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Keywords : *paid employment, work attitude, marital status, parenthood and housework.*

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Influences of Marital Status, Parenthood and Housework on Women's Attitude towards Paid Employment in Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract - For economic and other social and psychological reasons, most developing countries like Nigeria, are currently witnessing a massive influx of women into workforce. One sure way of empowering women and reducing inequality between men and women in today's fast changing world, especially in a developing society like Nigeria, is by getting more women actively engaged in economic activities, to improve their financial status. Although most of the women are found in the informal and private sectors, where their contributions to society may not be adequately felt, a recognizable proportion are still found in the formal sector, where they function as actors in development and in turn receive regular salaries. In view of their increasing involvement in paid employment, this study investigates the extent of influence such familial factors as marital status, parenthood and housework have on the attitudinal disposition of female Public Servants towards paid employment in Calabar Metropolis, Nigeria. Results reveal that for both married and single women in the study, housework and child care are both very stressful and combining both tasks with paid employment is even more demanding. Results further showed that the highly demanding task of having to combine childcare and housework with paid employment results in incidences of negative attitudinal trends among subjects. The implications of this to sustainable development are considered and possible solutions to solving this dilemma of women are also suggested.

Keywords : paid employment, work attitude, marital status, parenthood and housework.

I. Introduction

In the past, society viewed women as people whose place was essentially in the home; to take care of domestic chores and cater for children. This explains the popularity until recently of the saying that 'a woman's education ends in the kitchen' Over the last century however, there has been a surge in women's level of participation in different economic activities including paid employment. By the dawn of the 21st century, there was clearly an explosion in the population of women stepping beyond the home to take part in paid employment. Mathis and Jackson (1994) predicted that the percentage of women of working age has increased from 43.3% in 1970 to 57.5% in 1990 and that women will constitute about 47% of the world total workforce by 2005. This global increase in female labour force participation (FLFP) has its social and economic impacts in the society.

The reasons for the mass exodus of women into the world of work are not far fetched. First, the expansion of industrialization created a large demand labour force, thereby creating space for women to join the labour force alongside men (Sutcliffe, 1971). Giddens (2006) explains that the labour shortage caused by First World War gave even more impetus for women to step into jobs previously regarded as the domain of men. Giddens added further that the decline in birth rate and increase in average age of childbirth also gave room for more women to make time for other activities such as paid employment.

Tied to the issue of industrialization is the problem of economic pressures that emerged with the growth and expansion of industrialization. The situation caused a shift in men's previous position as family bread-winners because as Myrdal and Klein (1968) asserted, women had to share in the responsibility of meeting up with the financial demands of modern industrial life and one of the most practicable ways of doing that was by taking up paid employment.

Above all, paid employment not only gives women the psychological benefit of meeting people instead of being cooped up in their homes all day(Haralambos and Heald,1980), but also the economic benefit of being financially independent (Porter,1982).

Notwithstanding their involvement in paid employment, studies have revealed certain trends among employed women. For instance, they are concentrated more in low-status and low-pay jobs (Haralambos and Heald 1980); they are less likely than men to be found in positions of authority, even in the low-status and low-pay jobs (Wolf and Fligstein 1979); they are often associated with frequent interruptions in work and are geographically immobile - meaning that they would prefer not to be shuttled between different locations to further their career(Crompton, Jones and Reid, 1982); and there is usually restrictions in the

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number of hours they put into work (Freeman 1982); as well as when such hours can be (Boserup, 1970). Absenteeism, coupled with lack of sense of career and a somewhat casual attitude towards the continuity of their employment is also found to be prominent among women in paid employment (Myrdal and Klein, 1968). Obviously, these trends would not give many women room to excel in paid employment, thereby widening the inequality gap between them and their male counterparts.

