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WOMEN AND GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Nigerian society still abounds with antiquated and anti-humanist beliefs, which portrays women as a weaker group and relegated to inferior positions, without regards to their mental capacity and educational competencies. Evidently, Nigerian women are not only increasingly being marginalised from advancing in their career life but recent studies have shown that they are excluded from having a political career which has significant importance to their economic advancement and sustainability. Although there exists no constitutional barrier to the increased participation of women, however, there exist societal and cultural barriers that frustrates participation of women.

More so, in line with the basic principles of humanity, the rights of women have remained largely a textual postulation in legal documents, with no direct positive impact on the living conditions of the average Nigerian woman. This thesis addresses and examines an under-researched aspect of the gender-inequality and gender-based marginalisation the Nigerian women experience – the relations between the women population exclusion and its impact on economic development and national peace. Albeit, the Nigerian government has failed in the effective enforcement of its constitution, particularly in ensuring that the Nigerian woman is adequately protected from the violations and injustices resulting from the oppressive social-cultural norms and religious laws, despite all the provisions in the law and ratification of protocols, charters and conventions (Grace, n.d.). This thesis adopts the qualitative research method to argue that the exclusion and the lack of active participation of women in government in Nigeria have been detrimental to the economic and social development of the country.

Keywords: gender inequality, Nigerian society, gender-based marginalisation, population exclusion, active participation, Africa.

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian woman has remained the perpetual victim of Nigeria's failing statehood, which is a resultant effect of the social, economic and religious construct of the Nigerian society (Ette, 2017). Broadly, the Nigerian woman is continually at a lesser par and treated unequally when compared to her foreign counterparts in some other nations. The issue of gender equality and women's right in Nigeria is one that has been recurrently kicked back and disregarded by the government. More often than not culture is usually the justification wielded for the denial of women's right and the perpetuation of gender inequality in Nigeria. Some of these harmful cultural practices pervasively promotes the crimes against the Nigerian women and they include the female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic violence, child brides or forced marriages, rape denial of inheritance and many other cases of abuse against women (Mukumu, 2015).

In today's Nigeria, the power relations between men and women still undermines women's role in politics, their socioeconomic and diplomatic values due to the cultural consideration of women as only relevant to the social side of life, and the cultural composition of the society that perpetuates these gender roles. Notwithstanding, the role of women in governance in Nigeria has continued to attract the international feminist audience and has been at the centre of the discourse for decades, especially since the creation of the e-journal, *Feminist Africa,* in 2002 (News and Views, 2003).

The XXI century has been heralded by increased international awareness and legislation on women's right and working modules and resolutions in place issued by the UN and other international multi-lateral organisations, which Nigeria is a member of and has officially adopted. Notwithstanding, the modules and resolutions aimed at enforcing and implementing a practical manifestation within the Nigerian state have had little or no effect. While the estimated population of women to men is 1.04 males to every 1 female, that is male – 50.67 percent and female 49.33 percent in 2017 (World Population Review) – the Nigerian women have been significantly underrepresented. This thesis makes the claim that the exclusion and the lack of active participation of women in government in Nigeria have been detrimental to the economic and social development of Nigeria.

The aim of this research is not to undermine the significance of men within the society or their contribution, and the study is not a proposal for policy formulation. The primary objective of this paper is to add some academic value to the ongoing call for governments lacking in the area of gender equality to put in place social institutions that encourage (Nigerian) women to become more proactive and promote active participation to drive economic development. This paper is divided into four sections, with the first section examining the literature and theoretical framework of feminist ideology centred on gender exclusion and its effect on economic growth (see *Figure* 1). Then, this research paper analyses a set of factors, which cause the marginalisation and exclusion of Nigerian women. The third part of the paper, the discussion section, examines the disadvantages and benefits or empowering the Nigerian women, particularly how the female population if continually engaged will contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. Finally, the conclusion sums up the research arguments to reach the logical antithesis that an inclusive, genderless Nigerian political and socio-economic society will be beneficial to the general wellbeing of the global economy.

Research Objective

It is important to state explicitly that gender-based prejudices have been deeply rooted in all cultures, hence, analysing the gender-based prejudices in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, through the feminist lenses do not signify it only occurs in Nigeria. The objective of this thesis is to mount evidence to impact and motivate more women especially the Nigerian women to go into governance and promote active participation and in turn drive the economic growth. Also, by stressing the underrepresentation of the Nigerian women, the paper aims to spur the government to engage the 49.33 percent of Nigerian women (World Population Review) by promoting gender equality in private and public spaces by putting in place policies and social institutions that protect women's right and encourages proactive and active participation.

It is also worthy to state that the researcher still observes a pre-existing dogma among the freshmen male students who generally assume the Feminist inquiry is mostly reserved for women or only for those who identify themselves as feminists. Hence, it is partly the researcher's aims to explore the core conceptualizations of the feminist inquiry to provoke his

self-reflection and explore new questions, as well as provide critical insight into the pervasive culture of gender domination in Nigeria. Until recently, there have been significant clamouring for women representation within the Nigerian public space, both in the media and within the academic sphere. The researcher's motivation is not only to contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender-equality but also to present emphatically what most scholars often overlook, that is the socio-economic implication of excluding the women population on national and global development. However, even though many studies have reported investing in women education facilitates economic development, and helps society to deal slow growth and lower income, there has been little literature reported on its effectiveness. This thesis, therefore, takes part in the debate to determine the effectiveness of using gender inclusion to drive political participation and economic development.

Additionally, the findings in this thesis will contribute to the benefit of the society considering that gender inclusion, the main concept in this research, plays an important role in cultivating an environment that supports women's economic empowerment, drives economic growth and social development. The greater demand for improving the standard of living of citizens justifies the need for more efficient national and policy approach to gender inclusion (see *figure 1*). Hence, state authorities and private institutions that adopt the recommended gender inclusion approach derived from the result of this thesis will be able to identify how gender biases, discrimination and domination affect their economic development objectives and how to formulate policies or institutional goals to address them.

Research Question

The research is undertaken with an aim to presenting answers to the below questions which will guide the direction of the thesis:

1. To what extent does the gender marginalisation and exclusion of women play in increasing poverty in Nigeria?
2. Will eliminating gender-inequality and patriarchy within the Nigerian society help in alleviating poverty and improve the Nigerian economy?

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Feminist Theory

The two key terms that are central to the feminist discussion have been 'gender' and 'patriarchy'. In the feminist context, gender is not a replacement word for sex or the biological difference between a man and a woman. Instead, it refers merely to the power relations between men and women, how the relations have been socially and habitually implemented, and how the power is deployed (Ruiz, 2012). Patriarchy, on the other hand, refers to the system where the female is subordinate to the male (in power and status terms). The theory adopted for this research is the feminist theory, which is one of the major arm within sociology. The term feminism was coined by a French socialist named Charles Fourier in 1837, and was first used in 1872 in France and in the United States in 1910 (Offen, 1988, 126), and it includes a wide range of subjects from political, economic, social, cultural and social, but its central message remains the equality among the sexes, equal opportunities for women and the dissolution of the oppressive practices associated with patriarchy, while also seeking increased access to education, better health care and improved life choices for women.

Feminist theory can be understood in the context of being both a normative and intellectual discourse, shining its limelight on the social phenomenon, issues, and experiences as it concerns women that are swept under the carpet, following years of dominant male perception (Crossman, 2017). The feminist theory is aimed at understanding and explaining the intricacies that surround the subject of gender inequality and gender roles, while also trying to explain the blurred lines that exist between men and women within a social construct.

The feminist theory was originally designed to explain and address the growing rate of oppression faced by women globally, without recourse to tribe, nationality, status, and age. Feminism as a theory has evolved over the years and has developed into two major shift which includes the particularising and contextualising the different experiences as they affect women, rather than the previous approach which universalised the struggle, losing elements in the way. The second dimension involves the shift from seeing and women as categories to be focused on, to getting into such categorisation, while exploring what makes up oppressive gender practices. (Carlson & Ray, 2001).

The feminist theory although being an old theory began to gain momentum following the speech by Susan Anthony following her arrest after illegally voting in 1872 which challenged the but which gained more momentum in early 1900, and a period was characterised by the increased clamour for the protection of the women's suffrage and protection of women's right. Feminist campaigns have recorded remarkable success over the years, and has been identified as a major force in the process that has recorded historical changes in the establishment of women's rights especially in the west where issues that affect the wellbeing of women, for example, women's suffrage, freedom to make decisions as it affects her reproductive rights, education, equal employment and pay, and freedom to enter into contracts without the approval of the men in her lives. The next section moves on to discuss feminism in Africa.

