

**Gender Violence and Women Political Participation in Nigeria; 2015 & 2019
Political Dispensation**

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Relations, Faculty of Environment, Management and Social Science, Lead City
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Degree in Politics and International Relations**

Certification

This is to certify that **Oluwapelumi Abisoye, ADELEKE** with matriculation number **LCU/PG/001515** carried out this research work titled “Gender Violence and Women Political Participation in Nigeria; 2015-2019” in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State for the award of Master of Science (M.Sc.) Degree in Finance and that this has into been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty

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Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge and express my sincere appreciation to Lead City University, Ibadan for the opportunity to finished this research work, and Lead City University Library for the materials gotten from there.

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“Even though the above-mentioned institutions and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in the work”.

Abstract

Gender violence and women's political participation in Nigeria will be investigated from 2015 to 2019. Gender violence includes intimate partner abuse in heterosexual and same-sex relationships, as well as rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment. The term "gender violence" refers to the perception that violence is frequently utilized to maintain basic gender inequality. Men and women have diverse roles and responsibilities in our families, societies, and cultures. These duties and obligations are referred to as gender. The study's objectives are to investigate gender violence as a form of political oppression, to examine the extent of women's engagement in Nigerian politics, to identify the problems women face in Nigerian politics, and to provide solutions to help women achieve their political leadership potential. Data was examined using the concept of the written act. Because this was a desktop research project, textual analysis was employed for the analysis. To do this, relevant literary works and historical data were utilised. The data was examined using content analysis. Inequality in the workplace is skewed against men. In terms of education, women have traditionally had a lower position than men. Women's education curriculum emphasized Home Economics, which includes sub-categories of Domestic Science such as needlework, embroidery, cooking, and child care. The colonial educational system was, in fact, sexist in its treatment of female pupils. In Nigeria, feminism arose from a rising desire to improve the circumstances of Nigerian women. According to the authors, education for women is important in eradicating inferiority complexes and equipping aspiring women to compete with men. Government and women's organizations should collaborate in both urban and rural areas to promote women's education and enlightenment via aggressive awareness and enlightenment campaigns. a public relations campaign intended at debunking the widely held idea that women are less valued than men

Keywords: Gender, Violence, Women, Political, Participation

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The paucity of women in political leadership posts has impeded economic growth in recent years. The under-representation of women in elected positions has been a major social development concern in Nigeria from the commencement of the current democracy process. Politics, for example, is a gendered phenomenon. People's lives are fundamentally influenced by everything from health and education to access to markets and public space to freedom of expression and capacity to work based on their sex or gender identity.¹ Many studies show that women's political participation was not just the result of individual efforts, but also of groups working together.²

Although the situation of Nigerian women during the past 45 years has not been ideal, it is nevertheless preferable to that of women in many third-world nations. Even though it is widely held that women's primary role is to serve their husbands, Nigerian women have grown into what can be fairly regarded as autonomous women for more than 45 years since the country's independence.³ The women of Nigeria have progressively grown more conscious of their rights and their status in society since they accepted whatever attitude, belief, prejudices, and treatment was meted out to them. During the colonial period, nothing was heard of women in Nigeria politics except for a few times when they maintained their ground to protest one occurrence or another; to the normal Nigerian male, any woman who knows her political rights and asks is swiftly considered as "Tomboyish."⁴

Over 10,000 ibibio and Igbo women reacted in 1929 to a taxation rumor that culminated in the deaths of roughly 26 of them. In African politics, women have made history,

although it is generally coupled with bloodshed and military intervention. As a result of the Northern Nigerian women's protests in 1973, the NPC and the Northern Elements of Progressive Union were formed (NEPU). Because of the widespread discrimination against women in many parts of the world, the international body recognizes that they require particular support.

Pre-independence Nigeria's Sir Hugh Clifford Constitution of 1922 excluded women from political involvement and only allowed rich adult males to vote.⁵ The colonial system, sponsored by the United Kingdom, formalized gender inequity in Nigeria's traditional civilizations.

Women in Nigeria, despite the fact that they do not yet lead political parties, have been organizing themselves since before the colonial period in order to redefine their place in society.⁶ Women's organizations have grown significantly in the previous two decades, and they now deal with a far broader range of topics. At the municipal, state, and national levels, there are several organizations, such as associations, cooperatives, trade groups, and religious organizations.⁷ After everything that Nigerian women's movement has accomplished thus far, a wide range of concerns must still be addressed quickly, including the need for more women to participate in political and decision-making processes. A rise in social and economic pressures and a male-dominated democratic system have had a detrimental impact on the progress made in the preceding two decades. This means that a fundamental shift in the approach to women's empowerment and gender equity is needed in the field of women's political engagement.⁸

Growth and development are severely hampered by the presence of violence. In particular, violence against women impedes progress toward development.⁹ It is defined as "any acts of gender-based violence as a consequence of physical, sexual, or

psychological injury or suffering to women" by the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) report as "whether happening in public or private life," according to the document.¹⁰Fetal mutilation and other traditional practices detrimental to women are also included in this description, as well as sexual abuse of female children and other forms of domestic violence against women.¹¹

Feminist movements all around the world gave rise to international and national institutions aimed at protecting women from violence and advancing their rights, such as the CEDAW, the UDHR's Article 21, and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance. Despite the absence of sex discrimination, these legal instruments emphasize the importance of freedom and equality of rights.¹²It is also included in Nigeria's constitution and has signed and ratified the most important international treaties on human rights and elections.¹³

Violence against women dates back at least a century and a half across the world. History suggests that women were underrepresented in positions of authority prior to colonisation. Even in pre-jihad times like as in Zazzau, the Sarauniya of Zazzau and Iyayun the Queen of Oyo were examples of queens who had their own palaces and reigned over their own kingdoms.¹⁴Despite the fact that just a few women have been given the opportunity to lead, there are hundreds of their male counterparts in every single situation. In Nigerian politics, sexism has become a serious issue. Cultural, religious, economic and masculine chauvinism are commonly cited as reasons for women's lack of engagement in Nigeria's government and politics.¹⁵In general, African society and Nigerian culture place most of the leadership responsibilities in the hands of males, promoting gender inequality in the process.

Feminists believe that women's marginality in the administration and conduct of public affairs is a result of their entrenchment in the globalized capitalist processes of production. Women's contributions to decision-making in traditional culture were not acknowledged. Every significant gathering of the family, community, and even the government establishments is studiously avoided by women. Women are unable to attend most community development meetings since they are conducted at night. Because of this arrangement, the majority of Nigerian women remains at home and raises their families. Feminists, on the other hand, have failed profoundly in their explanatory understanding of the attitudes of the feminine gender toward self-emulation. For instance, the 1991 population census estimated Nigerian women's number at roughly 44 million, or almost 50%, and by implication, half of the country's electorates. Feminine gender-self-destructive elements include this fall in female involvement in governance (National Population Census Commission). It's been a long time since this electoral strength has been transformed into forceful female governmental and electoral advantages.¹⁶

Women have risen to the occasion, particularly in the wake of the century and also in the 2011 general elections. Politics and religion have both seen an increase in the number of women in positions of power. Gender inequity and male chauvinism in Nigeria have been endemic for decades, and this is a huge step in the right direction.

Egba women in Abeokuta protested against taxes and exploitation in the 1940s under the leadership of an Egan lady. She also founded the Nigerian women's organization. For her first major political step in 1944, she founded the Abeokuta Ladies Club, which worked to improve the quality of life for women in Abeokuta by promoting adult education and charity work.¹⁷The national women's movement was founded during the

pre-Beijing activism period under the leadership of chief (Mrs.) Adegoke, who brought Nigerian women's issues to the attention of an international forum for the first time in Montreal, Canada, in 1952. One of the movements that led to the founding of the National Council of Women's Society (NCWS) in 1958 also attended another meeting in which it was claimed that Nigerian women exercised political power prior to colonial control. For these women, colonization resulted in a decline in both the political and economic standing of African women.¹⁸

Several studies have shown areas where colonial impact has reduced independent female engagement. It is because of the harm done to women's standing at the outset of colonial rule that the public now views women as terrorists in positions of power. However, she was later impeached and replaced by male equivalents, as was Mrs. Olujunmi, among others, as speaker of the house of representatives in 2007.¹⁹

While a female deputy governor of Osun state was in office from 2003 to 2010, she was largely absent from the state's efforts with rural women. Nigeria's previous military president's ex-first lady has launched an initiative called "Better Life for Rural Women"²⁰ was one of Babangida's key thinkers on the issue of women's empowerment. Later, the name of the program was changed to better living for rural dwellers from better life program (BLP).²¹

As a result, a woman from Africa who hasn't had the chance to go beyond the continent or do any research into what's going on there could believe that women's oppression and minimal involvement in leadership and decision-making roles are unique to Africa. As a result of this discrepancy, women in the United States are withdrawing from the workforce, even in the United States, where the problem of diversity is addressed critically and legally. Women in Africa are viewed as solely fit for domestic duties,

such as cooking and caring for children, while males are expected to provide for the family's material needs. A few African sub-cultural circumstances remain in which a guy drinks local wine early in the morning while his wife and children work on their family's farm.

As a result of the African belief that politics is only the domain of males, women in the culture are labeled as everything from prostitutes to irresponsible to adulterous. Those ladies ended up divorced as a result of the disparate labels they were given. In the second and third republics, female senators appeared on the political scene in 1983. In fact, in the fourth republic of Nigeria, a woman was elected as the state's deputy governor in 1999.²²

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Women in Nigeria suffer a major problem in the form of gender-based violence, particularly in the political sphere. The difficulty, then, is that women's participation in Nigeria's 2015-2019 federal elections may have been significantly influenced by economic hardship.

Women's participation and representation in political offices is still not encouraging when compared to their male counterparts when compared to the number of seats in each political office that can be held by women as stated in the scope of this research. It aims to draw attention to the issue of women's lack of full participation in Nigeria's public effacing because of the challenges they've experienced. This was the difficulty that prompted the researcher to begin this investigation in the hopes of quickly resolving it.

In Nigeria, the situation is much the same as it is in the rest of Africa. There is a lack of support for women's participation in politics, particularly in the social, economic, and cultural spheres. The research believes that Nigerian growth would lag behind the development of countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, which have supportive conditions for women. Nigeria is no exception to the rule that women with their intuition can and do start organizations to build their country if they are enabled to do so. Gender violence and women's political involvement in Nigeria, 2015-2019, are the focus of this study's restricted scope.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the gender violence and women political participation in Nigeria; 2015-2019. The specific objectives are to:

1. To explore gender violence as an act of limitation to women participation in politics.
2. To assess level of women participation in Nigerian politics.
3. To identify the challenges facing women participation in Nigerian politics.
4. Proffer strategies that can assist women realize their political leadership potentials.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How does gender violence act as a limitation to women participation in politics?
2. What is the level of women participation in politics in Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges facing women participation in Nigeria politics?
4. How can women discover their leadership potentials in Nigeria politics?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The role of women in Nigerian politics is a hotly debated topic in the country's political arena. Because of this, the topic of violence has been viewed as an attempt to undermine women's fundamental rights. As a result, the following issues will be addressed in this study:

The conclusions of this study will help women understand the importance of getting involved in politics. As a result, they will have a greater influence in society. In order for women's concerns to be heard at the local level, they must be represented in local politics.

A further debate on the necessity for female governors or presidents of Nigeria might be sparked by the findings of this study. Women's political engagement is a hot topic of discussion, and this debate will likely continue indefinitely. In order to recognize the role of Nigerian women in the political process, this research aims to extend the discourse.

It is also anticipated that the findings of this study would educate governments at all levels on the need of ensuring that political power is distributed in an equal manner between men and women. The study's conclusions and recommendations will reflect this.

If this study's findings are accurate, it is hoped that they'll challenge the mainstream media's coverage of women in politics.

Finally, this study's findings will be invaluable to future scholars in the field of gender and politics. As a result, the following studies will be influenced by the study design, literature review, and theoretical framework.

Because of their child-bearing, mother- and wife-making tasks, women are often omitted from politics on the basis of this logic, however this narrative excludes certain women. First and foremost, women are expected to prioritize this issue. A woman's leadership potential is based on whether or not she can demonstrate that she is a decent, loving, and responsible mother and wife. Most women, on the other hand, have a variety of reasons for not getting involved in politics. In order to participate in politics, one must be able to attend nighttime meetings. These gatherings go against the grain of traditional gender roles, which dictate that women spend their evenings at home with their families, rather than out and about. Women who get involved in politics are viewed as prostitutes because of the nighttime meetings and because it is regarded that since politics is masculine, for a woman to ascend to the top, she must use her 'bottom power' to advance. The importance of women in politics cannot be overstated in light of the foregoing. In order to create a better society, we must tap into the leadership abilities of women. Women have held leadership positions since the country's independence and have done so admirably. However, one of the reasons for this study is to contribute to the frontier of knowledge in the domain of gender and politics in Nigeria in general and among Nigerian women in particular..

1.7 Scope of the Study

Specifically, the 2015-2019 general elections will be the focus of this research. Specifically, the research will look on Nigeria's gender violence and female political engagement in the 2015-2019 electoral cycle.

According to this study, the number of women who participated in Nigeria's 2015-2019 political dispensation was included in the scope of this research. Nigerian studies haven't grown significantly during the past few years, despite this fact. After a decade of democracy, women's and youth's ability to participate meaningfully in government and development has grown, resulting in a synergistic expansion of women's political participation in their countries of government (Local, State and Federal).

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher was faced with a number of constraints in the process of carrying out this study. Some of them are discussed below:

Time: Time is one limiting factor of the study. This relates to the fact that this research work is one out of a number of different courses, the researcher is pursuing for first semester examination for the final year.

Inadequate Finance: The price of most of the materials needed for the study had been increased in the recent past. This constrained the researcher to strict conservation of almost everything at the expense of presenting a better work.

Lack of enough materials

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Democracy: This is a system of government whereby people are free to exercise their political powers either directly or through their representatives.

Gender Inequality: Gender inequality refers to disparity between individuals due to gender. Gender is constructed socially through social interaction as well as biologically through chromosomes, brain structures and hormonal differences.

Gender: Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behavior, activities, and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women.

Nigeria: This is a country which was named from River Niger the Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate in 1914.

Political Parties: This is an organized group of people who share similar political views and who act deliberately together in order to gain control of the decision making and control machinery government and creates public policy.

Politics: The activities involved on getting and using power in public life and to influence decision that affect a country or a society.

Women Empowerment: This refers to the provision and availability of opportunity and services which enables women to actively participation and contribute to political, economic, social and cultural development of the nation.

Women Right: These are inalienable, integral and indivisible parts of universal human rights.

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Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

This chapter focuses on a literature study that identifies areas of agreement and disagreement among academics. As a result, there is a knowledge vacuum that our research aims to fill. The following are the subheadings for this section:

- Conceptual Framework
- Theoretical Framework
- Empirical Studies
- Summary of Literature Gap

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Gender

Men and women have different roles and duties in our families, our societies, and our cultures. Both men and women have gender expectations when it comes to personal traits, abilities, and behaviors (femininity and masculinity).¹As children, we are taught gender norms and expectations. They are subject to change throughout time, and cultural variations can also affect them. Gender roles are influenced by a variety of societal factors, including political standing, class, ethnicity, disability, age, and more.

Women's subordination (or men's dominance) is socially produced when gender is used to social analysis. This means that it is possible to amend or stop the subordination at any time. It's neither genetically preset nor unchangeable in the long run.²

Gender refers to the variety of qualities that distinguish between masculine and femininity. Gendered societal structures (e.g., gender roles) or one's own personal

gender identity might all be included in this list, depending on the situation. It is widely accepted that gender is a fundamental feature of social structure. Those who don't fit into one of the two gender categories (boys/men and girls/women) fall under the umbrella term non-binary or gender queer in most cultures. South Asian hijras are an example of a third-gender minority group that exists alongside the more commonly accepted binary genders of "man" and "woman" (and fourth genders, and so on.).³

Rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence are all linked to gender, which is the strongest predictor of these crimes. Men are the primary perpetrators of these crimes, which target men, women, and children. One in every six women in the United States has been the victim of a rape attempt or rape (14.8 percent completed, 2.8 percent attempted) One in 33 males in the United States has been the victim of a rape attempt or completion at some point in their lives. There is a strong correlation between the number of male rape victims and perpetrators. However, this is not to imply that all or even most males are violent, or that women are incapable of such aggression.⁴

When we talk about gender, we're referring to the emotional and physical connections that exist between men and women. Gender is socially formed, not physiologically defined by a person's sex features. A basic organizing principle of society, it regulates the processes of production, reproduction, consumption, and distribution.⁵It's common for people to misinterpret the term "gender" to mean "the promotion of women."

Gender issues, on the other hand, focus on women and the interaction between men and women, their roles, access to and control over resources, division of labor, interests and needs, as defined by the FAO definition. Household safety, happiness, planning, and productivity are all impacted by gender relations.⁶

2.1.2 Concept of Violence

Armed conflict occurs when one person or group of people uses physical force against the wants or desires of another without justification or justification.⁷The political equilibrium system is upset when violence, particularly political violence, occurs.⁸In the context of a political community, political violence encompasses any attacks by members of that community on the political regime, its players – such as rival political organizations and incumbents – and/or the regime's political policies. Different sorts of political violence exist.⁹If a sudden change in government is what you're after, a coup d'état might be the catalyst (either military or political). In addition to war, terrorism, sabotage, assassination, and a variety of other types of political violence, riot and insurgency are other examples. The first vice of politics is violence. For one thing, it's not just marked by highly organized political activities like overthrows of regimes and declarations of a new ideology (or belief system) and the creation of new states.

The threat of violence has been recognized in African countries as a component of local, national, and international politics.¹⁰If a sudden change in government is what you're after, a coup d'état might be the catalyst (either military or political). In addition to war, terrorism, sabotage, assassination, and a variety of other types of political violence, riot and insurgency are other examples. The first vice of politics is violence. For one thing, it's not just marked by highly organized political activities like overthrows of regimes and declarations of a new ideology (or belief system) and the creation of new states.

The threat of violence has been recognized in African countries as a component of local, national, and international politics".¹¹Most of the world's political systems are plagued by bloodshed. This is especially true in emerging nations, where political violence has become a key aspect of the political process, especially following independence. The peaceful, free, and fair nature of the 1959 election, despite the results being challenged

by certain political parties, was hailed as a sign that Nigeria would embrace and entrench democracy after its independence in 1960. As a result of this, Nigeria has seen a rise in political violence and killings since its independence, despite the country's commitment to democracy.¹²

The low degree of female engagement in Nigerian politics may be attributed to a variety of factors, one of which being the prevalence of political violence.¹³ It has become a defining element of Nigerian democracy. In Nigeria, political violence appears to be an accepted element of the political process, which discourages many Nigerians, especially women, from participating.

Violence, intimidation, and thuggery in Nigerian politics is a major deterrent for female politicians.¹⁴ The political landscape of Nigeria is plagued by violence. Since the start of the present democratic experiment in May 1999, political activity in Nigeria have seen enormous levels of power struggles and political violence. Between 1999 and June 2002, more than 10,000 people were killed in violent conflicts. As a result of different acts of political violence that took place in Nigeria in 2001, the Nigerian Red Cross helped relocate around 250,00 individuals and 32,000 households. Economic power is intimately linked to political power. The placement and distribution of scarce resources are determined by those who occupy power positions. There is always a price to pay to enter into politics in Nigeria since politics is a competition for more money. If you want to get into politics, you're going to have to compete with others, which might lead to political violence because it involves spending a lot of money. As a result, political violence becomes a common component of the battle for power.¹⁵

As a result of political violence in Nigeria, families and communities have been divided and social groupings have been polarized, leading to tensions between and within social groups. Assassinations, bomb blasts, intimidation, killings, and damage of property

have all been observed by Nigerians in the past and are presently on the rise. In the Nigerian context, political violence might be seen as a reaction to frustrated conditions.¹⁶ On January 5, 1966, young Nigerian Army officers—Majors and Captains—took control, assassinating Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa and Northern and Western Regions Premiers Ahmadu Bello and Ladoke Akintola. This was the first noteworthy incident of political violence in Nigeria following independence.¹⁷ Anambra State's former Governor Chris Ngige was kidnapped in a plan to topple him on July 10th, 2003, the first big civilian coup in Nigeria.

Since the present democratic administration in Nigeria was established in 1999, political activities in the country have seen unprecedented levels of power struggle and political violence. It has been estimated that the number of persons slain for political purposes exceeds the total number of people killed in the Nigerian civil war, which lasted from 1967 to 1970.¹⁸ The "Trial of Blood" was an act of political violence and assassination that claimed the lives of more than twenty notable Nigerians. Between 1999 and 2011, there were a number of politically motivated acts of violence, including murder, assassination, and kidnapping.

1. On September 9, 1999, Sunday Ugwu, the younger brother of Ugwu, a member of the Enugu State House of Assembly, was shot and killed by unknown assailants.
2. A member of the Rivers State Assembly, Monday N. Fembari, was slain on December 18, 2001.
3. In Odigbo Local Government Area, Ondo State, PDP leader Janet Olapade was slain on August 13, 2002.
4. Ebonyi State's Ebonyi North Local Governmental Secretary, Anthony Nwodo, was killed on March 21, 2003.

5. Onyewuchi Iwuchukwu, an ANPP leader in Ikeduru, Imo State, was assassinated on April 19, 2003.
6. On May 3rd, 2003, Nassarawa State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Joyce Fatai, was assassinated.
7. Aminiasoari Dikibo, the PDP's South-South National Vice Chairman, was killed on January 6, 2004.
8. On February 5, 2005, Sunday Atte, the head of the Legislative Council for the Yagba East LGA in the state of Kogi, was shot dead.
9. Funso Williams, a PDP candidate for governor of Lagos State, was slain on July 30, 2006.
10. One of Nigeria's most prominent politicians, Segun Oladimeji, better known as "Segelu," was slain by a gunman on September 14, 2007.
11. Assassinated on March 4, 2010: Ademola Adegbite, Oyo State PDP Chairman for Atiba Local Government.
12. Modu Fannami Gubio, a contender for governor, was shot and killed on his way home from leading Jumat at the palace of the Shehu of Borno, along with Ali Modu Sheriff and five others.
13. Over 800 government cars belonging to the Akwa Ibom state government were destroyed at Ikot Ekpene and Uyo.¹⁹

Before, during, and after the election, there may be instances of political violence.²⁰ He cites the following as important contributors to Nigeria's political unrest:

1. There is a lot of corruption
2. Unemployment
3. a lack of security
4. The absence of a democratic culture

5. The justice system's failure.

2.1.3 Concept of Gender Violence

Intimate partner abuse in heterosexual and same sex relationships is a kind of gender violence, as is rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment. The phrase "gender violence" refers to all forms of violence against men, women, children, adolescents, homosexual, transgender, and gender non-conforming persons, as well as all forms of violence against the LGBT community. As a result of this sort of violence, gender relations are affected or impacted in some manner. To combat this violence effectively, we must address the cultural factors that promote violence as a part of masculinity.²¹

Sexual and various forms of domestic abuse against men, women, partners, and children are all examples of gender-based violence. There is 'public' and 'private' gender violence. As well as in the home and in society at large, governmental actors such as the police, military, and immigration officials can also be complicit in this type of violence. In cases of gender-based violence, women are disproportionately threatened by men they know.²²

This human rights violation, which has its roots in gender discrimination, is still one of the most prevalent ways that women are harmed. Gender-based violence is when someone is harmed because of their gender, and this is wrong. Male and female are both affected by gender-based violence, although women and girls are the main targets. Since most gender-based violence is committed by males, the words "gender-based violence" or "violence against women" are commonly used interchangeably. Even Nevertheless, emphasizing that violence against women is often motivated by power imbalances between men and women is critical in addressing the issue. These crimes

against women have a disproportionate number of victims, and EIGE uses the words interchangeably throughout its activities to reflect this.²³

Women's lowly standing in society is the basis for gender-based violence. Any act or threat by males or organizations ruled by men that harms a woman or girl physically, sexually, or psychologically is included. Women's sex violence is normalized and reinforced by traditional values, social conventions, and institutions in many societies across the world. Sexual violence (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment) is the most common form of gender-based violence, but there are also four types of emotional violence (psychological and verbal abuse), an economic form of violence (restriction of movement and denial of resources), and harmful traditional practices (child marriage, female genital mutilation, so-called "honour" killings).²⁴

Domestic violence, child sex abuse, forced pregnancy, and sexual slavery are all examples of gender-based violence. Other forms of gender-based violence include honor killings, female genital mutilation, dowry-related violence, rape and murder in armed conflict, and emotional abuse such as coercion and sexual slavery. Other forms of violence against women include the trafficking in women and girls for the sake of prostitution, the marriage of coercion, and the use of sexual harassment and intimidation in the workplace.²⁵

2.1.4 Conceptual Clarification of Violence against Women

So many of us who are victims of violence against women believe we are to blame for this epidemic. Rape, assault, sexual harassment, and child abuse are just a few of the many types of violence for which people feel justified inflicting harm on others. On a daily basis, we're bombarded with images of male aggression towards women from the news to TV shows to movies to advertising. It's a reality of life for women of all ages,

ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses, regardless of gender identity. When we talk about violence against women, we're not just talking about physical assault. Sexual, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse are all forms of abuse that fall under the umbrella term of "abuse".²⁶ Domestic and familial violence and sexual assault are two of the most common forms of violence against women that are addressed in the National Plan.

"Violence against women" is defined by the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women as any act of gender-based violence that harms or suffers women, including threats of such harms or sufferings, coercion or the arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether it occurs in public or in private life. Each state and territory in Australia has its own set of legal definitions. Even if there isn't a single definition, acts of violence that occur between individuals who have, or have had, a close connection are at the core of domestic violence, as is a pattern of behavior meant to instill fear in a partner, such as employing aggressive or threatening behavior. When violence is used as part of a strategy to exert authority and control over women and their children, it can be criminal or non-criminal; the threatening or violent behavior can include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse; and it can be both criminal and non-criminal.²⁷

Slaps, shoves, hits, punches, pushes, throws, kicks, arms twisted, strangling, burning, and stabbing are all examples of physical violence.

Controlling behaviours, such as withholding money, cutting off contact with loved ones, humiliating the victim repeatedly, making threats against the victim's children, or threatening physical harm or death, all fall under the umbrella of psychological and emotional abuse.

Forcibly controlling another person's money or possessions is an example of financial or economic abuse. Financial resources can be taken from a victim, and they may be denied the chance to work or make decisions about their own money.

