

Manipulation and Politicisation of the Sex Composition of Nigeria's Population Census Data and the Implications for National Development

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Abstract

Although the controversies over the census figures of Nigerian population have focused on the total census figures and regional/state/ethnic composition, the more important aspect of the sex composition of the population has been silenced or virtually ignored over the years. This paper therefore attempts to challenge or contend the sex composition of the Nigerian population figures as currently published and to highlight the implications for national development. The paper contends that the sex composition/ratio of the Nigerian population figures as currently published is deliberately manipulated and politicized against women. It argues that given the chain of events involving progressive decimation of male Nigerians from 1966 to date, it is hard to accept that there are more males than females in Nigeria. It further argues that the deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex composition/ratio of the Nigerian population in disfavour of women undermine their potentials and this impinges on our attainment of the five national objectives and the attendant negative effect on national development. It concludes that for Nigeria to attain national development she needs to give honour to whom it is due by publishing the correct or actual sex composition of her population figures, through accurate population census.

Keywords: *Manipulation, Politicisation, Sex composition, Cencus, National development*

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Background to the Study

The importance of accurate and reliable statistical data in national development has been highlighted by Shangodoyin and Lasisi (2011), Shangodoyin and Agunbiade (1999), Ward (2004) and Todaro (1992), to list but a few. For instance, Shangodoyin and Lasisi (2011) succinctly expressed the importance of statistical data in national development thus:-

Timely, complete, accurate and reliable statistics is critical to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong, equitable development, and is an essential ingredient for formulation of sound economic development policies. Thus, for economic development to attain its ultimate goals of sustainable economic, improved societal welfare, equity and other macroeconomic goals must be based on the availability of timely and reliable aggregate statistical indices such as gross domestic product (GDP), inflation rate, unemployment rate, interest rate, income per capita and balance of payments, to name a few. P. 132.

In the same vein, Ward (2004) cited in Shangadoyin and Lasis (2011:132) aptly states the importance of statistics thus:-

Statistics is a pathfinder for solution as well as a veritable tool in assessing the extent or level of national development of an economy in a given period. The national economic policies and complex interactions among various sectors of the economy make it imperative for building up macroeconomic planning models. This kind of model build-up is only possible with statistical information which is also used in estimating the parameters of the model, enables us to monitor the performance of the economy and social well-being of the people.

With specific reference to population census data, Mimiko (2006) cited in Ezeah, Iyanda and Nwangu (2013:51) asserts that:-

Population census is one of the fundamental tasks of the government. It has become a backdrop for government's political, economic and social policy formation. Population census is one of the key planning strategies towards sustainable development and progress of a nation. It provides answers to; "How many we are" in terms of the total number of the people living in the entire nation; "Who are we" in terms of age, sex, education, occupation, economic activity and other crucial characteristics; as well as "where we live" in terms of housing and access to social amenities. The answer to these questions do provide numerical profile for planning and development within a nation by providing, expanding and sustaining the infrastructures that will enhance the quality of life of the people.

Yet, Todaro (1992) identifies insufficient and unreliable data as one of the reasons for planning failures in the Less Developed Countries (LDCs). According to him "the economic wisdom of a development plan depends to a large extent on the quality and reliability of the statistical data on which it is based". Thus, according to him, "when these data are weak, unreliable or simply do not exist as is the case in many LDCs, the quality and accuracy of quantitative comprehensive plans are greatly reduced".

Just as the availability of accurate and reliable statistical data is important for national development, the role of women in national development has been acknowledged by both scholars and statesmen. For instance, Anikpo (1998) asserts that “it is desirable and inevitable that women should participate effectively in national development activities”. Equally, Hemmati and Gardiner (2002) aptly put it that “sustainable development requires the full participation of women at all levels”. And Kofi Annan, a onetime Secretary General of the United Nations said that “the future of this planet depends on women” (Pietila, 2007).

However, despite the importance of available and reliable statistical data, and women's role in national development as highlighted above, ample evidences of government deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex composition of the Nigerian population statistical data to the disadvantage of women abound. For instance, the sex ratio of the population has remained constant over the years amidst diverse scenarios involving decimation of the male counterpart of the Nigerian population such as the Nigerian civil war, militancy, cult clashes and Boko Haram, among others.

This paper therefore seeks to contest the sex composition of Nigeria's population statistics. The paper argues first, that the Nigerian government has deliberately manipulated and politicized the sex composition of Nigeria's population statistics to the disadvantage of women in the country; second, that the deliberate manipulation and politicization, of the sex composition of Nigeria's population statistics to the disadvantage of women is detrimental to national development; and finally, that in order to attain national development, the Nigerian government should discontinue with the manipulation and politicization of the sex composition of the country's population data.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows:- section 2 contains conceptual issues, while section 3 presents Nigeria's population census data. Section 4 x-rays the bases for contesting the existing sex composition of Nigeria's population statistics while section 5 highlights the implications of the manipulation and politicized sex composition of Nigeria's population data for national development. Section 6 contains the concluding remarks.

