ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS: STUDY OF SOME SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

[1]Dr. Rashida Adamu Oyoru & [2]Professor Sakah Saidu Mahmud
Department of Politics and Governance
Kwara State University. Malete.
rashida.adamu@kwasu.edu.ng
sakah.mahmud@kwasu.ed.ng

&

[3]Otohinoyi Samuel
Department of Public Administration
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
otohinoyisamuel@yahoo.com

Abstract
Women are said to constitute almost half of the world population but they are not adequately represented in the governance of their societies. This study focused on women participation politics in Nigeria, particularly in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West Local Government Areas of Kwara State. The time frame for this study is between 1999 to 2015 when the country returned to democratic government and the rule of law is enshrined in the constitution. Thus, despite global campaign for gender equality, women's political representation in the country has failed to achieve the critical mass of 30% women's representation in the country's parliament. The global average representation of women in national politics is 10%; in Nigeria, the figure has hardly ever been more than 4.8%. The research objective is to examine the role and level of women participation in politics since 1999 to 2015.To achieve the stated objective the study adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. The authors found out that illiteracy among women affected their active political participation. We also found out that there is no improvement in women participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west local government. The study thereafter recommended that, there is an urgent need to promote girl child education in Nigeria in order to curb the level of illiteracy among the females. Also, Governments should domesticate, incorporate and implement CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) policies and programmes that were signed and ratified in June 13, 1985; as it would advance gender equality, including in leadership positions, giving women full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making.

Key Words: Politic, Political Party, Political Participation, Constitution and National Gender Policy

Introduction

Nigeria is one of the countries where the female's population is almost at par with the males. Some of the women in Nigeria have begun to gain popularity in the political sphere of the country. Despite the recognitions of these women in Nigeria political sphere and their inclusion in politics, there still persists poor participation of women in politics and the numbers of women in political positions in Nigeria is growing at a slow rate. Thus, the Beijing platform for Action and Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 1955 cum the Millennium Submit (2000) which all laid emphasis on women equal participation in decision making as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account, as respective governments in the world were expected to implement policies and programmes which will advance gender equality, in both developing and developed countries of the

world; however, women continue to be under-represented in decision-making and leadership in several areas (Women Watch, 2007).

Despite the various international instruments to encourage women's involvement in political activities, the world still witnesses the slow progress of women's participation in politics (UNDP Report, 2015). The International Union Report of 2015 indicates that, there were only forty-one Countries in the world, where women attain the critical mass of 30% women's representation in the parliament out of which Rwanda, Bolivia, Andorra, Cuba, Seychelles, Sweden, Senegal, Finland, Ecuador, South Africa, Iceland and Spain were a handful of countries that have elected more than 40% women to their legislative body (IPU, 2015).

In Nigeria, for example, no woman has attained the position of presidency, in addition only few women have even developed the courage to contest for the position, for instance in the just concluded elections in 2015, only Sarah Jubril contested for the position of presidency (KOWA Party). Furthermore, Nigeria has not also experience an elected Governors within the 36 States of the federation, have only few female candidates have contested for the positions. On the other hand, in terms of the Ministerial appointment, Nigeria was ranked 17.6% with 6 appointed women ministers out of 34 in 1999-2003, in 2003-2007 only 5 women appointed ministers with 13.5% out of 37; In 2007-2011 only 14.8% with 4 out of 27 cabinet members. In 2011-2015, 7 (24.1%) appointed Ministers out of 29 Ministers. In the Legislative Body; (Senate and House of Representatives), in 1999 only 3 (2.8%) were member of the senate out of 109 total members. In 2003 the red carpets accommodate 4(3.7%) women senators out of 109 members. In 2007 the upper chamber has 9(8.3%) women members out of 109 in 2011 the senate house has 7(6.4%) women senators. Lastly, in 2015 only 22 women were members out of 469 total members, eight (8) women in Senate, and 14 women in the House of Representatives; making the total percent to be 4.6%.

