



# **An Examination of Women Political Participation in the South West of Nigeria, 1999-2015**

**OR Olatunji**



**[orcid.org/0000-0002-8406-150X](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8406-150X)**

Thesis accepted for the degree [Doctor of Philosophy in Social Science with Political Studies](#) at the North-West University

Promoter: Prof V Ojakorotu

Graduation: May 2022

Student number: 25731025

## **DECLARATION**

I, Oluwakemi Roseline Olatunji, hereby declare that this thesis with the title, “An Examination of Women Political Participation in Southwest Nigeria, 1999-2015”, is my original work. It has not been previously submitted by me or any other person in part or in whole for any degree in any other University. All the materials/authors cited in this study have been duly acknowledged.

Signature.....

Date.....

**Oluwakemi Roseline Olatunji**

Supervisor’s Signature .....

Date.....

**Professor Victor Ojatorotu**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to God Almighty in whom I live and sustain my being.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- I want to sincerely appreciate God Almighty in whom I found the true inspiration to embark on this journey.
- I would like to specially thank my father, Otunba Sola Olatunji for his immense support throughout my academic journey. Thank you for been among the few men who believe in and support girl child education to its core. I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ in His infinite mercy bestows on you good health and longevity.
- Also to my mother, Mrs. Ruth Kayode, I say a big thank you for your prayer and support throughout this journey. May God reward you bountifully.
- I would also like to extend my heart of appreciation to my supervisor, Professor Victor Ojakorotu, an erudite scholar par excellence. I am grateful for all your constructive criticisms and contributions to this study and my academic journey in general. You are indeed a great mentor and an exemplary role model. May you never experience backwardness and sadness in Jesus' name. I am most grateful, sir!
- My appreciation also goes to Prince Babatunde Oloye, thank you very much for standing by me through it all. You are indeed an inspiration.
- I would also like to thank all my siblings, Shade, Bode, Deji, Moses, Debola and Nifemi. I appreciate you all for your support and encouragement.
- Also to all member of the Oloye family, thank you for always being there for me. You are highly appreciated.
- I would like to appreciate Professor Lere Amusan for introducing me to Northwest University. You are appreciated, sir.
- My appreciation also goes to Dr. Agunyai Samuel Chukwudi for his immense contribution to the success of this study. God bless your kind heart, sir.
- I would also like to say a big thank you to all the staff of Victory Energy Group and Crystal Entrepreneurship Centre. God bless you all.
- I would also like to thank the following people for their support during the course of this study – Mr Bamidele Olajide Emmanuel, Folashade Adeoye, Mrs Ogunnowo Ruth Ooreofe, Dolapo Ogabi, Kehinde and Idowu Ayandokun, Tobi Oladejo, Dr. Monica Akokuwebe, Dr Fisayo Adebangbe and Didunloluwa Tella. You are all appreciated.

- My deepest appreciation also goes to Northwest University. Thank you for all the support and commitment to my academic growth.
- Also, to everyone who have participated in one way or the other in this study, I appreciate you all.
- I would also like to specially thank the people of South Africa for accommodating me throughout my study period. God bless you all and God bless the Republic of South Africa. Ngiyabonga!

## ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Action Congress
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AU	African Union
AIT	Africa Independent Television
AWDF	African Women Development Fund
AWU	Abeokuta Women's Union
CDD	Centre for Development and Democracy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIP	Corruption Perception Index
COWLSO	Committee of Wives of Lagos State Officials
FNWS	Federation of Nigerian Women's Society
GAD	Gender And Development
GADA	Gender and Development Action
HDI	Human Development Index
IDI	In-depth Interview
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
MASSOB	Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of Niger-Delta
NAP	National Action Plan
NBS	National Bureau of Statistic

NCAA	National Civil Aviation Authority
NCNC	National Council of Nigerian Citizens
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NEPU	Northern Element Progressive Union
NGOS	Non-Governmental Organizations
NGP	National Gender Policy
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPW	National Policy on Women
NWU	Nigeria Women's Union
NSRP	Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme
PDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
SDGS	Sustainable Development Goals
SMES	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WIN	Women In Nigeria

## ABSTRACT

The study examined trajectories of women political participation in Southwest, Nigeria from 1999-2015 and determined factors undermining and hampering women's political participation in Southwest, Nigeria. It also examined the effects of women's level of participation on the politics of South Western Nigeria between 1999 and 2015 and determined the nexus between women's participation in politics and proper representation of the people at the constituency level and identified policy measures that engender optimum political participation of women of the South West region of Nigeria in politics beyond 2015. These were the view to examining women's political participation in South West Nigeria between 1999 and 2015.

The study utilized qualitative research design that was sourced through semi-structure interviews with participants, purposively selected from the six states in Southwest, Nigeria. In each state, a total of 8 participants were selected to make the total sample size 48. The inclusion criteria of participants were based on knowledge of the subject matter of the study. Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis.

Results showed that the path of women to politics in terms of political participation in Nigeria and in Southwest in particular has been rough, tough, and limited and that factors such as religion, cultural beliefs, patriarchy, traditions and customs, as well as poor financial background, education, dirty politics nature, among others hampered and undermined women's political participation in Southwest, Nigeria. Results also showed that the level of women's participation has yielded little or no positive outcomes in politics and that their participation in politics does not necessarily translate to proper representation of the people at the constituency level as most women legislators ended up satisfying themselves at the expense of those they are representing. Further, results showed that policy measures such as the quota system, where certain number of seats or elective positions are reserved for women, empowerment of women, improved education of women, protection of women against intra-party discrimination, eradication of excessive conditions for women's political participation among others, would go a long way to encourage more women to participate in politics in Southwest, Nigeria.

The study concluded that the inclusion and participation of more women in politics will enhanced rapid socio-economic development of the Southwest region and Nigeria as a whole.

Keywords: Politics, Women, Political participation, Socio-economic Development



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **Contents**

<b>TITLE PAGE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY</b>	
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	13
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem.....	21
1.3 Research Questions.....	23
1.4 The Aim of the Study.....	23
1.5 Research Objectives.....	23
1.6 Assumptions.....	24
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	24
1.8 Scope of the Study.....	25
1.9 Operational Clarification.....	25
1.10 Summary.....	26
1.11 Limitation of the Study.....	26
1.12 Organization of Research.....	27

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

2.1 Introduction.....	28
2.2 Conceptual Review.....	28
2.2.2 Political participation.....	31
2.2 Democracy and Democratic Consolidation.....	48
2.4 Democratic Development.....	55
2.5 Gender and Political Participation.....	64
2.6 Women and Party Politics.....	69
2.7 Gender discrimination.....	80
2.8 Gender Mainstreaming.....	81
2.9 Women and Development.....	82
2.9.1 Women and Empowerment.....	83
2.9.2 Women and Peacebuilding.....	85
2.9.3 Theoretical Framework.....	87
2.9.5 Empirical Review.....	94
2.9.8 Gender Equality.....	101
2.9.9 Research Gap.....	103
2.10 Conclusion.....	103

**CHAPTER THREE: WOMEN LEGISLATORS AND THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN NIGERIA’S SOUTHWEST**

3.1 Introduction.....	105
-----------------------	-----

3.2 Women and Budgeting process.....	105
3.3 Women and Empowerment Programme.....	106
3.4 Women and Sponsoring of Bills.....	110
3.5 Women and Provision, Supervision of Constituency Project.....	113
3.6 Conclusion.....	114

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

4.1 Research Approach.....	116
4.2 Research Design.....	116
4.3 Study Population and Sampling Technique.....	116
4.4 Data Collection Method.....	117
4.5 Study Population and Sampling Technique.....	117
4.6 Sample Size.....	117
4.7 Sampling Technique.....	118
4.8 Data Collection .....	118
4.9.1 Study Location.....	119
4.9.3 Ethical Consideration.....	120

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

5.1 Introduction.....	122
5.2 Analysis of Demographic Data.....	122

5.3 Finding on Research Question One.....	123
5.4 Findings on Research Question Two.....	129
5.5 Findings on Research Question Three.....	138
5.6 Findings on Research Question Four.....	145
5.7 Findings on Research Question Five.....	148
5.8 Discussion of Results.....	151
<b>CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION, CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND CONCLUSION</b>	
6.1 Summary.....	156
6.2 Findings.....	158
6.3 Recommendation.....	159
6.4 Contribution to Knowledge .....	162
6.5 Conclusion.....	165
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	167

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

The concept of political participation can be best understood through an examination of the idea of politics. Several scholars have defined the concept of politics in different ways with prominent submissions by Harold Lasswell who presented his understanding of politics as who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell, 1963). To refine Lasswell's definition, it was submitted that politics is the authoritative allocation of values for society (Easton, 1981). In addition, politics has been described as the most concentrated form of economic expression (Lenin, 1965). Closely relatedly to that, Leftwich (2004) see politics as all activities comprising co-operation, intervention, and struggle for resources across cultures, where people organize the use, production, or distribution of natural resources for this purpose and for the reproduction of their biological and social lives. This could have influenced Dahl's (2003) decision to conclude that politics entails the use of power. Moreover, to corroborate his earlier submission, Leftwich (2004) opined that politics is how free societies are governed. The recurring explanation to the idea of political participation is that of an intentional service which involves series of activities such as voting in an election, vying for political positions, participating in rallies, and identifying with political parties (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). In many cases, these political activities are viewed as 'Social Avenues' open to all citizens who are of participating age especially in liberal democracies, not minding differences in background, assets, education, and sex. Many practices in African societies, particularly in Nigeria, indicate that some cultural morals have systemically over times hampered women from taking effective roles in politics, which to a large degree tend to redefine the principles of participatory democracy (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014).

In recent times, understanding the idea of political participation goes beyond government and politics. Rather than focusing on government alone, there are other factors incorporated in the description of political participation. Prominent scholars of this school of thought include Robert Putnam who described a breach in conventional public affairs as an obstacle to democracy (Hooghe, 2004). Although several opposing views have emerged to counter the argument mentioned above, their argument ignores the popularity of new methods of participation and collaboration. Opponents of this claim maintained that even if the society has shifted a bit from

the old ways of participating in societal affairs, political participation is still very strong, just that citizens in politics today prefer to get involved in an unceremonious network rather than joining political groups (Hooghe, 2004). Concerning women political participation, historical shreds of evidence (Waylen et al., 2013; Mazur et al., 2016) across various societies both in the past and today have encouraged practices of male supremacy over women in different spheres of life (Turner and Maschi, 2014). It is such that, throughout the ages and across cultures, women were rarely considered equal to men as they are known to have been reduced, disregarded and subjugated through the orchestration of traditional norms and systems which are gender-biased and always in support of the male gender (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014).

Similarly, several scholars have expressed their sentiments concerning gender dishonour and relegation because of societal biases and norms that have resulted in male dominance over women in almost every way (Agbalajobi, 2010; Aina, 2012; and Soetan, 2014). Over the years, political spaces across various countries including Nigeria, have been dominated by a patriarchal system of politics – a system many literatures have referred to as men rule (Ogunbiade, 2019). It is such that women actively participate in politics but they are less involved in making decisions, as was the case during the pre-colonial political administrative system (Guyo, 2017). It was later aggravated by the colonial administration, which introduced various unfavourable laws against women participation in politics, which hitherto made the political scene predominantly a male-dominated. History shows that in the pre-colonial era, women were much involved in political matters in various ways. Evidence in the literature on women's activities during colonialism indicates that women only lost relevance in positions of power and financial independence with the influx of cash crops and women's segregation from the global market (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). It was noted that, women just like their male counterparts, also held significant political positions across their various communities (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014).

Post-independence, men have exclusively held the Head of State or President and Minister for Defence positions, for example. The regular general political participation of women in Nigeria has not exceeded 6.7% as an electorate and political office holder, which is practically below the stipulated international standard, specified African continental standard and the West African rates of 22.5%, 23.4% and 15% respectively (Oloyede, 2016). The more women want to be politically

involved in Nigeria, the less unaccommodating the political arena gets for them (Quadri, 2015). This is why the political space in the country is largely male's dominated (Okeke, 2015; Olurode, 2013).

It has been further confirmed by statistics that women are vastly underrepresented in public life and decision-making positions. Onyeji (2019) did an analysis of the number of voters who registered for the 2019 general election in Nigeria. Out of 84 million, women consisted of 40 million women (47.14%). Yet this has not translated into meaningful political inclusion. In line with (Ogunyinka, 2019), rather than increased percentage of women in elected positions, their numbers kept reducing. For instance, the numbers of women in the Nigerian senate reduced from 7 to 6 between the 2015 and 2019 general elections. There was also a decline from the percentage of women in the House of Representatives from 20 women in 2015 to 12 women representatives in 2019 (Ogunyinka, 2019). Women only account for 3.8% of the total numbers of members in both the Houses of Senate and Representatives in 2019, making the lowest recorded participation for women in sub-Saharan Africa and way beneath the 24% stipulated average in the West African region (Ogunyinka, 2019).

Several works have pointed to colonialism as the significant promoter of patriarchy in Nigerian politics. It seems the gender inequality in Nigerian politics is embedded in traditional history (Izueke and Ezichi-Ituma, 2018; Makama, 2013; Oloyede, 2016; Omotola, 2007). Nevertheless, a kind of inconsistency is seen in this conventional thinking in the study of gender in Nigeria as some studies show that before, during and after colonialism, women held significant leadership positions in Nigeria (Nwosu, 2018). This begs the question: Is patriarchy the cause of the current underrepresentation of women in politics in Nigeria? Patriarchy is the universal societal arrangements which allow male superiority over female in terms of physical appearance, social, and economic (Okafor et al., 2007).

Women's exclusion from politics has been acknowledged as one of the foremost impediments for economic advancement (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018). The more women get involved not just as voters, but as contestants, leaders of parties and supervisors in elections, the more influence they would have in the political space and in society (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018). Lack of

substantial involvement of women in political positions in Nigeria poses a major setback for development in the country (Chukwuma and Ohabuanyi, 2018). The few elected positions held by women today were achieved through individual effort and joint group efforts. However, in more recent times, the failure of states' to integrate women's issues into governance, has led to women establishing their own groups and movements worldwide, mostly since the 90s. There is, for instance, the women's sewing club (Olojede,2000). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were social clubs for women and the numbers of women's groups with political leanings increased significantly towards the end of the century. Thus, women's movements have evolved with the aim of redefining the political sphere (Orisadare, 2019). In western democracies, there was a long account of women's movements, yet, over the years not much can be said with confidence about them (Mazur et al. 2016).

In Nigeria, various organizations have come forward in educating women, creating awareness, lobbying and providing and support to women to gain political office. Women's movements such as the market women and Women in Nigeria (WIN) fought a collective cause which was previously led by groups involved in "developmental" actions such as income generation, welfare, and home skills training. These have transformed into groups pushing for political decision-making positions for women and agitating for political and constitutional rights and conducting civic education (Olojede,2000). According to Holm (1992), women established their own parties. For instance, Madam Tinubu and Pelewura mobilized Lagos market women to render support for Herbert Macaulay, a foremost pro-independence nationalist. This was similar to the Eastern "Aba women's riot" against obnoxious colonial policies and the Warrant Chief System. In the same context, Mrs. Kuti independently staged women's protests to oppose taxes and other unfavourable policies against women in Abeokuta. Mrs. Ransome-Kuti likewise supported Mrs Ekpo who had made a move to resist colonial laws in the East. Mrs. Ransome-Kuti later transformed her Abeokuta Women's Union (AWU) into the Nigeria Women's Union (NWU) which later became the Federation of Nigerian Women's Society (FNWS) with the sole aim of upgrading women's status in Nigeria (Williams, 1992).

It is on record that political activism of Mrs. Ransome-Kuti paved the way for her membership of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) and this gave her the privilege to be part of the

delegation sent to London to meet and discuss the way forward for Nigeria before independence in 1960. Also, Chief (Mrs.) Bolarinwa and Alhaja Hurnani Alaga played significant roles in mobilizing women to support the Action Group Party (AG) of Chief Obafemi Awolowo in the Western Region (Badmus, 2006). Besides, Hajia Sawaba Gambo was a prominent female leader who later became the leader of the women's wing of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPIU). She was a strong supporter of Mallam Aminu Kano in the radical politics of the North. NEPU provided her the platform for organized activism among other groups (Badmus, 2006). The reason was partly because surviving parties in the multiparty system have not been effectively in addressing women's issues. Women's political ideas are often different from those of men and do not always align with existing party structures. On many occasions, women wanted to form broader multi-ethnic and multi-religious formations. Women's exclusion from political activities and the entire decision-making process has become a recurring phenomenon across various countries such as Yemen and Oman (World Development Indicators, 2014). The resultant effect of this is the call for global, continental, and national initiatives to encourage women's political participation.

In 1979, the United Nations came up with a treaty on the eradication of all unfairness against women (UNHR, 1979). This compels all signatory nations to take action against gender discrimination. The policy is further aimed at increasing the participation of women in all sectors of politics and development in line with their skills and needs in order to upgrade their quality of life, eliminate poor living standards at home, manage illiteracy and ignorance, and most importantly, guarantee a peaceful and stable nation (CEDAW, 2004). The policy further recommends that uniformity and equity targets must be made the core objectives of developmental policies which must be individual-oriented. Women who represent about half of a nation's population can contribute and fully realize their political opportunities. Above all, the goals of this policy specify the reason for incorporating women's commitments in all political and development efforts is to pay keen attention to areas where issues of women have not yet been adequately supported and where their roles have not been wholly acknowledged, for instance, in legislative matters (CEDAW, 2004).

The inadequate level of women representation in political positions in Nigeria has been a huge concern in Nigeria. Rigorous efforts have been made to promote gender equality in politics in accordance with the Beijing declaration which encouraged 30% allocation for women (Oloyede,2016). Additionally, there was the 35% political allocation for women in Nigeria by the National Gender Policy (NGP), a recommendation was made in order to promote women representation in elective and appointive position across the nation (Oloyede, 2016). Despite these attempts, Nigerian women are still poorly represented in governance (Oloyede, 2016). To further illustrate this, recently there were 36 confirmed ministerial appointments by the current administration. Of these, women only represented 16.7 percent. Women only make up of 5.6 percentage in the House of Representatives and 6.5 percentage in the Senate. Nigeria had enjoyed twenty-two years of democracy (1999-2021) and women have only recorded one state governor in the person of Dame Virginia Ngozi Etiaba, who became the governor of Anambra state between November 2006 to February 2007 and one speaker of the House of Representatives in the person of Patricia Olubunmi Foluke Eteh between June 2007- October 2007 (NPC), and (NBS, 2018).

Across Africa, there are several significant efforts towards women's political matters. These are reflected in policy documents and forums such as Article 4 (1) of the African Union Constitutive Act (African Union, 2000). Others are the 1994 Dakar Platform for Action, the 1999 African Plan for Actions to fast-track the Enactment of the Dakar, Beijing Platforms for Actions for the Development of Women, the 2003 protocol of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of African Women and the 2004 African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. These efforts had helped in advancing women's status in politics in a few African countries such as Rwanda and South Africa which have had substantial numbers of women representation in both elective and appointive positions.

At the national level, in the year 2000, the government of Nigeria implemented the National Policy on Women (NPW), which solely aims at eradicating all practices that are unfavourable to women and the girl child in all areas. The policy aimed at addressing critical areas such as cultural re-orientation and sensitization to change gender perceptions and stereotypes (National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001). Other aims include promoting women's rights and focus mainly on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), supporting women's legislation and legal rights,

promoting women's empowerment and integrating gender issues into key areas in the National Gender Policy. All these are put forward to enable equitable gender involvement in politics (National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001).

What is of greater concern is that democracy in every nation is anchored upon the principles of freedom, justice, and equal treatment of all citizens (Nwabueze, 1993). Democracy entails equal opportunities for political participation and decision-making (Sodaro, 2001). The issue of gender equality is globally recognized as a necessity for achieving development (Ezeilo, 2008). In the case of Nigeria, even in the face of the spread of the wave of democracy and the struggle by feminist movements which advocated for gender balancing in politics, Nigerian women are still systematically alienated from not just political activities but also the decision-making process (Agbalajobi, 2010 and Arowolo and Aluko, 2010). This marginalisation of women in political activities is said to be a major hindrance to societal growth. Advocacy for women's involvement in Nigeria's politics has been met with many challenges making it difficult to take advantage of various economic opportunities. The current prospects for women to be fully involved in politics are yet to be used by the various women's organizations within the country (Orisadare, 2019). It is in most cases concluded that various women's groups in Nigeria have no formidable political programme. Coupled with high rates of illiteracy, they also lack the knowledge of existing national and international gender equality law, thereby making it difficult for them to secure their rightful place in politics. In addition, the different roles played mainly by women's groups seem not to be enough to boosting their involvement in politics in order to influence economic change in the country (Orisadare, 2019).

The low participation of women in politics and especially in decision making processes affects not only the economy but also undermines Nigeria's quest to meet sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Nwogwugwu, 2020). It is the leading cause of gender violence, sexual abuse, and harassment in Nigeria (Read, 2017). In Nigeria, it is a fact that women's poor representation in government and decision-making subjects them to discrimination in education, nutrition, and healthcare (ISGlobal, 2016). For instance, women hardly take decisions on issues (material health, human right, food security, among others) concerning their survival because of their low representation in politics. Even the few ones in government are edged out of decisional power

because men (Ibrahim, 2016) outnumber them. For instance, there were 47 million registered voters for general election in Nigeria in 1999 with 27 million being women. This shows that they constitute a large percentage of the electoral population. In this same period, according to Egwu (2015), there were 11,117 positions available, but women only contested 631 (5.6%) and managed to secure 180 posts. Out of these, women only secured 140 positions at ward level as councillors (Egwu, 2015). This shows that there is still a considerable difference in the proportion of men to women in politics in Nigeria. It has become a worrisome issue in Nigeria, as the current reality does not reflect equal representation in political leadership. Scholars and stakeholders have pointed to the following factors as major hindrances to women in politics in Nigeria: male domination, violence, illiteracy, finance, religion, tradition, and political “godfatherism” (Osimen et al., 2018).

This brings to the fore the essence of this study which examines women’s participation in politics in southwest Nigeria. It argues that none of the six regions in southwest Nigeria has fared better in terms of women’s representation in politics as women have remained as deputy governors in all the six states in the Southwest and very few of them have made it to the state Houses of Assembly since the country’s return to democracy in 1999 (Anifowose, 2004). This goes to show the extent to which women suffer gender discrimination in Southwest politics despite their huge population. This study holds the view that development in Nigeria will continue to be elusive if women are not included in the decision-making process or are discriminated against in politics. Studies and intellectual debates have been very loud in the discussion of women’s exclusion from Nigerian politics and evidence is scarce on the implications of low representation of women for the achievement of SDGs and peacebuilding in southwest Nigeria. Not many scholars believe that the active participation of women in politics, particularly in the southwest region, can enhance inclusivity and peace in the region in particular and Nigeria as a whole. Given this, the study believes that research into women’s political participation in southwest Nigeria will yield significant results and advance knowledge in understanding the relevance of women in nation-building and developmental processes. It is in the light of this that the study attempts to assess the impact of women’s political participation on peacebuilding and development in southwest Nigeria.

## **1. 2. Statement of the problem**

Discourses on women's involvement and participation in governance have attracted numerous organizations and research bodies with much emphasis on gender parity (Crenshaw, 1989; Hancock, 2007; Carastathis, 2014). The policy of quota system as a way to address women's underrepresentation in politics has been extensively examined in the literature. Most of these investigations are inspired by European beliefs, which lack African women's values. Many records have shown that African women have demonstrated leadership and conflict resolution abilities uniquely during the pre-colonial era, but colonialism changed things (Agbalajobi and Yetunde, 2010). Agunbiade (2013) and Oluwole (2014) argue that women's impact in leadership in Africa, especially in Nigeria, cannot be overemphasized. They contend that the leadership of women in those days produced development in ancient societies. Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015) also reveal that in Nigeria, particularly in the southern part of the country, women played historical roles in all life endeavours but this changed in the modern era especially in the political sphere, as women are not allowed to express their political opinion as it used to be in the traditional societies. According to Ogundipe-Leslie (1994), women in this part of the country were fearless and eager to sacrifice for society's betterment.

This virtue seems to be lacking and unseen among Nigerian women, particularly those within the South West region in the modern era. Nigeria's new era of politics that ushered in a democratic system in the ongoing Fourth Republic brought hope to many Nigerians. The Peoples' Democratic Party dominated the Fourth Republic, which started in 1999. This party governed the country at the presidential level from 1999 to 2015 before it lost to the All Progressives Congress. This period marked historical democratic developments and acceptability. From 1999 to 2015, the political participation and involvement of women in the country were limited. The PDP administration entertained some women, but their participation did not translate into meaningful development due to societal norms and the patriarchal political system (National Bureau of Statistic, 2016). Identifiable studies on this, especially 15 years of the PDP era concerning women's political participation, are undeveloped. Published articles such as that of Agbalajobi and Yetunde (2010) and others have attempted to investigate the dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals of vision 2030 (SDGs), which lack empirical groundings. Besides, those that are based on European beliefs tend to attenuate African women's culture and contribution to the continent. Southwest

Nigeria is a unique region that produced important women during the pre-colonial era in leadership and other aspects of life (Orisadare, 2019)

The low representation of women in elective and appointive positions in Africa has remained a recurrent problem that has undermined the development of African countries including Nigeria. This problem has attracted scholarly studies and debates which mainly centre on mainstreaming women in the country's political system. However, evidence is significantly little on the impact of women in politics and development. Intellectual debates have been too loud on women inclusion in the political decision-making process without any consideration for the presence of women in governance. Besides, studies on women inclusion in politics in Nigeria have examined women ratios or involvement at the federal level, especially in the House of Representatives, ministries, and senate, and little, if nothing, has been done in terms of research to examine how women have fared at state Houses of Assembly. More importantly, many studies on this subject use secondary data to determine the extent of women's political participation in Nigeria (such as Agbalajobi, 2010; Anifowose and Odeyemi, 2014; Agbalajobi and Yetunde, 2010; Agunyai et.al., 2014). The inherent problem with this is that their results are deduced from reports and perceptions of scholars and not from women who suffer from discrimination in politics. This study significantly departs from this method and bridges the gap by empirically examining women's political participation in southwest Nigeria through a qualitative research design based on interviews,.

Contemporary societies seem to have changed the paradigm and the popular global campaign has been streamlined into the doctrine of gender parity with much reliance on European ideas. Most studies aligned with African values fall short of empirical investigation and concrete revelations of what constitutes women's political participation. In order words, there is a dearth of empirical studies that investigate issues of women's political participation in southwest Nigeria particularly from 1999 to 2015. Most of the studies mentioned above are philosophical deductions and historical accounts that lack empirical analyses. This is the gap that the current study strives to fill.

### **1.3. Research questions**

- i. What are the trajectories of women political participation in politics in southwestern Nigeria from 1999-2015?

- ii. What factors motivate and hamper women's participation in southwestern Nigeria?
- iii. How has women's political participation influenced the politics of development in southwestern Nigeria?
- iv. Has women's participation in politics enhanced the proper representation of the people at the constituency level?
- v. What policy measures can engender political participation of women in southwestern Nigeria?

#### **1.4 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study is to examine women's political participation in southwest Nigeria between 1999 and 2015.

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

The objective of this study are:

- i. To examine the trajectories of women political participation in southwest Nigeria from 1999-2015;
- ii. To determine factors that undermine and hamper women's political participation in southwest Nigeria;
- iii. To examine the effects of women's level of participation on the politics of southwest Nigeria between 1999 and 2015;
- iv. To examine the nexus between women's participation in politics and proper representation of the people at the constituency level;
- v. To suggest policy measures that can engender optimum political participation of women in southwest Nigeria beyond 2015.

#### **1.6 Assumptions**

The following assumptions were tested for validity and reliability in the study:

1. Women's political participation significantly enhance peacebuilding in southwest Nigeria.

2. There is a significant positive relationship between women's involvement in politics and proper representation at the constituency level.
3. The involvement of more women in politics significantly promotes socio-economic change and development in southwest Nigeria.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study advances new knowledge on the possibility of improving women's participation in politics. This significantly contributes to gender studies, a branch of political science and international relations. The study has the potential of providing adequate information which governments of African states can use to formulate and implement policies on safeguarding the interests of women in elective or appointive positions. This can encourage greater involvement of women in politics. Besides, the study's finding is capable of providing new knowledge to institutions such as civil society organisations, legislatures, INEC, and political parties on the importance of including more women in politics. In addition, the society, through the findings of the study can learn how to appreciate and safeguard the interest of women against their male counterparts through societal norms and value systems.

Across the world, including Africa, it is a fact that women play crucial roles in development. In fact, because of their teeming population, women constitute a significant size that could elevate the country through their knowledge, skills and calmness. This study advances knowledge on how countries in Africa can adequately tap into women's resources to transform their country. For instance, the findings of this study would be highly instrumental to exposing the fact that gender equality is a human rights issue that can lead to socio-economic transformation and national development. The study is a contribution to existing work on women political participation in Nigeria. It is also a significant investigation into the nature of women's political engagement in southwest Nigeria during the democratic regime of 1999-2015.

This study is beneficial to researchers, scholars and government agencies on gender related issues, as it deepens understanding of the state of women participation in politics in the southwest region of Nigeria. It generates research-based knowledge that is relevant to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality. The study explores women's

readiness to participate in politics in Nigeria as a whole and in the southwest in particular. Finally, the suggestions and recommendations provide adequate information on electoral education of the female gender in Nigeria and across the African continent.

### 1.8 Scope of the study

This study covers women's political participation in the six states that make up the South West geo-political zone in Nigeria from 1999 to 2015. These are Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo states. This period covers the country's return to democracy in 1999 until the 2015 general elections that has the lowest representation of women in politics so far.

### 1.9 Operational clarification

**Political participation:** This refers to deliberate activities undertaken by citizens in order to effect public decision. This can be done directly or indirectly. Such activities include casting of votes in elections, vying for political office, involving in campaigns, and donating money to candidates, writing of petitions, protesting and collaborating with others on political issues. It also refers to activities in which citizens are involved in order to affect policies.

**Democracy:** This is a form of government where all qualified members are free to select or elect their representatives.

**Development:** This means growth or advancement.

**Democratic development:** This means the practice by which democracy develops to the extent that it becomes difficult to return to authoritarianism without external caution.

**Gender:** It refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. For this study, it refers to women's characteristic roles in politics or public offices. Since knowledgeable people play politics, it means that women can also play politics, because they have knowledge.

**Gender equality:** It is the absence of discrimination based on gender in the allocation of resources, benefits and access to services.

**Politics:** Politics encompasses activities involving governance.

**Political system:** It is a system where government or official decisions are made. This system is often referred to as a legal, economic and cultural arrangement.

**Political party:** This connotes a group or association where candidates are chosen to contest for political offices in a country's elections. In this political setting, party members usually have the same political idea and parties may support specific political or strategic goals.

**Democratization:** This means a shift towards independent political rule or administration, including a noticeable political change towards autonomous leadership.

### **1.10 Summary**

This chapter has analysed various issues under headings such as introduction or background of the study, problem, the study aim, objectives of the study, research questions, significance, assumptions, limitations, the scope, theoretical framework, method, as well as operational clarification which are pertinent to the study. The next chapter focuses on the review of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks that have been earlier discussed in this chapter.

### **1.11 Limitations of the study**

This study was faced with a number of constraints, first of which was the issue of restrictions due to the covid-19 pandemic. It was difficult for the researcher to meet with all the participants as a result of restrictions to movement. The researcher was only able to meet with some of the participants via sending interview questions through google forms and the remaining participants were interviewed via phone. This is because many of the participants were unwilling to have one-on-one contacts with the researcher. Another constraint is the lack of cooperation from some of the respondent who were reluctant to participate in the study despite assurances from the researcher to protect their identities. Nevertheless, those who willingly participated gave their full commitment. Regardless of these few limitations, the targeted number of participants for this study were fully realised and data was fully collected and analysed to produce this thesis.

### **1.12 Organization of research (chapter outline)**

Chapter one discusses the introduction, statement of problem, research aim, objective, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and ethical considerations. Chapter two deals with theories and literature review on women's political participation in Nigeria. Chapter three focuses on women and legislative systems in southwest politics in Nigeria while chapter four presents the methodology of the study. Chapter five focuses on data presentation and discussion of results while chapter six presents the summary, recommendations, conclusion and contribution to knowledge.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Hazel V. Carby (2008) and Naomi Nkealah (2008) have produced very useful studies in the area of women's political participation. In a similar vein, Inglehart, Norris, and Walzel 2010; Leslie A. Schwandt-Bayer 2010; Lamprianou 2013; Riley et.al 2013; Marie Antoinette 2011, Mohamed 2010; Grey 2006. e.t.c. The most recent report suggests that women's political participation across southwest Nigeria has declined drastically (Index Mundi, 2019). As of 2019, the percentage of seats held by women in parliaments in Nigeria was 3.38. Its peak point in the last 19 years was 7.0 in 2010, and its lowest point was 3.38 in 2019 (Inter-Parliamentary Union). To understand the reasons for the decline in women's political participation and the justification for the research gap, a review of the literature was undertaken. The review is divided into the following parts; conceptual, theoretical, and empirical.

#### **2.2 Conceptual review**

##### **2.2.1 Politics**

Several scholars believe that politics is a multidimensional word. It may be used positively in the context of a "political solution" which is compromising and non-violent (Aian, 2015) or descriptively as "the art or science of government" but also often carries a negative connotation (Rod and Martin, 2013). Politics as a notion has been given different definitions and approaches both empirical and normative. Conflict or cooperation is vital in its definition. Several scholars have presented ideas that reflected the core of the concept of politics. In politics, several methods are deployed to achieve set goals such as negotiation (Brady, 2017), lawmaking (Hawkesworth and Kogan, 2013), force (Taylor, 2012) and war (Blanton and Kegley, 2016). The concept of politics births the political system concept which is a framework that defines acceptable political methods within a polity (Blanton and Kegley, 2016).

The concept of politics can be traced to the Greek word, *politika*, which means the activities of states. It has to do with all the activities related to making decisions as a group and other power-

related issues among individuals such as the distribution of resources and positions. Politics is defined as the art or science of guiding a national plan, gaining and maintaining control of a ruling party (The Free Dictionary by Falex). It also includes political actions, practices, or policies, as well as political affairs or business particularly the competition for power and leadership among competing interest groups or individuals (Mohamed, 2010). It is also related to government life, particularly as a primary activity or profession as well as political campaigns characterized by artful and frequently dishonest practices. It can also refer to a person's political beliefs or condolences as well as the entire network of relationships between people in society (Mohamed, 2010). Politics can be approached in various ways including;

1. **Extensive and Limited Approach:** The extensive approach sees politics as a dominant force across all human social relations, while the limited approach views politics within certain contexts (Leftwich, 2004). Politics may be explained as governance in a restrictive way while being explained so that areas earlier viewed as traditionally non-political are seen as politics through a feminist perspective (Leftwich, 2004). Prominent scholars of this approach include Adrian Leftwich and Robert Dahl.
2. **Moralist and Realist Approach:** This approach explains politics either as an exercise of power or as a normative social function (Morlino, 2017). The moralist approach explains politics in terms of ethics and utopianism to the extreme (Atkinson, 2013). For its part, the realist approach explains politics as the use of power irrespective of the ends being pursued (Atkinson, 2013; Morlino, 2017). Prominent scholars of this approach include Hannah Arendt, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Harold Lasswell.
3. **Conflictual and Cooperation Approach:** The conflictual approach explains that politics entails conflicts between different interests (Schattschneider, 1960). It posits that conflicts abound where there is politics (Mouffe, 1999). The cooperation approach highlights the role of diplomacy in political activities. It should, however, be noted that politics is a mixture of both conflict and cooperation that are embedded in human relationships. Pure conflict indicate war while pure cooperation is true love. Politics is embedded in both (Van der Eijk, 2018).

The history of politics begins with the account of political thoughts which can be traced to the eras of Plato, Aristotle, Confucius and others. Some scholars refer to the prehistoric era when able

animals engaged in politics through “social manipulation to secure and maintain influential positions (De Waal, 2007). The history of politics can be traced to the early Greek philosopher Aristotle who posited that all humans are political animals, and that there is a close link between ethics and politics. His ideas were later refined by the Italian scholar, Niccolò Machiavelli who wrote in his 1532 work ‘The Prince’ that politics is ultimately about having and keeping power and that without power, a leader could do nothing. These ideas have been widely explained in differing ways. According to Leftwich (2004), politics comprises all the activities of cooperation, negotiation, and conflict within and between societies and involves organizing the use, production, or distribution of resources (human, natural, and otherwise) in the course of the production and reproduction of biological and social life. Robert Dahl argues that politics is the use of power (Dahl, 2003). Besides, politics is a way in which societies are governed (Leftwich, 2004). For his part, Hobbes argues that people living in groups often give up some of their rights in exchange for government protection. In the 1800s, John Stuart Mill developed the liberal idea of politics. He argued that democracy is the most important political development of the 1800s and that protection for individual rights against the government is pertinent.

However, in the early stage of social organization – bands and tribes – do not have an integrated political organizations and are generally referred to as stateless societies (Fukuyama, 2012). In the early stages, the prominent civilizations were characterized by the absence of defined territorial boundaries as in present times. This is common in non-state societies that consist of egalitarian bands and tribes and also in complex and highly stratified chiefdoms such as Sumer and Egypt. In ancient history, the Greeks were the first recorded people to have primarily formulated a political philosophy of the state and have rationally analyzed political institutions (Nelson and Nelson, 2006). Before this period, states were described and justified in terms of religious myths. This development culminated in granting citizenship rights to their free populations which combined with a directly democratic form of government that existed in political thought and history (Nelson and Nelson, 2006).

In the history of the contemporary states, the peace treaty of Westphalia in 1648 signaled the commencement of the modern international system where external powers were mandated not to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries (Kissinger, 2014). It made states independent

agents culminating in nationalist movements in the 19th century which birthed several nations. This then brought about establishing a relatively unified state in Portugal and the Dutch Republic (Richards, 2004). In this regard, several scholars such as Black (1998), Robert (1970) and Foucault (2007) have argued that the nation-state did not arise out of political ingenuity or an unknown, undetermined source, nor was it an accident of history or political invention.

### **2.2.2 Political participation**

The recurring explanation of the idea of political participation is that of a voluntary act that encompasses a wide range of political activities including voting at an election, contesting for political and party offices, attending political rallies and joining political parties (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). In many cases, these political activities are considered to be a ‘free zone’ for all qualified citizens, especially in liberal democracies, irrespective of disparities in wealth, education, and gender. This means that specific cultural values have systemically impeded females from participating in politics to the degree that the ideals of participatory democracy become compromised (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014).

Conteh (2013) has noted that a free and fair election is sovereign and has the right to keep or vote out the government. In addition, it reveals the true will of the people and is therefore the only legitimate way to democratic leadership. Moreover, by exercising their vote freely, the people choose and give legitimacy to their leaders (Nwankwo 2018). Yorons (2017) further highlights the fact that elections are part of democracy. Therefore, if it is not properly conducted, the entire democratic process loses credibility. If the incumbent candidate or part is not credible or does not govern well, it is also through a subsequent election that the electorate will have an opportunity to express their will. A cursory observation of the election showed that voting is central in the process. According to Kwon-Ndung et al. (2014), voting is widely and commonly used in contemporary democratic politics to choose leaders for various electoral positions. Zahida and Younia (2014) view voting as the process of electing representatives by casting votes in an election. In this vein, Okolie (2003) emphasizes that voting in elections into public offices is usually conducted using ballot boxes. Voting, therefore, takes the form of thumbing in the ballot paper provided which establishes the essence of voting. Since the vote determines who will hold elective office. The vote, however, does not clearly communicate the citizen’s preference of leaders neither does it convey explicit information.

Voting undoubtedly accentuates the significance of people's participation in the election process. It is the legal right and civic obligation of the citizens in a state. In this sense, voting is the legal, political and social mechanism through which citizens can express their preferences in elections. It shows the level of political consciousness and participation of the citizenry (Ejue and Ekanam, 2011). Ejure and Ekanam (2011) observe that Article 21 of the United Nations Charter on Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country directly or through freely chosen representatives and that the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government. Beyond the global recognition of civil liberty, the Nigerian Federal Republic Constitution of 1999 (as amended) in sections 77(2), 117(2), 132(5), and 178(5) also identifies the conditions of voter eligibility and the essence of participation in the election process.

Voting, as a right and civic responsibility, is propelled by the need or interest to participate in the democratic process. When this need or interest does not exist, voter apathy occurs. Anderson (2017) defined voter apathy as a lack of interest in participating in elections by a certain group of voters. One side effect of voter apathy can be low voter turnout on election day if voting is non-compulsory. In addition, voter apathy occurs when eligible voters do not vote in public elections. Outside of election time, voters may seem disillusioned with the political process or politicians in general (Cloud, 2019, p.1). More explicitly, Lai Olurode (2013) has highlighted the following different forms of voter apathy – alienation and distrust. Voter alienation is conceived as induced voter apathy among the proportional percentage of voters. For instance, it was the organizational failure of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) that led to the disenfranchisement of 12 million eligible Nigerian voters who could not obtain their PVCs before the 2015 Presidential and National Assembly elections (Madubuegwu, 2015). Voter distrust is also conceived as voter disenchantment, which reflects in the loss of confidence in the political system and process.

Some of the most common forms of political participation include:

1. **Voting:** Voting remains one of the critical means of political participation because through this medium representatives are elected into power by the majority. It remains the most popular form of political participation which many see as the principal means of exercising ones right in politics. It is a special political action that allows more people's views to be

well represented than any other form of political activity. In voting, every citizen gets one vote that counts equally. Expanded voter registration means that more and more people have been able to participate and voter turnout trends indicate how many people exercise their right to vote as a primary means of political participation (Scotto and Xena, 2015).