Conceptual Issues

For ease of comprehension of the issues raised in this paper, we need to be familiar with such concepts as population census and sex composition, even though they appear simple; the expression politicization of sex composition, and national development. So let us take them in turns.

Population Census and Sex Composition

Census, according to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English is “an official process of counting a county's population and finding out about the people” or an official process of counting something for government planning”. For Shryock and Siegel (1973) cited in Okolo (1999) a census of a population “is the whole process of collecting, compiling, and publishing demographic, economic and social data pertaining at a specified time, to all persons in a country or delimited territory”. In the same vein, Odewumi (2000) cited in Bamgbose (2007),

and Ezeah et, al (2013) are unanimous that population census as defined by the United Nations “is the total process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analyzing and publishing or otherwise disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specified time, to all persons in a county or in a well delimited part of the country”. Thus population census as used here refers to the whole process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analyzing and publishing demographic, economic and social data at specified time to the people of Nigeria, in line with the United Nations.

The aim of population census is to provide necessary information about the people in terms of number, distribution, location, etc, in order to enhance planning and development within a nation by providing, expanding and sustaining the infrastructures that will enhance the quality of life of the people. Population census can be conducted by head-count or done by enumerators who go round and count the people who live in the country. It can also be done by systematic and constant keeping of accurate record on all births, deaths, emigration and immigration (Anamgba, 2002).

Population census is expected to be conducted every ten years. The population of a country can be studied in terms of its geographical distribution, for instance, urban and rural; age distribution such as 0-14, 15 -64, and 65 years and above; sex distribution, for instance, males and females; and occupational distribution such as skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled etc (Udu and Agu, 1989). However, our concern here is the sex distribution of the population. Consequently, sex composition of the Nigerian population refers to the composition of males and females in the population.

Politicisation of Sex Composition

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines politicize as “to make a subject or situation more political” and defines politicization as the noun formed from politicize. For the BBC English Dictionary “to politicize an event, situation or activity means to turn it into a political issue”, and equally sees politicization as the noun formed from politicize. Thus, politicization of the sex composition of Nigeria's population census figures means turning it into a political issue. In a nutshell it implies giving political colouration to the male-female composition of the Nigerian population vis-a-vis statistical colouration which is essential for planning and national development.

National Development

For ease of comprehension of the concept of national development, it is important to throw some light on development itself. It is a commonly held view among social scientists that development is a complex concept with a plethora of interpretations. For instance, its meaning has progressed from its narrow conception in terms of few economic indices such as a rise in per capita income in the 1950s and 1960s to a broader one presently. In recent times development is defined as a “process of improvement in the various aspects of the life of the society, usually seen in the occurrence of desirable changes such as; a reduction in the level of unemployment, a reduction in the level of absolute poverty; a reduction in the level of economic and social inequalities; an increase in the capacity of the society to produce and

distribute needed goods and services; an increase in real output of goods and services; a rise in the level of literacy; a rise in the levels of social and political consciousness and political participation; an improvement in the quality of services; a reduction in the level of pollution and/or environmental degradation; and an improvement in the quality of life of the people as measured by access to clean and safe water, adequate health services and decent accommodation” (Akpakpan, 1987, and 2011; Wilson, 2002).

It is in this context that Okowa (1997) defined development as “the process whereby a society changes in all its ramifications in a direction that is beneficial to all her citizens or at least to a majority of them”. Consequently, he defined national development as “the process whereby a given nation moves in its total setting, in a direction beneficial materially and otherwise to all its people”. This implies that the whole of the people or at least a majority must be involved in the process or motion, and hence the need for national objectives which serve as the driving force. Thus, in the case of Nigeria, national development has been defined in terms of five principal national objectives which according to Ndiomu (1992) have continued to be enunciated in subsequent development plans from the Second National Development Plan, namely: (i) a united, strong and self-reliant economy; (ii) a great and dynamic society; (iii) a just and egalitarian society; (iv) a land of bright and full of opportunities; and (v) a free and democratic society. Thus, in this work national development is conceived in the light of these desiderata.

Nigeria's Population Censuses, Sex Composition and Sex Ratio

The first attempt at a population census in Nigeria was in 1866. But subsequent censuses before 1952, such as 1911 and 1922 were restricted to some sections of the country (Makinwa, 1985; Okolo, 1999; NPC and ICF Macro, 2009; and Ezeah et al, 2013). The 1952 enumeration was the first nation-wide census. The first post-independence population census conducted in 1962 was cancelled, following alleged irregularities in its conduct. But the one conducted in 1963 was officially accepted. The 1973 census exercise was declared unacceptable and was cancelled. Thereafter, no attempt was made at conducting a census until 1991. The most recent census in Nigeria was conducted in 2006.