Intimate partner violence and other forms of interpersonal violence are all included under the umbrella concept of "family violence." The types of actions involved are the same as those specified for domestic violence. Just as the National Plan acknowledges that only some forms of domestic abuse are criminal offences, it also acknowledges that any form of family violence that causes the victim to live in terror is unacceptable. Because it encompasses a wide variety of marriage and kinship connections in which violence may occur, the phrase "family violence" has become the most popular term for identifying indigenous people's experiences.²⁸

Assaults of a sexual nature As examples of sexual violence, we can list rape, sexual assault with objects, forced pornography or pornographic activity, forced prostitution, and forced sexual encounters with the perpetrator's associates.

2.1.5 The Concept of Political Participation

All of these efforts are meant to affect the decision-making process by a single person. Citizens' civic engagement is exemplified in this fashion, and as such, it is an essential component of every democracy. The term "political engagement" refers to the act of making one's views and ideas known in the political arena. This word is frequently used to denote a citizen's effort to influence a political outcome.²⁹

All lawful efforts undertaken by citizens to influence the selection of government officials and the activities they carry out are considered political engagement. Traditional political engagement is emphasized by this definition and excludes unusual political participation, such as illegal protests, thuggery and politically motivated

terrorist acts. Political involvement has alternatively been defined as citizens' efforts to influence the government's policies. Individuals and groups, whether traditional or unconventional, may engage in a wide range of actions aimed at influencing the decision-making process. Citizens engage in a wide range of actions to have a say in the people who hold public office and the policies they pursue through political involvement. The ability to participate in public affairs, the right to run for office and the right to register as a candidate are all part of what he sees as the foundations of political participation, according to him. This includes the right to express oneself, to organize and to associate with fellow citizens in order to seize control of government institutions.³⁰

Participation in politics is another manner in which a person is able to play a role in the societal decision-making process and decide on how best to accomplish the society's common goals. Political behavior is one component, and it focuses on the ways in which people participate in it. One can engage in it either directly or indirectly. Selection or election of political leaders, policy formation, and other civic engagements are only some of the ways in which citizens can participate in the political process.³¹ Politics in any community, civilized or savage, is fundamentally about gaining control of and acquiring power, as well as influencing decision-making. While this is true, it is also true that Nigerians are influenced by their cultural, economic, political, religious, and educational backgrounds.³²

Defining what constitutes political engagement is not easy, and one of the main issues with the various definitions is that they are either more or less restrictive. A common view of political engagement, they say, excludes coercive kinds of participation since they are viewed as voluntary and so not political. Consequently, they defined political

participation as the act of participating in the political process, whether voluntary or compelled.³³

There are many ways to get active in politics, such as voting, campaigning for a political party, or supporting party activity in other ways. Other options include protesting, joining political organizations, and serving on local boards of directors as a volunteer. Conventional and non-conventional political engagement, on the other hand, has yet to be defined by scholars. Campaigning for officeholders and casting ballots in elections have traditionally been seen as normal behaviors that draw on long-established institutions of representative governance. The opposite is also true: Unconventional involvement challenges or contradicts long-established institutions or the prevailing culture in some way. There are two types of political engagement: conventional and unconventional. Conventional participation includes acts such as voting and writing letters to policymakers; whereas unorthodox participation includes boycotting and other forms of civil disobedience.³⁴

Unconventional political actions include things like rigging elections, defacing polling places, assassinating political opponents, defacing political party buildings, and defacing campaign signs and posters. As a result of the aforementioned study, political engagement encompasses a wide range of actions that can take various forms depending on the political culture of a particular nation. It is also determined by a nation's political climate, legal structure, and socialization process whether or not an activity is conventional or unconventional. In this book, political engagement is seen from a traditional viewpoint, including voter registration, membership in a political party, voting in elections, candidacy for political office, and engaging in political discussions.³⁵

2.1.6 Nigerian Women and Politics

Women in Nigeria are at the forefront of efforts to push their government to meet the West African quota of 30% for women. As a species, we've gone a long way, but there's still a long way to go before women can have equal rights in society and in politics. The Nigerian government and civil society were urged to make concerted efforts to improve affirmative action for women in government representation at all levels during the side sessions of the Commonwealth People's forum held in the country. Women have been advocated for in Nigeria's administration, and it has been urged that they be given priority for specific positions. Like the rest of the world, women account for half of Nigeria's population of over 130 million. Despite their growing numbers, women are not seeing more representation in positions of power or having their interests and concerns taken into account by policymakers.³⁶

Women are currently fighting for equal representation on the list of candidates in South Africa (one woman for every man). There is still a lot of anti-feminist sentiment in Nigeria. "Affirmative Action is rejected at community level by traditional and religious leaders, and there is opposition in political parties because women are not engaged (at the centre of power) where the lists are prepared," said Nana Tankoh of Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA). Men fear that the political limelight will be taken away from them by the entry of women into politics.³⁷

Until there is concrete proof of a significant improvement in the status of women in Nigeria, the country cannot call itself a democratic one. Women must be given the same opportunities as men to participate fully in all sectors of government. Women are being depicted and maintained as housewives who belong in the kitchen rather than the political arena by being excluded from crucial roles in political party organizations. Women's participation in leadership positions should be recognized and promoted if

puerility of stated viewpoints and contributions is a feature of a democratic society. Democracy can only be democratic when men and women work together on national policies and laws as equal partners. This country's political process will benefit from more males granting women access to positions of authority sooner rather than later.³⁸

Slowing down democratic progress and stifling economic growth will occur if women are kept out of decision-making positions since males control most political institutions and utilize them to serve their own interests. When it comes to making laws and policies that benefit the whole population, the government's ability to keep everyone on board determines how effective the decision is in meeting the wants and needs of the entire country. Women's perspectives should be considered in decision-making since doing so increases the likelihood of arriving at viable, broadly supported solutions.

The hallmark of a truly democratic framework is its ability to conceptualise the issues that affect people's lives in a way that encourages equal participation from women and men. Given this, democracy cannot be gender-blind. If we want to see a significant shift in power dynamics, we need to ensure that women and men are equally represented at all levels of decision making. Women's participation in politics in Nigeria has been minimal since the country's independence in 1960. When it comes time to vote, however, women are more likely to turn out than men. Dancing women are rewarded with meagre gifts such as sacks of rice, salt, and magi cubes because of their one useful skill.³⁹

To maintain women in a subservient position, it is essential to encourage them to dance in order to divert their attention away from positions of authority. There is a glaring omission here: the basic right of women to participate in public life. Practices are putting women's involvement in governance at risk. In the political arena, there is a systematic scheme to keep women out of the public eye.⁴⁰When it comes to politics,

women are underrepresented in both the elective and political spheres. They are not nominated by political parties, and the electorate, swayed by societal gender stereotypes, instead elects males.

Patriarchal standards that push women to the margins and demand that they be seen but not heard, as well as the societal conception of females as inferior to men, have been blamed for the lack of female engagement in politics. Women's engagement in politics is hindered by an uneven playing field. Political, cultural, and social environments are generally hostile to women who enter politics. It is becoming increasingly common in Nigerian politics for politicians to resort to violence as a means of winning votes, which scares off many women and makes the political atmosphere appear dangerous.⁴¹

Politicians use violence to keep women away from politics; they beat them, threaten their families, and arrange up marriages to fail as a way to scare them away from running for public office. Women's political clout is stifled by their gender.⁴²As a result of the widespread belief that winning an election entitles the winner to free reign over the country's coffers, political engagement in Nigeria has become an expensive proposition. Women have fewer possibilities than males to gain money and expand their economic foundation, making it difficult for them to win positions of elective or appointive authority in government.

A fundamental barrier to women's political engagement is the gender division of labour in our society, which pushes men to give women all domestic responsibilities. The effect is a reduction in political activism. Women are underrepresented in politics for several reasons, including but not limited to: religious discrimination within government bureaucracy; night meetings; god-fatherism; name-calling; the old boys' network; and religious equality.⁴³Women's involvement in politics is hindered by the lack of domestication of international instruments accepted by the Nigerian government.

Political equality has been impeded by cultural and historic norms that subject women to male supremacy. They face a variety of obstacles, including confrontation, intimidation, social prejudice, and a lack of public support.

Women in politics in Nigeria face a patriarchal political model. Most of the time, they don't have the backing of a political party or the resources necessary to enter politics.⁴⁴ Although some males have stated that women are inherently apolitical, this is not always the case, since women in both the present and the past have been known to engage in political activism. During the 1929 war, women like Margaret Ekpo, Gambo Sawaba, Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, and Aba and Ibio-bio were politically involved. The colonial administration's preference for males and the exclusion of women from Nigeria's political arena emboldened men to the disadvantage of women. Colonists wiped away the society's existing female political institutions and replaced them with exclusively male ones. Their masculinity policies steadily destroyed the pre-colonial era areas women formerly occupied and allowed males to destabilize the political system.⁴⁵

It's important to keep in mind, though, that some women lack the self-assurance needed to lead; they've taken on the old idea that males are born leaders and therefore have no business running against them in elections. We are told. Women's political engagement is sometimes discouraged by the idea that they are their own worst enemy. The media's disinterest in adequately covering female politicians is a powerful political weapon working against them. When it comes to portraying female politicians, the media has fallen short. As a result, gender stereotypes like "good wives," "bad wives," "husband snatchers," "witches," "diabolical," "wicked," "fashion aware," and "witches" continue to be perpetuated in popular culture.⁴⁶ Women, on the other hand, still do not fully grasp the significance of media relations in today's business world. They have no idea how the

men have stayed one step ahead of them by securing media attention. Winning elections is aided greatly by favorable publicity in the media.

For some time now, political scientists have argued that sexism is a fundamental roadblock to women's success in politics. According to research, studies have revealed that the military government has a detrimental effect on the country's political culture. In a male-dominated, male-oriented military atmosphere, a women-devaluing mindset was formed because of the military dictatorship. All of these roadblocks work together to further diminish women's visibility in political leadership positions. Women's political empowerment has been the focus of much of the fourth Republic's activism since its inception in 1999. In 1999, women took a more active role in party elections. Notwithstanding all the calls for Affirmative Action to be enforced, women held fewer than 5% of the elective posts in federal, state, and local government between 1999 and 2003, despite this.⁴⁷

In his first term as president, Olusegun Obasanjo tried to address this issue by appointing nine women to positions of power out of a total of 44. Only a few of states, led by Ogun, had a female commissioner in the first year of the Fourth Republic. The response of female politicians was not proportional to the potential of that openness, even though most political parties waived the levies imposed on female aspirants. Women were able to score better deals in 2003. There were two female presidential candidates and four female vice presidential candidates. No one was elected to their positions by the people.

It was said at a news briefing by Transition Monitoring Group (TMG).

“The present state of democratic governance in Nigeria gives us serious cause to worry. Instead of making progress, democratic governance appears to be in crises if not in danger as a result of many factors in the country which include the following: the state of

insecurity in the country, lack of institutional independence in INEC, high level of corruption, interference with the Judiciary, killing of electoral reform process undemocratic local government system, lawlessness and lack of internal democracy in Nigeria's political parties, growing rate of poverty in the country, and marginalisation of women, youths and persons with disability in the political process".⁴⁸

On the country's ongoing insecurity, TMG stated the administration had failed, adding "under the Goodluck Jonathan civilian based governance regime, innocent civilians are slaughtered, wounded, robbed, raped and abducted on a daily basis". Armed robbers, kidnappers, militants, assassins, and most recently, the terrorist actions of the Boko Haram organization continue unabated by the security authorities. Most Nigerians are afraid these days. Amnesty is being offered by several Nigerian governments to armed organizations and individuals who have violated the dignity of countless Nigerians' lives. Section 33 of the Constitution's protection of the right to life places an obligation on the government to intervene and preserve lives. This has been a huge failure for the federal government. the Uwais panel's findings "so as to establish fair playing fields for the 2015 general elections," the TMG advised the government to examine and implement it immediately, Respecting the independence of the judiciary and the National Assembly is an important part of the rule of law. In order to ensure the independence of the Independent National Electoral Commission, every member of the INEC board who is linked with a political party should be removed from office (INEC).⁴⁹

2.1.6.1 Women Participation in Nigeria Politics: Historical Perspective

Pre-Colonial Period

Nigerian women were active and effective members of their traditional political government prior to colonial rule.⁵⁰ Even while pre-colonial women's political participation lagged behind that of men, their position in governance was complementary rather than subordinate.⁵¹ Even in Nigeria's most traditional communities, women have had a significant impact on the development of their countries. Although they had a major part in Nigeria's pre-colonial politics, they were mostly marginalised after the country's colonial period, the people of their particular territories were also actively engaged in politics and had a say over the administration of government in those regions. Pre-colonial Nigeria, however, had varying levels of female engagement in the public arena, ranging from a monarchy like the Igbo tribes to an open democracy like the Yoruba kingdom. Gender segregation was common in traditional Nigerian culture, making it easier to gauge one's own level of authority and accomplishments. Sexist segregation, on the other hand, allowed women to have their own realms of operation and control in the society while yet allowing them to play a complementary role.⁵²

Certain political frameworks, which allowed men and women to share power, were defined and firmly established. In certain societies, women enjoyed equal rights and a voice in decision-making whereas in others, they played a supporting or subordinate role. Through this group, women were able to participate in political life.⁵³ That doesn't imply, however, that women had equal status in society. In pre-colonial Nigeria, there were few women who had political influence. Few women were able to participate in ancient rites, such as the Ogboni and Osugbo cults. Some of the notable women in traditional political governance in the south-west of Nigeria include Moremi of Ife, Efusetan of Ibadan, and Emotan. Others include the Erelu, Ayaba, and Olori (King's

Wives), Iyalode (Women's Leader), Iyalaje (Market Women's Leader), Yeye Oba (King's Mother), and Iya-olosa (Goddess Priest). No one can discount the importance of Iya Afin, Agan, and Abiye to the various kings' royal administrations.⁵⁴

Certainly, Queen Amina of Zaria had a major effect on the pre-colonial political growth of the emirate in Northern Nigeria and on Kambasa of Bony's achievements.⁵⁵ When Hausa nobility was replaced by Fulani/Muslim hegemony, women were completely barred from politics. After Amina's reign in Zaria's pre-Islamic history, no other Hausa monarch had a female in his court. Islam established clear distinctions between men and women in many aspects of life. Women were strictly forbidden from being visible in public places. In the Benin Empire, women had a restricted role in public life.⁵⁶ There were no women in any of the main positions. Craft guilds were governed by men, and even the marketplaces were controlled by the Benin King's representatives. The Iyaoba (King's Mother) and her court at Urelu were the only significant female political figures. They were strong and helped their sons' reigns succeed, as was the case with Iyaoba Idia, who is said to have contributed directly to the success of Esiegie's wars against Idah. They, on the other hand, did not represent the interests of Beninese women. Omu, the institution of the queen, was prevalent in riverine Igbo civilizations like as those in Onitsha, Asaba, Osomari, and Illah. As a result, the Omu's standing in the community was dependant on the Obi (king's) devotion, thereby restricting the office's influence. However, the men and women groups in the Igboland were involved in the management of the community's affairs.⁵⁷ Women were not completely barred from holding political office in pre-colonial Nigeria, despite the paucity of literature and history depicting the significance of women during this era and the fact that conventional African history presents only fragmentary depictions of women during this time period.⁵⁸ Because of

this, their political positions were overthrown and they became sidelined in today's political structures.⁵⁹

Colonial period

Like many other issues in Nigeria, the lack of women's engagement in politics may be traced back to colonization. It began with the colonial occupation and continued during Nigeria's independence and government, as well as the post-independence Nigeria, bringing together the previously separate southwest, southeast, and northern areas (Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa/Fulani). In Nigeria, women's political engagement was greatly influenced by colonialism. As a result of colonialism's political and economic enslavement, women were subservient to males and political power was given to men.⁶⁰

During colonial rule, women were not allowed to occupy any official posts in the government. To put it another way, colonial inception is to blame for the lack of acknowledgement of the political/leadership role of Nigerian women in Nigerian politics today. For centuries, women were stripped of their political authority by colonial administrations.⁶¹ As a result of this, the colonial rulers implemented a policy in which males were considered capable of contributing to society and, as a result, those who were fortunate enough to get an education were recruited. In the colonial administration's gender policy, women were denied both electoral and employment options, reducing their involvement in politics and the economy. In large part, this approach reinforced and generalized patriarchal norms in the country, and it marked the beginning of low female involvement in the formal government institutions, a tendency that has lasted to this day. While women in South Western Nigeria were the first in the nation to vote, their Northern counterpart were not, and it wasn't until 1976, after the elective concept had been brought to Nigeria, that the North's women were granted the right to vote.⁶²

In an effort to restructure traditional African economies so that they would be ready markets for European manufacturers and sources of cheap raw materials for their factories, colonial overlords gave economic power to men only in the cultivation of export crops, leaving women to focus on food crops.⁶³As a result of these factors, public policy has become less gender-sensitive and has contributed to the perpetuation of gender inequality in a wide range of social contexts. Women were also excluded from participating in politics since they were deemed unfit for public office and so could not vote, run for office, sit in parliament, or work in the government. This was all part of the colonial period's attempt to institutionalize male dominance in politics.⁶⁴The Nigerian womenfolk made nationalist groups, which served as vanguards against colonial rule, relevant despite their exclusion from mainstream Nigerian politics throughout colonial administration. Anti-colonial tax policies are the focus of women's political action and riots. Abeokuta Women's Union demonstrations between 1946 and 1958, the Eastern Region women's objection to increased school fees in 1958, and the women's opposition to the municipalization of their town in 1954 were significant in Nigeria's fight for independence.⁶⁵In the colonial era, the establishment of a women's political party in 1944 was a significant milestone in the advancement of women's political participation. During colonial times, women did make certain achievements, but those gains did not lead to greater participation in decision-making. It was males who controlled most of the early political groups, but women provided important means of support, both in terms of material goods and manpower. Women's organisations offered varied degrees of support to the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), and the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). Women, on the other hand, were underrepresented in leadership positions in this and other political parties throughout and after the nationalist era.⁶⁶A

single female senator was elected in 1958, but no female representatives were elected to the 312-seat House of Representatives or the federal cabinet.⁶⁷

Postcolonial period

The character of postcolonial politics also contributed to the minimal engagement of women in politics. Despite an upward trend in women's political engagement, a worryingly low level of involvement in Nigeria's political growth was seen.⁶⁸ The post-independence era's contentious politics hampered women's involvement. Ethnic, paternalistic and personality-based politics have taken hold in politics and political parties. Female voters were expected to back candidates from their own ethnic group, regardless of what such support meant to them personally. Women's collective action capacity diminished throughout the colonial era as party and ethnic loyalties took precedence above gender solidarity. There were only two female federal legislators and three in the Eastern House of Assembly from 1960 to 1965.⁶⁹ There were only four female parliamentarians in the entire country, but it was more than enough to give women a say in policymaking. Women were not encouraged to participate in politics during the military regime that followed this time period from 1966, and very little was heard of women at the top.⁷⁰ For the duration of military authority, women played only a minor part. Despite the fact that the military employs a number of highly skilled women, no one from such group was chosen to serve as military governor. Only one woman was appointed to each of Nigeria's 12 states in 1967, when the country was partitioned into its current 12 states; two women were also assigned to Oyo state.⁷¹ In 1975, there were no female members in the Obasanjo regime's 50-member Constituent Assembly. There were military dictators that didn't care about balancing constitutional interests, and that was the age in which we lived. Since women's organizations were outlawed as pressure groups, their operations were also disrupted. During the Murtala/Obasanjo regime's

preparations for relinquishing control to civilians, women were not prominent. In the fifty-member Constitutional Drafting Committee, there was not a single woman selected, and just a few of women were elected to local government councils in 1976. Despite increasing attempts to allow women the opportunity to participate in national development, the second republic saw no substantial change in women's political engagement.⁷² Despite the fact that women have been attempting to enter representative politics since 1979, they have had limited success, with just a small number of women serving in the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the States House of Assembly. Only three ministers, one senator, and eleven members of the House of Representatives were female. Every state legislature had no female members, and neither did the municipal government level, with no female chairman or councilor. In the two-year rule of Gen. Mohammed Buhari, women once again faded into the background.⁷³ However, the military began to elevate a few women to positions of power in the mid-1980s. Gen Ibrahim Babangida's arrival in 1985 marked a shift in military officials' attitudes about women's leadership.

The emergence of the First Lady Syndrome was a significant component of the growing prominence of women in politics. This, on the other hand, was nothing more than a self-serving ploy. The Better Life for Rural Women program was established under these auspices and later renamed by the following First Lady to the Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP).⁷⁴

2.1.7 Women's Political Participation

Anyone or any group can rise to the highest levels of authority in a democratic society, regardless of their gender.⁷⁵ Due to the current state of gender equality in society, women are less likely than males to get involved in politics. There is widespread agreement that women make up a considerable part of the world's population and have

made major contributions in all aspects of social life.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, when it comes to participating in politics, women are seen as little more than a "shuttle," a body to be observed but unheard. A core principle supporting gender equality in decision-making is the belief that everyone should have a voice in matters that directly impact them. In order to successfully incorporate women's perspectives into all levels of decision-making, from the private to the public and from the local to the global, it is stated that women should participate equally with males at all levels, from the private to the public and from the local to the worldwide.⁷⁷

A nation can benefit greatly from having more women involved in politics and other spheres of public life. Therefore, the participation of women is crucial to the development of every nation. The Declaration of Affirmative Action was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, recognising the significance of this issue by requiring that 30 percent of all posts in government-owned businesses be filled by women. Nigeria is a signatory to the protocol of action, but it has not yet enacted any laws that directly address the Beijing statement.⁷⁸

At this point, a look back at Nigeria's political and development history reveals a lack of effective mechanisms to encourage women to participate in the present democratic process, such as the changes in Nigeria's election act that appear to hinder women from participating.

Line 2 of the Electoral Act should be altered by eliminating the words "independent candidate" from section 82(3)(b). "Section 87(4) of the Electoral Act's Principal Act should be amended by introducing the following additional subsections immediately after the subsection (4)(11).

(12)

(A) Every political party in Nigeria must have a National Executive Committee (NEC) under its constitution, which is the party's top decision-making body.

(B) A political party's National Executive Committee (NEC) should have the following members:

- i. Party-affiliated former presidents, including the current one.
- ii. Current and past party members who serve as vice presidents
- iii. Party-affiliated governors
- iv. the party-affiliated National Assembly members.
- v. Former National Assembly chairmen who are currently party members
- vi. When pertinent, the board of trustees' chairman and secretary
- vii. Vice Presidents of the United States
- viii. Ex-chairmen of the national organization BOT
- ix: Party State Chairmen
- x. Party leaders at the national level.

One half (A12) of the political party's total membership should constitute a quorum for NEC meetings.

(D) Two-thirds (2/3) of the NEC's quorum is required for all NEC decisions on electoral affairs.

Nigerian politics is dominated by males, and the involvement of women is negligible. This was the impetus for the Minister of Women Affairs, Mrs. Josephine Anenih, to organize the National Summit on Women Participation in Politics, which took place on August 23 in Lagos.

In Nigeria, patriarchal beliefs and the prevalence of political violence have a significant impact on women's political engagement. It was in the year 2006 that Nigeria launched its National Gender Policy, a framework for promoting gender equality in order to foster economic growth and progress. However, women's political engagement remains shockingly low despite the Policy's stated goal of 35 percent by 2015.⁷⁹

Nigeria was rated 133rd in the world for the participation of women in politics before the 2015 elections. Only nine of the 109 Senate seats and 24 of the 352 House seats are now held by women. There are no female governors in any of Nigeria's 36 states. Votes are still being counted in the municipal elections and these statistics are not expected to alter much.⁸⁰In the 2015 sub-national elections, 87 of the 380 candidates for governor and deputy governor were women, despite the fact that there was only one female contender for President (22.9 percent)

- 122 of the 747 candidates for the Senate were eliminated in the first round (16 percent)
- 267 of the 1774 House of Representatives hopefuls (15 percent).⁸¹

Because of the political atmosphere, it is improbable that Nigeria would meet its 35 percent objective of female candidates for elected office. Nigeria, unlike many other African countries, does not have a formal quota system that, in certain circumstances, can be used to promote the participation of women in politics. As a result of this lack of quota, coupled with cultural and institutional issues, women are generally unable to participate in politics. Many of Nigeria's political leaders have military links, making it difficult for women to get access to their riches, influence, and power, as has been the case for much of the country's history. Women are discouraged or barred from entering official politics in Nigeria because of the expensive expense of mounting a campaign and the country's socio-cultural and religious conservatism.⁸²

2.1.7.1 Women Participation in Nigeria Politics: Analytical Perspective

Despite Nigeria's 35 percent female presence in elected and non-elected posts, the percentage of women in the country's legislative bodies remains dismal due to men's patriarchal control. It is clear that women have not surpassed 10% participation in Nigeria's elected offices since 1999. Since 1999, no woman has served as vice president or president of Nigeria. Only one woman ran for President of Nigeria in 2011 under the Peoples Democratic Party platform, and she was defeated in the primary election. How did she make it through the primaries with just one vote despite the enormous number of women who turned out for the primary but refused to vote for her even out of compassion for her plight. In 2015, five women were running for vice president, while fourteen males were running for president.⁸³ Women in political positions have increased throughout time and are expected to continue to rise in the future, although it is still a small percentage gain. In 2007, precisely the same thing happened. Despite some progress, the imbalance has not been significantly reduced. This is seen in the following tables. Women's numbers have increased somewhat since 1999, yet this has substantial consequences for governance. Once elected, a "gentlemen's club" that has been in place for a long time prevents women from having equal access to parliament and its decision-making processes. Few women in political decision-making positions will be unable to make an impact on policies that have gender consequences, according to the theory. Most women are reluctant to oppose the patriarchal system of power and dominance.⁸⁴

2.1.8 Obstacles to Gender Mainstreaming in Nigeria

Inequality in the workplace is biased in favor of males. When it comes to education, women have always had an inferior status to males. Women's education curriculum stressed Home Economics, which included sub-areas such as needlework, embroidery, cooking, and child care as sub-categories of Domestic Science. Indeed, the colonial educational system was sexist in its treatment of female students.⁸⁵ Due to social norms or a lack of formal education, many women do not fully engage in economic and political life.

The world's women make up a majority, but they are afforded just a fraction of the chances and rewards that society has to offer as a whole. In the world, one in three homes is headed by a woman, according to the UN report.⁸⁶ As a result, many homes rely primarily on women to carry out their responsibilities for the men, children, and elderly members of the family. Women can do great things if they have access to quality education, which is the most powerful tool for progress. They will broaden their horizons and sharpen their critical thinking skills as a result of this experience. Some women have achieved federal cabinet positions as a result of their education.