1.2   Feminism in Africa

Since the end of the WWII, international relations (IR) field has taken new dimensions, departing from the singularity of analytical approach of realist ideologies in the field, and broadening the core theoretical structure to include new concepts emerging from the traditional liberal theories such as the institutionalism, world-system theories, global political economy. Globalisation caused by the increasing interdependence of nations was a major influencer of this shift, and today, the IR field no longer revolves mainly around the realist war and security dogma. In addition, the globally syndicated demand for inclusion by women's rights activists for women's employment gave birth to the new era of Feminism. This was a call often syndicated with larger movements such as the class struggle, the struggle for human rights, peace, or for democracy. Notwithstanding, the feminist ideas have not been spared from backlash, particularly attacks from most world religions and politically conservative groups.

Africa is a multicultural and diverse continent and framing feminism in Africa can be misrepresenting the African, irrespective of her nationality, as encountering or experiencing same realities or problems. Evidently, this is not the case as Africa is not a country. Africa has its specificities due to the sociocultural and religious formations of different African countries. The Arab woman from Morocco experiences life differently from a woman from a democratic nation like South Africa, with the predominantly Christian population. However, and quite arguably, the issues African women face when it comes to gender relations are also faced by women elsewhere

in the world. That is, the repression, discrimination and oppression the African women face is not isolated to the continent alone and adopting the term African feminism is not out of order.

Although most educated women whether African or not, feminist or otherwise are faced with the dilemma of challenging the conservative and patriarchal socio-cultural practices, however, the discourse of African feminism cannot exclude the specificities because some realities within the African context make its feminism comparatively distinct (Atanga, 2013). More so, the issues African women face is unarguably different from the experiences and realities of, for instance, the European woman. Nonetheless, most of these global and African feminist discourses are yet to translate into significant policy formulation or reformation that empowers the African woman, and especially the Nigerian woman. Perhaps, due to the complexities within the different societies. For instance, Nigeria is a very diverse country, with 36 multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious states, and these complexities may require different approach to addressing them.

1.3   Feminism in Nigeria

Feminism in Nigeria originated from an increasing demand to improve the quality of lives of the Nigerian women. Its origin can be traced to the pre-colonial era where vocal women like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Magareth Ekpo beat the odds that characterized acute patriarchy of the Nigerian society, emerged as politicians, and identified as pioneers to the feminist struggle in Nigeria (Faseke, 2001). These women and many others played a key role during the era of the 1960's Nationalist struggle campaigning for equal rights and opportunities for all in Nigeria (Strobel, 2001). There were series of protest in the pre-colonial era, however, one of which includes the prominent Aba (Southeast Nigerian state) women's riot, the Abeokuta (Southwest Nigerian state) market women's protest in 1948 against heavy taxes levied by the colonial masters. These protests were spear headed by Funmilayo, who had by then was recognised as a women's right activist (Faseke, 2001). These women led a protest which succeeded in abolishment of the excess tax system and the struggle against unjust treatment meted out against women despite the fact that they fulfilled their civil responsibility (Oduntan & Mcintosh, 2011).

These nationalist protests by women paved the way for the contemporary feminist movement in Nigeria through the formation of the National women's union in 1947 which later metamorphosed into the federation of Nigerian women's society in 1953 (Strobel, 2001). The

leadership of this union fought for the inclusion of women into the male dominated political space through playing an active role in political forums and their individual engagements (Okeke–Ihejirika & Franceschet, 2002). Despite the sacrifices made by these women to ensure the effective inclusion and active participation in the decision-making sphere, the goal is yet to be actualised as women still constitute the minority in power, as the goal for 30 percent representation in the legislative arm is not yet attainable (Oluyemi, 2016, The United Nations, 1995). A common view amongst observers was that this under-representation by women within the political space has compounded over time and contributed to the low quality of life of the vast majority of Nigerian women. And although, Nigeria is a signatory to the United Nations convention that protects the rights of women, yet, the gender domination has pervasively persisted unabated due to patriarchy within the society.

1.4   Gender Inequality Occasioned by Patriarchy

The patriarchal society sets restrictive parameters on the women's activities, creating a social structure that promotes and condones domestic and sexual violence on women, sexual objectification of women. Radical feminists support this argument and the abolishment of patriarchy (Firestone, 2003). In a 1970 publication, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution,* Firestone stated that the aim of the radical feminists is to overthrow the ancient and most rigid caste and class system. A system, she argued, is based on gender and has been sustained for thousands of years by relegating the female societal roles through an unwarranted legitimacy and superficial permanence (2003). Broadly, most feminists consider patriarchy as an oppressive social construct that has over the decades justified the marginalisation of women in the political, education, professional, inheritance and family spheres of life (Salaam, 2003).

According to Stacey (1993), Kramarae (1992), and Lerner (1986), patriarchy is defined as a socially accepted behaviour and traditional structure that provides material relations and which also encourages the domination of women by men, placing unfair structural constraints on the roles, activities and opportunities available to women. Miller (1970) identified the family as the primary supporting institution of patriarchy. According to her, patriarchy was instrumental in displacing and downgrading the roles of women during the ancient society and later was

consolidated by religion in the creation of the male God (1970, 28). The common theme identified in Miller's submission captures patriarchy as dominance which is determined by gender, rather than mental or physical ability, that benefits the men.

In addition, Adams (2005) contributed to the discussion, adding that the term patriarchy is synonymous to "the rule of the father". According to him, there is the societal correlation between patriarchy and domination, the term phrased as Patriarchal domination, and societies have naturalised this gender-based domination of women by men for centuries (Adams, 2005, 3). A large and growing body of literature has investigated how patriarchy impacts economic development (Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Knowles et al., 2002), by outlining the interrelation between gender exclusion and economic development. Today, there are different types of feminist groups and although they disagree on many societal issues, however, regardless of whether they are liberal, radical, Marxist or postmodern feminists, they mostly agree that gender inequality still pervasively persists in today's society and must be addressed. In the literature, patriarchy amongst other societal vices has been associated with gender discrimination.
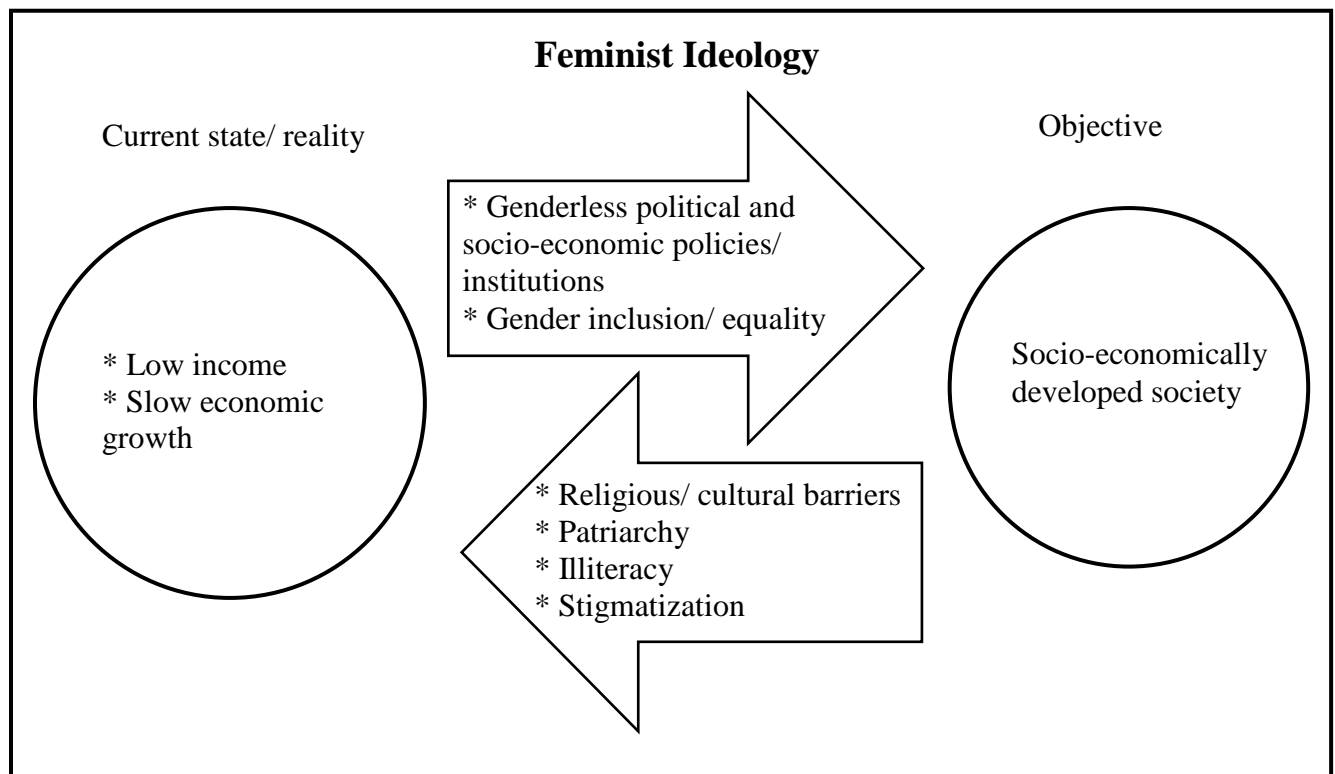