Table 1: Total, Sex Composition and Sex Ratio of Nigeria's Population Data

Year	Total Population	Sex Composition		Sex Ratio	
		Males	Females	Male	Female
1963	55,653,821	NA	NA	NA	NA
1991	88,514,501	44,544,531	43,969,970	50.32	49.68
2006	140,413,790	71,345,488	69,086,302	50.80	49.20
2017	189,901,303	96,192,150	93,769,156	50.65	49.35

- Sources** (i) Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (1998) Statistical Bulletin, Volume 9, No. 1, June, p. 122.
 (ii) Thomas, Joel (2012) Population trends and policy options in selected Developing Countries. Partners in population and Development, Bangladash and Population Commission, Pasadena

Although the population figures of Nigeria are given as 55.6 million in 1963, 79.76 million in 1973, 88.99 million in 1991, 140.4 million in 2006, (Thomas, 2012); 167 million in 2011 (NPDPC, 2011); and 189.9 million in 2017 (World Bank, 2017), the fundamental truth remains that there are only three officially accepted population censuses in Nigeria since independence. Consequently, Table 1 summarizes the total, sex composition and sex ratio of Nigeria's population census statistics from 1963 to date, while tables 2, 3 and 4. which contain the breakdown of the 1963, 1991, and 2006 census figures appear as appendices. 1, 2, and 3 respectively, for ease of reference. Note however that the 1963 population census was not disaggregated into sex composition and ratio.

The Grounds/Bases for Contesting the Sex Composition and Ratio of the Population Data

The doubtful state of the population figures of Nigeria has been widely acknowledged, including Last (2007), Odunfa (2006) and Wilson (2002), to list but a few. For instance, Last (2007) asserts thus:-

Nigeria census reveals no change. Figures released from Nigeria's census say the country's mainly Muslim northern states accounted for just over half of the country's 140 million population. This is roughly the same result as shown in the last census 15 years ago. The northern state of Kano was the most populous with 9.4 million people, just ahead of Lagos state with nine million... The results maintain the status quo despite claims by...

Equally, Odunfa (2006) asserts thus:-

Nigeria's counting controversy. No- one knows how many Nigerians there are, and until now the authorities have been too afraid to find out. Legend has it that one out of every five black people on Earth is a Nigerian. But that can only be an assumption for every head count held in Nigeria in the past 30 years has ended in national controversy and with strong allegations of population inflation. The last census was carried out in 1991. Its figures which are regarded only as being marginally less manipulated than others.

Yet Wilson (2005:90-91) remarked on the state of Nigeria's census data thus:-

As beautiful as the population and health policies and programmes appear to be there are serious questions begging for answers. For instance, how many Nigerians do we have on this planet earth? How do we reconcile the grasses, trees, stones and domestic animals etc counted in the 1991 census as human beings with the figures arrived at? Do we need to be told that the ongoing demarcation exercise in preparation for the long expected accurate headcount for Nigeria is fraught with corruption and bribery? It is indeed a jamboree of negotiated enumeration areas (EAs), where EAs exchange hands with hundreds of thousands of the Nigerian Naira 'the arbiter' to arrive at yet another unworkable figures for a successful population and health policies and programmes in Nigeria.

These doubts are heightened by the variation in the population figures found in important public documents such as Central Bank of Nigeria statistical bulletins, National Bureau of

Statistics, Nigeria Demographic and Health Surveys, and National Population Commission. For instance, while National Population Commission (1998), NPC (Nigeria) and ICF International (2014) and CBN (2005) gave the 1991 census figures of Nigeria's population as 88,992,220 composing of 44,529,608 males and 44,462,612 females, the figures in CBN (1998) were 88,514,501 with 44,544,531 males and 43,969,970 females.

Equally, National Population Commission (2006) gave the 2006 census figures as 140,003,542 people made up of 71,709,859 males and 68,293,683 females (Felix and Tasi, 2008) whereas the figures in NPC (Nigeria) and ICF International (2014) and Thomas (2012) are 140,431,790 with 71,345,488 males and 69,086,302 females.

However, our concern here is the sex composition and ratio of Nigeria's population which we are arguing that are deliberately manipulated and politicized to the disadvantage of women in the country. The bases or grounds for this argument are not farfetched, as shown below.

First, recall that barely four years after the first officially accepted census figures of 1963, Nigeria was plunged into politico-military crisis that led to mass killings of the Igbos living in the northern part of the country in October 1966. The crisis snowballed into a 30-months civil war between 15th July 1967 and 12th January, 1970 (Onovo, 1997; Achebe, 2012; Ezeani, 2013). Although the battle ground of the war was the then Eastern region, comprising of the present day South – East and four (viz- Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River and Rivers) of the six states of the South-South geopolitical regions, it involved the whole country. This fact is corroborated by Ezeani (2013) as he aptly put it that “the Nigeria-Biafra war-war between the then Eastern Nigeria and the rest of the country, spanning 1967-1970”.