2. **Protest:** Whether it is a legal right or not, public demonstrations are yet another crucial form of political participation. This is the popular method of calling the attention of political office holders to the agitation of the people because it helps citizens opinions to be known in a more pronounced way with the hope that their actions will inspire or instigate change in a particular area of politics. Protest involves unconventional and sometimes unlawful political actions undertaken to gain rewards from the political and economic system. Protest behaviour can take many forms (Lipsky, 1968). People can engage in nonviolent civil disobedience acts where they deliberately break the law that they consider unjust (Onubogu, 2020). This tactic was used effectively during the 1960s civil rights movement. Other forms of protest behaviour include marking public spaces with graffiti, demonstrating and boycotting. Extreme forms of protest behaviour include acts that cause harm like bombing a building or rioting. Members of social movements may resort to rioting when they perceive no conventional alternatives for getting their message across (Smith, 2012). Based on the gap in existing African studies (Bratton, 2013; Burchard, 2015) and Norris (2014), this study examines the negative impact of election violence on electoral participation. With less experience of alternation of power and some predominance of dominant parties, it is argued that in Africa, the incumbent parties prevent the opposition supporters from turning out (Hafner-Burton et al., 2014) by using violence.
3. **Public consultation:** Like voting, public consultations – popularly known as town hall meetings – is another form of political participation which accords ordinary citizens the opportunity to come together in a group with the elected executive (s) to share their views and also make their opinions and feelings (pleasant or unpleasant) known. Public consultation is a means to improve democratic governance by helping governments consult their citizenry on the government’s critical public policy issues. These are conducted with representative samples of the citizenry. A sample is chosen and subsequently weighted to

reflect the population census on all significant demographic variables. Thus, producing an accurate citizenry microcosm. Standard public opinion polls using representative samples can be an effective means of consulting citizens on issues they have already given significant thought to (Bertelsmann,2014).

4. **Jury duty:** While most people despise the idea of having to serve on a jury, it is an important aspect of political involvement. Jury service is one of the most important ways we can participate in the justice system because it ensures that persons charged with crimes are judged by people like them, rather than allowing the outcome to be solely determined by a single person, such as a judge, as is the case with voting, jury duty is one significant way we can take part in the democratic process. Jurors are meant to preserve life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for citizens. Serving as a juror in the public sector safeguards our constitutional right to an unbiased jury trial (Gleich, 2021).

While the above are some of the most common practices of political participation, there are still many other ways one can be politically involved. These include writing or signing a political petition; writing letters to a public official or political representatives; writing and discussing political issues; rendering financial help to a politician or a political cause; volunteering to join a political or public campaign; being part of activist or interest group and holding an elective office. Participation in electoral processes goes many ways beyond just getting involved in voting. Political participation entails the freedom to speak out, freedom of assembly and association, the ability to take an active part in the conduct of public affairs and the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government. Under international standards, both males and females have the legal right to exercise their rights fully as legitimate citizens and participate fully in all political matters. In practice, however, women find it challenging to exert this right to a maximum.

More so, people participate in support activities which are more passive types of political participation. They may attend concerts or athletic events associated with fundraising and create awareness about issues in society, such as scarcity and health care. However, the majority of these people are not really interested in politics; that is, they are not political activists advocating for political issues. But as much as these activities bring people together, by so doing they get to know

about political issues and such support activities can lead to active participation (Karine, Lalancette and Roseveare, 2012).

Many may get involved in representational participation, routine or habitual acts that show support for the political system. For example, people salute the flag and recite the pledge of allegiance at the beginning of a school day, and they sing the national anthem at sporting events. All these are known as symbolic acts and such acts are not always supportive of the political system. Many people do not say the pledge of allegiance, they see this as their way of expressing their dissatisfaction with the government. By symbolic acts, not voting, citizens can show their unhappiness with leadership choices (Karine, Lalancette and Roseveare, 2012).

This process has been made popular and supportive because of advancements in technology and the strategic use of media which offers people the opportunities to involve in campaigns. Technology enables people to browse the internet, to blog or be a part of debating organizations connected to an election. They can make videos and post such to support or oppose a candidate. Through the use of various social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, people can be recruited as volunteers for campaign as well as making donations for a particular candidate. A prominent example of elections that were largely influenced by the new media includes the 2008 elections in the United States and the 2015 elections in Nigeria. There was evidence of instances when young people in particular through the use of Facebook, organized online support on behalf of candidates. Students advertised campus election events on social media sites, such as candidate rallies and voter registration drives, which drew large crowds (Anderson and Rainie, 2020).

There are also instances when people run for public offices as it requires a great deal of dedication, time, energy, and money (Leonardo Becchetti, Nazaria Solferino, M. Elisabetta Tessitore, 2016). However, what is evident in recent times is that the percentage of people running for and holding public office appears small. There are many opportunities to serve in government although, the processes involved in running for public offices can be daunting. Once a candidate signifies interest in public office, the candidate must organize a campaign to create awareness, lobby for volunteers, raise funds, and garner press coverage (Annette, 2014).

Besides, several people can also participate in their countries' political activities through demonstrations usually unconventional and sometimes unlawful, political actions undertaken to gain rewards from the political and economic system (Thomas and Richard, 2015). Protest behaviour can take many forms. People can engage in nonviolent civil disobedience acts to deliberately break a law that they consider unjust (Lipsky, 1968 as cited in Thomas and Richard, 2015). Marking public locations with graffiti, demonstrating, and boycotting are all examples of protest activity. Extreme forms of protest behaviour include acts that cause harm, such as environmental activists planting spikes in trees that might gravely injure loggers, terrorist acts, such as bombing a building, and civil war are examples of extreme kinds of protest behaviour. (Human Rights Watch report 2021). Protest, in the case of extreme dissatisfaction with a particular societal condition, might lead to rioting. Riots are sometimes unplanned and ignited by an incident that brings long-held grievances and emotions to a climax. When members of social movements see no other options for getting their message across, they may resort to riots. Riots can result in property destruction, looting, bodily harm, and even death. (Mongiello, 2016).

In recent times, the understanding of the concept of women's political participation has gone beyond politics. Addressing the 21st annual national conference of the committee of wives of Lagos state officials (COWLSO) in Lagos, Rotimi Akeredolu said:

There is a need for women to start taking the issue of participating in politics seriously. Women's role cannot be just jamboree and singing at political rallies. The girl child must be trained in a way that she has a role to play in the future. We must do more than what we were doing before. We must stop the obnoxious practice which limits the potential of the girl-child. We must resist the attempt by those who crave perpetual domination. We must work on the curriculum of our education. Our women must feel that their gender is free. We must not limit their freedom. I can see women salvaging this country. Being wives of elected or appointed political office holders is not enough. I believe that it is salutary to have spouses who are very supportive of their husbands in many ways. (Akeredolu, 2021)

Women's low participation in politics is not just limited to southwest Nigeria alone but is a global phenomenon. It takes both gender involvements to have a healthy political environment as no one has a monopoly of knowledge and these must be taken into account when conceptualizing political involvement. Scholars have written extensively on this. Norris (2002), as cited in Weiss (2020) argues that "[m]ultiple types of civic involvement may have arisen in modern societies to supplement conventional ways of participation." Political engagement appears to have evolved and diversified over time, in terms of agencies/collective organizations, repertoires, and

targets/political actors (Weiss, 2020). Thus, since the political environment has changed, a broader way of looking at political engagement is required. Some commentators with an extreme and elitist democratic view believe that human acts should be categorized as political participation because, in the political process, citizens' only role is to vote against their leaders (Hermansson, 2003 as cited in Weiss, 2020) but in my opinion citizens' role goes beyond the role of voting against the unproductive leaders but includes involvement in every aspect of the politics of the nation.

This means having a close connection with the polity. Those who do not participate are likely to have less influence than others due to neglect or exclusion. Participation appears to be a complicated phenomenon that is influenced by a variety of variables with varying relative weights. That is not to say that no conceptual paradigm can claim to explain it (Ellen Lust and Waldner, 2015). Hooghe, Bengü, and van Deth (2015) note that the key independent variables can be categorized into two – internal (emotional and perceptive) and external (social and political). It can be further explained that individuals tend to act based on their environment or background (status, education, religion, among others) that orients them in the direction of or away from political activities. Besides, characteristic changes in motives and capacities will make how individuals respond to political activities vary. Furthermore, the level to which these social and emotional inclinations find expression as political activity depends partly on the political environment's nature including the political structure and institutions, the party system, and the pattern of political values and beliefs (McClosky, 1968; Falade, 2014).

According to Michele Grigolo (2017) and Peterson et al. (1998), the various actions that should be incorporated in a functioning definition of political participation include: voting as an individual right; contacting political or public officials e.g. politicians, civil servants, lawyers; seeking help from government officials or a public figure; setting up a political group; filing a lawsuit; sending gifts to public officials; campaigning; collective activity for political or public purposes; protests and strikes; boycotting; political propaganda. Others are support for political parties or groups; demonstrations or civil non-compliance; support for a political cause – wearing of printed shirts, caps, among others, that showcases a political cause; writing and signing of petitions against political or public officials; writing of letters to public or political officials or for newspapers; culture jamming; creating an internet home page for political activity, and joining online or internet political chat platforms.

Many scholars use either an old-fashioned conceptualization of political participation or new ones, or better still, ignore both and adapt their views to include all forms of political activities. This can be said about some form of non-political activities that have been employed for political goals, such as political consumerism, street parties, or guerrilla gardening. Furthermore, the use of media tools, such as the internet for these goals has made it problematic to identify what or not is a political activity. The major effect of the fading analytical sharpness of the concept of political involvement is that it makes the assessment of democracy much more difficult. Whereas a local definition of participation usually leads to dismal findings (for example, declining electoral turnout calls into question representative democracy's legitimacy), broader approaches usually lead to fewer alarming inferences. For example, rapidly spreading political consumerism shows that ordinary people are very committed (Hafner-Burton et al., 2014). More advanced approaches that focus on strong logical differences between different forms of participation call for a "second transformation" of democracy (Cain et al., 2003). Evaluations of the value of and the likelihoods of democratic change solely depend on how political behaviour forms are considered a political participation specimen (Bratton, 2013). Therefore, a shared perception of political participation promotes meaningful discussions about participation and the debate on the values and the likelihoods of democracy.

To find an all-inclusive clarification, it is therefore pertinent that neither the development of all-encompassing nominal definitions nor a deductive analysis of dominant participation forms seems helpful. The essential characteristics of political involvement are combined with a conceptual map of political participation that encompasses five unique, well-defined political participation variants (van Deth, 2014). These variations include a wide spectrum of systematic and efficient political participation based on the polity, targeting (that is government area or community issues), and circumstances or motivations for these different activities. Furthermore, future participatory innovations, which are the hallmark of a vibrant democracy, might readily be included in the conceptual map of political involvement. It is the first and foremost activity or action; second, it is voluntary rather than being ordered by a ruling class or compelled by law; third, it refers to nonprofessional or amateur activities rather than those connected with civil servants, legislators, or lobbyists, and lastly, it is concerned the state in broad senses as well as politics and the

government. voting, petitioning, filing a lawsuit are some examples of how one can get involved in politics. Political involvement can be understood as a latent notion with various participation forms sharing some primary feature. According to (Carneiro 2015), voting and taking part in party activities are all examples of political participation. In the last few decades, an array of new forms of political activities was continually added to the existing ones. There was also an expansion in the responsibilities of government across many countries, as a result, there was a kind of growth in political activities across many nations. That is, political engagement has increased importance in sectors that were previously considered private, social, or economic (Bleck and van de Walle, 2019). Usually, practical political participation research follows the expansions of the selection and the domain of participation with some discussions about the nature of newly added activities as forms of political engagement. With the publication of a few key studies, these improvements can be easily traced.

However, there is still a debate over whether public engagement, both voluntary activities and social involvement are examples of political participation, the term defies easy definitions. The borderlines between political and non-political societal sectors sparked new forms of engagement that openly reject the need for organizations or coordinated actions. Instead, a major focus is placed on the manifestation of moral and ethical values in activities that can be carried out by individuals. Boycotts and buycotts are two forms of creative participation or personalized collective action in which citizens use their purchasing influence to realize their political objectives (Micheletti, 2003; Stolle and Micheletti, 2013).

In recent years, increased use of technology has facilitated these new activities by making it possible to convey ideas, desires, and complaints instantaneously and at a low cost to everyone (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013). Due to providers' restrictions, policies and the problems of differentiating between communication, mobilization, and participation, the volume of internet-based data presents challenges to empirical investigation (Cantijoch et al., 2014). The following is a summary of the eight rules that define political participation. To begin with, all nominal definitions of participation begin with behavioural components; participation necessitates activity or action. It is not enough to be interested in politics or to watch newscasts. Specific abstentions from activities such as boycotting certain products, not voting, or not donating funds are not

considered strict examples of political activities. Some citizens consider their choice not to take part in formal politics to be a very political act. (Hay, 2007).

Second, political involvement in a democracy should not be compulsory. Instead, it should be voluntary and based on free will. Empirical research into freedom of choice is highly challenging, with a negative formulation emphasizing the absence of evident compulsion, which characterizes unreasonably costs, appears to be more real. It usually takes the shape of legal requirements or mandated tasks, as well as pecuniary or social extortion. This does not rule out the possibility of “mandatory voting” from the definition of political involvement. No system can mandate anyone to cast a vote in a society that guarantees secret elections (a key characteristic of democracy). It is believed that some countries force their citizens to vote but no democracy requires actual voting (Robert, 2003).

Third, most definitions of political engagement specifically point to voters to distinguish appropriate conduct from that of other related stakeholders such as office holders, politicians, public officers, civil servants, professional representatives, journalists, and activist’s appointees. Adopting the idea of political involvement to reflect the successes of the stakeholders above would broaden the scope of acceptable action to include a variety of conceptually and operationally distinct events (Stoker, 2006). Hence, the term “citizen” should be clearly stated in various classifications of political engagement to emphasize the nonprofessional, unpaid, and amateur nature of the activities and avoid any misunderstandings (Callahan, 2007).

Fourth, it is pertinent that the adjective “political” is a crucial part of any conceptualization of political participation (Gallie, 1956), all concept of political participation is answerable to the question of whether the activities under consideration are located in the political sector of society, i.e., the sector directed by the government and subject to state power. Even if early submissions on political participation research excluded the politics of nongovernmental organizations from the subject of study (Milbrath, 1965), in any vibrant democracy, new modes of political participation are introduced beyond the regular arena of politics regularly. Some types of political participation do not take place within the political sphere, but they react to public acknowledged problems about which active legislative activities or diplomatic programs may exist (Hay, 2007).

Furthermore, actions outside of the political realm cannot be considered means of political participation unless they are aimed towards that sphere. A number of these approaches are aimed at bringing issues of public concerns that have been previously overlooked to the forefront, demanding government intervention. For instance, antagonistic politics (Tilly and Tarrow, 2006) or elite-challenging politics (Inglehart, 1990) highlight the contradictory nature of these activities. It is thought that these measures will help people better comprehend legislation and government. These forms of participation are used to checkmate government activities to a minimum. An example of this is the blockade by workers to change regulations that affect labor. The decisive point is the activities' targets considered and not the activists' aims or intentions (Teorell, 2010). This usually expresses how action targets can be depicted without necessarily having to rely on the people's aims or intentions.

Hence, this type of political event is distinguished from other methods of involvement that have not been excluded from the broader definition of participation. The involvement of citizens in the political system is known as political participation. Political participation, according to Eakin (cited in Adelekan (2010), is the process by which an individual participates in the political life of his society and can decide what the society's common goals are and the best means to achieve them. According to (Akamare,2003), political participation means a subset of political conduct that focuses on how people take part in politics. One can decide to participate directly or indirectly because it is a purely voluntary action. There are numerous ways in which people can participate in political activities, including selecting or nominating political representatives, formulating policies, participating in community events, and other civic engagements. Whether civilized or not, according to Awolowo and Aluko (2010) the reason for political engagement in any society is to seek control of authority, acquisition of power, and influence decision-making. In most cases, the general growth of a society depends on the political participation of its citizens. Political involvement remains one of the basic elements of democracy. Ideally, according to Adelekan (2010), in democracy, when making decisions that concern the general public, demands individual engagement. The populace in a democratic society must be fully involved in the democratic process of selection of rulers and efficient transmission of public policies and attitudes. Before any society can claim to be democratic, such a state or society must be open to competitive choices, giving the citizens a sense of belonging, as well as enjoyment of civic and political rights

(Arowolo, 2010). The level to which individuals participate in politics varies. Below are six types of political players as listed by Falade (2008).

- I. The politically inactive: These are persons who do not get themselves involved in any political activities. They are indifferent when it comes to political matters.
- II. Voting experts: This set of persons are only interested in voting. They do not involve in any political issues aside from voting.
- III. Narrow-minded participants: These are a set of irregular participants who only participate in politics only when it affects their interests. Only when it impacts their interests do they vote or participate in other political activities.
- IV. The collectivists: These set of participants take part in political activities frequently. Though they do not take part in activities such as campaigns, they take an active part in community matters.
- V. The campaign supporters: These are a set of individuals who often participate in campaigns but hardly get involved in other matters related to the community.
- VI. Complete activists: This set of people get involved in all political activities. They vote, participate in political campaigns, participate in community events, and communicate with public leaders.

Individuals' cultural, economic, political, religious, and educational backgrounds are some of the elements that influence their political participation. Furthermore, the degree to which citizens participate in the political system is determined by their level of political awareness and their level of confidence in the political process. According to Falade (2007), politics in Nigeria is viewed as a nasty game that is characterized by bitterness, anger, rancour, and other connected evils. As a result, Nigeria is caught in a vicious cycle of political crises and instability. Several Nigerians were discouraged from participating in elections and other political activities due to political leaders' deception and unmet promises (Faeren Mercy Aгаigbe 2019; Adam Przeworski and Bernard Manin 2001). During the election campaign, politicians make a succession of promises, according to Falade (2008). The majority of these pledges are not kept once they are elected. As such, people are not always interested in participating in an election.

The 2011 election was only involved 35 percent of the 70 million registered voters (European Union Election Observation mission, 2011). The Friedrich Elbert Foundation found that voter apathy was caused by a lack of transparency, election violence, and politicians' failure to follow through on campaign pledges (Odebode, 2011). Political apathy in Nigeria stems from a combination of ignorance and deliberate dishonesty on the part of some leaders (De Vries and Hector Solaz, 2017; Transparency International, 2004). As a result, citizens cannot link their lack of social benefits and development with not taking part in the electoral process (Fabiya, 2010). This might have made Falade (2007) conclude that Nigerian political culture does conform with democratic principles. Even though this is different from the view of Awolowo and Aluko (2010) which expressed that Nigerian women's low political participation level is becoming disturbing. The involvement and participation in Nigerian politics are influenced by several elements. Participation in Nigeria's political activities has invariably altered these characteristics and conditions over time. Of course, all the legal prerequisites for engaging in politics are the most important of all considerations. Some are as follows:

- **Age:** According to 24 (4) Section of the Nigerian Constitution of Nigeria 1999, until a person reaches age 18, he/she cannot exercise an electoral right in Nigeria. The political relevance of this is that under Nigeria's universal adult suffrage system, an 18-year-old Nigerian is entitled to vote in any election. To run for office, however, you must be of voting age, as defined by the Constitution and other relevant legislation, including the following:
  - If he or she wishes to be president of the federation, he or she must be at least 40 years of age as provided in Nigeria's 1999 Constitution (as amended).
  - According to Sections 171 and 65 of the Constitution, a governor or senator must be at least 35 years old.
  - According to Section 65, 106(b), 147(5), and 192(4), a person must be 30 years of age before he/she can be a member of the House of Representatives, a State House of Assembly, a minister in the federal cabinet, or a commissioner in the state cabinet.

- One must have reached the age of 25, 30 respectively before he/she can be eligible for election as a councillor, chairman, vice-chairman, or ward councillor in any of Nigeria's 774 Local Government Area Councils. He/she must be a Nigeria citizen, a registered voter, must have nothing less than School Certificate level, and he/she must be a member of a political party and that party must be the sole sponsor of such candidate.

### **2.2.3 Education**

It is required that a candidate who obtains at least a secondary school certificate may be elected into any elective post mentioned above. This is not to say however that this minimum education requirement is adequate to navigating the world of politics in the digital era. Given this, advanced knowledge may be required for excellent performance in governance.

### **2.2.4 Citizenship**

While it is not necessary to be a Nigerian citizen to vote in a Nigerian election, it is necessary to be voted for. The constitution recognizes the following forms of citizenship: citizenship conferred by birth, registration as a citizen and naturalization. Candidates for the President's office, the Vice-President position, Governors' offices, deputies' offices, and any candidate who wishes to vie for a National or House of Assembly seat do not have to be a citizen of Nigeria by birth. Such a person would be eligible for any of the three citizenship classifications. Anyone who as a result of dual citizenship, losses his/her citizenship, renunciation, or deprivation of citizenship by the President is ineligible, and cannot secure a political seat in the National Assembly. It's also worth noting that indigeneity and other political considerations or calculations might have a significant impact on or imperil a candidate's candidacy, even if he meets all of the standards. This is reflected in Nigeria's political calculus.

#### **I. Political Party Membership**

Every Nigerian has the right to join the political party of their choosing. Section 40 of the Nigerian constitution guarantees this basic right. Anyone seeking a position in any political office in Nigeria must be a member of a political party, according to Nigerian law. It is essential to examine the procedure of joining a political party in Nigeria. A political party is a group of people who have similar ideas and ideologies about how country should be governed. According to the Independent Electoral Commission, there

are 91 registered political parties in Nigeria, with the PDP and APC being the most popular parties. In order to be actively involved in political ideology especially women, it is necessary to become a member of a political party. Many individuals are pointing accusing fingers from afar and even challenging the established authorities. The fact is that the bulk of these politicians base their decisions on the ideology and philosophy of their political parties, therefore simply voting on election day is not enough to be actively involved in politics. There's more to it. The steps to joining a political office are analyzed below.

- Ensure you are 18 years in age and above.
- Select a political party of choice
- Visit the ward or headquarters of the political party, obtain and fill membership forms, and register
- Collect membership card
- Fulfill your obligation to the party
- Attend the political party regularly to keep yourself updated, thereafter you may signify to run for any political office or be nominated

A candidate must be nominated by the party and may as well be supported financially during an election. Political parties as well as 'godfathers' in Nigerian politics, nevertheless have a lot of power over a successful candidate. This clogs the wheels of progress and creates a toxic political atmosphere, which can lead to threats of impeachment, or assassination of a political office holder who refuses to dance to the tone of his/her political party or the party's godfathers.

## II. **Additional Disqualifying Factors**

- Anyone who wishes to pursue a career in politics, particularly in public office, must be mentally healthy. A lunatic cannot be elected. Substance abuse, heavy alcohol consumption, and unusual addictions can all lead to insanity.
- He or she must not have been convicted of a crime involving fraud or dishonesty, either for the death penalty or for a period of imprisonment.

- A bankrupt, or an undischarged bankrupt, is ineligible to vote in a National Assembly election. The Bankruptcy Act lays forth the steps for declaring someone bankrupt.
- Anyone vying for political office and is a serving public servant at the State or Federal level, such a person must have left his/her former position at least 30 days before the election date. Employees who work for the government are individuals who are listed in Section 318 of the Constitution.
- Members of secret societies are not eligible for election to the National Assembly.
- Anyone who has been arrested and convicted for embezzlement and forgery and has been proven to be guilty of such crimes is disqualified.

The 2003 election in Nigeria was the second civilian election to be witnessed in the country. It witnessed an increase in the level of political participation in comparison to what was obtainable in 1999, as there was a ten percent increase in the level of participation (Akinyele 2003) The reason for this was not far-fetched from the fact that many Nigerian voters doubted the military's sincerity to return power to civilian government in 1999 general election. Until when they were convinced enough that Nigeria had truly been democratized, then, there was an increase in political participation in 2003. There was a reduction in the level of electoral participation, in 2007. Many factors were said to be responsible for this, such as the imposition of candidates, election rigging, and the 'I must win at all cost' pattern brought into the polity in 2003 and 2007 elections by the ruling Party (PDP). In 2011 (Nkolika Obianyo and Ikenna Mike Alumona 2014), it fell by 5.1 percent as voters lost faith in the election process, believing that the trend would continue. Apart from presidential elections, public involvement in Nigerian elections has been steadily declining since 1999. In 1999, there were fifty-seven million registered voters. A total of over thirty million people voted in the presidential election, accounting for about 60% (60%) of the electorate. In 2003, 60.82 million people were registered to vote, and 42,018,735 people voted in elections. As a result, around 70% of individuals on the electoral roll voted in the presidential election (Akinyele, 2003). In 2007, 61 million people were registered to vote with 35.41 million casting ballots. In terms of percentages, 58 percent of those who were registered voted in the presidential elections. While there were 73,528,040 registered voters in 2011, the presidential election statistics show that the average voter turnout was 52.9 percent. (INEC, 2011) According to Akinyele (2003), the 2003 elections in Nigeria shows that just 35 percent of the 70 million eligible voters voted. This

was due to the shoddy handling of the entire electoral process. Aside from the political indifference on display, the elections were sabotaged by issues such as poorly printed ballot papers and a lack of key resources, such as result sheets (Punch 2011).

Political scientists have wondered why there are differences in political involvement from country to country over time. On a micro-level, several theories have been proposed. Some on a macro-scale. Micro-level characteristics are those that are focused on a particular political figure and his or her ideas, attitudes, and values. Resources, such as income, education, and possibly employment, transportation, and psychological qualities, such as political beliefs and preferences, are certainly important in explaining why people behave the way they do. Electoral rules/laws, the potential cost in time, money, and effort are all macro-level factors that influence political involvement (Mahler 2003).

### **2.3 Democracy and democratic consolidation**

The term, democracy, is made up of two Greek words, demos, which means people, and kratos, which means rule. Democracy means “rule of the people.” Democracy, according to Appadorai (2004), is a governance system in which the people exercise governing power directly or through representatives who are elected by them on a regular basis. Ancient states were able to adopt direct democracy because all adult members of the community could easily take part in decision-making. In the current political system, population increase and the extension of political boundaries have rendered direct democracy impractical. This is why, in many places of the world, representative democracy has supplanted direct democracy. Representative democracy is an indirect democracy in which the representatives of the people hold power.

Dahl (1982), cited in Erunke (2012), defined democracy as “a system of elected representative government operated under the rule of law, where the most significant groups in the population participate in the political process and have access to effective representation in the practice of making governmental decisions, that is, of allocation of scarce resources.” A political system for selecting and changing the government through free and fair elections is considered the first of four key aspects in a democracy: People’s active participation in politics and civic life as citizens; preservation of everyone’s human rights; rule of law in which rules and procedures apply equally to all citizens (Diamond, 2004; Diamond and Morlino, 2016).

Some scholars argue that there is no consensus on the definition of democracy, but legal equality, political freedom, and the rule of law are the recurring features (O'Donnell, 2005). Some others are of the view that democracy necessitates three basic philosophies – upward control (sovereignty at the lowest levels of authority), political party, and social norms by which individuals and institutions only consider acceptable acts that reflect the first two principles of upward control and political equality (Kimber, 1989). Scruton (2013) in his opinion, argued that democracy alone could not deliver personal and political freedom without the presence of civil society institutions. Nussbaum (2000), who has a similar viewpoint, agreed that a basic aspect of democracy is the ability of all voters to engage freely and fully in the affairs of their society. However, with the prominence of the social contract doctrine, the collective will help voters. Democracy can also be considered a form of political collectivism because it is defined as a form of government in which all eligible citizens have an equal say in law-making (Snyder and Samuels, 2006).

In discussions of democracy, various features are mentioned rather than definitions. According to Erunke (2012), democracy is a flexible notion that has been given a variety of connotations by scholars in both classical and modern political studies. “Democracy is a type of government in which citizens have the authority and the option of exercising their power either directly, electing someone to represent them, or coming together to form a governing body”. Majority rule is sometimes known as or referred to as the rule of law. Democracy, according to Okoli and Gusau (2013), democracy is “government by citizens” or “citizens’ rule”. They consider democracy to be one of the ancient Greek civilization’s legacies.

Omemma (2016) emphasized the following indices of liberal democracy in this regard. The first is significant individual freedom of belief, opinion, discussion, speech, publication, broadcast, assembly, demonstration, petition, and the internet. The second is ethnic, religious, racial, and other minority groups (as well as a historically marginalized majority) have the freedom to practice their religion and culture and participate in political and social life. The third is that all adult citizens have the right to vote and run for office (if they meet certain minimum age and competency requirements). Next, genuine openness and competition in the electoral arena, allowing any constitutionally bound group to run for government. Furthermore, legal equality for all citizens under the rule of law, with laws that are dear to the people, widely understood, universal, stable, and non-retroactive. There is the need for an independent judiciary to apply the law fairly and

uniformly and to defend individual and group rights. Individuals' right to due process and freedom from torture, fear, and wrongful detention, exile, or intrusion into their personal lives by the state or non-state actors. Independent legislature, the court system, and autonomous agencies provide institutional checks on elected politicians' power. True pluralism in information sources and organizational structures, state independence, and hence a dynamic civil society. Civilians who are ultimately accountable to the public through elections have control over the military and state security apparatus.

The election is therefore the mandate of the people to decide on the array of promises and ideologies by the political parties, which will better meet the expectations of the people (Yorons, 2017). Omenma et al, (2017) made references to four points, first which is avoiding the breakdown of democracy. The second is the quality of democracy; the third is to institutionalize democracy and the fourth one is "two-turn-over-test of power". Schedler (1997) and O'Donnell (1992) cited in Omenma, Ibeanu, and Onyishi (2017), associate democratic consolidation with a system of government that avoids all means or issues that can lead to the breakdown of democracy or eliminate such risks that may likely lead to such breakdown. By this definition, democratic consolidation advocates "survival," "stability," "sustainability," or "tenacity" of democratic values. This view is also connected to "democratic survival" or avoiding degeneration to non-democracy. There is, however, a generally a measurement problem if we subscribe to this definition because it is difficult if not impossible to measure survival. Some Scholars emphasize "institutions" building (Schmitter, 1988; Linz, 1990; Schedler, 1997; Przeworski, 1991 cited in Omenma et al, 2017). Fundamentally, in any democratic setting where the election has been accepted and appreciated as the only effective mechanism of changing government, democracy is likely to be 'consolidated'. Linz (1990 in Omenma et al, 2017), for his part, describes democratic consolidation as a state of affairs when democracy must be perceived as the only game in town. Other scholars such as Schedler, (1996); Linz and Stepan, (1996); Diamond and Morlino, (2004); Roberts, (2009); and Munck, (2012) cited in Omenma, Ibeanu, and Onyishi (2017), simply defined democratic consolidation as "deepening of democracy", "high-quality democracy" or "quality of democracy".

Huntington (cited in Omenma et al, 2017) argues that democracy may be seen as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the early election at the time of the transition loses a later

election. It turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners, then peacefully turn over power to winners of a subsequent election. It is important to examine the concept of democracy in this study as it is the main point of this research. Democracy has become popular around the world today because it is believed to bring about growth and advancement. Democracy as a concept does not have a generally accepted meaning, as there have been different types of democracy over time. Almond, Powell, Strom, and Dalton (2004), see democracy as a political structure in which citizens have several basic civil and political rights. In this type of political structure, they are free to elect their political head through a free and fair election and the leaders are held accountable by law. Lipset (cf. Dada et al., 2013), defined the term democracy as a political arrangement that offers systematic legal rights for changing government officials, it also provides social apparatus that allow the largest proportion of the citizens to affect major choices by electing their choice of political leaders. Schumpeter and Dada (2013), view democracy as a political procedure or structural arrangement for achieving the same political and governmental goals. It is also a system that employs a competitive struggle for the people's vote, which is the distinctive feature of democracy.

Schedler (1997) and O'Donnell (1992) cited in Omenma, Ibeanu, and Onyishi (2017), associate democratic consolidation with a democratic government that avoids all possible factors that lead to a breakdown or eliminating all risks that will likely result in a democratic breakdown. By this definition, democratic consolidation advocates "survival," "stability," "sustainability," or "tenacity" of democratic values. This view is also connected to "democratic survival" or avoiding degeneration to non-democracy. However, there is generally a measurement problem if we subscribe to this definition because it is difficult if not impossible to measure survival. Some Scholars emphasize "institutions" building (Schmitter, 1988; Linz, 1990; Schedler, 1997; Przeworski, 1991 quoted in Omenma et al, 2017).

Huntington (cited in Omenma et al, 2017) argues that democracy may be seen as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the early election at the time of the transition, loses a later election, and turns over power to those election winners. If those election winners, then peacefully turn over power to winners of a subsequent election. In line Ette (2012), the most important elements of democratic consolidation is the ability of the majority of the people to uphold the peace and unity of the country. In this case, no individual or group will engage in the use of threat of

secession from the state, or any other means of threat that can result in the collapse of democracy even in the face of economic, social and political situation. This is to say that, behavioral disposition of individuals to remain part of the country even in the face of obvious challenges, is one of the characteristics democratic consolidation.

According to Ademola (2011), for democracy to consolidate, a process of transition from totalitarian to democratic regimes is required, which is critical for the establishment of long-term democracy and stable institutions. This author implies that democratic consolidation entails the transition from an authoritarian to a democratic one. However, this viewpoint appears to be superficial, because while the majority of countries in the globe have accepted democracy as a form of government, can we conclude that their democracies are well-established? How can we conclude that democracy has been consolidated if citizens are unable to benefit from its dividends? Rather than being the first step toward democracy consolidation, the transition from authoritarian regimes should be the first step. According to Ovwasa and Abdullahi (2017), democratic consolidation encompasses more than just the transition from a totalitarian regime to a democratic system; it also includes ensuring that elections are credible, free, and fair, as well as ensuring that incumbent political leaders accept election results and hand over power to the opposition without violence when they lose elections.

As opined by Okeke (2015), democracy consolidates when people's rights and the sanctity of the voting box are protected. "Democracy is, therefore, a system of government and a system of defense. It is a system for defending the powers of the people against seizure by political thugs. Democracy defends the hopes of a people against the onslaught by sundry intruders. Hence, in the context of developing democracies, the stronger the defense mechanisms of democracy, the nearer the tendencies of the system toward democratic consolidation." To put it another way, democratic consolidation happens when people's desires, choices, aspirations, and decisions are successfully directed, protected, supported, and carried out.

According to Kwasau (2013), democratic consolidation is the process of gaining broad and deep legitimacy to the point that all key political actors agree that popular rule is better for their society than any other feasible alternative. It also relates the act of minimizing the likelihood of the system collapsing with the point at which democracy can be regarded to have survived. It is seen as regime

maintenance by Omordia and Erunke (2007) and Udiale (2011), who perceive essential political institutions as the only valid framework for political contestation and adherence to democratic rules of the game. It manifests as improved economic development, a developed democratic culture, and a stable political structure; suffice to say, this cannot be achieved in Nigeria unless stability is achieved.

Beyond its classical form, democracy has a modern meaning as illuminated by Birch (1995) in Ezirim, et al (2016). During the Middle Ages, clergy or feudal lords (Dahl, 2008) ruled many regions worldwide especially in Europe. In Africa, the Mali Empire practised a constitutional monarchy which was democratic. In few years after this period, the city of Sparta established its form of democracy in 700 BC with only male citizens permitted to participate in the process. However, range voting was widely adopted (Boring, 1979). Shortly, the Indian city of Vaishali established its form of democracy in the 6th century BCE (Bindloss, 2007). The Roman kingdom also toyed with the idea of democracy during this period. In the early modern era, nations like England began the series of processes that birthed democracy in the 17th century (North and Weingast, 1989). Other countries like Ukraine and later the United States initiated the process that culminated in democracy (Tocqueville, 2003).

### **2.3.1 Types of democracy**

It refers to the pluralism of governing structures and other constructs like workplaces, families, and community associations. Types of democracy can cluster around values. For example, some like direct democracy, electronic democracy, participatory democracy, real democracy, deliberative democracy, and pure democracy strive to allow people to participate equally and directly in protest, discussion, decision-making, or other political acts. Different types of democracy – such as representative democracy – strive for indirect participation as this procedural approach to collective self-governance is still widely considered the only means for the more or less stable democratic functioning of mass societies (Diamond and Plattner, 2006).

Below are the common types of democracy:

1. **Direct or Pure Democracy:** This is the type of democracy where the people govern directly. It requires the broad participation of citizens in politics (Christians, 2009). Closely related to this is the Athenian or Classical Democracy, a direct democracy developed in ancient

times in Athens' Greek city-state. A type of direct democracy is based on referendums and other empowerment devices and concretization of popular will. More so, there is industrial democracy that is an arrangement that involves workers making decisions, sharing responsibility and authority in the workplace (Christians, 2009).

2. Indirect or Representative Democracy: These can be liberal or illiberal democracies based on protecting individual liberty and property by the rule of law. It can also be; electoral democracy (based on election), Parliamentary or Presidential democracy (based on the structure of government – the Westminster democracy in the United Kingdom or the Jacksonian democracy in the United States), Soviet or Council democracy, Totalitarian democracy, demarchy (selection through sortition), non-partisan democracy, organic or authoritarian democracy (Shigeo Hirano 2012; Paolo Bellini 2019)).
3. Cellular and workplace/industrial democracy based on location (Rayasam, 2008);
4. Ethnic democracy, ethnocracy, and Herrenvolk democracy;
5. Christian democracy, Islamic democracy, Theodemocracy;
6. Other types of democracies are anticipatory democracy (based on market-informed anticipation), associative democracy (based on voluntary association), adversarial democracy, bourgeoisie democracy (based on the rights of the bourgeoisie), consensus democracy (based on consensus), constitutional democracy (based on the constitution), deliberative democracy (based on authentic deliberation), sociocracy (based on consent decision making), revolutionary democracy (based on revolutionary actions), radical democracy, people's democracy (based on rule by the proletariats), participatory democracy, new democracy, multi-party democracy, market democracy, liquid democracy, Interactive democracy, grassroots democracy, economic democracy and democratic socialism.

## **2.4 Democratic development**

Various researchers have different interpretations of the idea of democratic development that has piqued the interest of academics and politicians since the third wave of democratization began. It is “an omnibus notion, a garbage-can concept, a catch-all concept, lacking a fundamental meaning

that would link all types of usage,” according to Andreas Schedler (1998:101). Avoiding democratic breakdown (Linz, 1996) and converting from a declined subunit of democracy to a consolidated liberal one is two perspectives in viewing the notion of development. The former is concerned with the stabilization and maintenance of new democracies, whereas the latter is concerned with the deepening, completion, or organization of democracies (Shedler, 1998). Despite the concept’s haziness, most academics agree that it was originally related to the issue of ensuring that new democracies are safeguarded, by establishing protection against the threat of authoritarian control. (Cheng et.al 2004; Cheng et.al 2014) defines it as a style that stresses personal dominance, strong centralized authority and control over subordinates, and unquestionable obedience. It is made up of overlapping behavioural, attitudinal, and constitutional characteristics by which democracy becomes routinized and firmly internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological existence and political calculation for achieving success.

Ademola (2011) sees democratic development as a distinct stage through which democracy moves from a dictatorial system of governing to a more democratic way necessary for establishing a more stable, institutionalized, and long-lasting democratic system. Similarly, Mohammed (2013) cites Beetham (1994) to see democratic development as the problem of how to protect the life expectancy of young or emerging democracies beyond the short period of making them resilient a dictatorial control and erecting barriers against subsequent contrary influences. It refers to “a firm establishment and successful completion of the process of political democratization,” according to Frimpong-Mansoh (2012). It is about regime maintenance and the essential political institution as the only acceptable framework for political contestation and adherence to democratic rules of the game, according to Ogundiya (2009). The notion is defined by Mainwaring et al. (1992) as all political players acknowledging that democratic procedure requires government renewal in the same direction. To put it another way, popular support of rules that promote political involvement and competitiveness is required.

Todd Landman (2017) is of the opinion that in a developed democracy, “democracy becomes the only game in town,” and presents a framework for defining democratic progress that includes behaviour, attitudes, and constitutional instruments. Behaviourally, there are no significant socioeconomic, political, institutional, or national players using unconstitutional means, violence, or attempts to secede from the state to achieve their goals. It was argued that progress is only

possible when a strong public opinion, privileges, democratic methods, and institutions are the only suitable method of ruling. In line with the constitution, government and non-state actors and societal forces in the state are open to and abide by by-laws, protocols, and sanctioned institutions for conflict resolution in modern democracies. Consequently, despite serious governance difficulties and widespread dissatisfaction with the incumbent administration, the public and elites maintain their belief in constitutional means as the only acceptable option to replace a government. Giraudy (2010) and Huntington (1991) proposes the “two-turnover” hypothesis as a measure of democratic advancement. He claims that democracy develops when an entrenched system holds free, fair, and competitive elections in which the party that gains power during the transition phase loses power in successive elections and is replaced by the winning party. When the victorious party also gives over power to another party peacefully in subsequent elections.