Figure 1: Thesis theoretical argument

1.5   Research Methodology

This research aims to examine the consequences of marginalising the 49.33 percent female population (World Population Review), its economic and social-political implication on sustainable governance. The research analyses the principal factors that contributed to the passive participation of the Nigerian women. This study is important not as a policy proposal document for policymakers but to promote and motivate active participation amongst women. The research methodology adopted for this research is the qualitative research method to analyse the information sourced from online portals. This information is then examined through the international relations theory of feminism to test the claim held in this research. The sourced data was representative with respect to gender-based discrimination and inequality as experienced within the Nigerian society. Also, the textual and observational qualitative method was used for identifying and characterising the core concepts of the paper, that is, the data collection was centred on the causes of gender-based exclusion and the advantages of inclusion on the overall economy.

2.   RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research paper aims to examine to what extent does the marginalisation of women play in increasing poverty in Nigeria and if the elimination of gender-inequality and patriarchy within the Nigerian society will help in alleviating poverty and growing the Nigerian economy. In this section, the causes of the drawbacks for women active participation will be examined. A considerable amount of literature has been published on the challenges that are affecting women participation in Nigerian politics. These studies six major factors list below and will be discussed in this chapter: Patriarchy, Religious and cultural barriers, Stigmatization, Low level education, Financing, and Political violence.

2.1   Patriarchy: Still a Major Drawback to women participation

In recent years, women's participation in politics and decision-making has received significant attention across the world. Hence, in 1995, a declaration was made for a 30 percent increased affirmative action of women representation globally at the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, China (The United Nations, 1995). This declaration is built on the argument that women's political participation, as recognised globally, is an essential determinant of the status of women in any particular country (The United Nations, 1995). However, women remain severely underrepresented in the decision-making process and positions in Nigeria (Ette, 2017). Despite women making up about 49 percent of the Nigerian population, Nigeria still records the lowest number of women in active politics with a measly 4 percent in politics and ranking 133rd in the world survey of female political representatives (LSE Review, 2016) (Also, see *Figure* 2 and *Figure* 3). One criticism of much prevalence of the passive participation of women in the Nigerian political sphere can be linked to patriarchy.
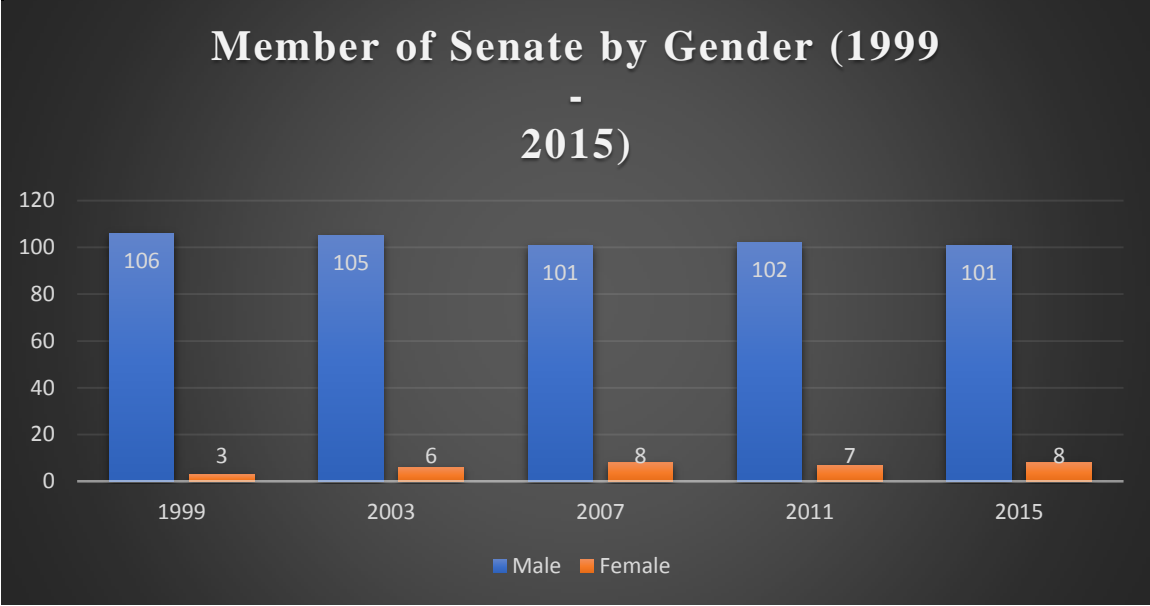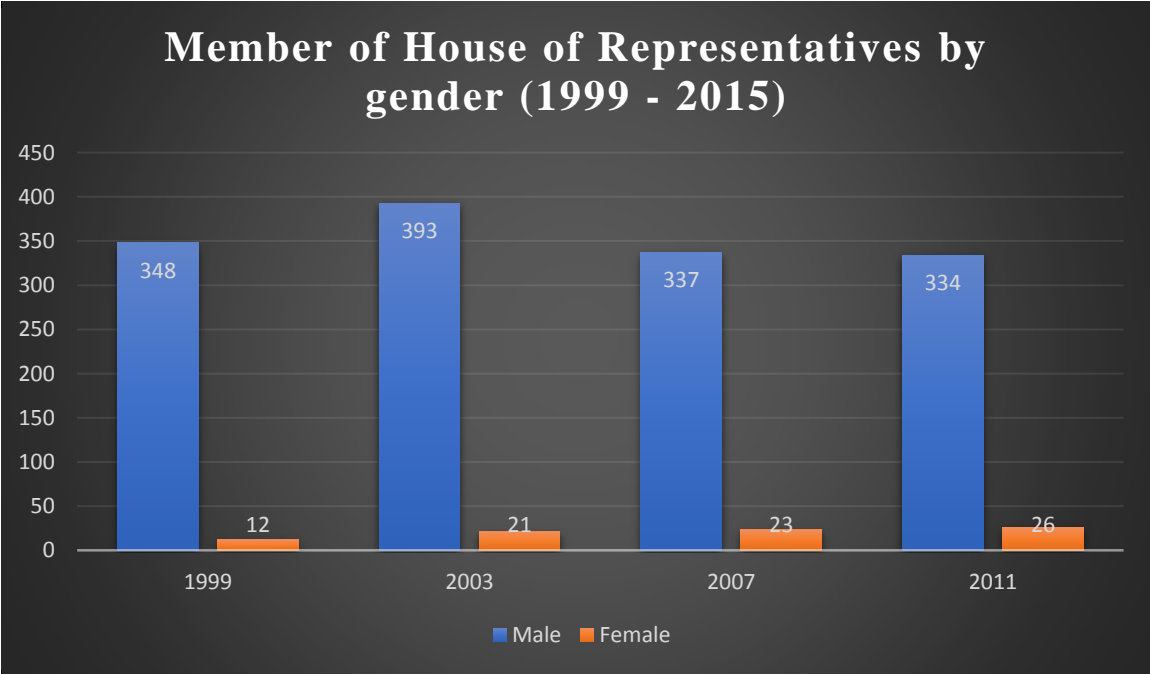
Figure 2: Member of Senate by Gender (1999 -2015)

Figure 3: Member of House of Representatives by gender (1999 - 2015)

According to Ette (2017, 1), the increasing interest of women in Nigerian politics has not improve their visibility and this is normatively problematic owing that it reinforces the

patriarchal formation within the Nigerian political space. As mentioned in the literature review, there are many societal obstacles that hinder the active participation of women in the political process, but gender roles significantly fuelled by patriarchy stands out. Patriarchy has been identified as a critical feature of the traditional Nigerian society (Aina, 1998) where emphasis is unduly placed on gender as a criterion for choosing both political and religious roles, automatically excluding women into the followership status. Albeit, patriarchy is prevalent in a vast number of African and third world countries, and continues to ascribe to men a higher social and authoritative status, this pervasive persistent of patriarchal domination is also replicated in the Nigerian political space (Bvukutwa, 2014).