Recall also that until recently, the work force of the Nigerian army were only men. This implies that the soldiers who fought the war from both sides were male Nigerians drawn from the then Northern, Western and Midwestern regions for the Federal side and then the Eastern region for the Biafra side. According to Ezeani (2013), more than one million people died in the Nigeria-Biafra (civil) war outside the 1966 pogrom in the North. The implication is that most of the one million people that died in the war were soldiers and therefore male Nigerians.

Given the above scenario, the sex composition and ratio of the Nigerian population figures were expected to tilt more in favour of the female cohorts in the next head count. However, the 1991 population census figures which was the next census after the 1963 one showed a reverse trend. For instance, the breakdown of the 1991 population census figures into the sex composition, according to states and geopolitical regions showed (see table appendix 2 tables 3) that:

In the South-East geopolitical region, the heart of the battle ground of the war, females are more than the males both at the geo-political and the individual state levels. For instance, the data showed a total population of 10,712,675 comprising of 5,143,434 males and 5,569,241 females, giving a ratio of 51.99 females to 48.01 males for the zone or region. This is consistent with our expectations given the situation under review. However, for the South-South

geopolitical zone with a total population of 12,939,266, the females were 6,396,017 while the males were 6,543,209, and the corresponding ratio was 49.43 females to 50.53 males. This is inconsistent with our expectation and therefore subject to questioning at the zonal level for the following two reasons:-One, states in the zone such as Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, and Rivers, were part of Biafra, the battle ground of the civil war where in the course of the war, all males of ages 18 years and above were forcefully evacuated from their homes and conscripted into the Biafran army to fight the war. Majority of these people did not return home alive after the war in 1970. Second, even though such states as Edo and Delta were outside the battle ground of the war at the time, we have earlier shown that males from all parts of the country were recruited to fight the war either as Biafran soldiers or the Federal Government soldiers. So, where did we get the men to constitute a higher proportion than women in the 1991 census figures for the South-South geopolitical zone, and in such states as Cross-River, Edo, and Rivers, within the zone?.

In the case of the South-West geopolitical zone, of a total population of 17,600,641 people, by the 1991 census, 8,928,507 were males while 8,672,134 were females, giving a ratio of 50.73 males to 49.27 females. Here again, the figures do not conform to our expectation, and therefore questionable for the following reasons: First, although the Yorubas (the South-West) were not the direct aggressors in the war, the quest to keep Nigeria one meant enlistment of males from the South-West zone into the army to fight on the Federal side. Thus, a reasonable number of the males from the zone joined the army, many of who did not survive the war. Second, a sizeable population of the Yorubas is Muslims whose Religion permits a minimum of four (4) wives. So how manage the census figures showed more males than females in Lagos, Ondo, and Oyo states within the zone and ultimately in the zone?

More astonishing are the 1991 census figures for the North-East, North-Central and North-West geopolitical zones, referred to simply as the northern part of the country. Recall that these were the aggressors in the civil war, which implied that, the bulk of the soldiers on the Federal side were recruited from this region. Yet, there is no state in these three zones where females are more than the males. The question is; does it mean that the males who fought the war, all returned home alive after the war?. That apart, it is on record that the north is predominantly Muslims and the South is substantially Christians (Ezeani, 2013). It is equally on record that the Muslim religion allows a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of seven wives. Given the above scenario why did the 1991 population census show more men than women in all the northern states except Benue and Sokoto states, and eventually male/female ratio's of 51.14 to 48.86; 50.63 to 49.37; and 50.36 to 49.64 respectively for North-East, North Central and North-West, geopolitical zones?

Second, it is on record from the three accepted census figures and other population figures projected from these censuses that the North, comprising of the North-West, North-Central and North-East geopolitical zones, is more populated than the South which includes the South-West, South-East and South-South geopolitical zones. For instance, the 1991 census showed that of the total population of 88,514,501 people, the South was 41,252,542 people representing 46.60 per cent, while the North had 47,261,959 people, representing 53.40 per

cent. This fact is corroborated by Ezeah et al (2013) who asserted that on the politically sensitive matter of the relative proportions of the population in the northern and southern states, the census shows a virtually unchanged division of North – 53.3 percent versus South - 46.7 percent in 1991; and 53.6 versus 46.4 in 2006.

It is equally observable from the 1991 census figures that the North has more males than the South as the figures were 23,929,378 and 20,615,150 for the North and the South respectively (by the 1991 census figure). Thus, given the religiously - bound limits of one- man to one-wife in the South and one-man to at least four wives in the North, it is hard to believe that there are more males than females in the North, especially in a situation where there are more females than males in the South where the dominant practice is one-man to one wife.

The implication is that the population of the North is highly manipulated to the disadvantage of the females. This explains why Okolo (1999) asserts with respect to the 1991 census result that “an interesting point in the provisional result is the revelation that there are more men than women among the Nigerian population”. According to them, the census report indicated that men constituted 50.32 per cent of the population, and women constituted 49.68 per cent.