Attitude towards work, as stated by Tikhonov (1978 – 79) is viewed in terms of an employee's productivity, quality of work, participation in rationalization and initiative in achieving results. On the other hand, Robbins (1988) maintained that the attitude of individuals towards their work can be seen for instance, in how individuals feel about their jobs and can be measured more specifically through an employee's job involvement, that is, the degree to which he identifies with his job; through organizational involvement, that is, the employee's extent of loyalty to, identification with and involvement in the organization, as well as job satisfaction. Therefore, the observed trends such as absenteeism, concentration in low status jobs, inability to perform challenging tasks, lack of strong desire and ability to attain positions of authority, geographical immobility, and labour wastage among women in paid work, are manifestations of their attitude towards paid work. Unfortunately these attitudes are in the negative direction.

This study is articulated to show evidence of such negative trends and attitude in the area of study as an example of what is still obtainable in developing societies, where much of traditional values are upheld by both men and women. Specifically, the study examines the place of marital status, parenthood and housework; as determining factors of the observed trends, which reflects women's work attitude. The study also offers insight into the possible implications for National Development, making useful recommendations on the basis of the findings.

a) Women's Economic Participation in Nigerian National Development

The involvement of women in paid employment is without doubt crucial to the development of any developing society, like many African countries. The centrality of women themselves in development is articulated in Todaro and Smith (2009:22):

> *"…Development scholars generally view women as playing central role in the development drama. Globally, women tend to be poorer than men. They are also more deprived in health and education and in freedoms in all its forms. Moreover women have primary responsibility for child bearing, and the resources that they are able to bring to this task will determine whether the cycle of transmission of poverty from generation to generation will be broken. Studies from around the developing world confirm that mothers tend to spend a significantly higher fraction of income under their control for the benefit of their children than fathers do. Women also transmit values to the next generation. To make the biggest impact on development, then, a society must empower and invest in its women".*

For the Nigerian woman, she has performed well in the family circle but the work place is another domain where the Nigerian woman needs to register and create her presence. The increased female labour force participation (FLFP) in Nigeria has shown women as active partners in national economic development. However, many factors militate against women in their effort to play their roles at work to the fullest. Anugwom (2009) identified the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian labour market, women attitudinal and psychological dispositions, choice of marriage partners by women among others, as some of the factors responsible for the marginal female labour force participation (FLFP).

Despite these negative factors which became barriers to female labour force participation (FLFP) in the past, which consequently slowed down women's involvement in development in Nigeria, the combined effect of increased awareness and better female education have broken these barriers. Indeed, the Nigerian woman has proven to be more than a mere spectator in the professional pursuit. Moreover, significant progress has been achieved in the gender development process. For example progress is being made with the allocation of quota for women in public appointments; initiation of women empowerment programs and emergence of women organizations like National Council of Women's Society (NCWS), Women In Nigeria (WIN), National Association of Women Journalist (NAWJ). Women in Nigeria are found to play leading role even in the male dominated professions like Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN). The promotion of women participation in economic activities was made a much more celebrated phenomenon in Nigeria when the late Mrs. Maryam Babangida actively promoted women related-issues during her husband's tenure as Nigeria's president. She established the Better Life for Rural Women Programme, for the purpose of empowering women economically and socially. Subsequently, there was the creation of the National Commission for Women, as well as a Ministry of Women Affairs, which provide additional ways for the promotion of women-related issues and the enhancement of the role of women in national development. These achievements are without doubt working to make sure that Nigerian women make giant strides in different areas of their professions, including Public Service, to discount the traditional positions of women as inferior to men.

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The graph below shows the progressive trend of women's participation in nonagricultural sector (Note: In the past, women were majorly involved only in agricultural production)s



Female labour force participation (FLFP) has both its benefits and its perils. Its benefits include the expansion of women's employment and income earning opportunities which in turn helps women achieve economic and social parity with men (Sahn and Glick, 1997). Sahn and Glick, (1997) further revealed that this maternal extra income is more valuable to children than father's income, because women were found to be more likely to allocate the extra income to food and child care and general family upkeep. Women therefore have to work if the African family is to be sure to secure basic needs such as food and shelter.

On the other hand, researchers have noted that whenever African women are engaged in economic activities outside their home, although their families earn more income, it is often associated with potentially "*deleterious consequences on the health of their very young children*," (Sahn and Glick, 1997). This is because when women work, they usually have lesser time to directly take care their children, including breastfeeding, preparation of nutritious foods and getting medical care. This usually has significant negative effect on their children under 5 years of age and may even extend to reduce the education of the older female siblings (or house helps) if they are obligated to substitute for their mothers in household work (Sahn and Glick, 1997). However, Sahn and Glick, 1997 were careful to note that there is an exception for a small proportion of women who command high incomes in the labor market, with which they can afford to pay for quality service, making the overall effects of maternal employment positive. Meanwhile, Arene, (1993) asserts that there is no validated research that professional housewives bring up children better than professional service ladies. She apply the benefits of their knowledge and exposures, combined with a more balanced judgment, to train their children and run their families and even be of greater inspiration and role model to their children. Moreover, working to augment family income has not significantly prevented many women from performing their primary role in the family as wives and as mothers. However, this category of women would of necessity put in extra effort to cope with housework and work outside the home.

As noted earlier, the subject of women empowerment and women's centrality to growing national and international interest are no more in doubt. Beside their domestic tasks, women have been playing very productive roles in the economic sphere of the Nigerian society. However because of the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society, women in employment are first and foremost seen as homemakers rather than fellow workers and partners in national development. This situation has led to a scenario whereby women, despite their educational attainments have been kept out of economic participation. This is particularly the case where the man has the means with which to take care of the whole family, Anugwom (2009). Secondly, there is the issue of women's attitudinal and psychological disposition at the work place. Some Nigerian women approach the labour market with the wrong mental and behavioural attitudes. There are cases where they display attitudes and work orientations that show them as not hardworking or committed enough to shoulder work related pressures and stress.

II. Methodology

The study population consisted of all female Public Servants in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State,

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Nigeria. A multistage sampling procedure was utilized to select 520 females (260 single and 260 married). First, the purposive sampling technique was utilized to select institutions to reflect the Local, State, Federal Public Service. These were also adjudged to have relatively high concentration of female staff. Thereafter, the respondents were randomly selected from defined strata (marital status and official cadre) of each institution.

To identify the influence of household factors on the attitudinal disposition of women towards paid job, a list of attitudinal and performance trends peculiar to females in paid employment was drawn up in a questionnaire which also contained demographic variables of respondents. These include; items on the marital status (single or married), family size (number of children), housework involvement (hours spent per week) as well as other family factors and demographic characteristics of the women. On the other hand, items on lateness to work, absenteeism, geographical immobility, and preference for certain job types, among other perceived or observed trends, were taken as items for attitudinal responses. The respondents were requested to respond with regard to their perception on the level of severity of each identified item.

To show the effect of marital status on the attitude of women towards paid work, the mean summative values of their likely attitudinal display towards each of the component items making up the attitudinal scale variables are presented for both married and single. This was done using 4 points Likert continuum of: strongly disagreed (1); disagreed (2); agreed (3); and strongly agreed (4). The total mean score were thereafter computed for each item, after which a mean cut-off point of 2.5 (1+2+3+4/4) was utilized to differentiate between agreed influence ($\geq$2.5) and disagreed influence ($<$2.5).

Of the 520 questionnaires, 500 were used for analysis; the extra 20 was to compensate for wrongly filled and unreturned questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were used to explain collated data. The t-test and Chi-square analysis were also utilized to ascertain the level and direction of interactions among the variables in order to draw inferences.

III. Results and Discussion

a) *Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

The demographic data from the respondents in the study area first revealed that the women in the sample captured were all Christians. This is no surprise as Calabar is located in the South-South Nigeria where the population is predominantly Christians. The few Muslims in Calabar are settlers from Northern Nigeria, who by religious requirements do not expose their spouses to the public except the few who are engaged in petty trading within the Northern or Hausa community in Calabar. This is explained by the fact that the Muslim North hold very tight to the cultural and religious requirement of early marriage, confinement of women and placing of limitations in the level of their involvement in any meaningful economic activities outside the home, Modo (1996). Although the Southern Christians believe women should be at home, they are more liberal in the practice of this culture and still allow their wives to combine housework with economic activities, including the formal types like Public Service.

Table 1 : Percentage distribution of respondents by age and marital status

Age	Single		Married		Overall	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Below 30	194	77.6	61	24.4	255	51.0
31-40	51	20.4	112	44.8	163	32.6
41-50	0	0	60	24.0	60	12.0
51-60	5	2.0	17	6.8	22	4.0
61 and above	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**250**	**100**	**250**	**100**	**500**	**100**

Table 2 : Percentage distribution of respondents by educational attainment and marital status

Educational attainment	Single		Married		Overall	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
No education	-	-	-	-	-	-
Incomplete primary education	-	-	-	-	-	-
Complete primary education	14	5.6	15	6.0	29	5.8
Incomplete secondary education	-	-	2	0.8	2	0.4
Complete secondary education	28	11.2	23	9.2	51	10.2
Higher education	208	83.2	210	84.0	418	83.6
Total	**250**	**100**	**250**	**100**	**500**	**100**

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Table 3 : Percentage distribution of respondents according to the number of years they have worked and their marital status

Number of years worked	Single		Married		Overall	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Below 5 years	154	16.6	30	12.0	184	36.8
5- 10 years	68	27.2	86	34.4	154	30.8
11 -15 years	18	7.2	41	16.4	59	11.8
16 -17 years	6	2.4	53	21.2	59	11.8
21- 25 years	-	-	26	10.4	26	5.2
25 and above	4	1.6	16	5.6	18	3.6
Total	**250**	**100**	**250**	**100**	**500**	**100**

As expected in Table 1, the number of respondents dropped to zero at age 61 which is just one year away from the official retirement age of 60 in Public Service in Nigeria. There were no singles between ages 41-50, implying that marriage is still highly regarded even as a status symbol among women As such, it is very rare to have women admit to being single at such age range, even among those who are separated, except for those who are widowed. There is also increasing education access for women as Table 2 reveals. Noteworthy is the fact that, at least a primary education is required for a Public Service job. Impressively a very large proportion of subjects (83.6%) have acquired higher education. This may not necessarily imply that the jobs require higher education but may be due to private demand for education with the prospect of earning more income through future modern-sector employment or promotion in a society that rely more on educational certification for employment. (Todaro and Smith, 2005). Table 3 indicates that only a small proportion of the subjects (8.8%) had put in long years of service (21 years and above) indicating further that it is not long since a reasonable proportion of women began to gain entrance into the formal sector of Public Service.

b) Marital Status, Housework, Parenthood and Perceived Influences on Work Attitude

Table 4 : Percentage distribution of respondents by number of children and marital status

Number of children	Single		Married		Overall	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
None	239	95.6	11	4.4	250	50.0
1-3	11	4.4	146	58.4	157	31.4
4-6	-	-	90	36.0	90	18.0
Above 6	-	-	3	1.2	3	0.6
Total	**250**	**100**	**250**	**100**	**500**	**100**

Table 5 : Percentage distribution of respondents by the number of hours they spend on housework per day and their marital status

Number of hours per day	Single		Married		Overall	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
3.5 hours	144	57.6	65	26.0	209	41.8
6-8 hours	100	40.0	119	47.6	219	43.8
8-11 hours	6	2.4	64	25.6	70	14.0
Above 11 hours	-	-	2	0.8	2	0.4
Total	**250**	**100**	**250**	**100**	**500**	**100**

On subjects' children, Table 4 shows that most of the subjects who had children (31.4%) limited the number to three. The likely explanation is that these categories of women working in formal sectors as results in Table 2 confirms and as Chaudhry and Irshad (2009) argued, are often predominantly educated, and therefore less vulnerable to unwanted and multiple pregnancies, due to raised aged at first marriage and awareness on the need to limit family size. Besides, they are more likely to be aware of available contraceptive methods.

Table 5 shows that 43.8% of the women spend between three to eight hours doing housework per day. Also, as much as 41.8% spend between 3 to 5 hours on housework each day. Public Service requires about eight hours a day, implying that many of these women will have reduced time for leisure and rest and this is certain to impact negatively on their performances at work.

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Table 6 : Mean distribution of respondents according to their marital status and their perception of combined influences of housework and family size on paid work

S/N	Perceived Response	Mean single	Mean married	Grand mean	Response	Rating
1	Perception of house work/child care as being stressful	3.1	3.5	3.3	Agreed	Strong
2	Combining housework with paid job as being more tasking for women	3.1	3.3	3.2	Agreed	Strong
3	Lateness to work	3.1	3.4	3.3	Agreed	Strong
4	Absence from work	2.8	2.9	2.9	Agreed	Weak
5	Geographical immobility	3.3	3.6	3.5	Agreed	Strong
6	Preference for a particular kind of job	3.2	3.0	3.1	Agreed	Strong
7	Overall job performance	3.0	3.4	3.2	Agreed	Strong

The figures in Table 6 show that both single and married subjects agreed that housework and child care are stressful and that combining them with paid job is very tasking. The results further show that both the married and single subjects agreed on all items influencing their attitude towards their job. However, this agreement is weak for absenteeism. The likely explanation is that women will still strive to be at work, even if it means their getting there late. Other factors, including health status, which could be as a result of stress from household responsibilities, can be responsible for women's absence from work. Also, all respondents strongly agreed to geographical immobility. This means that both married and single women will object to being transferred to other locations. More so, in the case of married women, they would not want to leave their home and children or change schools for their children. Although both married and single women agreed on preference for particular kinds of jobs, it is of interest to note that the single women scored a higher point. This could be explained by the fact that a number of Nigerian men, who are still very traditional in their values, tend to prefer to wives whose work will give them time for family life. A number of unmarried women will therefore be unwilling to compromise their 'marriageability' because of having to move from location to location by virtue of their jobs.

Table 7 : Summary of Mean, Standard Deviation and 't'-Test for difference between the perception of married and single women in their work attitude

Marital status	Mean	Standard Deviation	Total (N)
Married	21.6	3.9692	250
Single	23.66	3.992	250

Degree of freedom (DF) = 548
Calculated't' (t_{cal}) = 11.6657
Critical t (t_{tab}) = 1.960 at 5% probability level

The result in Table 7 shows that $t_{cal}(11.67) > t_{tab}(1.960)$, that is, the difference in the mean score of single women on their work attitude (23.66), which is higher than that of the married women (21.6), is significant. Therefore, single women are more favorably disposed to paid work than the married women in terms of their work attitude.

To establish the extent to which parenthood and involvement in house work are determinants of work attitude in women, chi-square (X^2) analysis was used in each case, while the incidence and direction of their respective relationships were depicted by the percentages corresponding to the frequencies as shown in Table 8 and 9.

Table 8 : Summary of chi-square analysis on the level of involvement in housework and women attitude towards paid employment

Work Attitude	Hours spent per week on housework			Total
	Less than 30 hours	30-45 hours	Above 45 hours	
No. of positive respondent	129(110.4)*	119(115.6)	16(38.0)	264
% of positive respondent	25.8	23.8	3.2	52.8
No. of	80 (98.7)	100(103.4)	56(34.0)	26.6

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negative respondent				
% of negative respondent	16.0	20.0	11.2	47.2
Total	209 (41.8)	219(43.8)	72(14.4)	500 (100)

* Figures in bracket indicate expected frequencies.
Calculated $\chi^2 = 33.7$
Tabulated $\chi^2 = 5.99$

In Table 8, the χ^2 statistical analysis with discrepancies between observed and expected frequencies counts show that calculated $\chi^2 = 33.7$ is greater than the tabulated $\chi^2 = 5.99$ at 5% probability level. The Table suggests a significant and negative dependence between the number of hours women spend in housework per week and their attitudinal disposition towards paid employment, considering the pattern of interactions displayed. However, the difference in percentage values between the positive and negative attitudes among subjects is not very wide, meaning that the extent of effect created by this variable (hours spent on housework per week) on women's attitude towards paid employment is not as strong as that of numbers of children, as earlier discussed.

A significantly high proportion of the women are among those who spend either 30-45 or less than 30 hours per week (43.8% and 41.8% respectively) Interestingly, a greater proportion(25.8% and 23.8% respectively) of them are favourably disposed to paid job in terms of their attitude as Table 8 shows. On the whole, a greater proportion of the subjects (52.8%) as shown in Table 8 are on the positive side of attitudinal display, the hours they put into housework notwithstanding. The increase in the use of domestic servants, high patronage of child-care centres (crèches) and changing attitude of husbands are possible contributing factors to the reduced impact housework could have on women's attitude to paid work.

Table 9 : Summary of chi-square (χ^2) analysis on family size as a determinant of work attitude among employed women

Work Attitude	Number of children			Total
	none	1-3	4 and above	
No. of positive respondent	85(71.7)*	68(73.0)	16(24.3)	169
% of positive respondent	17.0	13.6	3.2	33.8
No. of negative respondent	127(143.7)	148(172.9)	56(47.7)	331
% of negative respondent	25.4	29.6	11.2	66.2
Total	212(42.4)	216(43.2)	72(14.4)	500 (100)

* Figures in bracket indicate expected frequencies.
Calculated $\chi^2 = 8.59$
Tabulated $\chi^2 = 5.99$

The analysis in Table 9 indicates that the calculated chi-square value (8.5915) is greater than the critical chi-square value (5.99) at 5% probability level. This finding further shows a negative relationship between parenthood and work attitude, especially for those who manifested positive attitude. However, this relationship is not a clear cut one for those whose attitudinal disposition is on the negative. Could it be that some other variables other than familial factors have parts to play – this is a subject of further investigation?

Other striking features of Table 9 are the facts that only one-third (33.8%) of working women showed positive attitude, which is what is expected of them in their jobs, while the remaining 66.2% indicated negative attitude. These values, when compared with values from number of hours spent on housework, as showed in Table 8, indicate that this variable (number of children) contributes more to unfavourable tendencies in women's attitude at work. Since strain and stress at home affect women at work, this finding concurs with the work of Luecken et al (2000). In evaluating the biological and psychological effects of role of overload, Luecken et al examined the effects of marital (or partnership) status and parenting (defined as having children at home) on a sample of women and found that working women with children at home, irrespective of marital status, experience higher levels of home strain than those without children.

Among subjects with no children, one would have expected most of them to display positive attitude but the reverse is the case (17.0% showed positive attitude while 25.4% had negative work attitude), suggesting the influence of other factors, like personal commitment level. Despite this, it is only among this group that a reasonable proportion had positive work attitude, although a greater percentage still had negative

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work attitude. This suggests that there are other factors that influence women's work attitude in paid employment other than parenthood. On a general note, the results still indicate that the more the number of children a woman has, the more unfavorably disposed she will be to work in terms of her attitude.

IV. The Dilemma: Implications for Development

In Nigeria, many factors contribute to limit female excellence in the paid employment. There is a general bias against women in most developing countries like Nigeria. Traditionally, women are the home keepers and are in most instances restricted to mere baby industries and appendages to men folk, Jegede, (1994). Men are usually more recognized and valued even by women themselves, while women are viewed as the weaker sex who cannot be allowed to take on positions of authority. Ordinarily, Nigerian women would have loved to remain behind and take care of the home-front but the complexities of modern society, the ever-increasing (financial) challenges and pressures on their husbands, and their natural sense of love, care and sympathy, have conspired to force women into the man's world (Okoli,1999).