Women should grasp the opportunity to flourish in many educational fields since knowledge truly does create a man. There have been gains for women over the last two decades, but they still remain behind males in power, income and opportunities.⁸⁷

Their political engagement is restricted because of the marginalization of Nigerian women as a result of several social and cultural barriers. It's hard to argue with the enormous contributions that women have made to the nation's economy, but they are nevertheless irritated by various impediments that limit their activities, which can't lead to national progress. Because of our cultural norms and customs, it is difficult for some women to put their necks out in public. According to Nigerian tradition, a man's judgments are final and binding on his wife. The guy is always the leader and the

woman is always a follower. The male, aware of the importance of education in human development, fears that an educated woman will undermine his authority in the house. Because of this, he does everything he can to keep the women under his command in the dark. Educating female children is frowned upon or considered a waste of time and money in various cultures due to the common practice of women eventually adopting their husbands' surnames. Some people feel that educating girl children would put off their marriage till later in life.⁸⁸

Traditionalists think that females are exposed to or schooled in sex and sexuality subjects in the official education system. They fear that the girls may become promiscuous and lose their virginity, which is a highly valued moral attribute of the girl-child and her parents' moral teaching disposition toward her to be graded at marriage if she is exposed to such exposure or training.⁸⁹

Women's education and political engagement are hampered by long-standing sexism and misogyny. As a rule, women are supposed to be seen, but never heard. To be regarded living the life of a man, a woman must make herself visible and audible all at once. Even if she isn't, many will wonder whether she's married. A woman who is at the forefront or active in politics is viewed by some women as being too bold because they believe that it is against social norms and culture for a woman to be interested in politics.⁹⁰

As a result of parental poverty, women are more likely to encounter educational discrimination. Many Nigerian parents have been plunged into unimaginable financial difficulty due to the country's current economic crisis. Negative consequences include a lack of time and resources for their children's education, particularly for girls. The belief that their daughters can be sent to marriage (to increase the parents' financial standing) or engaged in other occupations, no matter how menial, has a detrimental

impact on their educational opportunities. In order to support their parents' low socioeconomic level, female children are more easily approached to engage in commercial occupations such as street hawking, farming, and housekeeping (and in extreme situations, prostitution). If these girls are enrolled in school at all, they are unlikely to go beyond elementary schooling.⁹¹

Even if you don't believe that politics is sinful or a trip to hell, certain religious views prohibit women from engaging (actively) in politics because they see it as a sinful endeavor.⁹² Women in Islam are expected to confide in Purdah. No one can deny the fact that these women will not have access to formal schooling or the political process. Some parents, including those who consider themselves devout Christians, worry that enrolling their female daughters in school may expose them to information that will lead them to reject their religion's teachings and clothing codes.

Early marriage is also a limitation since some women find it difficult or impossible to continue their education once they are married; their spouses may not agree. For their part, the women may be battling to have children and provide for their own and their husbands' needs. As a result, they would not be able to fulfill their educational ambitions. Unwanted or unexpected pregnancies are another obstacle that causes many females to leave school early.⁹³

2.1.9 Imperative of Gender Mainstreaming and Women Involvement in Socio-Economic and Political Development

As a result, women have been viewed as less clever, less productive, less creative, and so, less human than their male counterparts. Thus, women have had less rights and poorer social standing than males for the majority of human history. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, there has never been a female president in the country's history.

There has never been a woman governor of Nigeria. The Nigerian military has never had a female commander. Parents that prioritize their sons' education over their daughters' may have a good justification for doing so, given that their sons will be better positioned to compete in the economic and political realms of society.⁹⁴

Violence, hostility, manipulation and fabrication of numbers, high-class rigging, etc. characterize Nigerian politics. As a result, the majority of women despise or avoid politics altogether. Elections, on the other hand, appear to be improving as a result of recent developments. However, it is important to remember that man is a political animal, and that his understanding of human rights stems from his capacity for logic. Education, in general, is what bestows this ability to a person. Neither education nor politics can be separated from each other.⁹⁵

A male-dominated political atmosphere in Nigeria has prevented women from having their voices heard, but those with special skills aren't going along with that, either. In today's political climate, there are historical evidences that support the role of women in national growth. Women protested against the idea of being forced to pay taxes for political and cultural grounds, and their activities had a good impact. To name just a few, noteworthy Nigerian women in politics include: Queen Amina of Zaria, Queen Emotan of Benin, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, Senator Franca Afegbu.⁹⁶

There is a growing awareness among women of their place in the political system of the country as a whole. Professor Dora Akunyili (former NAFDAC director general) and other women politicians in Nigeria's House of Representatives and Houses of Assembly are significant evidence that women are becoming increasingly prominent in Nigerian politics. " There are countless examples of women who have thrived in a variety of industries. The Nigerian woman is steadily pursuing, battling, and securing a brighter future for her nation.⁹⁷

Many Nigerian women today have defied the expectations of society and the expectations of society's male members to achieve their full potential. Throughout their lives, they compete with males in every way. More and more women are now occupying positions that were once solely designated for males. In truth, they've been strengthened for the fight for recognition by a combination of education, enlightenment, and energy. Women in Nigeria are now seen as an essential component of the agents working for the country's well-being. In light of the importance of women's education and political participation, it should be noted that women who have been granted leadership roles have performed exceptionally well. As a result of the women's outstanding accomplishments, people's perceptions of them have shifted. The fact why women in politics have made more progress and achieved more success than their male counterparts is due to the fact that they do not have the time or space to consider only one side of an issue or make unwarranted compromises.⁹⁸ Women have a strong sense of morality, and they approach problems in subtly nuanced ways. Women's activism for greater political participation is waning as more of them gain high-paying positions on the national and international levels. For the first time, women in the country realize that achieving political independence must encompass not just emancipation from foreign rule but also the elimination of all forms of tyranny and discrimination. As a result, they are making concerted attempts to eradicate all traces of oppression and the associated evil from society.⁹⁹

2.1.10 Gender Inequality Occasioned by Patriarchy

Restrictions imposed on the actions of women by patriarchal culture promote and condone violence against women, as well as the sexual objectification of women. These views are shared by radical feminists, who advocate for the demise of patriarchy.¹⁰⁰ Radical feminists, Firestone said in *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for*

Feminist Revolution, published in 1970, want to topple the world's oldest and most ingrained class and caste structure. As she maintained, the gender roles have been relegated in society for thousands of years via an unjustified validity and a cosmetic durability¹⁰¹.¹⁰²According to the vast majority of feminists, patriarchy is an oppressive societal construct that has long been used to justify a woman's marginalization in all of these areas.¹⁰³

The term "patriarchy" refers to a set of norms and behaviours that are socially acceptable but also encourage male dominance over women by placing unfair structural restrictions on the roles, pursuits, and opportunities open to women.¹⁰⁴In ancient culture, the family was a fundamental foundation for patriarchy and played an important part in the displacement and degradation of women's responsibilities, which was subsequently solidified by religion with the formation of the male God.¹⁰⁵An overarching topic in Miller's essay catches patriarchy in the form of authority based on gender rather than cerebral or physical aptitude, which advantages the males.

"The reign of the father" is a synonym for "patriarchy."¹⁰⁶Patriarchal dominance is a word coined to describe the social norm of males dominating women because of their gender. This has been going on for ages.¹⁰⁷There is a growing amount of research examining the relationship between economic growth and gender exclusion and how it affects patriarchy.¹⁰⁸While liberal, radical, Marxist, and postmodern feminist groups may disagree on many social problems, they can all agree that gender discrimination is still pervasive and needs to be addressed. Patriarchy and other social ills are blamed for the persistence of gender bias.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The concept of sexism encompasses a variety of negative attitudes and behaviours toward women due to their gender, such as prejudice and discrimination.¹⁰⁹

The theory can be broken down into these components:

1. The basic, physical, and psychological differences between men and women help explain why men have traditionally been viewed as superior and fathers throughout history.
2. Gender roles are set by civilizations and cultures.
3. The exploitation of women is linked to the production process.¹¹⁰

Part of men's perceived superiority over women and the persistence of patriarchy may be traced back to the fundamental physical and physiological/biological disparities between the sexes.¹¹¹

Conventional patriachism is the most important kind of female dominance, and its legitimacy hinges on it. Culture and society, according to cultural gender determinants such as Ann Oakley and Sherry Orther, determine gender roles. According to their various analyses, culture is the culmination of a society's traditions, values, and conventions, as well as the prescription of behavior they have built up through time.¹¹²

Women's subservient standing in politics has been historically defined by culture and society and is thus considered immutable and unchanging by members of that society and its members. As a result, these traditions are passed down from generation to generation. In short, the social hierarchy prioritizes men.

That's why society looks to males to uphold cultural norms, while women are tasked with maintaining the health and harmony of the household and contributing to society's overall well-being by caring for children from infancy through adulthood. Materialist (Marxist) approaches to the feminist dilemma have a distinct perspective. An

examination of women's economic situation rather than their connection with males is what this study is about. The final conclusion is that women's oppression is linked to the creation of goods and services.

Housework and its connections to capitalism are therefore a primary concern for Marxist feminists. In this view, males (husbands) serve as domestic capitalists or compradors, exploiting women by making them undertake household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for children while not subject to economic appraisal or monetisation. They should not be compensated in any way for this.

The proletariat revolution, which always frees both men and women from capitalist exploitation, is predicted to end women's oppression together with class oppression. The fall of communism means that the objective of women's emancipation and freedom from male oppression may no longer be attainable, even if it was supposed to supply the intellectual foundation and premise for such a revolutionary putsch by suffering workers. Gender theologians, who believe that gender roles should be strictly segregated, often point to biblical passages to back up their views on the topic of religiously sanctioned sexism. As a result of these theoretical reasons, the social roles assigned to men and women, as well as the life chances available to each gender, are all predetermined.

There are two types of ambivalent sexism: aggressive sexism and benign sexism "the expressions of goodwill or friendliness: While historically only hostile sexism was deemed significant, new research shows that helpful sexism is just as harmful.

Sexism is re-conceptualized by Ambivalent Sexism to encompass both friendly and antagonistic feelings toward women. One of the most significant contributions is the

beneficent component's long heritage of addressing the dependency that men and women have in common.

Traditional gender norms and patriarchal societal structures are reinforced and maintained by both benevolent sexism and hostile sexism, although the two kinds of sexism differ in their presentation. Positive attitudes toward women in traditional roles such as protection, idealization and attachment are characterized as "benevolence" and "hostility" are classified as "domination," "degradation," and "hostility." Both forms of sexist ideas can be held by males without conflicting with one another "Women need to be safeguarded, yet they are also inept workers.

2.2.1 Feminist Theory

The terms "gender" and "patriarchy" are two of the most crucial ones in the feminist discussion. In the feminist context, gender is not a synonym for sex or the biological distinction between men and women. The only components of this phrase that are pertinent are the power relations between men and women, how they have been socially and customarily created, and how the power is employed. Or, to put it another way, women are subordinate to men in a patriarchal culture (in power and status terms). The theoretical foundation for this study is feminist theory, a well-known subfield of sociology. A French socialist first used the term "feminism" in 1872; it was first used in the United States in 1910; its main message is that of gender equality, equal opportunities for women, and the abolition of patriarchal practises while also advocating for greater access to education and better health care. Feminism encompasses a wide range of issues, including social, political, economic, and cultural issues.¹¹³

Feminist theory, as a normative and intellectual language, sheds light on social phenomena, difficulties, and experiences that have been ignored for decades by the predominately male perspective. Feminist theory must be able to comprehend and explain the complicated challenges of gender roles and inequality. This idea makes an attempt to explain how there are no clear lines separating men and women in society.¹¹⁴

Women are oppressed all around the world, regardless of tribe, nationality, position, or age, and feminist philosophy was created to understand and confront this rising problem. Over time, feminist philosophy has undergone significant shifts, the most notable of which is a move away from an approach that attempted to universalize the battle for gender equality and instead emphasizing the specificity and context of women's experiences. Another component entails shifting from perceiving and women as categories to going inside such categorization and investigating what constitutes oppressive gender practice.¹¹⁵

It was not until Susan Anthony's statement after she was arrested for allegedly voting illegally in 1872 that feminist theory began to gain traction. A time of heightened clamor for women's rights was marked by an increase in support for the preservation of women's rights in early 1900s. As a result of the efforts of feminists, women's rights have made significant progress throughout the years, particularly in the western world where issues such as suffrage and reproductive rights have become more important.

Feminism in Africa is the subject of the following section.

Liberal Feminism serves as the theoretical foundation for this research. When it comes to achieving economic security for oneself and one's family, liberal feminists believe that women seek no different from males. They're more concerned with things like equal pay for equal labor, as well as educational and political rights for all. Liberal feminism does not embrace the claim that biologically-based disparities between men

and women are sufficient reason for inequality, such as the gap between men and women in terms of political office and decision-making positions, the income gap between men and women, etc. For the most part, liberal feminists hold that "female subordination is founded in a series of customary and legal limits that hinder women's entry into and achievement in the so-called public domain."¹¹⁶ They are devoted to achieving gender parity via pragmatic changes to policy and law. Both men and women are affected by current gender inequities, as both genders' full potential is inhibited. To enable for a fresh and better socialization process that doesn't deny women their due role in society, this theoretical orientation holds in Nigeria that long-established misconceptions and even jokes about women's inferiority should be eliminated. Its adherents pay close attention to the way males talk about women, as well as their general attitude toward women. Because the Liberal feminist theory examines every facet of power interactions between men and women, it stresses the unequal political involvement adequately. Gender is a factor in determining political involvement disparities. It also offers advice on how women may do their part to make things better. For the sake of reducing the barriers that women face in participating in politics, this idea is significant. Firstly, the theory helps explain why women are less involved in politics than their male counterparts; secondly, it helps analyze the socio-cultural determinants that established women's domain in the private sphere and limited their participation in the public sphere by contextualizing their activities in relation to certain historical events, and thus proposes corrective measures.

2.2.2 Radical Feministic Theory

A central tenet of radical feminist theory holds that male supremacy and patriarchy are the root causes of women's oppression in society and in institutions. According to this thesis, society has to be completely restructured so that male dominance is abolished in

all of its forms, including economics and society at large. The radical feminist ideology does not believe that it is necessary to make concessions to the political views and agendas of males who already exist. As a result, it seeks to eradicate the most basic and universal type of dominance: the subjugation of women. Furthermore, it argues that male dominance extends beyond the realms of politics and the workplace to include the spheres of personal relationships and the home life of the individual. Female political participation is hindered by male-engineered political violence, which is frequently done in order to deter female candidates.

According to this interpretation, today's successful female entrepreneurs, educators, business leaders, and activists should take a stand against male supremacy in these fields. Because women make up a larger percentage of the world's population, it is imperative that they break free from gender constraints that limit their potential.

2.2.3 The Power Theory

The power theory is the theoretical framework. The notion of power is always at the heart of the social sciences. However, despite its place in international relations, the conventional power theory is increasingly being applied to other areas of political science. Control over another person's thoughts or behaviors. Despite its lengthy history, there are still significant differences among scholars over the precise meaning of power and the conceptual settings in which it belongs.¹¹⁷ Because of this, it is a fundamentally divisive topic of debate. It's more likely to be a collection of ideas than a single thought. Despite this, power has been viewed as the ability to define reality. These prerequisites for legitimacy are created by this notion of what is real and what is moral. As a result, the threat of violence or lawful authority can give rise to power.¹¹⁸

Even yet, there's a deeper meaning to power, one that has to do with the ability of individuals or groups to accomplish tasks, especially when they're thwarted by human resistance or rebellion. In order to deal with this opposition, we must consider the role of coercive methods (including the use of physical force) and how coercion relates to the voluntary and consensual components of power relationships.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, the position of an individual or the emission from a gathering of forces may also be considered forms of power. For example, a government, a municipal authority, an army commander, or a manager in an organization are all examples of "power" that may influence the actions and calculations of other people because they wield an array of forces to achieve particular aims and interdictions. Even so, it's not just the powerful who can dominate others who are less powerful, or those who are helpless.¹²⁰

Politicians use the term "power" as a synonym for "influence," which may be defined as the capacity of a political actor to persuade another political actor to do what it wants.¹²¹ Gender, power, and politics are intricately intertwined, and this must be emphasized. Despite this, the precise connection between power and politics is never hasty in the middle of these intricacies and dynamisms. Because of this, the study of power politics and gender concerns are intertwined. To provide one example, the idea that huge organizations wield more power than smaller ones is founded on a fallacious premise, as dispersed groupings like men or women are incapable of acting as a unit.

Hence, the reference to males being more strong than women pertains to a typical individual guy being more powerful than a typical individual woman.¹²² The theoretical foundation of this study centres around the subject of how Nigerian women have positioned themselves in the gender and democratic power battles for national development contributions.\

Other theories are:

2.2.4 Systems Theory

The origins of systems theory may be traced back to biology and other natural sciences. According to several academics, the systems theory deals with related pieces or objects that are interconnected but work together as one. All social phenomena, including politics, are intertwined in the systems approach's basic assumption. This means that no component of society can be understood in isolation from the rest of society, which has a direct impact on its functioning. Women play an important role in politics and society, and investing in Nigeria's women is essential if the country is to take use of this vast potential resource and increase women's engagement in rural and national politics. This would help the country develop as a whole.¹²³

2.2.5 Agenda-Setting Theory

According to agenda-setting theory, public opinion is set by the mass media by promoting specific topics. It claims that the public's perception of major topics is influenced by the way the news media presents them. This suggests that the topics that the media focus on become the ones that the public accepts as significant for debate and attention.¹²⁴

When looking at how political campaigns were covered in the media, researchers discovered that rather than persuasion or attitude change, the news' primary influence was to create an agenda, i.e. "to teach people not what to believe, but what to think about." A theory of agenda setting is rarely referred to as a practice in the media. Media theorists use this phrase to describe how the media prioritizes current concerns and sets the parameters for discourse on such issues. Politicians and the general public are more inclined to react on and take action in response to situations that the media has elevated

in importance. This increases the public's belief in the significance of these occurrences and assures that they receive even more attention. Even more important than bringing these concerns to the public's attention, the press is able to influence public opinion by putting them on the agenda.¹²⁵

Thus, when Nigerian media focus on reporting on women's political participation, it increases the chances of gender equality in the political process. Media engagement on marginalization of women, given that Nigerian women account for 60% of its population, can serve to portray perspectives that will encourage more participation from women inside the country's political arena.

2.2.6 Theoretical Model

2.2.6.1 The Civic Voluntarism Model

A democratic society's hallmarks of civic engagement include political participation and membership in community organizations. To guarantee that the voices of people are taken into consideration by political institutions and leaders when making choices that impact their communities, the involvement of the public is critical. Disparities in involvement among different ethnic and racial groups must also be considered. When it comes to politics, absolute participation levels are less essential than the inequalities in involvement, which determines which groups have more influence over policymaking and execution than others. This is especially true when it comes to political results.¹²⁶

This model of political engagement was initially referred to as the Resources Model because of its beginnings in a significant study conducted in the United States. The following phrase sums up the essence of the civic volunteerism concept of engagement. "Political action is characterized by three factors."¹²⁷ An alternative method to ask why

individuals don't become political activists is to ask why they don't become political activists in the first place. Because they can't, they don't want to, or no one asked, are all plausible explanations. Furthermore, people may be reluctant to get involved in politics because they lack finances, because they aren't interested in politics, or because they aren't part of recruiting networks.¹²⁸ This model takes into account a person's social standing, employment, education, and income, all of which are important determinants of one's ability to participate. Women's participation in politics is heavily influenced by these three elements. There are a multitude of factors at play here, including a civic attitude that encourages participation and attitudes like a sense of efficacy, a psychological connection to politics, and a sense of duty that motivates people to vote. As the most commonly quoted and duplicated model of political engagement in recent memory, this theoretical framework has been widely cited and repeated. However, the use of socioeconomic class as a predictor of involvement and civic ideals has been criticized. Why so many high-status people don't become involved in politics is left unsaid by the model. Because many high-status persons do not participate in politics, participation can be linked to social status, although the latter is only a weak predictor of involvement.¹²⁹

As a result of a lack of support or financial strength, some ladies claimed that they could not participate in the event.¹³⁰ They also say they don't have the time. Political participation is seen as a dirty game by some women, while for others, there was no one to urge them to get involved since they didn't feel like they had a voice in the process. If they wanted to get involved, they couldn't since they had no personal or communal ties to politics. However, when using this theory, one comes to the conclusion that psychological attitudes play a crucial role in determining political engagement. As a

result, organizations like the ones alluded to in this article can encourage its members who want to run for office but lack the personal or financial wherewithal to do so.¹³¹

2.2.6.2 Proactive Feminist Approach

To put it another way, being proactive is taking action in order to achieve a desired goal.¹³²With regard to women's engagement and problems they confront due to gender, culture, economy, and religion considerations; the proactive feminist approach may be helpful. This concept argues that women should take action in advance to avoid problems. Rather of waiting for things to go their way, proactive people take action before they know what will happen. Discrimination against women due of their sex is well-known. Because of this, they shouldn't be deterred from taking action. As long as women take a proactive feminist attitude, they will not discriminate against themselves by not running for public office, but rather demonstrating that they are capable of making things happen.¹³³People that are proactive don't wait for someone else to come along and handle their difficulties for them. Their activities are not passive, but rather they are continually moving ahead and involved in the process. If, for example, women do not go out to vote because they believe that they cannot influence the outcome of a ballot, they will remain mute and unheard in public. Women will not be proactive if they give in to this notion, but if this belief does not upset them, they will go a long way to make an influence. During elections, the government and the males engaged are supposed to create an environment that encourages its adult female citizens to get active, whether as candidates or as voters. Husbands should encourage and support their spouses. In order to create an atmosphere where women feel comfortable participating in public life, there needs to be a step-by-step legislative approach. A proactive effort by political parties and government institutions is also necessary to ensure that women's

demands are met.¹³⁴As citizens, women will become catalysts or multipliers of good habits.

As long as there have been written records, males have dominated women in every area of the world. There are several reasons for this, including cultural stereotypes, the misuse of religious or traditional traditions, patriarchal society systems in which males have the economic, political and social power, and the role women have historically performed as the followers of male political leaders.¹³⁵

Discrimination of this kind is not limited to the African or Nigerian continents, but occurs all across the world. There is just one difference: in our area of the world, it has persisted for so long, whereas in other industrialized nations, progress toward gender equality and equity is underway. Many forms of bias against women are unjustified. Because of their gender, women who want to be sureties for bailees in various Nigerian courts and police stations frequently find themselves ineligible.

Democracy has become an important instrument for sustainable development across the world, yet the notion of democracy remains a murky concept. Without the engagement of women, half of the world's population, political participation, which is essential to a healthy democracy and promotes equality of opportunity for everyone, will suffer.¹³⁶

For a long time, democratic polyarchies like the United Kingdom and the United States were in fact male polyarchies. Prominent democratic and republican political figures have scoffed at the idea that women should have equal rights to men.¹³⁷They mostly agreed with the general consensus that women's appropriate roles should be in marriage, childbirth, and raising a family, not politics. Since men are fundamentally equal under the law, John Locke believed that women should not be permitted to vote. He also

thought it self-evident that husbands should have ultimate authority over their wives' lives.¹³⁸

It's hard to trace the origins of male dominance across history, but one expert feels that physical difference offers a credible explanation. Because men are often bigger, taller, and more muscular, they are better equipped than women to use violence and intimidation to achieve their goals.¹³⁹ Due to their duty as mothers and caregivers, women are more susceptible than males. In addition, the coercive might of the state is used to further perpetuate the oppression and discrimination of women through customs, traditions, beliefs, and the law. Men are viewed as distinctive, stronger and more suited for public spaces, while women are seen as weak and ill-suited for private spaces. This is why women are discriminated against, according to our society's values.¹⁴⁰

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Violence against Women in Politics and Elections

There has been an increase in "gender-based hate speech" in the year preceding up to the 2015 Nigerian elections, as well as physical violence against female politicians and the spouses and family members of male political candidates.¹⁴¹ A method used to promote established patriarchal beliefs while undermining the inclusion of women's viewpoints and experiences in decision-making processes, these are all clear examples of violence against women in politics. There are several sorts of violence that may be used to silence women's political participation, including psychological intimidation, sexual harassment and abuse, and outright physical assault. Before, during, or after elections, political violence against women of either gender can be used "to delay, hinder, intimidate, prohibit, or eliminate political opponents and/or electoral processes" as a kind of electoral violence.¹⁴²

It is possible for women to be directly targeted by political violence when they participate in civic debate or support a political party. To provide one example, women who want to enter politics confront a slew of obstacles from the political party apparatus, including sexual harassment and assault. Discrimination against female candidates is a common tactic used by political parties to keep them out of the political arena.¹⁴³

A number of women have been harassed and abused while voting, as have female poll workers. As a result, women are frequently subjected to violence and interference in their right to vote, whether it comes in the form of intimidation, harassment, or even physical assault by their spouses. As a result of women's longstanding exclusion from positions of power in and beyond the home, this sort of gender-based violence is perpetuated by patriarchal norms that deny women their democratic rights.¹⁴⁴ When it comes to electoral violence, women are often secondary victims because of their familial and social ties. Instead of being targeted due of their behavior, women are frequently singled out for harassment because of their personal connections, such as having a mother or father running for office. As a result, this kind of violence is understudied and difficult to quantify. It is not uncommon for them to suffer retaliatory violence because of the responsibilities of caring for dependents and other social commitments. In rallies and demonstrations, women are more likely to have children with them, making it more difficult for them to flee if violence breaks out.¹⁴⁵

It is difficult to categorize violence against women in politics and elections since it is not always clear-cut. For instance, during the presidential election, the police used teargas to separate 2,000 APC women who had congregated to peacefully protest misbehavior in Rivers State. "We observed the ladies getting [sic] teargassed and we don't think it was a proper thing to do since under the 1995 Beijing convention, women

have the right to peaceful protests without any type of harassment or violence," a representative of Pan African Women Projects, a South African NGO, said.¹⁴⁶As to whether these ladies were targeted because of their gender, or if the police would have used teargas regardless of gender, it should be highlighted that some interpreted this as an attack on women, and we must also analyze how the use of teargas may have impacted women differently than it did males.

2.3.2 Current Status of Women in Politics

Female political engagement has risen steadily since 1979, when Nigeria's constitution established their ability to vote and hold elected office. Increasing levels of female engagement in politics, governance, and other fields, such as voting, holding public office, and enacting laws aimed at improving the status of women, are the only ways to determine this. Women's engagement in politics in Nigeria has grown significantly over the years, although they remain significantly underrepresented in comparison to their male counterparts, despite the country's high standards.¹⁴⁷

For many women in Nigeria, the idea that they should have a voice in policymaking and government is based on the simple fact that women make up half the country's population. Second, that all people are created equal, and that women have the same rights as men to engage in public life and to hold positions of power. By law, all citizens are entitled to the opportunity to participate in democratic governance. The 1999 Nigerian constitution by virtue of Section 40 states the following:

Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests: Provided that the provisions of this section shall not derogate from the powers conferred by this Constitution on the Independent National Electoral Commission

with respect to political parties to which that Commission does not accord recognition.¹⁴⁸

Section 42(1) of the same constitution states further that:

A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not, by reason only that he is such a person be subjected to any form of discrimination.¹⁴⁹

It is clear that if you are a woman and your franchise is infringed, you may file a lawsuit since the constitution bans sex discrimination.

The Constitution's Section 77 additionally states:

1. One person from each Senatorial district or Federal constituency shall be elected to the Senate or House of Representatives in such manner as may be specified by law in accordance with this Chapter, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
2. Every Nigerian citizen who has reached the age of 18 and is domiciled in Nigeria at the time of voter registration for a legislative house election is eligible to vote.¹⁵⁰

According to the information presented above, Nigeria's constitution does not specifically prohibit women from serving in public office. Despite this, there remains a lot of prejudice in practice. Women were elected to a small number of positions in the country's general elections in 1999, 2003, and 2007. To this day, men hold the majority of public office.

There have been a number of female candidates for governor and president, but no one has ever won. Legislative representation includes women, however they are underrepresented relative to male legislators.¹⁵¹ Following two decades of military dictatorship, just 3 percent of disputed posts were held by women in 1999, 4 percent in

2003, and 6 percent in 2007. In the three general elections held in the nation between 1999 and 2007, just a small number of women were elected to various positions. No woman was elected governor of a state in the federal union, according to the survey's findings. Only a few women served in the Houses of Assembly around the country and in the National Assembly's upper and lower chambers, respectively. Women were underrepresented in the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections, according to this poll. Women were not elected to the State House of Assembly in 2003 in States such as Adamawa, Cross Rivers, Ebonyi, Jigawa, Kano, Kastina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Oyo, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara. Only a few women were elected to the House of Representatives in states where women were allowed to vote.

There were a total of 7160 candidates, both men and women, who ran in the April elections, according to statistics from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Only 628 ladies took part in this total. In the presidential race, just one woman competed, whereas five women ran for vice presidential honors out of the 25 contenders.

9 of the 109 senators are women, while 25 of the 360 members of the House of Representatives are women. The State Assemblies have 54 female members. A 2% improvement over the 2003 general elections. For many women in Nigeria, the idea that they should have a voice in policymaking and government is based on the simple fact that women make up half the country's population. Equal rights for men and women to participate in public life, as well as in government, are fundamental principles of human equality. Nigeria's constitution and legislation provide all citizens the right to democratic governance.¹⁵²

It is stated in Section 40 of the Nigerian Constitution that everyone is entitled to gather freely and associate with others, including the right to create or join any political party, labor union, or other group for the defense of one's own interests. However, the

provisions of this section shall not detract from this Constitution's authority over political parties that the Independent National Electoral Commission does not recognize. According to Section 42(1) of the Nigerian Constitution, a person's status as a member of a specific ethnic group or religion or political stance must not be used as a basis for discrimination in Nigeria.

Women were elected to a small number of positions in the country's general elections in 1999, 2003, and 2007. Until now, most public offices have been held by men. There have been a number of female candidates for governor and president, but no one has ever won. Legislative representation includes women, however they are underrepresented relative to male legislators.¹⁵³

2.3.3 Overview of the Status of Women's Political participation in Nigeria

Participation in government and other institutions of society, such as the economics and culture, is referred to as political engagement (or participation).¹⁵⁴Involving citizens in political campaigns and debates, attending strategy meetings of political parties, voting in elections, running for elected office, and holding major government and political party posts are all part of the civic engagement required by this definition.¹⁵⁵Fairness, equal participation, and equitable treatment for all members of a society in terms of representation and power distribution are all part of what it means to be a democratic citizen. However, he points out that all democracies are afflicted by systemic inequities in political involvement. It has been observed that women participate less frequently than males, which means that the interests of half of the population are not adequately represented. Indeed, a number of academics have shown that the link between gender and political engagement is complicated and uneven.¹⁵⁶

Several nations have reported low female involvement and representation in public and political institutions. Even in Kenya (145th out of 186) the Gender Disparity index shows that gender inequality is widespread. Similarly, the UNDP (2005) reported that despite the strong international commitment to gender equality and closing the gender gap in the formal political arena, reinforced by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action, there are only twelve countries where women hold official positions of leadership in legislatures around the world.¹⁵⁷ A poor human development country, Nigeria was placed 152 out of 187 countries. Women's political engagement in Nigeria is best described by looking at the roles that women have played since the fourth Republic, i.e. 1999 to date, in order to better understand the subject.¹⁵⁸

Women in the Fourth Republic

Women in Nigerian politics have reason to be optimistic after the country's restoration to democracy on May 29, 1999. Between 1999 and 2015, there were five different administrations. After serving in the office of the president from 1999 to 2007, President Obasanjo was followed by Presidents Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, Goodluck Jonathan, and Muhammadu Buhari (2015 to present). President and Vice President were held by four men throughout the time.

Appointive Positions

Only seven of the 130 federal boards of public businesses that existed between 1999 and 2003 were made up of women. There were 47 cabinet ministers, however only seven of them were female. In the history of a government regulatory agency, only one woman was appointed to the position of Director General. Special Advisers and Senior Special Assistants were each given two female appointees, while Special Assistants and

Permanent Secretaries received a total of six and eight, respectively 12 women were named Ministers out of 42 in 2011, while four were designated Special Advisers (out of 20). There was a small improvement in 2011. This administration, led by Muhammadu Buhari, has only six female ministers among its 30. Kemi Adeosun was forced to leave and Jummai Alhassan departed freely, while Amina Mohammed resigned after being named UN Deputy Secretary General.

Since the restoration of democracy in 1999, women's political engagement in Nigeria has been extremely limited. Niger State Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the Niger State House of Assembly data show that women's political engagement in Nigeria has been appalling.¹⁵⁹ This is evident by the limited number of women that were known to have held political offices since the beginning of democracy in 1999.

2.3.4 Electoral Violence and Women's Participation in Elections in Nigeria

In order to understand what it means to be a man or a woman or how men and women are positioned in relation to one another, we must first understand the cultural norms and expectations that shape the behavior and attitudes of both men and women. Violent behavior is defined, allowed, and even encouraged by these norms in contexts where particular groups of males are given privilege and hierarchical control. Consequently, gender-based violence is a means of enforcing power imbalances that are the result of socialization, cultural norms and belief systems.¹⁶⁰ In order to understand why women are being harmed and what can be done about it, it is necessary to understand gender relations.

The patriarchal and gendered division of labor and power that prevails in Nigerian society is rooted in traditional and cultural norms that elevate males to the position of head of household. In certain ways, a man's treatment of a woman, even if aggressive, is

endured and accepted, especially within a family. At best, women's function is seen as supporting their male counterparts. It's very uncommon for males who consider themselves as the protectors of the female species to use violence in order to maintain their own egos and tame, dominate, or control women. As a result, sexual and gender-based violence is fueled in large part by gendered power imbalances. Many women are unable to receive aid because of their perceived inferiority in social, economic, and legal contexts.¹⁶¹

This country's political climate is well-known for rewarding persons with a strong sense of self-confidence and a willingness to engage in active party politics.¹⁶² Due to these and other factors, it can be difficult for women to navigate Nigerian politics. Women's political hopefuls sometimes mention their inability to run for office because of their fear of various sorts of physical and non-physical assault. Another barrier preventing many women from entering political politics is the perception of politics as a dirty game. Just the idea that women's 'feminine' traits are characterized by being delicate, soft-spoken, and motherly might be enough to cause them psychological harm.¹⁶³

Women are disproportionately targeted in acts of electoral violence because of their desire to run for office, their involvement in politics, or even just their intention to vote. Politicians refer to "political rape" when it occurs. In his view, political rape happens when males conquer women because of their ego, and when women strive to achieve what historically or naturally is most acquired by the men, violence is employed to scare or control them.¹⁶⁴ Pressure is exerted on some of them to stand aside in favor of a male candidate, and they may be the victims of threats and violence. Violence is utilized equally against male and female candidates, although it has a higher impact on female aspirants.

Despite the presence of gender-friendly measures in certain political parties' constitutions and manifestos, they are not widely respected.¹⁶⁵ Women were unable to participate on an equal footing with their male colleagues in party primaries. Politics in Nigeria has a "do or die" mentality, and threats are made frequently to warn opponents that the side with the monopoly of violence would prevail when the stakes are high. In the context of Nigeria's history as a democratic society, the recent wave of politically motivated killings has not helped.

Violence is clearly a key factor in the limited political engagement of women in Nigeria, as seen by the recent spate of violence in the country's elections. Parties clashed and killings took place in the Niger Delta region in 2003, for example. Senator Gbemisola Saraki, one of the nine female senators in Nigeria's National Assembly, nearly evaded assassination by hired guns. There are a lot of these politically driven assaults out there. In Nigeria's glorious past, there have been many women who have paid the ultimate price for their political ambitions. Nigerian politics' 'predilection' has claimed numerous victims, including Alhaja Kudirat Abiola and Suliati Adedeji.¹⁶⁶

There was more certainty in 2007 that people would avoid the polls because of threats of violence, as in Rivers state, which had poor voter participation and many political kidnappings.¹⁶⁷ Post-election violence erupted despite the fact that Nigeria's presidential election of 16 April 2011 was highly organized and credible compared to prior elections. Non-Muslims, state institutions, and PDP officials and sympathizers were the primary targets of the attacks.

However, because most of the NYSC troops stationed in Northern states were non-natives and non-Muslims, they were viewed as easy prey. Before they were slain, two female Marines were raped and murdered. Protesters in Gadau hamlet raped and attacked an unknown number of female Corps Members. Many other women were

assaulted during the protests, and the NYSC members' case serves as a reminder of this.¹⁶⁸

Shettima also says that security personnel in Maiduguri targeted and shot party members. He is the chairman of the CPC in Borno State.¹⁶⁹ Armed men and women at Zaria's Army Depot assaulted and detained more than 100 citizens fleeing protests in Kaduna. They were held for days in a location that was poorly ventilated and deprived of food and water before they were finally allowed to return to their homes. Although the severity of the sexual violence involved with the protests may have been underreported, the 2011 post-election violence saw sexual abuse.

It has been confirmed by the Bauchi State Police Command, which stated that 'an unidentified number' of female Corps members were assaulted by furious youths in Gadau village.¹⁷⁰ The Federal College of Education, Kano's female dormitory was purportedly overrun by demonstrators, although no sexual assaults were recorded. Lack of reporting mechanisms and security agents' attitudes toward victims of sexual abuse are some factors that limit the availability of information on offenders of sexual abuse.¹⁷¹

The 2011 post-election violence saw a lot of physical violence. Injured, battered, and wounded by demonstrators were common themes in the media. Injuries caused by deadly weapons like machetes, cutlasses, and arrows claimed the lives of a great number of individuals. According to accounts from multiple hospitals, gunshot wounds were widespread. The most prevalent type of violence during the protests appears to have been physical assault, although no official count of those assaulted and physically injured has been kept. "The nature of the killings currently is quite alarming, with assaults on women, children, and the elderly," a local human rights activist told Amnesty International.¹⁷²

Law enforcement authorities' failure to arrest, prosecute, or convict those who commit violence against women is a major factor encouraging sexual crimes and other types of violence. Violent acts have been promoted by the knowledge that it is possible to get away with them. Even the protector might become the culprit in such a circumstance. Men can also be survivors of SGBV, however women are disproportionately affected by this problem. According to the World Health Organization's report on violence against women, 40 to 70 percent of all women who are murdered are killed by a male intimate partner.¹⁷³

Due to proper security, Osun and Ekiti state's elections were a success. The question is whether or not this will be an issue in the upcoming general elections. One issue that has to be addressed seriously is violence against women. The next portion of this article discusses several mechanisms that might be utilized to combat electoral violence in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to women, in order to ensure people's safety and achieve gender equality throughout the country.

2.3.5 Effort Made Towards Female Participation in Politics in Nigeria

There are several groups working to increase the number of women in political leadership positions in Nigeria, including the Women Political Empowerment Office, the Nigeria Women Trust Funds, and the Women Lobby Group. Several measures have been taken to increase women's opportunities for political engagement, including the INEC gender policy, national multi-stakeholder forums, and the Nigeria Women Strategy Conference. Evidence-based statistics on this issue are now being compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics and the National Center for Women's Development. Right now, the available information is scattered. The information was collected from 1999 to 2015.

One objective of the data collection is to develop a foundation upon which to build the new Sustainable Development Objectives (SDG). Data collection is still under progress. There is high anticipation that the findings will indicate the continuous progress made toward the affirmative declaration, shed light on the gap's origins, and provide a numerical estimate of the gap between the current state of affairs and the affirmative action target of 35%. As a result, the effort to increase women's representation in Nigeria will have more support from key stakeholders and the awareness of new advocacy techniques would increase among stakeholders. Not only that, but it will wipe out any information that hasn't been synchronised.¹⁷⁴

2.3.6 Factors Responsible For Low Participation of Women in Nigerian Politics

- **Gender Roles – Patriarchy**

Because of patriarchy, women are stereotyped as uninvolved in political life and are restricted from participating in household decision-making.¹⁷⁵

To understand gender inequality, patriarchy must be understood in terms of the family. "The rule of the father" literally translates to "the rule of the father," but it also refers to a culture in which males rule over women. Most African families have a tendency to do this. When it comes to public life and governmental affairs, men are given a higher social rank than women.

This patriarchal system is maintained down the generations thanks to the influence of the family. Discrimination against the feminine sex is a result of the socialization of youngsters to anticipate and accept various roles in life. A man's biggest psychological weapon against a woman is the fact that he has dominated her for so long, especially in the political arena, where women are typically viewed as subservient.¹⁷⁶

- **Virility deficiency – women's conception of politics**

Nigerian politics is said to be built on the strength of those who are capable of competing in a volatile environment; those who have the means to seize it by force when necessary; and those who can march violence with violence. This notion has been held by several. Women are deemed too docile to be involved in politics and government because of this widely held assumption that males have better power, competitiveness, and self-reliance. Societal conventions and beliefs, via socialization, have established separate gender roles based on biological differences, creating this consensus. It has become more difficult for women to participate in mainstream politics because of their opinion of politics as a filthy game and their fear of violence.¹⁷⁷

Nigerians don't appear to know the difference between "a visible agenda for women and an affecting agenda for women," as the phrase goes.¹⁷⁸ Women's numerical strength has been emphasized, but it has been difficult to translate this into power since they are viewed as "supporters club, team of cheerers and clappers" compared to their male counterparts. Most female politicians run for office because they want to stand out from the crowd; they don't want to follow in the footsteps of their male counterparts. When it comes to politics, women's humility does not help them.

Lack of Economic Incentives (Financial Backing)

Discrimination against women has left them with an economic disadvantage. In order to be successful, a political campaign requires large amounts of money from outside sources.¹⁷⁹ As a result of the sexual division of labor and job options available on the basis of gender, males have gained greater buying power than their female counterparts throughout the course of time. As a result, over 75% of the labor force in Nigeria is composed of men. Men benefit from this economic gap at the expense of women. Only a few wealthy women have the means to fund political campaigns.

This is made worse by society's assumption that political activities are masculine, which makes it much more difficult for financial and political backers of politicians to support female candidates. More women in politics have been successful because of the efforts of women's movements, which help to fund and support women's political goals. The extent to which women in Nigerian politics are financially unable is shown by the extent to which their wives' reliance on their husbands in the family is made clear. Consequently, the lack of a financial foundation to support women's political aspirations has severely limited their options.

Discriminatory Customs and Laws

Customary practices in many modern communities are geared towards subjugating women to males and diminishing their self-esteem. In general, gender prejudice and cultural norms and practices have made women feel inferior and put them at a disadvantage, even in metropolitan areas, when it comes to the socio-political scene. Social conventions and stereotypical roles encourage women to play up their "femininity" by emphasizing their sex's daintiness, downplaying their achievements as "masculine," and otherwise portraying themselves as "weaker sexes." For example, in many cultures, it is more common to send the boy to school than the girl, because the girl is expected to care for the family and be married off. As a result, the number of illiterate women rises somewhat and their political rivalry with males becomes more intense.¹⁸⁰

- **Lack of Affirmative Action Quota**

Affirmative Action is a broad word that encompasses a wide range of programs aimed at helping the weakest members of society. Anti-discrimination laws and regulations are included in this category. A policy procedure of this type provides for regulations that

aim to better the lives of marginalized groups and enhance equitable opportunity for everyone. The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. (CEDAW). "Women's International Bill of Rights" and "Bible of Women Empowerment" have been used to characterize this conference. Since its acceptance, the women's movement has referred to it as a model for achieving gender equality.¹⁸¹

It "reflects the degree of exclusion and limitation practiced against women exclusively on the basis of their gender, advocating for equal rights for women regardless of their marital status in all spheres - political, economic, social, cultural and civic. It urges the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation at the national level and suggests temporary special measures to expedite gender equality in practice. The Convention provides that:

Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved. - Article IV, CEDAW.¹⁸²

A similar affirmative action provision was introduced in the 1999 Constitution to enhance non-discrimination for opposing parties. It is stipulated in the constitution that the government of the Federation and any of its agencies shall be composed in such a way as to reflect Nigeria's federal character and the necessity for national unity, as well as command loyalty. This ensures that there will be no predominance of people from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or any of it.¹⁸³

Affirmative Action isn't the problem, it's the practical implications and its connection to core concepts of fairness and justice that seem to be the problem. Equal representation in a country where women, who make up about half of the population, have been consistently marginalized in public life to the point where they have never held more than 15% of both appointive and elective offices is perhaps the strongest argument for gender-based affirmative action.

In spite of this, the Constitution did not guarantee equal representation on the basis of sexual orientation. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, unlike the constitutions of certain African nations, such as South Africa and Uganda, includes no provision for gender equality. Despite the mention of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, there is nothing in Nigeria's constitution geared at correcting the gender inequities that exist in the country. Instead of ensuring that all states and ethnic groups are represented equally, the Federal Character Principle implies that women can only represent the states in where they were born, further disadvantages women. A lady misses out on a huge opportunity if her culture forbids her from representing where she was born. There have been several instances where a woman's home state and her husband's home state both deny her appointment. Because it's more secure to name a guy in most of these cases, the government usually does. Since then, the lack of women in national politics has only worsened.¹⁸⁴

- Political rights for women are not adequately protected by legal and unwritten standards.
- Barriers to women's participation in public life are exacerbated by both religious and cultural traditions, which perceive women as obedient and virtuous in most cultures. They are not, however, visible to the general public. It is a struggle for women to get involved in politics, and it is made worse by the fact that many of

the women who work in politics are not very religious. It is not uncommon for some religious beliefs to oppose women's engagement in politics and leadership positions. When it comes to the Christian view of Eve, it's clear that "patriarchy has God on its side," as Millet puts it. Furthermore, they believe that their misdeeds are to blame for the emergence of gender inequality. To prevent women from furthering their political goals, Islamic religion forbids them from engaging in any activity that may be seen as public speech.

- As a result of Nigeria's political system, it is considered that politics is reserved for those who have little respect for human rights and are eager to compromise their morality for illicit benefits. As a result, women who run for office are seen with suspicion as being sexist and promiscuous.
- There is also a lack of engagement by women in the educational process. Adult literacy in Nigerian English stands at 50.6%, according to the National Bureau of Statistics' National Adult Literacy Survey, 2010, whereas literacy rates in all other languages total 63.7 percent (female adult age 15 and above). Due to a lack of education, women are less equipped for political positions than males. As a result of colonialism, men were given preference over women.
- Meeting times are weird and inconvenient for responsible and family-oriented women who want to attend caucus meetings to strategize and sketch out political strategies before or after elections. Mothers and other caregivers generally have designated periods of time in which they are expected to devote to caring for their families and children. This scheduling approach is seen as an attempt to keep women out of politics.
- Financing is a major issue when it comes to running for office in Nigeria. Despite the political parties' concessions to female candidates, most Nigerian

women are unable to satisfy the financial responsibilities of these posts. As a result, they were unable to overcome their male counterparts.

- Since the restoration of democracy in 1999, every election in Nigeria has been marred by some sort of political violence. In order for women to participate in politics, they have to be able to tolerate the political violence that occurs.¹⁸⁵

Although there have been a number of moves in recent times to the dedication, both personal and societal, to women's place in public life, there is still a long way to go. Women's subjugation in politics has been decreased to some extent thanks to a series of women's enlightenment, liberation, and conscious raising groups. Women have had a significant impact on a number of these sites.¹⁸⁶

2.3.7 Factors Leading to the Growth of Women Participation in Politics

- **Women Empowerment Programs**

As a multi-dimensional process, Sand Brook and Halfari characterized women empowerment as a process that aims to dismantle the cultural, traditional and social norms that disempower, disempower and dispossess women, especially within the plethora of opportunities that women have to acquire skills, acquire facilities, and acquire power. To counter cultural and societal traditions that disadvantage women, this latest invention gives women the opportunity to develop their particular talents and contribute more meaningfully to society growth.¹⁸⁷

Women's empowerment and ending violence and discrimination against women are the main goals of the Forum of Nigerian Women in Politics (FONWIP). Both the public and commercial sectors benefit from this policy. Among other things, the organisation organizes lectures on empowerment and inequality. At the heart of its mission is an emphasis on gender equality, with a call for 30% female participation in government

appointments, as well as a series of efforts to raise official understanding of the need of gender equality in public policy.¹⁸⁸

- **Activities of UN and other International Organisations**

Both government and non-governmental organizations have worked with foreign organizations to promote and implement strategies to eradicate gender disparity in Nigerian politics. At the United Nations (UN), various declarations and conventions have been established with the goal of eradicating all types of gender-based political discrimination.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one such declaration that forbids discrimination against women.

International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (ICCPR).

It is a treaty signed by the United Nations to eliminate all types of discrimination against women (CEDAW).

After the conferences in Copenhagen, Nairobi, Vienna, Cairo, and Beijing, the issue of women's participation in development has risen to the fore, as it is now widely acknowledged that full and equitable participation of women in the formulation and implementation of policy is a prerequisite for democracy and sustainable development.

No country can call itself democratic if more than half of its citizens are barred from participation in decision-making processes.¹⁸⁹

The United Nations also has programs and agencies dedicated to improving the status of women in political affairs, such as the 4th Conference of Women held in Beijing, China, in 1995, with the theme "Equality Development and Peace-Conriving Strategies" toward active liberation and empowerment of women; taking steps to increase the

number of women representation in legislative bodies around the world; and addressing the issue of violence against women.

- **Quotas and Proportional Representation**

Laws that allocate quotas for women to promote gender equality in public life are typically considered as a beneficial measure. Quotas are seen as a reasonable way to achieve this goal. Many factors – economical, cultural, traditional, and political – contribute to the exclusion of women from politics in many nations. Quotas should not be viewed as discrimination against males and unconstitutional because most of them are established on a neutral basis, according to this assertion and the grounds behind it.¹⁹⁰Nigerian law mandates a minimum of 30% female representation and a maximum of 60% female representation following the Beijing Conference. At the conference, it was decided that women should hold 30% of the public office posts. Between 1999 and 2007, there was a 78% rise in the number of women elected to public office in Nigeria.

Since the beginning of Nigeria's 4th Republic on May 29, 1999, the number of female political appointees has increased, although only a few women have become chairpersons of local government councils. Senator Bucknor Akerele, the state's female deputy governor, was elected by the people of Lagos. Trio: Florence Ita Giwa of Cross River State South Senatorial District; Stella Omu of Delta State; and Hajia Khairat Abdul-Rosaq, of the Federal Capital Territory, were all women in the Senate. Barrister Iquo Minimah, Lola Abiola Edewor, Patience O. Etteh, Dorcas Odurinrin, J.F. Adeyemi, Binta Garba Kosi, Gbenni Saraki, Florence Aya, Temi Harrinnan, and Mercy Almona Isei are the twelve (12) women in the House of Representatives. Women were also nominated to the Federal Executive Council by former President Obasanjo in the Executive Councils. Currently, eight (8) women hold key positions in the government, including: Prof. Dora Akunyili (Minister of Information), Mrs. Felicia Njese (Ministry

of State), Mrs. Dlasani Madueke (Ministry of Defense), Mrs. Agata Jerry (Ministry of Transportation), Mrs. Aishatu Dikku (Ministry of State), Mrs. Grace Ekpiwhre (Ministry of Science and Technology), and Mrs (Min. of women Affairs). In light of the above, it is clear that the proportion of women in leadership positions in Nigerian politics has increased significantly since the 1950s. Since the UN agreed to use a quota allocation system in global politics, this has become possible

So it is clear that the quota system helps to reduce the low level of women's political involvement and is an effective answer to the male dominated patriarchal culture. It also stereotypes the presence of women, which alters the face of decision-making, allowing for more substantial contributions. Women's participation in Nigerian politics is bolstered in no little amount by this method, since "a woman's experience in political life and policy-making is essential and vital to represent the whole population," says the author.¹⁹¹ "Quotas do not discriminate but compensate women for actual barriers that prevent women from pursuing a political carrier".¹⁹²

1. Women's interest in politics is boosted by variables such as:
2. Through the identification of aspirants and linking them with existing women politicians, playing a mentorship role and offering capacity building training to young or aspiring female politicians, the support network and potential role models may be developed.
3. In order to promote and advocate for women, a coalition of NGOs and grassroots women's organizations must be formed.
4. The ability to understand and exercise their legal and political rights.
5. Allowing women to participate in the decision making process without political harassment and violence in a sustained and effective manner.

6. The establishment of legal funding for women politicians to combat electoral malpractices is the fifth recommendation.
7. To effectively implement quotas, it is necessary to identify and involve key players, such as the Independent National Electoral Commission and political parties.¹⁹³

2.3.8 Actions Taken to Prevent Violence and to Protect Women

Both the PDP and APC signed the "Abuja Accord" ahead of the polls, hoping to prevent widespread electoral violence. The agreement called for peaceful elections and proper administration of the results. Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari met again only days before the presidential election to encourage voters to keep the calm on election day. Preventing post-election violence was President Jonathan's pledge under the "Abuja Accord." He swiftly surrendered the presidential race.

INEC's Chairman, Professor Attahiru Jega, was widely expected to oversee free and fair elections, and the organization made many steps to prevent violence on election day. The accreditation and voting procedures were overhauled as part of one big endeavor. Accreditation is required before a voter may cast a ballot in Nigeria, and then he or she must return later in the day to cast their ballot. Voters in 2011 had to wait until the afternoon to cast their ballots after they had been accredited. Violence erupted at voting sites because of the large number of people who waited in line.¹⁹⁴

Allowing voters to depart after accreditation and return to vote later in the day was approved by INEC in 2015. This approach was effective in reducing the likelihood of a riot. In addition, it had a surprising effect on female voters. Election watchers were concerned that this move would reduce female turnout since women would leave home after getting accredited and not return to vote owing to their domestic duties. This worry

was confirmed on election day. Women's turnout was not negatively affected by this procedure, according to an expert on women's political engagement, and may have actually made it easier for them to vote. While voting places remained open, women were able to take care of their daily duties without having to physically be there for long periods of time. Both INEC and the government have stated their commitment to ensuring the safety of women throughout the voting process. 'At INEC, we feel firmly that whatever we do, we must factor in the protection and defense of women,' said Professor Jega.¹⁹⁵The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Nigerian civil society organizations worked together to provide election observers with capacity-building trainings, with the goal of bringing gender-sensitive methods to the attention of the general public. According to National Democratic Institute (NDI) assistance, Transition Monitor Group (TMG) conducted pre-election warning monitoring and election day observation, which included a large component on gender-based electoral violence.. As part of this training, TMG was able to pinpoint particular instances of violence against women that occurred during the Nigerian election cycle, which was an essential first step in preventing future incidents.

The "Nigeria Women's Platform for Peaceful Elections" in cooperation with UN Women also sponsored a Women's Situation Room to guarantee that elections were peaceful and that women and youth had a significant role in preserving peace. For those who have difficulty reporting any obstacles to women's participation in elections, a toll-free phone number is available at the situation room. Additionally, the Nigerian Police and the Independent National Electoral Commission were on hand to assist in the resolution of any issues that were brought to their attention. 300 female election observers were also deployed to various states for the purpose of observing the polls. Methods used in Nigeria to increase the number of women elected to public office.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are at the heart of the Women for Change Initiative, which was founded specifically to mobilize Nigerian women to take an active role in affirmative action. Its main goal is to create a movement that would raise awareness of women's human rights and responsibilities as Nigerian citizens at all levels. The NGO seeks to develop initiatives for gender equality, equity, and the promotion of affirmative action concepts and processes, and as such is interested in finding a way to improve Nigeria's legislative process, which would include domesticating international instruments signed by Nigeria. election laws, tax laws, labour laws, property law, land use act, marriage act, and criminal laws that continue to perpetuate discriminatory customs should be reviewed to create an enabling environment for gender equality and women's empowerment. Participate in efforts to mobilise and sensitise women as role models for increased political participation. training women to be effective in all aspects of politics, from campaigning and public speaking to lobbying, policymaking, combining family and career, and stress management (or professional career) Increase your base of support by making women your first priority when hiring, and help women improve their financial standing by giving them access to microloans and business counselling. Elevate women to positions of leadership across all fields.¹⁹⁶

To that end, it intends to do things like lobby the legislature to get rid of discriminatory laws and policies and push for a review of political party structures and operational guidelines, as well as mobilise and sensitise women and their allies to get more women involved in politics at all levels of government. We should strive to create a women's political institute where political parties and female candidates and hopefuls may get the skills they need to succeed. Results of the study will be used to help candidates fill up any gaps they may have so that they may better prepare for the rigors of campaigning

and serving in elected office. Nigerian women have long been at the forefront of the movement to increase the number of women in political leadership roles. Various women's organizations in the nation advocated for the Beijing Conference's suggestion of at least 35% female presence in public office at one point. Some 20-30 percent of significant public jobs, particularly in the legislative and executive branches of government, have been given to women by both the Federal and State governments, despite the Beijing Conference's recommendation of 35 percent women representation. At the International Conference Centre, Abuja, over 2,000 Nigerian women gathered on July 16, 2010, to announce the commencement of Dame Patience Jonathan's "Women for Change" initiative, which was the first lady's pet project. They have realized that no threats can persuade males to back them after 15 years of Beijing's 35 percent affirmative action announcement.

As a result, the ladies will need to alter their strategy. With assurances that they will be treated with loyalty and obedience once elected, more women are interested in entering politics. For example, former US Ambassador to Nigeria Robin Sanders praised the work of Nigerian women such as Funmilayo Ransome Kuti and Grace Alele Williams and African American women such as Mary Bethune and others. In her own words, she advocated for more female representation in political life. On Thursday, the company announced an effort to demonstrate their dedication to collaborating with the NGO to eradicate violence against women and improve the lives of Nigerian women in the areas of healthcare and education.

The Women for Change Initiative (WFCI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of women's health, well-being, and empowerment. In Josephine Anenih's words, the goal of the campaign is to empower women economically and politically while also eradicating cultural norms that have kept them out of the spotlight.

CEDAW is a treaty signed by Nigeria. As a result, in our country, it is no longer acceptable to discriminate against women. There are a number of issues that Nigerian women need to address together, and they need to come up with solutions to them. Make sure you don't discriminate against other women, Nigerian ladies! As a result of the Women for Change project, female politicians have gathered to advocate for equal treatment and fairness in the political arena, as well as a forum for addressing obstacles to women's political empowerment.

2.3.9 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Women's numbers and nature have made them a major source of support for the installation and entronement of political leaders across the world. Despite the fact that women account for half of Nigeria's population, females hold fewer than 10% of the country's elected office.¹⁹⁷ Every level of Nigerian society, especially the political arena is rife with sexism. The physiological distinctions between men and women are used as the foundation for dividing labor and obligations in this gender-segregated society.¹⁹⁸ If we want healthy, vibrant democracies, we must make sure that women are fully and fairly represented in public life. Participation in politics by women has a positive impact on gender equality by expanding the scope of policy concerns that can be discussed and the sorts of alternatives that can be put up as answers. There were numerous pre-colonial communities where women were more politically involved and less exclusive in decision making, but colonial administrations with their gender-biased regulations contributed to perpetuate patriarchy.¹⁹⁹ For example, Iyalode of Ibadan, Efunsetan Aniwura, Ile-Moremi, Ife's and Saria's Queen Amina all served as military warlords in their own communities. Women's engagement in politics and the democratic process has become an important aspect of today's discussions on development and governance, according to the authors. As part of gender equality and women's empowerment,

women's equal involvement with men in authority and decision-making is a basic right.²⁰⁰

It's important to remember that a lot of effort has gone into promoting female leadership. In 2003, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolution A/RES/58/242, which urges all member states, including Nigeria, to take steps toward achieving gender parity in political leadership and participation. These steps include, but are not limited to, the following: monitoring progress in women's representation; ensuring that policies aimed at balancing family and professional life are equally applied; United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15 advocated for a minimum of 30% female leadership in all governing, labour union, political party, professional, and other representative organisations. The Beijing Platform for Action reiterates the need to target gender parity in Strategic Objective G2. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women mandates that women have equal access to political and public life and representation.

According to our country's constitution of 1999, every citizen, male or female can join any political party, labor union, or other group to further his or her own political goals. As stated in Section 42 of the same constitution, women's rights to participate in any lawful activity are affirmed.

According to United Nations and other international organizations, Nigeria is a signatory to a statement and promotion of the equal rights and equitable treatment of men and women. Women's engagement in politics is already at an all-time low because of the harassment and abuse they face. As opposed to prior years, the number of female attendees has decreased.

This study's issue statement is that women's voices reflect the voices of society's most socially excluded.²⁰¹

For this reason, immediate action is needed to identify the issues that are hampering the engagement of female political participants, secure the support of all relevant stakeholders, and restore women's voice in Enugu state politics.

Women's engagement in politics and the democratic process varies widely throughout the world, and it has become an important aspect of current discussions on development and governance. Women's political empowerment has been a long-standing goal of international organizations, however research reveals that despite this, in many countries, women are still marginalized, with low levels of engagement in political structures, as well as in the democratic process itself.²⁰² Rather of fixing the perceived gender inequities in Nigeria politics they promoted or developed, the rising discussion among scholars and intellectuals worldwide over the role of women in politics has caused severe conflicts. Women's political representation has been the subject of several debates throughout the years. As a result, while conservative thinkers claim that women's roles and obligations end in the kitchen, liberals have argued that women's political roles and responsibilities are as important as those of men's in society as a whole.²⁰³

Despite the fact that women make up half the population and cast a majority of the ballots in national elections in Nigeria, they do not have the same level of political participation as males.²⁰⁴ Women make up fewer than 7 percent of the total number of elected officials in the United States. In addition, women have yet to reach the 30% target set by the Beijing Framework of Action, which Nigeria adheres to. Women in Northern Nigeria did not gain the ability to vote until 1979, when the country's constitution finally granted them the franchise. This means that they were not allowed to run for political office or choose their own leaders until 1979. Women in Southern Nigeria were only granted the right to vote in the 1950s. Despite the efforts of Gambo

Sawaba, she was unable to vote or be elected in the north. As a result, her advocacy had nowhere to go because she couldn't represent women in politics way her peers in the West and East could.²⁰⁵

2.3.10 Role of Women in the Nigerian Society

In Nigerian politics, it appears that women have never had much clout, at least not from what we know now about the country. Some acknowledgement of the expanding role of women in Nigerian society, social, economic, or political, has existed in the past and even in the current democratic era.²⁰⁶

Even though all Nigerian citizens have the right to democratic government, there are still impediments that prevent women from fully participating in the country's political process. When it comes to ensuring a more diverse and inclusive government, the engagement of more women in the political process goes a long way toward accomplishing this goal. As a result, women can only have a significant influence if they have achieved the necessary bulk.

While many people believe that women's roles should be primarily focused on the home, others believe women may also play an active role in other aspects of society and politics, such business and politics. Other views differ on whether women's role is confined to domestic duties or if they may also contribute their own quotas by participating actively in other socioeconomic and political activities as well as their male counterparts. There is no gender difference in intelligence, thus women can hold their own against males in any situation. Women's underrepresentation in politics may thus not be attributable to a lack of intelligence, but rather to other cultural and environmental constraints.²⁰⁷

The process of collaborative decision-making is referred to as politics. To run governmental or state affairs, the word is commonly used. Civilized or uncivilized societies aim to organize society, harness resources, and distribute authority in order to influence decision-making in line with organized or individual interests. This is the essence of political involvement.²⁰⁸

For this reason, women participate in politics in order to exert influence on the allocation of power in accordance with their stated interests.²⁰⁹ In recent years, women have become increasingly aware of their mental status and have sought to alter the balance of power and redistribute wealth in their favor. For example, the percentage of seats held by women in the National Parliament went from 3.1 percent in 2000 to 7.5 percent in 2008, a dramatic rise.

The National Center for Women's Development said that there were nine women senators in 2007, up from four in 2003. In addition, there were 26 female representatives in the House, up from 23 in 2003. Female Deputy Governors climbed from 2 in 2003 to 6 in 2007; 2 women were appointed to the Supreme Court bench between 2006 and 2009. Many women are still underrepresented in the ranks of government and have made little progress in gaining access to positions of power and influence. The high levels of female marginalization in Nigerian politics are demonstrated by data from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on the April 5 2007 elections. In the April 2007 elections, only 628 of the 7160 candidates were women; 25 people ran for President, but only one of them was a woman, while five women ran for Vice President. There are just 9 female senators, 25 female representatives in the House of Representatives, and 54 female state assembly members. Women make up more than half of the world's population, according to the UN. More over half of all the world's labor is done by them, but they only make ten percent of the

world's money and own one-hundred percent of the world's wealth. Seventy percent of the world's one billion poorest people are represented by them.

This is a fact of life in the realm of stark development. Nigeria is home to the most people per square mile in Africa. Nigeria is the world's sixth most populous country, home to more than 162 million people. Some 80.2 million women and girls make up the majority of this population. Thirty-eight percent of Nigerian women lack formal education compared to twenty-five percent for men, and just four percent of women have higher education compared to seven percent for males. The Gender Equality Index places Nigeria 118th out of 134 nations. The number of female cabinet ministers is at its highest since the 2011 political dispensation. Women make up 33.3% of Goodluck Jonathan's cabinet, compared to 20.5% in 2007 under Yar Adua, 17.6% under Obasanjo in 2003, and 9.1% under Jonathan's predecessor, Yar Adua. In contrast to the changing numbers of deputy governors and members of the national parliament, the number of women in the cabinet minister post has constantly increased.²¹⁰

This male-dominated nation is strangled by a culture of custom and social ranks that make the Indian caste system appear like a child's play. It's just not possible for a woman to lead a country with 150 million people, many of whom are men who frequently see women as second-class citizens or mere objects of sexual desire, like Nigeria today. Nigeria has been a country dominated by men in recent years. Accept it and move forward. Although Sarah Jubril is adamant and honest, she hopes that the country's main political parties, all of whom are headed by men, would openly support the idea of a female president. The employment of quota systems to secure women's political appointments and institutional inclusion in several African nations is becoming more common. Women hold nearly half of the seats in Rwanda's lower house of Parliament, which was the case in 2003. There are also 30 percent of seats reserved for

women in Rwanda's upper chamber. Dame Patience Jonathan, the First Lady of Nigeria, created the Women for Change Initiative shortly after her husband, President Goodluck Jonathan, took office in May 2011. The initiative aims to increase women's political engagement. As a consequence of political re-awakening and understanding, women are taking an active role in political concerns today more than ever before. Discrimination is a common obstacle people face when engaging in the political process. Male chauvinists tend to believe that males are the only ones who can make decisions, while women are left to be told what they can and shouldn't do.²¹¹

Pre-colonial Nigerian women played an important part in politics, the African social order, and the existing pattern of labor division. Through the institution of women chiefs, the power of first-born daughters, and the age grades, Nigerian women engaged in politics and administration. Because of colonialism, traditional social structures including education, religion, and other pillars of culture were disrupted and foreign systems were imposed. Most ethnic groups in pre-colonial Nigeria, especially the Hausa, the Yoruba and the Igbo, had famous female leaders who held key political posts. Matrilineal succession characterized the ruling class of the Hausa civilization, where women held prominent political positions. Queen Amina of Saria, who succeeded her father to the throne and ruled for 34 years, is a good example of this law.

Lyalode, Iya-kere, and other female titleholders helped to keep the political machinery running smoothly. It was their duty to ensure the spiritual well-being of the Oba in particular portions of the capital city, since they were in control of the market places and of the palace's riches. Women at the highest political levels of the kingdom created an effective group of spokeswomen for political stability and compassionate governance, as well as for the interests of women. After his death, they were anticipated to join the ranks of the departed souls in the country of the spirits. In light of the

foregoing, Yoruba women's political participation is on the rise, in part because to increased literacy and globalization.²¹²

2.3.11 Culture and Religion Factor

In the last few decades, scholars have proposed a variety of explanations for the low representation of women in Nigerian politics, including: traditional and religious leaders' resistance, gender inequalities, deep cultural norms, harsh political terrains's, money politics' Godfatherism, patriarchal mindset, and national government's refusal to comply with international commitments to provide equal playing fields for all genders. Women's political engagement in Nigeria is hampered by a variety of cultural and religious norms. There are three types of violence: direct, cultural, and structural. Direct violence comprises physical attacks and thuggery, while cultural includes the justification of detrimental traditional beliefs and cultural standards, and structural is firmly ingrained in culture and social conventions.²¹³

According to Galtung, structural violence is a kind of prejudice and oppression that is both hidden and unnoticed. However, structural direct violence is cultural violence when elements of society legitimize and encourage it in such a way that it makes it appear, feel, or even feel normal or acceptable.²¹⁴ Ten of the young women who took part in a focus group session pointed to this as a crucial factor influencing their vote. In a patriarchal society like Nigeria's, women are only expected to be seen, not heard. Mohammed Buhari referred to his wife Aisha Buhari as 'belonging to the kitchen and the other room' when he was questioned about his response to his wife's criticism of his administration in a BBC interview during his official tour to Germany.²¹⁵ This goes to show that supporting a female candidate requires convincing the men on why they need to support such candidate.

One of the young participants from the Northern part of the country said:

“During my campaign few people in my community accepted me and while many did not accept me due to my religion, culture and gender. In my culture, they do not allow women to rule, women destiny is only to get married, have enough kids and be obedient housewife. When I met the traditional leaders, they told me that they will never allow me to lead them because I am a lady, even my family did not even support my candidacy. However, some groups that agreed to support you have already set their mind to vote men in major political parties”.²¹⁶

In Nigeria, politicians (male and female) contend with numerous challenges during campaigns, but young women are three times as more likely to be concern about violence and discrimination because of their gender, and twice as likely to worried not being taken seriously in comparison with their male counterparts.²¹⁷

Another participant with her eyes full of tears said:

“I was betrayed by my immediate family, the National Electoral Commission, Security forces and judiciary. My family was the first group of people, followed by my pastor in the church who told me not to run, reason was because I am a young woman, despite that my family has be in politics over a decade now”.²¹⁸

Prevailing social norms and “cultural attitudes discourage girls’ and young women’s political activism, which in turn limits their willingness and agency to take political action”.²¹⁹ Culturally, men are more economically stable then women. Campaigns cost a lot of money at various stages of the electoral process. A young woman needs a lot of finances to run for office. This is a huge barrier as the men expect her to come to them to request for funding. In the Southern Nigeria, women are more educated than their Northern counterparts. Yet, they need to beg for political offices. Most Nigerian men will not want a woman to represent then in an office. They feel it is the man’s birthright.

Young women struggle a lot to be accepted in the Nigerian political terrain unless they have a god father who has a strong influence on the 'king makers.

Nigerian Christians see politics as a dirty game. Some religious sects discourage members from running for political offices. The Christian faith requires that women are submissive to their husbands, by extension all men. The Islamic faith expects a woman to behave in an order. Young women are commonly perceived as further incapable of political participation due to discriminatory gender norms.²²⁰ Unmarried women are supposed to stay in 'Purdah' thereby restricting their movement. This does not in any way support political associations. It is a bit lenient to married women than single ladies. For the married young woman, she only enjoys freedom of association based on the extent her husband grants her permission. The role of a woman is often restricted to the kitchen. Most of the political meetings take place late in the night. A married woman is not expected to leave her family at that time of the night to attend such meetings.

During campaigns, while visiting the palaces to seek traditional rulers support, a young woman in the north is meant to kneel and greet the men. She is expected to cover her hair and remove her footwear. Doing all these is not a guarantee to be accepted to run for office nor win. In some cases, she must be accompanied by a man to gain audience with the king. In some places in the southern Nigeria, she is not permitted near the palace because it is believed that she might be having her menstruation therefore she should not be around the king.

2.3.12 The Use of Derogatory Labelling

What is known as 'slut-shaming', and other forms of derogatory labeling, are one of the major reasons identified by all female youths that participated in the study as a factor

responsible for the low turnout of female youths, as (successful) candidates in the elections. This is despite grabbing their party's tickets; they feel annihilated by the negative characterisation of female politicians. "...in Nigeria, women who are participating in politics are seen and treated as free women (prostitutes/wayward) of easy virtues, stubborn people, whores, too domineering, cultural rebellions, and so on".²²¹ When it comes to seeking an elective post that entails party politics, women (and those that are single) were labeled as 'Ashawo meaning prostitutes', 'runs girls', 'whores' and 'sluts' by some people in their communities. An example is Happiness Odochi, a 31-year-old House of Representative Contestant, who lost to a male candidate in the 2019 general election. She shared her bitter experience on how she and other female youths seeking to engage in politics were deliberately targeted to discourage them from being in politics. As she explained:

"Getting the tickets, the process of winning the primaries was not easy at all. I did not really get support from my political party; it almost seemed I was an independent candidate. I was insulted, intimidated, and humiliated, in the field. Some people said you are supposed to be looking for a husband not running for a position. Some said in to my face that young ladies in politics are "Ashawo" meaning prostitutes in Nigerian Pidgin, and even accused me of wearing body-fitted clothes to attract party leaders. Some even said that I manage to win the party ticket because I have slept with all the party leaders because no woman has ever run for elective position in our constituency except by appointment".²²²

Other participants in the FGD and those that I interviewed attest to the fact they have witnessed and experienced two or more of the various labels and derogatory statements that Happiness mentioned in her statement. These derogatory labels and stigma are meant to control the gender representation of all girls and women in society. They will be sanctioned if they fail to demonstrate femininity reasonably.²²³ This suggests that

stigmatising terms are beyond the narrative of private sexual practices regulation, it is more about the public gender performance regulation.²²⁴ Hon. Christiana (34), who won her election into House of Assembly, shared her experience on how she was insulted and abused during the party nomination contest until she started going to party meeting with her husband.

2.3.13 Insecurity and Violence: Physical and Sexual Harassment

Most Nigerian politicians, when they reach a certain level, or position, are protected by the Nigerian police from attacks. This is for all senior politicians, male or female. Junior politicians are less likely to have police protection. The involvement of hired armed ‘security’, who can behave as thugs and with impunity, is common throughout the electioneering process (before, during, and after elections). This situation can discourage young Nigerian women from entering politics.²²⁵ It is unlikely that young politicians, male or female, have the resource to hire their own ‘thugs’, who other pay to beat up opponents, destroy opponents' properties, and in some cases even kill or attack political rivals to pave the way for winning party tickets. From the House of Assembly race when she witnessed how sponsored thugs and hoodlums bombarded her state party primary to cause mayhem, shooting two people dead. Nobody was arrested. Her illustration of the electoral violence she experienced during the Nigeria 2019 general election is a representation of what female aspirants go through in their attempt to participate in politics. Sandra narrated that:

"During the party primary, my party ward chairman and a party member were shot dead; all the women and most of the men took to their heels. Many people were injured from the stampede; I sprained my ankle when I was jumping the fence to escape, I was scared that I am not going to make it out alive; only men who came prepared for the violence were the ones that continued the selection process to pick the various winners. The incident was all over the

news, my Dad and other family members were worried because I couldn't go home directly, I had to get myself treated first".²²⁶

All respondents, both female and male, said that since male contestants could be intimidated with death threats to drop their ambitions, this was more likely to be the case for female contestants who were threatened in this way. A contestant for House of Representatives said that even though he supports the idea of encouraging female youths and women, in general, to contest in an election, he could not approve or support his wife, sister, or daughter to take part in Nigerian politics for security reasons.

Nigerian women have, over the years, become targets of violence of diverse forms based on their positions in promoting transformative politics.²²⁷ The political terrain in Nigeria is extremely dangerous for both men and women. It is a "do-or-die affair fraught with violence".²²⁸ It is a political atmosphere where assassination, blackmail, intimidation, threats, humiliation, and sort of violence is the order of the day and as a result, scare women away from active participation in Nigerian politics.²²⁹

2.4 Summary of Literature Gap

Both men and women are expected to have certain traits, abilities or behaviors that they are expected to exhibit (femininity and masculinity). As children, we are taught gender norms and expectations. Over time, they can alter, and they can also differ from culture to culture. Many factors such as political status, class and ethnicity as well as physical and mental disabilities affect gender roles in society. Gender is an essential term in sociological analysis because it indicates the social construction of women's subordination (or men's dominance). As a result, the subordination can be altered or terminated. It is neither biologically predetermined nor fixed indefinitely. Sex-based

social structures (such as gender roles) and gender identity are examples of these features, which may or may not be biological in nature. Gender is widely accepted as a key component of social structure. Non-binary or gender queer people are those who don't fit neatly into one of the two gender categories (boys/men and girls/women).

Rape, sexual assault, and interpersonal violence are all strongly linked to gender. Men are the primary perpetrators of these crimes, which target men, women, and children. An attempted or accomplished rape occurred to one in six American women in her lifetime (14.8 percent completed, 2.8 percent attempted) One in every 33 American men has been the victim of an attempted or accomplished rape at some point in their lives. While males are the victims of rape, the perpetrators are virtually usually men. However, this is not to imply that all or even most males are violent, or that women cannot be aggressive as well.

Violent acts are defined as "the illicit and unathourized use of force to influence choices against the will or preferences of others.". The political equilibrium system is upset when violence, especially political violence, occurs. In a political community, "political violence" refers to all collective attacks against the political regime, its players (including rival political organizations and incumbents), or its policies by members of the political community. Various types of political violence exist. If a sudden change in government is what you're after, a coup d'état might be the catalyst (either military or political). Other kinds of political violence include rioting, insurrection, sabotage, and assassination. Politics' original sin is violence. For example, removing a government, replacing it with an ideology (or belief system), and then creating an independent state are all examples of highly organized political activities.

One of the most serious human rights breaches is gender-based violence, which is strongly founded in gender inequity and occurs in all communities. Violent acts

committed against a person on the basis of their gender constitute gender-based violence. Gender-based violence affects both men and women, although women and girls are the primary victims. It is common to use the words "gender-based violence" and "violence against women" interchangeably, because males are the primary perpetrators of the vast majority of cases of gender-based violence against women and girls.

Women's engagement in all facets of national life, particularly in politics, is a key factor in the country's progress. Women's equitability is consequently regarded as critical to any country's progress. At the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women, a decision was made that 30% of all government-owned posts should be allocated to women in order to show the seriousness of this issue. Even though Nigeria is a party to this protocol of action, no suitable legislation relating to the Beijing statement has yet been put in place in Nigeria.

In order to understand what it means to be a man or a woman or how men and women are positioned in relation to one another, we must first understand the cultural norms and expectations that shape the behavior and attitudes of both men and women. Violent behavior is defined, allowed, and even encouraged by these norms in contexts where particular groups of males are given privilege and hierarchical control. As a result, gender-based violence is a means through which belief systems, cultural norms, and socialization processes maintain power hierarchies and structural inequities.

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Chapter Three

Methodology

Research design, sample and sampling procedures, equipment and data analysis techniques and data analysis method are all covered in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

Desktop and textual analysis are the methods used in this study. Identifying and analyzing the mechanisms that work against gender violence and female political engagement in Nigeria is the goal of this research.

3.2 Population of the Study

Nigerian political women were the study's target audience. The research focused on gender violence and women's political engagement in Nigeria as a means of examining patriarchal culture. It is because of this that the findings and conclusions of the study were generalized. The general election in Nigeria in 2019 will be a significant test for the political engagement and representation of women. Political engagement and representation are vivid concepts to those who are well-versed in current events. People who don't have a good grasp of the political context are more likely to misread or just assume the worst. Despite this, neither concept resembles the other at all. Participation in politics covers a wide range of activities, such as voting, running for office, attending political rallies, subscribing to a political philosophy or slogan, and speaking in a way that might impact the political opinions or voting habits of others. Gender stratification is exacerbated by the low percentage of women in elected office. Women in national legislatures have cited social structure, politics, and ideology as three possible causes for the discrepancies in women's political representation. Women's influence in male-

dominated institutions will be restricted unless women are represented in numbers big enough to have a collective voice until they reach a 'critical mass'.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

It is important to note that the sampling method used is one of purposiveness. For the research, there are various books and publications that may be used as examples.

3.4 Research Instrument

Data was acquired using a combination of approaches in this investigation. Data from both primary and secondary sources were used... In order to get the best possible results, this is crucial. Primary data increased the quality of the discussion but was overshadowed by secondary data during data analysis. Internet, credible journals and relevant texts/books have been cited in this article's reference section for the secondary data utilised.

3.5 Method Data Analysis

In this study, just one approach of analysis was used: the written act theory. Textual analysis was used because this was a computer-based research project.. Relevant literary resources and historical records were used to accomplish this. These include, but are not limited to, textbooks, periodicals, online articles, publications, and archives.

Content analysis will be used to examine the data.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

4.1 Gender and Development

South African women's political engagement is examined in this report. Working towards equal representation of men and women in politics and decision-making positions at all levels, including in Cabinet; Parliament; Council; Management of the Public Services; CEOs and boards of state-owned enterprises/Parastatals as well as the private sector in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States are actively engaged.¹ S.African Development Community (SADC) members adopted a declaration and a protocol to encourage women to participate in politics. The first set a goal of 30% female representation in government by 2005, while the second set a goal of 50% female representation in public and commercial sector decision-making roles by 2020. There has been recognition for SADC's initiatives. A large percentage of seats in parliament in the SADC area are occupied by women, the greatest percentage in the world.

In both the SADC area and Africa as a whole, women's representation in national parliaments has gradually increased. In contrast to the rest of Africa and the rest of the globe, the rate has been significantly higher in the SADC area. Despite the fact that the number of women in parliament in Southern Africa's countries is large, the SADC region has some of the world's worst performance when it comes to gender equality. A few examples include Swaziland (6.2% female representation), Botswana (9.5% female representation), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (10.3 percent).² Furthermore, the 30% average which is above the African is still only half way to the target of 50% women representation required by the Protocol on Gender and

Development of 2008. Despite ongoing public support for these sorts of measures, however, the status of women, particularly in areas of politics and governance, has seen only nominal improvement.³

Furthermore, wide variations between countries—from 10% WIP in DRC and Botswana, to 44% in Seychelles—means that countries need to adopt different timeframes for achieving gender parity with an outside deadline of 2030.⁴ There are factors that have caused this. Political, socioeconomic and cultural barriers predominantly constrain or prevent women's participation in all SADC countries. The SADC concurs and states that Patriarchal aspects of traditional cultural systems and male-dominated structures of modern governance are still a factor, although this too is changing, even changing rapidly in some parts of the region, more slowly elsewhere. Other challenges are the continuing structural rigidities within political parties, and lack of political will at various levels.⁵

Therefore, the subheadings below answer the research questions formulated in chapter one.

4.2 Gender Violence Act as a Limitation to Women Participation in Politics

Equal rights and opportunities for women and men are a fundamental tenet of international law and norms, and this includes full and equal participation in all levels of political processes. Women make up more than half of the world's population and play an essential role in advancing society. Women play crucial responsibilities in most communities, including that of mother, producer, home manager, community organiser, and sociocultural and political activists. The women's movement has inspired the creation of many of the aforementioned roles.⁶

According to recent statistics, women now make up about half of Nigeria's population, reflecting a worldwide trend. But women's contributions to society as a whole, which are unquestionably crucial given their disproportionate representation in leadership positions, remain unacknowledged. This is because of patriarchal social systems, religious abuse, traditional rituals, and negative stereotypical beliefs about other cultures. The 1980s were a watershed decade in Nigerian history, when the issue of women's contributions to national development began to receive attention. It was at the 1995 International Conference for Women in Beijing that women in Nigeria were finally able to make a real impact on politics.

As much as 51% of Nigerian women participate in electoral processes. However, despite these advancements, women are still underrepresented in both elected and appointed offices. Based on the data we have, less than 7% of Nigerians hold political office. The Beijing Platform for Action requires an affirmative action rate of 30 percent, which Nigeria has not yet achieved. Many Nigerians are becoming increasingly concerned about the low numbers of women holding elected and appointive positions. Nonetheless, in response to the proclamation issued at the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, which pushed for 30% affirmative action, government and non-governmental organisations have undertaken serious attempts to enhance the degree of participation of women in politics. However, the current National Gender Policy (NGP) in Nigeria suggested 35% affirmative action and sought for a more inclusive representation of women with at least 35% of both elective political and appointive public sector jobs. The patriarchal practises intrinsic to our society, many of which were visible even in the pre-colonial era and persist to this day, are the primary cause of the underrepresentation of women in political activity. There was a decline in the

number of women holding elected and appointive positions in Nigerian politics before the return of democracy.⁷

4.2.1 Effort Made towards Female Participation in Politics in Nigeria

Several organisations, including the Women Political Empowerment Office, the Nigeria Women Trust Funds, and the Women Lobby Group, have been formed to increase the number of women in elective and appointive posts in Nigeria. The Nigeria Women Strategy Conference was also held, in addition to the creation of an INEC gender policy, a national multi stakeholder forum, and the launch of many interventions to bring about affirmative action. The National Center for Women's Development and the National Bureau of Statistics are working together to collect statistics that can be used to address this issue with confidence. The current data set is not standardised.

The collecting of data is meant, in part, to serve as a foundation upon which the new Sustainable Development Goals might be built (SDG). Information gathering is still under progress. It is hoped that the outcome would demonstrate the steady progress made toward attaining the affirmative declaration, indicate how the gap that once existed has been closed, and quantify the difference between the current state and the affirmative action of 35%. Additionally, it will raise awareness of new advocacy tools among stakeholders to promote the campaign for higher representation of women in decision making in Nigeria, as well as better evidence-based planning and programming including women in decision making. In addition, it will remove the currently unharmonized information.⁸

4.2.2 Limitation affecting Women Participation In Politics In Nigeria

Though women face insurmountable obstacles, studies have indicated that the factors stated below are largely to blame for the extreme marginalisation of Nigerian women in politics.

- 1. Patriarchy:** It describes a society where men have absolute power and control over women, which in turn has given rise to women being looked upon as mere household wives and non-partisans in decision making process in households not to talk of coming out to vie for political positions.
- 2. Stigmatization:** The way politics is practised in Nigeria gives the impression that its participants have little concern for human rights and are willing to compromise their virtue for dishonest gain. Therefore, women aspirants who ventured into politics are looked upon as shameless and promiscuous.
- 3. Low level of education:** One of the problems is that not enough women are enrolled in school. The National Adult Literacy Survey, 2010 published by National Bureau of Statistics revealed that the adult literacy rate in English in Nigeria is 50.6 per cent while literacy in any other language is 63.7 per cent (female adult age 15 and above). This explains why most women are least qualified for political offices due to low educational attainment. This is also an effect of colonialism, where men were more favoured than women.
- 4. Meeting Schedules:** Meetings of women's caucuses to discuss pre- and post-election strategy are planned at inconvenient hours, making participation difficult for women who also have families and other responsibilities. The slated time are often time which women are expected to take care of their

children and family. This method of schedules is viewed as an attempt to sidelining women from engaging in political process.

5. **Financing:** In Nigeria, candidates seeking political office need to be backed financially by a substantial amount to stand a chance. Even while certain political parties provide exceptions for female candidates, most Nigerian women who seek these positions cannot afford to meet the financial demands therein. As a result, there wasn't much they could do to equal or surpass the strength of men.
6. **Political Violence:** Since the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, elections have frequently descended into bloodshed. Female candidates for office in different political parties are unable to pursue their political careers due to the prevalence of political violence.
7. **Religious and Cultural barriers:** Women are considered as traditionally relatively obedient and picture of virtue, and neither Christianity nor Islam award women significant role in public life. However, you won't find them anywhere else online. It's a barrier to women entering politics, and it's exacerbated by the fact that most women who work in politics don't actually believe in God.⁹

4.3 Level of Women Participation in Politics in Nigeria

The essence of political participation in any society, either civilised or primitive, is to seek control of power, acquisition of power and dispensing power to organise society, harness and distribute resources and to influence decision making in line with organised or individual interests.

One of the most basic reasons people get involved in politics is the desire to see power distributed in a way that benefits their particular group's interests, and women are no exception. Women's evolving mental states have led them to push for more equitable power structures and the redistribution of wealth in recent years. Despite the fact that women's participation in Nigerian politics is widely apparent at the level of voting and latent support, research has found that violence and other forms of electoral conflicts perpetrated and perpetuated by men and male youths are the major barriers confronting and inhibiting women's active participation in Nigerian politics.

There are more and more debates on what women's roles should be in today's society. There is a range of opinions on whether women should be limited to roles in the house or allowed the same opportunities in the workplace, politics, and the economy as males. Despite the fact that a mother's relationship with her child may force and restrict her to remain sedentary, it is still thought that she should do all she can to help her family and the community at large. Women's engagement in political life is the primary topic of this study.

Nigerian women just like their counterparts all over the world, have contributed immensely to the nations socio-political and economic development, yet the struggle for their political emancipation cannot be successful unless equal opportunities are given to them. This is very important as women represent a potent force for the development of any nation in that they form a greater percentage of the global population. It was due to this observation that Ghali (1998:5) posited that until the role of women in national leadership is recognized, our national problems will remain unresolved.

Despite the progress towards democracy in many countries, women remain underrepresented in government at all levels, especially in ministerial and other

executive bodies, and have made little headway towards gaining political power in legislative bodies or reaching the target endorsed by the Economic and Social Council of having 30% women in positions at decision making levels by 1995.

According to the Beijing Platform for Action, only 16 countries reached their goal of having women make up 30% of their nation's decision-makers by the end of the 1990s. Data published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa shows that in 1997, the four African countries with the highest percentage of women in decision-making positions were Seychelles (27%), South Africa (25%), and Mozambique (25%). (25 per cent). In the 1999 elections, 57.4 percent of registered voters were women out of a total of 47 million Nigerians who were eligible to vote.

While no women were elected to the federal legislature during the first Republic, three were placed in that body through the 1961 regional elections held in the Eastern House of Assembly. Franca Afegbua was elected as the sole female Senator in the Senate under the Second Republic in 1983; however, she only served for three months before the Republic's downfall. In 1992, during Ibrahim Babangida's transition programme, only 8 out of 300 gubernatorial aspirants were women, or 2.6%. The states were all won by men, therefore they had no chance of entering any of the Government Houses. Furthermore, only 4% of the party executive positions in the then-existing parties were held by women.

There were 11,117 open elective posts in 1999, but only 631 women ran for them. Of those 631 women, only 180 were successful. Only 143 of the 180 winners were actually elected as council members in their respective wards. Only 1.6% of all elected seats were held by women during this time, with only 180 women holding political office. During Obasanjo's first term in office (1999-2003), women made up only 1.6% of elective positions. In 2003, not one of the 36 states had a female chief executive in the

executive branch. Only 3.54 percent of seats in the State House of Assembly were held by women. Women held just 3.67 percent of Senate seats and 6.11 percent of House seats in 2016.

Andy Uba (whose deputy was Stella Odife) resigned as Governor of Anambra State when the Supreme Court ruled on June 14, 2007 that Mr. Peter Obi (elected on the platform of APGA) had not finished serving his tenure. As Virgie Etioba took over as Peter Obi's right-hand man. Compared to the international standard of 30%, the percentage of women elected to the State House of Assembly increased from 3.54% in 2003 to 5.4% in 2007; 6.11% to 7.2% (for House of Representatives; and 3.67% to 8.3% (for Senate); nonetheless, this is still considerably behind the percentage of men.

An essential aspect of every functioning democracy is the free and unrestricted ability of its citizens to take part in the decision-making process. Those who agree with this view political participation as a means to "social justice, health services, better working conditions, and opportunity to franchise" as well as "freedom of expression, association, right to free flow of communication, right to influence decision process and the right to franchise."¹⁰ True democracy relies on people being involved in politics. Considering the concept of democracy, we see that it gives a level playing field for people to get involved in politics, and that it is fair for all candidates to run for office, thus:

a system of government that meets three essential conditions: meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and groups, especially political parties, for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair election, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties, freedom to form and join organizations sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.¹¹

The area in which the principles of equal citizenship are applied to all facets of life, including the social, economic, and political spheres; the realm of individual and group rights and freedoms; the realm of popular and equal participation in collective decision making; the realm in which governments are held accountable to mass publics and constituent minorities. The common thread among these definitions is that any regime or state that claims to be democratic must allow for a great deal of freedom of choice, openness, the protection of civil and political liberties, and widespread popular participation; this freedom must extend to all members of society without exclusion or bias. Freedom and the equal opportunity for political involvement that democracy affords both men and women serve as the intellectual basis of the definitions. Considering that democracies should not have any racial, religious, or gender-based restrictions, the ones practised in Nigeria, Africa, show that they are artificial and imposed. But the rise of industrial capitalism in the twentieth century also brought about the secularisation of politics and the legitimization of universal civil rights. Women started organising after realising that the tide of globalisation and industrial capitalism would eventually break the shackles of women's social, economic, and political status, and they wanted to speed up the pace and tempo at which equal rights were institutionalised for everyone. In today's society, women are able to take part in formal education, economic pursuits, and political processes to differing degrees, depending on the degree of modernization and technical advancement in their respective societies.

The paper is based on the following assumptions:

1. that women's low political participation in Nigeria is a result of the biological affinity and natural bond between a woman and her child, so that women

deliberately limit themselves to domestic activities in order to oversee the welfare of their children and coordinate home affairs;

2. that flowing from the above, husbands/fathers capitalise on this sedentary acceptance in order to advance their own careers and interests.

4.3.1 Factors Militating Against Active Women Participation in Nigerian Politics

There are a variety of causes that have allowed or contributed to the subordinate position women currently hold in Nigerian politics, as observed and revealed by empirical evidence. Some of these factors are a result of women's biological makeup, while others were created on purpose by men to limit women's mobility even more. The following are examples of such elements:

Cultural Practices: Cultural norms place many limitations on women's political participation. Patriarchy permeates Nigerian culture, and as a result, women there are conditioned to accept roles of subservience to men. It is considered unbecoming of women to expose themselves in public for political activities like campaign rallies and the like since they are perceived as belonging in the home, being unable to make informed decisions, and belonging in the kitchen. Many men believe it unbelievable and unrealistic for women to be involved in politics.¹²

Violence, Thuggery and Intimidation: Patriarchal domination in political parties, godfatherism, indigeneship, intra-party rigging, political violence, thuggery, and a high level of intimidation are further barriers to women's full participation in politics and governance.

Nature of Political Party Formation: Politics parties are typically formed through club and informal gatherings of male friends and business associates. Women and other

members of society are recruited for membership only when the foundations of the party have been set in stone. As a result, women are less likely to be involved in political parties at the ground level, when they could potentially reap the rewards of becoming charter members.

Inadequacy of Willing and Educated Women: Domestic duties and the need to keep the peace in the family are things that some Nigerian women acceptably subject themselves to out of need. As a result, fewer eligible and interested women will run for elective or appointive office.

High Cost of Election: While men and women are equally vulnerable, Nigerian women are hit harder than men. Female candidates have a significant disadvantage due to the high cost of sponsoring political parties and campaigns. It's estimated that running for governor could cost as much as 200 million Nigerian dollars.

The Issue of Indegeneity: This is another formidable obstacle to women's full and equal participation in politics. Women who marry outside of their birth constituencies (yet run for office in that constituency) are often seen as foreigners by voters in that area (at least by birth). If the woman's husband is from a completely different ethnic group, the situation is much more dire. A lady with such lofty aspirations is likely to face opposition and criticism.¹³

4.3.2 Women and Political Participation in Nigeria

The primary goal of this study is to examine, via secondary and primary research, the extent to which Nigerian women participate in politics and the nature of the barriers they face in doing so. The percentage of men involved in politics is staggeringly higher than that of women. It's not that women haven't made strides toward greater

representation in political leadership through appointments and elections; they have; it's just that their numbers still pale in comparison to the global benchmark of 30%.

Of the 300 candidates for governor in 1992, under Babangida's rule, only 8 were women, or 2.6%; none of them went on to become governor. The marginalisation of women in politics, particularly during party nominations, has been linked to the lack of women on party executive boards, according to studies. Since 1992, the percentage of women elected to the National Assembly has never been more than 8.3 percent. Only one woman was elected to the Senate's 56 open seats, while only three out of 442 members of the House were women. In 1992, only one woman out of ninety was elected to the Senate, and only fourteen out of five hundred seventy-five were elected to the House of Representatives.

In addition, it was found that in 1999, men held 966 of the 978 open seats in the 36 Houses of Assembly, while women held 12 of those seats, or 1.2%. In 2003, women held 39 of a total of 951 seats, an increase from the 4% held in 2001. In the Senate, women held 54 of 990 members in 2007 (5.5%), while in the House of Representatives they held 13 of 360 seats (3.6%) in 1999. Three hundred eighteen of the 339 seats were held by men in 2003, while only 21 were held by women, or 3.6%. Since 2007, when there were 20, women have taken up a total of 25 seats, or 7 percent. The situation was not much better in the Senate, when in 1999 only three out of a total of 109 seats (or 2.8%) were held by women. In 2003, men made up 92.3% of the legislature, while women made up only 3.7%, holding four of the 109 seats. In 2007, there was an increase of 8.3%, with 9 women out of 109 seats.¹⁴

4.3.3 Constraints of Women in Political Participation in Nigeria: An Exposition

Fifty-six years after Nigeria's independence, there are still fears that increased participation by women in governance is threatened by practice already discarded by other democracies. Women participation in politics and decision-making process is very important in order to bring about even development to the society. Like many countries, Nigeria maintains a national democratic constitution, boasting inclusive and equitable access to political participation. It was expected that facilitating Nigerian women's admission to one-third of positions in governing bodies would enable women to reach a critical threshold in the pursuit of changes in gender equity and thus, women's empowerment. However, the under-representation of Nigerian women in politics is both descriptive (that is, the number of women in political institutions is not reflective of the number of women in society) and substantive (that is, the unique perspectives of women are being heard in political institutions to ensure that women's needs, demands and interests are incorporated into political agendas). The empowerment and social status of Nigerian women have suffered due to their underrepresentation in the public and social sector compared to men and their inability to adequately fit into the political arena¹⁵.

The time of day that most political decisions are made in caucuses is the first reason that has prevented more women from entering politics. Some women could be falsely accused of wanting to use the cover of darkness to participate in sexual exploitation because of this. The question of funding is equally critical.¹⁶ Some desperate male politicians also use violence and unscrupulous techniques to prevent women from advancing in politics.

The following might be summed up as elements that work against women's efforts to participate equally in all facets of national life:

- i. Entrenched cultural practices: “Men are the decision makers; women should be cooking in the kitchen while men play politics.” – Comments passed to Dorothy Nyone when she announced her intention to represent the Gokana area for the ruling People’s Democratic Party. Social conventions, values, and mores combine to maintain the stereotype of Nigerian women as kitchen dwellers who are only gatecrashers into spheres outside of their matrimonial homes. Women are socialized from birth to see their place as second to that of men. The birth of a male child is warmly received, to the extent that women often feel that their marriage is not secure until they give birth to male children. Cultural practices are often harmful to women. For example, burial rites in the eastern parts of the country ensure that women remain social outcasts: widows are forced to drink the bath water of their dead husbands as part of the mourning process. Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) results from the early marriage of teenage girls in the north. Victims of these cultural practices cannot participate socially as they are viewed as outcasts.
- ii. Religion: Religion is an accomplice in the stereotyping of Nigerian women and reinforces the barriers that prevent them from participating politically, economically, and socially. For instance, in the northern part of Nigeria, women are held in Purdah in deference to Islam. Only their husbands have unfettered access to them and their movements are restricted to their quarters. They depend entirely on their husbands and families to meet their needs. The conditions of their lives can only be guessed at, as most households subsist below the poverty line. Religion ensures that a significant number of women are barred from participating in politics (either as voters or as aspirants to elective offices) as well as economic activities.

- iii. Inadequate funds
- iv. Male dominance in all sectors, particularly politics and economy
- v. Misconceived roles of women in politics
- vi. Early marriage which pervades certain sections of the country
- vii. Widowhood practices; and
- viii. Violent nature of politics in Nigeria.¹⁷

Others factors include:

- i. Patriarchal institutions that tend to push women back into the private sphere.
- ii. Cultural and religious socialization that considers Nigerian women as subordinates and men as their superiors. For instance, some religions do not allow women to go out in public and they can only communicate through the men.
- iii. Poverty, that is, women do not own resources; they are usually co-owners and as such property lies in the hands of men.
- iv. Illiteracy: The few literate women are usually marginalized and isolated by society.
- v. Repressive nature of socialization and lack of self-esteem.
- vi. Women's multiple roles such as reproductive, productive and community roles.
- vii. Lack of general security that tends to affect women more.
- viii. Sexual and gender-based violence.
- ix. There is no universal civic education from a gender perspective.
- x. Lack of solidarity among women.¹⁸

Also, it is obvious that women in Nigeria, as in most African countries, experience gender inequality that is manifested in almost all aspect of social reality: education, health, political participation and social status. Culture and religious beliefs tend to

reinforce the social conception of the woman as inferior person. Above all, the chauvinistic tendencies of the male rulers of the land have over the years denied women any meaningful participation in politics. For instance, all through the years when Nigeria was under military rule and people in positions of political power were appointed rather than elected, not a single woman was appointed as governor of the many states in the country, nor a member of the highest policy-making body (the Armed Forces Ruling Council). Several years ago about the political marginalization of Nigerian women is still very much applicable “Nigerian women must come to recognize that politics determines the allocation of all resources in the society, and that their alienation from politics means that their special interest will continue to be neglected”.¹⁹

4.4 Challenges Facing Women Participation in Nigeria Politics

The term "democracy" refers to the belief that all people, regardless of gender, should have the opportunity to run for and be elected to positions of power. It doesn't put any caps on the achievements that different groups in a community can strive for. However, the inherent human desire to dominate others has resulted in a significant segment of the population being marginalised and stereotyped in order to prevent them from participating in electoral competition and so gaining access to political power. In Nigeria, women's participation in electoral competition has been stifled on purpose, a phenomenon that benefits from entrenched religious and cultural views, as well as the biological and cognitive advantages of men. Both the global and Nigerian populations are more than half female. Because 'nothing for women without women,' it's crucial that women have a voice in politics for a society to be really democratic. Since Nigeria's return to civilian governance in 1999, the controversy over whether or not women face restrictions when voting has raged. Women's rights organisations and Nigeria's civilian

governments have worked to increase the number of female voters by enacting laws under the National Gender Policy.²⁰

4.4.1 Constraints of Women Participation in Electoral Competition in Nigeria since 1999

True representation of women in political contests, both quantitatively and qualitatively, can only be observed in actual vote totals and candidate nominations. The fact that women run for office in elections is a harbinger of greater political agency, even if winning an election is not a given. Therefore, one must conclude that the number of women registering and competing as candidates of major political parties in Nigeria is abysmal, especially if Ruqayya Momodu's remark is taken into account.²¹

There are now various barriers that prevent Nigerian women from actively running for office. However, the most prominent are societal, economic, and mental limitations. As was previously noted, most communities in Nigeria are still configured in the old patriarchal mode where men call the shots, which has a negative impact on women's ability to actively participate in electoral contests. Religious and cultural factors both have a role in this. The two major religions in Nigeria, the Holy Quran and the Bible, both have strict limitations on the roles women can play outside the home. Nevertheless, Islam does not completely forbid women from seeking positions of public prominence. Women are welcome to pursue public service in any capacity they think fit, with the exception of spiritual leadership and military command. Given the duties of the President of the Federal Republic as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, it would be inappropriate for a Muslim woman to run for or hold the post of President. Women are prohibited from holding military command positions, however they are eligible to run for state legislature and governorships.

Women's roles are mostly relegated to that of caregivers and homemakers in northern Nigeria, and women are underrepresented in political and religious leadership on matters affecting women and children. Since 1999, fewer women in northern Nigeria have run for public office. The late Alhaji Kura Mohammed was challenged in the Senate election for Kano Central by Hajiya Najaatu Mohammed. Alhaji Kura Mohammed, the male contender, won the election when it was reversed. This example is significant because it is a valid illustration of how political contests in northern Nigeria often reflect the patriarchal structure of the region. It also reveals how male power brokers exploit cultural norms and religious beliefs to influence the outcomes of female candidates' campaigns.

In addition, the few women who held political offices at the federal and state levels in northern Nigeria successfully ran for office and won, often defeating male opponents. Because of their wealth, political clout, and proximity to the halls of power, these ladies were at an advantage. Nenadi Usman, a former minister of finance, gained a Senate seat for Kaduna South in 2011. A commissioner in the Bukar Abba Ibrahim Administration, Hajiya Khadijah Bukar Abba Ibrahim ran for and was elected to represent Yobe State in the House of Representatives in 2007. She ran again in 2011 and 2015, both times successfully, and resigned in 2015 to become a minister in President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. In the 2018 APC primaries for the Damaturu/Gujba/Gulani/Tarmuwa Federal Constituency seat, Honorable Khadijah Bukar Abba Ibrahim re-contested and defeated her stepson, whom her husband, Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, had "anointed as APC candidate." Her late father Waziri Ibrahim had amassed a political empire.²²

For the first time in a major election in northern Nigeria, a woman, Senator Aisha Jummai Alhassan, ran for governor of Taraba State in 2015. There were rumours that

Senator Alhassan might face off against PDP candidate Mr. Darius Ishaku in 2015. Given the patriarchal structure of Nigerian politics, it is worth noting that Senator Alhassan, or "Mama Taraba" as her supporters nickname her, might not have fared as well in the primaries if she hadn't already been a senator and had the support of party stalwarts like Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

Men still have an advantage in political battle in southern Nigeria, but money is the real factor in who wins and who loses. The positions of Deputy Governor in Lagos and Ekiti States have both been held by women. In 2007, the Honorable Patricia Eteh became the first woman to ever hold the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives in the United States. Competing against Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in the PDP Presidential Primaries in 2011, Sarah Nnadzwa Jibril ultimately came up short. I feel that Mrs. Jibril's 2011 election and the rise of Honorable Eteh as Speaker were pushed as a cosmetic to serve western audience that democracy is getting rooted in Nigeria.

The results demonstrate that Nigerian society has some of the responsibility for this gender gap, as both men and women possess leadership potential and are essential to the functioning of any given society. You can't discount a woman's influence in politics because she cooks everything to perfection like she's in charge of the kitchen. Ask global leaders like Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Hillary Clinton, Margret Thatcher, and Christine Lagarde, or African leaders like Uche Ekwunife, Stella Oduah, Oby Ezekwesili, and the late Dora Akunyili, and they will tell you that the limits set by society are only man-made, not ordained by God.²³

Based on our findings, we can identify the following as significant barriers to women's political participation in Nigeria: the failure to provide equal educational opportunities for girls; the absence of economic, political, and social support for women; the nature

of politics in the country; and a lack of a solid educational foundation. Women, however, need to take the proverbial bull by the horns and make the most of their opportunities. The most powerful tool women have for getting their opinions heard in politics is other women. In order to better promote and preserve women's rights in Nigeria, having a more equitable representation of women in parliament is essential.²⁴ Politics organisations, at all levels of government and within their own ranks, should establish and execute gender quotas, informal targets, and other affirmative action methods.

4.4.2 Factors Militating against Women in Politics in Nigeria

The presence and voice of women in public life in many African countries, including Nigeria, is dictated by offensive social norms, political exclusion, and economic inequality. Women made up 49% of Nigeria's overall population in 2006, yet they still face significant barriers to participation at all levels of government, business, and leadership. There has been considerable progress toward political equality in African countries, but it is still mostly unrecognised. In terms of political influence, men are more powerful than women since they tend to manage more resources and have higher levels of education.²⁵ For instance, male council members need not have a high degree of education, but women with the same amount of education are not promoted to the same level of responsibility. Due to a lack of self-awareness, women often find themselves reliant on political parties or positions held by men. Issues of interest to males will be prioritised over those of interest to women if more men take on leadership roles. Women are sometimes elected to positions of power in government agencies where they play little to no active role in policymaking.

Many women in Nigeria, especially those working at the federal level of government, have little to no influence or power. A large percentage of them lack the abilities

required to communicate their thoughts persuasively. Women's empowerment and public issues suffer when there is a lack of understanding about political engagement. If more women are granted positions of power, they will work to solve these issues so that they can hold positions of authority throughout all branches of government. Inadequate representation, non-participation, and non-involvement of women in the preparation and execution of plans for their economic development and social justice through decentralised institutions are major reasons why women have not reaped the full benefits of years of planning and development. In addition to the fact that few women are given election tickets, most political parties don't even keep track of their female members. Nigerian women have extremely limited access to the decision-making process and a significant lack of access and control over financial resources because politics is traditionally a male realm and all financial, economic, commercial, and political transactions are performed by males outside the home.²⁶

Scholars have been paying a lot of attention to the causes and problems that keep women from rising to positions of political leadership and decision making. Women and men are built differently, although they may have some things in common in terms of, for example, education, socioeconomic level, and professional pursuits. But they are excluded from almost every aspect of public life. There are a number of obstacles that hinder women from holding all levels of political office and leadership roles in nascent democracies. There are many elements at play, but some of the most important are as follows:

1. Rude social customs including the purdah system, female genital mutilation (FGM), widowhood customs, and restrictive religious practises (as seen in the Northern geopolitical zone) (observed in the northern part of the country). Numerous of these socio-cultural traditions put obstacles in the way of women's

empowerment and gender equality, thus increasing the load on women. Women are frequently denied access to knowledge, education, and wealth-generating resources like land, capital (including credit facilities), labour, and entrepreneurial abilities due to the myriad exclusions and deprivations that surround them due to cultural and traditional beliefs. The low participation of women in politics and corporate decision-making can be attributed to these limitations imposed by sociocultural traditions.

2. The treatment of widows in a dehumanising manner, wife-battery, and other subjugating behaviours that may eventually cause a woman to lose confidence. These behaviours keep women "quiet" in both the public and private spheres.
3. Stereotypical barriers that prevent women from rising to the top of organisational and political leadership positions.
4. Disallowing daughters to receive their fair part of the family inheritance (this is common in the South-East of Nigeria). Women do not have any rights to land or landed property in practically all of the states of the federation because they are not allowed to inherit land or landed property under customary law, either directly from their fathers or their husbands.
5. The customary responsibilities placed on women and girls to perform housework, which frequently leaves them with little to no time for formal education and self-development.
6. Poor access to education and scholarship opportunities in a variety of professions: These limitations also affect women's access to education and professions, which in turn limits their ability to effectively compete with their male counterparts on the job market for rewarding and higher-paying positions.

7. Patriarchal contexts in African family societies: The culture of male supremacy inherent in regional traditions and cultures, including religious eccentricities, typically reproduces the poor status of Nigerian women.
8. Emerging democracies' high crime rates and corruption make it difficult for women leaders to fulfil their jobs. Additionally, women may not be as well-positioned as males to fight corruption when it arises. As an alternative, people can encounter gendered corruption, such as the requirement of sex in exchange for specific goods or resources.
9. High maternal mortality rate: The Nigerian health sector is beset by a number of issues, such as the improper distribution of health facilities, poor management of the health systems, inadequate referral systems, and the disregard for rural areas, where a larger percentage of the population lives, particularly women and children. Up until recently, when the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) was 545 per 100,000 live births, the topic of women's health did not receive much attention from either health policies or research. Health research, particularly in Nigeria's field of maternal and child health, has historically prioritised the wellbeing of children over that of women. Even though a woman's health is the focus, the issue still pertains to reproductive health, with a focus on family planning in particular.
10. The denial of equal rights to all people, particularly women, who in some regions of the nation are viewed as second-class citizens. In such circumstances, individuals are prohibited from taking part in any activities, not even at the local level. Women are made to believe that the kitchen is their permanent job, one that they may perform to the fullest extent.²⁷

Many women in new democracies face obstacles like those mentioned above that prevent them from gaining the education and experience they need to assert their rights

and develop the self-assurance they'll need to rise to leadership roles. The situation is complicated by the fact that, from an early age, females are socialised to assume a subordinate role, with emphasis placed on learning the skills necessary to become a good wife, mother, and homemaker. As a result, women have limited access to resources that could help them assume positions of public leadership, particularly in the fields of education and social networking. To be a woman in Nigeria and to rise to a position of public leadership is just as difficult as it is in any other country. The conditions under which women can realise their full potential, assume positions of leadership, and make meaningful contributions to the economic and social progress of their country.

4.4.3 The National Gender Policy: A Critique

Since women are underrepresented in political leadership roles, the Olusegun Obasanjo administration legislated the National Gender Policy. However, the National Gender Policy Document makes a mistake by failing to challenge the biases that patriarchy, culture, and psychology have placed on women. "The gender problem should address the systemic inequalities between women and men in society without ignoring their fundamental differences," states a report by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. By doing so, the first female minister is implicitly endorsing the gender roles that have traditionally been assigned to men. The paper failed to make a convincing case for women to run for office. Only that "gender participation in politics and to draw up mechanisms for the empowerment of women in politics" should be equalised was mentioned. If the Minister in charge of the Ministry was a woman, we might expect a more assertive document that would highlight the importance of women running for office. HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, poverty, and other issues that seek

government and foreign donor funding patronage were the primary focus of the document.

4.4.4 Social ‘Lynching’ and Women Participation in Electoral Competition in Nigeria

Making private sex videos by male partners for the sole purpose of blackmail has been a big element working against women running for office. Cultural norms in Nigeria discourage women from showing skin, as McCain correctly noted. As a result, women who have been the target of a partner's social lynching tend to develop low levels of confidence and self-esteem. Because of the scrutiny that would be directed at them, women in such situations will likely be discouraged from pursuing political careers. There is a growing trend in Nigerian media that aims to blackmail prominent figures and celebrities by releasing explicit videos or photos of them. He referred to it as the "new imperialism in media flows" and claimed that many of the victims of these controversies are female Nigerian celebrities. Using the example of Kannywood actress Maryam Hiyana, who was lynched after a private sex film of hers was leaked to the public, he claimed that it would be extremely unlikely for her or her children to ever achieve political power.²⁸

In this research, the author uses data from an anonymous interview to show that a former female Minister was pressured to abandon her plans to run for the Senate in 2015. As a result, social lynching will remain a major barrier for Nigerian women who want to run for office.

4.5 Women Discover their Leadership Potentials in Nigeria Politics

Political leadership, in particular, is essential to a country's progress. The political leadership a country has had and has access to is directly correlated to the country's

level of development, prosperity, and success. Gender differences exist in leadership, just as they do in other fields. Institutional leadership, like institutionalised practises and institutional frameworks, is skewed toward one gender or another. All of these procedures, norms, and institutions are embedded in systems that place men at the top of the hierarchy. Anyone who navigates these systems does so as a lived experience, taking with them all the traits (such as sex, class, education level), beliefs, and life lessons of their unique bodies.²⁹ Therefore, women and men who aspire to political leadership face the same institutionalised gender power that shapes and frames the leadership experiences of ordinary people. There is more to each reality than just one person's preferences or biases. Gender norms in society play a larger role in its development. The outcomes for women and men are consequently dissimilar. Because of their inherent diversity and the unique experiences they've had, no two women or men ever have the same level of success in leadership roles. Furthermore, the concept of leadership itself is often misunderstood. When someone is in a position of formal authority in the public or political sphere, such as an appointed or elected position, this is taken as evidence that this person possesses leadership qualities.

As a rule, women are not included in the decision-making processes that shape governmental policy. Comparing the low rates of female political representation in the 1960s to the present day, Africa has witnessed a tremendous escalation. The inclusion of women in political leadership positions is rising to the top of international agendas. Increased female political participation can be attributed to positive trends in African governance, which have been facilitated by the continent's steadily strengthening democracy. There have been many successes in empowering women and achieving gender parity, and numerous policies, programmes, and initiatives have been implemented to further these goals.³⁰

More and more women are becoming politically active, and many different factors have contributed to this development. More women now have a chance to take on leadership roles as a result of good changes taking place in the African continent. Even though there have been encouraging global trends in African women's political participation, a massive chasm still separates them from their male counterparts. There is a tremendous amount of work that has to be done before women are seen as legitimate partners to males. This research aims to show how African women are increasingly becoming politically active. We'll talk about what's helped these tendencies take hold. Finally, we will draw conclusions and make suggestions for how to remove the obstacles to women's participation.

Neither Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti nor Margaret Ekpo can be disputed as leaders in the political fights that preceded Nigeria's independence in the 1950s. Mrs. Kuti was a tireless activist in the fight for equal rights for women in Nigeria. Mrs. Margret Ekpo was the sole female member of the seven-man committee established in 1951 to form a national political organisation with the goal of gaining self-government within five years. In 1959, she was elected to the position of vice president of the Eastern House of Chiefs. In fact, it's possible that the two more well-known female political activists took inspiration from the ladies who led the 1929 Aba Women's Riots in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Not only did Professor (Mrs.) Grace Alele-Williams make a name for herself in the field of mathematics teaching, she also became the first female Nigerian scholar to be named Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin.³¹ Similarly, in 2001, the prevalence of fake medications was reduced from almost 90% to 68% thanks to the efforts of the late Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili (OFR), the former Director of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control. Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Nigeria's

Finance Minister under the Obasanjo administration, successfully negotiated a debt relief package for the country, and she also led the government's unpopular fuel subsidy removal policy, which sparked demonstrations in January 2012 under the Goodluck Jonathan administration. She also emphasised the importance of lowering the country's recurrent expenditure, which accounts for 74% of the national budget, and beginning investment initiatives to help reduce the 14% unemployment rate. The number of influential women in all spheres of society, including politics, the academy, business, and government, is growing rapidly in developing nations.

4.5.1 Historical Antecedents of Women in Political Leadership in Nigeria

There were a small number of exceptional women who held positions of leadership in pre-colonial Nigeria, but the vast majority of leaders were men. There were many different historical opinions on the bravery of women, either as individuals or as a collective, in a variety of perilous situations. As with many women across Africa, Nigerian women in pre- and post-colonial regimes faced and overcome sexism and brutality. The government's choices were overturned after women protested them. The nineteenth century was a pivotal time for the organisation of African women. Women conducted some of the most significant acts of resistance and tenacious rejection of slave traders during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, often drawing inspiration from the legendary strength of the Amazon women of Dahomey.³² Women in the region that would eventually become Nigeria have always played an integral role in the social and political life of their communities. Amina, as the first Queen of Zazzau, brought a new era to the state of Northern Nigeria throughout her reign. Upon the fall of the Songhay Empire, the dependent Zarakuna were compelled to exert their power even more (rulers of the Hausa Land). According to Bonny kingdom mythology, Queen Kambasa was a fierce warrior. She eventually supported the male cultural group's artistic endeavours as

a patron. In order to avenge the deaths of some of her subjects, the queen raised and equipped a powerful army that sacked the Opuoko settlement.

Efunsetan Aniwura, a great Yoruban warrior and later the Iyalode (chief of women) in Ibadan, is considered by many to be the most notable warrior in Yoruba history. Her commercial savvy has made her an unrivalled force in economics, politics, and beyond. As a prominent woman, Madam Tinubu also armed the Egba people of the 19th century. Strong foci of mobilisation for the women of Ijaw and Igbo descent in Southern Nigeria were their trade guilds. The Omu represented great power and wealth among the Igbo. Okwei, also known as Omu, had the insight to stop the British from imposing their sterling currency on the trading groups in Eastern Nigeria. Companies in Britain used silver coins and paper money to make purchases. The local farmers and manufacturers refused to accept even a fraction of the new currency for their old. When companies paid their farmers in foreign money, the Okwei (Omu) had to negotiate a rate of conversion with the local banks so that the farmers could use their own currency.

The assistance of the Niger Company and the bank managers in Onitsha and the other trade stations made this a reality. In 1935, she was a prominent figure in Nigerian society as the queen of Osomari. It was Okwei's job as Omu to give advice to the King and help him resolve issues, especially when it pertained to women. As a generous person, she also gave away some of her jewellery to individuals who couldn't otherwise buy it. Madam Okwei (Omu) was not only a queen, but also a religious leader, an administrator, and a general. Whenever there was a military expedition, she was the field marshal, and her boat had to be in charge. Olajumoke Obasa, a Lagos-based businesswoman, started engaging in charitable work on her own time. It was in 1930 when the ladies of Ebute Ero's market were requested to pay rent for stalls that she became actively involved in promoting the welfare of women and supporting their

interests. She organised a group to meet with A.W.S. members of the Lagos city council to voice opposition to the rent increase. The mandate that females pay regular stall rent was suspended. Mrs. Olufunmilayo Ransome-kuti established the Abeokuta Women's Union (AWU), whose goals included both the alleviation of suffering and the elimination of its underlying causes. She advocated for women's rights generally, and she was the first to point out that uneducated women were often more outspoken and selfless than their more privileged counterparts. The A.W.U.'s main goals were the elimination of the sexist Sole Native Authority (SNA) and the inclusion of women in the new administrative structure. In 1946 and 1947, the AWU petitioned colonial authorities in an effort to end taxation of women; after all, women contributed to the family's financial well-being by working outside the home to earn money for necessities like food, clothing, and shelter, and women paid a significant portion of the household's water bill. Around 12 women got together on May 10, 1944, to discuss why there should be a national women's group. Because "women were being defrauded by our males and the government," she urged the other women who would later establish Nigeria's Women Party (NWP), "we must as women demand our rights."³³

It was in 1929 when the Aba women of South Eastern Nigeria staged a massive protest against colonial policies, two decades after the end of World War One. Several colonial measures angered the Igbo market women because they undermined their ability to make a living and advance in society. The women began their protests in 1929. More than ten thousand ladies, their faces painted in various shades of blue and holding poles decorated with ferns, made up the largest group. More than fifty women were killed when soldiers put an end to the protest after the women had already destroyed several colonial structures. It's no surprise that modern Nigeria considers the Aba ladies to be unshakable heroines.

Mba reveals that between 1974 and 1978, in Onitsha, Ikporo Onitsha (women of Onitsha) led the entire community against the administration of Ukpabi Asika, whose policy had a disastrous effect of diminishing the economic resources of Onitsha women. This resistance to male reconstruction of traditional government level is a recurring theme in the history of women's resistance. The Ikporo Onitsha deemed it outrageously horrible that women's interests and the pressing need for resources were treated as unimportant by the government, which was a major factor in their decision to take on the policy. Officers of Ikporo Onitsha, including a number of seventy and eighty-year-old women, were regularly wounded by police, arrested, and detained over allegations that they had formed an unlawful government over the course of the protracted fight. Despite how futile these female-led wars may appear, they have claimed lives.³⁴

Ofala Okagbue, the Obi of Onitsha, was the first person killed in the conflict between Ikporo Onitsha and the government of East Central State. Because he failed to defend the constitutional rights of Onitsha women, the community shunned him as a form of protest. Second, Onitsha women's rights were trampled underfoot. Adazia Enwonwu, the Ndichie who openly mocked women for their insignificance, was the second victim. After his unexpected death, his family had to delay his burial until a formal process of recantation could be done. The Asika family, who openly backed administrator Ukpabi, became the third group to fall. As a result, they were isolated from the rest of the population and suffered social isolation. Even when Asika's authority was interrupted suddenly by General Muritala Mohammed's coup d'etat, the ladies kept up their protests. The former president of Nigeria and Owelle of Onitsha, Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, met his end as events developed due to his naive belief that the death of his archenemy Ukpabi Asika would put an end to women's complaints. Once a staunch defender of Ikporo Onitsha, his current stance is seen by the ladies as counterproductive to their wellbeing

and self-serving. The women claimed the Owelle were being devious by conflating a person with a still-active government programme in order to deflect attention from the former. After suffering the fury of the women and their constant public assault on his person, the Owelle severely withdrew to Nsukka, where he spent the rest of his days in seclusion.

In addition, there is rising unhappiness among women's rights groups and activists because of women's dissatisfaction with the way the Nigerian government has handled matters related to women's rights and welfare. There has been a lot of investment in studying the issue of violence against women, both by women's groups and individual women. The purpose of this is to stress the seriousness and significance of this issue to the authorities.

4.5.2 The Political Leadership of Nigerian Women in the Post-Colonial Era

Although women's roles and duties have expanded greatly since Nigeria's colonial era, few of them are in positions of power.³⁵ After Nigeria's independence, the country's leadership took on more of an ethnic, paternalist, and cult-of-personality flavour. Women's traditional job has been to provide unquestioning emotional and material support to the male members of their ethnic group. Women's ability to take collective action, crucial to their agitations during colonial times, was diminished as party and ethnic allegiance took precedence. There were only four women in the House of Assembly in the years 1960–1965. The military presence in Nigeria in 1966 was definitely male-dominated, and this had negative effects on Nigerian women. For the most part, men were in charge during the military government, while women were relegated to the background despite their considerable skills and experience. The government gave constitutional protections for competing interests hardly no attention. Intriguingly, not a single woman was appointed to serve on the fifty-person

Constitutional Drafting Committee. Similarly, only one woman, Mrs. Janet Akinrinade, was elected to the Constituent Assembly in the 1976 elections.

However, in 1985, under General Ibrahim Babangida's command, military rulers shifted their perspective on women in positions of authority. The term "First Lady Syndrome" did not exist prior to his presidency. Next came the Family Economic Advancement Programme, formerly known as the Better Life for Rural Women due to a name change by then-First Lady Mariam Babangida (FEAP). After it, women's pursuit of leadership roles accelerated. There were those who were successful and those who were not. Sarah Jubril was the lone female candidate who ran for president, however she ultimately lost each time.

While just 5% of the Constituent Assembly's 150 members were female when they drafted the country's constitution in 1989, only 20% of the world's 1,297 local government seats were held by women in 1990. Under Abacha, there was a dismal lack of women in positions of power. Only three women were senators, and out of 360 total representatives, 12 were women. Similarly, only 12 of the 990 representatives in the state legislatures were female. There were 143 female councillors out of a total of 8,810 across the country, and 9 female chairpersons out of a total of 774. From the time of independence in 1960 until 1999, a mere 3.1% of women were elected to political office, while only 5% were appointed to positions of authority.³⁶

In addition, 1999 heralded a new day as civilian rule was restored in Nigeria. Since the return of democratic rule, women's representation in both elected and appointed positions in government has increased dramatically. Despite these advancements, women are still severely underrepresented in positions of power and influence due to a gender gap in positions of authority.³⁷ Women only won 181 seats in the House of Representatives out of a total of 11,881 in the 1999 general election. From 1999 to

2003, Chief Kofoworola Akerele-Bucknor was the only woman to serve as Deputy Governor of Lagos State. As a result of women's poor showing in these elections, on June 28, 2002, in Abuja, the Gender and Development Action (GADA) International Human Rights Law Group, Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) convened a national summit for all women MPs. It was planned to encourage more women to seek and hold positions of power in Nigeria's government. There have been many initiatives to raise the number of women in leadership roles, but the results of the 2003 elections showed that this has not been successful. Just recently, women made just 8.8 percent of the total parliamentary body.

According to data compiled by the Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC), there were a total of 7160 candidates, both male and female, in the April 2007 elections. Only 628 women, or 8.8% of the total, took part in this. Despite women's dismal showing in the 2011 National Assembly elections, President Goodluck Jonathan has made progress toward increasing the number of female political appointments, as seen by the presence of several women on the current Federal Executive Council (FEC). Thirteen (13) of the original 42 ministers selected prior to the 13th September 2013 cabinet reshuffle are women.

Since 1999, only a small number of women have held positions of power in administrative and leadership capacities. These women have generally done an admirable job, dispelling any remaining doubts about women's capacity and capability to carry their weight when given responsibility at any level. The following are examples of the roles these ladies play: Mrs. Akon Eyakeny, Minister of Land, Housing, and Urban Development; Mrs. Sarah Ochekepe, Minister of Water Resources; Mrs. Omobola Johnson, Minister of Communication Technology; Hajia Zaniab Mania, Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development; Mr. Ndi Okereke Onyiuke,

Former Managing Director of the Nigerian Stock Exchange; Prof. Dora Akunyili, Former Director General, National Agency for Food and Drugs Control (NA It is undeniable that these women's efforts have contributed to a more positive image of Nigerian women as hard workers, disciplined, thorough, creative, entrepreneurial, and productive members of society. Their massive contributions to national development are progressively leading to a more positive assessment of women's roles and abilities in public capacities.

4.5.3 Patriarchy Approach to Women's low Participation in Leadership in Nigeria

Gender oppression theories explain women's predicament by pointing to the direct power dynamic between males and women, where the latter have basic and that is, in tangible interests in dominating, exploiting, and oppressed the former. By "dominant relationship," oppression theorists refer to any pairing in which one person or group exercises control over another, transforming them into a "subordinate" or "submissive" participant. Denial of the subordinate's individual subjectivity is central to the concept of instrumentalism.³⁸The available literature demonstrates that women still comprise a disproportionately small fraction of people participating in political decision making and leadership in Nigeria, despite the country's signing of international declarations asserting the rights and equality between men and women. Despite global progress in improving the status of women, gender disparities still exist, especially when it comes to participation in electoral politics, as acknowledged by numerous international conferences, such as the Cairo Conference on Population and Development (1994), the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), and the World Summit for Social Development (1995). The dominant and oppressive role men play in women's lives is important to theories of gender oppression³⁹. Patriarchy is the name given to the social

order that organises society in such a way as to give men an advantage in every sphere of life. This pattern of oppression of women is embedded in the very fabric of society. Patriarchy is not the inadvertent and secondary effect of other sets of elements like biological or social conditioning, or sex roles, or the class structure. It's an established hierarchy of authority that has been kept together via careful planning. Gender inequality and the inequalities between the sexes are, according to many who study the effects of patriarchy on women, direct results of this system.

Having so few women in positions of power and influence hinders Nigeria's efforts to advance the cause of gender equality in the country's legal and regulatory framework. Equity, quality, and progress are at the heart of the case for women's representation in political leadership roles. Women make up over half of Nigeria's population, therefore it's only fair that they have a say in political topics that directly impact them.

Psychoanalytic feminism and radical feminism are the two main schools of thought concerning the oppression of women. In the same way that other oppression theorists do, psychoanalytic theorists view patriarchy as a system in which men subordinate women; one that is prevalent throughout cultures and time, and one that is perpetuated despite occasional challenges. However, psychoanalytic feminism is distinct in its belief that all males, through their separate but cumulative everyday activities, contribute to the creation and maintenance of this system. When confronted with subordination, women rarely put up much of a fight and are instead more likely to accept it or actively contribute to it. As a result, this theory provides an explanation for the oppression of women by pointing to men's strong emotional urge to exert control over women. This need stems from men's mixed feelings about their own mothers. The lack of women in high-ranking political positions in Nigeria can be attributed to a number of causes. Main obstacles include preconceived notions and prejudices based

on one's social or cultural background. One of the main themes of these is that men are superior and women are inferior. They are an inherent element of the socialisation process, manifested in the form of gender education and training, which both men and women get beginning in early childhood.⁴⁰

According to radical feminists, patriarchy is the underlying structure of all other forms of subordination in society, including heterosexuality, systems of domination and class, caste, race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Patriarchy was the original model of social dominance and subjugation, and it remains today as the most ubiquitous and long-lasting form of inequality. Participation in patriarchy teaches men to devalue women, to treat them as objects, and to exert power over them. The institutional framework that determines how jobs are assigned, who gets hired, and who rises through the ranks, is another major obstacle. In the available research, women have been found to be at a greater disadvantage than men, with their labour being undervalued and underutilised. While women outnumber males in the workforce, they earn less than men on average.⁴¹

One barrier to women's leadership is that they are not given enough say in political and social processes that directly influence their lives. When males make decisions publicly, their ideals are reflected in the bodies that make those decisions. The track record of progress and the demographic make-up of Nigeria both point to the importance of women's participation in government. Women made up the majority of voters in Nigeria's most recent general election, but they were still grossly underrepresented in positions of power. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, women have only been able to participate in electoral politics through providing support to male leaders. There is a higher demand for equitable gender participation in the acquisition and exercise of political powers under the current political regime in Nigeria.

4.5.4 Factors that Limit Women's Access to Leadership positions

A number of variables inside Nigeria's political parties act to dampen women's ambitions and prevent them from rising to positions of power. Godfatherism, a party executive structure dominated by men, stereotyping, violence, the influence of money in politics, and other cultural and societal issues all play a role. Since men constitute the norm in political party structures, they are more likely to hold positions of power and have greater sway over party dynamics. For example, in the most recent Enugu State council elections, a woman named Mrs. Grace Ani was able to secure a seat for herself as a councillor in the town of Nara inside the Nkanu East LG. To her dismay, the seat went to a male contender who had previously lost the election due to sexism. Women in the neighbourhood protested, but their efforts were in vain; instead, Mrs. Ani was given a political appointment in the LG as a form of compensation. Furthermore, a prominent columnist and editor of a major daily, Reuben Abati, argued for this idea by referencing the case of Mrs. Lami Sadu, who was separated from her husband in 1999 for voting for the All People's Party against his wishes. Hajia Halima Tijjani (ACN, Kaduna Central) was brutally attacked in January 2011 for having the audacity to run for office. Her elbow was shattered in the process. In the end, Abati concluded, "the true problem is with the hypocrisy of the backward male elite in Nigerian politics, which views every woman pursuing a role in public life to be a "busybody."⁴²

If these obstacles aren't taken down, the underrepresentation of women in political leadership will only get worse. The underrepresentation of women is an assault on the democratic principle of equal representation of all interests in society. Inadequate quotas prevent women from taking part in politics on a large scale, a feature of democracies. Women's involvement in the voting process is crucial for a healthy democracy. Promoting women's political participation and holding political parties

accountable for affirmative action can be aided by include gender sensitive clauses in party constitutions and manifestos.

4.5.5 Factors Militating against Women in Politics in Nigeria

The presence and voice of women in public life in many African countries, including Nigeria, is dictated by offensive social norms, political exclusion, and economic inequality. Women made up 49% of Nigeria's overall population in 2006, yet they still face significant barriers to participation at all levels of government, business, and leadership. There has been considerable progress toward political equality in African countries, but it is still mostly unrecognised. In terms of political influence, men are more powerful than women since they tend to manage more resources and have higher levels of education. As an example, male councillors may not have a high degree of education, but women with the same level of education are not promoted to the same level of responsibility. Due to a lack of self-awareness, women often find themselves reliant on political parties or positions held by men. Issues of interest to males will be prioritised over those of interest to women if more men take on leadership roles. Women are sometimes elected to positions of power in government agencies where they play little to no active role in policymaking. Many women in Nigeria, especially those working at the federal level of government, have little to no influence or power. A large percentage of them lack the abilities required to communicate their thoughts persuasively. Women's empowerment and public issues suffer when there is a lack of understanding about political engagement. If more women are granted positions of power, they will work to solve these issues so that they can hold positions of authority throughout all branches of government. Women's lack of representation, engagement, and involvement in the planning and implementation of plans for their economic development and social justice through decentralised institutions is a major reason why

they have not reaped the full advantages of years of planning and development. In addition to the fact that few women are given election tickets, most political parties don't even keep track of their female members.⁴³ Nigerian women have extremely limited access to the decision-making process and a significant lack of access and control over financial resources because politics is traditionally a male realm and all financial, economic, commercial, and political transactions are performed by males outside the home. Thus, women's chances of running for office are essentially diminished. Scholars have paid a lot of attention to the causes and consequences of women's underrepresentation in political leadership and decision making. Women and men are built differently, although they may have some things in common in terms of, for example, education, socioeconomic level, and professional pursuits. But they are excluded from almost every aspect of public life. There are a number of obstacles that hinder women from holding all levels of political office and leadership roles in nascent democracies.

The following, among others, are some of the variables:

1. Rude social customs including the purdah system, female genital mutilation (FGM), widowhood customs, and restrictive religious practises (as seen in the Northern geopolitical zone) (observed in the northern part of the country). Numerous of these socio-cultural traditions put obstacles in the way of women's empowerment and gender equality, thus increasing the load on women. Women frequently are denied access to information, education, and wealth-generating resources like land, capital (including credit facilities), labour, and entrepreneurial abilities because of the variety of exclusions and deprivations that they confront due to cultural and traditional beliefs.⁴⁴ The low

representation of women in politics and corporate decision-making processes is to blame for these sociocultural limitations.

2. The treatment of widows in a dehumanising manner, wife-battery, and other subjugating behaviours that may eventually cause a woman to lose confidence. These behaviours keep women "quiet" in both the public and private spheres.
3. Stereotypical barriers that prevent women from rising to the top of organisational and political leadership positions.
4. Disallowing daughters to receive their fair part of the family inheritance (this is common in the South-East of Nigeria). Women do not have any rights to land or landed property in practically all of the federation's states since, according to customary law, they cannot inherit land or landed property from either their fathers or their spouses.
5. Because of their traditional responsibilities in the home, girls and women sometimes have little to no time for formal education or other forms of self-improvement.
6. Poor access to education and scholarship opportunities in a variety of professions: These limitations also affect women's access to education and professions, which in turn limits their ability to effectively compete with their male counterparts on the job market for rewarding and higher-paying positions.
7. Family societies in Africa tend to be patriarchal: The culture of male supremacy present in regional customs and cultures, including peculiar religious practises, typically reproduces the low position of Nigerian women.⁴⁵
8. Emerging democracies' high crime rates and corruption make it difficult for women leaders to fulfil their jobs. Additionally, women may not be as well-positioned as males to fight corruption when it arises. As an alternative, people

can encounter gendered corruption, such as the requirement of sex in exchange for specific goods or resources.

9. High maternal mortality rate: The Nigerian health sector is beset by a number of issues, such as the improper distribution of health facilities, poor management of the health systems, inadequate referral systems, and the disregard for rural areas, where a larger percentage of the population lives, particularly women and children.⁴⁶Up until recently, when the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) was 545 per 100,000 live births, the topic of women's health did not receive much attention from either health policies or research. Health research, particularly in the field of maternal and child health in Nigeria, has long placed a greater emphasis on children's health than on women's health. Even though a woman's health is the focus, the issue still pertains to reproductive health, with a focus on family planning in particular.
10. The denial of equal rights to all people, particularly women, who in some regions of the nation are viewed as second-class citizens. In such circumstances, individuals are prohibited from taking part in any activities, not even at the local level. Women are made to believe that the kitchen is their permanent job, one that they may perform to the fullest extent. The aforementioned issues frequently hinder many women in developing democracies from learning the knowledge and skills that will help them understand their rights and give them the confidence they need to hold positions of leadership. The fact that the girl child is typically groomed for a second-place position from the start, with the focus of her instruction being on how to be a good wife, mother, and homemaker, makes the issue even more challenging. As a result, particularly in the areas of education and social exposure, women are rarely given the skills

necessary for public leadership. Nigeria is just as difficult as any other country in the same league for Nigerian women seeking to enter positions of public leadership. As a result, the scenario will allow women to reach their full potential and play leadership positions, which will enable them to contribute to the socioeconomic development and nation-building of their respective countries.⁴⁷

4.5.6 Prospects of Women's Participation in Leadership in Nigeria

Women in Nigeria never experienced equality with men in matters of government during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, and the same is true today. The history of Nigeria's political change is rife with concerns about male dominance and women's token involvement in public affairs.⁴⁸

Both the military dictatorship and the new civilian democratic governance institutions and practises in Nigeria are male-centric. The military's promotion of women's subordinate status in society through the 'First Lady' syndrome (a phenomenon that prevented the 'woman's question' from being addressed within the mainstream development praxis) meant that women had few opportunities to challenge the era's underlying gender inequalities. The 'women's question' was relegated to the domain of political leaders' spouses under such systems (a mentality which is almost difficult to erase even within the party politics and democratic governance).

In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, one of the major aims was to ensure that women had a fair share of positions of power. The 'logical balance' of male and female voices should be heard in any representative organisation, it was said. Feminine perspectives should be represented at all levels of political power if we value leadership and governance that is participative, accountable, predictable,

and transparent. It is widely acknowledged that including women's perspectives and ideals in governance improves and diversifies decision-making. It has also been noticed that women in positions of local power tend to be more attuned to the concerns of their constituents.⁴⁹

The National Women Policy called for affirmative action of 30%, which was increased to 35% in the National Gender Policy, but the country has yet to make good on its promise to boost women's representation in politics. Societal and cultural issues that push women to the margins of leadership debate and decision making continue to be a barrier to women's political engagement. As a result, Nigerian women of all backgrounds—regional, urban, rural, ethnic, religious—face severe discrimination as a result of the large gender gap in politics and government. Women have always played an important role in politics, and this has always been true at the federal, state, and municipal levels. However, the striking lack of women's participation began to emerge in the 1960s, and its roots may be traced back to the larger socio-cultural and politico-religious components of Nigeria's structural reality. This meant that women's concerns were constantly overlooked in a democratic system where a majority vote was required. Women in Northern Nigeria, where this practise is common, often drop out of school to support their families as subsistence farmers or traders, which contributes to a growing trend of low female leadership engagement.

The discussion of women in leadership positions also needs a global context. Women are discouraged from holding political office because of their perceived inferiority. In some societies, participation by women in political power is strictly forbidden. Many intelligent women are relegated to supporting roles or simply shut out of positions of power. Despite numerous institutional agreements and treaties advocating for women's

equal involvement in business, politics, and governance, the situation remains unchanged.⁵⁰

Women and the poor, who rely heavily on these systems, are disproportionately impacted by corruption since it depletes public resources and diverts money away from national economic development or social services. It's possible that women are in a weaker position than men to stand up to corruption when it occurs. Women may experience discrimination based on their gender, such as the demand for sexual favours in exchange for money or other goods. There is a growing body of evidence linking anti-corruption measures with gender-sensitive governance.⁵¹

It has been said that women, in comparison to men, prioritise relationships, hold themselves to a higher level of ethics, and care more about the greater good. Many theories attempt to explain the existence of gender disparities in corrupt behaviour, including those that link them to variations in socialisation, access to corrupt networks, and corrupt practise expertise.

But there are scholars who argue that the gender-responsive anti-corruption rationale is flawed. When corruption operates through all-male networks and in venues where women are socially excluded, the extent to which gender relationship may limit prospects for corruption becomes more salient. As the workforce grows more gender-balanced and more women rise to positions of power, we cannot expect that they will automatically make more honest decisions. In addition, the data from Nigeria shows a gender-based contradiction when it comes to bribery at the highest levels of government. Notable women in Nigeria's history have reshaped traditional structures of leadership. In spite of this, other women have been exposed as corrupt much like their male counterparts. One can look at the circumstances surrounding the removal of Mrs. Patricia Etteh, Nigeria's first female Speaker of the House of Representatives, and

Adenike Grange, Nigeria's first female Minister of Health, in 2007. The corruption in both of these examples was not just committed by the women involved; rather, it is seen as an inevitable byproduct of the system that elevated them to positions of power. As a result, it is contended that the few token women who have held political position are frequently a reflection of the male oligarchy that brought them to power.⁵²

African nations are generally governed in a patriarchal fashion, with women relegated to the role of stooges and frequently being exploited by their male counterparts. To properly understand the rules of the game and the overtones of governance, women would need concerted exposure and training. Without addressing the collectivist culture and the inherent masculine manipulations existing in the public sphere, increasing the number of women in public office as a potential anti-corruption remedy may prove fruitless, as women may give in to the social ethics of their godfathers at the expense of the public sector ethos. Some elements are more encouraging of female participation in politics than others. Some commentary on these matters follows.

- i. Reducing extreme poverty and economic empowerment of women:** To achieve this goal, we might ensure parity in conditions that encourage women to take part in politics. Guaranteeing women's equal access to capital and large-scale investment opportunities; ending discriminatory practises based on gender in the ownership of land; giving women easier access to cutting-edge technology; and encouraging them to develop their own businesses are all important steps toward ending extreme poverty among women. Facilitate the participation of women in the implementation of empowerment initiatives. The government's role is to improve the conditions in which businesses can thrive by, for example, building necessary infrastructure and include the earnings of women in GDP calculations (GDP). Women and men in low-

poverty groups can be better prepared to take advantage of investment possibilities if they are educated about them, given access to institutional credit facilities, encouraged to start and grow businesses of all sizes, and offered access to extension services.

ii. Eliminating employment discriminatory practices against women and

addressing labour issues affecting women: This can be accomplished by expanding women's access to education and training in order to boost female representation at management levels, as well as by providing free vocational and adult literacy programmes to everyone. It is imperative that all forms of discrimination against women in the workplace be eradicated from both the public and private sectors, namely in the areas of recruiting, compensation, and advancement. For national and international labour regulations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers, to be effectively implemented, they must be reflected in personnel policies and practises. Organizations in both the public and private sectors of the economy that are committed to gender equality and equity should be incentivized by the government.

iii. Empowerment of women in politics:

The amount of female political participation can be increased by sensitization campaigns, economic empowerment, and better political education for women. Reevaluating the framework and operating principles of political parties is crucial in order to eliminate all discriminatory practises against women. Women running for public office should receive financial backing. Affirmative actions in politics (such as setting aside 30% of political jobs for women) are necessary to boost the proportion of women in elected positions and decision-making processes.

It is imperative that the current established arrangements which prevent women from taking part in decision-making be changed. Women in Nigeria's political arena have made significant strides since the country's return to democracy in 1999. They hold and have held key positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.⁵³ For instance, under the current democratic regime, Hon. Patricia Ette became the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Anambra State is famous for producing Dame Virgy Etiaba, the first female governor of any state. Aloma Mariam Mukhtar is the first female Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN).

- iv. **Constitutional Provisions:** Getting rid of any discriminatory provisions in current laws and legislations, especially those that target specific groups based on their gender, is one way to ensure that women and men have the same legal and human rights. Advocacy, enlightenment, and universal access to the law regardless of socioeconomic status and gender are all ways to ensure that customary legal systems reflect principles of gender equality. Building the capacity of the legislative, judicial, and other law enforcement bodies to defend gender justice and gender equality principles is also essential, as is introducing human rights education into school curriculum at all levels. Quotas and proportional representation are useful tools for advancing gender parity in government. To successfully implement quota, it is important to involve all relevant parties, including the Independent National Electoral Commission and political parties. Connected to this is the need for a legal structure that protects women's rights, particularly with regard to securing the domestic and international instruments essential to increase women's involvement in political, economic, and social decision-making.⁵⁴

- v. **Greater enrolment of girls into educational institutions:** There has been an increase in the number of Nigerian girls attending college during the past three decades. For instance, in the eastern portion of Nigeria, where many young boys leave for careers in trade and trading, ladies have stepped up to fill the void. In response to the overwhelming demand for female students, the majority of secondary schools for boys have been repurposed as either girls' schools or community schools for teenagers of both sexes. This is because of the shift in perspective among Nigerian parents, who now see women in a more positive light. Girls are increasingly enrolling in Nigeria's public and private institutions.⁵⁵
- vi. **Inspiration for women who occupied and are occupying positions of authority:** Dr. Okonjo-Iwela, Prof. Dora Akunyili, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, Mrs. Obiageli Ezekwesili, and the few others like them who have held political and decision-making positions during pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial times all have impressive records of leadership and accomplishment. This would elevate, strengthen, and elevate women, offering hope that more Nigerian women will play leadership roles in public affairs.⁵⁶ These women proved that the old adage, "If a man can do it, a woman can do it better," is true by displaying admirable traits that won the hearts of most Nigerians.

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Summary

There has been a problem with gender-based violence for many centuries. Even before colonization, it is said that there were fewer women in positions of influence. Despite the fact that only a small number of women have held positions of leadership, there are hundreds of their male counterparts for every single one of those women. The issue of sexism in Nigerian politics has grown to be a big one. Women in Nigeria have long been regarded politically endangered, and the low level of female engagement in government and politics is frequently attributed to cultural, religious, economic, and male chauvinistic factors. In general, African society and Nigerian culture place most of the leadership responsibilities in the hands of males, promoting gender inequality in the process.

Gender violence reveals the prevalence of toxic masculinity patterned violence: a widespread violence driven by aggressiveness, retribution, competitiveness, and entitlement, which encompasses sexual and other violence against men, women, partners, and children. There is 'public' and 'private' gender violence. There are several ways that the state may perpetuate such violence, including through its laws or the conduct of its agents such as police, military and immigration officials. Females are disproportionately at danger from men they know when it comes to gender-based violence.

Both men and women are expected to have certain traits, abilities or behaviors that they are expected to exhibit (femininity and masculinity). As children, we are taught gender norms and expectations. Over time, they can alter, and they can also differ from culture

to culture. A variety of socially constructed factors influence how men and women perceive and perform their gender roles. Gender is an essential term in sociological analysis because it indicates the social construction of women's subordination (or men's dominance). As a result, the subordination can be altered or terminated. It is neither biologically predetermined nor fixed indefinitely.

It is the spectrum of qualities that distinguishes between a woman's femininity and a man's masculinity that is known as gender. Sex-based social structures (such as gender roles) and gender identity are examples of these features, which may or may not be biological in nature. Gender is widely accepted as a key component of social structure. Non-binary or gender queer people are those who don't fit neatly into one of the two gender categories (boys/men and girls/women). Third genders exist in certain communities, such as the hijras of South Asia, which have distinct genders apart from "man" and "woman" (and fourth genders, and so on.).

Violent acts are defined as "the illicit and unauthorised use of force to influence choices against the will or preferences of others.". The political equilibrium system is upset when violence, especially political violence, occurs. In a political context, "political violence" refers to all collective attacks on the political regime, its players (including rival political organizations and incumbents), or its policies by members of the political community. Various types of political violence exist. If a sudden change in government is what you're after, a coup d'état might be the catalyst (either military or political).

A person's ability to have an impact on policy is reflected in the breadth and depth of their involvement in a variety of political activities. It is the broad method in which citizens' civic actions are represented, and they are essential to any democratic system. The term "political involvement" refers to the act of making one's views and ideas known in order to influence the political process. An action performed by a person to

affect the outcome of a political issue is sometimes referred to as "civic engagement." Political engagement is defined as any lawful activity undertaken by citizens to influence the selection of government officials and the activities they carry out.

Anyone or any group can rise to the highest levels of authority in a democratic society, regardless of their gender. Because of the lack of gender equality in human society, women are less likely to participate in politics. There is widespread agreement that women make up a considerable portion of the global population and have made enormous contributions to society in all areas. Inequality in the workplace is biased toward women. In the past, women's education was considered inferior to that of males. Women's education curriculum stressed Home Economics, which included sub-areas such as needlework, embroidery, cooking, and child care as sub-categories of Domestic Science. In actuality, the colonial educational system was sexist in its treatment of female students. Due to societal pressures or a lack of knowledge, many women do not participate in economic and political activities to the utmost extent.

There are more women in the globe than males, yet they only make up a small percentage of the population. One out of every three homes in the globe has a female breadwinner, according to a United Nations report. Because of this, a lot of homes are exclusively reliant on women to take care of the men, kids, and elders in their care. Women can do great things if they have access to quality education, which is the most powerful tool for progress. They'll be able to see the world in a new light thanks to their newfound understanding.

5.2 Conclusion

Increasing the number of women in Nigerian politics is a critical issue. For years, women have been pushed to the sidelines in politics, which has led to a growing

awareness of the lack of women in public office. Women's participation in politics is often motivated by a desire to help other women; this is their primary obligation, and it is from this position that the majority of women in elected office have found success. As a true platform, they exploit the women's movement to gain political power and to solidify their hold on that power. Women's engagement is increasing on these basis nonetheless, and campaigns for gender equality and equity look optimistic.

Attempts have been made to untangle the conceptual "cobweb" that surrounds the responsibilities women play in socioeconomic development in Nigeria through the promotion of gender mainstreaming and Nigerian economic growth. For a deeper grasp of the topics being probed, it was also necessary to look at related but unrelated concerns conceptually. Feminism and gender inequality in Nigeria's political sphere have also been linked in an effort to create a link.

The authors of this study believe that despite the limitations of gender mainstreaming, Nigerian women have a bright future in the political and socioeconomic arenas. Some of the issues raised in the study are already being addressed, albeit at a slower pace. The number of female students admitted to colleges, universities, polytechnics, and other postsecondary institutions has progressively surpassed that of male students. Women in the northern portion of Nigeria are undergoing a social revolution that is both subtle and important. Nomadic men and women, as well as their children, as well as females, are now being educated, which is always a source of empowerment in all three areas of life: political, economic, and social.

5.3 Recommendations

The following suggestions were given following this study:

1. In order to have political influence, one must have economic power. In order for more women to seek for political office, they must become more financially secure.
2. Women's education is important in eliminating inferiority complexes and empowering aspiring women to compete with males in the workplace. Adults in urban and rural regions should be the primary audience for women's education.
3. The government and non-governmental groups should work together to set up these agencies that deal with violence against women in rural regions. Women in rural areas will be able to use these organizations' services in the same way as women in metropolitan areas.
4. It is imperative that the government use appropriate laws to eradicate all cultural and religious restrictions on women's educational advancement and to embrace all professions.
5. In both urban and rural regions, the government should provide workshops and seminars. In addition, non-governmental groups should expand their outreach to rural regions via electronic and print media to raise awareness of the issue. Non-governmental groups should engage with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women Affairs to raise awareness about violence against women.
6. As part of an intensive push to change society's view of women as less than males, the government should team up with women's movements and civil society organizations.
7. In collaboration with other key stakeholders, such as the media, the government should launch a broad effort to end the social stigmatization and subjection of

women. 8. There should also be a lot of education done to make people aware of the need of having more women in elected positions. This can be accomplished through lobbying including traditional and community leaders, youth, women, and opinion leaders, faith-based organizations, and the civil society, among other sources.

8. For the benefit of budding female politicians, political parties should construct a network of support that pairs them with experienced female politicians who can serve as mentors and help them strengthen their skills in preparation for future elections.
9. Women should be given particular concessions and waivers by political parties, and this should be made a part of their constitutions. Parties should strive to include women in all of its decision-making bodies and processes as part of their attempts to be inclusive.
10. Socio-cultural considerations were a major impediment to women's political engagement. Distressing household chores, lack of support from spouses, low educational level, male dominance and religion (which injunctions are often deliberately misinterpreted in order to denigrate and degrade female politicians) were found to be major barriers to women's participation in politics in the region.
11. For a more balanced growth of the country, women should be given the highest priority. When it comes to economic progress, women should not remain neutral or stay on the sidelines. Instead, students should focus their efforts on acquiring practical education that will allow them to become role models in their respective industries.

12. It is time for women to start their own political party. Because politics is a numbers game, women should utilize their own party to increase their political clout and clout in their own right.

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Unpublished Thesis

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Punch Editorial February 17th, (2003)

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The Tribune, (2017)

Vanguard, (2011)

Biodata

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Address: No 27 Alaafin Avenue Oluyole Estate Ibadan, Oyo State. Nigeria.
Email: abisoyeadeleke@gmail.com
Mobile: 08167545908 /08033242822
State: Oyo State
Date of Birth: 18th April, 1993
Local Government: Ibadan South-East
Nationality: Nigeria
Next of Kin: Samuel Adeleke
Home Address: No 27 Alaafin Avenue Oluyole Estate Ibadan, Oyo State. Nigeria.

B. Education Background

1995 – 1997 Rich map nursery and primary school.
1997 - 2003 All Saints Church School- Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.
(First School Leaving Certificate)
2003 - 2006 The Vale College- Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.
2006 - 2009 Christ Ambassadors International School - Ibadan, Oyo State,
Nigeria (Secondary Education Exam- Leaving Certificate)
2010 - 2014 Afe Babalola University - Ekiti State, Nigeria
B.Sc. (Honours) International Relations and Diplomacy.

C. Work Experience

Intern - Work Placement

07/2012 - 09/2012

MetroEireann Newspaper Publication – Dublin 1, Ireland

- Researched topical stories and other newsworthy issues.
- Developed a working relationship with journalists, writers, proof readers and editors.
- Assisted in managing accounts and records of clients with the highest levels of confidentiality and discretion.
- Assisted in reviewing, editing and proofreading for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and formaing.
- Assisted in sourcing and ordering office equipment and supplies.
- Assisted in coordinating events and worked on ad hoc projects.

Vacation Employment

GLOBAL Quality Treasury Group – Dublin 1, Ireland

Summer 2013

General Assistant

- Oversaw daily office operations for all employees.
- Managed hundreds of accounts receivable accounts working directly with the financial Management office.
- Performed accounts receivable duties including invoicing, researching charge backs, discrepancies and reconciliations.
- Facilitated organized record retrieval and access by up to date maintaining filing system.
- Oversaw inventory and office supply purchases.
- Other ad-hoc duties as requested

Gender Equality Charity Event- Oyo-State, Ibadan Nigeria

August 2014

Duties

- Involved in the organizing and logistical planning of charitable events.
- Establishing, maintaining and developing relationship with vulnerable people.

- Providing mentoring and motivational support for the teenage girls.
- Making friends with lonely women to alleviate isolation.
- Liaising with social workers and other health care professionals.
- Translating short documents from English to Yoruba.
- Writing correspondence i.e request for supports, thank you letters and receipt.

National Youth Service Corps

11/2014 - 11/2015

Olokemeji High School, Olokemeji, Odeda, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Teacher

- Conducting daily morning assembly and ensuring orderliness in the school
- Prepared detailed lesson plan for school term and each week.
- Carrying out various activities assigned by school authority.
- Assisted in teaching various subjects.

Intern- Work Placement

09/2015 - 05/2016

Embassy of Nigeria Dublin, Ireland- Dublin 6

Clerical Assistant

- Answering the calls of the publics and solving their inquires
- Help organize office activities
- Developed a working relationship with Diplomats.
- Distribution of passport to various owner.
- Dealt with queries from the public, and calling the public which their Visa is being queried by the visa officer.
- Operating office machines like personal computers, scanners, photocopiers.

Chief Operating officer ING Auto Burglary Proof Company Limited 2021 till date

Duties

Overseeing daily operations of the company and work of executives.

Establishing policies that promote company culture and vision

Lead employees to encourage maximum performance and dedication.

Evaluate performance by analysing and interpreting data and metrics.

Participate in expansion activity.

Set compressive goals for performance and growth.

Manage relationships with partners/vendors

D. Skills

Administrative Skills

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Relevant Research prior to commencement of project
- Taking accurate messages.
- Financial awareness ensuring surplus for end of year account.
- Answering and re-directing telephone calls.

Signature

Date

University Compliance Certificate

This is to certify this thesis by ADELEKE, Oluwapelumi Abisoye, LCU/PG/001515 in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Lead City University, Ibadan, is in FULL compliance with the approved University format and style.

Signature

Date

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