Narrowing the problem statement down to Kwara State, in the forth legislature (1999-2003) no woman was member of Kwara State House of Assembly. In the 5th Legislature only Hon. Amdalat Adekunle Badamosi was member of the Kwara State Lawmaker out of 24 members of the Kwara State House of Assembly. In the 6th Legislature women were 3 (12.5%) out of 24 Law-makers of the Kwara State House of Assembly. Furthermore, the 7th Legislature (2011-2015) accommodate 5 (20.8%) out of 24 total members of the law-makers. In the just concluded 2015 General Elections, out of the 24-members Kwara State House of Assembly, only 5 were women while in the same year the 19-members State Executive Council had only 4 females (www.kwara.gov.ng).

At the office of the Local Government Area Chairpersons, there were only 13 (1.8%) in 1999, 15 (1.9%) in 2003, and 27 (3.6%) in 2007 out of the 2,700 total number of chairmen/chairpersons in the respective years. Finally, out of 6,368 Councilors there were only 69 women councilors (1.1%) which increased to 267 (4.2%) in 2003, and reduced to 235 (3.7%) in 2007. (www.inec.ng)

Similarly, in Ilorin West and Baruten Local Governments, between 1999-2003, there was neither female Councilor nor supervisory councilors except in Offa Local Government that had an appointed supervisory councilor in 2004. Since then, the rate of women participation has been at minimal level, take for instance in Ilorin West Local Government Area between 2004-2007, 2007-2010, and 2010-2013 only 2 women out of 7 executive cabinet members, and 12 councilors except in 2013-2016 that they had 3 women as elected vice Chairman and two appointed supervisory councilors for education and works as this accumulate 15.7% of the total representation of women (Author, 2016)

In addition, in Baruten LGA between 2004-2007 only two (2) women were in both the Executive and Legislative Arms of Government, while between 2007-2010 only one (1) supervisory councilor and there was no woman out of the 11 wards councilors but there was appointment of two (2) women supervisory councilors between 2013-2016. Consequently, in Offa LGA, there were four (4) women councilors (two elected and two appointed supervisory) between 2004-2007. Thus, two elected women

as vice-chairman and councilors between 2007-2010 and 2010-2013.The problem is why is it that despites the huge women population in Nigeria political parties have not involve them actively in political participation?

Research Questions

Other questions begging for answer are:

- To what extent does the role of Nigerian political parties affect women political participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West local governments of Kwara State?
- Is there any significant improvement in women participation in politics in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West Local Government Areas since 1999 to 2015 as a result of stigmatization?

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

i. to examine the impact of the role of Nigerian political parties, on the level of women political participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west Local Governments Areas of Kwara State.
ii. to evaluate the influence of stigmatization on the level of women participation in politics in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west Local Governments Areas of Kwara State between 1999 to 2015

Research Hypothesis

$H0_1$ There is no significant influence between Nigerian Political parties and women political participation.

$H0_2$ There is no significant improvement in women participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west political system.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of this study, the researchers adopt the survey and documentary research method. The researcher made use of oral interview, questionnaire textbooks, internet, journals, and other published and unpublished materials.

In order for the authors to analyse data collected, the use of qualitative and quantitative method was explored using chi-square (X^2) statistical tool to test the hypothesis. The population size of the research work cover the entire population of Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West local Government Areas in Kwara state. Offa has a population of 113,830,Baruten has an approximate population of 209,459 as at December 2015, when the figure was released while Ilorin West Local Government has an approximate population of 346,666 as at December, 2015 when the figure was released. The entire population for this study is 669,955.

In selecting the sampling size for this study, the Yamane's formula was employed. The Yamane's formula as expressed by Israel (1992) is denoted by:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population

e = Significant level (95%)

$$n = \frac{669,955}{1 + 669,955\,(0.05)^2} = \frac{669,955}{1 + 1674.888} = 399.99988 = 400$$

Based on the Yamane's formula computed above, the sample size for this study is four hundred (400) out of which 58, 213 and 129 questionnaires were administered using random sampling technique to residents of offa, Ilorin west and barutin local government areas respectively .