On the contrary, a society where all the adult population, particularly those above the minimum age for employment are engaged irrespective of their gender is unarguably a productive society. In a research by Dollar and Gatti (1999), gender inequality in education and health in any society that underinvest in women is not an efficient economic decision, and the society will have to deal with the consequences of slower growth and lower income. According to Dollar and Gatti, social observers have for centuries proved the status of women and the overall socio-economic development are mutually inclusive (1999). It is therefore likely that such connections exist between gender inequality and economic growth and development of any nation.

2.2   Gender differential and Gender Gap in Media Coverage of Nigerian Women

This ancient way of thinking has significantly affected the participation of women in politics and her social visibility. Given the capacity of the media to offset societal norms and inspire salient conversation, however, the Nigerian news media has obliquely isolated the Nigerian women's. It is worthy of note that there has been a significant increase in the volume of women participation in politics in Nigeria since the country returned to democracy in 1999 (Ette, 2017), participation has broadened to constitutionally include women who decide to carry out their civic duty. The political positions occupied by women has increased, also, the number of policies which centres on women empowerment and their general well-being implemented by the government have significantly improved when compared to the conditions during the military regime. However, despite the significant level of increase in the political participation and awareness of the

Nigerian woman, there is a still much work to be done when the comparison is drawn between women participation in politics and the domination of the political field by the men as is still experienced today (Nkechi, 1996).

Although there exists no constitutional barrier to the increased participation of women in politics, in reality, there exists a clear societal barrier that hinders women participation. The increased clamour for better female representation at the decision-making arm of the government is hinged on the premise that since women constitute about half of the Nigerian populace, they should also constitute an equal representation in decision-making arm and governance of the country (Nwanebo & Odigbo, 2012). A normative argument that scholars like Dollar and Gatti (1999) had earlier substantiated by positing the interrelation between empowering women and economic development. According to Nwanebo & Odigbo, the inclusion of women in the decision-making process, they argue, remains the only way to ensure the rights of women are protected, also the exploitive and discriminatory laws, which was intended to subjugate and berate women based on gender must be overturn (2012). Secondly, there is also the growing realisation that everyone is has equal rights, with women having the same rights as men to contest and play a part in governance and in public life, a position that is backed by the Nigerian constitution in Section 40, 42 and 77 which states the following:

> […] Section 40. Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests., (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

The section 40 above Right to peaceful assembly and association. While section 42(1) deals with Right to freedom from discrimination and states further that:

> […] Section 42(1) A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not, by reason only that he is such a person be subjected to any form of discrimination. (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

Section 77 of the Constitution refers to who can participate in the elections and also states:

> […] (2) Every citizen of Nigeria, who has attained the age of eighteen years residing in Nigeria at the time of the registration of voters for purposes of election to a legislative house, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter for that election (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

Although there has been a significant increase in the number of women vying for elective positions, this has not necessarily culminated to increased number of women in the decision-making arm of government, as the business of government is still dominated by men. The Nigerian society, women in particular, despite making up almost 50 percent of the population cannot boast of an elected female governor, vice president or president despite the increasing clamour for increased women participation in active politics. This exclusion is traceable to specific factors which include media visibility, lack of financial incentives and almost non-existent political sponsors. What is obtainable within the Nigerian political space is that the financial weights are thrown behind men than they would to women. Nkoyo (2002) outlined the causalities of this exclusion as gender roles, patriarchy, women's conception of politics, and harsh cultural and societal laws that discriminate women.

This gender differential is also visible in inheritances as women are typically excluded primarily because they are women not because they are not part of the family. The Patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society is highly replicated in the Nigerian political scene, where the opportunities available to women are often defined by the men, limiting women to merely figure positions of "vice" or secretaries, not because they lack the prerequisite qualification needed, to be appointed into the decision-making helm, but because they are women, and the society has dictated that a woman must be under a man. Another Nigerian scholar, Ette (2017), maintained that the Nigerian media has undoubtedly played key roles in marginalising female politicians by limiting their visibility and treating them as unserious contenders. According to her, the media's isolation of female politicians is carried out using 'relative absence' to reduce the chances of becoming recognisable. This Nigerian political exclusivity is detrimental to national cohesion, progress and development of the country (Ette, 2017).

2.3 Cultural disposition of the Nigerian woman

Another possible explanation for this gender-based exclusion can be traced to the Nigerian cultural norms that women are incapable of ruling, a sexual objectification of women, and this has had an adverse consequence on the economic productivity of the nation. Also, gender biases occasioned by the cultural norms are responsible for the meagre number of women's active participation in politics in Nigeria. The gender roles are taught to children at their tender age and it encourage these gender biases which in turn has become the societal norm. The United Nations convention to eliminate discrimination against women has been vocal against the discrimination of women globally. Nigeria is a signatory to this United Nations convention, yet, the continued domination by men in the political space and in other spheres has pervasively persisted unabated. This cultural gender biases still dominates and dictates social patterns of behaviour, limiting the active participation of women in governance and has adversely animated the poor economic growth.

The meaning of culture and its definition remains ambiguous and vague. One notable definition of culture, describes it as the fundamental fabric that determines the behavioural pattern of people within a geographical location, culture is the determining factor that explains why things should be done the way they are, and the rationalisation behind such acts. The definition adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico (UNESCO, 1982) is all-encompassing, and it defines culture as

> […] the sum total of complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not only arts and letters but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 1982).

In his turn, Geertz (1973) defined culture as a 'historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms using which men (and women) communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life". The concept of culture is differentiated from customary laws, but these laws are what gives legal backing to cultural laws expressed through values systems and norms (Bond, 2010).

The Cultural and Religious disposition towards the Nigerian woman has been one based on oppressive gender roles fuelled by patriarchy designed to keep women subjugated by the male counterparts who attempt to relegate women to the background, creating a societal accepted norm that places women at the bottom echelon of the social ladder. Many Nigerians have been taught the gender roles from childhood and it has promoted these gender biases which in turn has become the societal norm. Oftentimes, the gender bias permeates the society as an emphatic importance placed on the male child and the hurdles a woman is made to endure through in the absence of a male child. This gender bias only proves that although in theory both sexes are equal, there is far greater importance on the boy child as against the girl child.

These harmful cultural practices as seen in most African and Arab societies often portrays the woman as an object that is to be acquired by a man at marriage, thereby stripping her of the right to choose and make decisions and opening her to domestic violence and psychological abuse which makes the women in this cultural set up appear invisible and subservient to their male counterparts. Despite the growing global clamour for increased women empowerment ventures especially in patriarchal societies like Nigeria, there still exist a vacuum created by culture and Religion which has also been identified as one of the reasons responsible for low participation of women in both political and economic activities which in turn perpetuates a vicious cycle of poverty and a clog on the wheel in the quest for a woman's desire to live a productive life (Metcalfe, 2011).

2.3.1   Culture of Violence against Women

Domestic violence in Nigeria has been identified as one of the biggest barriers plaguing the campaign for women empowerment and active political participation of women, and the greatest tool for the subordination of Women in Nigeria. This domestic violence against women manifests in varying forms, which includes domestic violence, verbal abuse, rape and sexual assaults, or forced marriages. The cultural makeup of the traditions is Nigerian setting is one that subtly encourages physical abuse of women (Arisi & Oromareghake, 2011). Idimegwu argued that although violence against women is mostly under-reported, its occurrence is high in many culture norms both in the developed and developing countries (Odimegwu, 2001, 16-21). In

certain parts of Nigeria, the Tiv ethnic group for instance, elevates and portrays men who are able beat their wives as a proof of love. This culture of abuse has been imbibed in the women that they regard a lack of violence in their homes as proof that they are unloved and unwanted by the men in their lives (Idimegwu, 2001).

Most women with differing political opinion from their spouse are forced to silence by their partners and by the society, due to the elevated cultural and religious status of men over his household. Hence, what the family man says and beliefs is undebatable and must be strictly adhered to by his wife. This cultural norm stifles the woman's socio-political disposition and oftentimes forces her to silence, thus depriving her of the ability to independently make social and political decisions as it affects her, her family and the society at large. More so, since polygamy is culturally permissible in Nigeria, the fear of been replaced by another woman without any form of legal guarantees for her financial protection in the eventuality of a divorce has forced many women to silence. This fear has kept a lot of women in marriages where they are often treated with disdain by their male partners.