#### **2.4.1 The challenges of democratic development in Nigeria**

#### **2.4.2 Electoral malpractice**

The organized change of administration through a sincere, free, fair, and constant election is one of the pillars of democracy. Changes in the administration have been orderly since the country’s return to democracy, and elections have been held periodically. Between 1999 and 2019, five separate civilian administrations have developed, with five consecutive transitions from one civilian administration to another: Obasanjo administration, 1999-2007, Yar’adua/Jonathan administration, 2007-2011; Jonathan administration, 2011 -2015, Mohamadu Buhari 2015-till date. Since 1999, the country had gone through five legislative chambers at the national level and in the constituent entities. The Fourth Republic’s elections have been marred by major anomalies and malpractices, the extent of which grows with each election. State institutions, such as the police, the military, and the electoral body, were used to intimidate the voters and this could have negative impacts on the final results Adetula (2008). Aside from the fact that elections are fundamental concepts of democracy, sincerity, and credibility of elections are critical to the consolidation of democracy. Because election establishes the level of freedom that citizens have in choosing who will be their leaders. This cannot be said about Nigeria, where elections are manipulated to favor a particular candidate or party (Ogbonnaya, Omoju, and Udefuna, 2012).

### 2.4.3 Poverty

Another factor that poses serious hurdles to the country's democratic growth is poverty. Nigeria is rich in both natural and human resources, but its inhabitants are impoverished. The country is one of the poorest in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2009), hunger is visible in most Nigerian homes, where the ordinary person lives in abysmal poverty. As a result, the average Nigerian feels estranged from himself because he lacks the financial means to pay for necessities like education and medical care. According to Victor (2002), cited in Ogbonnaya et al. (2012), around 70% of Nigeria's population are poor. As a result, the poor masses are readily misled, and their right to choose is exploited, preventing objective decision-making. Furthermore, while making democratic choices, many sorts of inducements and pleasures that provide a short-term escape from poverty are prioritized.

In Nigeria, poverty is one of the reasons why voters sell their votes on election day. The trajectory of poverty in Nigeria demonstrates that poverty is not being reduced, let alone eradicated. Rural poverty grew from 22% to 68%, while urban poverty increased from 17.2% to 55.2 percent. Nigeria's poor status is precarious not just in terms of money but also in terms of food (Ijaiya 2011; Adams, 2019). In terms of economic poverty, the country saw growing income disparity, while in terms of food poverty; the rate of underweight children was at 30.7 percent in 1999. The rural food poverty rate was 34.1 percent, while the urban food poverty rate was 21.7 percent. Similarly, Nigeria's Human Development Index ranking remained poor, ranking 52nd out of 175 nations. This low HDI score shows the country's position in terms of limited access to essential social services (UNDP 2011).

The use of socioeconomic variables such as per capita income, life expectancy at birth (year), access to health-care services, safe water, education, sanitation facilities, and electricity helps to illustrate the level of poverty in Nigeria. Despite a variety of poverty reduction and eradication laws, programs, and initiatives, Nigeria remains enmeshed, entangled, and mired in poverty. This does not only highlight the paradox of a rich country and a poor people, but it also highlights the likelihood of a political economics explanation for the failure, dysfunctionality, and ineffectiveness of poverty reduction and eradication initiatives. The manipulation of the political structure and process for the economic benefit and personal aggrandizement of the rich and the disadvantage and pauperization of the poor and downtrodden who are the presumed targets is the

underlying problem in the failure and inefficacy of poverty reduction and eradication efforts in Nigeria, from conception to policy formulation to program design and execution.

According to Joseph Omotoso (2016), Nigeria's South-West geopolitical zone has a mix of educational development and substantial natural resource endowment. The area is abundant in petroleum, bitumen, agricultural, and forest resources. Despite earnings from oil and other resources, poverty is widespread among residents. The purpose of the study was to assess families' perceptions of the causes of poverty in southwest Nigeria. His study used a multi-stage sampling approach to identify 240 respondents who were household heads from two (2) southwest states, Ekiti and Ondo. Data for the study was gathered using well-structured questionnaires sent to household heads.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data gathered. Corruption, weak institutions, and bad governance were seen as "extremely high" sources of poverty in the research region by 51 percent of respondents, according to an examination of families' perceptions of the causes of poverty in southwest Nigeria. Robert Obioha (2019), is of opinion that many Nigerians are impoverished, not due to laziness or bad luck, as certain religious fanatics would have us believe. People are impoverished where there is an unequal distribution of wealth and production elements. There is a gender component to it since some religious and cultural constraints prevent women from working.

As is publicly acknowledged, some Nigerians remain impoverished because they lack the necessary skills, capacity, and technical advancement to improve their life. To get the poor out of this state-imposed bind, the government should come up with new solutions to the country's poverty problem. Since it is sometimes stated, experience is the best teacher, and this is completely true, as only someone who has been genuinely crippled by poverty can understand how awful it is to live in such a dilapidated position. The amount of homeless and hungry individuals in the country is alarming, as they frequently become a public nuisance, which is a growing threat due to the degree of criminal activity caused by a lack of appropriate jobs, food, and housing to keep them off the streets. Poverty limits one's options and chances to engage successfully in society. It also undermines human dignity by subjecting one to demeaning situations (Victor, 2019).

#### **2.4.4 Corruption**

Corruption is one of the most serious concerns and risks to Nigeria's Fourth Republic's democratic growth. The country's corruption reached a peak in 2004, when Transparency International, a German-based non-governmental organization, ranked Nigeria as the world's second most corrupt country 132nd in its 2004, and in its 2020 report, Nigeria has gone deeper into corruption practices by ranking as 134<sup>th</sup> most corrupt countries. Corruption Perception Index (CPI). In line with transparency international (2011), it was recorded that Nigeria was listed the third in the list of most corrupt countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and 143rd out of 183 out of the countries surveyed globally in 2011. According to Transparency International (2011), the level to which corruption and other crimes grow in Nigeria usually resulted in daily losses of between \$4 million and 8 million dollars and annual losses of about 70.58 million dollars, and the country has lost more than 380 billion dollars to graft since its independence in 1960. The war on graft has been said to be difficult to win because policymakers themselves (Olu-Olu, 2006; 2008) commit the crime. The US\$620 000 oil subsidy bribery scandals at the National Assembly, and that of the two armoured cars purchased by the National Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) for Aviation Minister Stella Oduah for \$255 million (The Nation, 2013). Nothing weakens democracy than corruption, according to Oko (2008). By transferring monies for social services into private pockets, undermines governance, provides perverse incentives for dysfunctional conduct and lowers citizens' quality of life.

#### **2.4.5 Incumbency factor**

By manipulating the entire political process, incumbency offers the individual incumbent an unfair benefit over other candidates in the election. Manipulation can take several forms, including the fabrication of voter registration lists, the nomination of elections officers and electoral tribunals to safeguard stolen mandates, and access to state coercion and equipment to intimidate other contestants. It also includes denying access to state-owned media outlets, among other things, to regain or extend their term against the will of the people, and the use of public resources for the campaign. The growing influence of the incumbent's element on democratic consolidation erodes the principle of democratic government, resulting in the rise of political godfathers and family dynasties (Nwanegbo and Alumona, 2011).

#### **2.4.6 Insecurity**

Insecurity is one of the most daunting difficulties facing the current democratic regime. Since Nigeria's return to civilian government, Nigeria has faced ethnoreligious issues, sectarian mayhem, and other events that have called into doubt and shaken the country's viability. The "success" of women in a suicide bombing has tainted their reputation as the "weaker sex." Hence, the concept that women's natural propensity is to promote peace simply because they are mothers (or are supposed to be) can no longer be sustained (Omilusi 2015; Zenn and Pearson 2014). Like never before in the history of the world, Boko Haram has used more females in carrying out suicide bombing missions than any other terrorist group in the world. In line with Kriel (2017) females accounted for 244 out of 434 suicide bombers used by Boko Haram between 2011 and 2017. Just in Northeast Nigeria alone, girls and women carried out over 100 suicide bombings between 2014 and 2017 (Hassan 2017). The erroneous belief held by most "counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency" forces that terrorists are traditionally males is linked to the "success" of women in suicide bombing missions (Onuoha and George 2015). Others are used as terrorists to attack public organizations. After all, they can easily pass through security checkpoints without being suspected because they are women (Davis 2013; Speckhard 2009). A number of these social unrest includes the crisis between Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba, the fracas in Shagamu, Ogun State; the crisis between Ijaw vs Itsekiri over where Local Government headquarters should be located; incessant uproar in Jos; the ongoing sectarian conflict epitomized by Boko Haram's activities as well as various post-election violence across the country.

These ugly circumstances indicate that democracy in Nigeria is under serious threat, this prompted Dauda and Avidime (2007) to say that, the present security issues in Nigeria are a key impediment to democratic consolidation. Electoral violence has an impact on voter turnout. literature on the influence of election violence on voter turnout reveals a harmful relationship between the two. Voters in Nigeria who have been threatened with electoral violence are less inclined to vote, according to a cross-sectional study (Bratton, 2013:129). The same was discovered in a global cross-national study (Norris, 2014:143). In this situation, it might well be said that the incumbent employs election violence to deter opposition supporters from casting their vote (Hafner-Burton, 2014).

Other nationwide research reveals that "electoral violence influences willingness to [not] vote, although this effect varies depending on partisan affiliation and electoral environment" (Burchard, 2015, p. 143). In some cases, people who are supporters of opposition parties are more eager to

vote even when they are subjected to electoral violence. Although not statistically significant, incumbent supporters were less inclined to vote in circumstances when they were threatened with violence (Burchard, 2015, p. 139). Election violence can be employed to prevent people from casting their vote (see Travagianti, 2014), stop them from voting, in order to punish victors, although the kind of adopted violence matters. In this case, the violence could be deliberate or incidental, the identity of persons who carry out the act of violence and the message that it is meant to pass to voters and how this act affects individuals directly (Bekoe & Burchard, 2017; Burchard, 2015).

In these studies, only one item is used to measure electoral violence and participation. Burchard (2015) and Bratton (2013) used the fear of violence at the polls to measure electoral violence. Norris (2014) did the same thing, except that she included electoral violence in the description of the electoral malpractice index along with other elements. They measured electoral participation by voting participation (Bratton, 2015; Burchard, 2015; Norris, 2014). According to Idoko Cletus and Dasuma Arida (2014), internal security responsibilities rest with the interior and defence ministers of the federation. They are to kick-off and supervise the form of operation by the police and other security agents in the country to ensure that peace and harmonious living exist in every nooks and cranny of the country. More so, in different states and local government areas of this country, the governors and chairmen as the chief security officers are to maintain and sustain the security situation in their territory. This can be done by making sure that the law enforcement agencies deployed to different areas do their work diligently. However, in most cases, many of these security agents, according to Iygeal (2012) sometimes seem to be ignorant of what is happening around them but depend on information from the general public before their action, though there is nothing wrong with getting information from the public, in most cases, people are afraid to inform the police about the atrocity been committed around them as they are not sure of the consequences of their action. Sometimes, some of the police may hear about violence and criminal activities but for the fear of death may neglect their action resulting in security disorder by some security agents in the country. Usually, this type of security disorder is very disastrous to the security situation in the country. Also, the weapon is not up to the standard of what is obtainable in developed nations, and the criminals have sophisticated weapons at their disposal and these have contributed greatly to security challenges in the nation. According to Fukuyama (2004), many people have committed all sort of crimes and get away with them. For example, a wealthy

individual or those in position of authority can commit numerous atrocities and get away with them due to nepotism and impunity, whereas the average person is punished for a minor offense. This type of favouritism in the Nigerian legal system is harmful to the professionalism of legal practice and the delivery of a better service (Okorie 2011).

This could be the reason why politicians equip hoodlums to distort elections in their favour and the activities of these hoodlums such as ballot box snatching, killings, and so on hampered the women's electoral participation in Southwest Nigeria. Akpor (2013) defines insecurity from two perspectives. Firstly, insecurity is the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being vulnerable to harm or injury. Secondly, insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. These definitions of insecurity underscore a major point that those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they are also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur, with this in place people may be unwilling to exercise their voting right. Adebukola Foluke (2014) discusses the nexus between poverty and insecurity. In Nigeria, insecurity is a very visible problem. It manifests itself in a variety of ways. These range from organized violent gangs or groups to one-man gun-killing criminals and armed robbers on the street. Sadistic rapists who rape and kill, as well as those who gang rape. Officers of the police shoot indiscriminately when citizens and petty thieves do not offer them a bribe. Cybercriminals, as well as those who specialize in disguising themselves to gain favour abound. Kidnappings and bank fraud add to the list of crimes. Even though Nigeria has faced security challenges in the past, as is common in most societies, the Niger- Delta militancy heralded organized violent crime and major security threats into the country. This manifests itself in the random shooting and killing of innocent people, the kidnapping of expatriates, and the destruction of massive infrastructure. Different groups, such as MEND, MASSOB and other violent groups in the region's south-south have taken over public and private properties in Nigeria, particularly in the oil and gas sector. A hungry man is an angry man when the majority of the society is poor, they can be easily influenced by criminals to join their group in exchange for money or whatever they promised to offer. The more the crime the greater is the threat it poses on the electoral processes of the nation.

#### **2.4.7 Political thuggery**

Democratic growth in Nigeria can be said to be under a serious threat due to the incessant outbreaks of election violence and the prevalence of political thuggery. Some politicians are so much involved in the business of hiring thugs to disrupt elections for them to be an advantage over their oppositions. These thugs, on the other hand, are usually employed to create fear and panic, to terrorize, hassle, or even injure opponents of their employers due to their modus operandi (method of operation). A typical example was the late Chief Lamidi Adedibu, who had many thugs at his disposal during his days as a politician in Oyo state (Iwere, 2009). His “Amala” politics theory and style, as well as his purported governmental assistance and protection, resulted in excessive use of political power, arbitrariness, and anarchy in the state (Njoku, 2010).

## **2.5 Gender and political participation**

The term gender connotes social and legal identities, socially created roles, and qualities with varying interpretations for both males and females. Sex, on the other hand, centers on the biological differences between males and females, (Arceneaux 2001; Karl, 2001; Kasomo, 2012; Kittilson, 2016; Leigh, 2006). Gender characteristically specifies male and female expectations, that specify what each group should or should not do, as a result of cultural and religious morals, which often shape formal legal instruments that are regarded as biased to the female gender. According to Kasomo (2012), gender “goes beyond just roles; it is also about relationships. What people say about women, men, and what they should do is tied to the question of who makes the rules and for what purposes.”

As a result of this gender role imposed by the society, men are seen to be more ahead of women in every sphere of life, especially in politics where they dominate as can be found in all nations across the globe, almost all the rules, laws, protocols and declaration are made and men and these have always given them an advantage over the women. Over the world today, women have to struggle to acquire voting rights and the chance to occupy a political position, in Athens inclusive, where the idea and practice of democracy first evolved, whereas the males had no such constraints (Kasa, 2015).

Many factors interact to hamper women’s political participation (such as poor financial means and illiteracy, deliberate legal and institutional discriminating elements, as well as culture and religion (Arceneaux 2001; Karl, 2001; Kasomo, 2012; Kittilson, 2016; Leigh, 2006). Lack of self-

confidence and interest for a leadership role on the part of the women for example according to Arceneaux (2001) and Kasomo (2012) maybe as a result of socio-cultural, religious, and institutional factors which all come to play. Negative gender role attitudes about women, according to Arceneaux (2001) particularly prevent women from running for office, because they are made to believe that it is inappropriate for them to vie for political positions. Women's political engagement is often hampered by and religious and societal ideas and values, which often inform formal legal and institutional structures (Kasomo, 2012).

Women's political participation is hampered by traditional conservative views that males should lead and women should follow (Welch and Studlar, 1996.). as a result, men are more into politics and also make policies that favor their course to the detriment of that of the women in nations where patriarchal beliefs are entrenched, as Nigeria exemplifies (Akpan, 2015; Kasa, 2015; Kasomo, 2012; Oluyemi, 2015). According to Kasa (2015), patriarchy has become a normal belief system that continues to establish distinct roles for men and women in such a way that it favors males regularly. Men, for example, are considered as the breadwinners and heads of their households and can make decisions for their families unilaterally. Through training females to accept male superiority as a natural truth, society plays a key role in guaranteeing the continuity of the insubordination of women.

In many African societies, including Nigeria, gender determined almost every aspect of the society, for example, gender dictates who gets educated if family resources are limited, which of the gender gets employed and for what (based on what criteria), who inherit the family properties, and who is to be considered for a certain electoral position. Kasa (2015), believes that women are less educated when compared to men, they are poorer and as well occupy lesser political leadership positions due to different unfair laws, patriarchy, and cultural belief that continue to assign women to inferior roles. Women's political participation in Nigeria is hampered by patriarchal socio-cultural and religious norms, childbearing, lack of finance, inability to have access to significant political links, and the common use of political thuggery (Nnaji, 2009; Fatale, et al. 2012; Ogbogu, 2012; Samuel and Segun, 2012; Falada, 2014; Olufuunke, 2014; Fatile, et al., 2017).

Based on empirical evidence, education, party affiliation, employment, and religious affiliation, place of residence, rural and urban areas, and geopolitical context were used as independent

variables (Cassese and Holman, 2016; Karl, 2001; Kasomo, 2012; Leigh, 2006). Leigh (2006) for example, finds education, population, and religion are important determinants of women's political representation. Out of all the listed variables, Leigh (2006) is of the view that to a larger extent education is the most important determinant of women's political representation, given the fact that it can assist women in gaining the necessary knowledge to pursue their political goals. Karl (2001) finds that education, occupation, and salary, as well as religion and culture, are the major determinants of women's participation in politics.

The impacts of geopolitical environment, locations, and party allegiance, on the other hand, are mixed (Karl, 2001; Leigh, 2006 ;). In contrast to Kittilson's findings, Leigh (2006) believes that party affiliation is not a determinant of women's political participation, although political affiliation can offer opportunities for political connections and resources, such as training and financial support, that can help women become more involved in politics, especially while their party is in power. Furthermore, according to Leigh (2006), there is no link between urbanization and women's political participation. Geographical locations, on the other hand, are key indicators of women's representation. Bias against women is also deep-rooted in society, and this frequently relegates women to low-income jobs and makes them largely rely on their spouses to make ends meet. Women's lack of financial means makes it difficult for them to participate in politics. According to research, one of the most significant barriers to women's political engagement is financial restraints (Kasa, 2015; United Nations, 2017). Gender discrimination feeds into the economic sphere, where women are frequently relegated to low-paying employment and are largely reliant on their spouses to make ends meet. Women's political participation is hampered by a lack of financial means. According to research, one of the greatest barriers to women participating in politics is a lack of financial resources (Kasa, 2015; United Nations, 2017).

Even though many civil society organizations have initiatives aimed at increasing women's representation, many of their publications contain evaluative statements rather than in-depth assessments of the value of various policies. Voting, working on election campaigns, community engagement, meeting with political leaders, and participating in rallies are all examples of participation. (Isaksson, Kotsadam, and Nerman, 2014) use the question of whether women "came together with others to raise an issue" as a proxy for inter-election engagement that is broad enough to embrace a variety of political cultures and contexts.

Although religiosity or religious attendance enhances political engagement in both men and women, it has varied effects on each group. Religious women, for example, vote more often than religious men, while religious men are more involved in politics than their female counterparts (Cassese and Holman, 2016). Relatedly, the expansion of the franchise to women signaled the emergence of women's political engagement despite structural hurdles. Over the years, with the advancement of various societies culminating in the move of the wave of democracy and its exclusive features, several countries across the world have recorded varying degrees of success in dismantling part of the obstacles hindering women's political participation. (Thornton, 2019; Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013). However, it is pertinent to establish that the percentage of women in positions of leadership and upper strata worldwide, especially in Africa, has become worrisome. Over the years, it elicited activities and discourse at various forums to their political participation in political activities.

Historical evidence across various societies during the ancient and contemporary periods has encouraged the idea and practice of the domination of men over women in various spheres of life. It is such that throughout ages and cultures, women were rarely considered equal to men as they are known to have been discriminated, marginalized, and dominated through the orchestration of cultural norms and practices which are gender-biased and always in favor of men (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). In this regard, several scholars have explored the role of gender abuse, exploitation, and relegation through several cultures, norms, and systems that have resulted in systematic superiority of male over the female in every aspect of life (Agbalajobi, 2010; Aina, 2012; and Soetan, 2014).

Despite the numerous efforts to increase the participation of women in politics, there still exists a considerable gap in the proportion or number of men to women in politics in Nigeria. For example, there were 47million voters registered in the 1999 general election in Nigeria, and out of these 47million registered voters, 27million were women, showing that they constitute a large percent of the electoral population. In this same period, according to Egwu (2015), out of the 11,117 electable numbers available, only 631 (5.6%) were contested by women who managed to win 180 positions out of the 11,117 positions available. Then out of this 180 (1.6%), 140 positions were women elected at Ward Levels as Ward Councillors (Egwu, 2015).

The participation of women in the politics of Nigeria has become a contentious issue due to the level of marginalization that has characterized the country's politics due to the various inhibiting phenomena – socio-cultural and religious factors that affect women's perception, interest, knowledge, and participation in the politics of the country. Women in Nigeria have been considered an endangered species concerning politics caused by the plethora of socio-cultural, economic constraints, religion, and male chauvinism (Osimen et al., 2018). In recent times, despite the constitutional provisions, local and international declarations of gender equality, and a series of attempts by government and the political structures. To solve the problem of gender imbalances in politics, mainly those who claim to have an interest in addressing this status quo – usually occupied by men (Osimen et al., 2018) still mete out a series of injustices to the female gender.

The low rate of women's participation in politics, most especially in Nigeria, has become a worrisome issue, as the current reality does not express equal representation in political leadership. Several scholars and stakeholders have identified factors such as; patriarchy, stigmatization, low level of education, financing, political violence, religious and cultural barriers, as well as political godfatherism as the causative factors responsible for the low participation of women in Nigerian politics (Osimen et al., 2018). The low participation of women in the political activities of Nigeria has become a worrisome phenomenon after the end of the military involvement, politics of the country that paved the way for democracy in 1999. Evidently, after several democratic changes of government, gender inequalities still exist at all levels of the country, thereby preventing women from brandishing their capabilities towards the sustenance of democracy. Given this, it is pertinent to state that the aim of developing Nigeria's democracy will remain a daunting task if women are continuously marginalized.

Women's political participation is influenced by a variety of institutions, including political parties. In most nations, political parties choose which candidates are nominated and elected, as well as which problems gain national attention. As a result, women's participation in political parties is a critical driver of their political empowerment potential, particularly at the national level. Because political parties have such a strong influence on women's political prospects, governments and international organizations working to increase women's election participation

should focus on their involvement. However, political participation is not limited to political parties. Women can also get involved in the political process by taking independent action, particularly at the local level, and joining civil society organizations. Participating in non-elected transitional assemblies has given some women in post-conflict countries political experience. Women's networks, labor unions, non-governmental groups, and the media can all help women get involved in politics.

## **2.6 Women and party politics**

In more recent times, from the independence period onwards, men have exclusively held the Head of State or President and Minister for Defense positions. It has been further confirmed by statistics on how women are vastly underrepresented in public life and decision-making positions. Several works have pointed to colonialism as the significant promoter within Nigerian politics in addressing the patriarchy question. This is anchored because men were considered more active, and they live to support their families, hence establishing more empowerment schemes and programs for men than women. When linked to the foreign capitalist economic system, the traditional economies of African comprise Nigeria's economy to export exported cash crops overseas, which diverted the production role to men (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). This exposure to political power made the male gender consolidate their interest and positions by taking over the mainstream political activities where significant political power exists.

According to Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014), the situation was later aggravated by the colonial administration, which enacted several anti-women laws, eventually transforming a previously politically gender-neutral political landscape into a primarily male-dominated political scene. They pointed out that women have long held powerful political roles, including the highest political office and the most sensitive positions in their individual communities' political hierarchy (Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014). What is more of great concern is that democracy across every nation is anchored upon the principles of freedom, justice, and equal treatment of all citizens within the economy (Nwabueze, 1993). It entails an equal opportunity platform for political participation and decision-making (Sodaro, 2001). The issue of gender equality is globally recognized as a necessity for achieving development (Ezeilo, 2008). In the case of Nigeria, even in the face of the spread of the wave of democracy and the struggle by the feminist movements which advocated for gender balancing within the conduct of politics, several Nigerian women are still systematically

alienated from not just political activities but also, the decision-making process of the country (Agbalajobi, 2010; Arowolo and Aluko, 2010).

In more recent times, the exclusion of women from political activities has been identified as one of the major hindrances to economic development (Oluwajemilua, 2016). Advocacy for women's involvement in politics in Nigeria has been met with many challenges, making it challenging to harness available opportunities for economic development. The various women's groups exploit the current opportunities available for women's participation in politics within the country (Orisadare, 2019). In some cases, it has been observed that several women's groups in Nigeria do not have a formidable political agenda, coupled with the existence of a high illiteracy rate the members of the various women's groups who lack the knowledge of existing National and International gender equality law, thereby making it difficult for them to participate in politics. In addition, the different roles played mainly by women's groups at all levels of politics seem not to be adequate in encouraging more women's participation in politics and influencing economic development (Orisadare, 2019).

Debate on women's involvement in the act of governance has attracted numerous organizations and research bodies with much emphasis on gender parity (Crenshaw, 1989; Hancock, 2007; Carastathis, 2014). The policy of quota system and the participation of men in women organizations have been suggested to tame issues that affect the active involvement of women in modern state's development. Most of these investigations are inspired by European beliefs, which lack the values of African women about their societies. Many records have shown that African women have demonstrated leadership and conflict resolutions uniquely during the precolonial system, but the advent of the colonial system distorted this political affinity (Agbalajobi and Yetunde, 2010). This has been maintained by Monica Ewomazino's (2015) and Emeka Emmanuel Okafor et. al. (2015) who argue that the impact of women in leadership role in Africa, especially in Nigeria, cannot be overemphasized. They contend that the most acceptable leadership demonstrated by women in those days orchestrated most development that accompanied most ancient societies. According to Emeka Emmanuel Okafor et. al. (2015), in the 1950's, the role played by Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Mrs. Margaret Ekpo in Nigeria's pre-independence political crisis cannot be overemphasised. Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome- Kuti was a staunch advocate

for the rights of women in Nigeria. Also, Mrs. Margret Ekpo was the only woman among the the 1951 seven-man committee formed that seek to create a political organization with the aim of obtaining self-government within the period of five years. In 1959, Mr. Margret Ekpo was made the Vice-President of the Eastern House of Chiefs. Similarly, the women who led the 1929 Aba Women's Riots in south-eastern Nigeria may have been the forerunners and role models for the two more well-known female political figures (Nduka, 2001). Professor (Mrs.) Grace Alele-Williams not only established herself in teaching mathematics, but she also climbed to become the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Benin, the very first female Nigerian academic to hold such a position (Nduka, 2001). Likewise, the late Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili (OFR), the previous Director of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, decreased the prevalence of fraudulent pharmaceuticals from almost 90% to 68% in 2001. (Akunyili, 2006). Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala helped transform the Nigerian economic agenda as Finance Minister (July 2003-June 2006) under the Obasanjo regime, and she also initiated the Nigerian government's unfavourable fuel subsidy removal policy, which led to mass demonstrations in January 2012 under the Goodluck Jonathan regime (Aina, 2012; McGroarty, 2012). She also emphasized the importance of reducing the country's recurring spending, which accounts for 74 percent of the national budget and embarking on capital projects that may help to lower the country's 14 percent unemployment rate (Osa-Okunbor, 2012). Women leaders proliferate in all emerging nations, not just in politics, but also in academics, the commercial and public sectors, and organizations (Okafor, Fagbemi, and Hassan, 2011). The above is a suitable clarion summons to action, with the justification being the growth of leadership and leadership culture in Nigeria.

Gender is the characteristics shaped by society, with its consequence of culture, norms, beliefs, and emotional inferences. While sex denotes the natural characters of being a male or female. It should be mentioned that any type of discrimination based on sex or gender is frowned upon and prohibited by Section 42(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended):

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 either expressly by, or in the practical application of, any Law in Force in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government, to disabilities or restrictions to which citizens of Nigeria of other communities, ethnic groups places of origin, sex, religion or political opinions are not made subject.

Many women have today risen to the challenges of the moment as the political post held by women has increase gradually over the years. Many women have risen to positions of power not only in politics but also in religion. This is a huge step in the right direction, as this would go a long way in helping Nigerian society stop the cycle of male domination and chauvinism. Some good political opportunities were presented to women in the 2015 general elections to navigate the way to political power; in attendance include female legislators, various representatives of women's groups, women and male gender activists, association of market women, association of professionals, as well as media practitioners. All these women are after the actualization of the 35% Affirmative Action Committee by President Goodluck Jonathan (Orisadare, 2019).

Women are increasingly seeking power dynamics, distribution, and redistribution of resources in their favor as they become more aware of their mental state. Despite this, detailed examinations have revealed that women's participation in Nigerian politics is mostly visible at the level of voting and latent support. According to Adeniyi (2003), the primary challenges confronting and restraining women's active engagement in Nigerian politics are violence and other types of electoral conflict committed and propagated by men and male youths. Opinions differ on whether women's roles are primarily domestic or whether they can participate in other socioeconomic and political activities alongside their male counterparts. However, it is believed that while the natural relationship between a mother and her child may compel, and confine her to sedentary activities thereby making her lose interest in political and social activities. It is also critical for such a woman to contribute her fair share to the growth of her family and society (Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer, 2019). Nigerian women have been denied the opportunity to execute these roles due to their continued marginalization. It is worth noting that society understands the importance of women as voters in a democratic system. Nonetheless, they are viewed as incapable of leading, which explains their limited acceptance of ascending to the highest levels of decision-making and participation in power systems (Uwa, Anegbode, Daudu, and Oyewole, 2018).

### **2.6.1 Factors that hamper the participation of women in politics in South-West Nigerian politics**

Women's underrepresentation in politics and governance has long been a source of concern on a global scale. Women's participation in politics in Nigeria is not proportional to the 50% of the

population that they represent, and this has not translated into equal representation in political leadership roles. The growing global focus on gender equality, supported by initiatives as that of agenda three of the Millennium Development Goals, is bridging the gap caused by long-term discrimination against women and assisting in the visibility of women in politics. In this context, Nigeria has recognized women in politics and included them in both appointive and elective roles. The impact of gender on political engagement has been highlighted by several academics such as Elvira Cicognani et.al (2011) and Kent E. Portney (2009). They pointed out that female political participation has always been lower than male participation. This was due to a variety of factors, including women's political disengagement and their sense of belief that their political power is limited (Lawless, 2004; Atkeson, 2003; Koch, 1997). Others concluded that these factors were due to women's poor and limited involvement in political activities, political parties, and civil groups. As a result, women's political aspirations were affected, and their sense of marginalization and lack of equality with men was reinforced (Pyeatt and Yanus, 2018). Female political participation is lower than male participation in most societies, not just in developing countries but also in industrialized countries. Women in American society are less interested in politics than men, according to Fitzgerald (2013) and Taft (2014). Similarly, there is a gender divide in political participation in the United Kingdom. Males vote in greater numbers than females (Childs, 2004). Koch (1997) and Verba et al. (1997) blamed this on women's lack of political interest.

Furthermore, women believe that they are powerless to effect political change and that their participation would have no impact on society. Furthermore, women's high unemployment rates make them hesitant to vote in elections (Roth and Saunders, 2019). In addition, Furth, the country's voting system has an impact on women's political participation. Because females voted in large numbers in the electoral list system, the gender gap between males and females voting in elections was narrowed (Beauregard, 2014). Pyeatt and Yanus (2018), Dolan (2011), and Fox (2011) have all suggested how to close the voting gender gap. They concluded that young females' sociopolitical interests could assist solve the problem of the voting gender gap by creating more awareness on the importance of women's participation in elections.

Education could be one of the solutions because when women realize that political events directly affect their lives, they are more likely to participate in politics. Females must overcome their psychological notions that equality with men is impossible to tackle this challenge. According to

Atkeson (2003), the more women are involved in the public sector, the more barriers to their political engagement are broken. In Sweden, women's political participation increased by 5.5 percent as a result of their involvement in the public sphere and demonstrations, whereas in the United Kingdom, women's participation in demonstrations was 1.9 percent (Roth and Saunders, 2019). Furthermore, other studies have found a correlation between democracy and active political participation, such as voting, campaigning, and citizen protests. It can be concluded that democracy is predicated on political involvement (Leigh, 2018, p. 7) It can be argued that women's marginalization in the past, as well as their denial of the right to vote for political and social reasons, caused them to feel estranged from society and unequal to men. As a result, women's interest in political issues, events, and party activities has waned. Despite the democratic transition in many developing countries and legal revisions that gave women more rights and independence in politics, there was still a gender gap due to inequalities in voting between males and females and low female voting attendance in elections based on the above.

### **2.6.2 Women in public governance in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, there is high level of disparities between men and women in public governance. An impediment, which often have negative impacts on women in all aspects; economic, social and political opportunities, the insignificant number of women in the political structures of governance, is the limited number of female participation in the structures of governance, especially, where key policy decisions are made and resource allocation is decided.

### **2.6.3 Representation in the National Assembly**

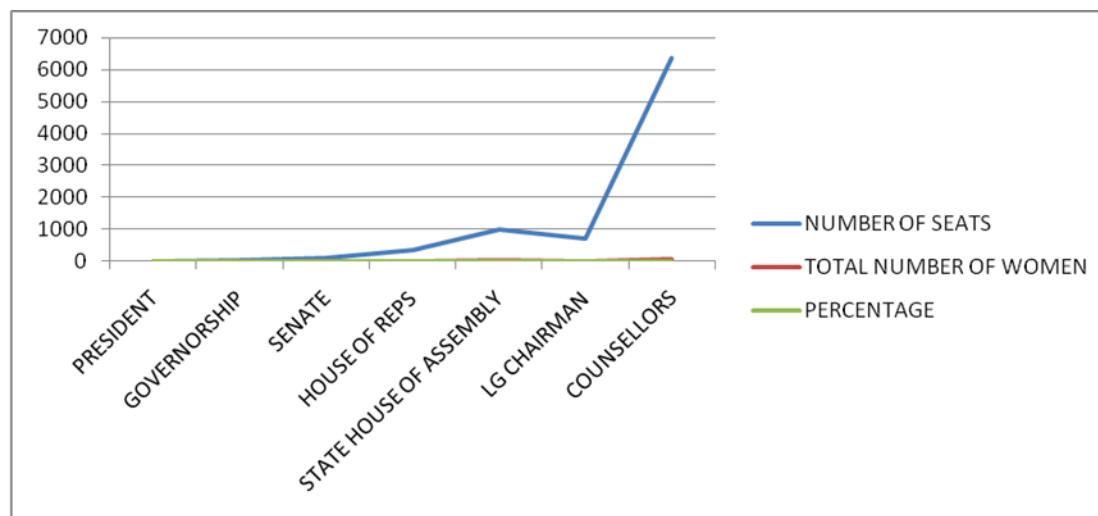
Women, who are assumed to be about half of the electorate with the right to vote and hold public office, continued to be under-represented as members of the National Parliament. Even after the recognition of the importance of women's political empowerment within the framework of the MDGs, with one of the indicators for monitoring Goal 3, that is, to promote gender equality and empower women currently measured as the proportion of seats held by women in the lower- and upper-houses of the National Assembly.

**Table 1. Women representation in the 1999 General Elections in Nigeria**

Position	No of seats	Total number of women	Percentage
President	1	-	-
Governorship	36	-	-
Senate	109	3	2.8
House of Representatives.	360	7	1.9
State House of Assembly	990	24	2.4
Local Government Chairpersons	710	13	1.8
Counsellors	6368	69	1.1

Source: Author Compilation, 2021

**Graph 1. Women’s participation and performance in the 1999 general elections**



Source: Gberevbie et al. (2013)

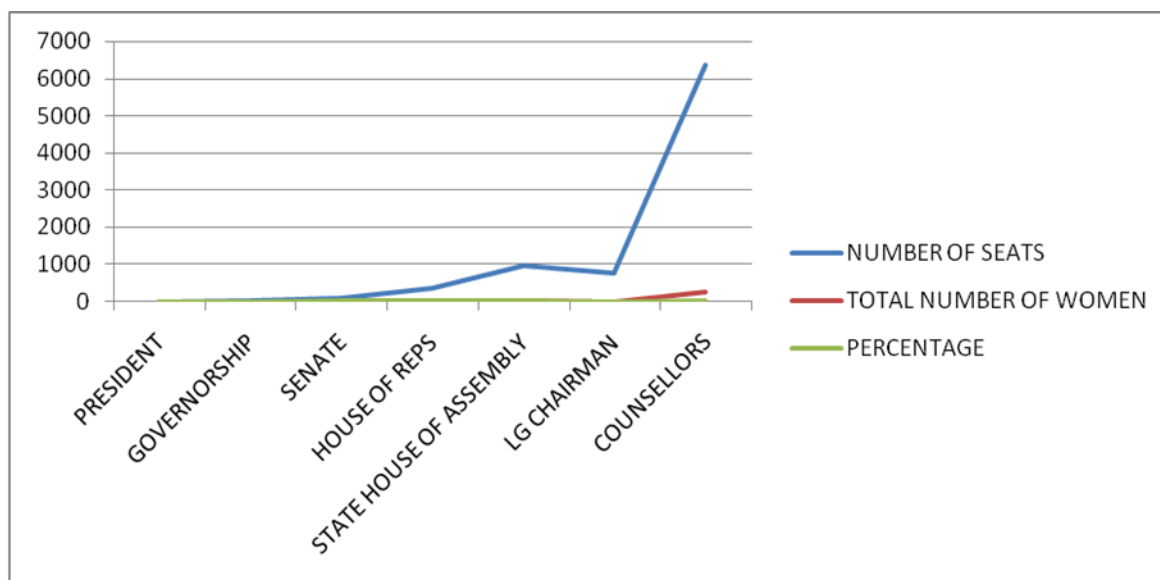
The first graph above indicates women’s performance in the general elections in 1999 in Nigeria. The outcome of the elections indicates that there was no woman president and state governor recorded. Nevertheless, at the state level, women secured 3 out of the 109 seats available, women won 7 out of the 360 seats at the House of Representatives, 24 seats out of the 990 seats at the state Houses of Assembly, 13 out of 710 local government chairperson seats and 69 out of the 6,368 councillorship seats available. Also, 1 woman won the position of deputy governor in Lagos State.

**Table 2 Women performance in the 2003 General Elections**

<b>Position</b>	<b>No. of seats</b>	<b>Total Number of women</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>President</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Governorship</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Senate</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>House of Representatives</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5.8</b>
<b>State House of Assembly</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Local Government Chairpersons</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Councillors</b>	<b>6368</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>4.2</b>

Source: Author’s Compilation, 2021

**Graph 2 presents the performance of women in the 2003 general elections in Nigeria.**



Source: Gberevbie et al (2013)

As shown in Graph 2 below, women secured 4 out of the 109 seats available at the Senate, won 21 seats out of 360 at the House of Representatives; secured 40 out of 990 seats available at the state Houses of Assembly; 15 out of 774 seats available at local governments positions; and 267 out of 6,368 seats for councillorship. Although, compared to the 1999 general elections, women recorded some level of victory. The 2003 elections saw the emergence of 2 female deputy governors in Lagos and Ogun states respectively. Also, a female member of the house emerged as Speaker in the Ogun State House of Assembly (UNDP, 2005; Iloh et al, 2009; Oni et al, 2011; cited in Gberevbie et al, 2013). Regardless of the victory recorded by women, the result of the 2003 elections still indicate a high level of marginalization against women.

In the 2015 election in Nigeria, out of the 469 honourable members of both Houses, men represent 92.5 percent while women represent only 7.5 percent. Furthermore, of all the men in both houses, 23.0 percent are in the senate and 77.0 percent in the House of Representatives (Table 1).

**Table 3: Summary of Seats Held in National Assembly by Type, Sex, and Year**

LEGISLATORS	2007		2011		2015	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Senate</b>						
<b>Male</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91.7</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>92.7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91.7</b>

<b>Female</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>House of Reps</b>						
<b>Male</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>92.8</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>93.9</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>92.8</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Both Houses</b>						
<b>Male</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>92.5</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>93.6</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>92.5</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (INEC 2007, 2011, 2015)

#### 2.6.4 Representation at state Houses of Assembly

The table vividly illustrates the representation of women and men in states' houses of assemblies. Like in the National Assembly, the number of men in the state Houses of Assembly far outstrips that of women. There is no doubt that men still and will continue to dominate politics in Nigeria.

**Table 4: Seats Held in State Assemblies by Type, Year, and Sex**

<b>Type</b>	<b>2007</b>		<b>2011</b>		<b>2015</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Hon. Members</b>						
Male	933	94.2	835	94.1	935	94.4
Female	57	5.8	52	5.9	55	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Committee Chairperson</b>						
Male	933	94.2	626	90.2	935	94.4
Female	57	5.8	68	9.8	55	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (INEC 2007, 2011, 2015)

## 2.6.5 Representation at the local government

Table 4 shows representation at the local government level. Of 6,681 representatives, made up of 768 Chairpersons and 5,913 Counselors, male chairpersons and counselors again far outnumbered their female counterparts especially in 2015. The results further illustrate the gender inequality in representation even at this lowest level of governance. Again, of all the Local Government Chairpersons, men are 95.6 percent and women 4.4 percent; and of all the Counselors, men are 90.2 percent and women 9.8 percent in the reference period.

**Table 5: Summary of Seats Held in Local Government by Type, Sex, and Year**

LEGISLATOR	2007		2011		2015	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>LGA Chairpersons</b>						
Male	510	90.1	738	96.1	740	95.6
Female	56	9.9	30	3.9	34	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Counselors</b>						
Male	5828	89.8	5175	87.5	6828	90.2
Female	665	10.2	738	12.5	740	9.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,493</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,913</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,568</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: State INEC 2015*

## 2.6.6 Representation in civil Service

In the civil service, women's representation in decision-making positions is among the concerns raised in the Beijing Platform for Action Gumisai (Mutume, 2005). However, the limited information to assess levels and trends poses challenges to addressing gender disparities in these areas of global concern. The highest representation of women among high-ranking government administrators with decision-making powers was 17.1 percent in 2011 for the position of Directors-General. Women who served as commissioners, special advisers, board chairpersons,

and in few cases elected as deputy governors constitute the most improved representations in a male-dominated landscape between 2010 and 2015 (Adetula, 2008).