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses primarily on critical assessment of low women political participation in Kwara State from 1999-2015 being a period of democratic dispensation. It took three local government areas in cognizance, which include, Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West as case study. Efforts were put in place by going to some ministries, departments, agencies as well as state political offices to collect data for detail analysis.

Literature Review

The Concept of Politics

The concept of politics has been viewed in different perspectives by scholars who have written on the subject matter. The idea of Aristotle that 'man is by nature a political animal' and his conclusion that politics is the 'master science' because it involves the intricacy of conflicts and conflict resolution on the distribution of power and resources in the society readily comes to the fore; thus, Heywood (1997:10) inextricably linked politics to the Government the phenomenon of conflict and cooperation when he defined politics as the art of a phenomenon which relates to the public affair, a means of resolving conflicts either by compromise, conciliation or negotiation, rather than through force and naked power. Sodaro (2001:27) share this view by defining politics as the process by which communities pursue collective goals and deal with their conflicts authoritatively by means of Government. Easton (1990) defines politics as the 'authoritative allocation of values' in a political system. By this Easton sees politics as encompassing the various processes through which Government responds to the pressures and demands of allocating benefits, rewards or penalties in a society. This is why Lasswell (1958) sees politics as the determination of who gets what, when and how. It is, however, observed that the various definitions above, consider the concept of politics from the viewpoint of the normative function of politics which is the resolution of conflict of interests. However, it is necessary that it ascribes value be also put to bear. In doing so, the concept of politics will not just be limited to the view of the developed countries, but will also be relevant to the context of the developing countries particularly Africa.

The Concept of Political Participation

The concept of political participation is one of those concepts in the Social Sciences that have been subjected to several interpretations and meanings by scholars and practitioners (Chukwuemeka and Eze, 2011). Almond and Verba (1963) viewed political participation as consisting of those legal activities of private citizens, which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of Government personnel and the activity they undertake. This definition emphasizes conventional political participation and excluded unconventional politics, such as illegal political protest, political thuggery, politically motivated terrorist attacks, hijack of ballot boxes among others. Political participation has also been conceived as activities of citizens designed to influence Government decision making. This definition, in a wide sense, comprises all the activities of individual and groups, conventional or unconventional that target decision-making process with a view to impacting a change.

Anifowose, (2004), observed that the definition of political participation is far from being straightforward and that one problem of the various definitions is that they are more or less exclusively. He argue that the perception of political participation as a voluntary action through which people seek to

influence the making of public policy excludes those forms of participation that are coerced. Thus, they defined political participation as a term that denotes the action by which individuals take part in the political process. Bari (2005), suggested that political participation consists of taking part in the process of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies. This conception, however, did not take into account the passive form of politics, such as discussing political issues with colleagues or making a joke about a politician and his political activities. Herderson, (2006), considered citizen participation in a decision that affects them as being imperative for democratic consolidation in any society. In a similar perception, Eme et al. (2015) have contended that efficiency in public administration is strengthened and enhanced by citizens' participation in the political process. (Eme et al 2015)

However, the absence or under-representation of women in the very process of decision making and implementation undermines the fundamental concept of a democratic form of governance which assumes that participation and representation in all areas and levels of public life should be equally available to women and men (Aluko, 2011). The concept of women's participation in politics would logically result from the synthesis of the essential political activities that women in Nigeria engage in such as:

i. Attaining political power in legislative bodies
ii. Holding public and party office
iii. Attending political meetings and election rallies and campaigns
iv. Voting in an election
v. Fielding self as a candidate to be elected
vi. Participation in political discussions and debates

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

It will be wrong to lay the dismal level of political participation of women in Nigeria at the doorstep of lack of legal framework for the equal participation of men and women in all the affairs of the Nation. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which is today the ground norm of the country, in its chapter IV, guarantees equality of sexes and non-discrimination in any respect on account of sex.