Arisi and Oromareghake reported that the societal pressure on women to keep her home even in the midst of a storm has resulted a sizeable number of women untimely avoidable deaths due to the under-reported forms of harassment, intimidation, rape and forced pregnancies. The societal and religious pressure placed on women to tolerate whatever treatment is meted out to her is appalling. Women are treated like commodities that have been acquired by marriage, and therefore her unreserved sexual obedience is required, and this cultural perception robs a woman of the right to sexual consent and is responsible for the increasing amount spousal rape that goes unreported in Nigeria women (2011).

2.4   Religion, Illiteracy and the Nigerian woman

The Nigerian societal set up is multi-religious in nature and is made up of Christianity, Islam and the traditional religious practices. Although all three religions have contributed to the demeaning of Nigerian women through their dogmas and axioms, it is essential to note that the Islamic religion have done the more damage in the highly patriarchal north-Eastern Nigeria where there

still exists the highest number of child brides, forced marriages, poverty, and the low education of the children (and more specifically the girl child). Nasir (2009) remarked that women are often the targets of oppressive religious laws like Sharia and Purdah, a law that secludes women from actively participating in the society and restricts the rights of women to the barest minimum, thus causing her to live in isolation, in the shadows of their partners. According to him, a plain example of the ills of religion towards women is the 1960 northern penal code, which was an inspiration of the Sudanese penal model that approves violence against a woman "for the purpose of correcting (the) wife" (Nasir, 2009).

In the typical traditional religious settings, women are not allowed to inherit houses and lands, as it is seen as the exclusive right of the men to own land properties and houses in the North. Although, largely a pastoral society, women are allowed to communal farm lands to plant, but ownership of properties remains the exclusive right of men. Some states in the north-eastern Nigeria are kicking back against this cultural norm, however, only a scarce 4 percent of women own lands or homes. Thus, making it the lowest number in the country ('Gender in Nigeria Report', Nigeria, B. C, 2012).

This gender imbalance between men and women, the child-bride marriages, and the religious dogmas, has created a seemingly lower socio-economic status for women and girls, stigma that has been domesticated. More so, some researchers have outlined the child marriage as the stimulant for the lowest education level in the northern Nigeria (see *Appendix 4)*, adversely impacting on the literacy level of the girl child in Nigeria. Although the Nigerian constitution clearly states the legal age of marriage at 18 years, most of the northern Nigerian states have refused to sign into law the Child Right that sets the 18 years as the legal age for marriage, thereby frustrating the implementation in the region. Rather, the region has adopted the Islamic sharia law that allows the marriage of young adolescent with the consent of her parents (ICG, 2016).

The social ills created by religion towards Nigerian women are not restricted to the Islamic groups as the Christian biblical principles that promote patriarchy have also instilled gender dominance of men over the women. The biblical doctrines elevate the male status as the head of the household and have been literally interpreted to subordinating the women to the receiving end of abuse, mediocrity and disrespect because it is assumed that a woman should follow the

leads without questions asked, stifling her voice and stripping of her personality. Although the religious abuse of Christianity is not as severe as the Islamic salient child marriages, both religions seeks to annihilate the rights of the women, stigmatising her to a state of perpetual vulnerability. This stigmatisation in turn sustains the reoccurring cycle of poverty and isolation and ultimately stalling the economic growth and the national developmental of the country.

2.5   The Nigerian woman: the biggest victims of conflicts in Nigeria

The Nigerian woman has been identified as the major victim of conflicts as she is continually plagued. Boko Haram, Nigeria's indigenous Islamic extremist insurgency group, whose name in Hausa roughly translates as "Western education is forbidden," has since 2009 abducted about 500 women and girls from the northern part of the country (Sieff, 2017). The Gender Based Violence (GBV) has been growing at an astronomical rate with the activities of the extremist insurgency group in the North-eastern Nigeria. From forced and early marriages, gender discrimination, and stigmatisation, to the physical, mental or sexual assault women. According to the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) in 2013, 3 out of 10 Nigerian women have experienced physical violence by age 15 (Demographic, 2013).

Also, between the period of June to August 2014, the Human Rights Watch (Werft, 2016) conducted series of interviews with over 30 women who were victims of kidnap by dreaded Boko Haram sects. The young women interviewed included 12 students of the infamous Chibok School tragedy that received international attention and clamour for their release. The women provided horrific details and clear insight on the level of the abuse endured by women captured by Boko Haram and their experience in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps (Werft, 2016). A significant number of these women were kidnapped from their homes, farms, schools, while performing different chores and turned into sex slaves, raped, or to be married off to Jihadi fighters as a motivation to recruit younger men. They were forced to endure both physical, mental and emotional abuse, while forcing them to act as spies, informants and suicide bombers due to the unsuspecting nature of women by the community.

The oppressive culture of silence, stigmatisation, and the shame that accompanies the topic of sexual abuse in the largely conservative northern Nigeria, has caused the under-reporting of rape and abduction of underage girls in the north by the Boko Haram Sect. This has also caused a lack

of awareness of the increasing traumas endured by girls and women in the region (Arisi & Oromareghake, 2011). The Boko Haram conflict in the North East has let off a chain reaction which places women as the worst hit, and robbing them of their fundamental human rights. According to the international Crisis Group (ICG) (2016), women are largely majority of the 1.8 million estimated internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the north-eastern Nigeria, bearing stigma of association with the terrorist group and are often prevented from being reintroduced into their communities.

2.6   The inactive participation of the Nigerian woman in the Nigerian political sphere

The Nigerian woman despite making up more than 50 percent of the general population (national population census, 2006) has continually been relegated to the back burner in the Nigerian political sphere, despite increasing academic strides and career advancement which cuts across various fields of human endeavours. This exclusion is no thanks to the prevalent patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society, which is re-enforced by strong social, religious and traditional beliefs, which treats women mainly as inferior to the men, and are thus expected to walk in the shadow of the men, who are regarded as leaders despite having the same career, work experience and academic qualifications as her male counterparts.

The marginalisation faced by women in the Nigerian political sphere can be largely tied to a dire lack of representation and active involvement in the decision-making process as regards their economic development and the advancement of social justice as concerning the issues of oppressive practices against women through decentralised institutions.   The lack of representation on the major issues that make up the crux of the matter as regards women empowerment and financial limitations placed on the struggle for women empowerment has also become an obstacle to the active participation of women in the Nigerian political sphere.

A large number of political parties in Nigeria have very little or no available data that shows the accurate number of women who are actively involved, and this hampers the chances for women being granted tickets to emerge as the front-runner in the general elections. (Shamim and

Kumari, 2002). This greatly affects any chances harboured the woman in the race for political power as the woman is caught in the storm of male egos who are greatly inclined towards a male counterparts, as it believed that a woman being the major nurturer in most Nigerian homes would be greatly time constrained to juggle motherhood and a political career as it requires lots of time outside the home, and she also would not to shoulder the enormous financial burden that characterizes the Nigerian political scene (Shayo, 2005).

This viewpoint is also supported by (Tripp, 2001) who posited that despite the progress made by women in the early 1990s on the issue of increased political representation of women, it has since not culminated in increased women appointment of women into politics. The huge financial burden associated with running for public office has become a tool used to discourage women from active competition for public seats against the male counterpart.

2.7   Factors hindering active participation of women in Nigerian political scene

According to Okafor, Fagbemi and Hassan (2011), one of the factors militating against the active participation of women in politics is the Stereotypical constraints against women who strive to attain political and organisational leadership roles. These stereotypes range from the traditional gender roles that relegates the woman and the girl-child domestic and household duties and chores, often leaving these women mentally isolated to the point where their sense of career ambitions is replaced with societies expectations of them, which is often limited to household chores and reproduction, while the critical issues like governance and protecting of their rights should be left to the men.

Other factors that hinder the active participation of Nigerian women includes the abhorrent and oppressive socio-cultural practices, harmful widowhood practices, female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriages, and the purdah system. The Purdah system is practiced predominantly in the Muslim dominated Northern Nigeria, requiring that women are physical segregated and cover their bodies to conceal their skin and form (see *Appendix 2*). It is a religious and social practice of female seclusion. Many of these practices create socio-cultural barriers to the

campaigns for women empowerment and stigmatisation. Thus, the socio-cultural realities place a burden on women, which distracts her from the getting basic education or acquiring a professional career.

