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WOMEN AND POLITICS IN
NIGERIA

SEPTEMBER, 1992



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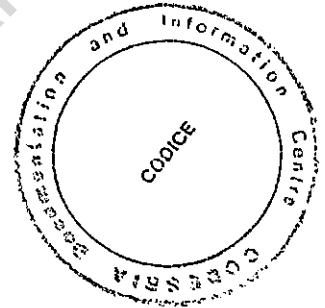
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WOMEN AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA

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BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

SEPTEMBER, 1992

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love and gratitude to my fiance and mentor Mr. OLIVER EZE OBIEZU, without whom I could not have endured the stress.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of this thesis is credited to the invaluable assistance of these personalities. Foremost among them, is my supervisor, Dr. O.B. C. Nwolise whose constructive criticisms and suggestions gave this work its face lift.

Also acknowledged are Professor Bayo Adekanye, Professor Alex Gboyega, Dr. Adisa, Dr. Otubanjo, Dr. Okuande and Dr. Suberu. All of the Department of Political Science, for the interest they showed in this study.

My immense gratitude goes to Dr. Fred Onyeoziri, without whose assistance this ambition would have been a mere dream.

While my special thanks go to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. N. O. Okafor for laying the foundation of my academic achievement, I also appreciate the encouragement and support of my brothers and sisters. Among whom are; Emeka, Chidi, Bena, Ngozi, Ebere, Uche and Okey. Others include Obi, Maechi, Goddy, Maria and sister Uzoma.

I am highly indebted to sister Chinyere Nnorom, whose advice is practical and wise. This thesis couldn't have been what it is without her assistance.

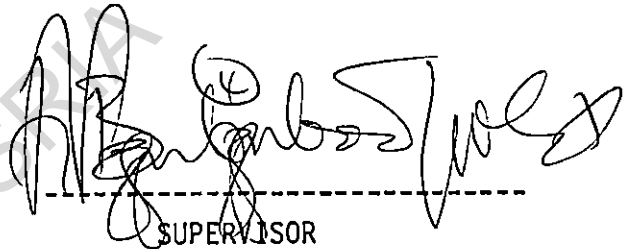
Finally, all the honour and glory for the success of this study are accorded to God Almighty, who is the author and finisher of everything.

Okafor Anthonia Nma

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this thesis is an original study carried out by OKAFOR ANTHONIA NMA in the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan for a Master's Degree in Political Science, under my supervision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'O.B.C. Nwolise', is written over a horizontal dashed line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

SUPERVISOR

Dr. O.B.C. Nwolise (Ph.D)
Department of Political Science
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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at determining the extent to which socio-economic factors and proximate variables affect Nigerian women's participation in politics.

The scope of the study covered women in Ibadan and Lagos areas. Questionnaire was designed to find answers to the research questions formulated. The questionnaire of thirty three items was administered to two hundred and twenty women, both literate and non-literate. A handful of women were interviewed directly on the normal face-to-face base.

Data collected were analyzed using statistical tools such as percentages and chi-square.

The findings of the study include the following:

1. There is a significant relationship between women participation in politics and their levels of educational attainment.
2. Marital status is independent of women participation in politics.
3. Financial status of women significantly affect their degrees of participation in politics.

4. Group identification or membership of association significantly affects women political participation.
5. A woman's interest in politics derives from that of her spouse.

The policy implications of these findings are that; women should be encouraged to aspire to the highest level of education affordable, since it enhances their participation in politics. There is also need to establish research bureaus and data banks to undertake women studies programmes and data documentation that will make information available for successful policy-decisions on women.

It is also recommended that women should be allowed into all sectors of the economy and into key administrative positions to improve their economic status. This will enhance their political performances.

Organizing women into social and political groups is also recommended since such groups are found to be politically visible and some even take open political stance which enhances the political consciousness of their members.

Since the role a woman would perform in the society is determined by the culture in which she finds herself and the amount of freedom she enjoys within the society, it is recommended that new cultural orientations, devoid of barages of myths supporting women domination and oppression in the society, should be introduced and that the obligation to participate in politics should be made part of the cultural norm.

One last area that attention is also given is the national political parties. This researcher recommends the restructuring of the Political Parties' ideologies to appeal to the interest of women.

In the final analysis, this study submits that women, if well motivated, will be invaluable assets to Nigerian government and politics.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Although there is paucity of theory to draw from to analyze women and politics in Nigeria, there is a general consensus in the current literature that women remain a marginal concern in the male dominated state. Even when the state maintains that Nigerian women occupy a high priority position and has been quite vocal in its commitment to bettering the life of women, women vis-a-vis men, have not been and are still not fully integrated or represented in the national political arena.¹ This gross underrepresentation of women is not peculiar to the Nigerian state but cuts across the globe though at varying degrees. Jane Parpart writing on women and the state in Africa posits that:

African women have a different relationship to the state than men ... despite ethnic, regional and class differences, women have been consistently underrepresented in African states affairs.²

More than in the economic and social sphere, at no level does the marginal status of Nigerian women reflect more vividly than in the electoral politics of Nigeria. A world index on the

political status of women, scored Nigeria as lowly as 29 percent the fifth lowest in the world.³ This situation calls for serious concern in a state that claims to be democratic because as Sabo Bako puts it:

No society that claims to be democratic will have its democracy taken seriously if it reduces more than half of its citizens to mere voting supporters for male sex dominated political parties or just to mere spectators in the political process.⁴

Almost without exception, past Nigerian administrations since independence, had ignored women or offered them token representation in the public fora. Women exclusion from the state and development process, can be measured through their limited access to key political positions, their minimal impact in policy making and the minor roles they played in party politics.

The absence of women from the state politics has had direct negative impact on the social, economic and political development of Nigeria and on the allocation of the resources of the country.*step
On realising the negative implications of women exclusion from the state, President Ibrahim Babangida in 1987, put in place a women oriented programme - Better Life Programme for Rural Women

(BLP). This programme was aimed at educating women about their rights and obligations in the country and to arouse their consciousness and interest towards political issues and public policy making activities.

Surprisingly, irrespective of the enormous inputs made on women through the Better Life Programme and other related programmes such as; the Mass Mobilizations for Social and Economic Rehabilitation (MAMSER), and the Directorate for Food Rural Roads and Infrastructure (DFRRI), their involvement and participation in the on-going political transition in the country is still very low. Women participation in the gubernatorial, constituent Assembly and the Local Government elections was very disappointing. Some of the election results show the following:

Table 1.1 Some Election Results in Nigerians' Third Republic

Office	Women	Men
Gubernatorial	0	30
Constituent Assembly	16	447
Local Government	3	556

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12

589

The picture above proves the obvious fact that Nigerian women have not made maximum use of the opportunities provided for

them by the Government to achieve leadership positions at the national level. If this be the case, what guarantee is there that given more opportunities, women will excel in their political endeavours? Even at that, what prevents a woman from becoming the president of Nigeria through concerted efforts?

One could perhaps recall that late Mrs. Indira Gandhi was one-time president of the second most populous country of the world - India. Even Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the acclaimed "iron lady", presided over Britain for nearly thirteen years (1979 - 1990). Also Mrs Gold Mier was one-time Prime Minister of Israel, Mrs. Elizabeth Dominican, ruled over Central African Republic between 1975 and 1976. Mrs. Sirimove Bandaranika of Sri Lanka and Mrs. Carazon Aquino of Philippine have presided over their governments and peoples respectively.

Despite the "normal" female factors, these women were able to rise to the highest political offices of their respective countries mostly on personal merit grounds.

At this juncture, the questions that arise are;

- 1) What are the reasons for the low political performances of Nigerian women? and
- 2) What can be done to remedy the situation?

Offering answers to the questions posed above, Steffen W. Schmidt says that the reasons lie within the culture, philosophy, style and political belief system that characterise the patriarchal political system. She further asserts that:

For women to begin to participate more fully in politics on an equal par with men, the changes that have to take place must go beyond the raising of consciousness of women themselves, as well as of men. Major changes will also be necessary in the relationship between the two institutions - family and polity.⁶

This thesis ^{will} therefore ^{focus} on the fundamental structural, ^{and} social/economic changes necessary to usher women into the lime light of politics in Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Women and politics are relatively neglected areas of research. A fair amount of research has been conducted into women and economics, women and technology, women and development and women and class, ignoring gender inequality and its implications on the state.

In Nigeria and other parts of the developing countries of the world, there has been little systematic research focused primarily on women and the role they play (or don't play), in the

political process. Attempts to explain the political and economic crisis of Nigeria have failed to acknowledge or incorporate women as a key element in such analysis.

This study therefore, directs its attention to gender dimensions of politics in Nigeria, to highlight the integral relationship between the conditions and prospects of women and their specific socio-economic and political circumstances. The study also aims at establishing within the Nigerian context, the validity of the claims by feminist theorists that women are being marginalized in the state politics. And finally, if the claims of marginalization are so validated by findings, the study will seek to remedy the situation by profering solutions to counter the problems identified.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Various studies have given some analysis on the level and degree of political participation in many societies. The pluralists have argued that representative government does not require the active participation of the mass of the population. This statement will hold if we agree that politics operates with certain privileged individuals representing the interests of the majority. Milbrath Lester-(1965) Political participation,⁷ has however argued that members of the society can be divided into

four categories according to their degree of political participation.

These are:

1. The politically apathetic who are unaware literally of the political world around them.
2. Those involved in "spectator activities" which include voting and taking part in discussions about politics.
3. Those involved in "transitional activities" which include attending a political meeting or making a financial contribution to a political party.
4. Those who enter the political arena and participate in "gladiatorial activities" such as standing for elective posts and holding public offices.

He estimates that in the USA, 30 percent of the population is politically apathetic, 60 percent reaches the level of spectator activities, from 7 to 9 percent is involved in transitional activities while 1 to 3 percent participate in gladiatorial activities.⁸

Using Milbrath's model to locate women's position in the political scale, one would find out that many are apathetic and not conscious of the political environment around them especially the non-literate rural women. Few are mere spectators who only

participate in voting, while some are mainly used as instruments by involving them in meetings and financial contributions.

As far as politics is concerned in Nigeria, a very insignificant number of women have moved to the gladiatorial level of politics, (standing for elective posts and holding public offices). One may then ask the question, why has women not fared well in politics? In answering this question, this thesis aim at;

1. Looking into the problems of the low level of political participation among women in Nigerian society.
2. It also aims at focusing on such constraints that inhibit voluntary participation of women in politics.
3. It will also examine the degree of political consciousness and awareness among women.
4. To access the impacts of socio-economic variables (education, income, marital status and group identification etc) on the level of women participation in politics.
5. To evaluate available feminist literature and to access their usefulness and limitations in analyzing Nigerian women and political participation.
- 6 Finally, the study intends to put forward some tentative suggestions, based on findings made, on how increased levels of women participation in politics could be achieved.

Specifically, this study seek to examine the following research questions in line with the set objectives above.

1. To what extent does education affect the level of women participation in politics?
2. Is there any significant relationship between marital status and level of women participation in politics?
3. To what extent does income (money) affect the level of women participation in politics?
4. Is there a significant relationship between membership of group/association(s) and level of women participation in politics?
5. To what extent does spouse's level of interest in politics affect the woman's degree of political participation?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study is very significant because it is expected to bring to light the various constraints on women that have for a long time inhibited their quest for leadership roles in the country. When these constraints are exposed, successful policies could be formulated to reduce their negative effects on women free will to participate in political activities.

Secondly, the study is expected to find out the extent to which socio-economic variables affect the degrees of women participation in politics. Findings will inevitably increase women opportunities in pursuing higher education and may open up new economic avenues to enhance women economic status.

Thirdly, findings of the study will help in establishing the validity of the claims of analysts that women are being oppressed, discriminated against and purposely marginalized. If these claims are validated in this study, suggestions will be proffered to remedy the situation.

Finally, the study hopes to contribute to the existing volume of literature on women and politics in Nigeria and will aid possible comparison of such research elsewhere in the world especially in the developing countries.

1.5 HYPOTHESES OF STUDY

In order to effectively articulate the central theme of this study - women and political participation, the following hypotheses will be tested to ascertain the effectiveness of socio-economic and proximate variables in determining the degree of political participation among Nigerian women.

1. There is no significant relationship between the degree of women participation in politics and their levels of educational attainments.
2. Marital status is independent to women participation in politics.
3. There is no significant relationship between the levels of women income status and their degrees of participation in politics.
4. There is no significant relationship between membership of group/association(s) and the level of women participation in politics.
5. A woman's level of interest in politics is independent of her spouse's level of interest in politics.

1.6 SCOPE OF STUDY

The study will be confined to women in Ibadan and Lagos urban areas only. This is because it will be difficult to cover larger population due to the time limitation of this study. The study focuses on adult female homosapiens , who are between the ages of 18 and 70 years, those who can vote and be voted for .

Both literate and non-literate women are involved in the study. But more of the literate women are drawn in the sample both for the interview schedule and questionnaire administration. This is so because the very literate women facilitate self-administration of the questionnaire and are in the position to offer more precise and authentic information necessary for the study.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

The major research instrument is the questionnaire of thirty three items, covering questions on background characteristics, facts, attitudes and opinions of the respondents.

Interview schedule is also employed in gathering more factual information that needed elaborate explanation. Women in the leadership category (union leaders), politicians and academicians were interviewed. Questions on the activities and general administration of women's national umbrella associations (National Council of Women Societies and The Better Life Programme for Rural Dwellers (News and BLP) are asked. Also asked are questions on how Nigerian women have generally fared in politics.

I had the opportunity to interview Chief (Mrs) Egun Oyagbola, Dr. (Mrs) Jane Ezihe-Ejiofor, Dr. (Mrs.) Geogina Nwagha, Chief

(Mrs) Adikwu and Ms. Franca Afegbua. Others include Mrs. Janet Akinrinade, Mrs. Sarah Jibril, Professor Bolanle Awe, Dr. (Mrs) Bisiola Akinbola and Dr. Bola Udegbe. The interview was based on the formal face to face discussion.

This researcher also relied heavily on books, periodicals and other publications (Seminar papers) on women in general.

The method of data analysis used is the chi-square test (χ^2). This is used to test the relationship between the variables under consideration in the study as factors affecting women in politics. The usual chi-square formula is used:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Where \sum = summation of all observations
 E_i = Expected frequency
 O_i = Observed frequency.

1.8 OUTLINE OF THESIS

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter One, is a general introduction of the theme under study. Chapter two deals with the theoretical exploration and review of literature. An overview of Nigerian women and politics forms the third

chapter. Chapter four is data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Discussion of findings comes in chapter five while the thesis is summed up with recommendations in chapter six.

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CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL EXPLORATION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is a well enunciated fact that women the world over, exhibit some kind of apathy towards politics and political activities. This apparent lack of interest exhibited by women in pursuing leadership roles, has been discovered to be not necessarily because they are less ambitious or lack desire or will to aspire to leadership roles, rather, it is a function of societal socialization, political belief system and political philosophy which ascribes responsibilities according to sex.⁹

Given that Nigerian women do not feature prominently in the political realm, that they lack the economic resources of men, and that the options for changing their situations are very limited, how then do feminist writers seek to explain and remedy such situations.

A purview of liberal, radical, Marxist, cultural and group theories will be analyzed to see how useful they are in answering the questions of apathy to politics by Nigerian women.

2.1 LIBERAL FEMINISM

In 1792, Mary Wollstone Crafts in - Vindication of the Rights of Women, articulated the main elements of modern liberal

feminism.¹⁰ She argued that women, just as men, were capable of realizing moral and political rationality and as such each individual should be given the opportunity to realise his or her potentials. Wollstone Crofts saw education as the means of enhancing women's status.¹¹ This emphasis on individual achievement and "the right of all individuals to freedom, autonomy and a voice in how they are governed"¹², is embedded in liberal feminism.

Liberal feminists, such as Betty Friedan, argues that if men and women are given "equal opportunities" to exercise their fundamental rights, then sexual inequality will be corrected. These opportunities, Friedan argues, can best be realised through changes attitudes and the legal system. Education for Friedan, is the means through which such changes will occur. She writes

For women as well as men, education is and must be the matrix of human evolution.¹³

Admittedly, changes in the above categories are necessary for Nigerian women to gain a voice in the public political world. In 1990, only 31 percent of the female population was literate as compared to 54 percent of the male population.¹⁸

As O'Barr puts it;

...Without education and without the kind of employment that prepares them for public life, African women will not be competitive in the contemporary political world. While they derive strength from their legacy of political expertise in traditional society, it is not sufficient in a world where men have a greater share of new resources.¹⁴

In addition, while there are still many areas in the law which need to take cognizance of women's rights, these changes are not sufficient in themselves to alter the position of Nigerian women. Such changes, as has been shown in North America, have not eradicated systematic discrimination against women.

It is further assumed that once women have attained the same level of education as men, they will then be incorporated within the political structure. This assumption is questionable. Bay Edna in her analysis of African women observes that education is not all the women need to be in the mainstream of politics. According to her, even the highly educated African women suffer one discrimination or another in both the private and public fora. She writes;

Educated women in Africa, for example, have found it difficult to obtain secure well-paid employments because these jobs have been a male preserve since colonial days. Even women from elite homes have to struggle against this tradition when seeking employment.¹⁵

Staudt Kathleen on the other hand, argues that African women who choose to infiltrate mainstream politics run the risk of being "co-opted" "scape goated" or face "overwhelming odds against achieving gender-based redistribution of resources"¹⁶ These frequent outcomes are the results of strong cultural and social assumptions about the rightful place of women. As the most recent elections in Nigeria suggest,

Even in a case where a women is seen as an achiever and a suitable candidate, sexual bias restricts the male electorates from accepting these qualities as being her sole merits. The questions pop up are, whose child, wife, lover, woman, sister is she.¹⁷

One last problem with the liberal feminist model is that it does not question the institutions or social systems from which women's subordination have sprang. It accepts that the liberal capitalist system is the best alternative for allowing men and women equality in the political and economic realms. Since Nigeria is still struggling to achieve some measures of economic prosperity and political stability, one wonders whether the liberal capitalist model really is the means through which Nigerian women's rights might be achieved.

2.2 RADICAL FEMINISM

Radical feminists such as Shulamith Firestone, and Kate Millet, argues that patriarchy rather than class is the most fundamental division in society and that the fight against patriarchy must take precedence over all other struggles.¹⁸ Inspired by studies of the psychology of sexism, the radical feminists emphasize the subtle ideological ways patriarchy asserts control over women, and the political nature of gender struggles within the family.¹⁹ They draw on marxist theory by defining societies in two classes: Men and Women.²⁰

For radical feminists, men control the means of production, as well as all socio-economic and political institutions. Such power is not only established in the public sphere though, through ideological hegemony, beliefs and attitudes which are detrimental to women and which women have come to be taken as societal norms, are perpetuated even in the private realm.²¹ Men therefore continue their oppression of women on a more personal level. Because such power transcends the public realm, radical feminists believe that the "personal is political".²² The slogan embraces relationships within the family, sexual relationships and sexual self-determination.²³

To radical feminists, the most fundamental power relationship is that between men and women in the private domain. Power relationships in private or family matters are thus unequivocally political. What happens in the private sphere, in particular sexual division of labour, determines the scope for women's participation in the public political sphere and thus the content of public decision-making.²⁴

While women's fecundity is the means through which they are made "second class citizens" radical feminists differ in their solutions of changing women status. Firestone believes that women have to control the means of biological reproduction before they can be equal with men. She argues that with the advance of technology, women will be able to do -that.²⁵ Millet on the other hand argues that it is the socio-economic and political institutions, and not biological reproduction itself, which helps to perpetuate gender inequality. She states;

... the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance - in short every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands. As the essence of politics is power, such realization cannot fail to carry impacts.²⁶

Radical feminists argue that for women to gain power, they would have to completely separate themselves from men. Male-female relations on every level is therefore seen as a form of patriarchal oppression. Hence radical feminists suggest the development of a separate women's culture as the answer to this domination.²⁷

Radical feminism fails as a useful theory in explaining and providing solutions to Nigerian women's oppression and lack of political powers. First, gender inequality is seen as being rooted in biology. As Ortner and Whitehead amply demonstrate;

What gender is, what men and women are
 What sorts of relations do or should obtain
 between them - all of these notions do not
 simply reflect or elaborate upon biological
 "givens" but are largely products of social
 and cultural processes.²⁸

Second, radical feminism is ahistorical since patriarchy is seen as existing in all forms of societies and at all times. As Stamp argues;

The promise that patriarchy is universal,
 is preceding and superseding all other
 forms of oppression, obscures the
 cultural diversity and historical
 specificity of human societies.²⁹

The two areas in which radical feminism can contribute to women^{and} politics in Nigeria is that women need to control their reproduction capacity and that the "personal is political!"

Women in Nigeria do not have control over their reproductive capacity. Renee Pittin points out two key areas which illustrate this lack of control: contraception and accessibility of abortion.³⁰ The Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) is the main organization which advises women on birth control and family planning.³¹ However, for a woman to use its facilities she has to get the written consent of her husband. In addition, single women are discouraged from using the organization since it is believed that their sexual promiscuity may increase. Abortion remains illegal in Nigeria further restraining a woman's reproductive freedom. Given that wealthy women may purchase abortion, it is the majority of poor, illiterate and rural women who suffer from this law. As these areas testify, Nigerian women have limited control over their reproductive ability. This may be a problem in Africa given the fondness people have for children and the respect for human life, but it is worth trying.

Again, the radical feminists noting that the "personal is political" contributes to the study of women's politics in Nigeria. Women are mainly delegated to the private sphere where their work has little or no tangible reward. Daddieh and Kaudawire writing on this issue posits that;

Most African Women, like women all over the world, perform large amount of unpaid labour for the family. But many African women also produce cash crops for which they receive little or no remuneration. Money from cash crop production is usually controlled by men as title to land. This not only reduces women's income, but also inhibits their ability to acquire the capital which might permit them to escape the "normal" cycle of female poverty.³²

Since economic power is inextricably tied up with political power, women in some form or the other must break free of such constrictive roles and, or their work in this realm must be given due recognition and adequate remuneration.

2.3 MARXIST FEMINISM

The Marxists argue that gender inequalities are subordinate to class and consequently, the end of class privileges will result in the sexism's demise.³³ In other words, traditional Marxist believes that women subordination to men is subsumed in the over-

riding conflict in the society - between classes and that when class society has been overthrown, a just and equitable society will exist for all. This is an attractive notion, as it seems to offer a clear cut solution to the thorny issue of gender inequality. But such "reductionism,"³⁴ has been challenged by Marxist feminists who accept that while class elements are important, gender element is equally important since all women do not suffer exploitation and subordination equally.

Marxist feminists argue that the economic system is the key element which determines the distribution of power within a society. Women are disadvantaged because they are burdened with domestic work as well as looking after the upcoming generation. Not only are women primarily burdened with these domestic works, they receive no pay for their labour. As a result, the reproduction of the labour force serves to maintain the capitalist system while leaving women at severe disadvantage vis-a-vis men.

Marxist feminists argue that the economic system is the key element which determines the distribution of power within a society. Political power they assert, derives from economic power thus both the political and legal systems reflect the ideas of the ruling class. What is inherent in the Marxist feminists

approach is the issue of male domination of economic resources. They argue that in the society, sex is the dividing line which creates a kind of barrier and subsequently classifies man into the class of the "have" and woman to the "have not". Thus men have access to better economic opportunities in the country. All economic activities are vested in the man who is always referred to as the breadwinner. The man thus plays the role of a distributor of goods even beyond the domestic borders. This earn them the prestige and power which are readily translated into political powers.

On the other hand, women have no rights to land or inheritance. They are seen as properties to be shared along with other properties at the death of their husbands. They have no residence status of their own neither do they have equal educational opportunities with their male counterparts. Their modes of capital formation are low (where it exist at all). Their incomes are often surrendered to their husbands on request. Women are further disadvantaged because they are burdened with domestic work as well as looking after the upcoming generation. Not only are they primarily burdened with these domestic labours, they receive no pay for their labour. As a result, the reproduction of labour force only serves to maintain the capitalist system while learning women at sever disadvantage vis-a-vis men.

As Asoka Bandarage puts it:

In the third world, women are heavily concentrated in the household and the so-called informal sectors. Hence much of their work is either undercounted or completely omitted from calculations of national income and productivity such as the gross national product. The results are the supposed invisibility of women's work, the continued belief in a universal male breadwinner role and more seriously, the greater poverty and hunger of women. 35

Further examination into women's economic role under capitalism has led Marxist feminists into exploring Karl Marx's concept of a "reserve army of labour."³⁶ Marx argues that the capitalist system needed a potential work-force who could be drawn into new branches of production, easily switched between different jobs and easily laid off when no longer wanted. In addition to providing a pool of flexible labour, the "reserve army" plays a useful role for employees by tending to depress wage rates, or increase worker productivity, by providing potential alternative labour.

Marxist feminists believe that in some ways, women seem to be an ideal reserve army. They are drawn into work when required and allowed to vanish back into the homes when their

labour is no longer needed. Women in the capacity of a reserve army of labour also contribute to the maintenance of the capitalist system in that when there is shortage or surplus of waged labour, they will enter or leave the labour force as the market dictates. The main elements of Marxist feminism are summed up in;

... the sexual division of labour
in reproduction, local class structure
the articulation of specific regions
and sectors of production within
national economies and the international
economy.³⁷

Marxist feminism is probably the most useful tool in analysing Nigerian women. This is because it accords importance to class, gender, local and international economies. As Asoka Bandaranage states;

It helps us to understand sexual oppression historically as it interacts with class oppression and imperialism. It (also) shows that women's oppression is not simply reducible to male ignorance or to the male ego. Women's liberation needs a radical change in our values, material interests and social arrangements at the national and international level.³⁸

As Marxist feminists point out, the links of the domestic economy to the international capitalist system are of key

importance. The implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has drastically affected the living conditions of the majority of Nigerians.³⁹

Given the harsh economic conditions in Nigeria, women will now have to compete even more with men for their share of an ever dwindling resource base. The implications of increasing and distributing the resource base for women is thus dependent on ties to the international economy.

One other area where Marxist feminism is useful is that women's labour within the domestic and public realms is recognized as being a mainstay of the economy. Government must realize the import of such labour and take steps to remunerate them. Marxist theory however does not provide a rational solution to the eradication of sexual oppression. On a theoretical level, there are many shortcomings in the Marxist position on women's subordination. Marxism pays attention to the effects of capitalism on women. The abstract forces of capitalism - commercialization, proletarianization, etc - are posited as the sources of women's oppression, not the exploitation of women by men. The result therefore is the neglect of such issues as the oppression of women in pre-capitalist and

socialist societies. The changing relations between men and women under capitalism and the cultural and psychological dimensions of sexual stratification.

2.4 GROUP THEORISTS

According to Arthur Bentley,⁴⁰ society is nothing other than the groups that compose it. He further asserts that; "while participating in the political process, groups and the individuals merge and for practical purposes become one ... Human life is itself a process, best described as the interaction of individuals and groups among themselves and within their environment." In other words, individuals are members of a group either consciously or unconsciously and it is this group that portrays and protects their interests.

Political participation according to the group theorists, though performed by individuals, is a function of group action and political participation is heightened when the individual becomes conscious of his interest within the society and he then desires to fight for that interest. In fighting for such interest, the individual unwittingly aligns himself to a group which portrays and protects his interest vis-a-vis the interest of other groups within the society.

Obviously, what is outstanding in this theoretical perspective is the issue of consciousness and interest. It portrays participation in politics as a function of individual consciousness and interest. Consciousness in terms of interest and political environment.

The Group theorists give a good insight in the problems of women in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Women are not conscious of the political environment around them. They are not conscious of their civic rights within the society. A great many of them, show no interest in pursuing their rights and they prefer to participate in politics as atomized housewives. Due to this lack of interest, and awareness and the lack of the necessary political knowledge which arouses political consciousness, women do not regard themselves as participants and beneficiaries in the political process. They see politics as the male preserve and thus show little or no interest in political activities.

Having exposed this aspect of political participation that accords recognition to the role groups/associations play in arousing the consciousness of its members to their interest in the political system, it is then necessary to seek to find ways in which the consciousness of women towards politics could be raised within the society.

2.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminists like Maria Mies - Politics Against Women and Women Struggle⁴¹, and Babara Rogers - Domestication of Women and Discrimination in Developing Societies⁴² in their books, individually argue that the greatest damage to women political ambition is the patriarchal culture. They posit that the role a woman would perform in the society is determined by the culture in which she finds herself, hence the case of consciousness and interest will depend on the dictates of the society and also on the amount of freedom women have within the society.

Cultural factors, to them stand as impediments on the free will of the women to participate in politics. Such factors are the orientation of women into domestic roles, the placement of taboo on acts that can expose women into public life and the sharing of societal roles according to sex. Women from childhood are socialized into domestic roles and taught to be submissive and to reject or suppress any quest for leadership roles. As Mies puts it;

African tradition is full of barages of images, beliefs, myths and rules designed to perpetually keep women subservient and to subject them to accepting male dominance of state politics. These traditions

portray women as physically, mentally and spiritually weak, Biologically inferior to men, limited -in options, less intelligent and less competent to handle state matters.⁴³

Women they further claim, are also portrayed as weaker sex, needing to be cared for by men, who ought to be seen and not heard, whose rightful places are the households with the sole responsibility to breed and rear children. They trace the dilemma of non-participation of women in politics to the social stratification of the society into weaker and stronger sex.

The approach is very useful in the study of women and politic in Nigeria is that it lays emphasis on the patriarchal culture as a factor in the obvious apathy women exhibit in politics. It brings out the handicap woman suffer from the dictates of customs and traditions. Most customs and traditions that suppress the zeal of the woman to participate in public affairs is held very fast by men and they always encourage its existence. Since women are rendered helpless and powerless, they only live by the dictates of the culture in which they find themselves. So having exposed this aspect of culture as an inhibiting factor on women's ambitions to leadership positions, these authors went forward to advocate a radical change and cultural reorientation for both men and women.

The problem with this approach is its overbearing feminine perspective. It lacks the understanding of social forces in the society and the role they play in the marginalization of women. It also fails to grasp the necessary laws and principles that propel the society which is often used to justify women subordinate positions. Both theorists lack adequate theoretical perspective on the propelling factors that determine the level of political interests of women.

Other feminists whose works are useful to this study, are Melville Curvell,⁴⁴ Political Women and Talcott Parsons et al; Family Socialization and Interaction processes.⁴⁵ They view women participation from the angle of political culture. They argue that the level of cultural awareness and the relation to political culture influences the level of political participation of its citizens - the level of political development of the political system affects the level of interest and participation of citizens in the system.

Through the process of socialization and socially medicated experiences, women learn that it is unwomanlike to issue orders to men, it is unwomanlike to argue with men and places a taboo on women public activities.

Shirley went further to assert that these sorts of socialization dichotomy can be found in underdeveloped societies and as such women in these societies are not expected to perform highly in political activities because their consciousness and interest to equal opportunities and rights are suppressed in preadult stage. Even educated women within these underdeveloped societies she argues seem not to have liberated themselves from the bundages of culture and custom as some of them are seen to also hold tenaciously to those laws that depress their interest in public affairs. Many educated women are still at the whims and caprices of their lords and spouses. They are not yet aware of the fact that participation in politics is a matter of right and that they can influence public policies relating to their interests by participating in politics. According to them many well-educated young women's lives are still being conditioned by the value orientations they imbibe in childhood. Most of these women just marry and only toss their skills and talents into the scrap heap at the commands of their husbands.

This pattern of stereotype tradition and culture which apportions roles according to sex, has a political bias and a political purpose for it is designed purely to render women less

powerful or powerless. Nigerian women like all women in developing countries, suffer these cultural inhibition. Women are often considered as weak sex and it is not uncommon to see men dispise a women political aspirant on the grounds that she does not have the potentials to rule. Most well educated women are commanded to sit back at home and take care of the children.. especially if the men are very affluent. This situation does not augur well for women in politics as research as proved that economical low status women perform poorly in politics. Having recognized the role culture plays in shaping women's political behaviour, they call for a new mode of political socialization in which men and women alike are given equal opportunities to develop their potentials.

These theorists are criticised of heavy reliance on political culture and political socialization alone in explaining women low participation in politics. They are accused of failing to realise that women participation have some bearings on the capitalist economy and its exploitation of the working class. They argue that the development of women participation has to do with the increasing existence of surplus values and the character of the global economic relations. Thus they posit that inability of women to participate actively in politics is as a

result of their lack of grasp of the ever scarce resources which determines the extent of power of every individual. They also blame the inadequate generation of surplus resources on the failure of the ruling class to effectively exploit available resources.

The second problem with these analysts is their failure to understand and appreciate the fact that politics is largely a class phenomenon which is hinged on the "survival of the fittest." Those who demonstrate greater power and opportunity, outwits the others. The society, whether developed or underdeveloped, respects the ability of one to convince the others that he is qualified for the electoral post he is seeking. Women should therefore struggle on equal par with their male counterparts. Available data has shown that women who were able to demonstrate their abilities to man the leadership positions and who succeed in convincing the electorates, have always had their ways in politics. No matter how developed a society may be, a woman who does not convince her audience that she has some leadership potentials capable of enhancing the development of the society, can hardly be voted into an elective post.

Nigerian feminist writers are not left out in theorising about women and political participation. Two pioneering works by Nelson and Nelson, African Women in Development Process⁴⁶ and Women in Nigeria Today⁴⁷, indicate the nature of women and Nigerian women in particular. The central themes of the works are religion and political discrimination. They attribute most of the problems of Nigerian women today as having its roots in the colonial imposition of foreign culture and religion. Both christianity and Islam are seen to subject women as second class citizens and exalt the position of men. They see these foreign religions as constituting the social impediment that inhibit present day women from politics. Islam they say enslave women and reduces them to second fiddle and even to beasts of burdens. Even the christian religion subject women to secondary position when it claims that a woman is made from only one rib of the man.

This perspective of feminist theory express the injustice religion plays on women. A situation where a particular religion dictates that a woman should cover her face to avoid being admired by men, is a great injustice to the women concerned. Islamic religion in particular isolates women from the public

realm and prohibits them from interacting with members of the public. A woman who cannot relate to her fellow human beings can hardly aspire to leadership roles. If a woman is not seen and heard, how then can she aspire to leadership position?

No nation of course will permit a woman under veil to take the mantle of leadership because she will lead the nation into extinction.

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CHAPTER THREEAN OVERVIEW OF NIGERIAN WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Nigerian political history is replete with recorded lists of charismatic women who in various ways have demonstrated the strength and resourcefulness of womenhood. These women in their different societies challenged the masculine assumption of female role in society and thus suggest by their achievements a pattern for effective female participation in politics.

Such women included Queen Amina of Zaria, Queen Kambasa of Bonny, Madam Nwanyeruwu of Aba, Madam Alimata Pelwuru, Nana Asumalu of Sokoto, Iyalode Efunsetan of Ibadan, Moremi of Ile-Ife, Sungbo Eredo of Ijebu-Ode, Okwei of Osomari, Charlotte Olajumoke Obasa of Lagos, Olufunmilayo Ransome Kuti of Abeokuta, Lady Oyinka Abayomi, and Ninwoye of Nupeland.⁴⁹

These women did wield considerable influences and political powers, with defined and accepted political roles which permitted them to control power despite fairly minimal authority.⁵⁰ They controlled economic tasks and exerted considerable significance over group decisions. They also exerted power through religious roles as ritual specialists and presided over puberty rites. Some held political posts through hereditary, others through elections.

Women in the pre-colonial period, traded food and craft goods, and performed such services as hair dressing, and cloth making. It was women and not their husbands who retailed farm produce. Women's importance in crucial sectors, the distribution and service sector, imbued them with a group consciousness and solidarity based on mutual interests and needs. Yet, even though women as a group were central to economic life, the overwhelming majority of individuals operated on a profit base so small that it bordered only on subsistence. Thus the economic survival of individual women in this period depended upon women organization and solidarity. Together they fixed minimum prices, decided on the location and running of markets, created credit unions, and formed cartels of buyers and sellers.

The sexual division of labour recognized women (as a group) as a critical component in the political economy. As a result, women held certain rights in the public domain, to participate in discussions of public policy, to be represented on governmental decision-making bodies, to own and inherit properties, and the freedom to pursue, control and defend their own economic interests.⁵¹

But, these rights it must be said, did not make women equal partners in society with men. For instance, their representation in governmental bodies was always limited and was not proportional

to their percentage of the population. The ownership and control of land, the basic source of wealth lay primarily in the hands of men. There were also restrictions that prohibited women from assuming certain public offices and positions of authority, and men by custom, held the balance of power.

Women's political and economic roles were seriously devastated during the colonial period. The colonial administrations refused to reorganize women organizations and roles in the society. Subscribing to an ethos that depreciated women's political and economic activities, they were blind to anything that did not fit into their preconceived notions of women's place. They refused women to vote until 1950, they did not appoint women to any important governmental positions, women were denied access to good education and employment. The British administrators in Nigeria simply pursued a policy of alienation and exclusion of women from the economic and political arenas. Colonial policies further depressed women's economic status by diminishing their control over their economic activities through price control measures and flat rate taxation.

These injustices, aroused women's consciousness towards their eroding political and economic powers, hence they organized

themselves in ad hoc manners to address particular issues as it affected their interests and that of the society in general.⁵² Such organizations as the Mitiri (Mitin) organization of Igbo women, the Lagos Market Women Association (LMWA), Nigerian Women Party (NWP) and the Abeokuta Women's Union⁵³ just to mention but a few, attacked sporadically certain policies and specific sexism of the colonial order in Nigeria.

Between the years of 1929 and 1930, the Mitin organizations of Igbo women, led by Madam Nwanyeruwa spear headed the famous Aba Womens protests which paved the way for a set of reforms in the Native Administration system and eventually influenced the 1946 Richard's Constitution which represented a marked progress over the 1922 Clifford Constitution.⁵⁴

In traditional Igbo society, women had political institutions through which they expressed their disapproval and secured their demands by collective public actions. The gatherings that appear to have performed the major role in self-rule among women and which articulated their interest, as opposed to those of men, were the lineage-wide or village-wide gathering of all wives (Ogbako Umunwanyị alury alu) which came to be called Mitin. These mitin were multi-purpose women's associations that provided women with a forum to develop and enhance their political talents, and a means for protect-

ing their interests (as individual women) as traders, farmers, wives and mothers.⁵⁵ In the mitin, women made rules about markets, crops and livestocks that applied to men as well as women, and exerted pressure to maintain moral norms among females.

In November of 1929, the mitin organization made their most outstanding outing when thousands of women from the Calabar and Owerri provinces converged on the Native Administration Centres. They chanted, danced, sang songs of ridicule and demanded the caps of office (official insignia of the warrant chiefs. In the protest and mass demonstration that ensued, these women broke into prisons and released prisoners, they attacked sixteen Native courts demolishing them with fire. This direct encounter with the British Police and troops left 50 women dead and 50 wounded.⁵⁶ However, the mitin organizations continued their violent demonstrations until positive reforms were made in the Native Administration.

The Lagos Market Womens Association (LMWA) under the leadership of Madam Alimotu Pelewura between 1920 and 1950 mounted their most serious campaigns against the policies of the colonial government. Female taxation and the attempt to enforce government pricing scheme in the markets, proved to be the greatest areas of conflict between the colonial authority and the LMWA.

In 1932 when the first rumours about women taxation circulated in Lagos, Pelewura led a delegation of Market Women to discuss the issue with the administrator of the colony.⁵⁷ The delegation was reportedly assured that the government had no intention of taxing women. However, within eight years, the colonial government enacted an Income Tax Ordinance in order to tax women with annual incomes of £50 or more.⁵⁸ The LMWA immediately organized mass protests to challenge the Income Tax proposals.

On 16 December 1940, over a hundred women assembled outside the offices of the commissioner of the colony, who eventually appeared to say that only rich women would be taxed. Madam Pelewura responded that once the principle of female taxation was conceded, it would eventually extend to all women.

With the help of the Nationalist leader of Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), Herbert Macaulay, the Lagos Women wrote a petition against female taxation to which several hundreds of them affixed their thumbprint. The petition detailed the 1932 promises of no taxation of women and also stated that female taxation breached "native custom" and was revolutionary in its character.⁵⁹ The petition also stated that Oba Falolu and the

Chiefs of Lagos agreed with the women that female taxation was not only contrary to custom but undesirable.

On 18 December, protestors held a mass meeting at Glover Memorial Hall, with an estimated crowd of above 10,000 women. Both Pelewura and the commissioner of the colony addressed the gathering. Pelewura emphasized the sacrifices that women were already making due to the economic effects of World War II, including paying the taxes of unemployed husbands and other male relatives.⁶⁰ Within a few days, the women achieved a limited victory. Governor Bourdillion issued a statement that only women earning over £200 annually (instead of £50) would be taxed and a special letter to that effect was delivered to Pelewura.

In another development, the World War II, saw not only the conscription of Nigeria males to fight in the war, but also established quotas of food that the colonies were required to supply to feed the soldiers. This resulted in acute food shortages throughout Nigeria and male absence from the farms made available food stuff high in price. Lagos, was badly affected as it had a large and concentrated population with only a very small percentage involved in food production.

In February, 1941, as a response to the constant price increase, the colonial legislature set price controls for essential foodstuffs.⁶¹ In an effort to enforce these controls the authorities

sent government agents to buy food in the localities contiguous to Lagos and sell it in designated government centres in the city. The Pullen price control scheme (named after Captain A.P. Pullen, who devised it), struck at the heart of women's economic participation, provoking vigorous opposition from the Lagos Market Women Association (LMWA).

During the first year of the price controls, the women farina sellers of Ijebu-Ode, stationed themselves on the Shagamu road and removed any farina found aboard vehicles designated for the government centres. In Lagos too, Market Women refused to sell at the controlled prices which were often lower than cost. Thus in early 1944, Pullen the deputy controller of foodstuff and the initiator of the control price scheme, convened a meeting at Oba Falolu's Palace between the market women, traditional authorities and representatives of the colonial government. An estimated 3,000 market women attended and in the presence of the Oba and the Chiefs, declared their refusal to submit to the price controls.⁶²

A few days after the meeting, Pelewura went to Pullen's office and threatened to close all the markets if the controls were not lifted. In 1945, the major Lagos news papers, the Daily Times and the Daily Services, as well as male nationalist leaders

supported the LMWA Women's call for an end to price controls. Thus in September that year, the colonial government decontrolled food prices.

Furthermore, the LMWA demonstrated its ability to recognize its class interests beyond the bounds of gender solidarity when in 1945, they organized in support of the general strike in Nigeria by contributing to the workers relief fund and keeping the set prices of food low in solidarity with the strikers.

At about the same time, a new class of women who owed their creation to Western education and Christian Missionary activities, began to organize themselves to address their peculiar problems. Lady Oyinkan Abayomi on her return from study in Britain, organized these women and formed the West African Educated Girls' Club (later renamed - Ladies Progressive Club).⁶³ On 10 May 1944, a meeting of this club convened to discuss the political situation of Nigerian Women resulted in the formation of the Nigerian Women Party (NWP). Among the objectives contained in the NWP's constitution, were to work for the Educational, agricultural, and industrial development of Nigeria, to seek by constitutional means the rights of British citizenship for the entire Nigerian populace and to work for the amelioration of the condition of women

of Nigeria not merely by sympathy for their aspirations but by due recognition of their equal status with men.⁶⁴ Membership of the party was limited to women of African decent only.

Three committees were set up within the party to deal respectively with problems pertaining to women's health and education, markets and native industry, and political and social issues. Estimates of the numerical strength of the Nigerian Women Party ranged from 500 to 2,000 women.⁶⁵

Despite its exclusivist nature, the Nigerian Women Party, was very strong and influenced several public policies. For instance, in 1944, the NWP convinced the colonial administration to appoint Abayomi as the first woman member of the Lagos Town Council⁶⁶. Shortly after its formation through several criticisms that there was no women council members.

In 1946, the NWP fought an ardent battle for the employment of women in government offices, the NWP questioned the preference of the government for hiring European women, usually the wives of administrative officers as nurses and secretaries, in place of Nigerian women and where Nigerian women were hired in these positions, they often received lower salaries than their European counterparts.

In response to these articulate protests, a royal commission in Britain in 1946 recommended that there be no differences in pay between men and women in subordinate grades of the civil services. The colonial authorities in Nigeria, subsequently adopted the commission's recommendations on the issue of equal pay for women and in addition, fired a number of European wives from the Nigerian Civil Services.⁶⁷

The Nigerian Women Party further protested a number of laws that related more directly to the traditional roles of the market women. The children and Young Persons Ordinance Act, which forbade children under fourteen from engaging in street hawking before 6 a.m and after 6 p.m for instance, was vigorously attacked. The NWP along with the market women vigorously protested this Ordinance and in a letter to the Commissioner of the colony, expressed the hope that the Ordinance which restricted peoples movements was not a subtle way of introducing the pass system which obtains in South Africa.⁶⁸ After several mass protests and demonstrations following the arrests of women with young babies on their backs under the ordinance, the colonial government rescinded the movement Act.⁶⁹

The NWP also protested a government ban on the export of locally woven cloth which was enacted during World War II on the ostensible grounds that there was a shortage of shipping space. The

party activity worked for the enfranchisement of women. And when women were finally enfranchised in 1959, four members of NWP ran for seats in the Lagos Town Council, though none was successful.⁷⁰

The Nigerian Women Party continued its political, economic and social pursuits until 1956 with most of its activities resting in the hands of a small elite leadership circle.

As the Nigerian Women Party lost momentum in the late 1950s, another formidable group of women - The Abeokuta Women's Union (AWU), founded in the late 1940s under the leadership of Mrs Olufunmilayo Ransome Kuti, gradually began to eclipse the activities of all the other women organizations in Nigeria. This Union formed to redress Abeokuta women's grievances over Alake (King) Ademola's obnoxious policies, pullen price control scheme and female taxation, adopted the motto: Unity, Cooperation, Selfless service, and Democracy. Its objective further included to unite, defend and protect women and preserve their social, economic and political rights.⁷¹

As early as 1918, Abeokuta women were subjected to taxation and during World War II, they were also subjected to the pullen price control scheme and food contribution to the war soldiers. These activities and colonial policies, hit badly on women's economic powers and independence. The assumption of power by Alake Ademola

in 1920 under the Sole Native Authority (SNA) system was to worsen women's situation as the Alake quickly organized his private police who collected district tax revenue and mounted road blocks at strategic points in Abeokuta and seized farm produce and live stocks.⁷² from women going to the market for the waring soldiers as directed by the colonial administrators. Often these women received no compensation for their confiscated goods and when they did, it was at a lower rate than that set by the administration. Consequently, thousands of angry women, thronged Alake's Palace to protest his policies, the indiscriminate seizure of foodstuffs and the method of levying and collecting taxes on women.

In July 1946, the AWU presented a formal petition to the Sole Native Authority which demanded that government did not tax women to pay the salaries of the market supervisors, that women be given adequate representation in the council by their own representatives. They also demanded the abolition of flat rate taxes for women.⁷³ This petition was not properly treated hence women resorted to contest the tax levies in courts. They hired lawyers who defended them in the courts and accountants to audit the SNA accounts.

When it became obvious in 1947 that petitions, court cases and negotiations were inadequate, the Abeokuta women resolved to adopt more militant tactics such as sit-ins, demonstrations, protests, and outright refusal to pay taxes. On 30, November 1947, about 10,000 women embarked on massive demonstrations engulfing the whole of Abeokuta. Finally, they maintained an overnight vigil outside the Alake's Palace and sang abusive songs such as:

"O you men, vagina's head will seek
 vengeance ... we are not paying tax in
 Egbaland even if it is one penny ... Alake
 is a thief, Council members thieves.
 Anyone who does not know Kuti will get
 into trouble. White man you will not
 get to your country safely, You and
 Alake will not die an honourable death." ⁷⁴

After the November demonstrations at the Alake's Palace, several women were imprisoned on charges of defaulting on their tax payments. The AWU responded immediately by staging a two-day mass demonstration from 8 to 10 December¹⁹⁴⁶ as large as that of the previous month. Consequently, Alake Ademola suspended female taxation, agreed to accept women representatives on the central committee of the SNA and finally relinquished his position as the sole native authority.⁷⁵ The Abeokuta Women Association, however, refused to accept anything less than his abdication as Alake, as

a result, Ademola abdicated his Alakeship on 3rd January 1942. Four women, including Mrs. Kuti and all the executives of the AWU, were appointed to an interim council established in a place of the sole Native Authority.⁷⁶

Membership of the Abeokuta Women Association gradually rose from 80,000 to 100,000 women and it finally changed its name to - The Nigerian Women Union (NWU) with its branches established in Calabar, Aba, Benin, Lagos, Ibadan and Enugu.⁷⁷

The mitin' Women of Igboland, the Lagos Market Women, the Nigerian Women Party and the Abeokuta Women Union, had clear political aims in their dealings and confrontations with the colonial administration. These women organizations, perceived colonialism as challenging women's traditional roles which despite or because of the gender stratification of the traditional society, included a high degree of political participation and economic independence.

While assessing Nigerian Women and Political participation therefore, one should bear in mind the fact that non-conventional actions such as civil disobedience, confrontational acts, demonstrations, riots and rebellions which are intended to influence public policies are forms of political participations. Writing on political participation, Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson posit that;

... protests, riots, demonstrations, even these forms of insurgent violence that are intended to influence the public authorities are forms of political participation.⁷⁸

If this is acceptable, then Nigerian women past and present, participated and are still participating very actively in political matters. Through demonstrations, mass protests, rebellious and confrontations, they have variously influenced the politics of Nigeria. Igbo women became tax-free through mass demonstrations that involved loss of lives in 1929. Lagos Women effected changes in the colonial government through violent demonstrations. They protected their interests and rights by protesting against policies that affected them adversely. Through demonstration and series of confrontation, they got female taxation abolished, pulled price control scheme dropped and women representatives in the Lagos Town Council; Abeokuta Women on their part, compelled an Alake to abdicate his Alakeship by mass protests and violent demonstration. They also got the sole Native Authority System abolished and achieved female tax free too. The educated women elite of the colonial period were not left out in the politics of the country. They constantly pursued their rights, amended obnoxious policies and got women representatives through confrontations with the colonial administration.

Political participation according to Sidney Verber and Norman Nje⁷⁹ also involve; voting, campaigning, joining political parties, donating money to support a party as well as such non electoral activities as community elections, particularized contracting, writing public officers and listening to political news. Margaret Peil in her book - NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT and POLITICS, THE PEOPLE'S VIEW asserts that the two most important forms of political participations are casting of votes and joining political parties.⁸⁰ Going by Peil's assertions, Nigerian women could be said to be politically efficacious. Records have it that they constitute the majority of voters in Nigeria. They have been known to join political parties, hold political posts, form female wing of every political party, campaign and more especially donate money to support their parties.

Since the introduction of electoral politics in 1922, Women in Nigeria have not only participated by casting their votes or joining political parties, they have also contested for electoral offices at the local and national levels. They have even formed exclusive women political parties - the Nigerian Women Party (NWP) founded by Abayomi in 1944 and the National Democratic Action Party (NDPA) founded by Miss Feliz Mortune in 1989.⁸¹ They also campaign, support and even sponsor candidates.

It is on record that Lagos market women formed the bulk of and also gave a big boost to Herbert Macaulay's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) between 1923 and 1944. They also transferred this support to the National Council of Nigerian Citizens when NNDP got affiliated to it. In 1946, Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, was among the delegation to London under the auspices of NCNC to lodge a formal protest with the secretary of state for the colonies Mr. A. Creech Jones about the going-on in the political sphere in Nigeria.⁸² Lady Abayomi served as the president of Action Group's Western Regional Women's Conference. Alhaja Humani Alaga and her supporters were also very active in the Action Group. Similarly, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo and Mrs. Mokeku among others were active and did similar things in support of the NCNC in Eastern Nigeria. In the North, Hajiya Gambo Sawaba worked tirelessly in the service of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and talakawa.⁸³

When finally in 1959 southern women were enfranchised, two women became senators - Chief (Mrs) Wuraola Esan and Mrs. Kemi. Mrs. Margaret Ekpo also served in the House of Representative. Subsequent elections in the country have seen several women into the state Houses of Assembly, National House of Representatives and the Senate as Legislators. Ms. Franca Afegbua was elected

into the Federal Senate House under Unity Part of Nigeria in 1983. There have been several women state commissioners, and Mrs. Janet Akinrinade, Mrs. Kesiah, N. Asinobi and Mrs. Egun Oyagbola were Federal Ministers during the Nigeria's Second Republic. In the current elections into the 3rd Republic, many women have emerged as local government chairpersons councillors and legislators. There was also a woman governorship aspirant Dr. Mrs. Dosumu and a woman presidential aspirant Mrs. Sara Jibrino.

The analysis above shows that in spite of the asymmetrical nature of the Nigerian society, and the strong conventions about the role which women should play, Nigerians especially, are not anti-feminists. They have always reorganized women's innate ability when it displays itself and has always given it free rein.

However, regardless of the above listed achievements of the Nigerian women, they are still highlighted as a peripheral majority in the Nigerian politics. Majority of women still trade the traditional stereotyped ideas of women as docile voters and supporters of male political candidates.

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CHAPTER FOURDATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data collected from the questionnaire administered on women located in Ibadan and Lagos areas are organized, presented and analyzed in this chapter in such a way as to test the hypotheses postulated in chapter one of this thesis. Brief interpretations of the tables (raw data) are also given in this chapter to give the reader an indepth understanding of the relationships among the variables tested in each tables.

Research questions are individually presented and discussed in relation to appropriate data before the hypotheses were tested.

RESEARCH QUESTION I - TO WHAT EXTENT DOES EDUCATION AFFECT
WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS?

In answering the above question, data gathered from the questionnaire were used. Questions 6 and 17 of the questionnaire, sought information on the respondents highest level of educational attainment and her level of interest in politics respectively. The responses are cross tabulated as shown on the table below.

Table 4.1 - CROSS TABULATION OF WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
LEVEL IN POLITICS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

		LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				Total	% Total
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low		
LEVEL OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION	Tertiary	12 (6.4)	9 (7.7)	6 (6.6)	5 (11.4)	32	14.55
	Secondary	18 (12.8)	24 (15.4)	12 (13.1)	10 (22.2)	64	29.09
	Primary	9 (14.8)	14 (17.4)	21 (15.1)	30 (26.2)	74	33.09
	None	5 (10.0)	6 (12.1)	6 (10.2)	33 (17.7)	50	22.73
	Total	44	53	45	78	220	100
	% Total	20.0	24.09	20.46	35.46		100

Note: The integers are the observed values (O),
while the expected values (E) are in parenthesis.

Table 4.1, indicates that 22.73 percent of the respondents have less than a primary school certificate and could be classified at non-literates; 14.55 percent of the respondents obtained tertiary education and have the highest percentage group with higher participation in politics, (37.5%). It could also be observed that a whopping 66 percent of the non-literate women show low (apathy) participation in politics.

To test whether these differences observed had any statistical significance, data was subjected to the chi-square test with formular

$$\chi^2 = \sum_1^n \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

$$\chi^2_0 = \sum_1^n \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{(12 - 6.4)^2}{6.4} + \frac{(9 - 7.7)^2}{7.7} + \dots + \frac{(33 - 7.7)^2}{7.7}$$

$$\chi^2_0 = 49.704$$

$$\chi^2_0 (a) = 16.900$$

TO TEST THE NULL HYPOTHESIS H_0

Under the null hypothesis H_0 , education does not affect the level of participation of women in politics. Alternative hypothesis H_1 , states that the degrees at which women participate in politics depend on their levels of educational attainments.

TEST: Accept H_0 if $\chi^2_{0.05} \leq \chi^2_{(9)}$

Reject H_0 otherwise.

Result: There is significant relationship between levels of educational attainment and the degree of political participation of women. Therefore:

H_0 : Rejected

H_1 : Accepted

α : .05

N : 220

DF : $(r-1)(c-1) = 9$

$\chi^2_{0.05}$: 49.704

C.V : 16.900

Test significance : significant

INTERPRETATION : Since chi-square value = 49.704, is greater than critical value = 16.900, we reject H_0 and conclude that the level of education attainment of women affect their degrees of participation in politics.

This further implies that women should be encouraged to pursue education at higher levels of enhance their interests in political activities.

RESEARCH QUESTION II IS THERE ANY SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS OF WOMEN AND THEIR LEVELS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION?

Responses given on question 2, 9, 10 and 17 of the questionnaire were used in answering the above research question. The questions sought respondents' marital status spouses level of interest in politics and respondents' level of participation in politics respectively. The responses are cross tabulated as shown on the table below.

TABLE 4.2 - CROSS TABULATION OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN
POLITICS BY MARITAL STATUS

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS	MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS					
	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Total	% Total
Married	10 (17.7)	23 (25.0)	29 (26.5)	46 (38.8)	108	47.09
Widowed	5 (5.1)	10 (7.2)	8 (7.6)	8 (11.1)	31	14.09
Divorced	5 (3.9)	8 (5.6)	6 (5.9)	5 (8.6)	24	10.91
Single	10 (9.3)	10 (13.2)	11 (14.0)	20 (20.5)	57	25.91
Total	36	51	64	79	220	100
% Total	16.36	23.18	24.55	35.91		100

Note: The integers are the observed values (o), while the expected values (E) are in parenthesis.

From table 4.2, 49.09 percent of the respondents are married and live with their husbands. They have about 30.56 percent group participation in politics.

It could be observed also that 25.91 percent of the total respondents are single ladies and they have the highest group participation percentage of 45.61. Interestingly, the absence of formal/legal husbands does not imply total absence of some kinds of relationships with men as a good number of the ladies in this category have children.

To test whether the differences observed had any statistical significance, data were as usual subject to the chi-square test with the formular $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$.

The result of the analysis is shown below.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{(10 - 17.7)^2}{17.7} + \frac{(23 - 25)^2}{25} + \dots$$

$$+ \frac{(20 - 20.5)^2}{20.5}$$

$$\chi^2 = 16.357$$

$$\chi^2_{0.05} (9) = 16.900$$

TO TEST THE NULL HYPOTHESIS H_0

Under the null hypothesis H_0 , marital status is independent of women participation in politics. Alternative Hypothesis H_1 , the levels of women participation in politics, is dependent on their marital status.

TEST : Accept H_0 if $\chi^2_0 \leq \chi^2_{.05}$ (9)

Reject H_0 otherwise.

Result : Women participation in politics is independent of their marital status. Therefore;

H_0	: Accepted
H_1	: Rejected
α	: .05
N	: 220
DF	: $(r-1)(c-1) = 9$
χ^2_0	: 16.35/
C.V	: 16.900

Test Significance: Significance.

INTERPRETATION : Since the chi-square value = 16.35/ is less than the critical value = 16.900, we accept H_0 and conclude that women participation in politics is independent of their marital status.

This further means that women who are less burdened with family responsibilities perform more actively in political activities than their counterparts who are under ment dominion and burdened with much domestic activities.

RESEARCH QUESTION III - TO WHAT EXTENT DOES INCOME (MONEY) AFFECT THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION LEVELS OF WOMEN?

In the questionnaire administered, questions 4, 5, 8 and 1/ were used in answering the above research questions. These questions sought information on occupational status of respondents, respondents annual salary levels and spouses (if any) occupation. The responses were cross tabulated and the result is presented in table 4.3.

TABLE 4.3 - CROSS TABULATION OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS BY ANNUAL INCOME LEVEL

ANNUAL SALARY LEVELS

	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Total	% Total
100,000 and above	5 (2.0)	6 (2.6)	4 (3.7)	3 (9.7)	18	8.18
50,000	6 (2.5)	7 (3.2)	5 (4.5)	4 (11.8)	22	10.00
25,000	6 (3.6)	8 (4.7)	10 (6.6)	8 (17.2)	32	14.55
10,000	4 (5.7)	6 (7.3)	9 (10.2)	31 (26.8)	50	22.73
2,000-5,000	4 (11.1)	5 (14.3)	12 (20.1)	92 (52.6)	98	44.55
Total	25	32	45	118	220	100
% Total	11.36	14.55	20.45	53.64		100

Note : The integers are the observed values (O), while the expected values (E) are in parenthesis

Table 4.3, shows that the meager 8.18 percent of the respondents that belong to the category of 100,000 annual salary level and above, have the highest group participation of (61.11%).

The table further shows that of the 44.55 percent respondents within the annual salary level of 2,000 - 5,000, 73.47 percent of them show high apathy to politics. Only about 9.18% of the respondents in this category participate highly in politics.

Respondents in the second and third categories - 50,000 and 25,000 annual salary levels respectively, also show high degree of interest in political activities - 59.09% and 43.75% respectively.

Data were subjected to the chi-square test to test whether the differences observed had any statistical significance.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{(5-2)^2}{2} + \frac{(6.2-6)^2}{2.6} + \dots + \frac{(72-52.6)^2}{52.6}$$

$$\chi^2 = 58.573$$

$$\chi^2_{.05} (12) = 21.00$$

TO TEST THE NULL HYPOTHESIS Ho

Under the null hypothesis Ho, financial status of women is independent of their levels of participation in politics.

Alternative hypothesis Hi; financial status of women determines their levels of political participation.

TEST: Accept Ho if $\chi^2_{\alpha} \geq \chi^2_{.05}$ (12)

Reject Ho otherwise

RESULT: There is significant relationship between the financial status of women and their levels of participation in politics. Therefore;

Ho : Rejected

Hi : Accepted

α : .05

N : 220

DF : (r-1) (c-1) = 12

χ^2_{α} : 58.573

C.V : 21.00

Test significance : Significant

INTERPRETATION : Since chi-square value $58.5/3$ is greater than critical value = 21.00, we reject H_0 and conclude that financial status of women significantly affect their political participation levels. It also implies that money is indispensable in politics. For women to be active participants in political activities, they should have adequate financial resources.

RESEARCH QUESTION IV : IS THERE A SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEMBERSHIP OF GROUP/ ASSOCIATION(S) AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION?

Data gathered from questions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20 and 26, were used in answering the above research question. These questions elicited the information cross tabulated in table 4.4.

TABLE 4.4 : - CROSS TABULATION OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN
POLITICS BY MEMBERSHIP OF GROUP/ASSOCIATION(S)

		NUMBER OF ASSOCIATIONS					
		Verh High	High	Moderate	Low	Total	% Total
LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS	Five	8 (6.4)	12 (9.2)	9 (7.6)	6 (11.8)	35	15.91
	Four	8 (7.1)	13 (10.3)	10 (8.5)	8 (13.1)	39	17.73
	Three	11 (9.6)	19 (14.0)	13 (11.6)	10 (17.8)	53	24.09
	Two	9 (12.7)	10 (18.5)	11 (15.3)	40 (23.6)	70	31.82
	One	4 (4.2)	11 (6.1)	5 (5.0)	10 (7.7)	23	10.40
	Total	40	58	48	74	220	100
	% Total	18.18	26.36	21.82	33.64		100

Note : The integers are the observed values (O), while the expected values (E) are in parenthesis.

Table 4.4 reveals that a significant number of the respondents belong to only two associations, 70 (31.82%). 57.14 percent of this population show low interest in politics. Of the category that belong to only one association, 43.48 percent of them are apathetic to political activities.

It could also be observed that the respondents who belong to about five or more associations, show the highest degree of interest in politics - 57.14 percent. Only about 17.14 percent of women in this category do not participate actively in politics.

Respondents in category two and three put together (four and three associations), also show high percentage interest in politics 55.43.

As usual, data were subjected to chi-square test to know whether the differences observed have any statistical significance. Table 4.4, is here analyzed with the formular

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \quad \text{the result show the following}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(8 - 6.4)^2}{6.4} + \frac{(12 - 9.2)^2}{9.2} + \dots + \frac{(10 - 7.7)^2}{1.7}$$

$$= 32.018$$

$$\chi^2_{.05} (12) = 21.00$$

TO TEST THE NULL HYPOTHESIS Ho

Under the null hypothesis Ho, membership of associations/groups does not affect women participation in politics. Alternative hypothesis H₁; membership of associations/groups affect women participation in politics.

TEST: Accept Ho if $\chi^2_0 \equiv \chi^2_{0.05} (12)$

Reject Ho otherwise.

RESULT : Membership of associations/groups, significantly affect levels of women participation in politics. Therefore :

Ho	: Rejected
H ₁	: Accepted
L.S	: .05
N	: 220
DF	: (r-1) (c-1) = 12
χ^2_0	: 32.078
C.V	: 21.00
Test Significance : Significant	

INTERPRETATION: Since chi-square value = 32.018 is greater than the critical value = 21.00, we reject H_0 and conclude that membership of associations/groups, significantly affect levels of women participation in politics. In essence, the numbers of viable social and political groups to which one associates, is capable of influencing her attitudes to political activities. Membership of associations therefore enhances political awareness and consequently political participation

RESEARCH QUESTION V - TO WHAT EXTENT DOES SPOUSE'S POLITICAL EFFICACY AFFECT WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

Data gathered from two questions in the questionnaire, questions 9 and 10, were used in answering the above research question. These questions sought information on the level of interests of the respondent's spouse (if any), and, or parents.

TABLE 4.5 - CROSS TABULATION OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS BY SPOUSES' LEVEL OF INTEREST IN POLITICS

		LEVEL OF SPOUSE'S INTEREST IN POLITICS				Total	% Total
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low		
LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS	Very High	14 (13.9)	18 (14.6)	25 (24.9)	16 (19.6)	73	33.18
	High	15 (13.2)	10 (13.8)	28 (23.5)	16 (18.5)	69	31.36
	Moderate	9 (5.7)	8 (6.0)	7 (10.2)	6 (8.1)	30	13.64
	Low	4 (5.7)	8 (6.0)	15 (10.2)	21 (12.9)	48	21.82
	Total	42	44	75	59	220	100
	% total	19.09	20.00	34.09	26.82		100

Note : The integers are the observed values (O), while the expected value (E) is in parenthesis.

Table 4.5, indicates that 33.18 percent of the respondents have politically efficacious husbands and they show the highest level of interest in politics (43.83%).

Those whose spouses are uninterested in political activities form 21.82 percent of the total respondents and equally show the least interest in political activities (25%).

The first two categories of women whose husbands show very high and high interests in politics respectively, put together, have a percentage interest of 80.06% in political activities. While the last two categories whose husbands are either uninterested or show low interests in politics, have only a percentage participation of 30.67%.

The differences observed in the data present on table 4.5, is hereby subjected to the chi-square test to know whether any statistical significance exist between them.

The result of the test is summarized as follows:

$$\chi^2_0 = \frac{(14-13.9)^2}{13.9} + \frac{(18-14.6)^2}{14.6} + \dots + \frac{(21-12.9)^2}{12.9}$$

$$\chi^2_0 = 16.522$$

TO TEST THE NULL HYPOTHESIS H_0

Under the null hypothesis H_0 ; a woman's interest in politics is independent of her spouse's interest in politics. Alternative hypothesis H_1 , the woman's interest in politics depends on the level of interest of her spouse in politics.

TEST : Accept H_0 if $\chi^2_0 \leq \chi^2_{.05} (9)$

Reject H_0 otherwise

RESULT : A woman's interest in politics derives from that of her spouse. Therefore;

H_0	: Rejected.
H_1	: Accepted
L.S.	: .05
N	: 220
DF	: $(r-1)(1-1) = 7$
χ^2_0	: 16.522
C.V	: 3.325
Test significance	: Significant

INTERPRETATION : Since chi-square value = 16.522 is greater than critical value = 3.325, we reject H_0 and conclude that the woman's interest in politics is derived from that of her spouse.

This further implies that men who are^{not} interested in politics are likely to have negative influence on their wives attitudes to politics.

SUMMARY TABLE 4.6

HO	HYPOTHESIS TESTED	RESULTS
1	There is no significant relations between women degree of political participation and their levels of educational attainment	Rejected
2	Women participation in politics is independent of their marital status	Accepted
3	.There is no significant relationship between a woman's income status and her level of participation in politics	Rejected
4	There is no significant relationship between, membership of group/association(s) and women degree of participation in politics	Rejected
5	There is no significant relationship between a woman's level of interest in politics and her spouse's level of interest in politics	Rejected

CHAPTER FIVEDISCUSSION OF FINDINGS5.1 LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In this section, the respondents' political behaviour is considered bearing in mind the level of education attained. For clarification purposes, non-literates represent those without formal education; semi - literates for those with primary education and literates for those with secondary education and above.

Table 4.1 above, indicates that about 23% of the respondents have less than primary school certificate and could be classified as non-literates for this study. It could also be observed that a whopping 66 percent of the non-literate class of women show low (apathy) participation in politics. This is attributed to the fact that due to illiteracy, they are not only uninformed academically, but are too timid to involve actively in such a social complex activity as politics. Secondly, they are unaware of their rights and the fact that participation in politics will influence favourable policies relating to their class interest. In most instances, this academic handicap carries poverty with it as most women in this category do not have gainful employment

or adequate economic resources. And it is also not uncommon to see such women out of political contention because partisan politics of present day demands high financial involvement which they cannot afford.

Thirty (30) out of the ninety six (96) women who have at least secondary education are seen to participate very highly in politics. This represents about thirty eight percent active participation of the group in politics. It could be explained that quite unlike their non-literate counterparts, these educated women who have acquired some high degree of confidence through education easily employ their guts in politics with their relatively higher income base. Education does not only equip them with the intricacies of political organization but afford them the necessary padding against crisis management and gender discrimination.

Within the Nigerian context, contemporary politics is the exclusive stock in trade of the "elitist" class even though it has acquired a grass root orientation. Most of the women with primary education have been observed to be involved in local group organizations which has been seen not to make much impact in grassroots politics as against the male forces.

Just as it is buttressed by our research, a basic academic standard is synonymous with the elite class. Hence the proportion of our women in this elitist class give a good picture of their degree of participation in politics. With education comes cultural emancipation and some chunk of independence of purpose. Education allows the woman of the home to aspire to leadership position outside the home and also wins her the respect and privilege support from the spouse and the electorates.

No doubt, our developing societies with its high illiteracy rate recognizes and reveres educated women as virtuous and invaluable asset to development. This is not only an encouragement for the educated lady to venture into politics but some sort of assurance of fulfilment of purpose.

5.2 MARITAL STATUS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

To be considered here is the effect of marital status on political participation. It could be observed from table 4.2 above that 25.91 percent of the respondents are single ladies and have the highest group participation of 45.61 percent; 16 out of the 57 single respondents are very highly involved in politics.

Interestingly, the absence of formal spouses might not imply total absence of relationships, rather, it measures the degree

of the womans freedom from the man's dominion. It relates to the freedom from acute family responsibility and male influence in discouraging the women from leadership tussle.

The single lady does not only seek the man's assistance when required, but does that purely on business terms. Hence she goes into politics as a full business venture unlike her married counterpart who in most cases goes into politics as a mere appendage to her husband or his peers. Miss Afegbua who was a senator in the Second Republic was not only the only female senator but a spinister.

The widowed and divorced women may not compare well with their married and single counterparts due to the fact that having lost their male spouses, they lack the morale support and guts required for such adventure as politics. The divorcee on the other hand, suffer most in politics as a result of the stigma left on them by their marital status which tradition does not sympathise with. While the divorcee suffers on moral grounds, the widow lacks the backing and the bite required in the trade due to the absence of the husband. In some instances, some political opponents could accuse the lady of having a hand in the death of the spouse, as a

way of winning access to political position. This exposes the perspective woman aspirant, especially against men opposition.

The married women has been discovered to be the least purposeful actor in politics. Most a time, the woman's involvement in politics reflects her husbands political activities. Most married women are marginal actors, waiting for coaxing and mostly end up only voters for their male counterparts. Much as married women have the advantage of close-quarter support from spouses, they are rarely active and have independence of purpose in political activities. This is worse when the spouse is politically passive, the woman automatically takes the apathetic stance too. It is not uncommon in Nigeria for married women to wait to answer the first lady after the husband has won an elective post.

Finally, it could be said that because of limited responsibilities unlike mothers, the single lady apparently has more time and liberty to participate activity in politiking. She easily mobilises her numerous peers for her trade and is at a better advantage in practising the profession to the later. Politics requires consistency and perseverance which only the single lady could demonstrate well against her male contestants. She does not

dabble into politics out of purpose or as an appendage to a spouse and hence equips herself well with necessary education and financing.

5.3 FINANCIAL STATUS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The effect of income in determining women participation in politics is also considered. The respondents income was grouped into five categories - those who earn between two thousand and five thousand, those who earn ten thousand, those who earn twenty five thousand, those who earn fifty thousand and the last category who earn hundred thousand and above. The discussion below is based on these categories.

Contemporary state politics requires high financing and with only about eight percent of our entire two hundred and twenty sample of women earning hundred thousand (₦100,000) and above in one year, the prospect is little in seeking political activities. There is evidence from our research that participation in politics by women is directly proportional to monetary base of the actor. This finding is not peculiar to women but general to the trade. And it is established that by traditional punctuations, woman has been made to have the less of necessities of life than the man, including

money. By this she has less chances in politics as she fights the omnipresent forces of subjugation by the male. The financial inadequacy dampens the woman's zeal in politics and paves the way for her male opponent to rule her.

A possible reason for women low income status is the fact that most women engage themselves in unpaid domestic labour. Child bearing and rearing is never remunerated and most other domestic activities that attract less pay. Women do not own land or have any sort of access to land and property. Economic resources available to women are very limited even the very limited resources are still under the whims and caprices of the man who apportions the resources when he deems necessary. A second reason may be that women do not have gainful wage labour. They only occupy the lower cadre of the services. This could be explained out, because they are not opportuned to acquire higher education, they are hardly suited for jobs that require highly skilled personnel. A third factor may be attributed to the social environment where a well-educated young lady tosses her certificate into the scrap being and folds her arms at home at the command of her husband.

This has a way of impoverishing the women in question. It is not uncommon in Nigeria for a man to tell his wife to sit down and take care of the children that her money is not needed for the upkeep of the home as such she was not supposed to do any paid job. This is more of an act of jealousy as most men are afraid to let their beautiful wives out to do paid jobs for the possible reason of losing them to other men.

The effect of the above is a predominant class of economically dependent women. Economically dependent and low income status women show little or no interest in the exercise of their right of influencing the decision making of government. Over 50 percent of women belong to the very low income group. Even the relatively affluent women cannot participate fully in the politics of the day.

Sara Jibril, the only woman presidential aspirant of the third republic was edged out of the primaries because she could not afford her party's nomination fee of five hundred thousand naira.

Chief (Mrs) Efun Oyagbola, a minister in the Second Republic regime of Shehu Shagari (Alhaji) said she could have contested (and won) a senatorial seat in the just concluded

senatorial election in the country but for lack of money.

During the period of electioneering into the House of Assembly, the National Commission for women attempted mobilizing funds for their women prospective contestants. It is now on record that they failed to form enough financial support for their members most of who could not even pass their party nomination on financial grounds.

Unfortunately, the males use their financial advantage to overshadow the females who might have political dreams. And as Mrs. Oyegbola put it,

If we rely on the men for money,
no matter how old you are, you
will have to lie down for a man

No decent woman any^{way} would consider degrading her personal ego just to finance her political ambition.

Generally, it could be argued that among all the impediments to the woman's political fortunes lies her inability to muster enough fund for financing her political dreams.

5.4 EFFECT OF MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATIONS ON WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

The importance of group identification in politics cannot be over emphasised. The ability of man to organise himself has been the highest attributes of this creature. And this ability differs as much as the sophistication of the concerned groups. Thus it has been observed that the number of unit organizations into which an individual belongs could well define his ability to organize others as in politics. These unit or domestic organizations not only serve as political educational institutions but often serve as interest or pressure groups which are ingredients of political participation.

No doubt our test is justified just as our result in table 4.4 indicates that the degree of involvement of a woman in groups/associations as a member could determine her level of political awareness and concomitant participation. At times, these groups could even engineer a member into partisan politics by sponsorship in a bid to represent their interest in the particular political grouping. At other times, political aspirants join as many groups as possible as a way of ensuring

high voter record as the members of these groups are likely to vote for their aspiring members. Thus the idea of group identification is related to the notion that traces increased participation to membership of social organizations. Relating the above notion to the study carried out in chapter four of this thesis, there is an indication that the more one identifies with a group, the more he/she participates in political activities. In the study in reference, women who belong to five associations and more, show the highest interest in politics -57.14 percent. Only 17.14 percent of women in this category show low interest in political activities. While 43.48 percent of women who identify with only one association show low interest to politics. It was also observed that a significant number of the respondents belong to just two associations (70-31.82%) and a whopping 57.14 percent of them are apathetic to political activities.

It could therefore be explained that women who identify with many associations are politically active because their organizations are often politically visible and some even take open political stance. Such stance have the effect of mobilizing their members thereby increasing their levels of political awareness

and interest. Furthermore, in the process of seeking to advance or defend the interest of their organizations, members become more politically exposed and involved too. Just as was mentioned above, a second possible reason might be that women who belong to many organizations enjoy the support and encouragement of these organizations and this goes a long way to boost their ego.

Women in Africa have a long history of organizing against their oppressions, political, economic and social - alike. In Nigeria for instance the Abeokuta women Union, under the headship of Mrs. Olufunmilayo Ransome Kuti, Lagos Market Women Association under the leadership of Pelewura and the Nigerian Women Party of Oyinkan Abayomi, organized against female oppressions between 1920 and 1960. These women associations wielded political powers and influenced government decisions in both the private and public realms. The Nigerian Women Party sponsored Abayomi as the first lady member of Lagos town council. Mrs. Kuti and four other members of the Abeokuta women union were appointed into the sole administrative council after they influenced the abdication of Oba Ademola. The Lagos market women on the other hand, influenced decision as

they relate to women interest. They fought and won female tax free, abolition^{of} pullen price policy and restriction of hawking in Lagos main land. The collective spirit generated by these women, the organizational form they developed spontaneously and the cultural expression accompanying their actions, constituted them into a formidable force, feared and respected. Were these women isolated and atomized house wives, dependent on male assistance alone, they would not have achieved much.

Just as data in the previous chapter revealed, the number of associations a woman belong to has some tangible effects on her level of participation in politics. It is not out of place to mention that most women association in Nigeria are apolitical. They do not concern themselves with political issues and this accounts the reason why most women who belong to many association are also found to be apathetic to politics. The National Council for Women Associations and the Better Life for Rural Dwellers just to mention, are clearly apolitical, concerning themselves only with minor economic ventures like art and crafts, weaving of clothes and exhibition: of products. Such groups are

never found to articulate the interests of their members and present them to the government. As Arthur Bentley posits, it is only the groups that are capable of articulating the demands of their members and seek action from the government that can be defined as political groups. So even though most women belong to many associations, these associations do not equip them with the necessary political knowledge and financial support needed for the present day politics.

5.6 EFFECT OF SPOUSES' INTEREST IN POLITICS ON LEVEL OF WOMAN'S PARTICIPATION

Results of the analysis carried out in table 4.5 indicate that 33.18 percent of the respondents have politically efficacious husbands and they show the highest group interest level in politics, 43.83 percent. Those whose spouses are uninterested in political activities form 21.82 percent of the respondents and show the least interest level in political activities, 25 percent.

The first two categories of women whose spouses show very high and high interests in politics respectively, show a percentage participation of 80.06 percent. While the two last categories whose spouses are either uninterested or show low interest in politics

have a percentage participation level of 30.67 percent.

This result is a close picture of what affinity men have for politics. This is because most times women interest in politics is derived from men who are usually their mentors. In families, it has been observed that the married woman automatically belongs to her husbands political party and also plays supportive role if her spouse has a nack for a political office.

Because of the institutionalized influence of man over the woman, it is not unusual for the man to co-opt his wife into politics if he is politically conscious. The man dictates the actions of the woman most of the time and does not hesitate to discourage or encourage her in adventures according to his personal desire and comitment. Another way in which spouses interest can influence the woman's level of interest and participation in politics is that an activist husband is always found to discuss political issues with friends and colleagues in the house and this has a direct influence on the woman who often finds herself picking interest by joining in such discussions. Political discussions at home also have the effect of educating the woman

about what obtains in the political arena and equips her with enough information and knowledge to seek elective position.

On the other hand, a man who is uninterested in politics automatically influences the woman negatively. He often discourages political discussions and does not allow the woman the free will and opportunity to participate fully in politics. Women have had a long history of marginalization by men in issues of human management in general and politics in particular. For the women to lean on their men for support in politics has always had a mischievous response from these men who claim the ownership of God's own earth - without justification. After all who is the man supporting the woman to rule?

Men have done unprintable things to undermine the woman's aspiration to organise groups as political cohorts. Most traditions that inhibit woman from public scene is upheld by men and the injustices done by man against the woman by influencing her proven more articulate approach towards issues have continuously deprived man the privilege of enjoying the managerial ingenuity of the better of the species of homosapiens.

On a general note, it was the contention of most respondents that they show low interest in politics and political activities because they are of little consequence in the final political events. Most women argue that their contributions do not effect any change or make any meaningful impact on the state as evidence has shown that vote casts are manipulated in favour of whichever candidate government want to sponsor into office. Elections in Nigeria are known for the numerous riggings and other fraudulent practices thathave the effects of rendering the voters efforts useless. So most women show apathy to politics because of their notion that their contributions will not make any meaningful impact on the electorates.

Women are obviously not alone in this view because it is a well enuciated fact that a potential voter is influenced to behave in a particular way by a number of factors. One of such influences is a set of attitudes relating to a persons belief in the effectiveness of voting. If a voter thinks that her vote will not make any significant change in a system, she is not likely to vote. This also affects other aspects of political activities like contesting for elective posts or campaigning for a candidate.

Once a woman feels that she will be rigged out of office, that election will not be free and fair, she simply stay back at home and suppress her ambitions.

Most women are also found to have high distrust for the Nigerian political system in general and the political leadership of the country. They feel that people (electorate) are often manipulated by the politicians to raise votes and are ultimately dropped as soon as the politicians achieve the mantle of leadership. This has its own negative effect on women who constitute the bulk of the electorates. Since women feel they are often alienated by the political leaders once success is recorded, they feel a sense of cheating and therefore withdraw from active participation, preferring to participate at the periphery of politics. Thus its being hypothesed that when distrust is combined with feeling of ineffectiveness, the consequence is likely to be withdrawal from politics. Low political efficacy and low trust combination will likely lead to apathy for why should one get involved in politics if her contributions have such low probabilities of influencing a change.

Also very significant in influencing the level at which women participate in politics is occupational status of women.

Several studies have shown that persons of higher occupational status are likely to participate more in politics. From responses gathered in question four (4) of the questionnaire (what is your occupational status?), it was observed that women of employer status and owner account worker (business women) show high interest in politics. Data show that there are many public office holders among women of these categories and many others were found to be political activists. Women in these categories always engender political discussions among friends in whatever forums they find themselves. One possible reason for the efficacy of the occupational high status women, is that they have well established income resources which often give the boost and bite needed in today politics. Also important is the fact that most women in these categories are educated and live above social inhibitions. They therefore suit properly into the political arena of the country. While on the other hand, the persons of low occupation status are probably poor, uneducated and still living within the bounds of cultural dictates hence cannot farewell in politics.

In summary therefore, several reasons have been given to explain the general attitudes women show towards politics. Most of the socio-economic variables are found to be related in either enhancing efficacy or apathy towards politics. The higher income status women were also found to have acquired higher education, married affluent men, who are equally active in politics. As a consequence then, such women with a combination of these variables, participate highly in politics. The other category of women of low income status, low educational achievement and probably married to politically apathetic men, show low interest in politics. The possible reasons offered are that their low income status hinders them from participating in politics and since they are not highly educated, they are not even aware of their rights and the possibilities of achieving their interest by influencing the policy making apparatus.

Since most studies on political participation centers on the premise that socio-economic factors are strong determinants of the degree of an individual's political activities, it then means that the findings of this study is in agreement with previous studies on political participation and individual motivations.

Differences in income are related to other socio-economic and attitudinal differences. The richer ones are likely to have higher education, interact freely with others in the social and political groups and more likely too, to be exposed to mass media (Television and Radio) and therefore are more likely to have developed attitudes and beliefs that encourage participation in politics.

We can then say that socio-economic factors (education, finance, social status etc) are likely to be responsible for the apathetic attitudes women show towards political activities in Nigeria.

CHAPTER SIXSUMMARY: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This study set out with the objectives of looking into the problems of the low level of political participation among women in Nigeria.

It also aimed at focusing on such constraints that have for ages, inhibited voluntary participation of women in political activities.

The study also aimed at examining the level of political awareness and interest among women.

It was also the objective of this study to access the impact of socio-economic and proximate variable (education, income, marital status, group identification, etc), on the level of women participation in politics.

The study also aimed at evaluating some available feminist literasture and assessing their usefulness and limitations in analyzing Nigerian women and political participation.

It was also the objective of this study to validate (or invalidate) some of the claims of feminist theorists that women are being marginalized in the state politics.

Finally, the study aimed at putting forward some tentative suggestions/recommendations, based on the findings made, on how the degree of women's participation in politics can be increased.

Two sets of instruments were designed and administered to two sets of women - the literates and the non-literates, located in Ibadan and Lagos urban areas only. One (questionnaire) for both the literate and the non-literate women and the other (interview) for women in the leadership category (union leaders), politicians past and present and academicians.

Data obtained were collated and analyzed by the use of statistical tools such as percentages and chi-square (χ^2_0) with

the formular
$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O - E)^2}{E_i}$$

Results of the analysis produced answers to the research questions set for this study and further indicate that there is significant relationship between socio-economic variables and the degrees at which women participate in politics. Most of these socio-economic variables are also found to be related in either enhancing efficacy or apathy towards political activities. The major findings of the study are as following:

- 1) Women degree of political participation depend on their levels of educational qualifications. It was observed through the cross tabulations of the degrees of women participation in politics and their level of educational attainments that a significant relationship exist between the two variables. It is a generally accepted fact that women who have acquired higher levels of education are more conscious and aware of their rights and the appropriate channels to direct their demands. Hence they tend to participate actively in politics as a means of achieving their demands on the society.
- 2) Women level of participation in politics is independent of their marital status. Women who enjoy the freedom from acute family responsibilities and some degree of freedom from the men's dominion - (single women) fare better in leadership tussle in the country than women burdened with unpaid domestic labour. The single woman is independent of what the man's perception about politics is hence she goes into politics as a full business venture while her married counterpart depends on the whims and caprices of her spouse. She either forms an appendage to an activist spouse or is discouraged by an uninterested spouse.

3) Financial status of women determines the degree at which they participate in politics. Information gathered from available data shows that a great number of women have very poor income status and most women in this category show low interest in politics.

4) Women membership of group/association(s) significantly affect their degrees of participation in politics. Women who belong to five or more social/political associations were found to participate actively in political activities. They therefore confirm the assertion by theorists that group identification enhances political participation. Theorists explain that identification with group(s) have the effect of mobilizing an individual politically by increasing his level of political awareness through taking open political stance. They also assert that political participation though performed by an individual, is a function of group action and political participation is heightened when the individual becomes conscious of his interest within the society.

Women who belong to one local, non-politically visible women group, show low interest in politics. This is simply because they are not conscious or even aware of their rights within the

society. A majority of the respondents claim that they do not participate in politics because their contributions will not make any meaningful impact on the political system of the country.

5. A woman's level of interest in politics derives from that of her spouse. It is observed from the data that there is a significant relationship between the woman's level of interest in politics and her spouse's level of interest in politics. Data show that politically active men have a positive influence on their wives' participation in politics. These men are either mentors or fully co-opt their wives into their parties and political ambitions. It is common to see women campaigning for their husbands standing for elective posts in this country and often when men get into sensitive political posts like the governorship or the presidential posts, their wives play key roles in the administration.

On the other hand data show that women who have spouses with low interests in politics do not fare well in politics because they are often discouraged by their spouses from entering into the political fray.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be deduced that:

- 1) Women who have access to higher levels of education will participate actively in politics. This is because there is a direct association between the level of educational attainment and the degree at which women participate in politics.
- 2) Women who are economically independent, those whose annual salary income levels are very high, will participate more actively in politics than women with low income status and *with* restricted or limited economic resources. Money is highly indispensable in politics.
- 3) Identification with politically visible and viable groups enhances political participation. Women who belong to many associations are more politically conscious than women who do not belong to groups.
- 4) Women who are not burdened with much family responsibilities and who enjoy some freedom from men's dominion participate highly in politics. Women want to be allowed some autonomy to pursue their political ambitions to the fullest.

- 5) Women whose spouses are politically efficacious exhibit a higher degree of interest in politics than women whose husbands are uninterested in politics. The level of interest of the men should be integrated with those of women within the society to realise maximum participation from both sides. None should hinder the quest of the other to leadership roles.

Having recognised that the political stance many women take towards politics is a reflection of the enormous constraints they encounter while entering the political fora and having also recognized the fact that women continuing participation on the periphery of politics reinforces their marginality and most significantly, their underrepresentation at the top echelons of national politics, this thesis proposes the following recommendations that will be useful for awakening the consciousness and interest of women towards active participation in politics and public policy making.

Education facilitates increased political knowledge, hence improvement on the general levels of women education will make them ready to absorb the political knowledge required for active participation in politics. Analysis of data carried out

in chapter four of this thesis also indicate that the level of education attained, strongly determines the degree of participation exhibited by women. This finding further supports the assertion that the better educated, and more informed persons are more politically active, supportive and more patriotic of the political system.

Based on the above findings, it may be necessary to improve upon the educational status of women. This will be achieved by giving women equal opportunities with men to pursue education at all levels. Women should be encouraged to aspire to the highest level of education affordable, through such incentives as scholarship awards and job assurances.

There is also need to establish research Bureaus, data Banks, Research documentation centres and women studies Programmes in higher institutions of learning in the country. The research centres should be capable of keeping data about women conditions of service, women professions, women labour forces, women access to land, live stock and extension facilities. Women credit facilities, economic activities, educational achievements and

women welfare in general. It is on the basis of data collected from these research centres that meaningful policies can be formulated for Nigerian women.

The first step towards the provision of viable and factual information base is the knowledge of appropriate methodologies for carrying out baseline studies of the position of women and their roles in the society. There is therefore need to have the expertise to integrate data and draw out their implications for political development. Women themselves would have to participate actively in the formulation of these strategies in order to take account of their socio-economic and cultural problems. They should plan, organize and report programmes on women issues themselves. They should also fight political passivity and inactivity among themselves. This way, they will put to an end male domination of state politics. Women should also organize their penetration into the male strongholds where major decisions are made to seek the means of influencing decisions affecting their class interests.

Organising women into viable social and political groups is another strategy needed to increase their participation in politics. Analysis of women organizations raises a number of

questions regarding the organizational potentials of women. For instance, a study on the activities of Nigerian women in the pre-colonial, colonial and early post independence era carried out in chapter three of this thesis, confirms some assertions and throws more light on women's potentials for mobilization and organization around their own sex and class interests. Another study carried out by Maria Mies⁸⁶ on the Indian peasant women labourers (the Harijans), shows that women, participate more actively in all aspects of societal development when in groups. Thus the idea of group identification is related to the notion that traces increased participation to membership of social organization and confirms Arthur Bentley's assertion that political participation though performed by individuals, is a function of group action and that political participation is heightened when the individual becomes conscious of his interest within the society.⁸⁷ Also data analysis carried out on chapter four of this thesis, indicates that the more women identify with women groups, the more active they are in political activities. This is so because most social organizations are politically visible and some even take open political stance. Such stance have the effect of mobilizing their members thereby increasing their levels of political consciousness. Furthermore, in the

process of seeking to advance or defend the interest of their organizations, the members become more politically exposed and involved too.

Women in Africa have a history of organising against oppressions - political, economic and social. In Nigeria for instance, women organizations between the years of 1920 and 1960, wielded political powers and influenced government decisions in both the private and public realms. Abeokuta women organized against Alake Ademola's obnoxious social and economic policies, female taxation, pulley price control scheme and the entire Sole Native Administration system. The collective spirits generated by these women, the organizational form they developed spontaneously and the cultural expression accompanying their actions, constituted them into a formidable force before the colonizers and the Alake. Were they isolated and atomized housewives dependent on individual effort alone, they wouldn't have achieved much.

In spite of the outstanding qualities shown by past women associations in Nigeria, women associations in the country today do not constitute a force. They are so fragmented that none constitutes an effective force for demanding improvement in the female condition. The two national umbrella organizations of

women, are strictly apolitical, preferring to operate within the system and to attempt reforms by gradual processes. These are National Council for womens Societies (NCWS) and Better Life programmes for Rural Dwellers (BLF). They show more interests in economic activities like weaving, sewing, art galary, crafts and general commercial activities.

In other to actually integrate women into national decision making as participants and beneficiaries, it is recommended that a more radicalist and politically viable umbrella association should be established. This association must have clearly defined social and political perspectives as well as the urge to lift as far as it can the veils that have been allowed to shroud the colossal contributions that women could make towards the political development of this country. It will also be committed to the task of shedding the shackles that have kept women away, from active politics. This umbrella organization should lay emphasis on unity and solidarity, it should be capable of encouraging women to come together, speak out their problems and share their plights together. Through this technique, women will be transformed person by person, group by group, from victims to activists.

In addition to fostering collective confidence, group cohesion seems to have built up personal confidence, it also increases women ability and control over themselves and their environment. Thus the value and importance of organizing women into groups is unquestionable.

Perhaps, one of the most discernable features observed in this study is the low economic status of women. A significant number of the respondents (98), belong to the lowest income category (2,000 - 5,000 per annum). This low income group constitute about 44.55 percent of the entire study population (220), and 73.47 percent of them are apathetic to politics. This finding thus confirms the assertion by theorists that economically dependent and low income status women show little interest in politics and in the exercise of their civic rights.

Chief Mrs. Ebun Oyagbola, while responding to a question put to her by this researcher on why Nigerian women do not fare well in partisan politics, lamented;

I could have contested (and won)
a senatorial seat in the national
Assembly but I could not do so for
lack of money ... what is prevalent

in Nigeria is money politics;
Women do not have this essential
resource, so one should not be
surprised that women politicians
perform the way they do.⁸⁸

Women cannot take the task of improving their economic status alone. It is therefore recommended that the government should come to their rescue by appointing them to key administrative positions in the country. Women should also be allowed into all sectors of the economy and should equally be allowed access to land since it is the major base of rural economy.

Culture is the collective way of life of a people, the way they eat, their dressing, language, beliefs and values. If we accept this definition, then women are the products of a particular group and they exhibit certain behaviour as may be determined by cultural values of the group. This explains why cultural analysts argue that the role a woman would perform in a society is determined by the culture in which she finds herself.

In Nigeria for instance, some aspects of the culture, decrees that a woman has no right to land or inheritance. She should not aspire to leadership roles as it is the natural

preserve of men and she is forebidden from issuing commands to men. In some other cultures, women are seen as properties to be shared along with other properties especially at the death of their husbands. No wonder some feminists regard culture as the greatest damage to a woman's political aspirations. Since the role a woman would perform in the society is determined by the culture in which she finds herself, then the case of consciousness and interest will depend on the amount of freedom women have within the society.

In patriarchal societies as Nigeria, men are culturally endowed with dominance, power and leadership. They are the owners and controllers of economic resources and they apportion these resources to women according to their own wishes. Women on the other hand are socialized into domestic roles and unpaid labour. Their major responsibilities in these societies being the task of child bearing and rearing which in most cases are not remunerated. In such a society, women are not expected to perform in the public realms. Their rightful places^{are} located within the households hence it is not uncommon to find large numbers of women justifying their apathetic attitudes towards politics by saying that politics is the exclusive preserve of the men.

In other therefore to free women from the shackles of cultural dictates, those traditions, beliefs, myths and rules designed within the culture to keep women perpetually subserviant and which subject them to accepting male dominance of state politics, should be legislated against. The traditions and customs that portray women as physically, mentally, and spiritually weak, biologically inferior and limited in options should equally be legislated against. Women should no longer be seen as less intelligent and less competent to handle state matters. Societies that have enjoyed women leadership roles - like Britain and India will attest to the fact that patriarchal societies deprive themselves of the advantages of the leadership roles of women.

Government should introduce new cultural orientations, devoid of barages of myths supporting women domination and oppression in the society. There should also be increased cultural pressure for participation of all the citizens in political activities by ensuring that obligation to participate is made part of the cultural norm. Men and women should be given similar political orientations. They should be given equal opportunities to pursue leadership roles.

It is also recommended that this new cultural orientation should aspire to increase the political awareness of women by giving ^{them} political socialization to increase their political knowledge from childhood. This is important because increased political knowledge have the double effect of demystifying the political process thereby making citizens feel more able to deal with the political world. Secondly, more understanding about politics can enhance interest in politics. The confidence which comes from extensive political knowledge would tend to increase women's interest and involvement in politics.

Another major factor that discourages participation in politics is the feeling in the citizen that her vote will not make much impact on the general outcome of election. A significant number of women especially those within the low income category, argue that they do not show much interest in politics because their votes do not effect any change in the political outlook of the country. If votes do not carry equal weights therefore, those who think that their votes are inferior to others would be discouraged from voting. By the same token, instances of electoral fraud tends to neutralise the effect of peoples votes and this in turn discourages active participation in politics.

It is recommended that efforts should be made to ensure that one man's vote is as good as the other. Elimination of fraudulent acts in the electoral process is also recommended. And finally the elevation of the state of politics to a prestigious level will encourage more women to participate in politics.

One last area that needs to be examined while giving accommodations/suggestions on improving women participation in politics is the political party. The strength of the political parties and their ideological appeals can be a factor in political participation. Given that political parties play (or should play) a key role in identifying issues of concern to the populace and that Nigeria is about to enter its Third Republic, with two official parties, are women of concern to these parties?

In the National Republican Conventions (NRC) manifesto, one sees that the issue of women's equality and rights is relatively unimportant. For example, more is written on other category in the manifesto than on women. In addition, the strategy for the achievement of "full emancipation, participation and involvement of women in all political, social, economic and other aspects of our national life" is extremely vague. They write;

... an NKC government will encourage and indeed ensure that women are free to pursue any vocation and employment within the confines of the law. 89

However, there are no concrete examples or policies which are articulated to do the above.

The Social Democratic Party (SDP) while writing a little more about women, is less subtle about its patriarchal attitudes and policies. They write;

The party in government shall encourage the mass education and mobilization of our women for ... nurturing a healthy family system and uniting the kinship groups together⁹⁰

Because the SDP is quite blatant about its stand on women (that they should remain in the domestic realm), one has little hope for women's greater participation in the state, if this party should come to power by 1993.

It is therefore, recommended, that political parties should represent the articulate interest of women. The parties, should endeavour to restructure their ideologies to suit as well as appeal to the interest of women. On the other hand, efforts should be made by the government to ensure that elections are free and fair, and that women are not rigged out of office by affluent and powerful male politicians.

In the final analysis, this researcher submits that women if well motivated, will be invaluable assets to the government and peoples of Nigeria on issues concerning politics and other developmental activities.

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APPENDIX I

WOMEN AND POLITICS : A NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

This questionnaire is designed for the study of the factors affecting women's political participation in Nigeria, for an Master of Science (M.Sc.) thesis work, in the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

While we solicitate for accuracy of information, we guarantee a confidential treatment of the information so supplied by this respondent.

INSTRUCTION: TICK (X) against any correct answer and comment appropriately, where need be.

1. How old are you?
 - (a) 18 - 29 ()
 - (b) 30 - 39 ()
 - (c) 40 - 49 ()
 - (d) 50 - 59 ()
 - (e) 60 and above()

2. What is your marital status?
 - (a) Single ()
 - (b) Married ()

- (c) Widowed ()
- (d) Divorced ()
- (e) Separated ()

3. What is your religion?

- (a) Christianity()
- (b) Moslem ()
- (c) Traditional ()
- (d) Others (specify) -----

4. What is your occupational status?

- (a) Employer ()
- (b) Employee ()
- (c) Own account worker ()
- (d) Unpaid family worker ()
- (e) Unemployed ()

5. What is your estimated annual income?

- (a) ₦2,000 - ₦5,000 ()
- (b) ₦10,000 ()
- (c) ₦25,000 ()
- (d) ₦50,000 ()
- (e) ₦100,00 and above ()
- (f) Others (specify) -----

6. What is your highest level of educational attainment?

(a) Primary ()

(b) Secondary ()

(c) OND/NCE ()

(d) HND/University()

(e) Others (specify) -----

7. What is your spouse's (if any) educational qualification

(see Q 6) -----

8. What is your spouse's (if any) occupation?

(See Q 4)

9. How active is your spouse in politics?

(a) Highly ()

(b) Moderately ()

(c) Low ()

(d) Uninterested()

(f) Very highly ()

10. Has your spouse/parent(s) held any political position
or public office in Nigeria

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

11. Do you belong to any professional association of women group?

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

12. If Yes: name your major associations: -----

13. Does your association have any political motives

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

14. What role does your association play in Nigeria ?

15. What role do you play for the association(s)

16. What are the problems militating against the progress of your association?

17. How interested in politics are you?

(a) Highly () (e) Very higher ()

(b) Moderately ()

(c) Low ()

(d) Uninterested()

18 Do you belong to any political party?

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

19 If Yes : which party?

(a) NRC ()

(b) SDP ()

20. Did you belong to any political party in the first and second Republic?

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

21. If Yes : name the party -----

22. What political activities do you usually engaged in?

(a) Voting ()

(b) Campaigning ()

(c) Contesting ()

(d) Joining political parties ()

(e) Others (specify) -----

23 Have you run for any political position before?

(a) Yes ()

(b) No ()

24. If Yes : under which party? -----
25. What position did you contest for? -----
26. How were you sponsored?
- (a) Personal ()
 - (b) Family source ()
 - (c) Association ()
 - (d) Others (specify) -----
27. What problems did you encounter while contesting for the post?
- (a) Financial ()
 - (b) Sex complex ()
 - (c) Male opposition ()
 - (d) Election manipulations ()
 - (e) Others (specify) -----
28. What other problems did you encounter as a politician?

29. How did you overcome these problems? -----

30. Was the election free and fair?
- (a) Yes ()
 - (b) No ()

31. What are the factors for your success or failure in the election?

32 Why have women not fared very well in politics?

(a) Low income ()

(b) Poor education ()

(c) Male domination ()

(d) Sex complex ()

(e) Family opposition ()

(f) Others (specify) ()

33 What in your own opinion should be done to make women active participants in politics?

Thanks for the information supplied.

Okafor Anthonia Nma •

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APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Women of leadership category (union leaders), politicians and academicians are to be interviewed. Questions on the activities and general administration of women national umbrella associations (National Council of Women Societies and the Better Life Programme for rural Dwellers (NCWS & BLP) are asked. Also asked are questions on how Nigerian women have generally fared in politics.

Questions based on association such as the following:

1. Does the National Council for Women Societies (NCWS) have any political ambitions?
2. In what ways does NCWS motivate/encourage her members to participate in political activities?
3. Can you say that NCWS is achieving its set objectives of furthering the course of Nigerian women?
4. What roles does NCWS play in enhancing women interest in politics?

5. What are the major problems encountered by NCWS in furthering the course of women?
6. Does the Better Life Programme for Rural Dwellers have any political motives?
7. To what levels has the consciousness and interest of women towards politics been aroused through membership of the BLP?
8. What assistance does the BLP offer women politicians, contesting for elective posts in Nigeria?

Other questions include

9. What do you think is the difference between women in politics today and in the past and what accounts for the difference?
10. What can you say are the reasons for women low interest in politics?
11. Why have women not fared very well in politics?
12. Suggest ways in which women can be made active participants in politics.