Now that they are in the world of work or rather the world of men, Haralambos and Holborn (2008) asserted that a key factor in causing the inequality between men and women in society is the problem faced by women in combining paid employment and family life. Economically, women are not expected to be serious about earning money in Nigeria. A woman is expected to be at home playing wife/mother role, while husband goes out to earn money. The society discourages women from accumulating wealth. If they earn any reasonable amount of income, it should be fully utilized in running the home, Oguonu, (2003). For Loveness, (1990), marriage is generally accepted as the center of any social community and this cultural dimension is as important as the economic and other aspects of social life.

The notion about being a woman is formed early in the female child and tends to inhibit the desire to aspire higher in certain aspects of life. From a theoretical stand point, Rosenberg (1956), in his Want-Satisfaction Theory of Attitude Formation asserted that the attitude of an individual towards an object or situation is largely a function of whether or not the object, event or situation facilitates the individual's satisfaction of his want or achievement of his goal. Consequently, individuals, stressed Rosenberg, will have positive attitude towards objects or situations that facilitate the satisfaction of their wants or achievement of their goals, and negative attitude towards objects or situations that inhibit or block the satisfaction of their wants or achievement of their goals. The implication of this is that women's work attitude in relation to their family size, involvement in house work and marital status will depend largely on whether or not their work facilitates or blocks the achievement/fulfillment of the expectations and obligations that come with parenthood, housework or those that accompany their status as single or married women.

To correct this, it becomes necessary to adopt Hyman's (1959) recommendation on absorption of political orientation by women, such that the beginning of participation of women in all spheres of life is started in relatively early childhood years; since by age 16, the phenomenon or notion is most probably well formed in the girl child. Participation by women and enhancement of women's status need not produce conflicts between the men and women but rather, more homogeneous societies with both sexes contributing to development. It should not be viewed as reversal of roles. Self-assertiveness programs can be run with a view to condition career women to the possibility of dilemmas and contradictions in being career women. On the other hand, men must be educated to reckon with the fact that this breed of women whom they cannot quite accept as women now exist and are increasing (Oganwu, 1996). The way out of this dilemma is thus to develop a strategy of balance among the roles of women. The urgent task is no longer how to bring them back to the home-front but rather how to fortify the home-front in their absence so that the vacuum created by so doing can be effectively filled (Okoli, 1999).

V. Conclusion

This study reveals that women's marital status, parenthood, and housework are all determinants of their attitudinal disposition towards paid employment in the area of study. In other words, the direction of women's work attitude is a function of all three determinants, with other personal, physical and psychological factors also interfering. Parenthood was however found to have the highest impact when compared to marital status and level of involvement in housework, leading to the conclusion that irrespective of the marital status, working women with children at home are more negatively disposed in their attitude towards paid employment.

These findings have implication for development, considering the centrality of women in development and the fight against poverty. It becomes imperative therefore, for women-directed development programmes to be designed to include early socialization programmes for the girl-child, to facilitate the inculcation into girls and women values that will give them a firmer hold on their role in development via paid employment. Value orientation and re-orientation for men will go a long way in securing the needed support from men whom these women will have to contend with

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as husbands and as bosses in their journey towards contributing to development via paid employment.

To further facilitate women's participation in paid employment society needs to work towards removing gender division within the family. This can be achieved by giving boys and girls socialization that is not gender-driven, thereby giving no room for identification with particular roles. If this is achieved the pressures women experience by virtue of their exclusive involvement in housework will be removed or at least reduced as both sexes will now share in housework.

Furthermore, bearing in mind that child care predisposes women negatively in their work attitude, as the study reveals, it becomes absolutely necessary to strengthen existing family planning, child-spacing and birth control programmes. Obviously, fewer children would imply, less child care obligations and consequently, improved work attitude.

To conclude, only gender-friendly work and social policies will create the enabling environment for the issues raised not to be a mere mirage but realities that would address the socio-cultural dilemmas women are faced with in their quest to be part of development generally and the world of work in particular. This responsibility rests largely on the shoulders of government.

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