According to Aina, all these socio-cultural oppressions plaguing the woman creates the barrier that denies her access to information, formal education, which limits the probability of accessing wealth-creating assets, which includes land, capital (which includes loan facilities) labour, and ground-breaking skills needed in the pursuit of economic empowerment (2012). These constraints created by are also largely to be blamed for the poor participation of women in politics and governance.

Unarguably, the stigmatisation of women as being lower in status when compared to her male counterpart is nationwide. The culture of male supremacy which has roots in local traditions and folklore and has taken form and characterised by cultural and religious beliefs (Aina, 2012). A clear example of this is the belief in the Northern part of Nigeria that the girl child has no right to inherit properties or acquire one even if she had the means to and also has no business being is school and should be married off at puberty, while the male child is adequately educated and groomed for leadership position, the effect of this is that the playing field automatically becomes unfavourable for the woman, as she spends the rest of her life living under the dictates made by men who do not have her best interest at heart.

In the political setting, with women who has worked all their lives to carve a niche for themselves are often judged on the basis of their gender not on their ability as it is in other developed democracies. Whereas, in the Nigerian political clime, ambitious women who are often qualified for the job are more often than not relegated to the office of a secretary or a second in command, even in cases where they are better qualified and experienced than the chosen or appointed candidate, but are denied position just for the sole reason of being women. These pervasive gender biases have been engraved into the minds of generations of Nigerians through the socio-cultural vices. Much of the instability and slow economic growth in society stems from these biases have also facilitated the gender discrimination.

Crime and corruption have also been identified as a limiting factor to the effective participation of women in politics, the superiority mentality exhibited by men in the elite class has exposed

women to many injustices perpetrated on them just for the singular reason of being women. Gender-based corruption is also a limiting factor as women are forced to sleep with men as a form of payment or appreciation for things that a man would be handed to a man. This alters the balance of the political playing field, which eliminates all traces of neutrality and places the woman in a disadvantaged position.

2.8   Effect of Inactive Political Participation

Illiteracy

Women are highly disadvantaged on issues that border on electoral, and decision-making issues and the issue of illiteracy has been identified as the primary culprit even though they are other factors exist. Women have taken a spectator role rather than an active role on issues that border on politics and decision making. In Africa and Asia, the high level of illiteracy has become a catalyst for plummeting levels in the political participation among girls and women leaving them at the mercy of harmful patriarchy laws made by the men who dominate the policy-making arm of the government.

Illiteracy according to Ralinema (1995) is described as existing in a state of the primary or remote unconscious of his roles in the society. Although there is no definite indication that a formal education is a pre-requisite for an increased political consciousness, it is also a known fact that increased level of formal education, especially among women, creates a healthy background for the development of democracy as seen in the developed democracies, which is visible in increased political participation among women.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistic, Africa and Asia had the highest illiteracy rates especially among young girls within the ages of 15-24 which stood at 30.4 and 13.1 respectively between 2005 and 2008, which also represented an improvement from was obtainable in the 1970s where illiteracy rates stood at 71.7 percent in Africa. Although there has been significant improvement in illiteracy rates in Africa, there is still a visible gap between developing countries and developed countries, which is responsible for the low level of political participation both as voters and contestants.

Formal education gives the voters in enhanced where there has also been identified as one of the core effects affecting the political participation of women in Nigeria. The importance of formal education in the heightening and formation of one's political interest and alignment cannot be overemphasised. According to Burns (2001, 281), after decades of research into factors that influence people's engagement in politics, Education has been highlighted as one of the critical influences that shape the political awareness and involvement. The level of political participation for any social environment is a strong determinant of the long-term sustainability of its democracy. The gap in literacy levels between both gender within the Nigerian social construct has created a pseudo-political enclave that favours the men over the women.

The influences of education in the process of political activism takes both a direct and indirect approach. The immediate effect that education has over political participation includes the direct acquisition of knowledge which culminates in the increased information which also broadens the horizons of information and subsequently guides the choices made by these women. Also, formal education through training, symposiums and professional courses equips women with heightened communicative and analytical skills which boost confidence levels and help prepare them for the rigorous political tasks of political growth.

The indirect effects of accrued to formal education for women are numerous and include vying for elective positions in school government unions, editors for student magazines etc. These avenues provide a learning ground for the woman which aids in the development of leadership, negotiation bureaucratic and organisational skills which also give women an insight and a competitive edge into the world of competitive politics which prepares her for future political endeavours.

The relationship between education and political participation can also be viewed in the light that accesses to formal education gives women chances at earning higher income, which also increases the propensity for increased political connections, engagements with potential sponsors and also the platform to liaise with non-political charitable and religious organizations that also serve as a veritable platform for political recruitment (Ibid, 141-2). The high rate of illiteracy among women within the Nigerian social construct deprives them of such opportunity that places her at the centre stage politically and gives her ample opportunity to make decisions that affect

the general well-being women instead of leaving such sensitive decisions in the hand of the men. It is also important to note that although formal education plays a vital role in the formation of political choices and increases civic participation, there exist other socio-cultural factors that determine and influence the level of political participation among women.

3   DISCUSSION

The first set of analyses examined the impact of gender exclusion perpetuated by the Nigerian society through the socio-cultural vices, and then the correlation between the gender exclusion and slow economic growth was tested using the qualitative research method by analysing resource data available online.

3.1   Inclusion to Drive Economic Growth

According to the President and Chief Executive Officer of Youth for Technology Foundation, Njideka Harry, the Nigerian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) would increase by up to 13.9 billion USD, if the Nigerian women had the same opportunities as Nigerian men. Much of the economic instability in Nigeria stems from the economic exclusion of the 49 percent women population (See *Appendix* 4). When the Nigerian economy reached an annual negative GDP growth rate in 2016 since 2019 (Nairametrics, 2017), the women were the most hit, this is because majority of women were excluded from the workforce and relied on the male partner. Yet the women continue to remain the most marginalised (Ademuson, 2016). Yet, the strength, size and resilience of the Nigerian woman, constituting almost half of the entire population and this reality makes her an economic and social force to be reckoned with, and a comprehensive resolve aimed at empowering her to be an active part of all development initiatives aimed at driving economic growth and socio-cultural advancements. Until the issue of women empowerment and gender equality is addressed to the point where it begins to yield positive economic results and women empowered to the point that they can play their social, economic and political roles without gender standing as a limiting force, Nigeria undeniably will not achieve any form of meaningful, sustainable development.

Although there has been lots of publicity on the subject of women empowerment, the inclusion of the about 50 percent women labour force in the economic development of the country is still very low, and largely left untapped. This is evident in the domination of the political and economic spheres by the men, as there is still the archaic belief that the decision making should be left to the men, while the seemingly mundane things be left for the women, resulting in women playing an insignificant role in the economic and social development of the country.

In a country where women make up more than half of the working population are women the link between increased political participation and improved socio-cultural conditions and economic standards cannot be overemphasized. The subject of women empowerment has in recent times been identified as a key indices in the attainment of economic development a view that was further buttressed by Acha (2009), the subject of women empowerment has become a veritable tool in the measurement of maintainable good governance, as he also posits that due to the size and tenacity of the women populace in Nigeria, No sustainable development initiative can be successfully achieved with the exclusion of women from the political and economic hem of affairs. This is a viewpoint also shared by Aderant (2002), Annekova (2001), Iheduru (2002), Lewis (2006), Mansor (2005), and Peters (2010, 2011) who all share the belief that the issue of women development is very key and can yield positive results in the areas of revenue allocation, determination of per capital income, the labour force, increased GDP.

Some of the key propositions to improve the current conditions; when the government is enforcing legislations then more focus can be targeted at addressing the issues that border on ensuring constant and unhindered access to basic economic resources for all genders. This improve her productivity levels such as equal employment opportunities with equal pay, land, machineries that are labour saving in nature, for example, tractors and caterpillars, processing machines, access to capital and loan facilities without the supervision of the male dominant figures in her life (Arene, 1993).

3.2   Women Marginalisation leads to Conflict

Conflict is ubiquitous when marginalisation becomes perpetual. When the issues surrounding marginalisation are allowed to fester, the resultant effect is always tension and conflict, as the aggrieved parties will find ways to ensure that their issues are given adequate attention or resolved. The marginalisation of women has over the years gained attention in international discourse, as it has been established that the fastest way to ensure development is to empower the woman. Despite the growing level of acceptance and appreciation of the significant role played by women in the global development process, there still exists a barrage of salient barriers which takes both social, economic and political forms.