**Table 6: Judges and Lawyers in Nigeria by Year and Sex**

Year	Judges			Lawyers		
	Female	Male	%	Female	Male	%
2010	209	603	25.7	439	841	34.3
2011	204	567	26.5	425	799	34.7
2012	214	624	25.5	440	809	35.2
2013	210	589	26.3	506	840	37.6
2014	209	618	25.3	435	838	34.2
2015	212	598	26.2	490	820	37.4

*Source: State's Ministry of Justice/State Judicial Service*

The number of both women judges and lawyers increased from 25.7 percent and 34.3 percent respectively in 2010 to 26.2 percent and 37.4 percent in 2015.

## 2.7 Gender discrimination

Across civilizations, traditional beliefs on women in relation to men have historically favored the masculine gender practically in every facet of life. From infancy to old age, women and girls have been exposed to various types of discrimination, exclusion, and segregation. According to Nelson Okey Madumer (2010), detrimental and discriminatory cultural practices against women's rights and fundamental freedoms persist to this day in Nigeria and rural communities, despite a plethora of national, regional, and international laws, treaties, and judicial pronouncements aimed at reducing the existence and spread of these unfortunate disparities based on gender. Many researchers, governments, and international organizations throughout the world have been challenged by this occurrence. Efforts have thus been undertaken to alleviate the negative impacts of male domination in all aspects of life that are detrimental to women. Women are frequently perceived to be disadvantaged in most, if not all, areas. According to Joss (2000), woman's impoverished existence begins at birth, when everyone is upset that the infant is not a male. In most communities in Nigeria, boys are regarded more than girls, and this attitude and preference

have serious ramifications for the female sex's whole life cycle. Girls are often not educated much like boys; as a young woman, she transitions from dependence on her father to dependence on her husband and how to submit to "family expectations"; as an adult, she is expected to reproduce and work, however stereotypically, mostly at home and sometimes outside, for either unremunerated and/or unequal pay; and as an elderly woman, she is more likely to rely on her sons and brothers (Taylor, 2012).

Women are also faced with discrimination in politics as we know that Politics is the battle for and actual use of power. It is all about acquiring and deploying power. There have been heated arguments concerning the inclusion of women in Nigerian politics throughout the years. Some claim that because women are considered the weaker sex, they lack the energy to participate in political activities. Men are stronger and so more suited to political activity. Most political gatherings take place at night, and married women may not be permitted to attend such meetings by their husbands, but married men are not restricted since it is believed that males are the head of the family. Nigerian governments continue to take steps to improve women's status, such as the establishment of the National Women Development Centre and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (Alamika and Ogugua, 2001). Other initiatives include the Family Support Programme and Family Economic Advancement Programme. However, the impact of these programs has yet to be properly evaluated.

## **2.8 Gender mainstreaming**

It was legitimately recommended at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on women as the acceptable approach that countries and their government should take in the implementation of the platform for Action (PFA)(UN 1995a). It is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, politics or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (ECOSOC, 1997 in Thomas 1999 (eds). Jahan (1995:13) identifies two major mainstreaming approaches which are, the 'integrationist' and the agenda-setting transformative approach. While the former involves

broadening the dominant paradigm to fit women 'in' without challenging the existing power structure the later approach challenges masculine's power structure not only because mainstreaming promotes women as decision makers, but also because it supports women collective action in redefining development agendas.

The struggle between male authority and a female's freedom to choose her own life and be free of male tyranny is a frequent issue in academic discussions on gender, and it is especially relevant to Yoruba women. In modern times, patriarchy refers to societal structures in which adult men hold the majority of authority. As a result, the concept of patriarchy has expanded beyond the confines of domestic power to become a more pressing social concern. Recent responses by women against patriarchal oppression have demonstrated that both males and females have the potential to engage in both nonviolent and violent activities (Agbaje, 2020). The National Gender Policy (2006) expresses a strong commitment to the engagement of Nigerian women in decision-making and political positions. It requires that at least 35% of leadership positions in politics and government be held by women, and a review of the Nigerian Constitution so those gender problems may be mainstreamed into the constitution (Aina, 2013).

Through the Platform for Action at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, mainstreaming was explicitly recognized as the worldwide approach for advancing gender equality. With the introduction of GAD, there was a realization of the value of gender analysis as a tool for understanding the distinct requirements of men and women in development policies, programs, and strategies, as well as the necessity for gender analyses to be conducted systematically. Governments and other stakeholders should encourage an active and visible strategy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs so that before making choices, the consequences on women and men are assessed. In this regard, a variety of issues are mentioned, such as health disparities and uneven access to and insufficient health-care facilities between men and women; domestic violence; women in decision-making; economic empowerment of women; and so on Barbara Bailey (2012). Gender mainstreaming is a methodology for assessing the implications of planned policies and programs using a gender analysis, which generates gender indicators and statistics. It emphasizes the need of incorporating men's and women's differing (social and economic) experiences into the design, implementation,

monitoring, and evaluation of these policies and programs to achieve equitable outcomes for women and men. To Mainstream Gender, the following factors must be considered:

- Who are the policy/programme/project stakeholders?
- What types of discussions are required, and with whom?
- Have all possible avenues been explored to integrate the viewpoints of all male and female stakeholders?
- What are the predicted (positive and negative) effects of the policy/program on each stakeholder group?

Mainstreaming is important because the well-being of a society is dependent on ensuring that all of its members believe they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream. Every person and every people has the opportunity to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from civic, economic, social, cultural, and political development that allows all human rights and basic freedoms to be fully realized. This necessitates providing chances for all groups, especially the most vulnerable, to enhance or preserve their well-being. Under these approaches new tools such as; gender analysis, gender statistics, gender awareness and gender sensitivity training were developed with a view to closing the gap or inequality between men and women. Again, as the mainstreaming continues to gather momentum women's rights and women's political representation became part and parcel of the mainstreaming. For instance the Beijing conference emphasized the importance of women participation in all areas of decision making and particularly in politics. In line with this Riley (2003) described gender mainstreaming as a political process that alter the balance of power. The implicit objective of all mainstreaming was for the "masculine" mainstream to give way to a new mainstream that will equally accommodate the roles, needs and experiences of men and women.

Connecting the concept of gender mainstreaming to this subject, it simply connotes allowing more women feature in governance and political institutions. For a very long time in Nigeria, women have been relegated to the background, but gender mainstreaming; it means more women can be at centre of helm of affairs. However, despite the fact that Nigeria was one of the stakeholders that signed the gender mainstreaming in the Beijing conference, women's representation in political institutions and politics has been low compared to their male counterparts. For example, since the emergence of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, there have been efforts to impose new demand

on government to foster a more open society and promote a greater role for women in public decision making (Okoronkwo in Ochanja and Tarwase, 2013). Women participation and representation in Nigerian politics and decision making since 1999, even though more improved than the previous years, has remained very low. For instance, the 1999 general elections saw only 181 position won by women out of the 11,881 available positions throughout the country (Samuel and Segun 2012, in Ochanja and Terwas, 2013). Also 2003, no woman was elected into the House of Assembly of 12 of the 36 State Houses of Assemblies in the country. In states where they were elected into the House of Assembly, they were very few (Agbalajobi, 2010, Olojede, 1999). Asaju and Adagba (2013) recorded that at the April 2007 elections, there were total of 1200 women aspirants to 1,532 offices. Although 660 of these aspirants won their primaries, -only 93 of them finally emerged as winners and these include six deputy governors. In 2011, only 32 women made it to the national assembly out of 469 members, representing only 8%. Out of 109 senators who became successful at the 2011 election, only 7 (6.4%) were women. Thus the parliamentary representation of Nigeria women which hitherto had a 2% increase in each new election from 1999 - 2007 suddenly dropped in 2011. This decrease became disturbing given the increase in the number of women who contested and the figure dropped remarkably when compared with the 2007 election. The 2007 general elections had 9 women who won their senatorial seats. This represents 8.25%. In 2003 elections, there were only 4 female senators which represented 3.67%. In the federal House of Representatives only 19 women won elections. This made up only 5.27% of the 360 member house.

After the 2011 elections, women in Nigeria experienced remarkable improvement in their political participation. President Jonathan appointed 33% of cabinet positions to women (up from at least 10% in the last government). These include sensitive positions like that of finance and education ministries. This success was only noticeable at the appointive offices as the 2011 also witnessed a decline in the elective positions occupied by women, especially in the national assembly. In the 2015 election lesser women made it to the national assembly. Only 27 women won elections to the national assembly. Eight (8) out of this number were senators and 19 were members of the house of representative.

From the analysis of women political participation and representation in Nigeria, from 1999 to 2022, it has established that women have not made much progress. This is more so if we compare their performance with the Sub-Saharan average. The struggle then is, is the present status of women in political representation a true reflection of the degree of gender mainstreaming and its related activities in Nigeria? The women delegates in the 2014 national conference for political restructuring likely saw a link between gender mainstreaming and political representation when they decried the wide gender gap in political representation and strongly suggested that serious gender mainstreaming be embarked upon to address the anomaly.

An awareness brought into place by gender mainstreaming activities at the global scene that produced declarations such as the International Women's Year of 1975, the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985) and the subsequent UN conferences like the 1992 Rio conference on Environment and Development, the 1993 Vienna Human Rights Conference, the Copenhagen summit on social development 1995 and the Beijing World conference (Nigeria not only effectively participated but also signed its legal instruments) did not only set new priorities, but also produced a blueprint for sustainable role of women in socio-economic and political development (Ama 1993, Desai and Potter, 2008).

Thus, gender mainstreaming has helped to expose the travails of women both in public and private offices to the front burner for public discourse. It has re-awaking and led to the emergence of women NGOs and other stake holders to agitate and demand for women's improved welfare conditions, especially through adequate representation in political and decision-making. For example, gender mainstreaming has significantly influenced the establishment of federal ministry of women affairs and related parastatals, the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS) which provided additional and statutory avenues for the promotion and facilitation of women related issues and the enhancement of their role in National development, including political representation. Similarly, it has encouraged wives of successive presidents in Nigeria to run projects with specific focus on women concerns. Some of which includes the better life for rural women, family advancement programme, and women in politics. These platforms were established on the basis of gender mainstreaming. Through' these platforms, women have been mobilized, sensitized and oriented about their capacity to contribute to national development. Indeed, these pet projects have increased their in National development. Although there has been an effective

gender mainstreaming in Nigeria, however, this does not increase women's representation in Nigeria.

## **2.9 Women and development**

The advent of entrepreneurship in the twentieth century encouraged female entrepreneurs to be innovative and creative. Women entrepreneurs are the driving force of economic growth and development, according to studies conducted in most of the advanced countries and certain African countries such as Nigeria suggested that the role of women entrepreneurship cannot be overemphasized. Women-owned enterprises are one of the world's fastest-growing entrepreneurial groups, according to Brusha and Cooper (2012). They contribute significantly to innovation, employment, and wealth development in all economies. It may now be claimed that women's entrepreneurship has risen over the last decade as the ratio of women in business has increased, resulting in economic growth and long-term development in industrialized nations. Women from southwest Nigeria have leverage on educational provisions to advance their course. Gone are the days that the role of women is relegated to the kitchen and full house-wife women have gotten their presence in all facet of life, the first pilot in Nigeria that was recently killed was from Southwest Nigeria. Also, Funke Alakija the richest woman in Africa is from southwest Nigeria. Even across the geo-political zones of Nigeria women are doing pretty well, most of the Nigerian women are currently holding very powerful international positions such as Dr. Ngozi Okojo Iweala and so on. According to Abimbola (2011), women have played major roles in the socio-economic development of their civilizations across Africa's many regions. African women have made incalculable contributions to the provision of both financial and social services. Alese (2013) revealed that woman's entrepreneurship accounts for a significant percentage of economic output and commerce in African countries. Similarly, the World Bank (2013) confirmed that women entrepreneurs in SMEs are the engine of growth, necessary for an efficient and competitive market, fundamental for poverty reduction, and play a hugely important pivotal role in the developing nations. Despite multiple studies and data demonstrating the contribution made by women's economic activities, acknowledgment of these contributions has been slow since the number of women entrepreneurs in Nigeria remains lower than that of male entrepreneurs. Considering the commendable programs and policies put in place by successive governments to close the gap, women entrepreneurs continue to trail behind their male counterparts' inaccessibility to

opportunities and asset ownership. I strongly believe if women are given the appropriate type of assistance and a favourable climate, women entrepreneurs may contribute far more to long-term economic development than they do now.

### **2.9.1 Women and empowerment**

Empowering women implies empowering a nation, the role of the women to keep the home and the society is enormous. Roughly 70% of Nigerians live in poverty, with many of them subsisting on less than one US dollar each day. Women are considered to be the most impacted by the country's current economic issues due to their widespread lack of access to vital resources such as education, capital, labour, business acumen, and, most critically, their exclusion from decision-making positions. Although there has been a widespread feminization of poverty, women carry the burden of poverty in families, trying to fend for children's survival requirements in the poorest households. Though, previous government regime has initiated a lot of poverty alleviation programs such

- Universal Basic Education (UBE);
- National Gender Policy, launched in 2006 and its strategic implementation framework, launched in 2008;
- Food and nutrition policy and household food security;
- National adolescent health policy;
- Population policy;
- Water policy'
- Specific development of the poverty reduction strategy paper to show commitment of government in addressing poverty particularly among women; and
- Recent macro-economic policies specifically target poverty reduction in their respective frameworks and guidelines – NEEDS (2003-2007), The Vision 20:2020.

In general, women in Nigeria have a greater rate of unemployment (compared to their male counterparts). Unfortunately, this trend is exacerbated in the private sector, where employment views are influenced by profit motives. Discriminatory practises continue to persist in employment legislation and service circumstances though covertly. For instance, women now suffer (unwritten) terrible working conditions in the banking sector, such as denial of maternity leave for pregnant

employees; prohibiting female employees from becoming pregnant and/or laying them off if they decide to marry. There is also a lot of stereotyping of women in managerial positions. Despite the fact that women are progressively entering the labour market, working conditions are far from ideal. Significantly, few women who have obtained postgraduate degrees currently work as academics in higher institutions, therefore boosting the proportion of female academics in Nigeria. The 1971 Labour Act was ruled to be discriminatory towards women. Despite the fact that the Act was revised in 1990, similar clauses are nevertheless often exploited against women in the workplace. Section 34 (1), which grants a worker the right to be accompanied by family, is a good illustration of this. According to the Act:

Any citizen who is recruited for service in Nigeria may be accompanied to *his* place of employment and attended during *his* employment there by such members of *his* family (not exceeding two wives and such of *his* children as are under the age of sixteen years) as *he* wishes to take with *him* (emphasis added).

This clause confers a unique on males, requiring them to be followed by their wives and children to their new workplaces (and not vice versa). As a result, women are predisposed to play second fiddle to their husbands. Nevertheless, it is recognized that the same Labour Act provides for women's safety during pregnancy, including access to maternity leave and protection from wrongful dismissal from employment. The same Act prohibits women from working in MINE JOBS because of their biological makeup. All of this points to the reality that conventional gender norms drive Nigerian laws and acts, which are mainly male-centric (Aina 2013).

### **2.9.2 Women and Peacebuilding**

Ever since the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was adopted in 2000, not enough studies have been conducted on the impacts of conflict on the southwest Nigerian women, as well as the full inclusion of women in all peace negotiations. Most of these scholarly works has been conducted within academic research and by other institutions concerned with women, peace, and conflict for example, the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) conducted a study on the role of women in peace building in 2012 titled "The role of women and girls in peace initiatives in Nigeria." There have also been studies by Gladys Kauna Garba (2016) and others. Conflicts have been portrayed as unavoidable and, in fact, as typical in any human interaction. However, it is the handling of these conflicts that makes the difference.

Conflict may really be a way through which meaningful outcomes can be achieved or existing relationships might be harmed.

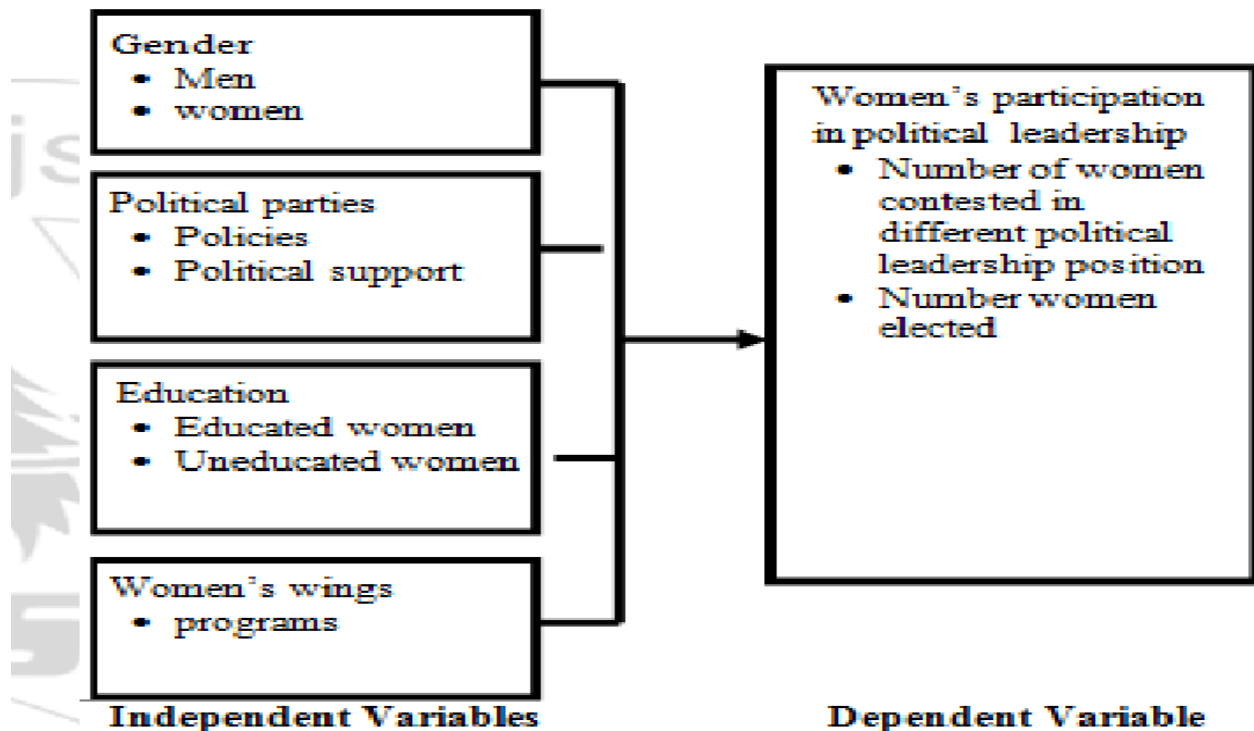
The 1999 Constitution stipulates that “the security and wellbeing of the people must be the fundamental goal of government.” The constitution further provides that “every citizen must enjoy equality of rights, duties, and opportunities before the law in advancement of the social order.” Laying the groundwork for women’s and girls’ equitable involvement in public life, particularly in questions of peace and security (Nwadinobi, 2017). The Coalition on Women, Peace, and Security (CEDAW) was founded on March 2, 2017 as a collaboration of six – now eight – registered Nigerian NGOs. It was established with the intention of providing information to the CEDAW committee on inadequacies in the law with a special reference to the elimination of all forms of discrimination into action against women. Also, in 2006, the federal government enacted a National Gender Policy. On May 9, 2017, Nigeria released its second National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and associated resolutions (NAP) for the 2017-2020 period. The revised NAP was created to address the shortcomings highlighted in the previous NAP as well as to integrate growing challenges in Nigeria (For example, a lack of crisis management and recovery techniques, ambiguous language, and insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of conflicts).

According to the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the CEDAW committee (July 2017), women in Nigeria have paid through the nose in the country’s conflicts, particularly in the last two decades. They have been subjected to unprecedented levels of sexual abuse as well as HIV infection, unplanned pregnancies and health difficulties, increasing food insecurity, and internal displacement. Current conflicts in Nigeria include those associated with violent extremism in the North East, a resurgence of militancy over economic grievances and kidnapping in the Niger Delta, and grievances over land use due to competition over natural resources between farming and herder communities (the herdsmen crisis) in most parts of the country in which southwest is not excluded. Women have historically been disadvantaged in aspects of peace and security, particularly where critical policy decisions and allocating resources are made. Women continue to be marginalized in peace building and conflict resolution. Processes have had an impact on development and community resilience,

particularly at the local level, because tradition discourages women from holding positions of leadership (Garba, 2016).

Laura Shepherd (2016) considers women as change makers rather than victims of abuse. Previously, several scholars have argued that males are the culprits and women are the victims of violence in disputes. Sheppard, on the other hand, states that the masculinized account of conflict fails to capture the complexities of men’s and women’s roles in conflict. Furthermore, she suggests that just allowing women to be depicted as victims of violence diminishes their independent agency and so weakens the establishment of peace-building efforts in which women may participate and all of their conflict experiences are not adequately addressed. Rita Manchanda (2005) is another academic who has employed the notion of women as conflict actors. She, like Shepherd, wishes to alter the way women are perpetuated in wars, where women are viewed purely as victims, which she believes is not the case. Women are frequently involved in conflicts as decision-makers, negotiators, peace campaigners, and combatants. The challenge she refers to is the need to begin seeing women as agents rather than victims and to increase their responsibilities as agents of progressive change.

**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

From the diagram, it is pertinent to establish a relationship between the variables identified in the background to this study. Key variables such as gender, activities of political parties, the level of education and exposure as well as the women's political wing, largely influence the level and nature of women's political participation in terms of the number of those who contest in an election and the actual number that gets elected.

### **2.9.3 Theoretical framework**

Before analyzing the theories adopted for this study, it is pertinent to discuss the meaning and nature of theory to fully comprehend the theorists' ideas and propositions regarding women and their participation in politics. The general analysis of a theory's concept is that; it is a body of well-structured and coherent body of idea that explains an issue, phenomena, or aspect of reality. A theory possesses descriptive attributes, arguments, propositions, logically linked variables, and universal applicability in its generality (Gold and McGlinchey, 2017). Universal applicability and precision in the results that are discernible in applying a theory's propositions that significant weaknesses in theories propounded in the humanities and social sciences have been revealed. Unlike the experiences in the natural sciences' views, ideas articulated by scholars in the humanities and social sciences do not always reflect mathematical precision in their application. This reduces the potential for prediction, which is a critical aspect of a theory. Arising from this, some scientists have described theorizing in humanities as a worthless exercise (Jaffe, 2014).

It has become commonplace within feminist theory to claim that women's lives are constructed by multiple, intersecting systems of oppression. This insight – that oppression is not a singular process or a binary political relation, but is better understood as constituted by multiple, converging, or interwoven systems – originates in antiracist feminist critiques of the claim that women's oppression could be captured through an analysis of gender alone. Intersectionality is offered as a theoretical and political remedy to what is perhaps 'the most pressing problem facing contemporary feminism – the long and painful legacy of its exclusions' (K. Davis 70). Intersectionality theory has been celebrated as the 'most important contribution that women's studies has made so far' (McCall 1771). Indeed, the influence of intersectionality has extended beyond the academy to international human rights discourses, as reflected by references made to it by the United Nations' Beijing Platform for Action (2000), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2000), and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, which in its

resolution on the human rights of women ‘recognized the importance of examining the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination’ (2002) (qtd. in Yuval-Davis 193; see also Patel). One of the benefits attributed to intersectionality is inclusivity. The claim is that as a theoretical paradigm, intersectionality can act as a corrective against the white solipsism, heteronormativity, elitism, and ableism of dominant power and hegemonic feminist theory by making social locations and experiences visible that are occluded in essentialist and exclusionary constructions of the category ‘women’ (see Spelman). Ange-Marie Hancock argues that intersectional approaches are ‘inclusive and incisive’ and foster ‘deep political solidarity’. This analytic benefit corresponds to Crenshaw’s analysis of political intersectionality, which reveals how transformative social movements have reproduced deeply ingrained cognitive and representational exclusions in the course of political practice.

However, careful consideration of the nature of theories in the humanities reveals that they are helpful despite their flaws. As scholars such as Quincy Wright and May Brodbeck have argued that the inability of many societies’ approaches to produce a precise result is an attribute and not a fault arising mainly from the enigma of human nature. Theories, therefore, continue to remain functional in the humanities and social sciences despite the inability to attain the level of precision and, by implication, the capacity to predict like theories in the natural sciences (Rodrigues, Oliveira and Costa, 2012).

For this study, scholars across different fields of political science, political philosophy, sociology, and critical stakeholders have come up with several theories aimed at explaining women’s political exclusion across various countries. What has been done over the years is that a number of these theories were postulated to address women’s political exclusion based on tradition. It is a strategic way of categorizing men and women along the line of patriarchy (Peacock and Levack, 2008). It is opposed to the impacts of the social environment in which individual women find themselves. From those mentioned above, it is evident that humans’ social location is reflected in intersecting identities. These cannot be analyzed in isolation from society. Therefore, women’s exclusion from politics largely interfaces with culture at different phases or stages of participation-education, religion, income, privilege, and historical background.

It becomes pertinent that any theoretical underpinning that could be considered amenable to this research study must be strategic beyond the emphasis on patriarchy to encapsulate other key influential factors responsible for women's political exclusion. It is against this background that this study adopts the intersectionality theory as its broad theoretical approach. The pertinence of the intersectionality theory to this study is anchored on the fact that humans' social environment possesses both positive and negative effects on the overall performance of the person. This makes it crucial that the person's social location must be at the forefront in any investigation related to gender. Hence, gender must be evident in the framework of power relations entrenched in social identities (Carastathis, 2014).

The exclusion of women from political participation in Nigeria could be clearly understood and critically analyzed using intersectionality theory Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989; Hancock, 2007; Carastathis, 2014). It primarily focuses on the perception and understanding of women exclusion patterns that structure politics in a given place, which in turn define both the descriptive and normative views of the society that reinforces the status quo or otherwise. In other words, it centers on those who are most marginalized in society and sub-systems of power within any power system. The theory originated from the interaction of power structure in the life of the minority, especially the experience of black women that suffered discrimination on the grounds of race and sex in the United States of America. This feminist theory, originally conceived to deal with discrimination based on race, class, sexual orientation, and gender. It also focuses on how they interact to marginalize women in the United States which has now been extended to include other persons and women previously ignored, thereby making for its inclusivity.

This theory argues that inequality and discrimination in society are best understood when approached from how the privileged group members marginalize those who are multiply-burden. In this regard, emphasis only on factors that cause marginalization of the less elite group in isolation cannot fully explain the situation, as they are mere integral parts of the whole gamut of a complex process that creates the condition of oppression and domination. Therefore, attention must be on how these factors and the complicated process intersect and discriminate against the disadvantaged group. The application of this theory aims to identify the social identities that form the basis of discrimination, how these relate or interact with one another, and how the outcomes

of the relationship affect social and political equity in society. The theory is holistic because of its simultaneity, complexity, irreducibility, and inclusivity (Carastathis, 2014).

In the face of the reality that society assigns roles to men and women, Barry and Grady (2019) argue that women in Africa still observe gender-based roles as instituted by patriarchy and the discriminatory structures reinforcing the continued oppression of women out of the significant decisions that affect them. The African view of society is not individualistic; it is family-centered, and this informs the perception of women's position and place in the society as those responsible for household duties, and as "second-class citizens or [those who] playing second-fiddle" to men (Adefemi and Agunbiade, 2019).

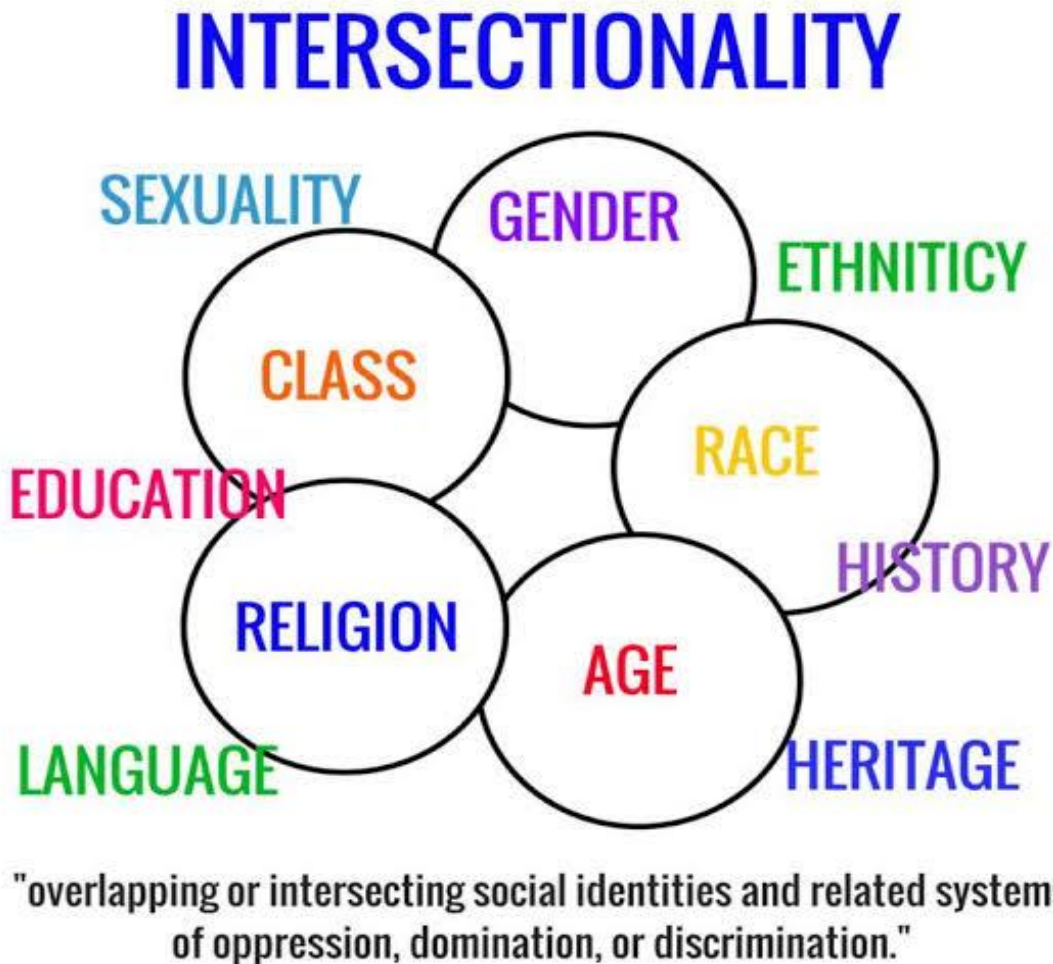
From those above, it is evident that the stigmatization of women who go into politics as non-adherent to gender expectations is a threat to the value system (Higginbotham, cited in Crenshaw, 1989). In Nigeria, gender often prescribes who is appointed or elected into important positions (Dim and Asomah, 2019). Women tend to be discriminated against because the norm has seen politics as a male-dominated role or activity. Men, in most climes, have dominated the political arena and set the rules to advance their interests at the expense of women (Kasomo, 2012 cited in Dim and Asomah, 2019).

The intersectionality theory presents reality as well as other socio-economic, cultural, and religious factors. These include education, employment, religion, residence, party affiliation, geo-political zone, customs, traditions, ethnicity, women's limited confidence, low motivation for leadership positions. It includes values that interact to add to strict legal and institutional systems that obstruct women's participation in politics in Nigeria. The interplay of all these factors prevents the restructure of redistributing opportunity against a multi-disadvantaged women-folk in an established power system, as their interplay and fluidity can manifest in different ways in situations wrongly regarded as fair or neutral. Reeves and Mackenbach (2019) argue that inequalities in political participation influence policy choices of who gets what, when, and how concerning party political, elected political offices, and political appointments, respectively.

The Nigerian reality is that the geo-political zone is a crucial determinant of women's political participation as women from the North-East, South-East, South-South and South-West are less politically engaged (Dim and Asomah, 2019). A focus on the southwest zone (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun,

Ondo, Osun, and the Oyo States); Adefemi and Agunbiade (2019) note that between 1999 and 2015, women constituted less than 9% of members of the state legislature in the region.

Figure 2



Applying this theory to the travails women faced in political offices in Nigeria, it can be reasonably conclude that stringent condition such as level of education, certain financial capacity or requirements, access to political structure, among others have contributed negatively to low representation of women in Nigeria's politics (Agunyai et al., 2014). Similarly, it has been well-documented (Aina, 2003; Agbalajobi, 2010; Ibeanu, 2009) that due to some of the conditions listed by the intersectionality theory, women in Nigeria have not actively participated in politics. They find it difficult to break into political positions because they are generally disadvantaged by gender ideology, cultural patterns, and predetermined social roles assigned to women and men as

well as low literacy, poor childcare, inadequate health care, and poverty (Orji, 2018). It has long been assumed that traditional anti-egalitarian attitudes toward gender slow down the political advancement of women. Studies of political recruitment in established democracies found that these attitudes influence both whether women are prepared to come forward as candidates for office (the supply side) and the criteria. In cultures with traditional attitudes toward gender roles, many women may be reluctant to run and, if they seek office, may fail to attract sufficient support to win. A study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) found that female politicians in many countries cited hostile attitudes toward political participation by women as one of the most important barriers to running for parliament (IPU, 2000).

Many communities in Nigeria emphasize women's traditional roles as mothers and housewives and restrict them to those roles (Agbalajobi, 2010). In communities where traditional, patriarchal value system is very strong, it favours sexually segregated roles and militate against the advancement, progress and participation of women in the political process (IPU, 2000). The gender role assigned to women defines their social and economic status in society, and this has a direct effect on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies (Agunyai et al., 2014). However, the structure of the Nigerian economy is such that many women rely on a male breadwinner for survival due to their inability to independently earn a living (Orji, 2018). The implication of this, as proponents of the intersectionality theory has observed, is that the ability of women to influence decisions at household level is essentially limited (Manser and Brown, 1980). With very little advantage over decision making at the household level, the capacity of women to participate in decision making at higher levels is equally constrained (Orji, 2018).

The capacity of Nigerian women to independently earn a living is particularly limited by their lack of access to decent employment. Available data show that Nigerian women have a limited access to formal employment: only 32.5 percent of women were employed in the (non-agricultural) private sector in 2007 (NBS, 2010), while the figures for the public sector show that the proportion of women employed in the sector between 2001 and 2004 did not exceed 30 percent (Fatile and Adejuwon, 2011: 115).

Barriers to formal employment for women can be traced to the reproductive roles they play, which often lead them involuntarily to accept low quality, poorly paid, parttime but relatively flexible

employment. Reproductive roles also mean that women often forgo promotion to higher paid jobs if these involve anti-social hours or frequent travel away from their families (British Council, 2012: 19). Lack of access to gainful employment means that many women fail to enjoy the regularity and predictability of income that formal employment offers as well as access to assets like bank finance, old age pension, social security (health insurance), union representation, and other benefits that depend on having a formal job.

Nigeria has been recording low participation of women in both elective and appointive positions, partly due to fallouts or limiting tendencies as advocated by the intersectionality theory. This is a growing concern to many Nigerians including women. However, concerted efforts have been made by government and non –governmental organizations to increase the level of participation of women in politics in line with the declaration made at the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, which advocated 30% affirmative action. In Nigeria, the extant National Gender Policy (NGP) recommended 35% affirmative action instead and sought for a more inclusive representation of women with at least 35% of both elective political and appointive public service positions respectively. The under representation of women in political participation gained root due to the patriarchal practice inherent in our society, much of which were obvious from pre-colonial era till date. However, the re-introduction of democratic governance has witnessed once again an increase in women political participation both in elective and appointive offices. The national average of women’s political participation in Nigeria has remained 6.7 percent in elective and appointive positions, which is far below the Global Average of 22.5 percent, Africa Regional Average of 23.4 percent and West African Sub Regional Average of 15 percent

### **2.9.3.1 Critique of intersectionality theory**

Despite intersectionality’s analytic promise to capture structural complexity without reducing or fragmenting simultaneous experiences of oppression(s), Alice Ludvig has argued that the fact that the social world is ‘insurmountably complex’ raises serious problems for intersectionality (247). Ludvig contends that ‘the endlessness of differences seems to be a weak point in intersectional theory’ (247). On what basis can a judgment be made as to which categories are salient? For instance, Ludvig points out that in daily life, it is often not possible to discern the specific form of categorical prejudice at work in an experience of discrimination: ‘[s]ubjectively, it is often not

possible for a woman to decide whether she has been discriminated against just because of her gender or for another reason such as a foreign accent' (246). Like Ludvig, Shuddhabrata Sengupta argues that the phenomenology of oppression ultimately defies its reduction to 'axes', 'structures', or even 'systems'; the 'algebra of our world' is too irreducibly complex and contradictory, flouting even an approach that aims to capture irreducibility (635). At the very least, Ludvig claims that intersectionality theorists are faced with a definitional problem: '[w]ho defines when, where, which, and why particular differences are given recognition while others are not?' (Ludvig, 247). Similarly, Kathryn Russell argues that we lack 'arguments about when and where we can emphasize one factor over another' as well as 'analyses about how gender, race, and class are connected' (35). Russell suggests that '[c]urrent scholarship seems to be caught in a bind between collapsing social categories together and separating them out in a list' (35).

Yet precisely this quandary, whether to flatten or fragment social experiences of multiple oppressions, is anticipated in Crenshaw's germinal discussion of intersectionality. What this set of criticisms reveals is that the methodological and conceptual challenge that intersectionality presents to categorial essentialism has been side-stepped by much 'intersectional' scholarly research, which assumes the stability and explanatory power of monistic categories even as it explores their permutations and combinations (see Carastathis, *Reinvigorating Intersectionality*). These categories have been defined with the experiences of relatively privileged subgroups as their 'historical base'. The 'bind' Russell identifies and the definitional problem Ludvig raises for intersectionality presuppose the adequacy of analytic distinctions between systems of oppression and aspects of identity rather than problematizing them. The conflation of 'complexity' and of the 'particular' with multiply oppressed groups (such as 'women with The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory a foreign accent'), and the corresponding conflation of 'simplicity' and the 'generic' with (relatively) privileged ones (such as women without an accent marked as foreign) reveals a single-axis framework is assumed. Another set of critiques concern the scalar reach of intersectionality. There is some debate as to whether intersectionality functions as a micro-, meso-, or macro-level heuristic. Collins distinguishes between the terms 'interlocking' and 'intersectional', taking them to refer, respectively, to macro-level and micro-level phenomena:

The notion of interlocking oppressions refers to macro level connections linking systems of oppression such as race, class, and

gender. This is the model describing the social structures that create social positions. Second, the notion of intersectionality describes micro-level processes – namely, how each individual and group occupies a social position within interlocking structures of oppression described by the metaphor of intersectionality. Together they shape oppression.

The intersectionality model presupposes but does not theorize the relations of micro-level to macro-level phenomena: as a model of identity, she argues that structural intersectionality offers no resources to ‘link intersectionality to its macro-level conditions of possibility, those “interlocking” structures of oppression’. Taking precisely the opposite view, intersectionality as a macro-level theory does not illuminate how social categories of gender and race function in the ‘lived experience of concrete subjects’ and that the model needs to be supplemented with a theory of subjectification.

Still another set of critiques of intersectionality involves the aforementioned distinction between intercategorical and intracategorical approaches (McCall). Broadly, the former is concerned with differences between social groups, while the latter is concerned with differences within social groups. Yuval-Davis critiques the intercategorical approach to intersectionality, arguing that ‘[u]nless it is complemented with an intra-categorical approach, it can be understood as an additive rather than a mutually constitutive approach to the relationship between social categories’. For instance, research which assumes the stability, fixity, and homogeneity of social groups can lapse into positivism, adding together monistic categories of identity. Elizabeth Cole makes a compelling argument that a positivist, intercategorical approach to intersectionality, which ‘assumes the definition and operationalization of social/structural categories as independent variables’, fails to ‘address the processes that create and maintain [...] the categories’.

Another set of criticisms concerns the normative goal of ‘inclusion’ imputed to intersectionality. Can intersectionality deliver on the promise to transform feminist theory and politics by centering the experiences of multiply oppressed groups? Or does it participate in a ‘retrograde’ form of identity politics? Drawing on Crenshaw’s largely overlooked call at the end of ‘Mapping the Margins’ to view identity-based groups not as monoliths, but as coalitions, constituted by internal differences as much as by commonalities, Cole suggests that ‘although intersectionality may be misconstrued to suggest

a politics of identity [of] vanishingly small constituencies, in fact the concept holds the promise of opening new avenues of cooperation' (see Crenshaw, Mapping 1299).

By contrast, Naomi Zack is dubious that intersectionality can deliver on its inclusionary promise. Zack argues that while intersectionality may indeed overcome essentialist constructions of identity, '[p]olitically, it easily leads to a fragmentation of women that precludes common goals as well as basic empathy. The de facto racial segregation of both criticism and liberation along the lines of historical oppression sabotages present criticism and future liberation because women of color speak only to themselves'. Zack asserts that women of color are only heard in white feminist discourses 'if they are willing to present themselves as representatives of this or that disadvantaged racial or ethnic group – they have lost the ability to speak to and be heard by white women as women'. Like a small group of 'post-intersectionality' theorists situated in the legal academy (Ehrenreich; Kwan; Chang and Culp; see also Nash), Zack calls on feminist theory to go 'beyond intersectionality' to achieve a truly 'inclusive feminism'. Although Zack's incisive critique of the abiding racial politics of U.S. feminist discourse is well taken, the tokenism she challenges hardly seems specific to, or inherent in 'intersectionality'. Furthermore, we might question the notion of 'inclusion' – which seems to presuppose the very same asymmetries of power that intersectionality contests – and instead materialize 'coalition' as the normative implication of intersectional analysis (Carastathis, Identity Categories)

#### **2.9.4 The African feminist theory**

This is a theoretical approach developed by the Sierra Leonean anthropologist, Filomena Chioma Steady in the early 1980s. Concerning the conceptual clarification of this theory, the submissions by various scholars, authors, and key stakeholders have been varying. The recurring idea is that of a movement established to address African women's conditions and necessities within the continent (Nkealah, 2016). However, it is said that due to the different experiences of African women within the continent, several brands of African feminism have sprung in response to a specific group of women. These sometimes align or conflict with other theories – mostly the black feminism and African womanism, which are apparently preferred by African women in the diaspora rather than African women within the continent. The evolution of the movement and the idea has been clouded by bickering, as several arguments exist to justify the history of African feminism. Scholars such as; Hazel Carby, Naomi Nkealah have submitted ideas to justify the

position and relevance of African feminism. While Hazel Grace (2020) submitted, ‘History has produced sexuality and femininity in ways that deviate from the attributes with which white women have been gifted as the prize of the Western world.’ ‘African feminism aspires to establish a new, liberal, creative, and self-reliant African woman within Africa’s various cultures,’ according to Naomi Nkealah (2008). In the end, feminism in Africa attempts to change culture as it impacts women in many societies.

Undoubtedly, feminist theories are the most relevant theories adopted in the analysis of women and men’s status in society while making efforts to address women’s subordination caused and reinforced by gender inequalities in a society characterized by patriarchy. African feminism in its approach is such that it addresses gender discrimination in particular within the working sphere as a political imperative imposed and reinforced by development aid, which encourages the employment of women in low level and low skilled jobs. African feminism also demands the progress of spaces for women to contribute to the running of their societies. In the precolonial era, women’s prominence across various societies was so evident that they held top positions, which significantly contributed to society’s advancement.

African women’s writing in the 1970s had a significant focus on dispelling mal-representations of African womanhood can literature during the period. In this period, feminist actors in both writing and activism made efforts to demonstrate their relevance to the African context, and more importantly, they do not emulate the western feminist ideology. The totality of the concept of feminism – as an activist movement and a body of ideas, succinctly expresses the necessity for a positive transformation of society that excludes women’s marginalization and enshrines the inclusiveness of the entirety of women’s rights as full citizens in their spheres of life. However, in reality, the aforementioned has, over time, mainly received theoretical concerns.

Concerning this research study, this theory’s application is pertinent as it helps to explain the origin of the inequality between men and women within the continent. This origin can be traced to the colonial roots of gender inequality in Africa which suggested that slavery and colonialism culminated into gender inequality (African union, 2009). This theory is applied to this study to pinpoint the evolution and existence of gender inequality in Africa, specifically in Southwest Nigeria which is the focus of this research. In more recent times, efforts to mitigate these

unbalanced realities in Africa started with noteworthy feminist movements across the continent. For instance, Gender and Development Action GADA has been a mobilizing force for women's groups and their supporters, connecting their popular demands to policy-making enclaves and advocating for necessary adjustments. On February 24, 2010, the Gender and Development Action Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre opened its doors. The center, which was founded with funding from the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) was designed to resolve family, marital, and intimate relationship problems.

Concerning involvement, participation, and representation in politics, the African feminism theory identifies the emergence of the decline in female participation in politics, resulting from the colonial regime repression, suppression by male post-independence. In response to this, many demonstrations were carried out across the continent, first in South Africa in the 1990s, Liberia in 1994 and Nigeria in the same decade. It involved workshops and conferences that advocated for women's legal rights under law and constitution (Mikell, 1995).

This is a theoretical approach developed by the Sierra Leonean anthropologist Filomena Chioma Steady in the early 1980s. This idea was primarily influenced by the legacy of her family experience with slavery, which lends itself to the experiences of women of African descent on the continent and women of the African diaspora worldwide (Terborg-Penn, 1995). Concerning this theory's conceptual clarification, the submissions by various scholars, authors, and key stakeholders have been varying. The recurring idea is that of a movement established to address African women's conditions and necessities within the continent (Nkealah, 2016). However, it is said that due to the different experiences of African women within the continent, several brands of African feminism have sprung in response to a specific group of women, which sometimes align or conflict with other brands – mostly Black Feminism. African womanism, which is both perceived by the African women in the diaspora rather than African women within the continent. Nigerian feminists can be found all around the country, united in their desire for women's freedom and equal society. These feminists, who are represented individually or via groups, have played a key role in determining the course of national problems, particularly those affecting women. As indicated above, a variety of contributions have been and are being documented on various feminist projects.

### **2.9.5 Empirical review**

#### **2.9.6 Women and political participation**

Onwuadi, Ugwu and Eneh (2020) have investigated the prospects and problems of civic adult education in promoting women's participation in politics in Anambra State, Nigeria. Two specific purposes, research questions, and corresponding null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 1,770 community women leaders from the 177 communities in Anambra State while through stratified proportionate sampling technique, 10 percent (177) respondents were selected for the study. The instrument for data collection was a 14-item researchers' questionnaire validated by three experts and whose reliability co-efficient was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method. Data collected from respondents were analyzed as mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistic was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed amongst others that to a very high extent, civic adult education programs contribute towards women's participation in politics. This is done through enhancing their involvement in the management of their community resources; equipping them with requisite life skills with which to adjust to constantly societal changes/demands; raising their awareness on current political matters and enhancing their critical consciousness on political issues. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Anambra State Agency for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education should corroborate with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other providers of adult education programs in the state. To ensure that an effective civic adult program is engendered in adult education provisions for enhancing women's critical consciousness and active participation in politics and governance of their society.

Madubuegwu, Agudiegwu, Onyia, Odoh, and Egbo (2020) examine the historical dynamics of voter apathy and its causes in Nigeria's electoral democracy. The methodology of this study is the qualitative design where the authors adopted a documentary source and non-participant observation methods of data collection and textual analysis of data and events. It revealed the persistence trend of voter apathy sustained by exacerbating conditions with adverse effects on democratic consolidation. The paper whence opines those measures to reverse the trend of voter

apathy in Nigeria are streamlined in two-dimensional perspectives to strengthen the process of democratic consolidation through voter enthusiasm.

Ehigocho (2021) examines the role of education in women empowerment for effective participation in National Development. Education is a very important tool in improving the status of women in any society. It is indispensable as it enables women to gain knowledge about the world that helps women upgrade their status, gain positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and the necessary strength needed to face challenges in life. Therefore, educated women have a vital role to play in governance, the agricultural sector, the industrial sector, and the commerce sector for the building of the nation. Although Nigerian women are faced daily with some grassroots challenges that have hindered their participation in the building of the nation. The challenges faced by women daily that have limited their contributions to the development of the Nigerian economy include; cultural and traditional belief systems, religion, illiteracy, and low standard of living. The study concluded that across the country, women access to education is still low as the gender disparity in the enrolment of women into all levels of educational institutions has widened over the years. To bridge this gap, the government should as a matter of urgency create and implement policies capable of promoting gender balance in access to education across the country, by insisting on the enrolment of a higher percentage of girl children in schools from primary schools. The government should also create policies that can remove institutional and artificial barriers based on culture, religion, and traditional considerations impeding women from contributing to economic development.

Akpan (2018) looked at how many women voted in the 2015 national elections. Qualitatively driven and relied on secondary sources of data, he contended that, despite decades of the battle for gender parity and women's empowerment, women's political participation in that election was quite low. The study also addresses the patriarchal aspect of Nigerian society, as well as the absence of internal democracy and political violence. These were obstacles that women had to overcome to participate in politics. The study explored the theoretical perspective on women's discrimination and inequality, and then proposed alternative solutions to help them participate in politics and become more empowered. In Africa, Olugbemiga (20117) looked at the trends and patterns of women's participation and representation. The place of women in Africa's growing democracies has been brought to the forefront of debates, conversations, and literature on women's

engagement in developed and developing democracies. While significant research has been done on women's political participation in industrialized democracies, there is little data and knowledge about women's participation in Africa. This research gives a thorough investigation of the trends and patterns of women's engagement in Africa's nascent democracies, using Varieties of Democracy data from 1900 to 2015. The trends and patterns were demonstrated using data from five African countries. While women's engagement was very low from 1900 to 1950 due to tradition, ignorance, colonialism, and a lack of education, the data revealed greater participation after 1950, which is positive in and of itself, but the upward trajectory has not been continuous or static'. Due to a variety of variables, it fluctuated between positive and negative. Environmental, sociocultural, and educational variables, as well as each country's internal political dynamics, all contribute to this. The report stated that, while African women's political participation began at different times due to country-specific circumstances, women's marches for participation and inclusion have been on the rise in many, if not all, African countries.

The first thorough empirical investigation of physical and psychological gender-based violence against politicians was published by Hkansson (2019). He finds that the most pronounced gender discrepancy in violence exists among politicians at the top of the political ladder, based on three waves of survey data on 8000 local-level politicians in Sweden. Female mayors are subjected to significantly more violence than any other type of politician. Furthermore, there are signs that women are penalized more severely than men for media exposure and supporting minorities. This shows that perpetrators of political violence choose to target women, especially those who are more powerful and visible. The findings have significant implications for understanding the personal cost of having political power, as well as how it varies by gender.

In Osun State, Nigeria, Orisadare (2019) evaluated the involvement of women's groups in politics, problems, and implications for economic growth. The research was conducted utilizing primary data from forums and dialogues held inside women's groups in Osun State, Nigeria, with an average of thirty (30) members from ten (10) local government areas (LGAs). Additionally, exploratory methods based on existing research were used. According to the findings of the study, women's organizations do not have a political objective; in most cases, their goals do not correspond with any political agenda, even though its members accept government jobs and enjoy official patronage. There was also evidence that women's groups have a high percentage of

illiteracy, with the majority of them unaware of existing national or international gender equality laws or affirmative action. As a result, participating in politics and contributing their voices to political issues is tough. The study indicates that the current role of grassroots women's organizations in encouraging more women's engagement in politics and affecting economic development may be insufficient. As a result, if they want to assist more women to join and be relevant in politics, they must step up their efforts and embrace political problems. As a result, the study advises that governments and all stakeholders should prioritize greater empowerment programs for women's groups at the grassroots level, particularly in the areas of decision-making and political engagement.

Agbalajobi (2010) through a qualitative method examined women's participation and the political process in Nigeria: problems and prospects found that the underrepresentation of women in politics is as result of some cultural stereotype, abuse of religion, traditional practices and patriarchal societal structures. A critical look at these factors shows that they are similar to some of the core principles of intersectionality theory. It also found that women have been put at the background politically for years; this has engendered a consciousness of women under-representation in public life.

Ette and Akpan-Obong (2022) in their study titled *Negotiating Access and Privilege: Politics of Female Participation and Representation in Nigeria* utilized the qualitative data and found that strategizes pathways through patriarchal structures by deploying their femininity by accentuating the resilience of women in contexts where electoral dynamics undermine their participation and make access to the political space a privilege. Evidence from this review showed that the prospect of a shift in favour of increased participation by women is relatively bleak, individual women continue to aim for the 'political glass ceiling'. The study holds the view that the election of Kamala Harris as the US first female vice president could have a rippling effect on women's participation in Nigerian politics. This shows that that the emergence of first black woman as the vice president in the US can motivate more women's involvement in politics in Africa.

Similarly, Tamunosaki and Davis (2019) in their study titled *Gender Mainstreaming and Political Representation: The Nigerian Experience* argued that the mainstreaming of Nigerian women into politics has been limited by factors such as the dominant patriarchal system in Nigeria, negative

attitude of Nigeria women towards the political process and their lack of support for fellow women aspirant, among other inhibitions. Utilizing both the qualitative method and feminism theory, results showed that in spite of gains made in the area of women mainstreaming in politics, there still exist a wide disparity between men and women in the country in terms of access to socioeconomic opportunities including participation in politics and decision-making. A critical look at this result showed that this disparity could have been because of the factors listed above. The inability of the government to effectively implement global declarations on mainstreaming of women in politics could have also been responsible for the disparity between men and women.

Osondu-Oti and Olominu (2018) conducted a study titled breaking the glass ceiling for Nigerian women participation in politics: a gender mainstreaming approach using the qualitative method. It argued that lots countries have made tremendous progress in the mainstreaming of women in politics, especially countries like Rwanda and South Africa in Africa; and Sweden and Norway in Scandinavian countries. It notes the need for a remarkable breaking of the glass ceiling, which is rarely examined. It found that Nigerian women's full participation and representation in politics largely depend on the strict adoption of the mainstreaming approach. Its finding also include that while Nigerian women have been appointed to head key political offices, their larger participation and representation in electoral politics have been hindered by glass ceiling barriers such as patriarchy, structure of production and reproduction, culture and religion, inadequate formal education, success penalty and lack of legal backings that support equality in the country's Constitution. Evidence from this study is similar to the above where Nigerian women are deprived by cultural, religious, and societal sentiments. From this reviews, it will reasonable to conclude that full implementation of the mainstreaming plan, effectively backed by the government will go a long way in improving women's participation in politics in Nigeria.

Suleiman (2017) through the study titled the Role of Women towards Political Participation in Nigeria argued that the patriarchal system and male domination of the society, which relegates women to subordinate role, has created women's inferiority complex and alienated them from the mainstream politics in Nigeria. This is further worsened by the Nigerian political culture of thuggery and gangsterism, which has made the political terrain too dangerous for most women to venture into mainstream politics. It found that the reformation of all religious, statutory and customary laws and practices that perpetuate women's subordination in the country and the explicit

specifications and modalities of affirmative actions on women's political participation and clear guidelines for implementations in the Nigeria constitution will enhance increased participation of women in politics.

### **2.9.7 Causes/factors undermining women's participation in Nigerian politics**

In Nigeria, Dim and Asomah (2019) explore the socioeconomic elements that influence women's political participation. Political participation is predicted by education, religion, residence, party affiliation, and geopolitical zone, according to the study. Post-secondary education, the South-eastern geopolitical zone, and party identification are the most significant predictors of women's political engagement, according to the beta values derived by multivariate linear regression analysis. The study emphasizes the need for education and the promotion of women to join political parties to gain more clout in the Nigerian political system. In a study titled "Gender and political participation in Nigeria: a cultural perspective", Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014) rely on secondary data to find that cultural norms impede women's participation in politics in Nigeria. The study holds that women's low participation in politics can be checked and redressed by a solid political will to implement policy measures or declarations on gender discrimination. This study inevitably is germane to this research work in that its findings and conclusion can serve as reference points and guides. For instance, the head of state or presidents of countries to prompt global policies on gender discrimination can adopt their findings on solid political will.

Esidene and Abudul (2013) find, in their study "The Role of Women in Nigerian Politics: Addressing the Gender Question for an Enhanced Political Representation in the Fourth Republic" that colonialism is the leading cause of women's low participation in politics in Nigeria. This finding has a close affinity with this study, especially in the causes of women's low participation in politics. Agbalajobi's (2010) study, "Women's participation and the political process in Nigeria: Problems and prospects" using mainly secondary data, finds that cultural stereotype, abuse of religion, traditional practices and patriarchal societal structures are the leading causes of discrimination against women in politics in Nigeria. It concludes that discrimination against women has engendered a consciousness of women's under-representation in public life. This finding is particularly relevant to this study because it reveals other possible reasons for women's low involvement in Nigerian politics.

Several scholars hold that politics is a multifaceted word. It may be used positively in the context of a “political solution” which is compromising and non-violent (Aian, 2015) or descriptively as “the art or science of government” but also often carries a negative connotation (Rod and Martin, 2013). The concept has been defined in various ways, and different approaches have fundamentally differing views on whether it should be used extensively or limitedly, empirically or normatively, and on whether conflict or cooperation is essential to it. Politics is exercised across various levels from clans and tribes to government structures, firms, and sovereign states (Bo, 1985) – and several methods are deployed to achieve set goals – such as; Negotiation (Brady, 2017), lawmaking (Hawkesworth and Kogan, 2013) and exercise of force (Taylor, 2012), War (Blanton and Kegley, 2016). The concept of politics underpins the idea of the political system which is a framework that defines acceptable political methods with a polity (Blanton and Kegley, 2016). Throughout recorded history in all parts of the world, men have subjected women to domination. It is persisting cultural stereotypes, abuse of religious and traditional practices, patriarchal societal structures in which men dominate economic, political, and social power, and the role women have historically played as the followers of male political leaders.

This type of discrimination is a global phenomenon not just an African or Nigerian issue. The only difference is that it has persisted in this region of the world for so long, even as other industrialized countries strive for gender equality and equity. Women face unjustified discrimination in a variety of ways. For example, in some Nigerian courts and police stations today, women who wish to act as sureties for accused persons who have been granted bail are routinely denied due to their gender. Even in today’s environment, democracy has become a critical tool for achieving long-term progress. The influence of the democratic definition is still unknown. Political engagement is a requirement of democracy and allows for a range of viewpoints. Democracy cannot exist without the participation of women, who make up half of the world’s population.

Anifowose (2004) claims that several established democracies, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, were in actuality male polyarchies for a long time. Even well-known proponents of democratic and republican governments have scoffed at assertions that women should be treated equally to men. They mostly agreed with the popular belief that women’s primary roles were marriage, procreation, and family, not politics. As a result, John Locke believed that “all men are

by nature equal; they never urged that women be allowed to vote, and they regarded it more or less self-evident that husbands have the final say” (cited in Anifowose, 2004). According to Anifowose (2004), tracing the historical origins of male dominance is impossible, but he feels that one fairly probable answer can be found in physical differences. Men are usually huge, taller, and even physically stronger than women, making them better capable of enforcing their will through physical aggression and threats of violence. Women, on the other hand, are particularly vulnerable due to their roles in childbirth and nursing. Discrimination and subjugation of women are also imposed through customs, traditional customs, beliefs, and legislation, all of which are backed up by the state’s coercive authority.

To be sure, it is difficult for women to participate in political life when their major concern is survival, and where they have no choice but to spend much of their time trying to meet the basic needs of their families. The persistent economic crisis that Nigeria has been experiencing since the 1980s has led to far reaching deterioration of the conditions of families across middle and lower classes of the society. As a result, women have had to increasingly take up economic roles in the family previously reserved for men. This situation is accentuated by the increase in the number of female-headed households, where death or absence of male heads of households has forced women to assume the bread-winner role. In families where women have formal employment (e.g. as teachers, lawyers or doctors), they tend to combine them with their full-time role as wives and mothers. Participating in politics under these conditions might then be considered a third full-time job.

In conclusion, discrimination against women has a basic nature that praises men as distinctive, more robust, and supposed to be in the public space, but see women as fragile, incapable, and should be confined to the home or private space. It has had a significant impact on women’s perceptions of politics, resulting in a low level of political interest, awareness, and involvement among women (Agbalajobi, 2007). Nte, Edem, Otioro and Anwana (2020) examine political transition and democratic consolidation in Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. They use historical and descriptive research methods were adopted and data were got through the aid of primary and secondary sources. The elite theory was also adopted as a theoretical framework. The major findings revealed among others that several attempts at providing political transition and democratic consolidation in most African countries were hampered by the personality cult of the

emerging political gladiators who exploited the instrument of state to promote their selfish agenda, by way of manipulating transition programs and advanced political strategies to prolong their stay. Based on these findings, the paper recommended among others that politics should not be viewed as do or die affairs, those at the position of power should accept defeats and hand over to power to whoever wins elections. Hate speech must be tamed if parties have to operate in a safe political environment and inter-ethnic conflicts stemmed and institutions such as the judiciary, legislature, and electoral body should be independent.

Umar and Bakare (2018) investigated the barriers to women's participation in the information society in Nigeria. The study has identified some of the barriers to women's access to the internet as to lack of Infrastructure that includes both the hardware, software, and the network. Education and skills include literacy, language, computer skills, and information literacy. Socio-cultural and economic problems such as the African culture, religious beliefs, and other family responsibilities have affected women's participation in the use of the internet. Women's participation in the information society is dependent on some of the following requirements as educational empowerment economic empowerment provision of infrastructural facilities attitudinal change towards the use of ICTs. The study concluded that women have to be fully engaging in the use of the internet so that they can also participate and contribute to their inclusion in shaping the Information Society.

Women's political representation in Nigeria is further constrained by the level of education and training that many women receive. Although the gender gap in educational enrolment is closing, studies reveal that the gross enrolment ratio of girls is still significantly lower than that of boys. The UNESCO EFA Monitoring Report for 2008 puts disparity in the net enrolment ratio between boys and girls in primary schools at 68 percent and 59 percent, respectively (UNESCO, 2008). The report also indicates that girls' completion rates are generally lower than that of boys; some States in the North, such as Jigawa, recorded girls' completion rates as low as 7.8 percent (UNESCO, 2008). Apart from gender disparity in enrolment, studies also suggest that many female students underperform and do not obtain the qualifications that are expected. Figures suggest a decline in the number of female candidates who meet the threshold of five credits, including credits in English Language and Mathematics, which are crucial to further education and training in Nigeria. Several reasons are given for the poor enrolment and performance of female students.

These include inability to pay school fees, bullying in schools, lack of water and sanitation facilities at schools, early marriage, parental disapproval of the secular curriculum, lack of regular attendance as a result of domestic and other health related issues, and poor quality teaching (Unterhalter and Heslop, 2011; Hunt, 2008).

Musa, Jide, and Deinde-Adedeji (2020) examined the role of political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (2010 -2019). Political parties are the heart and soul of a democratic society, and without them, no true democracy can exist. Following the military interregnum, political parties in Nigeria's Fourth Republic reactivated their activity. The character and behaviour of the country's political parties have a significant impact on democratic consolidation, and the article examines how they have molded or stagnated democracy. The study was based on a historical design and used the elite theory as a framework. The information gathered was evaluated textually. The relationship between political parties and democratic consolidation was examined using secondary data such as books, journals, and online materials. The dearth of well-institutionalized political parties, godfathers' syndrome, and a lack of internal democracy were all impediments to democratic consolidation during the research period. To address the existing state of party politics and democratic practice, this study suggests that political parties be overhauled.

From the foregoing analysis of factors constraining women or responsible for their underrepresentation in politics, it can be summarized that women in Nigeria are prevented from politics due to the following reasons:

(a) Gender: The predominantly patriarchal nature of Nigerian society that dictates behavior along gendered lines, coupled with the country's political experience during the colonial era has had a devastating effect on women's political participation.

“Gender has over the years, portrayed women as weaker sex. The concept of gender represents the woman as one who is superficial with interest mainly in fashion, beauty and little love for deep thinking” (Awajiusuk, 2015, p. 99). In line with this thinking, female children are socialized to regard themselves as subordinate and their primary duty is taking care of the home and child bearing and rearing when they reach adulthood. In contrast, male children are trained to play leadership roles from infancy (Awajiusuk, 2015, p. 104). Thus, women

that participate in politics contravene culturally assigned gender roles. This results in an unequal balance of power as women are marginalized and excluded from politics due to the belief that they are subordinate and are not fit for public engagement (Nwabunkeonye, 2014: 287). Indeed, some Nigerian cultures forbid women from occupying leadership positions as they believe that they cannot lead men.

- (b) Biological roles: The demands imposed by women's biological roles of child bearing and rearing might also inhibit their participation in politics. Moreover, when they do venture into politics, they are likely to avoid elective positions that are time consuming and prefer to provide logistical support.
- (c) Dual Nativity: The Nigerian Constitution grants women dual nativity. This means that they have equal rights in both their place of birth and those of their husbands. Although some are of the opinion that this gives women an edge in politics, in reality, it is a hindrance because women do not know where they truly belong. In her place of birth, her kinsmen might not vote for her due to the cultural belief that she ceases to be part of them as soon as her bride price is paid. Equally, her husband's kinsmen might not recognize her as one of them.
- (d) The Demands of Politics: Politics is time consuming and involves traveling and meetings that could last late into the night. This discourages women from entering politics as responsible wives are expected to be home taking care of their family. Moreover, Nigerian politics is marred by political violence and intimidation of both voters and candidates during elections, further hindering women's participation.
- (e) Stigmatization of women in politics: Given the political environment in Nigeria, many believe that politicians have no regard for human rights. The fact that politics is male dominated leads to misconceptions that the few women in their midst can only make headway if they compromise their virtue. Hence, they are regarded as being of easy virtue and culturally rebellious, among other things (Nwabunkeonye, 2014, p. 287).
- (f) Finance: Competing for political positions in Nigeria requires huge financial back up that most women cannot access. Financial requirements include registration and nomination fees which are exorbitant, and paying for election campaigns, among others. As noted previously, economic marginalization of women is one of the colonial legacies. Women in Nigeria have yet to measure up to their male counterparts financially. Their economic disempowerment

stems from the sexual division of labor, denial of property rights, and job opportunities offered on the basis of sex, among others. This gives men an edge over women (Agbalajobi, 2010, p. 78). In the same vein, voters regard elections as an opportunity to obtain money from candidates as they are not sure they will keep their promises if elected. They hence vote for the highest bidder (Ekpenyong et al., 2015, p. 9). Monetisation of political office has thus negatively impacted women's participation in politics.

- (g) Cultural and religious inhibitions: Most cultures in Nigeria do not afford women political rights. A woman's rights are believed to be subsumed in her husband. Payment of a bride price, which is widespread in Nigeria, gives a man control over his wife. A husband could prevent his wife from participating in politics or taking up a political appointment if she does not seek his approval (Obi, 2008, p. 73). The two major religions in the country (Christianity and Islam) preach that women should be submissive and by implication are not expected to be leaders, further enhancing their political marginalization.

### **2.9.8 Gender equality**

Gender inequality, particularly in the political sphere, has been a major issue for women in recent years. Gender inequality has been a worldwide problem for millennia. PREMIUM TIMES and women's rights advocates anticipated that women will have minimal representation in the 2015 election. The forecast was validated by the outcome of that year's election. In that year's election, women received just 6.2 percent (seven female senators) of Senate seats, while males received 93.8 percent. Only six women were appointed as deputy governors in the country's 36 states. There was no female governor elected. According to the Centre for Development and Democracy (CDD), some of the variables influencing female political involvement and representation in Nigeria include money, awareness, culture, religion, party system, and structure, among others. Even though the following shows that very few women have had the opportunity in a leadership position, there are hundreds of male equivalents for everyone or a single example of women. Sexism has emerged as a prominent issue in Nigerian politics.

Women have been politically classified as an endangered species, and their minimal engagement in Nigerian governance and politics is frequently attributed to culture, religion, economic constraints, and male chauvinism. The majority of leadership posts in African society, and

particularly in Nigerian society and southwest Nigeria, have been assigned to males, therefore promoting the trajectory of gender inequality.

The 2015 general elections provided female lawmakers, representatives of different women's groups, women and male gender activists, the market women's association, professional associations, and media practitioners with a strong opportunity to negotiate the path to power. All of these women are working to make President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's 35 percent Affirmative Action Committee a reality.

The 2015 general election was viewed as an excellent starting point for validating Nigerian women's voting patterns. It is clear that women actively participated in and supported the 2015 campaigns and elections, necessitating reflection and focused advocacy for the conscious and quality inclusion of women in the structures of the then elected government and parliament through clear pronouncements and action (AIT's Focus Nigeria, 2015). Thus according to Igwe (2002), political engagement is the degree and form of people's involvement in government and associated institutions of society, such as the economy and culture. Involvement in political campaigns and debates, attendance at caucus or strategy meetings of political parties, voting during elections, running for office, and holding government and party positions are all examples of active citizenship. Okolie's (2004) expatiates on this by including freedom of expression, affiliation, the right to free flow of communication, the ability to influence decision-making, and the right to social justice. It also outlines such rights, according to him, to demand improved social and health services, better working conditions, and pay increases, among other things.

Looking at this in another perspective, during 2017, Nigeria had a workforce of 110 million, with 85 million in the working population, 45 percent of which were women (World Bank SCD, 2018: ix). Females make up 45.5 percent of the Nigerian labour force (World Bank, 2019). Women's engagement in official and informal job markets has been increasing in both rural and urban regions between 1990 and 2009, although it remains lower than that of men (Olowa and Adeoti 2014:73). Women who could really work outside the house – notably in non-familial organizations; in remunerative employment in the formal rather than informal sector; or in regular and full-time jobs that are permanent and stable – are more likely to gain empowerment (Oluwabemiga et al, 2016: 76). Even though its citizens are a valuable productive asset, the

strength of its workforce is determined by their health, education, and talents. Small amounts of investment in health, sanitation, safe drinking water, and education erode human capital and the current and future worth of this labour workforce. Gender disparity is prevalent, particularly in school, with net primary enrolment rates for boys and girls of 70% and 58%, respectively (World Bank SCD, 2018: ix).

### **2.9.9 Research gap**

From the harvesting of scholarly views on causes of women's underrepresentation in Nigeria, gender equality, theoretical reviews and framework, and other topical issues above. It can be deduce that many extant studies on women participation in politics have generally examined causes of women's low representation and its implications for national development. Little, if nothing, has been written on their role in sub-national government level. Evidence shows that many of these studies have examined women's role at the national or federal level, especially federal legislative institutions, whereas evidence is sparse on their role in local government, and state House of Assemblies. This study bridged this gap by examining the role of women in sub-national parliament in Southwest, Nigeria.

In addition, other scholarly studies on this subject have extensively focused on discrimination against women in public offices than their positive contributions to politics and development. Rather than dwell on over flogged area of gender-inequality and exclusion from politics, this study specifically focuses on new idea and knowledge that women can bring into politics. Little research work has been done to highlight the contributions of women in politics. It is imperative to note that majority of these studies have depended much on results from secondary method rather than that from primary data where the voice of affected women can be heard. This study bridges this gap, by utilizing interviews to collect data from affected women.

Besides, previous extant studies have been too focused on women's participation that representation. Participation and representation are not the same, while most women participate in politics through voting, not all of them have representation in politics compared to men. This study bridged this gap by examining the low representation of women in politics. Research in this regard will advance knowledge in the possibility of understanding why more representation of women in politics promotes national development.

Existing study on women and politics has found a variety of elements that influence women's political engagement throughout the world. There have been several valuable studies on the examination of women's political participation in Nigeria (Orisadare, 2019; Adeniyi, 2003; Cicognani et.al, 2011; Portney, 2009; Pyeatt and Yanus, 2018; Lawless, 2004; Atkeson, 2003; Koch, 1997; Pyeatt and Yanus, 2018; Fitzgerald, 2013 and others). This study takes a different approach by looking at women political participation in southwest Nigeria. It highlights issues that motivate women's low political participation in southwest Nigeria such as avoidance of ideas and motions made by women, lack of equal understanding of partisan politics, lack of appropriate education, and political competitiveness as some of the problems faced by women. It aims to find a long-term solution to the issue of women's underrepresentation in the southwest Nigerian democratic structure, which has frequently led many gender activist groups such as Lola Omolola, Aisha Yesufu, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Kiki Mordi to demand the United Nations 35 percent quota of women representation in all political offices.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

This rigorous literature review has highlighted the impediments to women's political participation including actual, perceived, and firmly embedded in the society and in elected positions in southwest Nigeria. The review shows the numbers of women in position remain very low and this situation will take some time to change. The low political participation is due to the country's violent, political culture, intimidation, manipulation, emotions, and money politics, ignorance, corruption, dishonesty, and indifference are all factors that contribute to apathy. Women, peace, and security networks have demonstrated their strength, particularly when it comes to collaborative action or advocacy. Focus on women as agent of peace building will yield more viable result as they are closer to children and also have convincing power over their husbands.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **WOMEN LEGISLATORS AND THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN NIGERIA'S SOUTHWEST**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the role of women in the State Houses of Assemblies across South-West Nigeria. State legislative houses are administered or run through a committee system and members of these committees are drawn from among elected legislators, which in some cases, include women. Women play crucial role in the legislative process, especially in the area of public debates and discussion on proposed bills, oversight functions on Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs), as well as representation. For instance, few women that eventually made it to the parliament, have played decisive roles in budget discussions, debates, and approval. They have also been engaged in serving as members of committee to probe and compel the executive to be accountable. One other area, women have played key role in the state parliament is during the plenary section, as they have actively lent their voices to issues under discussion at the floor of the parliament. Some of them have proposed bills, while others have been actively involved in advocating programmes and policies that can empower women. Given these attributes of women's political participation in legislative process, it is pertinent to discuss in details contributions or role of women in legislative process in Nigeria's South west. To adequately address this concern, roles of women in budget approval, empowerment programmes, constituency project, among others were discussed.

#### **3.2 Women and budgeting process**

Central to the duty of the legislators, is the scrutiny and approval of a country's or state budget submitted by the executive arm of government. Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, the legislative houses (federal and state) have played critical roles in the approval of budget. Though, the various legislative houses across Nigeria have risen to the occasion in the budgeting process, the level of participation of women legislators have remained largely unknown. This is because, despite the claims for allowing more women in politics, available evidences suggest that the number of women legislators remains minimal. Thus, women's participation in key positions have remain limited if not low, and this explains why Ntiwunka (2013) observes that apart from

the budgeting process for the ministry of women affairs, other budget processes have been carried out with active participation of women.

In spite of the conscious attempt to ensure equal representation of both sex in legislative duties in the South West, the number of women holding key positions remain low. Though, several scholars have attested to the fact that women representation and holding of key positions is on the increase in legislative houses (Agbalajobi, 2010) there has been a sharp neglect in the fiscal laws that guide the process of allocating appointments among legislators. This problem accounts for the lapses in developmental agenda, problematic office allocations and heads of budget scrutiny process. Since 1999, the budgetary process in Nigeria have been executed without due recourse to gender consideration, and this not only contradicts the country's claim to adhering to gender policy, but also global best practice (Nelson, 2020).

### **3.3 Women and empowerment programme**

Women empowerment and their inclusion in decision making or development process is globally recognized as determinant of development, including community development. The inclusion of women in development, is not the same as equating them with their male counterparts, but it is critical to development. However, the problem has always been gender inequality, disempowerment of women, and their exclusion from development process. For example, how can there be development, when half of the world population is not given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making, that can stimulate development? The case of Africa, and Nigeria in particular, is pathetic as women's exclusion from development processes is further exacerbated by the patriarchal system. Furthermore, the gender-gap in mobile internet usage in Africa is another devastating factor against women empowerment.

The gap in ICT usage has soared to about 34% in Sub-Saharan Africa (Intel 2013). Women have been worse hit by this gap as it affects their access to opportunities and economic development, thus worsening their already precarious problem of exclusion from development process. Thus, the good news is that globalization and advancement in technology have proven to be effective in reducing gender inequality (AfDB, 2015; Fulufhelo & Shuman, 2020). New media, via computer-internet information and communication, is capable of enabling resourceful persons, communities

and countries to address their socio-economic conditions, with greater positive outcomes and efficiency (UNESCO, 2003).

The increasing use and penetration of mobile phones and internet penetration are creating more unprecedented opportunities for people including women (Intel, 2013). It has empowered women, reduced their isolation, strengthen their voice, improve their participation in governance, reduced poverty and promote gender equality (Gurumurthy and Chami, 2014). One important developmental area, where new media has empowered women and contributed to community development is food security. Women are key stakeholders in all components of food security. Food security is part of community development projects, because without food, hardly can any community be safe for inhabitants. However, for a very long time, despite, the unique roles of women in community food production, they lack access to digital technologies like smart phones, and even some of them who have access, lack the literacy skills to operate the technology, sometimes, because most of them live in rural areas, they lack access to internet to power their smart phones (Intel, 2013).

These ugly circumstances have negatively relegated them to the background in food security decision making process. Consequently, side-lining them as beneficiaries of grants, credits, and government supports for food security. For example, decisions about beneficiaries of agricultural grants, credit facilities, agricultural research and development, and supports from government are overwhelmingly determined by men at the expense of women, who are the main livewire of food security at the community level. This lop-sidedness is partly responsible for Africa's high rating in hunger and mal-nutrition index (Duflo 2005; von Grebmer et al., 2017; Quisumbing and Maluccio, 2003). This is grossly unacceptable, and requires a concerted effort against women discrimination in decision making process.

The empowerment of women and inclusion of their needs in development plans is the surest way for Africa's development (Lechman and Paradowski 2021). One of the channels of empowering women is granting them access to the use of new media digital technologies (Çetin et al., 2020; Asongu and Odhiambo, 2020). This increases their freedoms and voice, making them contribute

unique initiatives to development, which in the long run benefits the entire society (Lechman & Paradowski, 2021).

The contribution of women farmers to food security, especially in terms of food chains, distributions, and nutrient utilization has been improved through access to smart phones, e-wallet, and agricultural technology. Women are critical to the economic force of Africa as 43 percent of the continent's agricultural labour force are women and they are responsible for 60-80 percent of food production (FAO, 2011; Lindio-McGovern and Wallimann, 2009; Mehra and Rojas, 2008). Besides, women in the blue economy (fish farming) have avoided waste and over fishing through calls from their smart phones to customers to determine quantities of fish to be supplied to the market (Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2018; Agbarevo and Ukagha, 2018). Similarly, through the use of new media, women, especially girl children, have been bolder to report violence, rape, and sexual harassment against them to the police and other relevant authorities in the society. With access to smart phones and social media platforms, more women have participated in social gatherings, community projects, and development processes including the construction of markets, roads, bridges, boreholes and hospitals. Their voice on issues of maternal health and child births can be widely disseminated and brought to public attention via smart phones, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp among others. For example, unlike when they lack access to new media, they can now put a call to community health workers to report their health challenges and get instant feedback on appropriate treatment and drugs to use. This has the potential of reducing the maternal mortality rate and construction of more health centres at the community level to cater for maternal health challenges. It has been proven that women's health is a strong determinant of development at the levels of family, society, and nation (Cetin et al. 2020; Asongu & Odhiambo, 2020).

Empowering women with adequate access to new media will promote inclusiveness and participation of more women in household developmental process and decisions, which in turn, could transcend to community development. If at the household level, women are actively involved in the decision-making process, it will go a long way in shaping the development of their community, since communities are composite of various households. The decision of households in the adoption of ICTs, without doubt, influences the empowerment of women (Lechman & Paradowski, 2021). Digital technologies by women influences household consumption and wealth

accumulation (Kim, 2018), thus leading to more savings. Similarly, the use of digitally-based new media by women increases household income and allows its equitable distribution (Patria & Erumban 2020). Women's access to the use of digitally-based new media increases the general welfare of household members and that of the community due to access to better information on financial products (online investment, financial savings, and credits), services (money transfers), and market access, (Pellegrina et al., 2017; Tchamyu et al., 2019).

How best to empower women remains a core and lingering discourse across the globe and with no end in sight. Despite the role women play in the society, women continue to face all sorts of obstacles when it comes to their active participation on issues that affect them directly (Arum 2010). As a way of making up for the exclusion of women, various states in Nigeria have set up women empowerment programmes to ease the burden women face in family upbringing and societal pressure. For instance, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Ogun state has persistently initiated women empowerment programmes with the sole aim of closing gender gaps and ensuring that women in Ogun state contribute meaningfully to the development of the state and Nigeria. Nonetheless, programmes that are expected to empower women and close the gender disparity remains at 49 and 48.4 percent implementation (Agbalajobi, 2010). This has been worse with the seeming marginalization of women in the decision making process of these empowerment initiatives as well as the brazen corruption that characterizes the operations of these institutions (Ntiwunka, 2013). Though women supervisory councillors make up 43 percent of cabinet in Ondo state, women have made substantial impacts in the governance of the state via their participation in empowerment programmes like 'Gbebiro' (family support). Gbebiro was set up with the sole aim of empowering women, providing health education, strengthening family values and cohesion, and equally ensuring that women acts as agent of stabilization in the family and their immediate society. Furthermore, the programme equally ensures that women who find themselves in leadership position demonstrate a high sense of commitment, responsibility and the zeal to deliver on their mandates (Adebimpe and Afolabi, 2021).

### **3.4 Women and sponsoring of bills**

Despite Nigeria's commitment to the 35% affirmative policy, women representation in the legislative houses remains disappointing. In terms of vying for and occupying legislative seats,

women are a far lesser percentage, and this affects their expected role in decision making, leadership (Bello, 2013) and even sponsoring of bills. Though Agabalajobi (2010) argues that there seems to be an improvement in terms of the numbers of women elected into legislative seats and politics in Nigeria, she concludes that this number still remains largely insignificant with adverse effects on political decision making processes. Nonetheless, evidence abounds to suggest that women have been active or play key roles in terms of sponsoring, scrutinizing and approval of bills in various legislative houses across South-West Nigeria. It is in this context that Adefemi and Agunbiade (2019) argues that despite the apparent low representation of women in legislative positions across states in the South-West, elected women have made significant impacts in decision making and sponsoring of bills in the interest of their constituency and the state at large.

Azumi and Asan (2021), in their study, “Women and Legislative Representation in Nigeria’s National Assembly: A Detailed Appraisal of the Eight Assembly, 2015-2019” argue that there are some conscious bills aimed at improving the status of women in decision making process in Nigeria. However, women participation and holding of key political offices remain limited as experienced in successive elections since the return to democratic rule. For instance, only sixteen women won legislative seats in the National Assembly, thirteen in the House of Representative and three in the Senate in the 1999 general elections. Then in the 2003 general elections, the number of women legislators both at state and National Assembly increased to Twenty-one and Four in the Senate. In 2007, the number of women legislators in both houses swelled to Twenty-seven and nine in the senate. It is therefore surprising that subsequent elections have witnessed low women representation with only Seventeen in the 2019 general elections. Undoubtedly, the series of institutional frameworks have not been able to address these gender disparities and this negatively affects women access to key positions and the decision making process in the business of law-making.

In a separate study, Adefemi & Agunbiade (2019) elaborate on the extent to which women have participated with the business of bills making. Though, they admit that women constitute a meagre 9% of the legislative positions between 1999 and 2015, this did not in any way discourage them from active participation in sponsoring bills across the South-West region. Women legislators have ensured that their voices are heard in terms of raising fundamental bills, motions, debating and the

eventual passing bills considered to be useful to the entire population. Between 1999 and 2015, female legislators have sponsored more bills than their male counterparts across state legislative houses in the South-West. The representation of women lawmakers in the legislature is shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Elections in their respective State Houses in 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015.**

State	No of seats	No of women			
		2003	2007	2011	2015
Lagos	41	2	5	7	4
Oyo	32	0	1	1	2
Osun	26	0	1	0	0
Ogun	26	2	2	2	2
Ekiti	26	1	0	4	2
Ondo	26	1	1	1	2
Total	177	6	10	15	12

Source: Adefemi et al (2019)

The above table shows the number of available seats at the State House of Assemblies in the Southwest in the 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 General elections respectively and the number of seats that were occupied by women. To know the level of involvement of the few elected women legislators in the law-making process at their respective Houses of Assembly, we need to consider the degree to which elected female representatives were able to influence policy and law-making in their state houses of assembly. To what degree did their active participation contribute to the formation of state policies?

Table 2

Women Legislator	Year	Bill Sponsored	Motion Made
Hon. Tejuoso Funmilayo (Lagos)	2003 – 2015	Domestic violence bill led to the construction of	Several motions on education, Health, Security, Youth, etc.

		Happy Home and Child's right law	
	In view	Gender and equal opportunity bill	
Hon. Omowunmi (Lagos)	2007- 2015	Residents 'registration bill and special people's bill	Immortalization of former Governor Bola Hamed Tinumbu, Tighten up security against incessant child kidnapping and call on law enforcement agents and destitute on pedestrian bridge and railways in the particular Oshodi bus stop
Hon. Sunmonu Monsurat (Oyo)	2011 – 2015	Protection of women against incessant abuse and child mortality bill. The first member's bill on Oyo security trust fund	-
Unnamed (Ekiti)	-	Gender-based violence bill	-

Source: (Adefemi,2019).

Similarly, Abiola (2019) explores the extent to which women remain active in legislative activities in Osun state, both at the state and even the executive arms of government. Though, women remain largely under represented across the South-West region, Osun state could boast of being the second

state with highest number of women representatives. For Abiola, women in Osun state have been able to capitalize on this strength to contribute meaningfully in the areas of sponsoring and scrutinizing bills in line with their mandate and promise to their members of their constituencies.

### **3.5 Women and the provision and supervision of constituency projects**

Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule, federal and state legislators have been saddled with the responsibility of initiating, executing and supervising constituency projects in the interest of the citizenry. Therefore, the expectations are that more women are expected to play lead roles in the area of supervising constituency projects. But the reverse is the case in Nigeria, as more legislative seats and positions have been dominated by men. Given that Sections 15 (2) and 42 of the 1999 Constitution guarantee adequate space for national integration, gender equality, freedom of religion and association, women are continually confronted with several hurdles which affect their political participation. While some African countries have witnessed increased women representation in politics, there is a worsening trend in Nigeria (Dan-Azumi & Asan, 2021). This negative trend has ensured that women are marginalized in decision making process and constituency projects.

One indicator of community development is the improved well-being of community members, Lechman and Paradowski (2021), sense of belonging and access to social networking (Hübler and Hartje, 2016) as well as education and health (Cecchini and Scott, 2003). Women's access to new media is critical to the above benefits, mainly because, they are central to household and community life. Women are the mainstay of any household and community, apart from the fact that they are more confined to the household than men, they possess all the attributes to build and nurture the growth and development of every member of the household, which in turn, could transform the development of the household and community at large. The use of ICTs promotes households and communities in many social and economic realms, especially, through household or community equitable income, social networking, cohesion, togetherness and the sense of belonging (Lechman and Paradowski, 2021).

Community development projects such as maternity centres, borehole, roads, bridges, markets, and others have been built based on collective actions and voice of women in rural communities.

More women than men, make use of, and patronize above social services, thus, placing them in a strategic position to make an informed decision on the construction of the projects. For example, their collective voice for an improved maternal care for women have stimulated the construction of more maternity centers in rural communities. Similarly, their role in the food supply chain to the market and access to digitally-based new media avail them the opportunity to identify bad roads, takes pictures of such roads, and report same to relevant authorities for repair or construction. This is highlighted in Odeyemi's and Obiyan's (2018) study which show that new media enhances women's ability to identify societal needs and report crime. In addition, women's role in community peacebuilding is enhanced and they are now more active in settling community disputes and fostering social cohesion (Ife, 2016).

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Poor women participation in decision making processes in Africa and Nigeria is one of the most pressing issues in the continent's democratic experience. While a series of regional and home grown initiatives have been adopted over the years to address this menace, women representation remains poor. One of the results is women's voices are not heard on governance issues pertaining to their welfare. This problem is made worse with the seemingly deceptive posturing of political parties. Though, political parties acknowledge that they have a role in ensuring that women voices are heard, recent experiences suggest that women representation is not been encouraged. Political parties that are expected to be a recruiting ground for female legislators adopt all kinds of inform norms which scare away women. Most problematic, is that women also support their fellow women within the party fold. Elaborating on the extent to which this issue affects women in decision making, Dan – Azumi and Asan (2021) notes that despite the fact that women headed some key standing legislative committees in the Eight Assembly, women voices in terms of passing bills that concern them and the entire citizenry remains limited. Undoubtedly, this problem has persisted even up to the Ninth Assembly. Women representation have remained at best limited, and this impacts on the expected roles of women in the democratization process in Nigeria. Therefore, there is urgent need to ensure that Nigeria's commitment to the 35% affirmative action is revisited with a view to ensuring compliance.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Research approach**

This study uses an emergent, exploratory, and inductive qualitative method. Qualitative methods are fundamentally consistent and involve techniques of collecting data that do not involve calculations (Kinge and Tiobo, 2016). Qualitative techniques describe the complexities of social life and “deal with actions as part of all-encompassing social procedure and settings, instead of something that can be obtained and investigated alone” (Holmes Zamanian, 2014). Qualitative method enables the investigation of complex social experiences without predetermining how such analyses should proceed (Saaty and Kearns, 2014). Furthermore, qualitative methods are known for their ability to provide detailed information and a comprehensive explanation and understanding of human behaviour and public relations. As such, aqualitative methodology is appropriate for this study considering the complexity of the topic.

#### **4.2 Research design**

Research design can be defined as the whole strategy or plan of how to provide solutions to research questions. The three types of research designs are exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Saunders, 2009). Exploratory research involves focusing on an objective study. This is usually done when it is necessary to search for novel understandings. This study therefore employs an exploratory design that involves obtaining data from a section of the population for analysis. This design presents opportunities to sample the opinions of participants and get relevant data. This method is also reasonably simple and can be easily done within a short period (Kerlinger, 1973).

#### **4.3 Study population and sampling technique**

The sample population of this study includes women in the six southwest states of Nigeria, namely Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo. The study uses purposive sampling techniques and target respondents include NGOs, gender experts as well as male and female politicians.

#### **4.4 Data collection method**

##### **4.4.1 Primary method**

To have a deep understanding about the factors influencing women’s political participation in South-western Nigeria, the data for the study was collected using qualitative data through in-depth interviews (IDIs). The primary source of data was NGOs, experts on gender issues as well as male and female politicians on the one hand, and selected women from across different fields on the other. The essence of interviewing male politicians is to try to get opposing views to those of female respondents. In this case, patriarchal aspects of women’s political participation and representation in the South-West would be identified. The researcher in southwest Nigeria purposively selects the state capitals as the study locations because they are seats of government and NGOs to be interviewed can be easily reached in state capitals.

#### 4.5 Study population and sampling technique

The sample population of this study includes women and male politicians, especially at the party level, in the six southwest states of Nigeria – Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo. The target respondents include NGO officials and gender experts.

#### 4.6 Sample size

To evaluate the sample size for analysis, one must first get an estimation of the population size. According to (Asika,2012), a sample size is the exact portion of the populace. The sample size is a subcategory of the entire population. The following table is the breakdown of the sample size in categories of respondents from the different study locations:

**Table 1: Sample size of the study locations**

Respondents	Sample Size for Study Locations					
	Ado Ekiti	Ikeja	Abeokuta	Akure	Osogbo	Ibadan
NGOs	2	2	2	2	2	2
Gender Experts	1	1	1	1	1	1
Male Politicians	2	2	2	2	2	2
Female Politicians	3	3	3	3	3	3

Total	8	8	8	8	8	8
-------	---	---	---	---	---	---

The research process begins with making appointments with participants through digital channels such as telephone, on-line interview platforms and via skype.

**4.7 Sampling technique**

The study used purposive sampling, choosing respondents who have good knowledge of the gender dynamics of Nigerian politics and, more importantly, of southwest, Nigeria. Purposive sampling, which is also referred to as judgmental selective sampling, is a type of non-probability sampling. It is a sampling procedure where the units to be examined are judged at the discretion of the investigator. It encompasses a set of different non-probability sampling methods where the object to be studied depends largely on the decision of the investigator when it comes to selection of each unit (for example, people, organizations, events, pieces of data). In this case, the sample to be studied is usually small unlike in probability sampling.

**4.8 Data collection method**

**4.8.1 Primary method**

The primary source of data was purposive interviews of NGO officials, experts on gender issues, as well as male and female politicians on the one hand and selected women from different fields on the other hand. Interviews were conducted both physically and digitally. The researcher decided to opt for both options due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher went for physical interviews in low risk areas while interviews were conducted digitally in high risk areas. In comparison, the inclusion criteria of participants were adequate knowledge of the subject matter and familiarity with southwest politics. They have resided in the southwest for years and were within the age range of 20-69 years. The exclusion criteria were lack of knowledge of the subject matter, less than four years of residency in southwest states and lack of familiarity with politics in the region. Participants were recruited through the service of field workers who assisted in identifying participants who meet the essential inclusion criteria. The recruitment steps began with writing letters, telephone calls/scripts and personal visitations and meetings with participants in public offices.

Participants were informed that the research is purely for academic purposes and their rights. However, the essence of interviewing male politicians is to try to get potential contrary views to those of female respondents. In this case, patriarchal elements of political participation and representation in the South West were distilled. Besides, interviews, observations of participants by “attendance of meetings” and “visitation to public offices” rendered additional data collected through the taking of notes, reports, and reactions of people at meetings, primarily reports relating to issues concerning women involvement in politics. Similarly, official familiarization or quittances with public office women to learn about, observe and retrieve information on the women-men ratio in public offices.

#### **4.9 Secondary method**

Secondary data for this research were sourced from journal articles, book chapters, online materials, newspapers, magazines, government publications, and gazettes. All of such sources were duly cited and referenced.

##### **4.9.1 Study locations**

The study locations are Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, and Ondo states as shown in the table below:

**Table 2: States and study locations**

<b>STATES</b>	<b>STUDY LOCATION</b>
Ekiti	Ado Ekiti
Lagos	Ikeja
Ogun	Abeokuta
Ondo	Akure
Osun	Osogbo
Oyo	Ibadan

Source: Author’s Computation, 2021

#### **4.9.2 Data analysis**

Data gathered from interviews was analyzed using content analysis and the intersectionality model. Some of the steps that were taken for data analysis include verbatim transcription of data collected from the field, triangulation of the reliability of outcomes from diverse methods. This increases the chance to assess some of the multiple causes that influence the outcomes. Data was triangulated through a combination of theories, techniques and findings. This was for the purpose of cross verification of data to improve validation as well as for multi-perspective meta-interpretations on the topic under investigation.

#### **4.9.3 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are critical when carrying out research, especially the ones that involved public participation. Ethics are the standards put forward during the conduct of research that identifies good and bad. Ethical considerations form an integral part in any research, mainly because good moral conducts can prevent a creation or misrepresentation of data and subsequently impel the search for information and fact; this is a critical purpose of the research. It is, therefore, mandatory that a researcher have a good understanding of ethics, and how it can affect the research plans. This becomes very important especially if it involves discussion with individuals or groups who serve as contributors in the research. In the study, a range of discussion might arise from in-depth interviews, group discussions, investigations, or noting people's behaviour. In doing this, it is expected that participants may likely face the pressure of balancing their tight schedules and time between series of political meetings and the interview time. This risk was handled by interviewing them during their recess or vacation period.

Questions that were asked during the interview were strictly for academic purposes and the interview did not take longer than 45 minutes. The direct benefits for them as a participant were probably be to acknowledged for being part of a few individuals who have played a role in understanding and explaining women's political participation in their area and how to improve on the same. Furthermore, their contribution helped in adding to the body of knowledge for future generations. The researcher protected the data collected by encrypting it and securely stored the data for five years. The study utilizes the services of data transcribers and the interviews were recorded with the consent of participants. Research data is expected to be stored for five years, following Northwest University (NWU) ethics' policy. The research outcomes will be shared via

sending of soft copy or hard copy to participants on request. Similarly, the researcher asked the participants if they would like to get the feedback of the research results, then they might reply with a yes/no so that the researcher can send the feedback once the study is completed.

The researcher had to thoroughly assess and avoid the possibility of unethical conduct in the course of the research especially any action(s) that may adversely have negative impact on participants. It is the duty of the researcher to protect the image of the supervisor (s) and that of the institution from claims of immoral conduct resulting from public criticism. The researcher therefore ensures total adherence to the laid down ethical guides of the institution. Proper referencing and confidentiality was duly observed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher administered 48 interviews to women and male politicians at the party level in the six southwest States of Nigeria, Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo who were active between 1999 and 2015. The interviews were administered via Google forms. Participants included NGO officials and gender experts. Inferences are made based on responses from the respondents. Suitable statistical techniques and thematic content analysis were used to analyse the responses that are presented below.

#### 5.2 Analysis of demographic data

**Table 1: Demographic analysis of respondents**

Characteristics		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	20	41.6
	Female	28	58.4
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	18	37.5
	Married	30	62.5
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	O' level	3	6.25
	Diploma holders	4	8.33
	Bachelors	24	50.0
	Master degree holders.	10	20.8
	Ph.D.	7	14.5

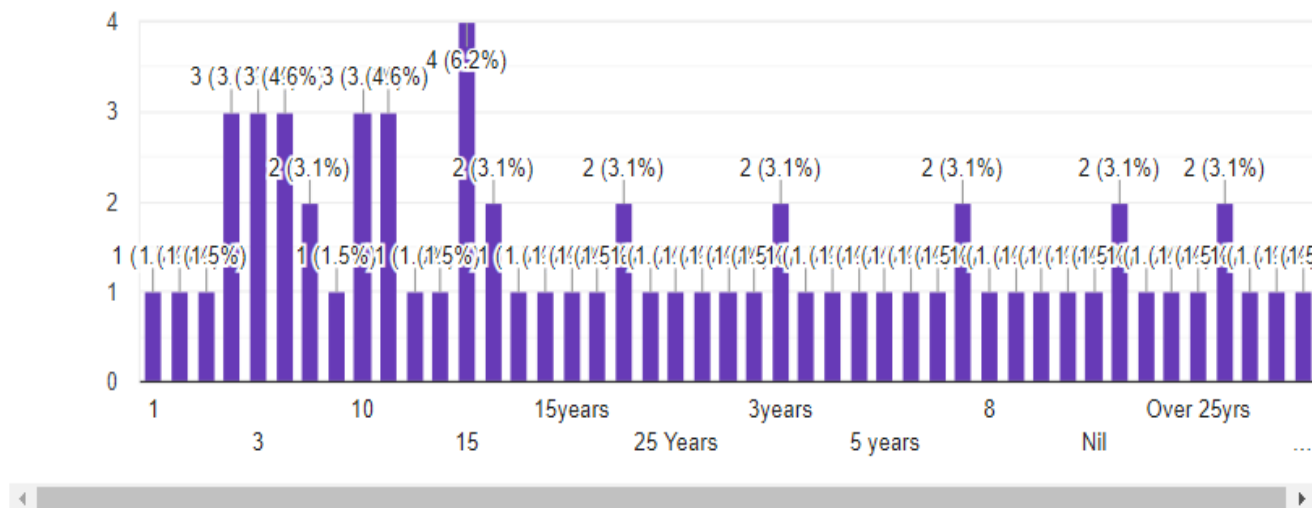
The gender distribution of respondents indicates that 20 (41.6%) were male while 28(58.4%) were female interviewed. In terms of the marital status of the respondents, 18(37.5%) were single while 30(62.5%) were married. The educational qualification of the respondents indicated that 3(6.25%)

were O' Level, 4 (8.33%) were diploma holders, 24 (50%) were bachelor's degree holders, 10 (20.8%) were Master degree holders while 7 (14.5%) were Ph.D. holders.

6. How many years of experience do you have in politics / advocacy/ administration?



65 responses



The analysis of the graph above shows the numbers of years of experience respondents have in political advocacy and administration and it implies respondents have adequate knowledge on the subject under discourse.

**5.3 Findings on research question 1: What are trajectories of women political participation in Southwest Nigeria from 1999-2015?**

There are diverse identifiable issues on the trajectories of women political participation in southwest Nigeria since the commencement of the Fourth Republic in 1999 several of which are linked to personal, ideational and social factors. The participants expressed diverse views on this in Nigeria as a whole and Southwest in particular. It can be recalled how women were underrepresented during this period. During President Obasanjo's and President Goodluck Jonathan's regimes, few women were in the presidential cabinet and these included the late Prof Dora Akunyili and Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. These women are unique in their respective offices and they proved not only to the country but to the world that women can actually hold political offices irrespective of stigmatization and discrimination of women involvement in politics. They

were so exceptional and this inspired other women at the grassroots. These changes are not made to be effected quickly as Nigerian society is purely male-dominated society and women are often relegated in all spheres. However, there are women also who were brought in by political parties for selfish reasons such as Mrs Etteh. She was brought in as a speaker and was used to manipulate fraud and corruption which led to her untimely removal from office. Such scenarios were sad as she was the first woman who was made a speaker. To confirm the above view, a participant said:

Women are marginalized in politics, women's participation in politics was on a very low side compared to the male gender. As we all know, before the fourth republic women agitated and fought for their emancipation (liberation). But when we compare women involvement in politics as at then and now, I do not think a lot has changed in term of women involvement in this ongoing Fourth Republic. Even the women who managed to secured important political seats are always victimized and manipulated.

Women's participation, as well as their contribution to politics, is not sufficiently emphasized. Even though women made their mark in political development, there are accounts of women rulership in various kingdoms across Nigeria and the southwest. An example is the Igala ethnic group which was said to have been founded by a woman named Ebele Ajan. Others like Nana Asmau of Zauzzau, Idia and Emotan of Bennin and Moremi of Ife were among those who displayed tremendous bravery in politics (Oladejo, 2015; Okoli et al 2015). Obviously, the advent of colonialism in Nigeria largely truncated the respectable, progressive achievement made by Nigerian women in the public space during pre-colonial era. The level of economic growth, political and social developments of women noticeable before the advent of colonialism were dispossessed, devalued and reverse by colonial experience (Oluwole, 2014). This is reflected in the response of one participant:

Women political participation in the southwest is still far beyond expectation. They are still marginalized and restricted from occupying significant political and decision making position in the region. Tracing women's political participation to the pre-colonial era, women waged strong influence in politics for example Madam

Tinubu, Olufumilayo Kuti, Anisetan Aniwura, Moremi and many other women made their mark in the sand of time in politics in southwest. What we are seeing per women involvement in today's southwest is very discouraging.

Women's political participation has always been restricted even before Nigeria started having representative government. A section of women in the southwest only voted for the first time in the country's general election in 1959 while their northern sisters never had the privilege of voting until 1976, 54 years after female voting was mandated in Nigeria (Adefemi et al., 2019; Gberevbie et al., 2013). To have equity in Politics both male and female must have equal positions in the political sphere of a given environment. This level of political involvement of men and women should be able to accommodate different interests and opinions, thus every rule of exclusivity of men as having natural rights over the political power at the expense of women should be banned. Once this is achieved, there will be a certain level of gender equity in the participation and representation of men and women in the political arena in Africa, especially in South Western Nigeria. By so doing, there will be integration of different human potentials in the political scheme of things in the society. One participant remarked:

Women have always been restricted since the inception of Nigerian politics. Women were not allowed to vote and be voted for until the Clifford constitution made it a little bit universal, even then, not all women were allowed to vote, just some categories were allowed to vote.

These statements confirm that women political participation was low and that women were only used for campaign and voting but when it came to actual participation where they supposed to advance their interests, they are often excluded. Equality in political representation of both men and women in terms of numbers suggests a sense of gender equality, but women in Nigeria, especially in the South west, as in the rest of Sub-Sahara African, still face with so many challenges in this male dominated political arena. Having women in political positions is not as important as removing the obstacles they encounter from their male counterparts when trying to advance women's interest. Obstacles such as intimidation, discrimination in contesting for political position and allocation of political offices, financial impediment in sponsoring their campaigns as well as

stigmatization from their male opponents. A participant opined,

Talking about women in politics in the southwest, in the fourth republic, we have many women in politics but not in elective positions. Even few that vie for elective offices do not have the financial muscle or the social wellbeing to win the election and that is why we do not usually have women in our political institutions even during this democratic era.

Literature has shown that greater gender balance in power sharing between men and women in the political process is the only way forward to achieving development in any society (Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 5). In this way, the UN (2005) contends that a government where there is no equal representation of women but controlled by male elected officials is likely to be biased against the election of women, such government may not fairly represent women's interests. To corroborate this opinion, women in the southwest are not doing exceptionally well in politics in the area of decision-making. Although the National Gender Policy (2006) expresses a strong commitment to the engagement of Nigerian women in decision-making and political positions. It requires that at least 35% of leadership positions in politics and government be held by women, and a review of the Nigerian Constitution so those gender problems may be mainstreamed into the constitution (Aina, 2013). Yet, women still operate below the stipulated 35% representation in both state and national levels in Nigeria. An IDI stated:

The level of women in politics in the fourth republic is high in the area of campaign, voting but low in regards to been elected in elective decision making both at legislative and executive levels.

Women are assumed to be about half of the electorate with the right to vote and hold public office, but continued to be under-represented as members in governance. Even after the recognition of the importance of women's political empowerment within the framework of the MDGs, with one of the indicators Goal 3, which is, to promote gender equality and empowerment (MDGs). In confirmation, an IDI says:

Despite the major role women play, society

has not given recognition to these and to the fact that they are discriminated against in politics, especially in this democratic dispensation. In the year 1999, the percentage of women's participation was relatively low; it was about 2.23% in total. Since that year, 1999, no State Governor has been recorded in the Southwest.

In Nigeria's fourth Republic, women's participation in politics has been relatively unimpressive especially in the southwest that used to be the melting pot of women politics in the pre-independence era (McIntosh, 2009). Women in pre-colonial Nigeria played a very significant role in the political administration of their respective kingdoms. Although women political administration during pre-colonial era varies, depended on political structure of each ethnic group. In Yoruba kingdom, for instance, there were female chiefs (cabinet members) such as Iyalode, Iyaloja, and iyalaje. They participated in the decision-making process; they are also involved in settling of disputes in their respective jurisdiction. Accordingly, women assisted in the maintenance of law and order in various communities across Yoruba states. In some part of Yoruba land, women assisted in settling quarrels among the male chiefs and officiated in the opening of new markets. The Oba's wives (Olori) were also influential in state affairs and there were occasions when women were employed to monitor and influence foreign policy decisions in some Yoruba States (McIntosh, 2009). To further substantiate the above submission, an IDI opined:

Women political participation in the Fourth Republic in the southwest is too insignificant. Dated back to pre-colonial time, southwest women were known for their bravery and participatory roles in the political organization of their kingdoms. But in today's politics issues related to women in the region are too neglected. The only area where the women have only occupied a tangible position has been in the area of deputy.

Before the emergence of the fourth Republic, the political space of Nigeria was predominantly in the hands of the military and the implication was that, there was a general lull in the political circle for both male and female (Austine and Charles, 2013). The Military governments did not really put women issues into consideration in governance during the military regimes. Although some of the First ladies tried to use their pet projects such as Better life for Rural Women

programme established by (Maryam Babangida) and Family Support Programme initiated by (Maryam Abacha) and Women's Rights Advancement Association created by (Fatima Abubakar) respectively to advance women cause. Yet, women political participation was insignificant. However, after a long stay of the military in politics, the country witnessed a transition, which gave birth to the current democratic dispensation. The long period of military incursion in politics and the activism that followed, which led to the ushering of democracy in 1999, led to expectations among the citizenry. Specifically, Nigerians envisaged a system where every citizen will have equal opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnicity and religion. With the arrival of the Fourth Republic, of course, women are already up and doing politically, trying to give their male counterparts a run for their money. In support, an IDI points out that:

The participation of women in the Fourth Republic was relatively low, I can say it was due to different military activities in the past. But thankfully today, women in the southwest are up and doing in politics even if their participation has not yielded the result we want to see, but they are slugging it out with the men in every sense of it.

Women in the Southern part of Nigeria, by 1960 already had franchise, which brought about emergence of women in political position during this period. For example, this period saw the emergence of Mrs Esan Wuraola as a member of parliament. The following year, which is 1961, Mrs Margret Ekpo also contested elections and won a seat in the Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly under the platform of the (NCNC). Other notable women who won seats are Mrs Janet N.Mokelu and Miss Ekpo A. Young. The situation was not the same in Northern Nigeria, as women were not allowed to take part in politics to vote and be voted for until 1979, which implies that prominent female politicians like Hajia Qambo Sawaba could not vote and were not eligible to be voted for in elections until 1979 (Oluwole,2019 ). An IDI, supports the above:

I can say women in the Southwest have fared somehow well in politics between 1999 up until date especially when compare with the Northern Zones.

The role of the society/cultural norm in the political participation of women cannot be overemphasized. Cultural norms and tradition continue to downplay the usefulness of women in politics across many African societies (Okoli et al, 2019). Nigerian women unlike their male counterparts suffer a great deal when it comes to decision- making, be it in the home, at work, in family gathering to the public. A woman is to be silent when her husband talks, she is force to keep mute when her boss queries her, she does not have a say when decision pertaining to her family is made. A woman is expected to sit back and watch while political decision, educational decision, health decision and even financial decisions which directly affects her is been made in the public realm. All because she is a woman and the tradition of her society does not permits her the right to speak when men are making decisions. The above factors as opined by (Crenshaw, 1991) are some of the overlapping identities that intersect to marginalize women in politics across many parts of the world, including Africa, especial in Nigeria where traditional norms is deeply rooted. In contribution to the above submission, An IDI further substantiates:

It is about society and because of this; women themselves have become so timid in taking part in the political process. However, a few women in Southwest are gradually coming out of the traditional encumbrances that hitherto limited them to the kitchen. Today, only about 5% of women in Southwest are actively engaged in politics.

Nigerian women since after independence have fared not so well politically. This is so because in spite of the fact that women are known to give massive support to political parties they are not well represented in appointments and policymaking. Nigerian politics can without a doubt be said to be structured toward the “masculine model” of political life in which men dominate the political sphere to a large extend by dictating the rules of the game and defining the principles for assessment. In line with Orji et al, (2018), Nigerian political life is modified in accordance with male values and norms, and in some instances, in way in which male lives. He asserted that, for women to have a successful carrier in politics there is need for an intense adjustment in lifestyles that many women may not be able to afford. And those who manage to secure a political seat tend to function in political environment typified by intense pressure, physical assault, labelling, name calling, and inferences about moral repute. All of these and many other political maltreatments

make it challenging for women to participate in the political process and emerge as political leaders in Nigeria. To further substantiate the above, an IDI said:

Personally, in my opinion, I would say women are still facing a lot of challenges in term of political involvement in Southwest. Culture and tradition are still playing a twist on how far women can go in politics. So, I have not seen a satisfactory progress on women political participation across the six southwest states in general.

Women have been politically categorised as an endangered species, and their minimal engagement in Nigerian governance and politics is frequently attributed to culture, religion, economic constraints, and male chauvinism. The majority of leadership posts in African society, and particularly in Nigerian society and southwest Nigeria, have been assigned to males, therefore promoting the trajectory of gender inequality.

#### **5.4 Research Question 2: What factors, motivate, and hamper the participation of women in politics in southwest Nigeria?**

None of the participants mentioned that there is or/are any specific factor(s) motivate women to participate in politics in southwest Nigeria. However, diverse opinions were given for the factors militating against the participation of women in politics. These include stereotypes, culture and religion, family burdens, lack of finance, negative social and religious norms, electoral contest such as intimidation, lack of political will, lack of proper education, jealousy among women and lack of support for women by other women, societal perception of women, funding for sponsorship, lack of proper political experience, not belonging to a strong political class or zoning, low self-esteem, ego of men and lack of support from the family. These results conformed to the findings from the participants. The gender imbalance, in the political sphere also exists in southwest Nigeria and this had remained a recurring phenomenon despite the huge numbers of voting-age women with requisite educational qualifications and knowledge in the region. As Agbaje (1999; cited in Oluwole, 2014) as rightly noted, the notion of democracy lies at the heart of participation, which defines the degree to which people (men and women) within an organised society get involved in the life of that society. Political participation therefore established upon the development, recognition, encouragement and expansion of the

opportunities for participation in the decision processes of such a society. Thus, exclusion of women who make up almost half of the nation's population in political decision making will lead to little or no progress in the country's economy. Giving priority to girl's child education could be one of the solutions because when women realize that political events directly affect their lives, they are more likely to participate in politics. Females must overcome their psychological notions that equality with men is impossible to tackle this challenge. According to Atkeson (2003), the more women are involved in the public sector, the more barriers to their political engagement are broken.

This is in line with an IDI:

Well in my own opinion, I do not see any factors or interventions that has been built to motivate women. Women are still behind in terms of education, career building and their involvement in big business or socioeconomic status is very low. Women are still kept behind, to be at the kitchen and kept at home. In Nigeria, recently we have women who have higher degrees from higher education across Nigeria and outside Nigeria but their voice is never heard.

According to Atkinson et al., 2020, Women do not comprise a uniform group and diversity, division and difference problematize women's citizenship as a group. The theory of intersectionality and identity has revealed that identities are complex, encompassing multiple intersections of class, gender, sexuality, race and nationality-causing individual to react differently at different times (Crenshaw 1991; Collins 2000). Differences of education, job opportunities, and cultural possibilities also get permeated through the lenses of class and ethnicity, which structure the individual experiences of women. Many scholars are of the opinion that the inactiveness of women in the political scheme of things is largely depended on their lack of quality education, access to vital resources, among others. Dim and Asomah (2019) have examined the socioeconomic influences of women's political participation and conclude that these are education, religion, residency and party affiliation. The study emphasizes the need of education and the promotion of women to join political parties in other to gain more influence in Nigerian political system. In agreement, an IDI points out:

The lack of education and skill among women

in line with the demands of political leadership is an obstacle incidental to women 's political participation in the Southwest in particular and Nigeria at large. As a result of low education and skill, they are poorly equipped mentally to venture into the male dominated world of politics. As a result of her deficiency in the fields of education, professional ability and poor leadership skills, the Nigerian woman lacks self-confidence, courage and boldness required to aim for the highest post in political arena.

This response conforms to studies carried out by Nelson (2012) as well as Okoli et al. (2019) which recognized financial impediments as a major threat to the participation of women in politics in Nigeria. According to Ngara and Ayabam (2013), approximately 90% of Nigerian women live below the poverty line. Women do not have access to education, information, finance, training, and skills all of which are required for survival in a country like Nigeria. In addition, the cost of politics in Nigeria is too high and many women cannot afford such. A majority of women in Nigeria depend on their spouse for money, as they do not have 'godfathers' such as the male politicians. The low financial status of women does not give them the access to start thinking of being involved in politics, even at the local levels, they cannot afford such. A lot of money are involved in politics and many women do not have access to such finances One of the participants buttresses this as follows:

Lack of adequate finance or amount of money is a major impediment to women political participation in Nigeria. Politics in Nigeria is driven by money and very few women have the financial capacity to even venture. Consequently, participation has remained abysmally low.

Many studies have pointed to patriarchy as a major obstacle to the participation of women in politics across Africa. The marital duties of wives in most western cultures are entirely unfamiliar to most Nigerian women including those in the South-West region, where women have enjoyed equal opportunities in both public and private arenas alongside their male counterparts. The issue most Nigerian women faced are cultural subservience where males are conferred supremacy over females as a result of cultural and religious norms that women must

be obedient to their husbands (Akokuwebe et al, 2021). Ajibade, Ocheni, and Adekunle (2012), laid emphasis on male supremacy of the female folks. They submitted males are seen to have controlling access to institutional power and argued they mould ideology, philosophy, art and religion to men's advantage. This largely explains reasons why men strategically dominate the economic, political and societal structures in most societies of the world and women are subjected to the role of `second class citizens` in the scheme of things. The following comment of an IDI confirms the above:

Women are largely underrepresented in politics due to the patriarchal practices inherent in Nigerian society including the South West. women who are married cannot leave their homes for days in the name of political campaign. Men see women as mothers to the kid and maintaining the household.

Recognising the problem of lack of women representation worldwide, Nigeria signed into series of frameworks aimed at bridging this gap. Some of these frameworks include; Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), International Convention on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights, Beijing Platform for Action, African Charter on Human and People's Right, and the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). Regardless, women are still confronted with the issue of intersectional multiple identities: patriarchy, discrimination and other vices in the society (Eniola 2018), inequality and subjugation in terms of attaining key political positions. This has been made worse with the introduction of ethnic, religious and socio-cultural sentiments into the political arena (Agbalajobi 2010). Another IDI supports the above observation and highlighted issues related to harmful societal behaviour towards women:

The major factor has been cultural discrimination and segregation of women. Stereotyping, discrimination and low self-esteem, the patriarchal society.

It is evident that the stigmatization of women who go into politics as non-adherent to gender expectations is a threat to the value system (Higginbotham, cited in Crenshaw, 1989). In Nigeria,

gender often prescribes who is appointed or elected into important positions (Dim and Asomah, 2019). Women tend to be discriminated against because the norm has seen politics as a male-dominated role or activity. Men, in most climes, have dominated the political arena and set the rules to advance their interests at the expense of women (Kasomo, 2012 cited in Dim and Asomah, 2019). Men's negative attitudes toward women in general including in politics have generated a lot of concern over the years (Orji et al., 2018). It has been argued that women find it uneasy to break into political positions due to the attitude of men and by tradition. According to Akokuwebe and Okafor (2015), men's domineering attitudes are impediments to women venturing into politics. An IDI participant noted that:

Politics in Nigeria has always been dominated by the male Gender for years and the superiority of the male gender does not give women the privilege to stand before men but gradually, we are beginning to separate politics from culture and tradition, which has formed part of the misconception about women involvement in politics.

A detailed examinations to women's political participation in Nigeria have revealed that women's participation in Nigerian politics is mostly visible at the level of voting and latent support. According to Adeniyi (2003), the primary challenges confronting and restraining women's active engagement in Nigerian politics are violence and other types of electoral conflict committed and propagated by men and male youths. Electoral violence has overtime resulted in women's political apathy experienced in the electioneering process in Nigeria. Many women have had to pay the price for electoral violence in Nigeria over the year (Onwudiwe & Berwind-Dart, 2010; Luka, 2011; Olufunke, 2012, Kehinde, 2018, cited in Olatunji & Ojakuorotu, 2022). The assertion from participants showed that the impact of political corruption and election violence could be dangerous, especially when women are targeted. This substantiates the report of (Olatunji & Ojakuorotu, 2022) that election violence has a severe ripple effect on women's political involvement in Nigeria. An IDI participant opined:

Many factors have hamper and hinder Nigerian women from engaging fully in politics. For instance, women do not get spousal and family support to fully participate in politics. In fact, their 'significant others' usually will discourage them from such

thoughts. Many families have the fear that their wards can be manhandled and killed in the process as we see these trends in the exiting political trends in Nigeria. Nobody wants to lose their family members as it will be a great loss to them and government will never acknowledge such loss.

Since the first republic, violence has been a reoccurring phenomenon in Nigeria politic. There is no administration can be said to be devoid of violence in the country`s politics. Thuggery has a stronghold in almost official position in different states of the country. As it stands today among politicians in Nigeria, the more thugs they have in their possession, the more likely they are to win an election. Thus, thuggery has now become a source of income to some unemployed youths and a means to achieve an end for the politicians who employ them. Gboyega (2004; cited in Olatunji & Ojatorotu, 2022) stated that thuggery and political violence are indispensable instruments in the hands of hungry power seekers. This is because these thugs are in the employ of the political godfathers, these godfathers are the high and influential in the society, and they are either the kingmakers or the kings themselves. These godfathers have almost become part of the Nigerian constitution of which people usually say that if you do not have a godfather, you would not go far in politics. Women on the other hand, do not have access to these godfathers, because no godfather wants to put their money on women aspirants as they have the opinion that women hardly win in Nigeria`s elections. To further buttress the above submission, a participant had this to say:

A corrupt and patronage-based political system e.g. godfatherism, violence at the election, including against the women. A lack of effective government action; are the key factors discouraging women from taking an active part in politics in Southwest and Nigeria in general.

Women`s political participation is a crucial factor in democratization. It is a fundamental success for women to participate in the democratic process. The model of democracy is important for the overall success of any nation. Democracy is created to accommodate both men and women and not the men alone as it is seen majorly in today`s politics ((International Declaration of Democracy in1997). The essential foundation of democracy takes into account the significant participation of men and women in the social and political affairs as it centered on the equality

to complement each other and to benefit from one another and to benefit from another's differences (Olatunji, 2018). Despite the fact that Nigeria is recognized as a democratic nation, Nigerian politics is both a male-dominated and competitive environment. During nomination for potential candidate for elections for example, there seem to be systematic disparities in how male and female aspirants are treated. The party leadership who are mostly males always look out for the 'winnability' when a woman is presented as a candidate while reverse is always the case with male candidates. This explains to a large extent reason why majority of Nigerian women are sceptical about politics. An IDI submitted:

Women are not encouraged enough. When they lose an election, they get discouraged and women are not as violent as men would be because elections in Nigeria can be bloody and the fear that the corrupt practices in the current dispensation will not allow them to achieve their set goals, so they would rather not get involved.

Aboribo and Oguoe (2007), cited in Gberevbie and Oviasogie (2013), revealed some impediments to active participation of women in politics and governmental affairs in Nigeria and these include the patriarchal structure of the Nigerian society, traditional norms, sexual harassment and discrimination. They maintain that "politics in Nigeria is by nature a militant activity and women are not interested and involved in such activity, they rather prefer to be seen within the caring professions". In support of this assertion, an IDI participant said:

Election in Nigeria is violent prone hence many women are scared to participate. Most times, the male politicians with the support of their godfathers' employ violence, thuggery and intimidation during election and many women cannot stand the heat that come with their activities"

One of the crucial pillars of democracy all over the world is ensuring inclusion in the electoral process. However, many countries face challenges protecting the political rights of groups facing discrimination. People with multiple social identities, including women. In politics, women continue to experience compounding discrimination in political and civic life. Women in Nigeria are excluded from political and policymaking processes. If we must to make women's voices

heard, it is important to identify, assess, and develop contextualized solutions to remove barriers to meaningful participation. An IDI submitted:

Some men politicians are found of using threat, manipulation as well as sexual assault on women. As we all know, women do not have the strength to engage in unnecessary contest and no woman would like to be publicly embarrassed or disgrace, so sometimes they yield to their manipulations due to fear of been publicly humiliated.

Religion and cultural norms are said to be two major characteristics that bear a devastating influence on gender and human rights. According to Amusan et al. (2021), both religion and cultural norms are constantly used to justify violations of women's right, more specifically on the ground of marriage and access to properties. Furthermore, Austine and Charles (2013) support this view by asserting that the seclusion of Muslim women in the purdah was a natural subjugation of women from the public arena and absolute reliance of women on men. This conforms to the submission of one of the participants:

Some religion does not permit women to speak in public talk more of taking part in politics, for example in Islamic religion some women known as Ieha (Purdah) are not permitted to be seen in public even if they manage to appear in public they must be fully covered. These set of women are not permitted to participate in politics thereby denying them their rights as human.

As a result of the numerous societal factors, women faced diverse forms of gender stigmatization, discrimination, inequality and exclusion, most especially in the area of politics and leadership. According to Boris (2019), the various forms of biases against women are a multiple outcome of system beliefs, norms and cultural values.

Women are always afraid of the notion of people about them. You know the way our culture is structured and how people view women politicians. People insult and label them as irresponsible. Even the educated ones are not ready to go into politics for fear of the

negativity that politics brings generally.

One of the crucial pillar of democracy all over the world is ensuring inclusion in the electoral process. However, many countries face challenges protecting the political rights of groups facing discrimination. People with multiple social identities, including women. In politics, women continuing to experience compounding discrimination in political and civic life. Women in Nigeria are excluded from political and policymaking processes. If we must to make women`s voices heard, it is important to identify, assess, and develop contextualized solutions to remove barriers to meaningful participation. An IDI submitted: In agreement to this submission, one of the female respondents narrated her ordeal while trying to contest for the position of local government chairperson in her state a few years ago:

The definition being giving to us that women works belong to the kitchen and other room. I was once a victim of this, I could remember vividly when I had the opportunity to contest for the local government chairman election in my local government area few years back. A male colleague who was also a running mate said to me “If you are responsible enough I expected you to be in your husband’s house and play your role as a wife rather than coming here to make a mockery of yourself.

Gender discrimination is a global phenomenon not just an African or Nigerian issue. The only difference is that it has persisted in this region of the world for so long, even as other industrialized countries strive for gender equality and equity. Women face unjustified discrimination in a variety of ways. For example, in some Nigerian courts and police stations today, women who wish to act as sureties for accused persons who have been granted bail are routinely denied due to their gender. Even in today’s environment, democracy has become a critical tool for achieving long-term progress. The influence of the democratic definition is still unknown. Political engagement is a requirement of democracy and allows for a range of viewpoints. Democracy cannot exist without the participation of women, who make up half of the world’s population. It has long been argued that traditional gender inequality slow down the political growth of women (Agbalajobi, 2010; Adefemi, 2013; Orji et al., 2018). Many women may be hesitant to vie for political office and if

they do, they may not attract sufficient support to win as a result of traditional gender prevalent in many African countries especially in Nigeria.

The cultural structure of typical Africans extends to Nigerians too. The ideology sees a woman as a secondary figure in the community. As a woman it is very difficult to compete with men politically in Nigeria and this also extend to the Southwest region due to many factors that I cannot even start to mention.

The attempt to address the gender imbalance in political participation in Nigeria has been a thorny issue in the literature, partly because of the domineering nature of men and the inherent cultural, religious, and electoral system in Nigeria. In Nigeria, scientific evidence (Agbalajobi 2010; Awofeso and Odeyemi 2014), indicate that women are underrepresented and sometimes have no representation, unlike the men, in elective positions. [Ebosele \(1993\)](#) and [Adepoju \(1994\)](#) are of the opinion that it is a disservice for any country to ignore its women population in its development efforts. Thus, the need for effective participation of women in politics should be compelling and that women should be seen as partners in progress instead of been discriminated. To support this view, here is a submission from an IDI participant:

It is believed that the affairs of the country are none of the wife's concerns that they belong to the kitchen and other rooms so generally, they think women are domestic workers and have no concern with affairs of the nation.

There have been numerous debates in the past decades on issues of gender inequality in developing countries such as Nigeria. Despite decades of prominent debates on this issues, there has not been a significant change in the condition of women. The female adult literacy rate is still low in comparison with that of the male. Low education of women limits their performance in politics and decision-making (Okafor and Akokuwebe, 2015). According to Anifowose (2004), cited in Olufunke (2014), before any nation can fully enjoy the true idea of democracy with its importance on participation, competition and freedom of the citizen, an effective promotion of gender equality must take place. True democracy will not materialize in a nation

without the equal involvement of males and females (Anifowose, 2004, cited in Olufunke, 2014).

This view is in line with the opinion of a participant:

Gender inequality was a major factor hampering women political involvement in Southwest, especially in terms of education and other necessary skill acquisitions. Women were not allowed to be intelligent or show forth their intelligence, especially in politics and male chauvinism added to the factors limiting women from participating in politics.

In line with Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2012), they contend that women in Africa especially in Nigeria have become conditioned into accepting social debasements associated with widowhood rites and self-imposed abuses of the type that denies female children good food. Even in urban centers and in civilized circles, the stereotype gender-roles make women overplay their femininity by accepting that they are the weaker sex, over-emphasizing the dainty nature of their comportment, viewing the ambition of some members of their sex as ominous and regarding exceptional achievements as untoward competition with men'' ( Nwanegbo & Odigbo 2012). To this end, an IDI submitted:

The issues of lack of knowledge and understanding of politics, egocentric nature of the masculine gender placed by the society, inadequate information about politics, illiteracy, lack of education, gender imbalance are the major impediments to women political participation in southwest.

Tradition, culture, and lack of will from female gender, inability to stand firm in terms of electioneering campaign, a corrupt system, sexism, violence during elections, cultural differences, lack of political awareness, education, social isolation, personal factors such as low confidence, and self-esteem, and fear of failure have been recognized as bane of political participation among women in the Southwest (Agbalajobi 2010; Akokuwebe et al 2021; Majekodunmi et al, 2013; Rasak et al 2017). In order to promote women`s equality as well as their difference, there is need for women to engage with the formal political system (Lister, 2003). This will help women to bridge the differences in a political struggle under their identity as women ( Ramola Ramtohum, 2015) A participant submitted that:

Many women in the southwest lack exposure, experience, self-esteem, and lack interest in politics all these put together are hindering factors affecting women involvement in politics within the southwest region.

In spite of the various movements and agitations for equal rights for women, to know that women have to continue struggling for equality both in the workplace and in politics, one might ask oneself: what is the issue that keeps them from attaining those equal rights that they have struggled for in centuries. There are several literatures, debates and assumptions of why women still fight to get to the top level of management. Some researchers are of the opinion that greater number of women do not know how to compete and negotiate for top-level positions in public places. To buttress this point, an IDI opined:

Lack of ability to withstand campaign pressures, lack of trust and lack of confidence among women themselves are some of the factors denying women their rightful place in politics in Southwest.

A greater number of participants indicated inferiority complex and distortions during election, the culture of men domination, lack of awareness, monetization of politics, politics of violence, religion, and lack of motivation as limiting factors to women political participation in Southwest. culture, wrong misconceptions, electoral violence, poor electoral system were as well identified. There are many but importantly societal and patriarchy system have been identified as major factors limiting women political participation in the South-west region.

### **5.5 Research Question 3 How has women's participation in politics influenced politics and development in South Western Nigeria?**

A larger percentage of the participants explained how women's political participation has influence development in the region. While few responses indicated otherwise.

Adefemi & Agunbiade (2019) detailed in their study the extent to which women have participated with the business of bills making in the Southwest. However, they acknowledge the fact that women represent a meagre 9% of the legislative positions between 1999 and 2015; this in any way did not discourage them from active participation in sponsoring bills across the South-West region. Women legislators have ensured that their voices are heard in terms of raising fundamental

bills, motions, debating and the eventual passing bills considered useful to the entire population. Between 1999 and 2015, female legislators have sponsored more bills than their male counterparts have across state legislative houses in the South-West. It is clear that these women politicians do not see the political struggle through the biased ethnic lens. Building commonality that cuts across ethnicity, religion, gender and class. Below submission by an IDI support the above:

Women in politics in the South West have always come up with intervention policies to reduce poverty among women in the region. Women now aspire to high offices both at the state and national level and they have variously placed women on priority in intervention and poverty alleviation projects in the south West region. Effectively, some of the best brains in politics today are women.

The global involvement of women in politics and public decision-making is not only to women's advantage, but also for the overall purpose of democracy and development. The consensus on the equal participation of women and men in political representation processes, implemented by the fiftieth conference of the Commission on the Status of Women states that "without the active participation of women and the inclusion of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. In addition, that women's equal participation is a necessary condition for women and girls' interests to be taken into account and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning (Olatunji, 2018). In support of the above view, another respondent commented:

Women have given back to their communities and empowered women especially the less privileged. They have helped handle important positions in South Western Nigeria by contesting for positions. This has given women more representation at the highest level.

The first democratic election in Nigeria was conducted in 1999. Going by the trend of women representation in governance in Nigeria, the 2003 election accommodated more women political participation. Agbalajobi (2009:77) contended that women's desire to partake in governance is based on the following; that women in Nigeria make up more than half of the country's populace

and by so doing ought to be permitted a sensible offer in the basic leadership and the administration of the nation. The second point hinges on normal equity - the fact that all individuals are equal and that both men and women ought to have equal rights to take an interest in governance and public life in the nation, the privilege to popularity-based administration is a privilege presented to all citizens by law. An IDI state:

By 2003, we had more women participation in governance and since then it has been on the rising trend up until now. So today, we see women vying for councillorship and these were areas we hardly saw women, it used to be the preserve of men. Nevertheless, today women are vying for these positions and many more.

One of the significant issues that dominates democracy in recent years is the politics of presence that has informed the participation of women in politics globally (Lafleur, 2013). This maintains that all parts of the public should participate in political processes to guarantee that all opinions are represented in the decision-making processes (Klijn & Edelenbos, 2013). Generally, this politics of presence can be equated to equal opportunity for women and men in a state's political space. The comment below by one of the respondents concur to the above submission on the rising trend in women political participation in Southwest Nigeria in the ongoing Fourth Republic. He opined:

It has been a gradual development. From 1999 up until 2015, there have been improvements. Statistically, we have more women every year. Even when it does not want to happen that way, women react to it.

The Fourth Republic saw a degree in women activism on the part of western women regarding their advancement particularly in the political arena. The western region has seen women played the role of agent of peace both in their family as well as in their community at large (Agunbiade, 2019). In conformity with the above, a participant observed that:

I can personally say that women political participation has influenced development in southwest Nigeria. We have produced the first

female speaker of the house of representatives, Patricia Olubunmi Eteh, and Jumoke Akindele, Speaker, Ondo State house of Assembly. We have equally produced women speakers in Ogun State, female Deputy Governor in Lagos, Ogun State, and Osun State, and several commissioners and top government functionaries in the South West.

Another respondent also subscribed to the above view:

Between 1999-2015, we had the first female speaker, INEC chairman as a female all from the South-West. We had many women who occupied various important positions during this period. In Ogun State, for instance, we had a female member of the Exco, female Commissioners, and female deputy governor. Currently, there are four female members in Ogun Statehouse making it the highest number so far.

The misconception of women as the lesser creature has changed over time and continuous education, empowerment of the girl child is beginning to alter the norm, and young ones are beginning to get involved in governance. This is reflected in the response below:

Women participation in politics in Southwest has influenced politics and development. women now sit in policy and decision-making gatherings with their male counterparts and they are considered in any developmental projects. It created more sensitization on Women Development and Empowerment Programmes.

Regardless of the fact that the number of women in the state Houses of Assembly are few and considering the rigorous process in passing of private member bill in Southwest Nigeria, women legislators have been active in passing of bill and other developmental projects (Agunbiade, 2019). Exploring the extent to which women participate in grassroots development, for instance in Osun State between the period of 1999 to 2015, Abiola (2019) submits that while women representation in political offices remains low when compared to the males, their impact

remains largely significant. Women have contributed in the areas of initiating or sponsoring bills, carrying out legislative oversight functions, checks and balances and provision of social amenities to their constituency members across the state. In confirmation of the above opinion, a participant commented thus:

The few women who have participated in Politics in the South West have done so with utmost dedication to their duties. It has strengthened women's political participation and decision-making in Southwest Nigeria. It helps include a better perspective of the plight of women during policy construction. The diverse perspective allows for proper scrutiny of our problems. It has influenced other women positively.

A glance at the views of the participants shows a broad consensus that the Enthusiasm and desire of women legislator for the development of their state cannot be overemphasized. This finding corroborated respondents' opinion on the influence of women in politics in southwest Nigeria:

Many of the women who are in one position or the other have different interpretations of projects specifically designed for women in form of empowerment and improved their ability to overcome challenges. The level of poverty is gradually decreasing because those already in politics target more interventions for women.

Another view is presented below by a respondent:

Participation of women in politics in the southwest has influenced development. Few women who manage to occupy some political decision making position have helped to create awareness and also established some skill acquisition centers both formal and informal where both men and women can acquire skills.

In contribution, yet another respondent emphasized that:

It has led to more women's involvement in politics in the southwest. The few women that we have in politics in the South West have

achieved a lot and their contribution to the development of the South West region is so obvious and enormous. Women's participation in politics in the South West has contributed greatly to social development in the region.

The following response corroborates the assertion above:

It has positively influenced the region as more women are now being actively involved in politics and being educated about politics. It kindled the fire of political awareness among women and political consciousness among men.

A number of participants are of the view that women in politics in southwest have done well for themselves and the entire southwest region by the virtue of the role they play in the agitation for more women inclusion in politic. An IDI puts:

It is difficult as a woman to try to gain the audience of the public to have asses to political seats. But as we can see in today's politics in southwest, women are coming out to take one position and the other. Agitation for women's participation in politics with their male counterparts of a ratio of 35: 65 (women to Men) is being implemented.

According to Adedayo Oluwaseun Adefemi et.al (2019), it was stated that Nigeria has witnessed some level of activism on the side of South-western women, notably in terms of their development in all aspects of life, particularly in politics. Western women in Nigeria acted as peacemakers inside the family and in their community.

To buttress the above point, An IDI added:

There is a good number of women in elective offices and in their own little way they have brought about development in the region.

Some of these women in partnership with some NGOs have created platforms where they educate children and empowered women financially and also train some to be useful to themselves and the society.

In view of an IDI participant, women in politics in the region have partnered with some Non-Governmental Organization to aid development in the southwest region, as stated:

A lot of poverty alleviation programmes have been organized through the help of some women politicians in the southwest and these had helped some women to be independent.

Some respondents however have contrary opinions regarding how women's participation in politics has influenced politics and development in South Western Nigeria. Some of the respondents' attribute women's inability to influence development in politics in the southwest to their insignificant numbers in the state House of assemblies in the region. Often time, it is challenging to get women elected into political office than their male counterparts, this is because chosen political party does not accommodate women as election candidates and if they do, they rather put them in tough-to-win areas. Many female politicians face this type of challenges across the world, despite the debate for more women's representation in governance. This explains partly why there is little number of female elected officials. A respondent implies:

A respondent implies:

It is obvious that women still have a long way to go to attain the level of representation they seek. The percentage or ratio of women to men in governance in the state house of assemblies across the southwest region is still far different as a result they have not been able to influence development in the region". Women only make impact and visible when it comes to voting and campaigning but not as candidates and very few in representation in governance.

In the face of the reality that society assigns roles to men and women, Barry and Grady (2019) argue that women in Africa still observes gender-based roles as instituted by patriarchy and the

discriminatory structures reinforcing the continued oppression of women out of the significant decisions that affect them. The African view of society is not individualistic; it is family-centered, and this informs the perception of women's position and place in the society as those responsible for household duties, and as "second-class citizens or [those who] playing second-fiddle" to men (Adefemi & Agunbiade, 2019). An IDI posited:

What do we expect in term of impact/development? women are not giving the change to express themselves in politics in the region, the few ones that are in political offices seem to be silenced by the men.

Discrimination against women has a basic nature that praises men as distinctive, more robust, supposed to be in the public space, but see women as fragile, incapable, and should be confined to the home or private space. It has had a significant impact on women's perceptions of politics, resulting in a low level of political interest, awareness, and political involvement among women (Agbalajobi, 2007). It has long been argued that traditional gender inequality slow down the political growth of women (Agbalajobi, 2010; Adefemi, 2013; Orji et al, 2018). Many women may be hesitant to vie for political office and if they do, they may not attract sufficient support to win as a result of traditional gender prevalent in many African countries especially in Nigeria.

To buttress the opinion of the above respondent, another respondent expressed:

Women have little or no influence in politics in South West, if I am to put the number of women representation into consideration, the number of women is not up to 1% and I do not think that out of 100% 1% can have any influence on decisions. For example, in Ekiti, we cannot pick point the number of women in the house of assembly, local government chairmen or vice chairmen. For these reasons and women are still far from it in terms of representation in politics in the southwest.

Although laws in Nigeria and many parts of the world forbid sex discrimination, yet, it is still a general problem to most women, especially the working class (Macarie & Moldovan, 2011). It appears practices such as always having men, as leaders both in the family and at public place are

still rampant all over the world. Penceliah, (2011) argues that absence of women in leadership positions can be ascribed to gender institutional cultures that “prevent women from seeing the leadership potential that exists in half the population.” She argued further that despite some strides made in terms of women empowerment there is still a lot to be done in order to help increase the number of women politics. An IDI participant also lend to the submission above, she expressed:

Women do more when they are more, in a situation where you have just two women among large numbers of men, they will not be able to make much impact. It is just like a lonely voice in the wilderness. So I cannot say that women have used their political position to influence much development in the southwest.

Politics as we all know is the battle for and actual use of power. It is all about acquiring and deploying power and as such women are still politically primitive and dependent as a result of inequality that have existed in the system since inception. Hence, they have not been able to make substantial influence on development in the region (Nelson, 2010). In respect to the above view.

An IDI submitted:

Women’s participation in politics has not influenced politics and governance in southwest Nigeria. The majority of them just hang up to some political godfathers or powerful husbands or relations or engage in acts against their ordinary ways of life. Women here are still politically primitive. They still see no reason why they should participate in politics talk more of having influence.

Another participant stated:

No visible development, hardly will you see or heard about a certain projects executed by women in political offices in southwest. I cannot really blame them because they have not been able to vie for important political contests and win they are mostly noticed in

term of voting in election.

Some participants indicated that the participation of women is greatly low but the few that are up there are doing brilliantly well regardless of how they got there and they are changing the narrative. While some participants are of the opinion that women are moving past how they used to fare in politics. Other respondents however confirmed that it is still in its infancy. They are of the opinion that Women’s influence in politics in Southwest is still almost at a zero notch.

#### **5.6 Research Question 4: Has women’s participation in politics enhanced the proper representation of the people at the Constituency level?**

**Table 2**

		%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>56.25</b>
<b>Maybe</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6.25</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>37.5</b>

Author’s compilation, 2021

The above table presents the feedback of the respondents on whether women’s involvement in politics in the South West has enhance the proper representation of the people at the constituency level in the region. The result indicated that 18(37.5%) indicated no impact, three (6.5%) maybe while 27(56.25%) showed yes that women involvement in politics in the south West has enhanced proper representation of the people at the constituency level.

Women representatives are seen as more responsive to community issues and more sensitive to constituency demands (Anzia and Berry, 2011) cited in Oji et al, (2018). Because women lawmakers are inclined to broadly see “women’s” problems as social problems, perhaps as a consequence of the role they play as mothers and caregivers in their societies Oji et al; (2018), women see their representation in governance as a tool to serve the minority or underrepresented groups in the society (camissa and Reingold, 2004; cited in Orji et al, 2018).

The above view corroborates with the below IDI opinion:

Women's participation in politics has tremendously improved effective representation of the people at the constituency level in the S/West, Nigeria because women are goal getter and they are committed to being part of policy making, particularly in issues that concern them and the general society. There's more advocacy, awareness creation for other women to participate in politics at the grassroots.

Adefemi et al.; (2019) explores the level to which women have participated in the business of legislative and law making in the Southwest since 1999. They argue that despite the various obstacles that have been put in place to discourage women from actively participating in politics or holding key political positions, the zeal and thirst to outshine these obstacles remain high among the women folks in the region. Though, women constitute a small population of the legislative house across the region, women have continued to show or demonstrate the zeal and capacity to make meaningful impact via their contributions in the area of sponsoring of bills, budgeting and drawing to the attention of the house issues of urgent importance within their constituencies. They conclude that women legislators have contributed to more impactful bills in their various legislative houses, as compared to their male counterparts. An IDI commented thus:

People-driven policy, exposure to the helm of affairs. Among others. Empowering young females to aspire to hold political offices, women empowerment in various capacities - Women's healthcare had improved - it has encouraged more women to participate in politics. Women have participated and contested actively in elections and this showed that their impact could be felt if they eventually participate equally with the men folks in politics.

One of the participants of the view that the commitment of the few women's representatives in the Southwest house of assemblies has served as eye opener for other women as this have resulted to other women's readiness to participate in politics and they are showing interests. And this has

influence tangible representation of women in politics in the southwest unlike before.

The following view represents that of the participant:

There is something we call bandwagon; it means that if one person can do it others too can do it as well. By 1999 we had few women but the few who were able to hold Political offices encouraged others to also follow suit. By 2003, we had more women participation in government and since then it has been on the rising trend up until now. It keeps rising because of this bandwagon effect.

Furthermore, some of the participants indicated that the political activities of women have brought a high level of awareness spearheaded by women in politics so many of them are now ready to be involved in politics unlike before. An IDI remarked:

Many men have come out openly to give props to their partners for the roles they played behind the scenes. So maybe the women were not the faces behind the developments but some definitely would have been the brains.

To further contribute the above, An IDI participant had this to say:

Most of the women have been involved in empowerment while those who are not in politics use their NGO to carry out goodwill. The likes of Ibukun Awosika and Folorunsho Alakija have used their platform to groom, mentor and empower women to take up leadership positions. So also, Mrs. Folashade and Mrs. Ronke Shoyombo are working tirelessly to improve education.

The IDI below has a contrary opinion:

The truth of the matter is that it's only the constituents that can determine what is effective representation. For example, I have personally experienced where people preferred converting and celebrating the cash collected for school buildings and security vehicles and equipment for personal enrichment.

### **5.7 Research Question 5: What policy measures can engender political participation of women in South West, Nigeria?**

Studies have shown that women participation in politics is a necessity because it gives women the opportunity to be part of the policy process for societal advancement (Agunbiade, 2019; Boris, 2019; Abubakar et al, 2014). Therefore, any attempt to prevent women from participating in politics on the basis of their gender negates the tenets of democracy and hence is a threat to sustainable development. Therefore, to engender maximum political participation of women in politics in the southwest Nigeria, the following recommendation were made by respondents. A IDI participant suggests:

Government or political parties must make a deliberate policy to encourage women in politics in Southwest. There is huge financial gap between male and female so party or government must address this. Cultural barriers by different which prevent women from attending a male dominated meeting should be discouraged.

The requirement for 35 percent affirmative actions as stipulated by the national government does not always translate to more female members of the legislature. The major problem here can be attributed to political parties not fielding female candidates in constituencies where they have more than a fair chance of winning an election. Rather, political parties tend to field them where they have low chances of winning an election. Even in the case where they are fielded as strong candidates, their political success is closely attached to powerful patrons within the parties. Thus, to encourage more women involvement in politics, political parties must be ready to support their female members by pushing for policies that influence their interest in politics. An IDI thus suggested:

There should be allocation of major roles or important positions to women. Policies on the enlightenment of women generally should be in place. National Orientation Agency should be well formulated on women's participation in politics. Pushing for Policies that influence and affect the positive interest of women in politics. Political parties also need to embark on aggressive inclusiveness and abolition of gender inequality.

According to a study conducted by Akokuwebe and Amusan (2021) they argue that less than 10% of women in Nigeria own assets such as land and the implication is that lack of access to assets such as land and other properties significantly reduces women chances of having access to bank credit facilities for collateral requirements.

There should be abolition of unequal inheritance right and gender discrimination. The awareness of women in politics should be a priority of any serious government of the day. Therefore, there should be more awareness, improve security during campaigns and election.

According to Crenshaw in her intersectionality theory, multiple overlapping identities discriminate against women political participation. The most prevalent impediments identified that women typically have to confront and overcome when participating in the political arena are culture of patriarchy, socio-economic disparity, and weak capacity. An IDI also suggests that:

There should be relaxation of cultural barriers, Improved level of awareness, Removal of threats and brigandage from our body politics to avoid our women from being scared away. We must eliminate structural and legal obstacles that hinder all girls' and women's participation in politics and decision-making, and hold those obstructing them accountable.

To further substantiate the above suggestion. A participant had this to say:

More and more education and orientation is required, eliminate political thuggery, Excessive monetization of electioneering processes will go a long way in this respect.

In a study conducted by Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014) titled “Gender and political participation in Nigeria: a cultural perspective.” They found that cultural norms hinder women’s political participation in Nigeria. They therefore contend that the low participation of women in politics can

be addressed by solid political “will” to implement policy measures or declarations on gender discrimination.

To buttress the above suggestions, An IDI participant mentioned:

Changing cultural norms through media campaigns and education, there should be organized programmes that will empower women, mentoring should be encouraged among women, monitoring the fairness and conduct of both party primaries and general elections, party Congresses should also be focused on for gender fairness and equity. There should be a mandatory number instead of just recommendatory number and there should be a force of law, as this would make people comply.

This submission conforms to the study of (Abubakar and Ahmed, 2014) they asserted that all stakeholders such as government, religion and traditional head should look particularly into socio-cultural and religious practices and how it affects women active participation in politics in Nigeria. According to them, these stakeholders are believed to be educated and as such they should be gender sensitive and help to protect women’s political and other rights in the society. They should ensure that all discriminatory practices be it political, cultural\religious against women are discouraged and ensure that effective measures are in place to punish offenders to serve as deterrent to others.

## **5.8 Discussion of Results**

The study confined the views of different levels of women’s political participation in Southwest Nigeria from 1999-2015. The informants shared their views on how women have fared so far in politics across the region since the inception of the ongoing Fourth Republic. As shown in the findings, impact of different negative forces that intersect to hinder higher level of women involvement in politics and decision making are numerous: cultural and religion hurdles, finance, lack of education, lack of political will, lack of family support and enabling opportunity, women not supporting other women, male chauvinism and the turbulence nature of the Nigerian political arena all these put together are some of the factors indicated to hinder political participation of women in Nigeria including the southwest.

On the trajectories of women political participation in Southwest Nigeria from 1999-2015, results showed that, women political involvement in the ongoing Fourth Republic is not encouraging. According to results, before the Fourth Republic, there were radical women who went out of their way in political participation, which influenced core development not only in Southwest but also across other regions including southeast and Northern regions of Nigeria. These women according to findings were feared by men and they hold government standstill, but after that generation were gone, most contemporary women are not as radical as that any woman exhibiting radicalism are subjected to hardship, taking them to their religious heads for counselling and sometimes, leading to spousal divorce. Women were made to be afraid and subjected to submission at the home front to take care of their families; consequently, it difficult for women in this ongoing Republic to follow in pursuit of political participation as those mentioned radical women before the fourth republic. This is partly because of patriarchy and different colonial activities that gave more priority to men at the expense of the female. The various colonial activities disrupted the political participation of women and systematically dislocated women's position from the public and relegated them to the private spheres. This was as a result of colonial policies that subjugated women such as the colonial law that specify the possession of 100 pound before they can be eligible to stand for elections and the one that excluded women from voting, all these put together kept women in a form of 'bondage', deprivation, devaluation and disempowerment (Orisadare, 2019). Results also revealed that culture and tradition in Nigeria have given privilege to underrepresentation of women in the home front and in the public arena which in turn had denied women their right as human and prevented them from having equal access to resources that could enhance their involvement in politics like their male counterparts. As a result of cultural beliefs and values which have eaten deep into the African culture including Nigeria, women have become a target of stigmatization, conflicts and discrimination of diverse forms. Hence, men are seen as the most powerful and valued members of the society, thus, they control most of the activities in the society, such as agricultural export of cash crops and the political sphere are seen as exclusively preserve of the male (Okafor and Akokuwebe). Pogoson (2012) cited in Oluwole (2013), thus observes:

*“Patriarchy has also been identified as a major social system which has legitimized the domination of women by their male counterpart. Patriarchy is a social system in which the role of man, as the main authority person, is fundamental to social groups and association”.*

Cultural and traditional barrier birthed the marriage standards that restricted women to the private arena. The notion is that women are traditionally raised with the capacity to function better in the home front as home manager and child care givers since social nature attributed family domestic duties to female children, thus, marriage institution offers the necessary backing for these home training to be effective (Oluwole, 2013). Female children are saddled with the responsibilities of catering for the family, ensuring general maintenance of the home and the surroundings as well as caring for the children. In some cases, female children are married off to pay off family debts or for the purpose of using the money collected for bride price in maintaining their younger ones or even the family. The implication of this is that, these cultural practices have subjected women to various forms of marginalization and exclusion from leadership position for many years and this has inevitably denied mankind their exceptional potential for governance (Enemuo,1999; cited in Oluwole, 2013). Findings showed that negative effect of cultural discrimination on the basis of gender affect women in particular as they mostly bear the brunt in the society. This result is in line with the findings of (Boris, 2019; Oluwole, 2013; Agunbiade et al ,2019) they argued that discrimination kept the women in disadvantage position at every levels of leadership in Nigeria. Evidence (Akokuwebe, 2021; Agbalajobi, 2010) revealed that the eradication of societal discrimination against women can improve their status especially in leadership for the betterment of the larger society.

On the factors undermining and hampering women's political participation in Southwest, Nigeria. Results showed these factors to include lack of education, stereotypes, culture and religion, family burdens, financial hurdles, lack of political will, electoral contest among others. Results found that low level of women education in the Southwest is one of the major constraints to women's effective participation in politics in the Southwest. The illiteracy rate among the female in the southwest is high when compared to that of the male. Gender disparity is prevalent, particularly in school, with net primary enrolment rates for boys and girls of 70% and 58%, respectively (World Bank SCD,2018: ix). Most women in the southwest lack adequate education that could position them for political leadership. Results showed that, for someone to navigate the world of politics, a certain level of education is required. Illiteracy rate of women in the southwest is high and this has negatively impacted their chances of becoming relevance in politics. Uneducated women will not be given the opportunity to participate in politics even though uneducated male are seen in the corridors of power and politics. Agbalajobi and Yetunde (2009), Ngara and Ayabam (2013),

Nelson (2012), Okoli and Akokuwebe (2021) have all argued that women do not have access to vital assets such as education, information and adequate skill needed for survival. Oluwole (2012) suggests that, for women to be able to compete favourably at the same level with their male counterparts, they must improve their capacity in the areas of education and skill acquisition. In addition to that, Ehigocho (2021) asserted that education is indispensable as it enables women to gain knowledge about the world that helps women upgrade their status, gain positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and the necessary strength needed to face challenges in life. Therefore, educated women have a vital role to play in governance, the agricultural sector, the industrial sector, and the commerce sector for the building of the nation. Consequently, more education of women will serve as a means of promoting gender equality and gender equity in the southwest region in particular and Nigeria as a whole.

The study also highlights financial hurdles as another constraint to women political participation in southwest. The cost of politics in Nigeria is too high and many women cannot afford it. A majority of women in Nigeria depend on their spouse for money, as they do not have ‘godfathers’ such as the male politicians. The low financial status of women does not give them the access to start thinking of being involved in politics, even at the local levels, they cannot afford such. A lot of money are involved in politics and many women do not have access to such finances. Women are made to provide collaterals that are unreasonable and it is often difficult for women to meet up with such financial institution demands. This result is in line with the findings of (Amusan et al, 2021) they asserted that inaccessibility to loan by women without a collateral or the husband’s authorization hinders women’s economic progress. In other to improve women’s economic and political status, the feminization of poverty must be deconstructed and women be given the requisite education and skills that give them access to economic resources.

Results also point to electoral contest such as intimidation as one of the major factors responsible for women’s underrepresentation in politics in the southwest. Violence orchestrated by male politicians, their thugs and godfathers makes the political arena a war zone for women who prefer to stay within peaceful professions rather than risking their lives, that of their loved ones or soil their hands with blood of the innocents. In this regard, Olatunji and Ojakorotu (2022) as well as Majekodunmi and Olanrewaju (2013) assert that political violence poses a severe impediment to women political participation. Violence is often perpetrated by men politicians and their cohorts

to disrupt elections thereby scaring women away from participating in politics and this has led to overall low turnout of women in the political arena in Nigeria and the southwest.

Additionally, results show that women do not support their fellow women when it comes to politics, they rather castigate and gossip about fellow women instead of supporting them with their votes and this has been a big major problem. Women have been seen to create unnecessary forms, patterns and paths of hatred, jealousy, gossips and image tarnishing of other women who are rising on the ladder of success most especially in politics. For instance, Prof. Sonaiye from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, who came out as Presidency in the last general elections, only received 3 or 10 votes, despite the population of women in Nigeria. This shows to a large extent how women do not support other women in their journey to political success.

On the effects of women's level of participation in the politics of South-western Nigeria between 1999 and 2015, results of the study finds that, women are not adequately represented and issues concerning women are often neglected. Results found that the only area where women have had higher participation is in the area of voting. But when it comes to actual representation women are often relegated. As a result, low representation of women in the political system severely undermines the extent of development in the Southwest. The exclusion of women, who are half of the population of the region from development initiatives or plan, certainly would affect the development of the region. For example, issues concerning women, especially their empowerment, gender-digital gap, maternal health issues, girl-child early marriage, and other prevailing issues (gender violence, rape, harassment) confronting women are rarely considered for decision and action during important decision-making process. It is because, in most decision-making organs of the government, women are not adequately represented.

Results on the nexus between women's participation in politics and proper representation of the people at the constituency level, showed that, though few women participate in politics in the region, but their participation has not translated to meaningful or effective representation of the people in the region. This is partly because the number of women representatives is few and their impact is not being felt by the people. People at the constituency level still suffer from poor representation. Results also showed that rather than effective representation of voters and citizens,

who have voted for them, politicians, including women, neglect them, at the expense of primordial sentiments. However, result showed that few women in politics in the region are dedicated to their duties, and they have also used their positions to bring about different policies on education, health, poverty relieved programmes such as establishment of acquisition centres where people can learn different skills. Also, advocacy programmes for girl child education as well as advocacy on more women political participation in the southwest.

Finally, on the policy measure that can engender optimum political participation of women in the South-West region of Nigeria in politics, results showed that women's low involvement in politics especially in term of representation can be resolved through the institutionalization of affirmative action policies. It also suggests that to have a substantial number of women representation in governance, government through its policies should encourage political parties to establish quota system in their constitutions and manifestoes which reserves certain number of elective positions for women at all levels of political structure. This should be accompanied by entrenching the same in the Nigerian constitution and be made justiciable if breached (Oluwole, 2013).

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 Summary**

This study has examined the trajectories of women's political participation in southwest Nigeria from 1999 to 2015 and sought to determine those factors which hindered their political participation. It also examined the effects of women's level of participation on the politics of the region during this period in order to determine the links participation and representation at the constituency level. Finally, it suggested policy measures to engender optimum political participation of women in politics in the future.

The study drew on intersectionality and African feminist theories. While the former holds the view that humans' social environment possesses both positive and negative effects on the overall performance of the individual, African feminist theory is of the view that African women have the power for political participation. Both theories recognise the fact that women are strong enough in terms of capability and number to occupy elective and appointive positions. Since the population of women is about half of the world's population, excluding them from politics and decision-making processes is inimical to progress and development. The inclusion of women in politics and decision-making organs would go a long way in facilitating rapid socio-economic development. However, this has been difficult to achieve due to what is described in intersectionality theory as the effects of human social environment syndrome. The Nigerian political environment has not been beneficial to women's political participation.

A review of literature on political participation, gender equality, discrimination, mainstreaming, women and development, democracy and women political participation, among others reveal that women's participation in politics in Nigeria during this period has been very low and that this has severely undermined the country's level of development. It has specifically denied the country the opportunity of enjoying the expertise of women in peacebuilding. It was observed that while studies have investigated the role of women in Nigerian politics, not much was known about the roles played by the few women in Nigerian politics in southwest Nigeria. This study thus bridges this gap by advancing knowledge on how the inclusion of more women in Nigerian politics can promote sustainable development and peace in Nigeria.

The study examines the roles played by women legislators in state Houses of Assemblies across southwest Nigeria. It was established that women indeed played active roles in legislative functions such as law making, representation, and oversight functions. To discharge these functions, state legislative units operate a committee system with each assigned specific duties and functions. It was also established that women legislators are members of these committees that have actively engaged in the effective running of the legislature. However, the study observed that women have been faced with daunting challenges getting access to elective positions in the assembly.

To accomplish its objectives and provide robust answers to research questions, the study used a qualitative research design that heavily relied on an in-depth-interview with politicians, women, feminists, party executives, and women organizations drawn from the six states in southwest Nigeria. Data was analysed using thematic content analysis. This was done in relation to research objectives and questions as well as research assumptions with the aim of confirming, modifying or accepting or rejecting assumptions formulated to guide the study. The combination of facts, evidence, opinions and perceptions of respondents from the interview session as well as results of previous studies on the subject matter enhanced the validation and acceptance of the study's research assumptions. Research objectives were fully accomplished and validated based on raw facts, matching of such facts with evidence from previous studies. In other words, the study's research questions, objectives, and assumptions were confirmed and validated by evidence from previous studies on the subject matter and information gathered from participants.

## **6.2 Findings**

In achieving its five stated objectives, the study developed five research questions. This enabled the study to address its broad objective. With respect to the first objective, results showed that women's political participation in Nigeria have not been encouraging. This is partly because of patriarchy and colonialism that gave more priority to men. The study also found that factors undermining and hampering women's political participation in southwest Nigeria include patriarchal systems, stereotypes, culture and religion, family burdens, lack of finance, negative social and religious norms, intimidation, lack of political will, and lack of proper education among others. These factors have collectively prevented women from active political participation in

southwest Nigeria. For example, the purdah religious system, which relegate women perpetually into their living rooms, has made it very difficult for women to participate in politics.

It was also found that the low representation of women in the political system severely undermines development in the South-West. The exclusion of women, who are half of the population of the region, from development initiatives or plans, certainly affects the development of the region. For example, issues such as the gender-digital gap, maternal health issues, girl-child early marriage, gender violence, rape, sexual harassment, confronting women are rarely considered and implemented. It is because, in most decision-making organs of the government, women are not adequately represented. Results further showed that despite few women participating in politics, this does not necessarily translate into good and effective representation of the people. This is partly because the impact of the few women in politics is not being felt by the people. People at the constituency level still suffer from poor representation. Results showed also that rather than effective representation of voters and citizens who have voted for them, politicians, including women, neglect them due to primordial sentiments. Finally, results showed that women's low representation or political participation can be resolved through strong political will of those at the helm of affairs. The president, especially, needs to be more committed to 35% affirmative declaration for women's political participation. This will give more opportunities to women to be actively engaged and have a voice in their own affairs and contribute positively to the growth and development of the country.

### 6.3 Recommendations

It is recommended for the country to be more committed to and comply with global affirmative action against women discrimination in politics. The president should show more political will by fully complying to the 35% affirmative action that enables women participate in politics. This will go a long way in the achievement of sustainable development goals in Nigeria. Other recommendations are as follows:

**i. Equal representation:** Equality in governance should be encouraged; men and women should participate in politics/governance and other social concerns on equal terms. There should be enabling constitutional amendments to ensure equitable participation of men and women in both

elective and appointive positions for meaningful national development. Also, national legislations should conform to the international standard instituted in various agreements and apparatuses for the abolition of discrimination against women and to ensure the interest of women through adequate representation. There should be implementation of political empowerment to encourage active political participation of women in politics and decision making, especially through the strengthening of affirmative action policies and allocation of quotas.

**ii. Women empowerment:** Women need to be empowered to be able to fight their way through in an arena that is dominated by strong men. Women should be privileged just like their male counterparts to have access to credit facilities and other factors of production such as land and labour in order to increase their productivity and income generation. Unfair laws of inheritance and succession in most African states including Nigeria should be abolished. Conditions that subject women to seeking the consent of husband before they can be granted loans should be discouraged as this denies women legal ownership and access to credit facilities.

**iii. Positive portrayal of women by the media:** This is a digital era where the media remains the most effective medium of conveying information. Therefore, the media should provide more positive portrayals of women politicians or aspirants. The media should desist from publishing negative or derogatory comments and focus more on positive comments about women politicians in order to encourage other aspiring women to be politically inclined.

**iv. Abolition of discriminatory practices:** Stakeholders such as government, religion/traditional leaders should particularly look into socio-cultural and religious practices and how they affect women's active participation in Nigerian politics. These stakeholders are believed to be educated and as such should be gender sensitive and help to protect women's political rights. All discriminatory practices – political, cultural, religious – against women are discouraged and ensure that effective measures are in place to punish offenders to serve as a deterrent to others.

**v. Proper perception of women:** There should be proper sensitization and public enlightenment campaign or programs in Nigeria to discourage the use of negative labelling, derogatory names, abusive language and expressions to describe women politician or women political aspirants. The campaigns of male political opponents that see Nigerian women as not complying with Nigerian culture of not accepting leadership roles of women just to marginalized them should be discouraged. Women politician in Nigeria should be properly and positively viewed as partners of their male counterparts rather than been perceived as weaker vessels.

**vi. Priority of female education:** Education remains an important tool in politics and other aspect of life. Women have been relegated to the background in every aspect of life endeavour as a result of their illiteracy level. To navigate the world of politics, technology, business and so on, women need proper education. Therefore, the government both at the federal and state levels must prioritize female education by giving girl child free education from primary to the tertiary levels. Government should create forums where young women and girls are exposed to a wide range of discourse aimed at the advancement of women in all spheres of life. Highlight how their participation at the decision making tables as elected or appointed office holders can make a difference.

**vii. Constitutional Amendment:** Just like Article 27 (8) of the constitution of Kenya and Article 6 (4) of the constitution of Rwanda (2003), Nigeria should amend its constitution to give 35% representation to women in governance across the country. Equally, additional amendments should be made to define the state of origin of a married woman for the purpose of proper political representation. As it stands in Nigeria today, married women do not know where they stand in term of politics, they neither belong to their states of origin nor their spouses' in terms of political representation. For this reason, there is need for constitutional amendment.

**viii. Women's change of attitude towards and perceptions of politics:** Improving women's participation in politics has to begin with women themselves. Women must be willing to come out of their shells to take part in politics. They must be prepared for the horse trading that goes with political appointments and decision making. They must earn the trust of the wider society, especially the sceptical males who have dominated politics. They should also be willing to produce different results, especially in a corrupt society like Nigeria. There is also the need to educate fellow women on the gains of politics and to educate men that women are equal stakeholders in society and that their contribution would make the society better for all. Women have not come to threaten men's domination but to make a case for equal participation and perhaps an alternative to masculinity in leadership.

**ix. Women support for fellow women:** Women must put their differences, gossips, hatred and jealousy aside and render support for their fellow women during campaigns, voting and throughout the electioneering process and beyond as this will help boost the morale of female aspirants.

**x. Abolition of unequal division of labour among the sexes:** There should be proper orientation for children from the home front through to the larger society. Some of the issues the female gender

is facing in public spaces today start from the home front as a result of unequal division of labour among the two sexes. Female children are mostly restricted to the home front to cook, wash, clean, care for children and the environment while the male children are more inclined to the activities outside the home. The resultant effect of this unequal division of labour is that, it has beclouded the thinking of the female gender and make them subscribe to the believe that they cannot function better in the public realm like their male counterparts who are already groomed for the public arena.