Finally, Bamgbose (2009) asserts that “since 1990 Nigeria has been subjected to a cycle of polymorphous violence which has generated thousands of internally displaced persons”. According to him most cases of these violence occurred in the Northern states, including Bauchi in 1991, and 2001; Kano in 1991, 1999, 2001, and 2004; Kaduna in 1992, 2000, and 2002; Taraba in 1991 and 2000; Plateau in 2001 and 2004, Nasarawa in 2001; Bornu in 2000; Adamawa in 2003; Benue in 2004; and many others. According to him, in all these cases in the North, thousands of people had died while others are displaced. In these violence the people involved are mainly the males, who lose their lives in thousands.

Equally, since 1999 till date there has been constant decimation of the male population in the country. The following instances will attest to this. First, since 1999 till date there have been waves of cultism in the country, especially in the South who die in their hundreds on daily basis either as a result of clashes between rival cult groups or security operatives' attacks. All these are males, except where stray bullets kill or wound innocent people occasionally. Second, militancy in the Niger Delta areas has taken its toll, even as the issue has not been fully resolved. Third, kidnapping is also taking its toll as security operatives eliminate as many as could be arrested. Finally, the dreaded Boko Haram has been taking its toll for over ten years till date. As earlier said, in all these cases the chief culprits are male Nigerians who are decimated on daily basis.

Thus, given the above scenario, it is expected that the sex composition and ratio of the Nigerian population figures should be tilted in favour of women. That is, there should be more women than men in the population. However, a cursory look at the 2006 population census figures indicated the contrary. For instance, a breakdown of the 2006 population census figures into the sex composition according to states and geo-political zones shows as follows:-

In the South-East geopolitical zone the sex ratio is male-dominated in three (Imo, Anambra and Abia) of the five states but female-dominated in Enugu and Ebonyi states. It is male-dominated at the geopolitical level. For instance, the data show a total population of 16,381,729 comprising of 8,306,306 males and 8,075,423 females, making a ratio of 50.70 males to 49.30 females for the zone. This is not consistent with our expectation and therefore raises a number of questions. For instance, why the reverse trend in Imo, Anambra and Abia states of the South-East geopolitical zone? Where did the more males come from in these states?

With respect to the South-South geopolitical zone, the figures show more males than females both at the state and geopolitical levels. For instance, the total population figure for the zone was 21,014,655 decomposed into 10,865,055 males and 10,149,600 females with the corresponding sex ratio of 51.70 males to 48.30 females. Here again, Delta and Akwa-Ibom states that were female-dominated in the 1991 census figures suddenly turned male-dominated by the 2006 census figure, what an irony?

For the South-West geopolitical zone, at both the state and geopolitical levels the figures show more males than females even though in the 1991 census figures, Ogun and Osun states had more females than males. Here again, there are questions begging for answers.

In the case of the North-West, North-Central and North-East, including FCT Abuja, generally referred to as the North, the figures show more males than females as in the 1991 census figures except for Kebbi state. This again indicates a high level of manipulation of the census figures as argued earlier. Another spectacular feature of the population figures is the apparent constancy of the male/female ratios. For instance, the sex ratio has remained virtually the same all through the period under review, why no change?

Recall that the 1963 census figures were not decomposed into its male/female components or sex ratio. This started from the 1991 census. So, it is safe to state that the manipulation and politicization of the sex component and ratio of the census figures against women started with the 1963 census.

Other grounds for contesting the sex ratio of the Nigerian population census figures in recent times are school enrolment, National Population Commission birth registration and media news. For instance, school enrolment at all (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary) levels show more females than males. Again interaction with the field staff of National Population Commission (NPC) who go for birth registration in hospitals and clinics confirm a trend of more female than male births. Equally, Wazobia Radio Station in one of its programmes in 2017 aired that of the over 7 billion people in the world, more than 5 billion were women. It is equally asserted that sex composition of a population is among the factors responsible for increase in population and that a sex composition that favours female population leads to an increase in child bearing and the consequent increase in population (Anamgba, 2002). It is on record that Nigeria is the 7th most populated country in the world after China, India, United States, Indonesia, Brazil and Pakistan whose combined population alone constitutes half of the world population. It is equally on record that Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with the fastest growth rate in

population (Nwosu, Dike and Okwara, 2014). The fundamental question is:- if not from the most populated countries, Nigeria inclusive, where else could the over 5 billion women out of the world population of over 7 billion people aired by Wazobia have been gotten?

So, given the above scenario, it is safe to state that the population figures of Nigeria are highly manipulated and politicized in disfavour of women.

Implications of the Manipulated and Politicised Sex Composition of Nigeria's Population Data for National Development

For objective assessment of the implications of the deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex composition and ratio of Nigeria's population data against women for national development, there is need to recast the role of women in national development. In this regard, Onuchukwu (2006:64) asserts that:

Human beings are the major instruments or key or pivot of development. Biologically, the woman after being conceived by man, carries, bears as well as nurtures children who later grow to adult men and women that generate ideas and knowledge necessary for development. Thus, the woman by her nature is the nurturer of life and therefore the very beginning of development. In addition to nurturing life, women engage in general housekeeping including cooking, washing among others.

Apart from child bearing and rearing women also have economic, political, religious and social roles that they play in national development. For instance, they are actively engaged in agricultural production, especially in the rural areas which provide food for the teeming population as well as primary inputs for the industries. According to Onuchukwu (2006), "it is observed that in Africa women are responsible for three quarters of all subsistence agriculture in addition to their domestic responsibilities". Also, they are very many in petty trading, tableshops and other informal sector activities and equally participate in the formal sector activities such as government employment.

Politically, they vote and are voted for during elections. Thus, they participate in the political processes in the country. In the religious sphere, they train their children in the fear of God to ensure proper behaviour and moral stability. In some cases they organize fasting and praying for the spiritual, political and economic stability of the nation(Onuchukwu, 2006).

Socially, they belong to some influential pressure groups with the aim of influencing and pressurizing government to embark on meaningful development projects and other national issues. In some cases they form social clubs in their communities which in most cases embark on developmental projects such as building markets, classroom blocks, bus stands among others. Equally they are peace lovers and have always encouraged peaceful coexistence of their communities and consequently national peace (Onuchukwu, 2006).

Equally, Ekong (2006, 2008), Agbola (1990, 1996), Okoro (1996) and Mivanyi (1996) have reported on the contributions of women in agriculture, community development and political

development. For example, Ekong (2006) asserts that “women are the real engine driving the economy of Nigeria and are the keys to development and hence crucial to the goal of sustainable development”. According to Ekong (2008), “in 1975, FAO reported that 70 percent of all the work in food processing and almost 100 percent of all domestic and household chores were performed by women”. According to Ekong (2008), “this trend has not changed but rather now take additional burden of extra domestic affairs”. In line with the above observation, Agbola (1990) asserts that women are the operators of the economy and constitute a major arm of the labour force. He concludes that Nigerian women are dynamic, industrious and resourceful.

Thus, just as Marx (1971) has argued that the economic system which is the substructure is the base of any nation, upon which the superstructure comprising of politics, law, religion, social institutions etc, is built and therefore no nation can survive without the base; this is the way women are, in national development.

Given the roles women play in society as highlighted above, a responsible state should give honour to which it is due, by allowing the real sex composition or ratio of the population to play out. But here is a state that employs all means to manipulate the sex ratio of the population in disfavor of women as well as politicize the figures. The question before us is: what are the implications of the deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex ratio of the nation's population figures in disfavor of women for her national development?

Our position in this paper is that the deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex composition or ratio of the nation's population figures in disfavor of women impinge on the attainment of the nation's five national objectives and therefore detrimental to national development. The following instances attest to this fact. First, deliberate manipulation connotes unjust, in egalitarian, unfree and undemocratic scenarios which negate what our national objectives, ala national objectives three and five emphasize on. For instance national objective three presents Nigeria as a just and egalitarian society while national objective five depicts her as a free and democratic society. Second, it is hard to describe Nigeria as a great and dynamic society, looking at it from the point of view of the constant sex ratio of the country's population figures for the past 27 years (1991 to 2018) when the nation's population figures started showing the number and percentage of males and females in the population. Here again, our national objective two has been breached. Third, manipulating and politicizing the sex composition of the nation's population figures in disfavor of females imply underutilization of their potentials which in Marxian parlance amounts to undermining the substructure, the base upon which the superstructure is built. So, how can a nation in this state of affairs be said to be a land of bright and full opportunities or a united, strong and self-reliant one? In the same vein, our national objectives four and one have been violated.

Thus, given the above instances, it is safe to state that the deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex ratio of Nigeria's population data in disfavor of females have impinged on the attainment of the five cardinal national objectives and therefore detrimental to national development.

Concluding Remarks

In concluding, let us relate the issue of deliberate manipulation and politicization of the sex composition or ratio of the nation's population figures in disfavor of women to national development. It can be argued that a relationship exists between population data of a nation and national development. This fact is corroborated by Mimiko's (2006) assertion that population census is "one of the key planning strategies towards sustainable development and progress of a nation as it provides information about the total number of people living in a country; who the people are in terms of age, sex, education, occupation, economic activities and other characteristics such as housing and access to social amenities".

Among the population census information highlighted above the sex composition of the population is of significant importance. This is because the sex composition of the population affects the total population which in turn affects the other population data and then national development. As earlier stated, sex distribution of a population is among the factors responsible for increase in population as a sex distribution that favours female population leads to increase in child bearing and the consequent increase in population.

It is on record that Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with the fastest growth rate in population (Nwosu, Dike and Okwara, 2014). So, the fast growth rate of Nigeria's population may not be unconnected with the fact that there are more females than males in the country's population.