For instance, the Nigerian woman makes up more than half of the agricultural work force, shouldering the responsibility for national food production and mostly on a subsistence basis. However, very little has been done by the government to alleviate the sufferings faced by these women. Particularly, ensuring increased productivity which can be achieved by allowing access to loans without requiring a male figure before the woman is granted loans that will better her life and improve the overall developmental objective of the country.

Although the Boko Haram insurgents get their women mainly through forceful means which includes kidnapping and raids, there has been recorded cases of women who voluntarily seek to join the group out of prejudice and poverty (Guilbert, 2016). Using this women as bait for the recruitment of young men into the sect. Rinaldo Depagne, the West Africa project director for the ICG, affirmed this is largely the resultant effect of the generational cycle of patriarchy that has hitherto robbed women of the luxury of choice, education, and marginalised the them of their dignity. According to Depagne, the social environment has helped to create a fertile ground for radicalisation by the Boko Haram insurgents who promise these women some form of protection and hope and a means of escape from the insensitive and impassive Nigerian government (Guilbert, 2016).

These women often serve as informants, and suicide bombers who do the dirty work of the insurgent who find it difficult to operate in the face of ubiquitous military presence in the region. According to research by Africa Check posited an estimated 17,500 people were casualty of suicide bombers during the Boko Haram reign of terror (Ogunlesi, 2014) and many of these bombers were women and are often used to navigate the terrain that are impossible for the male terrorists to walk just because less suspicions are placed on women and they are grossly underestimated due to the extreme patriarchal setting of the north. These women were often exposed to extreme form of violence that made it easy for Boko Haram to keep them in check while also stripping them of all form of humanity.

The continued marginalisation of women is Nigeria has a far-reaching effect that has the propensity to frustrate both the development plans of the nation and undermine military intervention in the troubled northern Nigeria. The magnitude of the continuous marginalisation faced by women in the North is also replicated in the continuous mistreatment of women even in the IDP (Internally Displaced Person) camps where women are reportedly being raped,

mistreated and sometimes forced to offer sex for food and those who were previously married to insurgents treated like outcast, the effects of these remains that the door to continuous radicalisation by extremist groups still remains open (Bloom & Matfess, 2016).

The results in this chapter indicate that 1) it is a fair generalisation to postulate that the exclusion of the 49 percent of women population from the labour force is detrimental to the national development and 2) the perpetual marginalization is a major influencer of tension and conflict within the society. The next chapter, therefore, proceeds to sum up the research arguments to reach the logical antithesis that an inclusive, genderless Nigerian political and socio-economic society will be beneficial to the general wellbeing of the global economy.

CONCLUSION

This academic enquiry aimed at answering the questions on what extent does the marginalisation of women play in increasing poverty in Nigeria, whether or not the elimination of gender-inequality and patriarchy within the Nigerian society can help in alleviating poverty and improving the Nigerian economy. To achieve the aim, the thesis adopted feminist theory, and qualitative research method, examined how the lack of active participation of women in government in Nigeria have been detrimental to the economic and social development of Nigeria. The outcome of the study revealed that the place of the Nigerian woman in the developmental process of Nigeria cannot be over emphasized, as population-wise she equally constitutes the labour force that can drive the eradication of poverty within any society. The Nigerian woman makes up for more than 48 percent of the general population and the constant marginalisation of the Nigerian woman through the deep-rooted patriarchy in-depth in the Nigerian social system, lack of education and early marriages have continuously dealt a grave blow to the government's development initiatives.

Although feminism in Nigeria, despite being traced to the pre-colonial days, has not yielded the desired result of empowering women, as the level of female education and child marriages has continued to soar. The notion that a woman's primary aim is to strive to become a good housewife with the sole purpose relegated to the kitchen and a good wife to her husband has continued unabated. The stigmatisation has been pervasively domesticated, replaced by the norm that the important things like decision making and other civic duties should be left to the men. In the Nigerian political clime, women have remained largely disempowered, with less than 30 percent political representation and 22 percent unemployed rate.

The most populous country in Africa, a democratic nation like Nigeria which claim to represent justice and equity cannot to continue to remain impassive because the exclusive politics and policies are detrimental to its national cohesion, progress and the development of the nation. In this vein, there is dire need for an increased level of education and political participation of women because government's continued negligence to invest in female education plainly is an inefficient economic decision. Overall, the research observed that gender inequality and exclusion in education is bad for national economic growth. A number of socio-cultural vices were identified; patriarchy, religious and cultural barriers, stigmatization, low level education,

financing, and political violence, as issues that can be addressed with government's positive affirmative actioned policies.

Although there exists no constitutional barrier to the increased participation of women in the Nigerian politics there exist societal and cultural barriers that frustrates participation of women. The correlation between gender exclusion and sluggish economic growth is particularly interesting because already the Nigerian reality excludes about 49 percent of its female population through the socio-cultural vices, a situation that is now made worse with the increasing 22 percent of female unemployment rate. Hence, the economic reality of the nation for excluding and marginalising the female population means the overall national citizenry have to pay the price in terms of sluggish growth and decreased income. This is rather a disappointing outcome for the country, with a negative effect on the overall developmental objectives of the nation, in terms of slower growth. Taken together, these research results conclude that women socio-economic development is an essential vehicle for the overall increase of income, productivity and increased GDP of the Nigerian state.

In addition, this thesis has identified that gender inclusion, the main concept in this research, plays a crucial role in fostering an environment that supports women's economic empowerment, drives economic growth and social development. The findings of this research provide insights on how gender biases, gender discrimination and gender domination can adversely affect both private and public economic development objectives. Also, the findings of this thesis could be useful in helping governments of developing countries to combat issues of gender inequalities that affect the women population. This study was limited by the absence of analysis of women from other developing countries, particularly women from other African countries. By focusing on Nigerian women, the study neglects the insights that the international or regional comparison of the socio-economic realities of women from other nationalities or regions would have provided to the research.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the thesis contributes to the ongoing study on gender and the interrelation with the socio-economic development of the society. What is now needed is a cross-national or regional study involving women from different nationalities or regions. It would be interesting to compare the experiences of women within the regional settings and testing these experiences with the findings recommended in this research and contribute to the ongoing

discourse on gender inclusion. There is, therefore, a definite need for further research into the subject of gender inclusivity and broadly, research focused on examining the benefits of genderless society. As this thesis has shown, unless governments of the developing countries adopt gender inclusive policy approaches, socio-economic development may not be attained.

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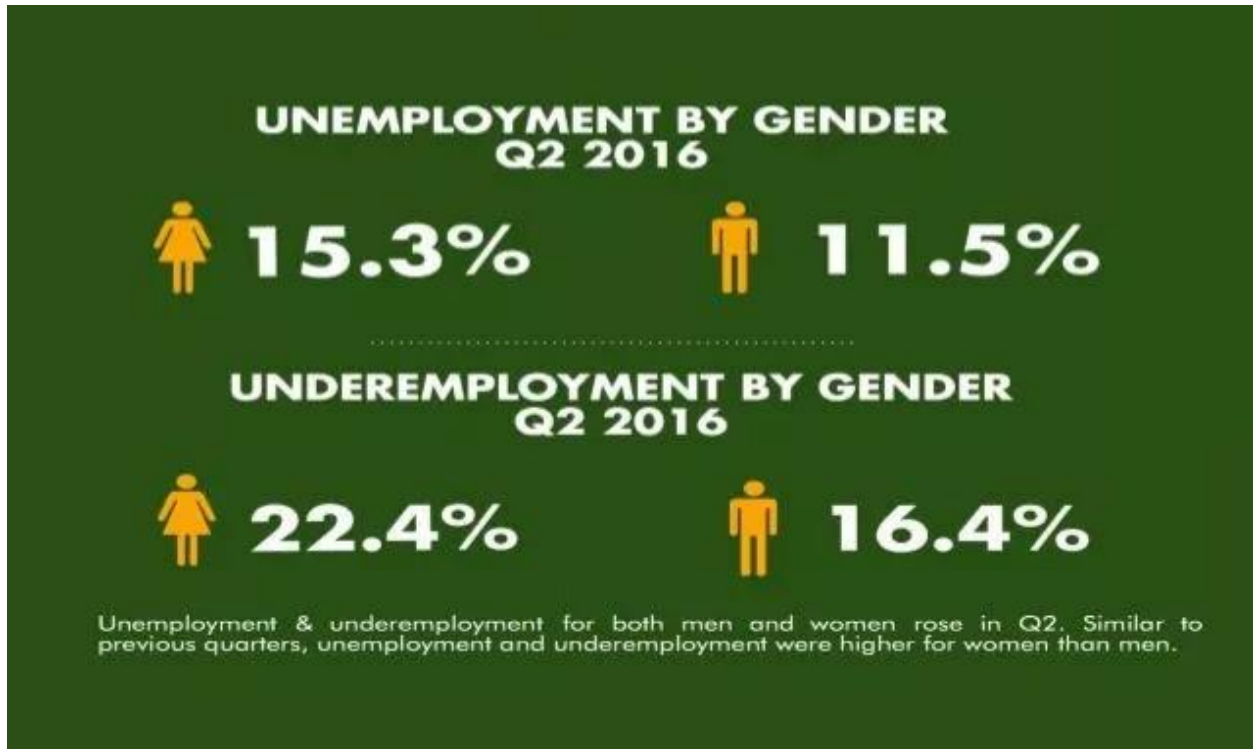National Bureau of Statistics. (2017, June). Unemployment/ Under-Employment. (Q4 2016)