This provision, if strictly adhered to should guarantee equal participation of women and men in the political space. It should also provide the opportunity to enforce the provision through litigation (Olateru, 2012).

International Commitments

Nigeria is obliged to implement all its commitments which guarantee gender equality both at Regional and international levels. Notable amongst these instruments are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, The International covenant on civil and political rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act Cap 10, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990, The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) 1995, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of women and the Millennium Development Goals. Examining these instruments one finds that CEDAW for example in its Article 1 condemns all forms of discrimination against women on basis *"of political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."*. Although Nigeria ratified CEDAW since 1989, it has not domesticated the law to make it applicable in Nigeria, despite various advocacies and clamor for the passage of the CEDAW Bill through the successive National Assembly since 1999. Though the African Charter on Human and People's Rights has been domesticated through the promulgation of the Act in 1990, the law is not fully implemented to ensure equality of women and men in the political arena. The Protocol to the Charter on women's Rights also is not being implemented and has not been domesticated to make it part of

Nigerian's laws (Bisi, O.O. 2012).

It is pertinent to mention that the African Union in its Constitutive Act makes it obligatory that gender equality is guaranteed and enforced by member nations including Nigeria. Article 11 of the Act specifically provides that: " ... *it is a binding obligation to ensure that women have every opportunity to contribute in terms of full equality to political and socio-economic development in all our countries*" Nigeria is in flagrant abuse of this obligation as it affects women' political participation and representation (Olateru, 2012).

Furthermore, the successive 5 yearly reviews of the Beijing Platform for Action show that Nigeria has not fully implemented the commitments under the BPFA especially the recommended provision of the affirmative Action Policy. The current position of Nigeria makes it even more impracticable that the country will meet the Millennium Development Goals (Agbalajobi, 2010).

Conceptualization of Political Parties on Women Participation

The process of candidate recruitment and nomination is probably the most important for political parties to address if women's political participation is to be promoted. Parties are the vital link for achieving equality and inclusive participation, given that they maintain firm control over the nomination of candidates for elected office. Political parties vary substantially with regard to how they nominate candidates, the number of women selected, where women rank on party lists, and the proportion of women who make it to elected office. Parties also vary in their breadth of participation and degree of decentralization (Daniel, 2012).

Be as it may, in the pre-electoral phase, recruiting and nominating candidates is probably the most crucial process for ensuring that women participate in politics. The gender gap widens significantly as candidates for political office move from being eligible to becoming aspirants to finally being nominated by the party. It is important for parties to incorporate rules that guarantee women's representation. When this commitment is unwritten and informal, it is much more difficult to devise strategies for women to break into the inner circle of power, and harder to hold the party accountable when the commitment is not realized. If a party's internal organization is weak and the rules for recruitment are not clear, decisions tend to be made by a limited number of elites, usually men. In recent years, electoral quotas have become a popular policy measure to bring more women into politics (Lai, 2013).

Consequently, advance democratic governance requires creating and sustaining an environment of inclusive and responsive political processes and promoting the empowerment of women. The inclusion of the perspectives of women and their participation in politics are prerequisites for democratic development and contribute to good governance. Political parties are the most important institutions that affect the political participation of women. In most countries they are responsible for candidate recruitment and selection, and decide on which issues are placed on the policy agenda. How women participate in political parties – or how political parties encourage and nurture women's involvement can be best explained with an illustrative diagram below:

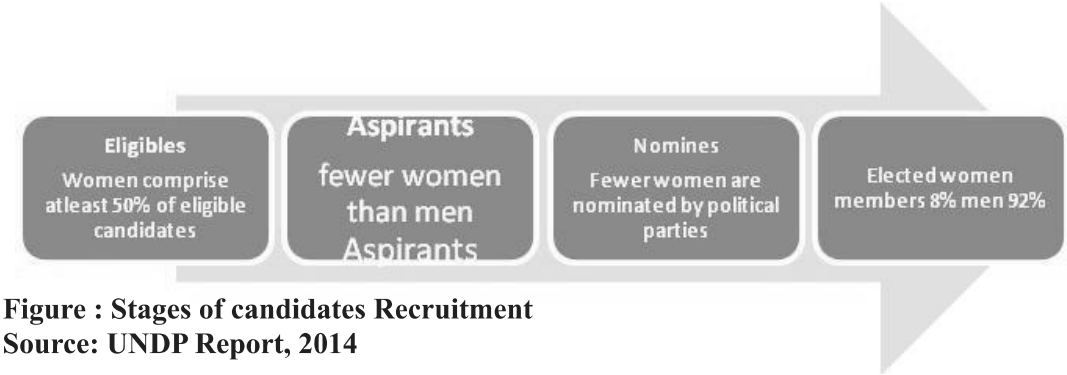


Figure : Stages of candidates Recruitment
Source: UNDP Report, 2014

Theoretical Framework

Feminism Theory

The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. Although the terms "feminism" and "feminist" did not gain widespread use until the 1970s, they were already being used in the public parlance much earlier; for instance, Katherine Hepburn speaks of the "feminist movement" in the 1942 film Woman of the Year (Pratto et al, 1997).

Thus, other prominent founders of the theory were Betty Friedan, (1921) *An America Feminist and social critic*; Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) *French philosopher, novelist, and feminist*; Jean-Paul Sartre; *the Second Sex 1949*; Kate Millett, (1934) *American feminist theorist and artist cum founder of Radical Feminism*; Germaine Greer, (1939): *An Australian feminist and cultural critic*; Juliet Mitchell, (1940) *British feminist and psychoanalyst*. Jesse Bernard (1903-1996); Janet Saltzman Chafetz(1974) *masculine/feminine; feminist sociology (1988); Gender Equity, (1990)*; Heidi Hartmann, (1981) *The unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism Research professor on women's studies, George Washington University*; Rae Lesser Blumberg, (1984) *An American Theorist of Gender and Stratification.*

However, feminism has been defined as advocacy for social equality for men and women. Feminism is generally opposed to patriarchy and sexism (Igube, 2004). In addition, Abdulkadir (2003) define feminism as an ideology which seeks to assert the principle that women should have political, economic, and social rights equal to those of men. It is a movement that entrenches these rights through the emancipation of women, liberating them from class and gender exploitation and oppression.

Consequently, Feminists advocate for equal rights for men and women in all spheres of life. Feminist ideology means agitation for women's economic, social, legal, political, educational rights which will lead to their empowerment vis-a-vis development. Indeed, the concept has been defined as a collection of movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and equal opportunities for women (Adadevoh, 2001). Its concepts overlap with those of women's rights. An examination of the above definition shows that feminism is also a movement or advocacy which campaigns for women's rights and interests. Iwuchukwu (2006) in his contention, define feminism as the belief in the importance of gender equality invalidating the idea of gender hierarchy as a socially constructed concept. Feminism is mainly focused on women's issues, but because feminism seeks gender equality, some feminists argue that men's liberation is therefore a necessary part of feminism, and that men are also harmed by sexism and gender roles. Feminist scholars have always presented meticulous exposition on sexual inequalities and patterns of feminine science, all of which focus on questions of different oppressions and injustices (Nwagwu and Ifeanacho, 2009 in Fatile et al, 2012).

> *In whatever manner feminism displays or distinguishes itself, what is constant in all its shackles is the determination of every group to uplift womanhood and strive towards liberation and emancipation of women (Ezeigbo, 1996). Furthermore, Feminist theory also focuses on the promotion of women's rights and interests. Politics is grounded in the nature of society in which it takes place. (Fatile et al, 2012 cited in Osaghae, 1997,) made one of the elaborate attempts at explaining the political behavioral and institutional patterns of societies in terms of Weberian postulations on individuals and collective values embedded in their culture.*

Based on the above assertion, Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's history into three "waves". The first wave refers mainly to women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (mainly concerned with women's right to vote). The second wave refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s (which campaigned for legal and social rights for women). The third wave refers to a continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived failures of, second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this session, we tested the hypotheses by the use of tables, simple percentages and chi-square statistical tool after which recommendations were made based on the findings. A total number of 400 questionnaires were distributed to respondents and 347 (86.75%) questionnaires were duly recovered for analysis. The questionnaire revealed that, about 21.04%, 35.16%,7.2%, and 36.60% of the respondents held primary school certificate, S.S.C.E, Diploma/NCE and Degree/HND respectively. These manifestly show that most of the respondents were adequately literate.

Test of Hypothesis One: The null hypothesis to be tested is “that, there is no significant influence between Nigerian Political parties and women political participation. This in effect is to see the relationship between Nigeria political parties and women political participation with the notion that the latter depends on the former. The chi-square (X^2) distribution was used to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested under variables related to it; variable below shows the result:

Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State
Table 1: Distribution of Respondents on Party's support

POLITICAL PARTY FACTORS	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Non-Response		Agree		Strongly Agree		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Ilorin West	55	33.1	46	27.7	-	-	55	33.1	10	6.0	166(100%)
Baruten	3	2.9	37	35.9	-	-	45	43.7	18	17.5	103(100%)
Offa	3	3.8	20	25.6	-	-	26	33.3	29	37.2	78(100%)

Source: Field Reports, 2016

Table above shows that in Ilorin west 46(27.7%) and 55(33.1%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State while 55(33.1%) and 10(6.0%) agree and strongly agreed disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State. Also the table showed that in Baruten 3(2.9%) and 37(35.9%) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State while 45(43.7%) and 18(17.5%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State. This table also showed that in Offa 20(25.6%) and 3(3.8%) of respondents disagree and strongly disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State while 26(33.3%) and 29(37.2%) of respondents agree and strongly agree that disagree on the statement that Nigeria political parties promote active women's political participation in Kwara State.

The respondent A1 from Ilorin west lament on the negligence of political party towards supporting and empowering women inclined; she noted that the political party only used the women for political campaign and fail to fulfill their promising in term of appoint women into vital portfolio in the party apart from women leader position.

In juxtaposition of respondents' comment and the data analysed; it is apparent that in Ilorin west local Government political parties does not promote active participation of women as majority of the respondent disagree and strongly disagree on the statement question. While different is the case in Offa and Baruten, evidence in the above statistical figures showed that political party promote active political participation of women.

Women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers
Table 2: Distribution of Respondents on Political Parties Factors

POLITICAL PARTY FACTORS	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Non-Response		Agree		Strongly Agree		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Ilorin West	26	15.7	45	27.1	1	0.6	70	42.2	24	14.5	**166(100%)**
Baruten	8	7.8	38	36.9	1	1.0	43	41.7	13	12.6	**103(100%)**
Offa	4	5.1	18	23.1	-	-	30	38.5	26	33.3	**78(100%)**

Source: Field Reports, 2016

Table above shows that in Ilorin west 26(15.7%) and 45(27.1%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers while 70(42.2%) and 24(14.5%) agree and strongly agreed that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers. Also the table showed that in Baruten 38(36.9%) and 8(7.8%) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers while 43(41.7%) and 13(12.6%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers. This table also showed that in Offa 18(23.1%) and 4(5.1%) of respondents disagree and strongly disagree that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers while 30(38.5%) and 26(33.3%) of respondents agree and strongly agree that women are considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers.

A meticulous overview of the respondent's opinion reveals that women are not considered by political parties as selected party's flag bearers;

Women are generally protected by party's constitution
Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on Political Parties Factors

POLITICAL PARTY FACTORS	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Non-Response		Agree		Strongly Agree		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Ilorin West	49	29.5	32	19.3	4	2.4	51	30.7	30	18.1	**166(100%)**
Baruten	10	9.7	28	27.2	1	1.0	44	42.7	20	19.4	**103(100%)**
Offa	1	1.3	24	30.8	-	-	19	24.4	34	43.6	**78(100%)**

Source: Field Reports, 2016

Table above shows that in Ilorin west 32(19.3%) and 49(29.5%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree that women are generally protected by party's constitution while 51(30.7%) and 30(18.1%) agree and strongly agreed that women are generally protected by party's constitution. Also the table showed that in Baruten 28(27.2%) and 10(9.7%) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that women are generally protected by party's constitution while 44(42.7%) and 20(19.4%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that women are generally protected by party's constitution. This table also showed that in Offa 1(1.3%) and 24(30.8%) of respondents disagree and strongly disagree that women are generally protected by party's constitution while 19(24.4%) and 34(43.6%) of respondents agree and strongly agree that women are generally protected by party's constitution.

While interviewing respondent on constitutional provision as regards to women protection in the party the PDP women leader responded that the party constitution does not protect women; she emphasized that there is need for quota system within the party so as to create conducive environment for women contestants.

In addition, respondents B2 from Baruten envisage that despite the low participation of women the party still played women on same conditions with the male counterpart.

Hypothesis 1 ($H0_2$): There is no significant impact between Nigerian political parties and women political participation.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test Statistics

Political parties Roles	Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig.
Ilorin West	21.006	2	.862
Baruten	3.654	2	.000
Offa	0.297	2	.000

a. Local govt. of respondents: Baruten local govt.
b. Independent Variable: political parties
c. Dependent Variable: Women political participation

The table above is a reflect of data analysis on hypothesis 1 was accepted in Ilorin west local Government with Chi-square value of 21.006 with a corresponding p-value of 0.862 which is above the conventional significant value (0.05) so therefore, the result showed that there is no significant impact between Nigerian political parties and women political participation.

The level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics
Table : Distribution of Respondents on women's literacy

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Non-Response		Agree		Strongly Agree		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Ilorin West	24	14.5	28	16.9	1	0.6	55	33.1	58	34.9	**166(100%)**
Baruten	11	10.7	43	41.7	-	-	29	28.2	20	19.4	**103(100%)**
Offa	8	10.3	18	23.1	-	-	27	34.6	25	32.1	**78(100%)**

Source: Field Reports, 2016

Table above shows that in Ilorin west 28 (16.9%) and 24(14.5%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics while 55(33.1%) and 58(34.9%) agree and strongly agreed that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics with 1(0.6%) non-response.

Also the table showed that in Baruten 11(10.7%) and 43(41.7%) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics while 29(28.2%) and 20(19.4%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics. This table also showed that in Offa 18(23.1%) and 8(10.3%) of respondents disagree and strongly disagree that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics while (34.6%) and 25(32.1%) of respondents agree and strongly agree that the level of women's literacy in this local Government hinders them from participating in politics.

As depicted by the above table; it's inevitable to say that the level of women's literacy in Ilorin west and Offa local Government hinders them from participating in politics. This means that adequate awareness is not readily made available to change the mind set of people towards politics while Baruten as explained by the statistical data showed that the level of literacy among women were very high; as most of the women knows the importance of political participation.

Decision: Hypothesis 1 was accepted in Ilorin west but was rejected in Baruten and Offa Local Government Area. The result of the interview conducted is analysed below to buttress further the argument of respondents.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant improvement in women participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west political system.

In order to effectively proof if there is any significant improvement in women's participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west Local Government council, secondary data derived from past elections in the three local governments from 1999-2016 was utilized. The analyses is shown in table 5 below:

Table 5: Percentage of Women Representation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin West Local Government Council from 1999-2016

Election Year	Offa C	S	Total (%)	Baruten C	S	Total (%)	Ilorin West C	S	Total (%)	% increase Offa	Baruten	Ilo/West
1999-2003	0	1	1(4.2)	0	0	0(0)	0	0	0(0)	-	-	-
2004-2007	2	2	4(16.7)	2	2	4(17.4)	2	2	4(16.7)	3%	17.4%	16.7%
2007-2010	2	0	2(8.3)	0	1	1(4.3)	2	2	4(16.7)	0.5%	-0.75%	0%
2010-2013	2	0	2(8.3)	0	0	0(0)	2	2	4(16.7)	0%	-1%	0%
2013-2016	-	-	-	0	2	2(8.7)	1	*2*	3(12.5)	-	8.7%	0.25%
Total Available Positions	*12*	*7*	*24*	*11*	*7*	*23*	*12*	*7*	*24*			

Source: Field Reports, 2016

As reflected in the above tabulated data collated from each of the local Government. Evidence showed that between 1999-2003 no elected councilor in Offa local Government. In 2004-2007 only two (2) elected councilors out of twelve (12) available position signifying (16.7%); likewise, between 2007-2010, 2010-2013. On the other hand, Offa experienced one (1) female supervisory councilor out of seven (7) available positions with (8.3%), two (2) between 2004 and 2007 signifying 16.6% and no woman was appointing between 2007-2010 and 2010-2013.

In Ilorin west local Government, no women were elected and appointed between 1999-2003; while only two women councilor and supervisory councilor was appointed between 2004-2007, 2007-2010, 2010-2013. While in 2013-2016 one councilor and two supervisory-councilor.

In Baruten local Government no councilor and supervisory councilor was appointed between 1999-2003; two (2) councilor and supervisory councilor between 2004 and 2007; only one (1) supervisory councilor between 2007-2010. No women were neither elected nor appointed between 2010-2013. In 2013-2016 only two (2) women were appointed.

From the result presented above, the percentage increase in women's representation in the selected local Government supervisory and Councillorship positions for all of the years is less than 30%affirmative action as stipulates in the World Women Declaration (1995) in Beijing. Thus, the above statistical analyses therefore, make juxtaposition on objective three of the study; thus, the collated data shows that *there is no significant improvement in women representation in the selected local Government councils since 1999-2015*.

Decision: Hypothesis 2 was accepted in all the three selected Local Government councils (Ilorin West, Baruten and Offa).

Major Findings

The test of the formulated hypotheses of this study with data generated from the field led to the following findings:

- We found out that illiteracy among women affected their active political participation
- We found out that there is no improvement in women participation in Offa, Baruten and Ilorin west local government
- the researchers found out that most political parties in Nigeria only use the women to serve as agents of mobilization during campaigns and rallies, and later dump them after elections without any form of adequate compensation. Even those that must have contested for one position or the other, are not adequately compensated when they fail to win the position and by so doing, it demoralize their morals.
- The researchers also found out that, despite all efforts made by the different governments, since the country returned back to democratic rule in 1999, there is still no significance improvement in the level of women participation in Nigeria politics because the percentage increase in women representation in the selected local governments (chairperson, councillorship and supervisory) for all the years is still less than the 30%affirmative action as stipulated in the world women declaration (1995) in Beijing.

Conclusion

The imperative of democratic consolidation in Nigeria requires that women, who constitute half of the national population, should find prominence in the mainstream political development of the nation since democracy is only achievable on the altar of popular participation of every citizen of the society, males and females alike.

Recommendations

In order to achieve the goal of improved women's political participation, the following policy recommendations are suggested.

1. There is an urgent need to promote girl child education in Nigeria in order to curb the level of illiteracy among the females. This is very important because an educated female will hardly see herself inferior to anyone. This will go a long way in solving the challenge of incompetence highlighted by the women in the selected local government areas of kwara state.
2. Nigerian Governments should domesticate, incorporate and implement CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women) policies and programmes that was signed and ratified in June 13, 1985; as it would advance gender equality, including in leadership positions, giving women full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making.
3. Government should partner with women's movements and civil society organizations, such as Gender and Development Action (GADA), Gender Rights Advancement and Development (GRAND), Civil Liberties Organization, Rural Women Empowerment Network (RUWEN), Legal Defence and Assistance Project (LEDAP), National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) Women in Nigeria (WIN) etc to embark on awareness and enlightenment campaigns towards changing societal perception that women are inferior to men, and that those women in politics are irresponsible.

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