

## WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION: THE MISSING LINK BETWEEN BUILDING RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The marginal representation of women in local government administration is the missing link between building resilience and sustainable local government development. The role of women in local government development is vital for the achievement of UN sustainable development (SDGs) and the AU Agenda 2063. Women occupy a very critical position in society right from their family levels. At the family, their role in the transmission of cultural values, and formation of the character and personality of the children cannot be over-emphasized. Women and development are two things that go hand in hand. However, the position and vital role of women have long been neglected by development partners and stakeholders. No society can develop fully while ignoring any of the sexes, especially women. The continued marginal representation of women is argued to be the bane of local government development in Nigeria. Women are important partners in development; nations cannot continue to bear the high cost of not involving them in development planning. Methodologically, the paper Applied the Marxist feminist theory and qualitatively gathered data through a literature review and used other digital sources to answer questions such as What is women's importance in Local Government development in Nigeria? To what extent are women excluded from local government administration in Nigeria? What is the role of Women in Local Government Development? The paper found that mainstreaming women in local government governance and administration is a sure answer to building resilience and sustainable development and that women should be placed on the frontline in contemporary national and international sustainable development planning.*

### BACKGROUND

For many months, conference leaders held discussions on local government development, sustainable local government, carbon emission, clean water and agricultural productivity, amongst others. Paradoxically, there was little attention devoted to planning, implementation, development and sustenance of these programs through women the unsustainable local government development risk bearers (Molin (2009). In 2010, after the Hurricane Katrina disaster, those with the least ability to survive were women, who are most of the poor in the United States. In the 1999 Asian cyclone disaster in Bangladesh, 90 per cent of the victims were women. In the 1994 Asian tsunami, more than 70 per cent of all deaths were women (<https://iwpr.org/wp>). in the camps of those that are Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) due to Boko Haram terrorist activities and floods in Nigeria, women and children were in the majority Surprisingly, in many of these cases, women are the key to managing the aftermaths of disaster. (United Nations 2008) stressed that these varied gender issues have led to different opinions among men and women on dealing with change and development, especially in local governance. Women in rural villages are agriculturalists or are engaged in businesses that help to develop and sustain local government finance. Yet, women are marginal in local government development programmes, administration and governance.

Since investing in women is smart but investing in girls is smarter economics, women should not be left behind in local government administration and governance. The peripheral position of women in local government governance in Africa and Nigeria has been argued to be the missing link between building resilience and sustainable local government development and governance (Emordi (2019). This misnomer needs to be addressed by policymakers and sustainable development planners for there to be quantum progress in local development and governance in Nigeria. Emordi, (2019) also argued that excluding half of the population which is women in

sustainable local government development agenda. This exclusion can be likened to labouring to build a tower of Babel, which would be abandoned by the next generation for not understanding the language of sustainable development of the past generation (Emordi, (2019).

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT**

This paper relies heavily on Marxist feminists' theory as adopted by Bryson (2003) and anchored on modernization and radical feminist theories to establish the links between the marginal representation of women and sustainable development in Africa. Modernization theory explains development as the process of moving from traditional to modern ways/ approaches to doing things. This is the idea of the Western European countries that the less developed or developing countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia must be westernized or modernized to enable them to develop. Hence these countries were colonized by European nations to bring them the advantages of development. Some scholars argue that this is why British colonial rulers insisted on changes in Nigerian political, religious education, transport, communication, culture and agriculture systems among others. This theory believes that for a society to be developed it must move from primordial or traditional stage to new and improved technologies, and stages of social organizations that characterize developed societies, it also stresses that development is possible only when society's citizens transform from traditional method of doing things to modern ways. (Singer, 1982)

Modernization theory has been criticized by several scholars for regarding rural development and underdevelopment as a condition rather than a historical process or experience and for the circular explanation of development and underdevelopment due to the system of farming in rural Africa. The method which predominantly involves traditional (daily struggle with primitive tools and equipment) without providing explanations of what is responsible for underdevelopment in the first instance is inadequate to explain underdevelopment. Again, it has been argued that the modernization approach is inadequate for providing answers to development because it fails to attack the root cause of underdevelopment. (Torado 1982) Nigeria experiences modernization approach which sought to affect the development of rural areas can be regarded as not very fruitful in this regard. National Development programs such as the First National Development Plan (1962-1968), Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), Third Development National Plan (1975-1980) Fourth Development National Plan (1981-1985), and The Structural Adjustment Program (1986-1989) The First National Rolling Plan (1990-1992) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (2004-2007), have not led to any significant development (IDEVAN). These plans indicate that within thirty-eight years, Nigeria has adopted six different national development plans which have failed to develop the local communities in Nigeria because of the limited involvement of people.

Including women in local governments is an essential step towards creating gender equality in, governments and gender-sensitive policies will be engendered. Since women have different needs and perspectives on social and political issues, it is important to involve women in governments to incorporate all the societal viewpoints in the policy and decision-making processes of local government stakeholders. Through their active involvement in community work and women's groups, local women politicians will become aware of issues faced by women in their communities. Due to this and the necessity to create a voter base to run in elections, women politicians can be active advocates of women's issues among their colleagues in the local government and of mainstreaming gender perspectives in policies. iKNOW (2009) Politics experts highlighted how important it is to realize that gender perspectives should be mainstreamed into policies and government planning not only by women politicians but also by their male counterparts.

As Marxist feminists have argued, primitive societies differed from modern societies in that relationships between the sexes were based on equality in primitive societies. Then, there was sexual division of labour, whereby women were responsible for domestic work and men for agriculture. Even in the pairing family (which was not the same as the strict monogamy of today, one man one wife and two four children), this did not involve subordination; then men reigned did exploits in the field while women reigned supreme in the home, and descent was calculated through the female line (Bryson 2003). This egalitarian situation was changed by the development of a new source of wealth in the male sphere of activity, through the domestication of animals and breeding of herds. As some men gained property and power over others, their position within the family was strengthened, and they wanted to pass their property to their children; for this, they had to overthrow the traditional order of inheritance and ensure strict monogamy on the part of each woman, who becomes the mere possession of husband, the means of producing heirs (Maconachie, 1987) from then till now women have remained subjugated and sidelined in all spheres of the society and in governance especially in the local communities and by extension the local government council.

The implication is that if Nigeria continues, as usual, in her development plans without the proper involvement of women in her plans, the ambition to develop the rural communities will continue to fail Since 1976 when local government was harmonized by the military government in Nigeria, local governance and administration has lost most of its features and like Nigerian development plans, has not lived up to its expectations for its creation. These programmes did not contribute to the concrete development of the rural communities instead there was massive capital investment in agriculture and rural development without visible outcome to that effect. It can therefore be argued that the neglect of half of the population could be at the root of underdevelopment in the first instance which some of the critics of modernization theory seek. Women's subordination and negligence in development plans are argued here to be responsible for the sustainable development woes Nigeria and other African countries are experiencing today.

### **WOMEN AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA**

In the contemporary world today the need to decentralize administration to facilitate efficiency, development and good governance across all the component units of any nation or country has become the rule rather than the exception for both developed and developing countries. Every country tries to ensure that services are delivered to the people on the grass root, there is no doubt that the services are delivered through a structure called local government. The establishment of local government in Nigeria arises from the need to facilitate rural development through infrastructural development and delivery (Sehinde, 2008) the recognition and importance of local government in the development process is based on the imperative to tackle local socioeconomic problems and manage grass root development through the provision of basic infrastructure as provided in the section 7 (1) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria which empowers local governments to construct and maintain rural roads, street lights water and drainages and other public facilities such as market and motor parks amongst others (Wunsch 2001), Ekpe (2006).

Local government in Nigeria can be argued to be the creation of British colonial administration. It has over time experienced changes in name, structure and composition (Arowolo 2010) between the 1930s and 1940s local government was known as Chief-in-council or chief and council respectively. This was a period where traditional rulers were given pride of place in the scheme of things. In the 1950s election was introduced according to the British model in the southern and western parts of Nigeria with some measure of autonomy in the personnel, finance development, and general growth experienced in the local government administration in Nigeria. With this reform heterogeneity was the order of the day as there was no uniformity in the system and the

level of development was remarkably different. The introduction of the 1979 reform by the military government of General Olusegun Obasanjo brought about uniformity in the administrative structure of the local government system, the reform introduced a multi-purpose single-tier local government system (Ajaiyi 2000) the reform also introduced population criteria under which a local could be created.

Consequently, a population of 150,000 to 300,000 was considered feasible for a local government in the 1976 guidelines for local government creation. The intention for this was to avoid creating non-viable local governments. However, the local government in Nigeria also experienced another restructuring when the government of Ibrahim Babangida in 1991 introduced the legislative arm of local government apart from the earlier structure of the chairman, counsellors and other professionals that constitute the administrative bureaucrats. The Babangida's government however increased the number of local governments from 301 to 453 in 1989 and 1991 while the government of Sani Abacha raised the number to 900 before it was reduced to 774 that we have today. The essence of all the reforms stemmed from the need to facilitate development in the rural areas. Every government of the day believes that local government can generate a sense of belongingness, safety and satisfaction of the populace.

These constant changes from successive governments perhaps informed the argument of the government of Cross River when the government argued in Tripod that the evolution of local government in Nigeria has a checkered history which reflects the instability that has characterized governance in the country. Although Nigeria was amalgamated in 1914, the first National Legislation on Local Government Administration was enacted in 1916, vide the Native Authority Ordinance of 1916. The ordinance empowered the Governor-General, Sir Frederick Lugard, to appoint a Native Authority for the area. When Nigeria was conquered by Great Britain, the colonial legislation, replaced all pre-colonial, indigenous systems of local administration with colonial authorities. However, because of necessity, the British Authorities could not do away entirely with the traditional authorities where they existed consequently, they incorporated them into the new system of local administration. The Native Authorities were empowered to check or prohibit behaviours that the colonial authorities considered offensive. After independence in 1960 and in 1966 when the military takeover of political power. There were radical changes in the evolution of Local Government administration in the Regions and States that later replaced them. The initial reforms focused mainly on correcting the political abuses perpetuated by Local Government officials. Consequently, the Local Constabulary, courts and prisons were taken over and integrated into the national police, judicial and prison services. In 1967, following the creation of 12 states out of the 4 Regions, all the states carried out reforms of their local government systems. All the reforms aimed at effective local administration did not address the most fundamental problems of poverty and rural development. Each Local Government Council was the Local Authority for its area and, a majority of the members were elected. The councillors elected their chairmen subject to the approval of the State Governor. Supervisory Councilors were elected from among the councilors who served as the political heads of departments of the Local government. Together with the chairman and at least two elected members, they formed the finance and general-purpose committee of the council.

During the second republic (1979 - 1983) however, many of the features of the 1976 reforms were violated because of the pressure of party politics. The state governments suspended the elected local governments that were already in office when they were elected. They replaced them with their nominees and created new local governments without, in many cases, following the due process of the Law. Consequently, the number of local government areas rose dramatically from 301 to over 900. Due largely to glaring violations of what appeared to be a national consensus on local government administration, the Military Government under General Buhari appointed a

twenty-man committee to review the system of Local Government Administration. In the meantime, it abolished all the new local government.

Aleyomi (2013) highlighting the functions of the local government in Nigeria stressed grassroots participation in governance as a vital reason for the creation of local government. Some of the major reasons for the creation of local government in Nigeria apart from bringing governance closer to the people, administrative convenience is to provoke development and preserve the heritage and common interest of the people. Local governments are created for administrative practicality and suitability. Many functions will be cumbersome for the State and Federal Governments to perform because of the distance separating them and the people. Such functions can be best and effectively performed by the local government, for example, functions such as the collection of rates, radio and television licenses, and registration of births, deaths and marriages would not be effectively carried out by the state and federal governments without the local governments. Local government is also created to serve as the presence of the federal and state governments amongst the local people and as a channel through which policies are communicated and implemented. Another reason for the creation of local government is that Local governments are created to bring about meaningful development in the rural areas. As agents of rural development, local governments use the funds from both federal and state governments and their internally generated revenue to improve the lives of the people within their areas of operation through the following economic development in line with sections 7(3&4) of the Constitution:

Local government helps in sustaining livelihoods through the provision of credit facilities for agriculture, arts, crafts and small-scale businesses. Local government encourages the formation of cooperative societies and other economic groups. The creation of Local Government is intended to bring people of common heritage or ancestry together as a political unit to further their interests and increase their participation in government business. In Nigeria today, there are over 250 ethnic groups with diverse cultures and tongues (Aleyomi 2013). These ethnic groups are further divided into communities. These communities form the constituents of most Local Governments in Nigeria. By carving out Local Governments amongst people of the same community, the government is preserving such long 'traditional association' and using the same to foster the interest of the people concerned. While the intentions for the creation of local government are commendable and laudable excluding the women's agenda in all the local government development programs and reforms can be inferred to be the brainchild behind building resilience and local government development in Nigeria. Since the inception of local government till date Nigeria has continued the search for answers for viable local government programs that can suit the reason for local government creation to no avail. Evidence of research by (Molin 2009), (United Nations 2008), and Emordi, (2019), amongst others, has shown that the solution may be mainstreaming women in local government administration in Nigeria. daily activities of women center in the local areas and arguably know the local areas better. Local government functions are functions that are natural to women. Given that the local government was created to bring governance to the people, therefore, excluding women from local government administration is missing the link to the achievement of the purpose of its creation.

### **The Problem of Women Exclusion in Local Government Administration in Nigeria**

Excluding women from local governance and not having gender parity in this level of government in Nigeria runs contrary to Nigerian signatory to the 1979 Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), The International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights, The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, The Beijing Platform of Action and signed up to The Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Crucially, the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol) having recognized the essence and importance of these global and regional affirmative declarations, the Federal Government of

Nigeria an attempt to implement them captured them in Nigeria's Gender Parity (NGP) which was launched in 2007. Extreme poverty presents a large obstacle, as women and girls comprise 70% of the 1.3 billion people living on less than a dollar per day. Empowering women to take part in the workforce is not a simple problem to solve. For many women, there are physical and psychological consequences for not entering the workplace, social discrimination, violence and shame. A crucial part of the solution is getting women to earn a living through having access to participate and work in the local government. This will allow them to thrive in their economic environments so that they may, in turn, foster the success of local communities. Subsequently, this will enhance both the lifestyles of women and their cultural environment. For example, in indigenous societies, women are custodians of traditional knowledge relating to resource management. Providing access to modern technology presents a perfect opportunity for both empowering local women and encouraging sustainable development.

Contrarily, women are still marginal in local government development and administration in Nigeria. Emordi (2019) argued that development and peacebuilding by men without women is akin to building a tower of Babel. Emordi (2019) maintained that in the formation of blocs' alliances and peace initiatives in 1939 when the League of Nations was formed men failed to include women in their quest for peace. Since then, men have maintained the gaps and exclusions of women in all life endeavor as well as local government development programs. While the attainment of desired peace has equally been elusive to them, the world and her leaders). Men have continued to sit in conferences and boardrooms to make decisions expected to be implemented by women the unsustainable development risk bearers.

Excluding women from local government governance makes women not abreast with what stakeholders and government expect of them because they did not understand nor were part of their treaty. However, Aiyede (2014) maintained that one of the reasons why women are excluded in most development programs is due to the policy guiding government sectors, especially in the local government is very close and does not give space for the recruitment of females. For Albert (2014) women are critical in development; what it means is that when women are not actively involved their absence would mean a greater consequence for the society. Arguably, women value society more than men because women seem to have more stakes in society in terms of human resources (children, husband, and mothers' relatives) than men, women are more cautious while men on the other hand are careless due to their natural aggressiveness and make-up. The world without women would be like the Hobbesian State of nature while building peace without women could lead to effort in futility Emordi (2019). Every society is like an aircraft having two wings, "male and female wings". Any society that fails to include women in peace and development processes can be said to be flying on one wing, and such a society can easily crash (Albert 2019), Candice (2009). The argument is that better inclusion of women in local development and administration as in the Nordic countries has the potential to benefit Nigeria more than women exclusion. Many Nigerians crave a change in the local government system as presently constituted to not only bring it in conformity with present-day realities but also to make it live up to the expectations of the people who have been yearning for grassroots development. This will however require a lot of processes like constitutional amendments and inputs from the civil society.

### **Women in Local Government Development**

Around the world, local governments, the private sector and even civil society are exploring better ways to achieve poverty reduction and rural development through local economic development strategies (Iwala 2014). To him, the cornerstone for sustainable national development is the sequel to the fact that local governments, particularly in Nigeria face increased challenges of poor

qualitative leadership, financial indiscipline, and almost absolute reliance on allocation from the federated account disbursed through the state. Local governments in Nigeria also experience low internally generated revenues (IGR), pervasive poverty, income inequality compared to other levels of government, long-term ethnic and communal conflicts, civil unrest, political instability and corruption as well as gender inequality amongst others (Iwala 2014). As, massive transformations are taking place in the global economy resulting from trade liberalization, privatization and enhanced telecommunications. In Nigeria, women constitute a greater proportion of the total population about 49.36% as reported by the World Bank Report (2012). Despite this huge number, women are not well represented in governance at the national level well as the grass-root level. Women in this modern era are poorly under-represented in most countries of the world, especially in Nigeria in contrast to men. In 2016, the global participation rate of women (UNDP 2012) in national-level parliaments was 22.6%.

In 1954, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Women went into force, enshrining women's equal rights to vote, hold office, and access public services as provided for male citizens within national laws. Women's political and socio-economic status is bound to improve when women become more involved in decision-making and policy development at all levels of governance. This is incongruity with the argument that with the active involvement of women in community work, local women politicians who are fully aware of issues faced by women in their communities will be able to use their unique positions to address the socio-economic and political issues of women. The role of women in decision-making has been addressed in terms of policy by various international agreements and conventions such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). However, many countries including Nigeria, that are signatories to these treaties are yet to fully implement them to adequately engage women as active partners in politics and governance. With their biological disposition as mothers, caregivers, farmers, businesswomen, commercial and subsistence farmers and environmental stewards' women are more likely to engender legislation that will engender development and people friendly to the local government. Scholars like (Nwolise 2014) and Albert (2014) contended that women than men have more stake in the environment. This refers to human assets, husbands, children, parents and relatives. In this stretch, they argue that women are more like to ensure environmentally friendly policies and to ensure a more stable and secure environment.

Again, women are key players in managing and protecting land and water resources, but their contributions are often ignored. Women produce 50 per cent of agricultural output in Asia, represent nearly 80 per cent of the agricultural labour force in parts of Africa, and bear sole responsibility for household nutrition and wellbeing in many developing countries. The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are neither gender nor age-neutral, yet women bear much of the brunt of climate change. Women and children are frequently among those most significantly affected by fluctuating commodity prices and natural disasters such as drought and famine. Given, that women occupy such vital positions in society bringing them into governance at the local government level will be like finding the missing link between engendering sustainable development in the local government development in Nigeria. The above argument is in line with the findings of iKNOW Politics (2009), that women in local governance are a key factor in creating gender-sensitive policies and services.

Scholz (2012) argued that any discussion on sustainable development is not complete without a conversation on gender equality. World Bank studies show that development strategies focusing on gender equality see stronger economic growth than gender-neutral strategies. Throughout the world, women represent a substantial, underutilized force for sustainable development. In Asia, for example, women are responsible for 50% of agricultural output. The agricultural labour in the African market is female (World Bank 2012). Unfortunately, many of these women lack access to necessary agricultural resources, which, if freely accessible to women, would decrease global

hunger by 12-17%. As quoted above firms that employ women in leadership positions have better performance and higher profits. And, contrary to what might be believed, supporting female employment has a positive impact on family well-being generally.

Gender parity in the local government is not just a lofty aspiration anymore. It is the necessary missing link for sustainable development in the local government areas of Nigeria. Women, on average, reinvest up to 90% of their income into their households. Involving women actively in local governance will give women more money to spend on food, housing and education – crucial components for reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development.

Stressing the social and imperative of benefits of women adequately coming on board in local governance without addressing environmental dimensions of sustainable development will be like addressing one leg of a tripod rather than the three legs to have a balanced effect of the treatment. The position of women in society and the family extends to the three dimensions of sustainable development. In agriculture, women are very much involved, in environmental women are also more affected than anyone else by climate change and natural disasters. In other words, focusing on the environment without attention to social factors can lead to green growth for a few and these few tend to be men (Candice Stevens 2010).

Redclift (2008), maintained that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we need to refer to processes of democracy and governance in the context of sustainable development. McGregor (2008) believed global climate change and the implications of this are potentially very important for poorer Earth's societies. Subsistence and commercial agriculture is still the most significant livelihood in the developing areas. Women in the local/rural areas in Nigeria are mostly subsistence crop and livestock farmers who equally lack the knowledge and capital to embark on large-scale farming. Supporting the economic empowerment of women is not just a good policy; it will benefit the country. (Candice 2010). argued that firms that employ women in leadership positions have better performance and higher profits. And, contrary to what might be believed, supporting female employment has a positive impact on family life and encourages women to have more children. Gender equality at the local government is not just a lofty aspiration anymore. It is the necessary missing link between sustainable and unsustainable local government development in Nigeria. Women, on average, reinvest up to 90% of their income into their households. Reducing gender inequality gives women more money to spend on food, housing and education – crucial components for reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development.

Increasing women's presence and participation in governance and local government development feminists argue will not only empower women in many ways but it will also increase women's representation at the state and federal government levels which is necessary for the achievement of gender parity in governance and in policy. Women, as the conventional primary caretakers of children, often have a more prominent role than men in advocating for children, resulting in a "double dividend" in terms of the benefits accruing to society through women's participation and representation in governance. Women's adequate representatives in governance at the local government will not only advance women's rights as citizens but also advance the rights of children and enhance their political socialization and education. It is believed that engaging women adequately in local governance will equip women as educators and raisers of children to influence their children and youth on their civic duties. Bringing women equitably into local government administration will also enhance the quality of life for various individual families in their communities. When women are engaged in national legislatures, there is a notable trend of women advancing gender and family-friendly legislation; this can be replicated in local government governance. This advocacy has been seen in countries like France, Sweden, the Netherlands, South Africa, Rwanda and Egypt. Furthermore, several studies from both industrialized and developed countries indicate that women in local government tend to advance



social issues in the local government. In India, for instance, greater women's representation has corresponded with a more equitable distribution of community resources, including more gender-sensitive spending on programs related to health, nutrition, and education. Candice (2009) argued that Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Norway and Sweden) and France that engaged more in women's governance also have more working women and higher birth rates than those without enlightened gender policies like Japan, and Korea. He maintained that companies and firms with more women in leadership positions tend to have better performance and higher profits. This implies that women in local government will engender better development in the local government area.

However, despite the obvious benefit of having women in the local governance in Nigeria, women are still sidelined in local governance since the creation of a local government in Nigeria which dates to the pre-independence era even though women are risk-smart and people-oriented (OECD 2010). Following this argument of women being better managers, it therefore follows that through women countries can achieve better stable development in the local government. If women managers engender more profit for the companies, they work for it means that engaging women in local governance will be a veritable tool to achieving viral and rotund local government in Nigeria.

### Conclusion

Achieving sustainable local government in Nigeria will continue to be abysmally elusive to the government, policymakers and stakeholders without bringing women into local governance. Onyishi (2012) stressed that the expediency for the creation of local government anywhere in the world stems from the need to facilitate development at the grassroots. The importance of local government is a function of its ability to generate a sense of belongingness, safety and satisfaction among its populace. Such a strategy for ensuring national administrative development and political efficacy is found in the concept and practice of local government. Whatever is the mode of government, local government has been essentially regarded as the path to, and guarantor of, national integration, administration and development. Central to the creation of local government, however, is its ability to facilitate an avenue through which government and the people intermix, relate and more quickly than any other means resolve or dissolve issues that may have heated the system. Local government has been perceived as a panacea for the diverse problems of the diverse people with diverse cultures. As important as this tier of government has been, there seems to some impediments that have been infringing on its performance and functions in recent times. In this stretch, Aleyomi (2012) argued that the importance of the creation of local government anywhere in the world reveals the need to aid development at the grassroots. The establishment of such areas is geared towards playing vital social, political and economic roles for the overall development of the country. The realization of this important fact coupled with the desire to bring the government nearer to the people most especially people in the rural areas has prompted the Federal Government of Nigeria to introduce several significant reform measures to local government administration, particularly since 1976. However, the peripheral position of women in local government governance in Africa has been the missing link between building resilience and sustainable local government development in the continent, especially in Nigeria. To this end, government and local government development stakeholders need to actively engage women in local administration in Nigeria.

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