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APPENDICES

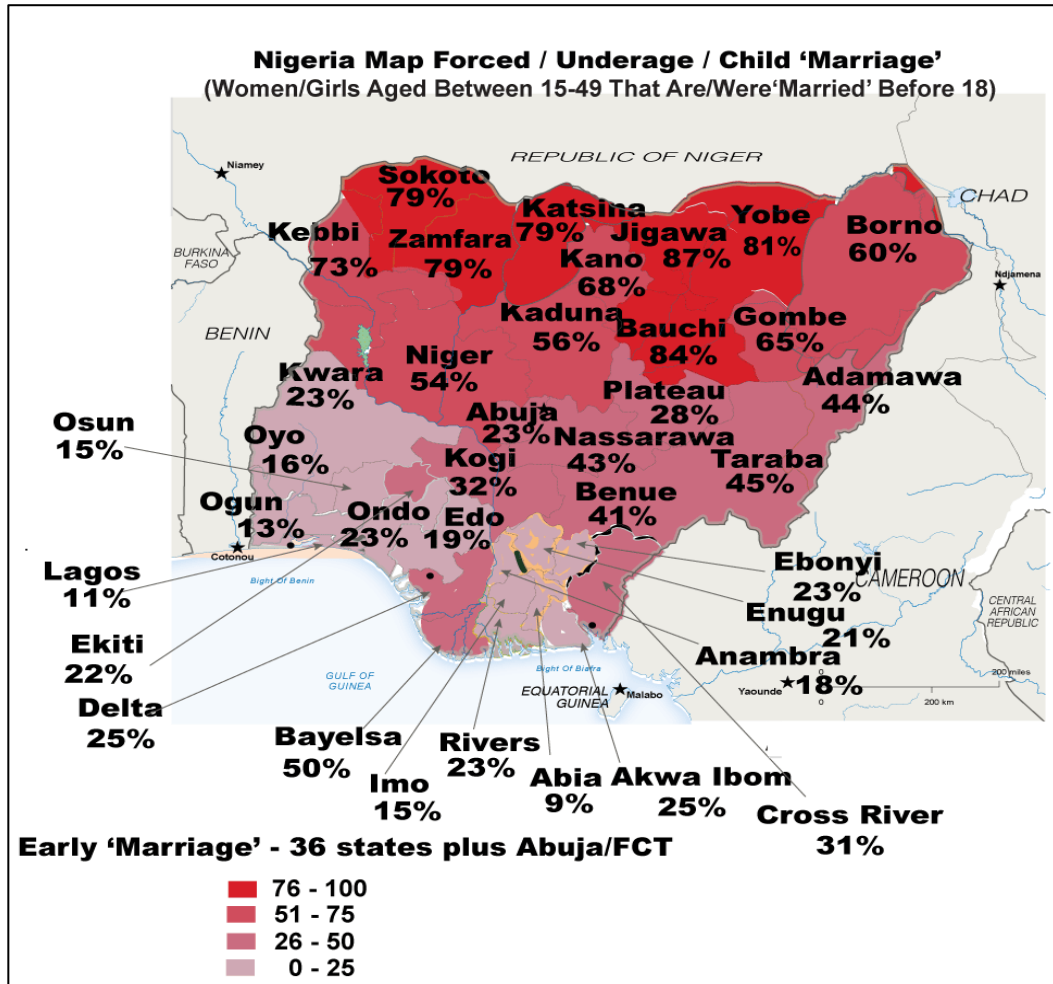**Appendix 1. Unemployment by Gender Q2 2016**

Source 1: National Bureau of Statistics (2017)

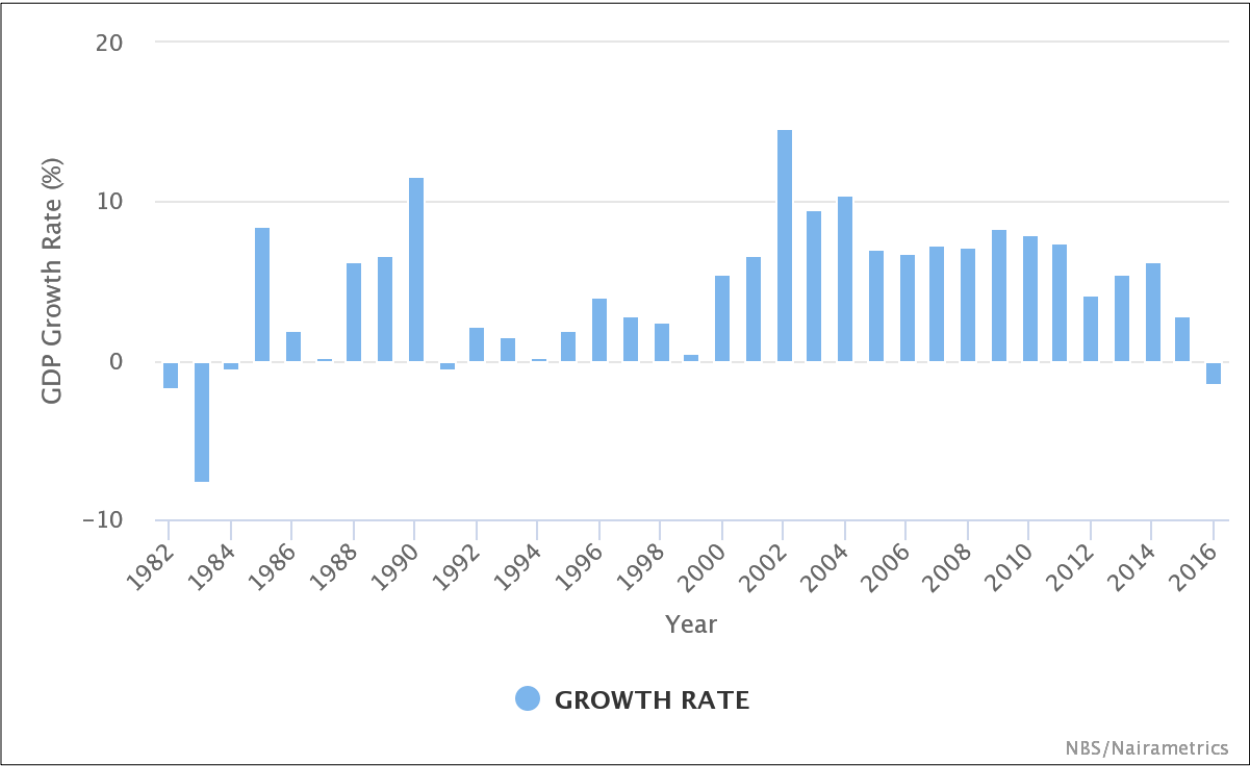**Appendix 2. Nigerian woman from Kwara State, north-central Nigeria**

Source 2: Amala Gist. (2016)

Appendix 3. Nigerian Map showing Child/ Underage Marriage in 2016

Source 3: Afri-Dev (2016)

Appendix 4. Nigeria Historical Real GDP Real Growth Rate

Source 2: Nairametrics (2017)

Appendix 5. Table 1. Member of Senate by Gender (1999 - 2015)

	Male	Female
1999	106	3
2003	105	6
2007	101	8
2011	102	7
2015	101	8

Source: (The Nigerian National Assembly)

Appendix 6. Table 2. Member of House of Representatives by gender (1999 - 2015)

	Male	Female
1999	348	12
2003	393	21
2007	337	23
2011	334	26
2015	341	19

Source: (The Nigerian National Assembly)

Appendix 7. Abbreviations

FGM - female genital mutilation

GBV - Gender Based Violence

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

ICG - international Crisis Group

IDP - Internally Displaced Persons

NDHS - Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization