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POLITICS AND THE GIRL CHILD IN NIGERIA

Politics in Nigeria is believed to have evolved. This can be seen as more of the minority groups, especially females have been allowed to participate in political or electoral process and even contest for office. This evolution has led to another belief or rule, which is that the “best person” should hold a political position. But are political chances equally available or males and females alike in Nigeria?

It is undisputable that men hold more political position than women in Nigeria. Some political parties only make few positions available for women, while the rest must and can only be occupied by men. Outside of politics, some organisations do not allow women to become their presidents/chairmen, they are only allowed to hold positions of the vice presidents/ assistant chairmen and maybe any other position below that.

The girl-child faces some challenges that are not faced by her male counterpart. One of these challenges which is also the greatest challenge is the limitation to the number of positions and extent of leadership that is available for the girl-child. This completely puts off the “best person” belief as females are not given the chance to contest for some or most of these positions. In Nigeria, we have never had a female president or even a female vice president since our independence in 1960. Yes, we have had some commendable women who have held some ministerial positions, but why have none of them risen to the level of becoming the National president? We have not even had a female governor before. Only a few states such as Rivers State presently has a female vice president. Even at the local government level, women are still not allowed to become local government chair ladies, but are allowed to hold other lower positions. Some females even have to be intimately submissive to their male superiors before they are allowed to hold some positions or even contest for office. This is not to imply that males do not also face their own political challenges, but politics in Nigeria is fairer to them than females. All these, shows glaringly that the girl-child is not allowed as much privileges politically, as her male counterpart.

The reason for this divide has still not been pin-pointed. Is the girl child just unqualified to be the “best person”? is it wrong (morally or in other aspects) for the girl-child to hold top political positions? Does the girl-child possess certain characteristics that make her unfit to compete with equal privileges as her male counterparts or is it just better to have more male political leaders and less female political leaders? These are some of the questions that I ponder on whenever I think of this political divide of which the girl-child is disadvantaged.

On a final note, I suggest that we ponder and think about these questions and try to find suitable answers to them. I also suggest that the girl-child should be allowed to compete on a level field with her male counterparts if we are truly in support of the belief that the “all-round best person” should hold any political position