So, it is safe to argue that the high rate of population growth in Nigeria could be attributed to the composition of more females than males in the nation's population. Therefore, it is safe to state that the sex composition of Nigeria's population as currently published is highly manipulated and politicized.

Equally, the emerging literature shows, that women play innumerable roles in society, ranging from children bearing, house chores at home, to national and global issues. So, it is safe to argue that understating women's figures in the population as currently applied in Nigeria amounts to undermining their potentials and the attendant negative effect on national development.

Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the sex composition of Nigeria's population as it is currently published is highly manipulated and politicized in disfavour of women, and this state of affairs negatively affects national development. The paper therefore suggests that the Nigerian government should give honour to whom it is due if she wants to attain national development, by publishing the correct or actual sex composition of her population figure. This can be done by conducting population census by head count and/or systematic and constant keeping of accurate records on all births, deaths, emigration and immigration.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Table 2: Breakdown of 1963, Nigeria Census Data

Regions	Sex Composition		Total
	Male	Female	
North	NA	NA	29,777,986
East	NA	NA	12,388,646
West	NA	NA	10,278,500
Mid West	NA	NA	2,533,337
Lagos Capital Territory	NA	NA	675,352
Grand Total	NA	NA	55,653,821

Source: <http://www.nigerianmuse.com/importantdocuments/?u>

NB:

Total Population of North	-	29,777,986 (53.51%)
Total population of South	-	25,875,235 (46.49%)
Grand total	-	55,653,821 (100%)

Appendix 2

Table 3: A Breakdown of 1991 Nigeria Census data

Geographical Zone/ state		Sex Composition		Total	Sex Ratio		Total
		Males	Females		Male	Female	
South-West	Lagos	2,999,528	2,686,253	5,685,781	52.75	47.25	100
	Ogun	1,144,907	1,193,663	2,338,570	48.96	51.04	100
	Oyo	1,745,720	1,743,069	3,488,789	50.04	49.96	100
	Osun	1,079,424	1,123,592	2,203,016	49.00	51.00	100
	Ekiti	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Ondo	1,958,928	1,925,557	3,884,485	50.43	49.27	100
Sub-Total		8,928,507	8,672,134	17,600,641	50.73	49.27	100
South-East	Enugu	1,482,245	1,679,050	3,161,295	46.89	53.11	100
	Ebonyi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Imo	1,178,031	1,307,468	2,485,499	47.40	52.60	100
	Anambra	1,374,801	1,398,102	2,767,903	49.67	50.33	100
	Abia	1,108,357	1,189,621	2,297,978	48.23	51.77	100
Sub-Total		5,143,434	5,569,241	10,712,675	48.01	51.99	100

South-South	Bayelsa	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Rivers	2,079,583	1,904,274	3,983,857	52.20	47.80	100
	Cross River	948,270	920,334	1,865,604	50.83	49.17	100
	Edo	1,082,718	1,077,130	2,159,848	50.13	49.87	100
	Delta	1,273,208	1,296,973	2,570,181	49.54	50.46	100
	Akwa-Ibom	1,162,430	1,197,306	2,359,736	49.26	50.74	100
Sub-Total		6,543,209	6,396,017	12,939,226	50.57	49.43	100
North-West	Sokoto	2,158,111	2,234,280	4,392,391	49.13	50.87	100
	Zamfara	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Katsina	1,944,218	1,934,123	3,878,341	50.13	49.87	100
	Kano	2,858,724	2,773,316	5,632,040	50.76	49.24	100
	Kaduna	2,059,382	1,909,870	3,969,252	51.88	48.12	100
	Kebbi	1,024,331	1,037,895	2,062,226	49.67	50.33	100
	Jigawa	1,419,726	1,410,203	2,829,929	50.17	49.83	100
Sub-Total		11,464,492	11,299,687	22,764,179	50.36	49.64	100
North-Central	Plateau	1,645,730	1,637,974	3,283,704	50.12	49.88	100
	Nasarawa	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Kwara	790,921	775,548	1,566,469	50.49	49.51	100
	Kogi	1,055,964	1,043,082	2,099,046	50.31	49.69	100
	Benue	1,385,402	1,394,996	2,780,398	49.83	50.17	100
	Niger	1,290,720	1,191,647	2,482,367	52.00	48.00	100
Sub-Total		6,168,737	6,043,247	12,211,984	50.51	49.49	100
North-East	Gombe	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Borno	1,327,311	1,269,278	2,596,589	51.12	48.88	100
	Bauchi	2,202,962	2,091,451	4,294,413	51.30	48.70	100
	Adamawa	1,084,824	1,039,225	2,124,049	51.07	48.93	100
	Taraba	754,754	725,836	1,480,590	50.98	49.02	100
	Yobe	719,763	691,718	1,411,481	50.99	49.01	100
Sub -Total		6,089,614	5,817,508	11,907,122	51.14	48.86	100
FCT		206,535	172,136	378,671	54.54	45.46	100
Grand Total		44,544,528	43,969,970	88,514,498	50.32	49.68	100

Sources: (i) Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (1998) Statistical Bulletin, Volume 9, No 1 June p.122

(ii) Sex Ratios computed by the Researcher from CBN (1999) figures

Total Population of South	→	41,252,542 (47%)
Males	–	20,615,150 (49.97%)
Females	–	29,637,392 (50.03%)
Total population of North	–	47,262,039 (53%)
Males	–	23,929,378 (50.63%)
Females	–	23,332,578 (49.37%)

Appendix 3

Table 4: Breakdown of 2006 Nigeria Census Data

Geographical Zone/ state		Sex Composition		Total	Sex Ratio		Total
		Males	Females		Male	Female	
South-West	Lagos	4,678,020	4,335,514	9,013,534	51.90	48.10	100
	Ogun	1,847,243	1,810,855	3,658,098	50.50	49.50	100
	Oyo	2,809,840	2,781,749	5,591,589	50.25	49.75	100
	Osun	1,740,619	1,682,916	3,423,535	50.84	49.16	100
	Ekiti	1,212,609	1,171,603	2,384,212	50.86	49.14	100
	Ondo	1,761,263	1,679,761	3,441,024	51.18	48.82	100
Sub -Total		14,049,594	13,462,398	27,511,992	51.07	49.93	100
South-East	Enugu	1,624,202	1,633,096	3,257,298	49.86	50.14	100
	Ebonyi	1,040,984	1,132,517	2,173,501	47.89	52.11	100
	Imo	2,032,286	1,902,613	3,934,899	51.65	48.35	100
	Anambra	2,174,641	2,007,391	4,182,032	52.00	48.00	100
	Abia	1,434,193	1,399,806	2,833,999	50.61	49.39	100
Sub -Total		8,306,306	8,075,423	16,381,729	50.70	49.30	100
South-South	Bayelsa	902,648	800,710	1,703,358	52.99	47.01	100
	Rivers	2,710,665	2,474,735	5,185,400	52.27	47.73	100
	Cross River	1,492,465	1,396,501	2,888,966	51.66	48.34	100
	Edo	1,640,461	1,577,871	3,218,332	50.97	49.03	100
	Delta	2,074,306	2,024,085	4,098,391	50.61	49.39	100
	Akwa-Ibom	2,044,510	1,875,698	3,920,208	52.15	48.85	100
Sub -Total		10,865,055	10,149,600	21,014,655	51.70	48.30	100
North-West	Sokoto	1,872,069	1,824,930	3,696,999	50.64	49.36	100
	Zamfara	1,630,344	1,629,502	3,259,846	50.01	49.99	100
	Katsina	2,978,682	2,813,896	5,792,578	51.42	48.58	100
	Kano	4,844,128	4,539,554	9,383,682	51.62	48.38	100
	Kaduna	3,112,028	2,954,534	6,066,562	51.30	48.70	100
	Kebbi	1,617,489	1,621,130	3,238,628	49.94	50.05	100
	Jigawa	2,215,907	2,132,742	4,348,649	50.96	49.04	100
Sub -Total		18,270,656	17,516,288	35,786,944	51.05	48.95	100
North-Central	Plateau	1,593,033	1,585,679	3,178,712	50.12	49.88	100
	Nassarwa	945,556	917,719	3,863,275	50.75	49.25	100
	Kwara	1,220,581	1,150,508	2,371,089	51.48	48.52	100
	Kogi	1,691,737	1,566,750	3,258,487	51.92	48.08	100
	Benue	2,164,058	2,055,186	4,219,244	51.29	48.71	100
	Niger	2,032,725	1,917,524	3,950,249	51.46	48.54	100
Sub -Total		9,647,690	9,193,366	18,841,056	51.21	48.79	100
North-East	Gombe	1,230,722	1,123,159	2,353,879	52.28	47.72	100
	Borno	2,161,157	1,990,036	4,151,193	52.06	47.94	100
	Bauchi	2,426,215	2,250,250	4,676,465	51.88	48.12	100
	Adamawa	1,606,123	1,561,978	3,168,101	50.70	49.30	100
	Taraba	1,199,849	1,100,887	2,300,736	52.15	47.85	100
	Yobe	1,206,003	1,115,588	2,321,591	51.95	48.05	100
Sub -Total		9,830,069	9,141,896	18,971,965	51.81	48.19	100
FCT		740,489	664,712	1,405,201	52.70	47.30	100
Grand Total		71,709,859	68,293,683	140,003,542	51.22	48.78	100

Sources: (i) Africa master web @ <http://www.africamasterweb.com>; or Nigeria master web @ <http://www.nigeriamasterweb.com>

Total Population of South	→	64,908,376 (46.36%)
Males	–	33,220,955 (51.18%)
Females	–	31,687,421 (48.82%)
Total population of North	–	75,005,166 (53.64%)
Males	–	38,487,804 (51.31%)
Females	–	36,516,262 (48.69%)