

B. having regard to the effects which the present demographic trends are having and will continue to have on the funding and organization of social protection,

C. having regard to the impact of demographic developments on the labour market. 99

In consonant with the above concern, the Commission raised an alarm that it:

Regrets that, in its proposals in Agenda 2000, the Commission devotes virtually no attention to the social aspects of enlargement, and also that the demographic report 1997 says very little about the social aspects of the demographic situation in Central and Eastern Europe resulting, among other things, from:

- emigration,
- aging of the population and falling proportion of younger people,
- lower fertility rate and
- higher (infant) mortality; Calls on the Commission and Council, therefore, to investigate ways in which the European Union could help reduce mortality, particularly among children, in the countries of Central and Eastern

Nigeria was the last on the list of world demographic powers listed by the European Commission on demographic trends, and this study takes serious note of the importance and the significance of the inclusion of Nigeria as a demographic power. On the other hand, the United States, due to its "Long Declining in the Birthrate", resulting from "a decrease in the percentage of married couples and an increase in the number of divorce", has devised another way to increase its population and that other medium is immigration.

Looking at the above, this study would contend that it will not be in the best interest of Africa or any part thereof, including Etsako, to attempt a population control measure. Comparatively Etsako is one of the most politically dispossessed in human history and in modern times. It is as politically dispossessed as Africa itself, in comparison with other continental geo-political settings in the world. Etsako was invaded by foreigners from the Nupe ethnic group across the River Niger in Nigeria, just as

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100 Ibid.
101 Elgin F. Hunt and David C. Colander, 218.
102 Ibid. 225.
103 Ibid. 224.
the continent was invaded by the imperialists of Britain, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Portugal, Denmark, Italy, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands, who created all the artificial boundaries in the continent, at the Berlin Conference of 1885 while the United States sat and watched in apparent sympathy with the British. There seems to be an opinion which says that the United States never possessed a colony in Africa, but it could be successfully contested that the U.S. was a collaborator with Britain in the colonization of Africa. It has been observed in contemporary political history that in their politics, and in international forums on any issue, Britain can never oppose that which America had shown an interest, and vice versa. A few examples here would be useful. The United States could not openly support the Nigerian secessionist Biafra because Britain was supporting Nigeria, even though many Americans had favored Biafra. A ship load of Christmas gifts was reported to have been sent to Biafra by the wife of the late Mr. Richard M. Nixon of the United States who was the President at that time. There was also the "Constructive Engagement" policy developed by the U.S. to nurture and prolong apartheid in South Africa,

as against military action advocated by many African States because Britain was opposed to such intentions and the U.S. was not in favor of sanctions either. At the UN, Britain and the United States are always together, so to say, on most issues. The UN 1967 Resolution 242 had called for the withdrawal of Israel armed forces\textsuperscript{105} from the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel during the June war; sanctions were imposed against Israel for its failure to comply; and up to this day, no one has attempted to enforce those sanctions. But we are all witness to the current continued enforcement of a “so called” UN “No-Fly-Zone” in Iraq by only the United States and Britain. It is not an unknown fact that the US and Britain have a special relationship, and George Shultz, a former US Secretary of State made it clear: “Every American secretary of state in recent history, at an early point, has had to think through the matter of the ‘Special Relationship’ between Britain and the United States”.\textsuperscript{106} The effect of this special relationship was demonstrated at the Berlin Conference and during the Falkland Islands conflict because the relationship has always been in effect before these periods.


in our history.

However, Etsako was affected by the slave trade depopulating the region of its best of human values, just as the entire continent of Africa was depopulated by the imperial powers of Western Europe, the United States and the Arab world with the ignoble trade in human beings. Etsako is yet to recover from the humiliating shock of the slave trade era and its attendant political consequences. Equally, the perennial scars of injuries suffered from “political trenches” of the imperial powers, followed by the effect of neo-colonialists’ intrusive forays into the entire sub-region, are crying against any further attempt, overt or covert, to limit or hinder, temporal or permanent, Etsako’s means of regeneration or population development, which the women are. Women possess the seed of life and, women are the means.

The current agitations about the need for the political development of African or Etsako women appear to have been

107 “Political trenches” of the Imperial powers imply all of the political pitfalls dug by the colonial masters and their allies; such political pitfalls include the deliberate destruction of the cultural icons of the people while mounting destructive propaganda against the culture of the people in the name of their new religion; the divide-and-rule principles; the artificial demarcations or call them boundaries, that have continued to affect the peoples’ political unity, carved by the Imperial Powers of Europe and their political allies; the political fraudulence by replacing or changing of African names to English; mislabelling, the fraudulent mis-education of the people, and the deliberate displacement of political powers and misplacement of such powers in the colonial territories through their installed neo-colonialists stooges.
brought about by the Western-European's concern about their own population. This same concern appears to be responsible for the hue and cry about the need to bring African women at par with western women. In other words, the concern of the United States is not about the well-being of the African woman, instead it is about how to ensure that Africans do not populate the earth at Western regret. This phobia seems to be real as all kinds of alibis are being sought for a need to prevent population development in Africa. The best alibi in this instance seems to be the Thomas Malthus' unfounded and illconceived pessimistic theory.

Thomas Robert Malthus was a clergyman of the Church of England. He was also an early English economist who in 1798 published an article titled "An Essay on the Principle of Population As It Affects The Improvement of Society". He revised the article six times within a period of 30 years. The seventh revision was not published until 1834, after the death of Malthus. The essence of Malthus' theory was that "population tends to outrun the means of subsistence". In other words, population would always tend to press against food supply. Further, he propounded that "When the food supply became inadequate to support more people, any further increase in population would be prevented by the 'positive'
checks of malnutrition, famine, disease, and war”.  

It is legitimate for one to suggest in argument, that this Malthus doctrine of pessimism is responsible for the covert war on African population because the doctrine appears to be serving as an alibi to those whose population appears to be on the decline; and it is for this reason Africa and African womanhood may have to be used as a sacrificial lamb. The slogan of “over population crisis in Africa” and the rush for population control in Africa is a hoax for which the Malthus doctrine is an alibi and a tool. For example we read:

In reaction to the prediction by Thomas Malthus that the world’s population would soon outgrow its food supply, a movement began in the early twentieth century to limit the number of births, and therefore limit the growth of the world’s population. The movement is supported by groups such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation. A number of countries have made population control a national policy. To varying extents, the methods of population control include Family Planning, Birth Control, Contraception, and abortion.  

The comprehensible nature of the above synthesis appears to present an incontrovertible evidence that there appears a movement to depopulate Africa through the destruction of the

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109 Ibid.

family structure and the historic cultural value systems. Against this background, the population control syndrome in Africa may not be left unchallenged as it appears an enemy of Africa and the Africans. This might appear an option because the Malthus theory had long been successfully debunked and condemned as unnecessary pessimism by the more positive, future looking, of the economist Julian L. Simon.

Julian Simon is an economist at the University of Maryland. His philosophy holds that there can never be a shortage of food on earth to the extent that upon which there is a need to control population. The proponent of population control also cautioned that too many people will further compound the problems of the world. On the other hand, the opponent of population control, Julian Simon in his philosophy further holds that the more people on earth the better because the new births will come to the world with new ideas and solutions to solve whatever the new problems may be, that may accompany the new people that are being brought to this earth. He wrote that today’s world is merely the best so far, and will be better still tomorrow because the people will continue to produce more bright ideas.\footnote{John Tierney, “Betting The Plan”, The New York Times Magazine, 1 December, 1990.}
In spite of all that has been said and done to allow equanimity to prevail, the west through the United Nations has continued to devise ways and means to counter population development in Africa at the expense and regret of Africa. Unfortunately, the U.S. international population policy and programs remain the international population policy of the United Nations and vice versa.

The Department of State provides policy coordination and leadership on international population policies, in close collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. Government agencies. USAID is the primary implementing agency responsible for assisting developing countries with comprehensive population and development programs, including family planning, related reproductive health,... The U.S. also works through multilateral organizations such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO provides technical assistance for reproductive health programs as well as strong support for contraceptive research.\footnote{Ibid., 2 - 3.}

The policy is said to be mirrored by the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994. At the Conference, a basic principle established was that implementation of the programs was the sovereign right of
each country, consistent with national laws and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people. Consistent with this principle, with regards to obeying the people’s laws and development priorities including full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of the people concerned, this study would argue that a violation is already being committed against Nigeria. Etsako people would consider it an abomination for a woman to abort a pregnancy, as it is against the culture, ethical belief and philosophy of the people. Also, it is unheard of that men could sterilize themselves without a natural cause. This study would argue also, that population control cannot be a developmental priority now in Etsako and not in Nigeria because it is only the time to develop or grow the population for human development purposes. Furthermore, the argument is that Etsako, Nigeria and Africa are more or less at the point where the United States was in 1800 when its population was barely 5.3 million. Today, the same U.S. is 248.4 million. The rapid increase in the United States population


114 Hunt and Colander, 224-25.
has been due to expanding immigration and rapid rate of natural increase.\textsuperscript{115} It can be argued therefore, that since the United States immigration has not stopped expanding, in spite of its current enviable status, but declined in its natural ability to increase its population, Etsako, Nigeria or Africa should not tamper with its only natural (childbirth) ability to increase its population because there is no other means to increase population in the region.

Contrary to promoting human population development in the region, the United States Aid for International Development (USAID) has mounted a high-powered propaganda campaign for the promotion of Vasectomy.\textsuperscript{116} The USAID’s objectives in the population and family planning in Africa include "Reducing the rapid rate of population growth through sustainable reduction in unintended pregnancies" and "Increase use by women and men of voluntary practices that contribute to reducing fertility".\textsuperscript{117} This Study contends that the USAID practices in Africa with regards to vasectomy, promoting the practice of abortion, male

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.


impotence through the use of chemical drugs, and all other efforts to make the women become independent of the men, are a direct violation of the moral sanctity of the people’s philosophy of life which places much emphasis not only on the material aspect, but as well on the spiritual outlook on life in Etsako and Nigeria.

The trend in Africa’s population, like other populations in the world, cannot be easily ascertained as to the exact figures because in most cases projected or estimated figures are always in use. Evidently, the UN population figures pertaining to most countries of Africa, especially Nigeria, cannot be reliable due to their inaccuracy, as the figures are always estimated or projected for political reasons. Evidence is not hard to come by, as these are almost being reported daily in the media. For example, in the Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution of Sunday, February 4, 1996 we read: “Around world, women forced into birth control”, further the researcher continued:

There is no element in the health system that is as powerful as word of mouth, said Nils Daulaire, USAID’s senior adviser on population policy. The way to sustain a program is when people demand it.... In developing countries governments are trying to cut burgeoning birth rates without the infrastructure or resources to teach total family planning, population experts say.
Between 1960 and 1990, fertility was reduced by a third in developing nations, and the percentage of couples using 'modern' contraceptives nearly all targeted at women - climbed from 10 percent to 48 percent. Almost half of these women had tubal ligations. Another 29 percent use IUDs, and 12.5 percent take pills. These are the methods most promoted by major donors, such as the USAID and the World Bank.

Over the next decade, developing countries must provide birth control to 157 million more women just to maintain today's population growth rate. And to attain the ambitious goal of zero-population growth, that number would have to climb to 269 million, according to the World Bank.  

Question. One is tempted to ask: if Africa is castrated to reach a zero population growth rate, which is the desire of the United Nations and Western and European nations, from where shall Africans import or recruit the young people needed to replace the elderlies who will eventually die? And from where shall Africans procure the continued manpower needed for its ongoing human and material development needs? Rather coincidentally, the United States has embarked on visa lotteries, with which it selects some able-bodied young men and women, from many of the so-called developing or poor countries of the world. Selected winners are granted automatic immigrant visas, and this is assisting in meeting

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118 Ibid.

the manpower needs created in the U.S. indirectly by the effects of feminism in the country.

Meanwhile, in its 1997 report on world population, the United Nations indicates that worldwide birth rates are decreasing:

There are fewer people around doing it than once feared. In fact, revised U.N. population estimates say there may be a half-billion fewer people worldwide by 2050 than previously projected. Population control, in short, is making progress.

‘Fertility rates are going down all over the world’, said Nafis Sadik, executive director of the U.N. Population Fund.

On closer look, the bright spot does dim in one way: Population growth in parts of sub-Saharan Africa is being held down by high mortality rates from AIDS.¹²⁰

The above report says something that should encourage Africans to watch out for the U.N. and its requests. It relates to African women and their well being because the U.N. and its western and European directors do not appear as friends of the Africans and especially their women.

The irony of this situation can be best understood when one realizes that it is in the African continent that overpopulation is a serious world problem. While Europe and the West are doing everything to raise huge population and

protect it, Africa is being sterilized. Twelve countries in Europe have come together in a union known as the European Union consisting a huge population of 348.5 million. Incorrectly or not, the Commission’s report states that this figure makes the Union first in the developed world and third in the world:

With its 348.5 million inhabitants on January 1994, the European Union is the third world demographic power after China (1.188 billion) and India (870 million). It is in front of the CIS (290 million) and the United States (255 million). Indonesia (180 million), Brazil (156 million), Japan, Pakistan and Bangladesh (120 million each and lastly Nigeria (around 116 million) come further down the ranking.

The Union retains its third place, among the groups mentioned above, in the United Nation’s mean projection for 2025.121

At the 1994 population conference in Cairo, birth control was considered as an environmental issue. Again, at the world conference the population issue was turned into a feminist agenda, and it drew protest from the Roman Catholic Church and the Moslem world. The agenda was viewed as anti-family. During the meeting, “There was a strong focus on

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gender equality and empowering women to control their lives, especially their reproductive lives".122 This was viewed as a very strong method of controlling population. At the end of the World Conference, which was under the auspices of the United Nations, a consensus was reached. The consensus was that of "More Power to Women, Fewer Mouths to Feed".123 In other words, the United Nations reached the decision that in order to curb population growth, the women must be given more power to argue and to challenge their husbands as a way of disorganizing the home, which is the seat of population development and continued existence of a people. This appears to be the very essence of feminism, and the very reason the New world wants feminism introduced to Africa. With this feminism, African women will be expected to see their husbands as "equals" and as opponents, as opposed to what they (the women) have always been, complementers and mothers of their children and of the home.

The irony of the problem is the fact that some women (not African women in the Motherland any way) seem to see the situation as favorable to them when in fact it appears to the contrary. This dilemma and the irony of the issue


make it possible for a woman (not an African woman) to go out and ask some young college female students not to dream of having children in their life in this world.

Addressing the new graduates - all young females, of Agnes Scott College 1997 Commencement exercise in Decatur, Georgia, "Alice Walker warned them of the dangers of bringing children into a world fraught with problems including overpopulation". How sad this may seem, that those who were born into this world are trying to prevent others from being born into this beautiful world? Although, the speaker may have considered what she was saying as righteous, because of female experiences in this part of the world. But on the other hand such a statement would have been considered an irresponsible statement by women in Etsako.

FAMILY STRUCTURE IN ETSAKO

In a family unit in Etsako one finds the father, the mother, the first child, and the children. In a polyharmonious family unit one finds the man, the first wife, the second or third wife, the first child, and the children. In either case, the man is the head of the house followed by the first wife. If the man has a son as the

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first child, in the absence of his father, the first child takes decisions on-behalf of his father. The extended family starts from the man’s father, his mother, brothers, sisters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, uncles and cousins.

There is no concept of equality among the traditional people of Etsako, but there are hierarchy and class of people, just as there are class and hierarchy of angels and archangels in the other world, all working together in their respective levels for the attainment of prescribed desired goals. Also, in our socio-political and economic systems of societies as well, there are classes and hierarchies of leadership. This being the case, will it not be hypocritical to argue that there should not be a leadership in the foundation of societies, which is the family? Seniority therefore, is an important factor in the family. Whenever there is anything to be shared, the man takes first, followed by the first wife, second, and or third wife, followed by the first child whether a girl or boy. The children eat together in the same bowl. The junior must respect the senior among the children, and among the wives if they are more than one wife. Seniority is determined by the age in the case of the children, but in the case of the women, seniority is the order in which they were married to the man. In most cases, the first wife acts as a mother to all in the house hold, including the man. To disobey a
senior is a serious offence that draws serious consequences. It attracts serious disciplinary action from the senior who was disobeyed and, from any other elder who was around when such disobedient act was committed. This cultural behavior extends throughout the entire community. To illustrate: when an elder or a senior person witnesses a misbehavior of a younger person or a child, the elder or senior person does not wait or require another mandate to do what is expected of him or her, to correct the child in whatever way the senior sees fit. This elder or senior person does not have to be related by blood to the younger person or child to take any measure to discipline the child. This is how it takes a village to raise the child, as an African philosophy. It is a cultural philosophy of the people that once a child is born, the child becomes the responsibility of the people, for the child belongs to all in the community, and not just to his or her parents any more.

In some cases, and at times, the youngest wife gets very close to the man. There is mutual respect always in the family. If there is any domestic work to be performed, the senior wife decides who does what. The house chores are shared among the children.

As the head of the home, the man is the one who holds the authority, and he decides what takes place. The wife gives advise depending on the issue at stake. There is no
competition between the man and his wife nor do they see themselves as opponents or competitors. This ancient cultural traditional of authority in the home of the Africans, was recently upheld, reaffirmed and adopted by the Southern Baptist Church as a doctrine, at their Convention which began in Salt Lake City, Utah June 6, 1998. The Baptist Convention doctrinal statement reads in parts:

A husband and wife are of equal worth before God. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. A husband should love, 'provide for', 'protect', and 'lead' their families and that wives should 'submit graciously' to the leadership of their husbands.125

The wife takes instructions from the husband. The wife prepares the food and serves the husband. In some situations, if the man has more than one or two wives, each may cook her own different dish and serve the husband and the children when it is dinner or morning meal or lunch meal. Each dish is eaten together until all is consumed. There are other situations where meals are prepared upon the direction of the elder or first wife, and all eat together also. It depends on the preferred pattern of feeding elected by the man.

Some of these cultural practices have changed due to

socio-economic conditions brought about by modern day realities. It is the duty of the husband to provide the means necessary to ensure what is required to be done in the household. There is a concept of "odo-ogho" in Etsako. It means that it is the wife that possesses the "secret" of the husband because she was meant to protect the integrity of her husband for there lies her own prestige, integrity and honor. The women used to be very happy and the homes were peaceful, but the advent of the colonial church and their missionaries who were hostile agents to the traditions of the people, have been trying to impact the cultural order to the regret of the traditionalists. It may be good to imagine the harmony in the community if in every home, such practices as described above permeates.

The point must be made that owing to the unavoidable prevalence of this cultural family system as described above, Africa is still holding together today. The foreign systems of governance appeared to have failed as at the period of this study, due to ignorance, general impatience, and greed of the people who were given the mandate to operate the new systems. The failure also appeared to have been pre-determined by those who brought the new foreign systems about for the purposes of subordination or subjugation and exploitation.
In this section, our intention is to briefly examine what feminism is; what are its roots in the western world where it has been in existence for over a hundred years, with a view to seeing the probability of transporting such a foreign concept to Etsako. Few obvious questions that might be asked or answered here will be: (1) Is it every social disease that Africans must embrace? (2) Is there any good reason that western feminism must be imposed on Etsako women or African women in spite of the seemingly contagious social effects that appeared to accompany the characteristics of the philosophy of feminism? Does the culture of Etsako people or that of the African peoples generally have a room for feminism?

Before proceeding further, let us look at a notable previous work on the gender issue in Uganda from a western perspective. In their research, Wakoko and Loba were to find out how Ugandan women responded to crisis and change in Uganda, and the way the responses reflect attempts to reconstruct social life along more gender-egalitarian lines in Ugandan. They discovered that “Although women’s economic and political power appears to have increased in the postinsurgency period”, but “women remain behind men in both domains. Uganda
continues to face serious debt repayment problems".\textsuperscript{126} This Study however, note that these scholars are not yet aware of the future impact on the home front concerning, other things, children and their future behavioral impact on the society that may be resulting from this current change in the political status of the Ugandan women as is the case now in the United states of America. In his own right, Ekechi points out that recent literature on women abundantly attests to the fact that in many African societies women actually wielded considerable influence and political authority independent of men,\textsuperscript{127} but it must be emphasized that these women were not feminists. Discussing the marginalization of African women, as seen by the West, Iheduru points out that:

\begin{quote}
while African countries' administrations are now making appreciable efforts to ensure that women are treated equally and fairly, current scholarship on Africa, and by implication Nigerian, women tends to be immersed in what has been called 'Western oriented discourse on the marginalization of (African) women'.
\end{quote}


that does not take into account the significant statements about the African woman (expressed) in vernacular cultures and traditions’. These statements are important for at least two reasons. They are made by African women themselves through their writings contrary to the viewpoints of the ‘outside’ observer. Secondly, they derive from a particular world view whose cultural uniqueness sets it apart, and distinguishes it from western ideas of women’s emancipation and subordination.128

Admonishing western scholars who appear to derive joy condemning every aspect of African culture that has no western origin or flavor, Anthonia Kalu writes:

One has only to look at the impact of Western women’s presence in the workplace in the last century for this idea to make sense. The inclusion of the contemporary African woman within this group of women who work is cited as a privilege for which the African woman working in Western-type jobs should be thankful. Paradoxically, it is usually from these positions of privilege that she can speak about the oppressive nature of the traditional African socioeconomic structure and women’s work. The understanding is that outside African frames of reference, she has access to more decent work! If the African woman fetches African water or firewood, she is in the wrong job. On the other hand, if she has access to pipe-borne water and an electric stove and remains credit-worthy in the Western sense, then she is developed and

This study would contend that Western scholars have seen nothing wrong with Western Feminism over the years; only recently is one observing criticisms of feminism by a western writer, Danielle Crittenden and an African American female scholar, Dr. Valethia Watkins. Dr. Watkins describes the hostility she is confronted with, when she talks about what is wrong with feminism with her female colleagues, as that type of hostility faced by a man from his wife who met him on their matrimonial bed with another woman. Yet the characteristics, behavior, and philosophy of feminism are being equated, with the philosophy of democracy and human rights principles.

Obviously, such equation, association or characterization of feminism, as observed by those social engineers are false. The attempt to equate the characteristics of feminism to the principles of democracy and human rights, and the attempt to transport it in such a guise to Africa, represents the deceitful

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130 Dr. Valethia Watkins was speaking on “The Feminist Oppression of Black Women” at the Political Science Departmental Weekly Seminar, at Clark Atlanta University, Tuesday, April 27, 1999.
tactics which Africans have been exposed to through imperialism over the years. Such an attempt amounts to academic dishonesty, intellectual fraud, and moral bankruptcy. It could be argued that the British knew that the curricula of the school system which they introduced to Africa would bring about the current prevailing social chaos. The contents of the curricula were dangerously defective as they contained what were culturally and politically irrelevant to the children and the population. Take one simple example: African children were taught British, European and American history, but they were not considered worthy to know their own African history; and this has had a psychologically damaging effect on the people of Africa to this day.

Feminism: what is it, one may ask? The general Western definition is "The doctrine - and the political movement based on it - that women should have the same economic, social and political rights as men".\textsuperscript{131} It is a social movement that originated in England in the eighteenth century, with its goal as the attainment of certain social, political, and economic rights for

women. The movement’s aim was to give women equality with men in the western world where women were not given their rightful positions and the respect they deserve as humans in the society. From the African perspective, feminism is a social idiosyncrasy whose principles, bring about destabilization to the home and society where these principles are successfully introduced. Also, another possible explanation of feminism from an African argumentative perspective would be that feminism is a Euro-American myopic and mundane principle of “female personal autonomy and a modern dilemma, that cuts young women off from those aspects of life which are distinctly female desires, such as being a wife, motherhood, raising children and commitment to a man,” to borrow Crittenden’s expression. History shows that the movement had generally followed the spread of the Industrial Revolution, and the associated breakdown of traditional norms and the attainment of economic independence by women. In the process, women issues became that of a social movement in its traditional form in certain European countries and the United States in which women have traditionally held a subordinate

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In the West today, feminism, having achieved its original objectives, has become more of a psychological state - a constellation of certain attitudes held by individual women - than a social movement. It remains a social movement in its traditional form in certain currently industrializing nations, particularly those in which women have traditionally held a subordinate position.

Historically, the origin of feminism is traceable to the Greeks. They segregated their women, since it was not an offense but a normal practice in the "polis" because women were considered property, lower in value than the slaves. History relates that Lesbos is a Greek island in the Aegean Sea, off the coast of Asia Minor. This Island in Greece was founded in the 7th century, and a woman known as Sappho lived there. A native or an inhabitant of Lesbos is a lesbian, a name or word said to have been derived from the eroticism or homosexual activities of Sappho, the leader and her followers in Lesbos. In his book, *Sappho of Lesbos*:

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133 Ibid

134 Ibid.


Homosexual activities? The cause, and where is the origin?

Fig. 17

A symposium: the reclining man plays the pipes as a boy dances; a lyre hangs above them.

Two female figures in a courting pose. The chin-touching gesture and the garlands have erotic connotations.

(Source: Sappho's Immortal Daughter, Margaret Williamson)

Her Life and times, Arthur Weigall described Sappho as “very ill-favoured, being small and dark, like the nightingale whose tiny little body is covered by unlovely plumage”. Sappho was said to be 19 years old when she revolted against the authority of the oligarchy of the polis, for the general maltreatment of women and the general rules or policies as applied against women in Greece, at the time.

It appears by our conclusion, that as a result of Greek males’ hostility toward their women, neglect and their abandonment for young males as lovers by the adult males, Sappho gave her mother’s name instead of her husband’s, in protest, to her first baby, and for which she was sent on exile by the Athenian oligarchy. It appears a likely deduction that Sappho founded Lesbos when she was banished from Greece. Furthermore, in Lesbos, as a result of the circumstances, all the young females were previously denied of male human touch and invented new ways to satisfy their feminine human

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138 Ibid. 69.

139 Ibid. 86.

140 Ibid. 78.
natural urge. Is it not a dictum and an aphorism, that necessity is the mother of invention? And is it impossible that this was the reason, and the origin of feminism and lesbianism as we know these concepts and their characteristics today?

The term, feminism originated with the French dramatist, Alexandre Dumas the younger, in his essay on the rights of women, L’Homme-Femme, which appeared in 1872. Feminists struggle in the West began in the late 1800s and in the early 1900 when Elizabeth Cady Stanton with Susan B. Anthony founded the National Women suffrage Association in 1869. It was not until 1920 before the women won their right to vote with the enactment of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In the West, traditionally, a woman’s place was in the home, but things changed along the line, and came to a climax with women’s entry into the labor force. Consequently, the trend accelerated during the First World War when women came into the labor force

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143 Ibid., 120.

144 Ibid.
in large numbers, to assist by taking over the jobs that were left by the men who went into military forces\textsuperscript{145}. This was the beginning of American women into the labor force, and they have refused to go back to their traditional role of home makers since then, which appeared as a consequence of their being treated previously as sub-human, by the men. The effects of their refusal on the home and society, are not in a small measure. Mary Ann Mason wrote:

\begin{quote}
The explosion of women into the labor force is one of the most important phenomena of the twentieth century. Its impact goes well beyond the economic indicators; it determines the way we live now, from the time at which we must rise in the morning to the way in which our after-work evenings and weekends are spent. It affects the food we eat, the magazines we read, the way we raise our children. But, as with most important historical phenomena, those living through it have a hard time explaining it.\textsuperscript{146}

Yes, we are having a hard time explaining so much juvenile delinquency, violence in our streets and schools with our kids, so much guns with our children, and disobedient children. Yes, we are having a hard
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.

time explaining why children do not want to be children any more by doing what children are not supposed to be doing. The American society undoubtedly, is having a hard time explaining the unhealthy large number of divorces in the western society, broken homes, a huge number of never-marrieds; huge population of spinsters and young and old bachelors, and of course, we seem to have a hard time pin-pointing the source of many of these situations, probably because we hate to face the hard facts. “Young women are the unhappy victims of their mothers’ generation’s feminism, says Danielle Crittenden in her book *What Our Mothers Didn’t Tell Us*”, a book she wrote.

Crittenden contends that:

Though they usually don’t realize it, feminism has ‘seeped into their minds like intravenous saline into the arm of an unconscious patient’. Feminism doesn’t provide answers for the questions that distress young women, such as ‘is work really more important and fulfilling than raising my children?’ and ‘why does my boyfriend not want to get married as much as I do?’ The modern dilemma is that the success of feminism has cut women off from those aspects of life that are distinctly female desires, such as being a wife and raising children.\(^\text{147}\)

\(^{147}\) Ibid.
It is our conviction, as it appears, that feminism may have given ways to some of these societal afflictions, that have affected the most serious aspects of our lives, that aspect or part of our life that is inseparable with existence anywhere the family. Whether we know it, recognize it, and accept it or not, does not remove the fact that it has. The family unit and its unity are on the way out having been affected negatively, unless something is done to save the situation, and quickly too. The effects, to a larger degree are very much noticeable today in the homes and in the society. The feminist movement’s problem appears to have grown out of proportion to the extent that only a critical analyst with an inner ear and a profound mind is able to identify, trace, and link some of the socially serious problems to their causes, so that we may be able to look for a cure. One analysts, Martha Ezzard wrote that the feminist movement has been all too silent on issues of family, children and the moral underpinnings of women’s and men’s lives.\footnote{The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, Sunday September 17, 1995 p.B4.}

For example, Andrew J. Cherlin of The Urban Institute said, that “divorce in the United States
tripled and in Britain quadrupled over just the past few decades".\textsuperscript{149} The Urban Institute is a research organization investigating social and economic problems in the United States. Cherlin also admitted that the causes for the rise in divorce are not well understood, but top on the lists is "the increasing economic independence of women and society-wide attitudinal shifts".\textsuperscript{150} In the United Kingdom, the problem is not different, and we read:

There are more lone-parent families in the UK than any other country in Europe, reports \textit{The Times of London}. 'Single parents... now head almost one in five UK families with children under 18, compared with one in seven Danish families and one in eight in Germany and France'.

Of every ten lone parents in Britain, nine are women. The traditional, or so-called nuclear, family that consists of a father and a mother together with children now seems to be just one a 'family concept' among others. But why is the one-parent variety more prevalent than before?

Divorce and separation head the list of causes. Here Britain follows the trend in the United States, where about half of


\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
all marriages end in divorce.\textsuperscript{151}

In an article, "Why More Couples Are Getting Divorced", \textit{JET}, states that:

Between 1960 and 1980, the rate of divorce skyrocketed. It went from 393,000 divorces and annulments in 1960 to a staggering 1,189,00 in 1980, according to a U.S. Bureau of the Census report. The rate of divorce has since continued to steadily soar.\textsuperscript{152}

Unfortunately, it can be argued that hypocrisy about feminism has not allowed us to see clearly the nature of the war of survival that men appeared to be in the Western world. That the home can today be considered paralyzed or broken down in the Western world, as many marriages and homes have suffered tremendously due to the devastating effects of feminism.

Marriages are no longer stable; and marriage as an institution has stopped being an envy to many in many western societies. Many young people no longer wish or look forward to marriage, and those in it already are counting their days as to when they will be lucky to get out of it. Many men as well as many women tend to hate


marriage now in the western society. This appears to be one of the fundamental reasons why "23 million people in the United States, representing nearly a fourth of the nation's house-holds, live alone".\textsuperscript{153} In a story culled from the Chicago Tribune, it shows that "The divorce rate has climbed from 30 percent of all marriages in 1970 to close to 50 percent today".\textsuperscript{154} In the words of David Popenoe:

The decline of fatherhood is one of the most basic, unexpected, and extraordinary social trends of our time. Its dimensions can be captured in a single statistic: in just three decades, between 1960 and 1990, the percentage of children living apart from their biological fathers more than doubled, from 17 percent to 36 percent. By the turn of the century, nearly 50 percent of American children may be going to sleep each evening without being able to say good night to their dads.\textsuperscript{155}

In a similar view, Lawrence Stone, a family historian of the Princeton University states: "The scale of marital breakdowns in the West since 1960 has no historical precedent that I know of, and seems unique. There has been nothing like it for the last 2,000 years,

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid.


and probably longer". This study would like to argue that this problem of family and marital instability, do not appear unconnected with the so called "irreconcilable differences" between many American women and some of their men. Furthermore, the study would contend that the problem is stemming from marital disobedience and disrespect brought about by feministic concepts, attitude and characteristics of many women who are feminists in the West.

Looking at such a serious problem of the home, where does Etsako fall in? Is Etsako ready for the Euro-American family trends of development? Are the people of Etsako prepared for the type of a civilization that is currently moving through the western and European nations in matters pertaining to women's equality? More clearly, is Etsako ready for feminism and its type of political development including some of its aberrations, in Etsako?

In response to the above questions, there is a need for us in this study to refer to the findings of the poll conducted in Etsako. Our interpretation of the findings, will allow us to see what the Etsako woman knows of herself, believes in, and the things that she

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156 Ibid.
prefers to do. It will also allow us to know those which she does not like to do. When asked whether they prefer an office work, the Etsako women responded nay, by a majority of 270 or 90% of the total 300 polled. An African woman does not like or need an office work because it takes her out from her home, her power and the center of her world’s activities. Quoting Mrs. E. B. Duffey in her 1873 article titled, 'What Women Should Know’, David Popenoe states:

The true home is a world within a world”, and It is the central point of the universe around which all things revolve. It is the treasure-house of the affections, the one serenely bright spot in all the world, toward which its absent members always look with hope and anticipation”.157

Etsako woman does not need the office environment for the purpose of liberation, for she is a naturally liberated species. In Mrs. Adegboyega-Edun, we read, quoting David Lamb, that “the African woman is the world’s most liberated woman, more than you can ever imagine. Its true that her cares are many, but they are also shared”.158 Therefore, the African woman does not

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157 David Popenoe, Ibid.

need to be liberated. During the Second World War, many African men were drafted to the war fronts farther away from Africa to fight alongside the British forces. But their wives did not abandon their homes because they preferred not to, unlike the American women who, during World War I, abandoned their homes and have not returned since.

The Etsako woman is not self-employed because the home activities appear to be more satisfying and are more than that of an office paid employment. The African woman prays to God, that her husband be more endowed with the means and ability to take full and proper care of her, so that she would not have to go out to work because to do just that, was considered suffering. Culturally, it was considered sufferings for a woman to leave the home early in the morning, rainy or not, for work in an office. Of the three hundred women polled, 220 or 73.33% of them affirmed that they would not seek employment if their husbands were able to cater to the needs of the family.

There could be no doubt about the African woman’s sincerity regarding her preference to stay home if the husband is able to provide for the family because during the colonial period, women were not having office jobs. Some of the men who had employments were relatively well
paid. As a result, the women had no need to seek employment. Children were well cared for, and their mothers were happy that their husbands were employed by the white, colonial masters. They were proud to have husbands who worked the white man’s employment. Was it not after the departure of the Imperial masters that things went sour? Things went sour due to continued colonial exploitations, mismanagement of resources by the neo-colonialists aided by the ex-colonial masters.

In the poll, the majority of the women responded that it was not easy to work and raise children. Of course, the African woman will not play or tolerate any obstacle that will disturb her from caring or raising her children. Although the African woman may not have been to the western world, but those who have, are able to see the problems that the Etsako woman had escaped by ensuring that she stays at home to nurse her children. Juvenile delinquency is rare in Etsako. The children do not use drugs: that a child shoot his or her mother or his father to death is unheard of in Etsako. A teacher is like God before an Etsako child, because the child had inculcated from the family setting, respect for the seniors; respect and obedience to the elderly and above all, respect and obedience to authority. To an Etsako resident, a teacher is an elder with wisdom to be highly
respected. Therefore, some of the occasional violent occurrences in the West, that are beamed out to the world in the news, would appear as an abomination in Etsako and in many cities in Africa.

The other day two young kids, Andrew Golden, 11, and Mitchell Johnson, 13 years old respectively, carried out a shooting spree in their school, at Jonesboro, Arkansas. They killed some four students and a teacher who dived to protect a student who was going to be shot. One of the students had pulled the fire alarm to ensure that every one in the school was coming out while they opened fire.\textsuperscript{159} In another scenario, a kid, Andrew Wurst, 14, of Parker Middle School, at Nick's Place, near Edinboro about 100 miles north of Pittsburg, was arrested for shooting and killing a teacher at their school party.\textsuperscript{160} Resulting from over-hyperactiveness on the part of a child, a substitute teacher was fired at Cobb county in Georgia. The teacher was alleged to have tied a 2nd-grader to his seat to keep him seated in his chair because the child kept standing in spite of the


\textsuperscript{160} The Atlanta Journal /The Atlanta Constitution, "Teacher is Slain; Boy, 14, Charged", Sunday, April 26, 1998 p.A3.
teacher's efforts to have the child sit. One can argue that these seemingly aberrant and criminal behaviors are the by-products of incoherent home childhood preparations. An African child who has internalized the norms of his society from infancy that his or her disgraceful act reflects on the family, will not dare do the things that we hear from the western media.

From an African perspective, it could be argued that parental abandonment of the home for the work place appears to be a great factor in the truancies and violence in youth in many western countries. It is more the reason that the Etsako woman knows and believes that having an office employment will disturb the proper management of the home and raising of the children. Many of the African women, as many as 74.33% or 223 out of the 300 polled, believed that they had never participated in western form of politics. The meaning of these women's nay response actually should be taken to mean that they have never liked to participate in western form of politics, such as in the electoral process. Otherwise, these women have always been in

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politics in the traditional African sense. These women
play politics every day rationalizing with their
children, their husbands, their neighbors, their peer
groups and they play politics with their mates. In
Etsako, the culture and tradition encourages every man
to take more than one wife if they are able to prove
their manhood. So one finds that the women play
politics of understanding with themselves. For example,
these women have so many cultural, traditional groupings
which they belong to in accordance with their
traditional status in the society. Even recently, when
military regimes are the order of the day in Africa, we
find army officers' wives association. The first ladies
have one too. We also find the "Better Life for Rural
Women", which was chaired by General Babangida's wife,
Mariam. At this period, there is an organization of
women in Nigeria known as "Family Support Programme";
there is a branch in every state and in every local
government area and there is a branch in Etsako. The
former First Lady, Mrs. Maryam Sani Abacha is the
President, while every state governor's wife is a state
president of the association. These organizations cater
for the women and their well being.

What do we know of the Family Support Program, one
may ask? It is an organization of women which attempts
to strengthen the family. Its philosophical basis derives from the belief that the welfare of every human being, his actions and predispositions are tied up with that of his family and kinship. Consequently, the contribution of individual citizen(s) to the process of national development necessarily depends, among other things, on the extent to which the society prepared him for this role and how effectively his efforts are organized to participate in the things. Therefore, the organization is an effort to effectively utilize the institution of the family to address some of the nation’s needs, taking into cognizance Nigeria’s rich cultural heritage, norms and traditions including political obligation to the observance and advancement of democratic rights and opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of their socio-economic milieu. The general objectives of the body are:

I. To improve and sustain family cohesion through the promotion of social and economic well-being of the Nigerian family for its maximum contribution to national development.

II. To promote policies and programmes

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163 Ibid.
that strengthen the observance and protection of human rights and the advancement of social justice and human dignity.\textsuperscript{164}

The interactions of women at these forums, pursuing these kind of principles and motives can only be considered as political socialization. If they are not, one may ask what else would? Although, the women indicated in their responses at the poll, that they were not interested in politics, but that they were not opposed to those who engaged in party politics. The implication here appears to be that they were not used to Western party political practices; practices they do not consider appealing because they were perceived as anti-cultural.

The women know and believe that party politics is for men, and not for women, because it is such a rough terrain that only men may venture pursuing. Although, there were few women who are in politics, they do so as a matter of choice, and not compulsion of any sort. In other words, there are no social or civil policies or laws that brought the women into politics. It may be true that a policy is not necessarily a law, but a policy compels action and possibly, obedience. Therefore, when a policy is being sought, for the

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid. 6.
purpose of regulating African women’s affairs, it amounts to an unnecessary compulsion for action and obedience, without leaving room for those who may have a choice. On the other hand, one may argue that Western women appeared to have been compelled into situations with which feminism as a social doctrine or policy was the answer.

Etsako women disagreed with the notion that the men have not done well in politics because they know very well that discrediting the men automatically discredited the women themselves, since the men were never alone in the running of the political process. The women could not say that the men have not done well. The women are often very compelling on the men in whatever the men do, hence when a man succeeds in his life we ask for the woman behind him. When a woman succeeds too in her life, we ask the same question: "who is the man behind her?" It appears reasonable, therefore, to shame both if either the man or the woman failed to meet the expectations of the society on any given situation. This appears to be the situation.

Take for example, in Nigeria generally, and in many other places: when the man is "good", that is when he becomes rich, the woman becomes the "The Madam" - a direct effect of the husband’s riches. The same thing
applies to the man if the wife becomes wealthy. It is for this reason, it appears, husband and wife or wives, support themselves when either one embarks upon any venture, no matter what that venture may be. Of course, the influence of every man who is a political heavyweight in Nigeria, extends to the wife. The essence of what one is rationalizing here appeared to have been the motive upon which Kolawole Balogun’s wife was alleged to have gone to fight Mbadiwe’s wife urging her to compel on her husband, Mbadiwe, to leave her husband, Balogun alone. This was in 1959, pre-independence period when Kolawole Balogun went with Dr. Mbadiwe in his Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons DPNC, deserting their political father, The Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and his party, the NCNC. Dr. Kingsley Mbadiwe and Kolawole Balogun’s party, DPNC had become unpopular as opposed to the National Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons NCNC, which both of them were staunch members prior to the episode. One may only adduce that Balogun’s wife directly felt the waned political impact or influence of her husband, hence she planned the action she took, and of course, her husband Kolawole Balogun was readmitted to the NCNC by Dr. Azikiwe. In view of the foregoing it appears proper to credit the political failures of Etsako, Nigeria and or
Africa to the men and women of Etsako, Nigeria, and or Africa. They all failed.

This study would argue that on no account could the men in power have done better politically in Etsako or Nigeria. It is always a saying that a ship without a captain is a failure because it will always stray off course and get lost. This appeared to have been the political case of Nigeria, and all other sub-entities within, such as the Etsako Division now comprising of three local government areas of Edo State in the country. Admittedly, the political leadership had been placed with those without the qualities required for such onerous responsibilities. Every other problem emanated therefrom, while all wisdom and integrity went with it. It can be argued that it appears to be one of the reasons why we are unable to pin-point with whom the political failure rested.

Examining the issue of mandatory political participation for every one including the women, one may argue that as politics is an avocation, it is better left for choice. In other words, politics should be left to those who chose to be politicians. Political participation does not rest only with contesting an elective position as a politician. Participation in community deliberations and expressing opinions, are all
aspect of political participation. Also, voting in an
election is equally an important aspect of political
participation, which Etsako women have not failed.

Every one does not have to force a hobby on any one
because some hobbies can be expensive and time
consuming. It is not every one that has money to go
into politics and not every one has the time. It
appears to be one of the reasons participation in
politics was not made mandatory, according to Nigeria’s
1989 Constitution. Not every man participates in
politics, and no one requests that it be made mandatory.

Of what special need is there that requires peremptory
request or pressure which is being mounted on Africa to
politicize the bearer of its seed?

FAMILY VALUES IN ETSAKO

Family value is synonymous with human value in
Etsako and might be so throughout Africa. By human
value we refer to the intrinsic, essential and
nonquantifiable premium placed on human life. Family
values and the institution of marriage are quite
significance and of immeasurable importance to the
community, and family as the unit of society begins with
marriage. Through marriage is the emergence of the
family which gives rise to a society or community, and
the world is an embodiment of societies in which we live and interact with one another. Obviously, any one who may not be interested in marriage or family cannot be serious when he or she talks about society and family values.

From all indications, feminism and feminists do not believe in or have regards for family and culture. For example, we read:

'Feminism has viewed basic moral concerns as a male trap', says Fox Genovese, whose upcoming book is titled 'My Life Is Not About Feminism'.

Waite, who is president of a Washington think tank and serves on President Clinton's Glass Ceiling Commission, says feminists have been timid about any moral judgments - even support of marriage as an institution or recognition of the importance of fathers in children's lives....

But the feminist leadership, often sounding more radical and anti-family than its following, has played right into the hands of feminism's most vocal opponents.165

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese was the author of the above, as reported in her upcoming book, and she was the founder and former director of Emory University's Women's


Though they usually don’t realize it, feminism has ‘seeped into their minds like intravenous saline into the arm of an unconscious patient... The modern dilemma is that the success of feminism has cut women off from those aspects of life that are distinctly female desires, such as being a wife and raising children. Crittenden wants us to take a step back from sexual freedom (which she says ends up harming the woman, who gets used and dumped), career (only a tiny minority have stimulating, gratifying jobs), and zealous personal autonomy (often an indication of being too fearful and weak to take on responsibilities), in favor of commitment, marriage, and child rearing.167

However, a marriage institution laid on solid foundation produces a well grounded and balanced family, and in turn produces a well orderly society. A disorderly family setting produces a chaotic and disorderly society. As a result of the foregoing, marriage is of supreme importance. No unmarried or never married adult expects to attract a place of honor or respectability in the community in Etsako. In Etsako, marriage appears to be the first spiritual obligation of a woman,

166 Ibid.

167 Crittenden, 3-13.
therefore, it is very important. The next, is to be fruitful, that is, the woman should be able to become pregnant and have a baby or babies. Without marriage, the female cannot be recognized as a woman, but a girl. As a girl, she cannot make herself available to become fruitful, it is forbidden culturally. A woman in Etsako who has not given birth "Okpotso noa gbakhue no Oto", meaning a woman who has never "caused a placenta to be planted in this Earth", does not appear to have a place of honor in the community. "I am Mrs. so and so" is an important title in Etsako for a woman. I tend to believe, it is probably so in many other parts of Nigeria and in most of the rest of Africa. It is more than having a Mercedes Benz, a BMW, or a Lincoln Continental and Volvo. It is more than a university degree, a Master's or Ph.D. combined. Marriage is the first-port-of-call for a female in Etsako, therefore, it is not surprising, that at the poll in Etsako, almost all the 300 females polled in Etsako, affirmed that it was an honor to be a wife. Although western education brought about by colonialism has affected to some degree some aspects of the culture and traditions, but to some extent, the foundation to repair the damages remain.

As it is honorable to be a wife, so it is to be a
mother; although, the latter cannot be without the former, culturally. This is probably due to the fact that nothing cannot give rise to something. To the people of Etsako, an un-wed female is not a woman but a girl, and a girl cannot be a mother until she is a woman hence the saying that nothing that cannot give rise to something. Philosophically, Etsako holds the belief that the universe was orderly ordained, therefore, unchaotic. Therefore, there must be 1, before 2, and before 3; 3 cannot be after 4, it will be 43, and they are all different entities and situations that must be recognized. This is the order of things or living in traditional Etsako society.

Take for example, an Etsako woman would want to have as many children as she is able to have energy to bring to this earth. It is anti cultural to count the number of children. Children are not pebbles to be counted. It is the belief that children are the cover cloth of the non-wealthy individual, and children are the wealth of the down trodden. An Etsako woman is prepared to stay with her husband as long as she has a child or children with the man, no matter what may be the problem directly with the man or his extended family. It was an abomination for someone to say that he or she may want to marry, but would not have children
An Etsako girl singing a tune at a traditional ceremony
(Source: Odufa's Archive, Azukhala Ekphei)
A typical Etsako traditional family
as one sometimes hear some people say in many parts of Europe and from some parts of the United States of America.

Etsako woman places a very high premium on children and child bearing, and it would appear that the essence of marriage, to the Etsako woman, is children. Procreation is the essence of man’s sojourn on earth. To the women of Etsako, emotional support derivable from sexual activity is a by-product, but not the reason for the act. That kind of emotional support appears to be secondary in marriage, hence mating is not for pleasure nor is it for public exhibition. Rather, to the people of Etsako, the women especially, marriage and mating are a spiritual fulfilment for the regeneration or reincarnation of self within the human community. Any failure in this direction, is a disaster in which no one else can rehabilitate, except the individual and nature.

It must be noted too, that on no account should a woman become pregnant without a husband. In the first place, no one would accept a woman with pregnancy for which one was not sure of his responsibility, and no woman would want to bring forth a child that no one has accepted. Culturally, such a woman has brought shame to her family for she has become the mother of “Omo-Egigbesi”, in other words, a child whose father is
unknown. Such a child or children are considered as being possessed of some psychological characteristics and behavior arising from the nature of their birth, which is considered to be nonconductive to the parents and the society. These things are dictated by the culture and traditions of the people, and these factors serve as the basis for social control of a society, which begins with the family. In other words, the societal control begins with the orderly process of the family. It is the basis upon which Etsako ought to preserve the family by ensuring that its marriage as an institution is undefiled by external forces.

RELATIONS BETWEEN WOMAN AND MAN

The relationship between a man and his wife in Etsako is a simple process, in the sense that everyone in the family knows who is who in the family. The line of authority and who the authority is are well understood. There can be no mixed signals. The wife knows her obligations to her husband, the children and to the entire household. The man knows his obligations and responsibilities to his wife, to the children and to the entire household, and this extends to the entire community. The children know their collective roles, as well as their individual obligations and
responsibilities to their parents and to themselves as individuals based on the age of each child. Although, these cultural norms and practices still prevail in Etsako, but they are under pressure from western influence; Christianity and Islam which are the two main foreign religions in the area.

The woman knows that she is the best of an adviser that the man has. Also the wife knows that she was supposed to take instructions from her husband, and Etsako women are glad to do so as a matter of duty, responsibility, and they enjoy every bit of it. A popular local female artists from Etsako released a musical album in Lagos some months ago which they titled "Okha somhi nogwa, osomhi na atogbo", meaning: "if it becomes good for the forest, it becomes good for the grassland". The exact meaning of this proverb comes out clear with the song which says: "okha somhi no odomhe, osomhi nimhe; odomhe okhadi imoto, mhi domoto", "meaning if it becomes prosperous for my husband, I am prosperous; if my husband buys a car, I have bought a car",. The result of the poll on this issue was 280 out of 300 affirmed that they would take instructions from their husbands. The women know that every one of their roles in the home is as important as that of the
husband. The husband knows his roles are supreme and are crucial to the success of the family. He understands that every one in the family looks up to him as dictated by the norms and traditions of the people, including the fact that he is the bread winner of the family. He knows that his failure means the failure of the family as a whole. He is to provide for everyone even though everyone in the family is working to assist him to achieve whatever anyone may have the desire to have. Above all, it can be argued that there is mutual respect and understanding in the collaborative efforts of all in the family in Etsako. This may explain the absence of the divorce syndrome common in other developed societies.

It could be explained that the man’s role, which may appear dictatorial to foreigners, may be likened to that of the benevolent dictatorship of the Divine which is not destructive nor is it for self aggrandizement. The man’s instructions or directives are firm, but not rigid because they are always changeable by a counter advise of the wife who is the mother of the home. The man may bark, but the effects are soon neutralized by the soft voice or pronouncement of the wife in response to such a bark, when she considers such barking an unnecessary answer to whatever the situation may be.
But the man must be seen as the one in control. In fact, an Etsako woman would want her husband to be seen as being in charge, no matter what because it makes life worth living with everyone in the community, and it makes a good role model for the children.

The man may have two or three wives and many children; his responsibilities are not shared except that he may choose to delegate some minor specific responsibilities to the senior wife, but he retains that of being the leader of the house. The concept of “my wife” is derived from the fact that he marries the wife or wives, and not the other way round, as is obtainable in western societies. For example, the man pays a dowry on his proposed suitor which makes the lady become the man’s wife. Dowry is not only in cash, there are other token items, such as gifts, no matter the size of such a gift; it could be a car, a house; the suitor may chose to pay for the education of a brother or sister of the bride as a form of appreciation to the family of the bride and of the marriage. The dowry is paid as a token of appreciation to the parents of his wife or wives.

In the western world, dowry means money, property, or material goods that a bride’s family gives to the
bridegroom or his family at the time of wedding,\textsuperscript{168} but in Etsako and in many parts of Africa, it is the man who pays the dowry. In many cultures, the dowry does not only helps to cement the relationship between the bride’s or groom’s families but also serves to reinforce traditional family roles and gender roles.\textsuperscript{169} Although, in Etsako, the wife understand her roles as very important to the community, hence their negative response to the suggestion in our questionnaire, that “a woman’s role in politics was as important”.

It could be contested that Etsako woman believes that a man is strong enough to do everything and hence he is capable enough to love and protect her from any danger. Therefore, the man can play politics and as well be capable enough to assist her in raising the children. Assisting in raising the children in this sense implies that the benefits derived from a man’s political role are, would be used to assist in caring for the children. The Etsako woman does not believe in the notion that what a man can do a woman can or can do it better. This may be because she knows that the man


\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
and woman were created differently for each other and for different factors or purposes and were probably made from different elements.

For those who believe in the Bible, the woman was made from the rib of the man. (See Genesis 2:21-23). The purpose was for the woman to complement the man’s efforts and comfort him when he may be tired. The woman was not made for the purpose of competing with him, the point could be made that the people of Etsako, or the Africans, were not acting from their knowledge of any Bible when they called woman a man’s complementser or helper. They knew from a careful empirical observation and analysis of the behavioral characteristics and the feminine nature, that a woman was a complementser of the man. Of course, the African, as the first homo erectus\textsuperscript{170} has been close to nature and in his observation of natural phenomena, he seemed to have gained an envied understanding.

Therefore, the African is able to distinguish, and acknowledge the essence of things, notions, behaviors and characteristics of phenomena, and plants and

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\textsuperscript{170} Apart from the general previous archaeological and palaeontological knowledge of the fact that Africa is the first home of man, our able President, Mr. Bill Clinton recently declared while on his trip to Africa, that “Africa is mankind’s first home. We all came out of Africa”, see White House Press Release, Remarks by the President to the people of Ghana, Accra, Ghana, March 23, 1998, 4.
animals. He is able to tell that a woman was not meant for those physical and energy-sapping activities, conditions and situations. But she has the emotional endurance or capacity and psychic energy required to withstand the stress of life, of conception, of nurturing, and of the family trials and tribulations. For the purpose of argument, this study proposes that endurance or capacity and psychic energy are natural with the woman right from her period of evolution or emergence.

Take for example: Ontologically (the ultimate nature of reality or the true science of all being), the female has demonstrated her energy and psychic capacity for survival at various stages of her life. Also, we have learnt in Biology through biochemical analysis of intra-dynamic activities of the female and male chromosomes (X & Y) during copulation between man and woman. In their journey for life, towards the female egg with the sole aim to impregnate it, results have shown that the male chromosome, more often, usually dies on the way before fertilization point in the female ovum. But the female chromosome usually last through the journey to get to the egg and fertilize it. This could be the explanation for why there appears to be more baby girls born than boys.
Also, it is an open secret that after birth, baby girls outlive the boys. In other words, there appear to be more baby girls alive than the number of boys that survive. This appears to be one of the major reasons we have more girls, ladies or women in our society than young boys, young men and men. In real life as well, experience has shown that many more men die earlier than women. Many are drafted to wars and die there than women, many men are locked up or incarcerated in the various underground prisons. The men experience a harder life than women, and this also seems to account for the number of surviving men in life. The list of factors that draw on man’s raw physical energy responsible for the over-all shortage of men are endless. It becomes evident as to why the females must outlive men; as mothers who must replenish the earth from its diminishing population, and this may be one of the reasons Africans must preserve and protect their female species from the harsher realities of the modern day materialistic and technological world.

IMPACT OF CULTURE AND TRADITION

The importance of culture and cultural activities including tradition, as an embodiment of politics and political practices cannot be over-emphasized due to
their evocative nature. In the words of Manly P. Hall:

“Beauty is essential to the natural unfoldment of the human Soul. The mysteries held that man, in part at least, was the product of his environment. Therefore they considered it imperative that every person be surrounded by objects which would evoke the highest and noblest sentiments.”171

Although I am in agreement with the above proposition, it could probably be argued as well that the above might be the basis upon which European and American societies always have kept their artifacts and images alive. This they do by ensuring that all cherished images and artifacts are everywhere preserved, within the society and beyond; furthermore, it seems to be one of the reasons American idiosyncratic paraphernalia, such as the blue jeans, or levi, baseball caps and general sports wear, have almost become the normal outfit for most people everywhere in our world. It could also be argued too, that the same commitment to self-cultural values and to images and icons that evoke sentiments and pride, appear to be one of the very reasons for always presenting a universal symbol or a great personality in their own (European and American) images, irrespective

of whether the universal symbol or image was actually and truly theirs or not. In other words, western and the European worlds have always grabbed or converted that which does not belong to them, as long as the personality or images of what they are grabbing or converting represented a motivational ideal, capable of demonstrating moral integrity and profound awareness of a people.

Examples abound. Prior to this time, Egypt and Egyptians were always being described to students in the classrooms and in other forums, by European and American educators, as if Egyptians were not Africans and the State of Egypt was not an African nation. This was because Egypt was the cradle of human awareness, call it civilization if preferred; and when it seemed impossible to dissuade the world that Egypt is an African nation, and that the Egyptians are actually Africans, it appears someone thought of duplicating Egypt outside Africa, by recreating Egyptian monuments, such as the pyramids in Las Vegas. In the same vein, Jesus The Christ has always been presented to the modern world and Africans, with an image and personality foreign to what He actually was, historically speaking as we read:

In all the Romish countries of Europe, in France, Italy, Germany, etc., the God,
Christ, as well as his Mother are described in the old pictures to be black. The infant God in the arms of his black mother, his eyes and drapery white, is, himself, perfectly black. There is scarcely an old church in Italy where some remain of the worship of the Black Virgin and Child are not to be met with. Very often the black figures have given way to white ones and in these cases the black ones as being held sacred, were put in retired places in the churches, but were not destroyed, and yet to be found there.\textsuperscript{172}

The motives for confiscating or adapting another's cultural images and icons, probably because of their motivational powers and pride of the images and icons, may not have posed any problem. However, the problems are the emotional injuries and the psychological impact on the original owners of such images and cultural icons, due to the interpretations and propaganda of the confiscator or adoptee.

One of the conclusions drawn from the lessons learned from this study is that the West would wish that the people of Etsako, and probably the entire African peoples abandon their culture and adapt the European and American culture. One can only contend that this is the only credible reason for advocating that the United

\textsuperscript{172} J. A. Rogers, \textit{Sex And Race: Negro-Caucasian Mixing In All Ages And All Lands}, Vol. 1, The Old World, (St. Petersburg, FL: Hegla M. Rogers, 1968), 274.
Nations should mandate American and British women to embark on conducting workshops in Africa to brainwash the African women. (See Chapter IV Table 29 of this study). In other words, the British and American women should go and teach the African women how to become British and American women; how to discard their husbands; how to bring about instability in many African homes; how to control the population of Africa through destabilization of the home and family due to lack of cooperation of the women in the home; and how to break up the African traditional marriage institution which is the embodiment of the peoples' culture and strength.

It is arguable that this social havoc would appear to be the exact results from feministic characteristics and the type of education that will emanate from the British and American women's workshops and seminars in Etsako and eventually in the whole of Africa. Although while the West would wish that African culture is eradicated, it ensures the growth and survival of other cultures by promoting those cultures. An illustration of this good behavior is the current ongoing reunification of American-adopted Chinese children in the U.S. Chinese children adopted through the Chinese Children Adoption International by American parents, are brought together periodically. The program organizers
hope that it will become an annual event to help "Chinese children keep their cultural heritage alive". The American parents of the adopted Chinese children, felt that "Keeping the children in touch with their Chinese roots could prove difficult", hence the program was created. Some of the American parents have enrolled their adopted children in Chinese language classes.\textsuperscript{173} Evidently, one would contend that were it African children, there would be no such attempt to help the children keep their culture irrespective of the period for which the Chinese children have been adopted.

Experience, which is the best teacher, shows that today, a Black child adopted by a White family behaves quite differently from how Black people would normally behave. During the slave trade period, two African slaves from the same geographical region were deliberately kept apart and their names "unknown", to ensure that their language and culture did not survive in the new world. Is it possible to measure the impact of this experience on the Africans in the Diaspora today or is it likely that any sane individual can under-rate this impact on Africa and the African Americans today? One would argue

\textsuperscript{173} The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, Sunday, May 24, 1998 Section F, Front page.
that there is not much difference in the two historical periods, and that they look like. Even up to this day when slave trade is no more, Africans who are explorers or immigrants to the New World - America, are compelled or encouraged to take on American names and learn to speak like the Americans (a kind of assimilation) if they need to be given employment. These type of experiences tend to keep us alert as to what comes next, when concepts and formula towards Africa are being propounded and introduced by African adversaries.

This study found that the people of Etsako generally, and their women particularly, cherish their culture as they cherish child bearing. It therefore, concludes that the women are the custodians of the peoples’ culture and tradition, that they also know how to impart the traditions and culture to the children through informal education at home. An Etsako woman, like any other African woman, communicates with her children on day to day basis. It appears to be responsible for the home grown knowledge and discipline of the African child. When some African children and American and British children stay together, the difference becomes obvious in terms of comportment and personal discipline. It is a known cultural fact that at home, an African mother speaks with her mouth, but
when others are present, either at home or else where, she speaks with her eyes to the child and the child understands and responds without any question or argument. It is the contention of this study that the African woman educates her daughters in a way no one else will ever do, while she directs the male children to their father, only for an answer that requires to be given by a father to a male child.

A United Nations Report talks about African culture being pervasive. Is there any culture that is not pervasive, and is there anything wrong with a culture that is all encompassing within its own environment? A culture should be as pervasive as the people because each individual, as a product of the culture should be a carrier of the cultural traits, and hence culture of the older societies should be all encompassing or pervasive. Which of the cultures do we prefer to be pervasive in Africa? Is it the current perverse culture of “man-to-man” and “woman-to-woman” syndrome? Is it the culture of divorce syndrome currently plaguing European and Western countries? Still, is it the cultural syndrome of “babies having babies” that should be allowed to pervade our

human families? Furthermore, is it a culture of "irresponsible" men and women roaming about as eligible bachelors and "never-marrieds" that should be left to become pervasive? Yes in Etsako, an adult of age who is not married is regarded as an irresponsible soul. The UN may need to explain to Africans what it meant by "society's pervasive cultural belief", which according to this study, appears to be one of the reasons African women must be empowered to dent the African pervasive culture.

This study found that in Etsako, a woman is the mother of the home, and the man, the father of the house, is the head of the entire home as demonstrated by the responses of the women polled in Etsako. The men are culturally bound to provide for their wives, protect them and lead their families, and of course, care for and protect those whom we love. The word "love" means "uyemhi" in Etsako, therefore, it can be argued, that the people do not appear to be devoid of the power and emotion to love their women. Culture and traditions have always been important and will continue to be very important to the people in Etsako and they appear to be the guiding spirit of the people.

Consequently, it is a culturally alert strategy for
the women of Etsako and Africa generally, to be given an African oriented education that will prepare them for their natural responsibilities. For example, here in the U.S., a study published by the JET magazine has found that women with more education have fewer babies. The study found that almost half of all women with college degrees between ages 22 and 44 have never had a baby. The study was reported to have been conducted by the Atlanta based Center for Disease Control and Prevention CDC.\textsuperscript{175} The study found that in 1995, about 9 percent of women representing about 5.4 million, had no children and expected to have none in the future. The study was reported to have shown that there was a dramatic increase in women seeking help for infertility; that in 1988 while 4.9 million sought help, 6.1 million sought help assistance for infertility in 1995.\textsuperscript{176} This study would argue that this phenomenon was a negative impact which arose from a preference for education and career first by the majority of such women seeking help for infertility because they might be those who did every thing to postpone having babies due to their preference for career


\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
before family responsibility.

In view of such results, in the above findings, it may be contested that the idea of sending American teachers to Africa to improve the skills of African teachers will result a negative impact on the culture of the population of African children due to the myopic and individualistic philosophical nature of the aims of the American teachers.\(^{177}\) It has been reported that Rev. Leon Sullivan is donating $1 million towards the development of education in Africa\(^{178}\). Rev. Leon Sullivan’s great and meaning efforts at developing African education will be more meaningful, and will have a more productive and lasting effect on the future children of Africa culturally if African teachers’ skills will be developed by African teachers, in Africa. Such $1 million can be properly channeled to Africa for the purpose it was meant. Africa does not lack able educators, but it may be in need of materials and infrastructures in which a million dollars will play an important part.

As this study has been able to demonstrate, African population and African culture will be adversely affected


\(^{178}\) Ibid.
should African or Etsako women be exposed to the American and European form of political socialization.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing section of this chapter, we have provided an introduction and made political observations of the findings of this study. We have discussed the American Assumption?, presented the case against population control in Etsako and described the family structure of Etsako. Also we discussed the principles and implications of feminism and Etsako, explained the family values in the context of Etsako; examined the relations between woman and man; and lastly, we discussed the culture and traditions of Etsako. It is based on the foregoing discussions that this study draws its conclusions and recommendation. Before then, however, it is necessary to restate the African political philosophy that became our conceptual guide in this study. The philosophy was enunciated by the late doyen or father of modern African political nationalism, The Right Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and it states:

The African philosophy of politics and government is both pragmatic and idealistic. Its pragmatism may be explained in the concept that food, shelter, and clothing constitute the necessities of life which every individual must share one with another.
Its political idealism is based on the idea that in addition to the material necessities of life, a spiritual outlook on the rights of man also is an essential element to the corporate existence of the State. Call it what you may - popular communism or communistic nationalism - yet, the African State does not reckon greatness on material values alone; rather, it seeks to safeguard the citizens, so that the security of the many may not be usurped and transgressed by the few.\textsuperscript{179}

Based on the available data as presented elsewhere in this study, this exercise has arrived at the conclusion that the political efficacy of African women in African political systems as defined in this study, will change the African traditional family structure, and will affect negatively, the historic African cultural value systems. In other words, African culture and traditions, including its cherished historic traditional family structure and its values will adversely be affected, if African women mount the political soap box, as is overtly and covertly being advocated by the technologically developed world in contemporary time.

Again, this study has revealed that the purpose of the siege on African women, to become politically educated within the western idiosyncratic framework, is to negatively affect the culture, family and the population growth rate.

This shall be very unfavorable to the people of Etsako as an ethnic group, and probably to Nigeria as a state and any other African state, as a cultural society, if these plans are allowed to succeed.

Furthermore, it is the study's conclusion that those who have appeared to have seen the need to slow down African population growth rate will carry out their plans through the indoctrination of the women of the continent and through African women of the Diaspora as well. The instrument or tools that will be deployed in their covert plan will be feminism, its principles and philosophy. These conclusions, based on the data generated and analyzed by this study, have deduced from a number of factors: (A) The over-bearing pressure on Africans to ensure that their women are given western education to assure the westernization of the African womanhood. (B) The hue and cry about over-population in Africa and the attempts to curb population growth rate in the region by the United Nations and the United States, through their main agencies, such as the UNFPA, USAID, UNDP, WHO including the International Planned Parenthood Federation IPPF. (C) The consensus of the Western and European powers at the World Conference on Population in Cairo, Egypt in 1994 is quite instructive enough: "More
power to women, fewer mouths to feed". The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution of Sunday, August 28, 1994 editorialized it thus: "Equality is Best Contraceptive". (D) The actual free distribution of millions of male and female contraceptive pills in Africa by the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Johns Hopkins University of the United States. (E) The number, though unspecified, of African American women who appeared to have been told by their doctors that they would be unable to have children in their lives, who thereby resigned in frustration without any more zeal to seek further alternatives. (F) Last and not the least: There seems also, to be an unspecified number of some African American women of child bearing age who seem to have under-gone or are under-going "fibroid" treatment or surgeries for quite some time in the African American community.

Although, it appears suspicious that many physicians may be deploying the use of "autosuggestion" as part of the covert activities against African women, which seems to be taking a large toll on the unsuspecting Black women who are not aware of what must have happened to them at the "doctors'" office. It might be impossible to ascertain what

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180 Eugene Linden, 64.

181 McLord Obioha, 76-77.
may be a considerably large number of African Americans who probably have gone through artificial sterilization upon some doctors' advise here in the U.S. and within the African American community. After a ten year study, the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have just raised an alarm at the suspiciously undue high rate of deaths of Black women from child birth. Black women are almost four times more likely than White women to die from complications of pregnancy, and it is considered one of the sharpest racial disparities in public health in the United States.  

Furthermore, this study would conclude that, paradoxically, African women of the Diaspora may be used without their knowledge that they are being drawn into a process to indoctrinate the unsuspecting women of Africa. Therefore, while embarking on what this study regards as an inauspicious mission to the women of Africa, the African American woman seems to have the feeling that she is on a mission to assist the women of the Motherland, Africa.

This study would furthermore argue that the culture of Etsako people seems to have equipped and mandated the adult to direct and guide the young, and discipline the child when

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the need arises. Consequently, this study observes that this cultural process seems to have kept the communities free of juvenile insubordination, truancy, indiscipline, and violence, such as are prevalent in some European and Western countries. Although, the presence of drugs and some of these social anomalies have not been identified in Etsako, but with the day-to-day infiltration of foreign ideas and acculturation, through foreign text books, fictions and non-fictional materials including movies which are imported into the countries, it is not impossible that drugs and some of these things may one day become available. In spite of this uncertainty, this study would contend that the culture of the people took cognizance of the fact, that today's child is tomorrow's adult. Therefore, if the child was not prepared for a responsible adulthood, irresponsible adulthood, cheats, insubordination, truancy, and all other psychological problems or deficiencies including violent behaviors and attitudes, could pose a serious risk to the communities. Evidently, a disciplined child is a responsible adult and the bedrock for a responsible community. Unfortunately, western idiosyncracies see things differently because, to the Westerner and the European, the young man or girl is a human with in-born rights and privileges that must be respected by adults, this study would contend. An adage says that gold is given to those
who know the worth of gold, and this study would add: rights
and privileges should be given to those who have the
understanding and idea of what freedom, rights and
privileges entail. Benjamin Franklin, an American
statesman, had made a statement implying that one has no
right to call another, ignorant, if one has not given the
other the opportunity to know what he or she ought to know.
If this is correct which I think it is, this study would
ask: do we have the right to lock up many young souls in
prisons when we have not prepared them for good citizenship,
or when we have not shown them how not to be victims of the
law of society?

Consequently, therefore, this study would like to
contend, that the quest to grant the rights of man,
privileges and freedom to the young, without the
Corresponding understanding of the responsibilities that go
with it, is a major cause of some of the social crisis in
some Western-European societies including the United States
of America. Etsako and Africa do not have to share in that
crisis. A proper up bringing of the child begins with the
mother. To displace the mother is to have displaced the
child and derailed the society because the orderliness of
the home is negatively affected without the mother of the
home, the woman; and the products of disorderly homes are a
burden to the affected society, this study would further
conclude.

The study would make the point that, although the characteristics, behavior, and philosophy of feminism are being equated, associated or characterized as belonging to the philosophy of democracy and human rights principles, that such equation, association or characterization of feminism, as observed by social engineers and adepts, is false. The attempt to equate the characteristics of feminism to the principles of democracy and human rights, and the attempt to transport it in such a guise, to Africa, represents the anomalous patterns by which Africans have been led off their track by imperial powers over the years. Such an attempt lack human decency and, it amounts to both academic fraud and intellectual dishonesty.

Finally, this study will conclude by advocating that African women should be allowed to proffer solutions to their own problems within the context of their own African cultural environment; that the African woman has always been in politics, but not in the western cultural framework of political jingoism; that the western political terrain is not for the African woman; that African men and some women who are practicing the western form of politics, are yet to perfect their learning in the relatively new system of governance, in Africa.

The study notes that man is the leader or head of the
home in Etsako, and the woman complements the man’s efforts to lead the home. An opinion supporting this view was echoed recently by the Southern Baptist Church Convention when it stated that:

Marriage is neither a partnership nor hierarchy. Yes, the husband must be the head of the family. But the woman is the heart of the family. All love and new life spring from her. A body is alive only if the head and the heart work together.

A husband’s 'headship' is about servanthood, not power. He is commanded to live in sacrificial service and love for his wife, even if it costs him his life.183

Notably, this study would observe that the Southern Baptist Church’s stand, is a support for the ancient noble and virtuous cultural philosophy of Etsako and the African people, on the issue; the role of an African woman is different from the role of an African man; that in spite of the complementary role of an African woman, her status as a Mother is Spiritual before the Africans, and that her role cannot be compared to those mundane materials of the day. Motherhood is the greatest status of womanhood, for there lies the continuity of man and society. All of her other roles are complementary to herself in the fulfilment of her greatest role of motherhood. Further, the complementary

role of the African women is comparable to the complementary role played by the so called negative wire or polarity in an electrical circuit. The positive wire or polarity in a circuit, needs the negative wire or polarity to bring about a manifestation of an electrical energy or live, in the circuit. Spiritually, the two polarities have equal usefulness in the circuit playing different roles for the same purpose. Prince Tony Momoh, former Minister of Information and Culture in General Ibrahim Babangida’s administration in Nigeria, equated this relationship with that of a motor-vehicle engine and the petrol or gas with which the vehicle is driven. The engine and gas or petrol need each other for the use of man. Without one, the other is useless in the vehicle, both the engine and the petrol or gas must collaborate or complement themselves for the vehicle to become useful to man, but the roles of the two factors in the engine differ to a greater extent.¹⁸⁴ So is the relationship between man and woman, in Etsako.

Chapter V
SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY

This study was to draw attention to some of the perceived western covert attempts to destabilize and destroy the historic culture and family structure of the people of Etsako, with a view to undercut the population of the people. Included in the process and effort was the need to examine, emphasize and highlight the urgent need for a reflection on the politics of Etsako, in the context of Africa as a whole. This was to allow the people of Etsako to see the need to concentrate on maintaining their identity, in terms of African thoughts, patterns and ideas, as opposed to allowing foreigners to influence, dictate and impose their ideas, their characteristics, patterns and events, on Etsako. To achieve this aim, there was a need for a title or theme that facilitated an understanding of the essence and purpose of the study. Hence, the title: "African Women and Political Development: a Case Study of Etsako Women in Edo State of Nigeria", was adopted.

It was very necessary to show the traditional political
and social structure of Etsako, to disprove the notion that Etsako, and by extension African societies, being traditional, were stateless and supposedly not orderly and systematic.

The conceptual framework was the African philosophy of politics and government which supports the minor hypothesis, that the political efficacy of African women in African political systems will change the African traditional family structure, by negatively impacting the historic African cultural value system, if Etsako women were not politically socialized from an African cultural perspective. The philosophy of the concept was preferred because it recognizes the duality of nature in man (human being). It recognizes life’s material necessities, such as food, shelter, and clothing, as well as the spiritual outlook, such as what man may do or not do, say or not say, to remain or be in accord with nature. This duality of existence constitutes an essential feature of the African existence.

The theory that the Political Efficacy of African Women in African Political Systems, Will Change the African Traditional Structure, and Will Affect Adversely the African Cultural Values Systems, was upheld by the rejection or disconfirmation of the major hypothesis which stated that the political efficacy of African women in African political systems tend not to change the African traditional family
structure and, tends not to affect the historic African cultural values if African women became westernized politically. In other words, this study shows that if the African woman becomes radically westernized the African way of life, the understanding of the totality of the human nature in relation to the universe - the psychological component, the visible and the invisible; the metaphysical or the ontological aspect of existence, will drastically be altered to the detriment of the African social stability and order. The current social experience in the West should serve as a warning to Africa. A study carried out by the National Marriage Project at Rutgers University shows a dramatic decline in marriage rates and increased pessimism among teens about marriage. According to the study, "Marriage rates have plummeted to a 40-year low"; "Couples are having a harder time achieving long-term wedded bliss", and young women are increasingly pessimistic about their chances for successful marriage.¹ The institution of marriage is in serious trouble, said David Popenoe, the report co-author and co-director of the National Marriage Project at Rutgers, and he emphasized, Americans are now less likely to marry than ever before, and those who marry

¹ "To The Point: Rutgers Study Shows a Dramatic Decline in Marriage Rates and Increased Pessimism Among Teens About Marriage", Rutgers News, Office of Media Relations and Communications, July 1, 1999.
seem to be less happy than in previous decades. This study has argued that the source or cause of this problem is related to the breakdown in the American family brought about by the success of the principles of feminism. Therefore, it will be wise for Africa to not westernize its women. Arguably, the failure of the major theory, was connected with its one-sided understanding of our bypolar world with its mundane, materialistic elements. The theory neglected a very vital aspect of the African, the spiritual frame of reference which determines or comes to bear on what an African must do or not do in his or her every day affairs.

This study had argued that, to destabilize or negatively affect the population and destroy African society, subverting the role of African women in Africa is the quickest means by which such a mission could be accomplished. Although, the role of women in Etsako society, arguably has always been complementary, this nevertheless served as the foundation for a harmonious continuity of the society over the years.

In short, this study maintains without any equivocation that there abound enough evidence and illustrations which suggest, that the population and the culture of Etsako are under attack from another value system. That system's aim appears to be to destroy the traditional value system
through the western women. It is strongly believed that the African women intelligensia in the Diaspora, although unaware, are being deployed as facilitators in the process. The study therefore affirm that any attempt, overt or covert, directed at politically socializing Etsako women from a foreign ideological perspective is a political challenge that the people of Etsako cannot afford to ignore.

RECOMMENDATION

Preamble

A. This study being conscious of the implications of some of the covert and overt negative influence of western polities against Africa and Africans, and the fact that reported overpopulation is not a new phenomenon;²

B. Aware of the fact that the very term 'manpower' suggests that population size constitutes a relative measure of national strength;³

C. Aware of the fact that if a state is to command substantial power, it must have a large optimal population, to supply the masses of soldiers and workers essential to


³ Ibid.
military strength;¹

D. Considering the realities of the day, it is not at all likely that the day of mass armies has passed or that the infantryman (even though motorized or airborne) is obsolete, that World War II saw all belligerents pressed for manpower before its conclusion and, even then, large forces were required to occupy the defeated states;²

E. Conscious of the fact that if Nigeria did not have a strong military, partly explained by its large population, it could not have provided the leadership of the ECOMOG forces that intervened in Liberia and Sierra Leone;

F. Aware of the fact that Nigeria is expected to assume a leadership role in Africa, and that such a role requires that it possesses adequate manpower;

G. Aware of the assertion that African women have solutions to their problems within the context of their own cultural backgrounds;³

H. Appreciating the point made that the African woman, as perceived in her traditional setting, is seen as the divine equal of a man; as a mother, revered by all as

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¹ Ibid.
² Ibid.
the goddess and source of life; one who brings peace, comfort and satisfaction to the family; one who not only nurtures but counsels, teaches, contributes to the family’s economy and overall well-being; as a wife whose noble and respected roles in the family, community and society at large complements those of the menfolk, with no room for conflict; 7 and

I. Also, aware of the serious concerns raised by Danielle Crittenden who says that feminism has seeped into the minds of young women like intravenous saline into the arm of an unconscious patient: that feminism does not provide answers for the questions that distress young women, such as: ‘is work really more important and fulfilling than raising my children, and why does my boyfriend not want to get married as much as I do?’ She asserts that the modern dilemma is that the success of feminism has cut women off from those aspects of life that are distinctly female desires, such as being a wife and raising children; that women need to take a step back from sexual freedom, career and zealous personal autonomy, in favor of commitment, marriage and child rearing; 8 this study reaches the

7 Oriaku Nwosu, The African Woman: Nigerian Perspective, (Nigeria: BIMA Publications, Bima Africa Ltd., 1993), 2. Dr. Oriaku Nwosu, a Nigerian woman is a Professor of Foreign Languages at Delaware State University in Dover, U.S.A.

8 Danielle Crittenden, 3-13.
following conclusions:

Consistent with the foregoing, and consistent with the other issues raised, and the findings of this study, it is to be concluded that if the African woman becomes politically westernized, her resulting political efficacy will bring about changes in the traditional social structure that will destroy the indigenous value system. This will have adverse effects on the family as an institution as a whole. This study therefore, makes the following recommendations:

1. Every effort should be made to protect the African woman from undue foreign influence because the African woman is the greatest asset of the various ethnic groups, states or nations in Africa. The future of African peoples depends on her role in society. The propagation and sustenance of the culture and moral sanity of an ethnic group, state or nation rests with the woman’s ability to retain her role as defined by traditional African culture.

2. Population is a factor in the game of international politics, as it determines the outcome of events, whether natural or man-made catastrophes. In other words, the survival strength of a people or nation, in part, lies in the size and its population. Therefore, an ethnic group such as Etsako, in Africa must make every effort to maintain a healthy population. A healthy population is one that has
a greater chance of survival should something unexpected occur.

3. The marriage and family system, polyharmony (one man, two, three or four wives), of Etsako should be maintained and strengthened because it has worked to sustain the society in Africa. The marriage and family system ensures that no one woman is left uncared for as they regulate the activities, behaviors and conduct of the community. In other words, the marriage, family, and other aspects of culture, are social stabilizers that maintain the social and moral equilibrium of a society. It is therefore necessary to guard them zealously in the interest of stability and continuity.

4. To maintain a moral sanity of a people, the culture, as a means of identity and survival, need to be preserved. Culture is an all important, encompassing element in a human life. It determines the political success or failure of a people. Therefore, no ethnic group or groups in Africa, Etsako inclusive, should under-rate the need to ensure the survival of its culture, its growth and its development.

5. The people of Etsako should ensure that a foreign movement and way of life do not succeed in swaying its women folk. To westernize Etsako women is to end what is left of the culture of Etsako and to end the ethnic groups known as
Etsako people.

6. The political strength and success of an ethnic group in a cultural society such as Etsako, Nigeria or Africa, is dependent on the culture as an agent for instilling discipline. It is therefore, necessary that ethnic groups in Africa ensure that their cultures are not adulterated from the influence of an external agency.

7. Political participation in Etsako inclusively, has been by choice without any compelling, mundane and contemporary social policy. In other words, African women in politics by their own choice date back into antiquity. As demonstrated by this study, ensuring efficacy of Etsako women in the current Nigerian political system will change the traditional family structure and will adversely affect the indigenous cultural value system. Consequently, Etsako women should avoid undue foreign influence. They should be left alone to be themselves and to play their traditionally defined roles within the context of their own culture.


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