**xi. Punishment for anyone found guilty of sexual exploitation:** there should be a severe punishment for anyone found guilty of sexual exploitation. Even when women have the ability and capacity in terms of education, intellectual capacity, knowledge and understanding of the grassroots politics, men who are the political stakeholders tend to tag women with sexual exploitation. Thus, for women to make headway in politics there must be an end to sexual exploitation and anyone found guilty should be punished accordingly.

**xii. Entrench laws that enforces equity and equality of women:** There should be a law that guarantees equality of employment opportunities and eliminates all discriminatory and abusive practices on the grounds of sex, religion, ethnicity, age, class, disability or marriage against the employment of women in both public and private sector of the economy.

First, training is crucial. Women need training in the fundamentals of politics. They need to understand grassroot politics and start from there. When people are unknown at the grassroots, they aren't successful.

Another way is networking and mentoring. Women also need to see that politics is not all dirty. They need to see governance as what affects every member of a society. Legislative changes are needed too and that is where affirmative action comes in. A quota system that reserves a fraction of electoral positions for women can be legislated. Financial support is crucial. Some women can't afford to buy party forms. And when payment for forms is waived for women, they are often made to step down for the man who has paid. Women need financial support that will not impede on their rights to participate or vie for positions. Women must also ensure that only women who are efficient and have the capacity to lead are encouraged to vie for positions. The media must change their attitude towards political coverage of women. They sometimes project women in ways that are not relevant to leadership, politics or election. The media must help educate people of the dangers of cultural norms and harmful gender stereotypes, and monitor fairness in elections. There

are cases where election violence has badly and specifically affected women. The media have to report these and hold perpetrators accountable. Advocating for affirmative action at the state and political party level is also important. Political parties have been known to tell a woman to step down from the electoral process. This must stop.

#### **6.4 Contributions to Knowledge**

The study advances knowledge in the area of active involvement of women in the politics of legislative committee system at the state house of Assemblies in the six South-western states in Nigeria. Evidence from results of the study showed that although the rate of women in politics is still very low in these states, but women have played or occupy key positions at the committee level, especially, in areas of debate on bills, approval of state's budget, probing of public servants, and many other related legislative duties. The study has also contributed to knowledge in the possibility of understanding the magnitude of low representation of women in politics and its implications in Southwest region. This contribution is specifically important, in reawakening the calls for quota system to encourage more women's participation in Nigerian politics. The idea of quota system is based on the argument that certain number of seats or political positions should be exclusively reserved for women. With this new contribution, more women would be encouraged to actively participate in politics in the region.

Of great importance, is the study's contribution to knowledge in the area of providing adequate advocacy to Ministry of women's Affairs on issues such as empowerment, education, continual public enlightenment, safeguarding the interests and rights of women. For instance, through this study, majority of women's associations including the Ministry of women Affairs would now understand that discrimination against women in politics is a fundamental human right issue that can be challenged in the law court. This study through this contribution, has provided adequate information and advanced knowledge on procedural steps to be followed by women in regaining their position or participation in the political process.

Furthermore, the study is uniquely relevant because of its inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary contributions to knowledge in fields such as political science (specifically in areas of political behaviour, electoral system, and party system), sociology (specifically, in areas of society, empowerment, citizens obligations, cultural and traditional beliefs system), Geography (specifically in areas of regional or locational practices, Southwest regional political system),

Economics (specifically in areas of how financial or monetary gains define political participation, poor financial capacity of women, leading to their exclusion from political participation, seeking for government appointment for money than service to the people), Education (specifically, in areas of calls for proper education of women and the girl child, vocational training for rural women), History (specifically in areas of historical perspective of women participation in Nigerian politics, since 1999, history of politics in Southwest), Religious studies (specifically in area of how religion-purdah system deprive women from political participation), International relations(especially in the area of comparative analysis of western and African feminism), and Gender studies (specifically, in areas of gender equality, gender discrimination, and women participation in politics).

The study in its contribution is significantly a departure from the usual heavily laden quantified analysis of women participation in politics to a more in-depth compact analysis of women's participation. This study adds to knowledge by effectively showcasing far-flung problems contributing to low representation of women in politics in Southwest Nigeria. It brought to the fore, some of the issues (such as low self-esteem, financial incapability, natural preferences, public general perceived belief among others), that other studies usually gloss over, as the main travails of women in Nigerian politics. The study expands the frontiers of knowledge by providing adequate information to government and relevant stakeholders on the need to understand that the country's development is highly dependent on the inclusion of more women in the development and decision-making process. It specifically contributes to growing body of knowledge in areas women's utility in sustainable development.

One other contribution of this study to knowledge is in the area of deepening understanding on the role of women in peacebuilding in Nigeria and Southwest in particular. It deepens knowledge on how women, majority of whom, are victims of violence, use their experiences of their travails to launch peacebuilding efforts as part of their political participation. This is hardly examined by previous studies and the few ones that ventured into it, does not see it as means of political participation. Furthermore, the study contributed to the utility of women in governance across South-western states. For example, through findings of this study, especially in areas of women's role at the legislative committee level and their deputy positions, knowledge about their

performance in governance can be learned. The findings of this study were significantly different from the previous as it provides adequate information on how women have actively participated in promoting good governance in their respective offices

The study also advances knowledge in the possibility of learning how women politicians navigate intra-party politics in Southwest region. For instance, findings on women's political participation reveals that women play active role in the internal mechanism of political parties, especially in reconciling conflicting members and ensuring that they remain in the party. The study provides adequate information on the performance of women in appointive positions ministries, commission, agencies, and government departments across states in South west region. Lastly, their contribution to community development projects especially at the constituency level was revealed through the findings of this study. Evidence from this study's findings shows the extent to which women have actively participated in the development of their constituencies, especially, women at the states house of assemblies in southwest Nigeria.

### **6.5 Conclusion**

More participation of women in politics has several good tidings and benefits. Apart from the fact that their participation in politics will provide a balance basis for developmental decision-making, it will go a long way in according them a sense of belonging in the country. Scientific evidence from the literature shows that women are homebuilders and such rare quality can be translated to build the entire country. It is also a fact that women are more suitable for peacebuilding and care-giving. For a country to be peaceful there is a need for expert in peacebuilding, this places women in a strategy position to build peace, which in the long is a unique determinant for sustainable development. The involvement of women in politics will make them useful partner to men in the development of the country. Although, their exclusion from politics has been identified in recent times as one of the major setbacks for economic development. They are are a strong pillar for grassroots politics; and a drive for more women participating in politics at the grassroots still faces a lot of challenges, making it difficult for them to harness available opportunities for economic development. For a very long time, the affairs of the country has been in the hands of men, who have achieved little or nothing, without the inclusion of women. The results of this study showed that majority of the problems confronting Nigeria, politically, socially, and economically, was due to low representation of women in public offices.

Socially, many of the social institutions that regulate social crimes such as gender violence are handled by men, who may not be directly affected by the violence. Similarly, most of those that take decision about maternal mortality rate are men, only few women are involved in the decision making. This is ugly circumstance cut across sectors in Nigeria as women are relegated to the background due to the overriding influence and powers of men. This situation would have been different, if more women are involved in politics as evidence from countries like Rwanda, where more women are involved in politics, has been very stable, peaceful, and highly developed.

In Nigeria, reverse is the case with active representation of women in politics as fewer women get into political positions. Factors such as political parties' dynamics, financial capacity, poor media coverage, defections, among others have been responsible for low representation of women in politics. The weak intra-party democratic principles that imposes candidate on the people, costs of politics prevent women from politics. Poor financial capacity to compete with men also prevent women's engagement in politics. It is also a fact that media coverage does not display women issues, hence their low representation in politics. The media give poor coverage to female candidates. It is not the same as the coverage men get. Women candidates are often subjected to gender related electoral violence, threats and hate speech because of the perception that women want to get what is traditionally men's. There are also societal factors that impede women's representation. They include cultural or religious norms surrounding marriage, indigeneship – a concept that recognises only ethnic groups native to a particular state – and the structures that portray women as subordinate to men. There is also lack of political will and effective commitment by the government to the plight of women in the country. All of these have negatively contributed to low representation of women in politics in Nigeria and invariably undermine the potential of women in the development of the country.

Women occupy half of Nigeria's population, their participation will create a balance of power between genders. This is an indicator of development in any society. The full and equitable participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining strong, vibrant democracies. When women are not participating in politics, it's less likely that policies will benefit them. Women need to participate to bring attention to issues that uniquely affect them, and to change attitudes towards gender. Women's political participation could promote women's

collective voice on issues and greater involvement of women in community development projects through monitoring, reporting and over-sight in community projects. Gaps in women's exclusion from decision-making process and community development projects could be bridged by their involvement in decision-making, mainly as stakeholders in community projects or services. Their active engagement in development initiatives or peacebuilding stimulates women's collaborative efforts in identifying specific threats to women and proper identification of projects required in communities.

Rwanda and South Africa, unlike Nigeria have used a quota system to pave the way for women representation in politics. In Rwanda, over 50% of political positions are held by women. Affirmative action or a quota system provides role models. Seeing women in positions of power can encourage others to confidently aspire to leadership positions. Affirmative action also promotes diversity and increases opportunities for a disadvantaged group. It can decrease the potential for conflict as members of society begin to find themselves at the same level, politically, economically and socially.

The study concludes that the role played by women at the sub-national or state level may not be adequate to mainstream them into national politics, or achieving the gender equality goals, and influencing economic development. It therefore becomes relevant to educate them on the need to effectively participate in politics and decisions that concern their affairs, if more of them are to participate and be relevant in politics in elected positions in view of the 2023 elections. The study therefore suggests that more women should be empowered and educated, especially at the sub-national level. This will offer them the opportunity to have a sense of belonging and be bold to contribute meaningfully to the development of their country. The awareness of their unique role and having the capacity to play such role, especially, when the government offers them the opportunity to serve will go long way improving the conditions of women and promotion of sustainable development in Nigeria.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abutudu, M. (2013). Political Parties and Elections in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Being a paper presented at National Conference on Political Parties and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria, organized by the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, in collaboration with the Democracy and Governance Development Project (DGD) II of UNDP, 26-28 June, 2013
- Abiola, I A (2019) Women's Political Participation and Grassroots Democratic Sustainability in Osun State, Nigeria (2010-2015), *Journal of Interdisciplinary Feminist Thought*: 11(1): 1-17
- Adebukola, Foluke Osunyanmi. Interrogating the Influence of Poverty on Insecurity in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 4, No. 12; October 2014
- Adedayo Oluwaseun Adefemi and Ayodeji Temitope Agunbiade. Women Political participation and Representation in State Legislatures, Southwest, Nigeria- *Journal of Political Sciences and Public Affairs* ISSN 23-33- 0761, 2019
- Adeleke, Justina Olufunke. Women's Political Participation at the Local Government level: A Case Study of Akoko South West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal* August 2014 /SPECIAL/ edition ISSN: 1857 – 7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431
- Adeline Nnenna Idike, Remi Chukwudi Okeke, Cornelius O. Okorie, Francisca N. Ogba, Christiana A. Ugodulunwa. Gender, Democracy, and National Development in Nigeria. Accessed at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244020922836>
- Ademola, A. (2011). Endangering good governance for sustainable democracy: The continuing struggle against corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Research on Peace, Gender and Development* 1(11). December. Pp 307-314.
- Adeosun, A. (2014). Democracy and Democratic Consolidation in Nigerian Fourth Republic: Issues and Challenges. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 19(10):05-10
- Adetula, V. and Adeyi, E. (2013). Money, Parties and Democracy in Nigeria. Being a paper presented at National Conference on Political Parties and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria, organized by the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, in collaboration with the Democracy and Governance Development Project (DGD) II of UNDP, 26-28 June, 2013

Aderonke Majekodunmi and Awosika, Felix Olanrewaju. Godfatherism and Political Conflicts in Nigeria: The Fourth Republic in Perspective. *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences Research (IJMSSR)*ISSN: 2319-4421 Volume 2, No.7, July2013

Agbaje, A. and Adejumobi, S. (2006). Do Votes Count? The Travails of Electoral Politics in Nigeria. *Africa Development* 31(3): Pp 25-44.

Agbaje, A. (1999). Political Parties and Pressure Groups. in R. Anifowose and F. Enemou (eds), *Elements of Politics*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd

Agbaje, A. (2010). Whose Catalyst? Party Politics and Democracy in the Fourth Republic: From Theory to Denial, Chapter 3, In Said Adejumobi (ed.). *Governance and Politics in Post-Military Nigeria: Changes and Challenges*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Agbaje, A., Akande A., and Ojo, J. (2007). Nigeria's Ruling Party: A Complex Web of Power and Money. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 14(1): 79-97

Agunyai S. C., Odeyemi, T. I., Olawoyin, W. K (2014) Women and politics of marginalisation in Niger-Delta area of Nigeria. *Journal Research in Peace, Gender and Development*, 4(4): 55-62, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14303/jrpgd.2013.113>

Akande, J. (2002). *Gender Views: A Women Law Center. Newsletter, April Edition.*

Akiyode -Afolabi A (2011) 2011 Election: Gender Ranking of Political Candidates and Other Issues in Women's Political Participation. *WARDC: Lagos*

Alli, Y. (2013). ₦255 million car scandal: Oduah's 12 sins by reps' panel. *The Nation on Sunday* November. 10, p.5

Akhakpe, Ighnodalo. Election Crisis, Liberal Democracy and National Security in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*; ISSN: 2046-9578, Vol.10 No.11 (2012)

Akpan-Obong, Patience and Ette, Mercy (2022). Negotiating Access and Privilege: Politics of Female Participation and Representation in Nigeria. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 00(0): 1-16.

Al-Mohammad, S.M. (2017), "The impact of social websites over Jordanian students' intentions of active political participation: an application of theory of planned behaviour", *International Review of Management and Marketing*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 1-16.

Almond, G., Powell, G., Strom, K. & Dalton, R.(eds). (2000). *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. Singapore: Pearson Education Inc.

Ama, I. (1993). *Mobilizing Nigerian Women for National Development: The role of femal elites*; *African Economic History* Vol. 21:1-20

Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko and Nkemakolam Okorie. *Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications*. *Global Journal of Human- F Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 Version 1.0 Year 2014

Anifowose, R. (2004). *Political Parties and Party System in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria: Issues, Problems and Prospects* in Olurode, Lai and Anifowose, Remi (eds.) *Issues in Nigeria's 1999 General Elections*. Lagos, Nigeria: John West Publications Limited and Rebonik Publications Ltd.

Anifowose, R. *Women Political Participation in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects* in Akinboye SO (ed.) (2004). *Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics* Concept Publication Limited Lagos

Appadorai, A (2004). *The Substance of Politics (Fourth Impression)*. India, Oxford University Press

Arowolo, D. and Aluko, F. (2010). *Women and Political Participation in Nigeria*. *European Journal of Social Sciences* 14 (4), 581-593.

Asirvatham, E. and Misra, K. (2009). *Political Theory*. New Delhi: S. Chard & Company Ltd.

Asiwaju, A. (2000). *Sharing Best Practice Experiences in Democracy-Building in Non-French Speaking African States*, draft paper presented at the 4th International Conference on New and Emerging Democracies, Cotonou, Benin Republic, December 4-6

Atiyat, F. (2017), "Jordanian women participation in the parliamentary elections of 2016: field study in Albalqa governorate", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 109-122.

Atkeson, L.R. (2003), “Not all cues are created equal: the conditional impact of female candidates on political engagement”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 65 No. 4, pp. 1040-1061.

Atkeson, et al. (2020), *Waiting to Vote in the 2016 Presidential Election: Evidence from a Multi-county Study*, Vol 73, Issue 2, 2020. Access at [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1065912919832374?casa\\_token](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1065912919832374?casa_token)

Atkinson, S. (2013). *The Politics Book*. DK

Augustina, Giraudy. *The Politics of Subnational Undemocratic Regime Reproduction in Argentina and Mexico*. *Journal of politics in Latin America* 2/2010: 53-84

Arum I (2010) *Women NGO’s and Women Empowerment in Nigeria*, *African Research Review*, An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia Vol. 4 (3b) (Pp. 272-280)

Asaju, K. and Adagba, S. O. (2013). *Women participation in national development in Nigeria: Imperative of education*, *Journal of public administration and governance*, Vol 3 (1): 57-69

Awoyemi, O. (2012). *Revenue allocation, insecurity and poverty in Northern Nigeria*. Accessed 17th November, 2019: <https://www.proshaven.com/news/16703>

Ayoade J. (2008). *Godfather Politics in Nigeria*. In *International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Money, Politics and Corruption in Nigeria*, Jos and Ibadan: IFES,

Babatope, A. (2012). *Party conflicts and democracy consolidation in Nigeria: Bumpy past, shaky future*. *Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol. 1(1): pp.12-20

Beauregard, K. (2014), “Gender, political participation and electoral systems: a cross-national analysis”, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 53 No. 3, pp. 617-634.

Bernstein, A.G. (2005), “Gendered characteristics of political engagement in college students”, *Journal of Sex Roles*, Vol. 52 Nos 5/6, pp. 299-310.

Blanton, S. and Kegley, C. (2016). *World Politics: Trend and Transformation, 2016-2017*. Cengage Learning

Brady, L. (2017). *The Politics of Negotiation: America’s Dealings with Allies, Adversaries and Friends*. University of North Carolina Press

Brady, H.E., Verba, S. and Schlozman, K.L. (1995), “Beyond SES: a resource model of political participation”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89 No. 2, pp. 271-294.

Boris Happy Odalonu, *The Nexus of Gender and Political Participation: An Appraisal of Factors Militating Against Women in Politics in Benin Metropolis, Nigeria*. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)* |Volume III, Issue IX, September 2019|ISSN 2454-6186

Carastathis, Anna (2014). *The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory*. *Philosophy Compass* 9(5): 304–314,

Chukwuemeka Orji and Oluchi Agbanyim. *Women’s Political Representation in Nigeria: Why Progress is slow and What can be done to Fast-track it*. PLAC 2018. ISBN: 978-978-966-648-5

Childs, S. (2004), *A British Gender Gap? Gender and Political Participation*, The Political Quarterly Publishing, Oxford.

Chijioke Nelson, Asst. Editor, Finance/Economy, Nigeria and poor gender-based budgeting records, *Business News* 27 January 2020, <https://guardian.ng/business-services/nigeria-and-poor-gender-based-budgeting-records/>

Crenshaw, Kimberle (1991). *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour*. *Stanford Law Review*, 43 (6):1241-1299

Cohen, C.J. and Dawson, M.C. (1993), “Neighbourhood poverty and African American politics”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 87 No. 2, pp. 286-302.

Collier, D., and Levitsky, S. (1997). *Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research*. *World Politics*, 49, 430–451

Conge, P. J. (1988). *The concept of political participation: Toward a definition*. *Comparative Politics*, 20(2), 241–249

Crenshaw, K. 1991. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241-1299. Doi: 10.2307/1229039

D. A. Falade. Political Participation in Nigerian Democracy: A Study of Some Selected Local Government Areas in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: F Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 8 Version 1.0 Year 2014

Dababneh, A.B. (2012), "Jordanian women's political participation: legislative status and structural challenges", *European Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 213-221.

Dada, J., Udoaka, E., and Dada, E. (2013). The Imperative of good governance for sustainable democracy in Nigeria. *African Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol.3(2): pp 45-60

Dahl, R. (2003). *Modern Political Analysis*. Prentice Hall

Dan- Azumi J B & Asan C (2021) Women and Legislative Representation in Nigeria's National Assembly; A Detailed Appraisal of the Eight Assembly (2015-2019), *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 11(2): 86-109

Dauda, O. and Avidime, S. (2007). Towards a sustainable democratic government in Nigeria's fourth republic. *Millennium Journal & International Studies*.

De Waal, F. (2007). *Chimpanzee Politics Power and Sex Among Apes*. Johns Hopkins University Press

Desai, V., and Potter, R. (2008). *The companion to development studies*; London, Holder Education.

Diamond, L. (1995). Democracy in Latin America: Degrees, Illusions and Directions for Consolidation, in *Democracy and Communism: Theory, Reality, and the Future*, ed. Sung-chul Yang (Seoul: Korean Association of International Studies)

Diamond, L. (1996). Towards democratic consolidation. *Journal of democracy* 7(3): 7-16

Diamond, L. (1997). Civil society and the development of democracy. Working Paper No. 101. Estudio.

Diamond, L., Kirk-Greene, A. and Oyediran, O. (1997). *Transition without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society under Babangida*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner

Downs, A. (1957). *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper & Row.

Dr. Idoko Cletus Usman, Dasuma Arida Mathew. Security Challenges in Nigeria and National Transformation. Internatiuonal Journal of Management Studies and Research (IJMSR) Volume 2, Issue 8, September 2014, PP 8-16

Dr. Jacob Omede Andrew Abdul Omede. Terrorism and Insecurity in Nigeria: Moral, Values and Religious Education as Panacea. Journal of Education and Practice ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online) Vol.6, No.11, 2015

Dr Todd Landman. Developing Democracy: Concepts, Measures, and Empirical Relationships. Background paper prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, May 2007

Dworkin, R. (2006). Is Democracy Possible Here? Princeton: Princeton University Press

Easton, D. (1981). The Political System: an inquiry into the state of political science. University of Chicago Press

Ebuka, Onyeji. Profiling 2019 Female Aspirants: Why Political Space Dwindles for Nigerian Women. Access at <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/277002-profiling-2019-female-aspirants-why-political-space-is-dwindling-for-nigerian-women.html>

Elvira Cicognani, \* Bruna Zani, Bernard Fournier, Claire Gavray, Michel Born. Gender differences in youths' political engagement and participation. The role of parents and of adolescents' social and civic participation. Journal of Adolescence xxx (2011) 1-16

Eme, Okechukwu Innocent and Anthony Onyishi. The Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: A Thematic Exposition. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business Copy Right © 2011 Institute of Interdisciplinary Business Research 172 December 2011 VOL 3, NO 8

Emeka Emmanuel OKAFOR1 Monica Ewomazino Akokuwebe. Women and Leadership in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. Developing Country Studies Vol.5, No.4, 2015

Eniola B O (2018) Gender Parity in Parliament: A Panacea for the Promotion and Protection of Women's Rights in Nigeria, Frontiers in Sociology, 3(34): 1-7

Erunke, C. (2012). Reconsolidating democratic governance in Nigeria: Analysis and suggestions. African Journal of Social Sciences Vol.2(2): pp67-73.

Ette, M. (2013). The press and democratic consolidation in Nigeria: Prospects and challenges. Accessed 21st November, 2019: <http://eprints/hud/ac.uk/id/eprints/18259>

Faeren Mercy Agaiigbe. Voter Apathy and Voter Turnout in the 2015 General Elections: The Benue State Experience. Being Draft paper sent to The Electoral Institute, INEC in Abuja

Falade, D. and Orungbemi, O. (2010). Democratic Governance and Political Education in Africa. Being a Paper Presentation at the 3rd International Conference on Forgotten Africa and African Renaissance at the Treasureland Conference Centre, Kumasi-Ghana from 12th to 16th October, 2010

Falade, D. (2007). The Role of Social Studies Education in Inculcating Democratic Ideals in Nigeria. *Ife Journal of Theory and Research in Education* 10(1):16-23.

Falade, D. (2008). Questions and Answers on Concepts, Methods, Issues and Problems in Social Studies. Lagos, Novec' kol.

Fitzgerald, J. (2013), "What does 'political' mean to you?", *Political Behaviour*, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 453-479.

Frinpong-Mansoh, Y. (2012). Democratic consolidation in Ghana: The role of the news media. *Africa Media and Democracy Conference*, Accra, Ghana. pp.1-36.

Fukuyama, F. (2012). *The Origins of Political Order: from Prehuman times to the French Revolution*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Gary, Marks, Liesbet, Hooghe, Moira Nelson, Erica Edwards. Party Competition and European Intergration in the East and West. *Comparative Political Studies* Volume 39 Number 2, March 2006, 155-175

Gberevbie E D & Oviasogie F O (2013) Women in Governance and Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria, 1999-2012, *Economics & Sociology*, 6(1): 89-107

Gladys Kauna Garba. Building Women's Capacity for Peace building in Nigeria. *Review of History and Political Science* June 2016, Vol. 4, No.1, pp. 31-46

Godiya, G.A. (2013). Patriarchy and Gender Inequality in Nigeria: The way Forward. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 9(17). <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2013.v9n17%p>

G.S. Mmaduabuchi Okeke. Women participation in politics in Nigeria: A democratic imperative. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* Vol. 1, No. 4, 2015, pp. 391-399

Hague, R. and Harrop, M. (2013). *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*. Macmillan International Higher Education

Hay, C. (2007). *Why we hate politics*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press

Hazel V. Carby. *White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood* 1st Edition Imprint Routledge Pages 24 eBook ISBN 9780203639948 accessed at <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203639948-9/>

Helpdesk Report. Gender Roles and Inequalities in the Nigerian Labour Market. Sue Enfield Institute of Development Studies 21 May 2019

Heywood, A. (2017). *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (6th ed.). Basingstoke: Macmillan International Higher Education

Huntington, S. (1991). *The third wave: Democratisation in the late twentieth century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Ibrahim, T. (2016). Human Capital-Growth nexus: the role of Government Spending on Education and Health in Nigeria. Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA). Ahmadu Bello university Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. [https://mpra.ub.uni-uenchen.de/73712/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_73712.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-uenchen.de/73712/1/MPRA_paper_73712.pdf)

Institute for Global Health (2016). *Inequalities in women's and girls' health opportunities and outcomes: A report from sub-Saharan Africa*. Barcelona Institute for Global Health. <https://www.isglobal.org/documents/10179/5808952/Report+Africa.pdf/a978fe4a-d076-468b-805e-2f05861822d7>

Jean-Paul Gagnon (2018). *Democratic Theory* 5(1): 92-113

Jing Du, Nan Li and Yuan Jing Luo. Authoritarian Leadership in Organizational Change and Employees' Ctive Reactions: Have- to and Willing-to Perspectives. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2020

Joseph Omotoso Ajayi, Esan Agbabiaka Aderinola, Jimoh Atanda Afolabi, Simeon Dada Yomi Alfred and James Olaniyi Okunlola. Households' Percieved Causes of Poverty in Southwest

Nigeria. Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development. Vol. 16, Issue 1, 2016

Joint Shadow Report CEDAW Committee, 67th Session (July 2017). Women, Peace and Security in Nigeria. Submitted for the Committee's review of Nigeria's combined 7th and 8th periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Jahan, R. (1995). *The elusive agenda: Mainstreaming women in development*, London, Zed Books

Kayode Ogunsusi. The Menace of Insecurity by Herdsmen Attack and its Implication on Tourism in Southwest Nigeria. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*. ISSN: 2223-814X April 2021, Vol 10, No 2, pp. 530-546

Kehinde David, Adejuwon. (2018). *Gender discrimination and democratic governance in Nigeria: An assessment of the fourth republic (1999-2011)*.

Klijin, E. H. & Edelenbos, J. 2013. The influence of democratic legitimacy on outcomes in governance networks. *Administration & Society*, 45, 627-650.

Kissinger, H. (2014). *World Order*

Knapp, A. and Wright, V. (2006). *The Government and Politics of France*. London: Routledge

Koch, J.W. (1997), "Women's engagement in politics in the year of the woman", *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 118-133.

Kwasau, M. (2013). The challenges of democratic consolidation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *European Scientific Journal*, March Edition, vol. 9(8): pp.181-192.

Lai Olurode. *State and Political Participation: Women in Nigeria's 2011 Elections*. Fredrich Ebert Stiftung. Discussion paper No. 4, April 2013

Lafleur, J.-M. 2013. *Transnational politics and the state: The external voting rights of Diasporas*, Routledge.

Larry Jay Diamond and Marc Plattner. (2006). *Electoral System and Democracy*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lasonas Lamprianou. Contemporary Political Participation Research: A Critical Assessment (2013) DOI:10.1007/978-3-642-30068-4\_2

Lasswell, H. (1963). Politics: who gets what, when how: with postscript (1958). World

Lawless, J.L. (2004), "Politics of presence: women in the house and symbolic representation", Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 53No. 1, pp. 81-99.

Lawless, J.L. and Fox, R.L. (2001), "Political participation of the urban poor", Journal of Social Problems, Vol. 48 No. 3, pp. 362-385.

Leftwich, A. (2015). What is Politics? the activity and its study. Polity Press

Leonardo Becchetti, Nazaria Solferino and M. Elisabetta Tessitore. Education Not for Money: An Economic Analysis on Education, Civic Engagement and Life Satisfaction. Scientific Research Publishing, 2016, 6, 39-47

Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer (2010). Political Power and Women's Representation in Latin America. DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199731954.001.0001

Linda Olofsson. Women's role in Peace Processes: A comparative study of women's participation in the peace processes in Africa and Western Asia. Submitted for a bachelor degree, Linnaeus University, Sweden. Accessed on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 at: <https://repository.globethics.net/handle/20.500.12424/4029686>

Linz, J. & Stephan, A. (1999). Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and post-communist Europe. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press.

Luka, R. C. (2011). Women and political participation in Nigeria; the imperative of Empowerment. Journal of Social Science and Public policy, 111:24-37.

Luke Kelly. Barriers and enablers for women's participation in governance in Nigeria. Retrieved October 15, 2021 from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d430c8eed915d09d4bd354a/596\\_Nigerian\\_Women\\_Governance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d430c8eed915d09d4bd354a/596_Nigerian_Women_Governance.pdf)

LSE Public Policy Group (2013) The Legacy of Margaret Thatcher (London: LSE Public Policy group). Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/files/2013/05/Thatcher-final.pdf> accessed November 8, 2021

Macarie, F. C. & Moldovan, O. 2011. Gender discrimination in management: Theoretical and empirical perspectives.

Majorie McIntosh (2009). An encyclopedic nation of Yoruba women- Yoruba women work, and social change. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009. Accessed at [https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as\\_sdt=0%2c5&q=mcintosh+2009+behavior+women+political+participation+Nigeria&btnG=#d+gs\\_gabs&t=1651528598890&u=%23p%3DsflohldxCY4J](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2c5&q=mcintosh+2009+behavior+women+political+participation+Nigeria&btnG=#d+gs_gabs&t=1651528598890&u=%23p%3DsflohldxCY4J).

Mainwaring, S., O'Donnell, G. and Valenzuela, J. (eds) (1992). Issues in democratic consolidation: The South American democratic in comparative perspective. Notre Dame: university of Notre Dame Press.

Mandy Jollie Bako and Jawad Syed: Women's marginalization in Nigeria and the way forward, Human Resource Development International- Volume 21, 2018 - Issue 5: Critical Perspectives of HRD and Social Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Marjorie Keniston McIntosh. Yoruba Women, Work, and Social Change. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. xiv + 336 pp. \$24.95, paper, ISBN978-0-253-22054-7.

Mariam Marwa Abdul, Olayinka Adeleke, Olajumoke Adeyeye, Adenike Babalola, Emilia Eyo, Maryam Tauhida Ibrahim, Monica Voke-Ighorodje, Martha Onose (2011) Analysis of the History, Organisations and Challenges of Feminism in Nigeria, <http://www.nawey.net/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/05/Feminism-in-Nigeria.pdf>

Maricopa County Forensic Election Audit Volume III: Result Details Work Performed for: Arizona State Senate 1700 W Washington St Phoenix, AZ 850079 /24/2021

Milbrath L.W. (1981) Political Participation. In: Long S.L. (eds) The Handbook of Political Behaviour. Springer, Boston, MA. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-3878-9\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-3878-9_4)

Mohammed, U. (2013). Nigeria's elected system: A change to sustainable democracy in the fourth republic. International Journal of innovative Research and Development, pp. 567- 581.

Morlino, L. (2017). *Political Science*. Sage Publication inc

Nasiru Zubairu. *Rising Insecurity in Nigeria: Causes and Solution*. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences* ISSN 2201-4624, Vol. 19, 2020, 4

Ndubuisi-Okolo Purity., Ph. D1\*, Theresa Anigbuogu., Ph. D2. *Insecurity in Nigeria: The Implications for Industrialization and Sustainable Development*. *International Journal of Research in Business Studies and Management* Volume 6, Issue 5, 2019, PP 7-16

Nelson C (2020) *Nigeria and Poor Gender- Based Budgeting Records*, *Business News*, 27 January, <https://guardian.ng/business-services/Nigeria-and-poor-gender-based-budgeting-records>

Njoku, A. (2010). *Political violence and its implications to democratic consolidation in Nigeria*. *Knowledge Review* 21(4): pp 16-22

Ntiwunka, Gift (2013) *Gender and National Development: The Role of Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development*, *Journal of Research and Development* Vol. 1, No.6, 1-10

Nwadinobi EA (2017) *Role of Women in Peace Initiatives*. *Intel Prop Rights*. 5: 195. doi: 10.4172/2375-4516.1000195

Nwanebo, C. & Alumona, I. (2011). *Incumbency factor and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's fourth republic*. *The Social Sciences* 6(2): pp.125-130.

Nwanegbo, C. & Alumona, I. (2011). *Incumbency factor and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's fourth republic*. *The Social Sciences* 6(2): pp.125-130.

Nwogwugwu, N. In: Yacob-Haliso O., Falola T. (eds). *Women's Empowerment and Women's Health in Africa*. *The Palgrave Handbook of African Women's Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020

Ogege Sam Omadjohwoefe (Ph.D). *Insecurity and Sustainable Development: The Boko Haram Debacle in Nigeria*. *American International Journal of Social Science* Vol. 2 No. 7; October 2013

Ojo Olawole and Koledade Abiodun. *Political Economic of Poverty: Lack of Political Will or Poor Economic Policy in Africa (A Case Study of Nigeria)*. *IJMSSSR* 2020 Vol.2 Issue 4, July-August

Ogbonnaya, U., Omoju, O. & Udefuna, N. (2012). The Challenges of democratic government in Nigeria's fourth republic. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* vol. 3(11): pp.685-693.

Okafor, Emeka Emmanuel, and Monica Ewomazino Akokuwebe. "Women and leadership in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects." *Developing Country Studies* 5.4 (2015).

Oko, O. (2008). The challenge of democratic consolidation in Africa. From the selected works of Okehwawu Oko. Available at: [www.works.bepress/okechukwu/oko/2](http://www.works.bepress/okechukwu/oko/2)

Okoli Ogonna John; Ikechuku Dialoke, Chukwuka Ekene U. and Edwin, I. Edwin- The Tripod of Women's Role in National Development: *International Journal of Innovative Psychology and Social Development* 7(2): 132-143, April-June, 2019

Olabanji Olukayode Ewetan and Ese Urhie. Insecurity and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development Studies*, ISSN 2201-4268, Vol. 5, Number 1, 2014, 40-63

Oladapo O A, Atela M & Agbalajobi D T (2021) Women's Political Participation and Its Predictors in Northern and Southern Nigeria, IDS Working Paper 548, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton: United Kingdom

Olanrewaju, John Shola. Political Parties and Poverty of Ideology in Nigeria. *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences* Volume V1, No 3. Quarter 111 2015

Olatunji O.R., Ojatorotu V. (2022) Electoral Violence and Its Impact on Women's Political Participation in Nigeria. In: Ani K.J., Ojatorotu V. (eds) *Elections and Electoral Violence in Nigeria*. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-4652-2\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-4652-2_12)

Olatunji Oluwakemi Roseline (2018). A comparative analysis of women's political participation in Nigeria and South Africa. A master's thesis submitted to the department of politics and international Relation at the North-West University, Mafikeng campus.

Oloyede, I. (1990). Women Power and Political System. In Olurode, L. (ed). *Women and Social*

Oloyede, I. (2009). Public Policy and Gender Politics in Nigeria. In Akinboye, S.O. (ed). *Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics*. Lagos, Concept Publication Limited.

Olu-Olu (2006). Corruption and the problem of development in Nigeria. *The social Science*, (3):183-187.

Olufunke, A. J (2012). Violence and women participation in politics: A case study of Ekiti State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*,5 (1): 26-34.

Oni, Ebenezer Oluwole. *The Dynamics of Women Political Emancipation and Political Participation in Nigeria: Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa (Volume 16, No.3, 2014)* ISSN: 1520-5509. Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pennsylvania

Orokpo O F E, Emaajo B & Audu E (2018) *CARD International Journal of Social Sciences and Conflict Management*, 2(2): 75-84

Ozoigbo, Bonaventure Ikechukwui. *Insecurity in Nigeria: Genesis, Consequences and Panacea. European Journal of Social Sciences Studies Volume 4, Issue 4, 2019*

Osimen Goddy Uwa, Anegbode E. John, Basil Osayin Daudu and Oyewole Oyindamola O. *Political Participation and Gender Inequality in Nigerian Fourth Republic. Global Journal of Political Science and Administration. Vol. 6, No. 5, pp. 22-38, October 2018*

Onwudiwe, E., & Berwind-Dart,C. (2010). *Breaking the cycle of electoral violence in Nigeria. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.*

Paolo Bellini. *Direct Democracy and Representative Democracy. 2019 – Philosophy and Public Issues (New Series), Vol. 9, No. 1 (2019): 91-106 Luiss University Press E-ISSN 2240-7987 | P-ISSN 1591-0660*

Pettitt, R. (2014). *Contemporary Party Politics. London: Macmillan International Higher Education*

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (2019) *Legislative Bills on Improved Women's Representation and Issues: A review*, <https://placng.org/i/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Legislative-Bills-on-Improved-women-Representation-and-Issues-A-Review-1.pff>

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. *Cultural backlash: Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Authoritarian-Pluralism. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018*

Pogoson, A. (2013). Women, Political Parties and Exclusion in Nigeria: 1999-2012 Being a paper presented at National Conference on Political Parties and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria, organized by the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, in collaboration with the Democracy and Governance Development Project (DGD) II of UNDP, 26-28 June, 2013

Przeworski, A. (1991). Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reform in Eastern Europe and Latin America. New York: Cambridge University Press

Ramola Ramtohul. Intersectionality and women`s political citizenship: the case of Mauritius. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 2015. Volume 33, No. 1, 27-47.

Rasak, B. & Garuba, R.O. (2017). Political Thuggery and Women Participation in Politics in Nigeria. Vol. 8(1):63-76. *Political Science Review*

R.D. Riley, M. J Price, D. Jackson, M. Wardle, F. Gueyffier, J. Wang, J. A. Staessen, I.R.White. Multivariate meta-analysis using individual participant data. *Research Synthesis Methods* Volume 6, Issue 2, June 2015

Read, J. Sexual violence and the Boko Haram crisis in north-east Nigeria. Humanitarian Practice Network, October 2017 <https://odihpn.org/magazine/sexual-violence-and-the-boko-haram-crisis-in-north-east-nigeria/>

Schedler, A. (1998). Preventing Political Violence in Nigeria. Ibadan: University press

Schmitter, P. (1992). The Consolidation of Democracy and Representation of Social Groups. *American Behavioural Scientists* 35

Seeraj Mohamed. The effect of a mainstream approach to economic and corporate governance on development in South Africa (2010). *Journal of Constructing a democratic developmental state in South Africa: Potentials and challenges* 149-168

Shedler, A. (1998). What is democratic consolidation? *Journal of Democracy*, 9(2): pp. 91-107.

Simbine, A. (2007). The People`s Verdict on Political Parties and Nigeria`s Democratic Experiment: 1999-2001, In Joab-Peterside, Sofiri & Ukoha Ukiwo (eds). *The Travails of Democracy in Nigeria, 1999-2003 and Beyond*, Port Harcourt, Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS), Chapter 11, pp 207-232

Simbine, A. (2013). Single Party Dominance and Democracy in Nigeria: The People's Democratic Party Being a paper presented at National Conference on Political Parties and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria, organised by the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, in collaboration with the Democracy and Governance Development Project (DGD) II of UNDP, 26-28 June, 2013.

Spencer, C. and Redmond, E. (2004). Primary State Formation in Mesoamerica. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33(1): 173-199

Springer, S. (2011). Public Space as Emancipation: Meditations on Anarchism, Radical Democracy, Neoliberalism and Violence. *Antipode* 43(2):525-562

Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1993)

Sylvia Chan. *Liberalism, Democracy and Development*. First published 2002 Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Tamunosaki, T., & O., D. E. (2019). Gender Mainstreaming and Political Representation: The Nigerian Experience. *International Journal of Academic Research in Public Policy and Governance*, 6(1), 19–27

Tayo O. George, Christiana Adetunde, Oluwakemi Ijagbemi, Mercy Udume. Overcoming the Challenges of Women in Politics: Lesson for and from Nigeria. *The Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology (NJSA)*. Volume 14, No. 1, June 2016.

Uhlener, C. (2001). Political Participation. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behaviour Sciences*

United Nations Women Nigeria (2020) *The Nigerian Legislature's Role in Advancing Women, Peace and Security*, <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/09/the-nigerian-legislature-s-role-in-advancing-women-peace-and-security>

Van der Eijk, C. (2018). What is Politics? In *The Essence of Politics*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press

Verba, S. and Nie, N. (1978), *Participation and Political Equality*, University Press, Cambridge.

Verba, S., Burns, N. and Schlozman, K.L. (1997), “Knowing and caring about politics: gender and political engagement”, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 59 No. 4, pp. 1051-1072.

Yann P. Kerevel and Lonna Rae Atkeson: Explaining the Marginalization of Women in Legislative - *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (Aug. 6, 2013), pp. 980-992. Published by: The University of Chicago Press on behalf of the Southern Political Science Association

Y. Penceliah (2011). Gender mainstreaming with special reference to senior management in local government. *Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 46, No. si-1