

## GLOBALIZATION AND WOMEN IN GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: 2015 - 2022

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### ABSTRACT

Governance is the process of decision-making and the ways in which decisions are implemented (or not). In any given system, the government is the major actor, but others can influence the process. This where the inclusion of women is solicited for. Women are still struggling for equal treatment and participation in political affairs in many countries. Whether it is access to healthcare, education, the labour market or political rights, women often receive less of a share than men. And yet, women make vital contributions to society that men often take no part in. These barriers women face are present at the individual, institutional and socio-cultural levels. For example, at the individual level, women who are actually equally qualified as men talk themselves out of running for office because of stereotypes. At the institutional level, political organizations like parties and legislatures remain unwelcoming to female colleagues. At the socio-cultural level, the representation by the media of women in leadership, still tends to focus on what they wear, their marital status or their voices, as opposed to their policy positions or competence. Globalization has further entrenched in some aspects the subjugation of women economically. It is hoped that with globalization women will enjoy more options in income-producing employment; more employment opportunities mean that there are more ways of breaking off from unequal relations; such options entrust women with greater opportunities to take their work and skills elsewhere. Different feminist theories were discussed as regards women's participation in the democratic space and society at large. The Radical Feminist theory speaks to the research study. The paper is mainly qualitative and descriptive. The recommendations aver to more inclusion of Women in the Nigerian democratic system.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Discourse on globalization today concentrates on local manifestations of global developments in terms of lifestyles, cultures, social cohesion, social conflict, identity formation, economic opportunity, survival strategies, and above all, inequalities, particularly gender inequality and rights. Due to globalization, many nations now access various international goods and services. It has allowed individuals to purchase goods and food not grown in their own nations year-round at a relatively low cost. While one understanding of globalisation has to do with fair interchange and sharing of products and services between countries and cultures, the reality of a globalized world is considerably different. An integrated global economy has come to be known as "globalization". It is still challenging to comprehend in terms of its specific meaning, form, and influence, even though it is a term that is frequently used on a global scale. The term "globalization" has so many different connotations depending on which dimensions or features are being discussed, it can be challenging to comprehend. Individuals tend to have diverse perspectives on globalization depending on their ideologies or backgrounds. However, it is frequently portrayed as a multifaceted phenomenon with important political, cultural, and economic roles (Robinson, 2004). Its description has revealed a recurring theme: it is a political, economic, social, and cultural

phenomenon that increases global interdependence and interconnection through international capital flows, multinational activity, information technology, and people adopting transnational identities (Moghadam, 1999).

When it comes to addressing the alleged gender disparities in the political involvement of nation-states, whether advanced or developing, there is a rising discussion among academics and the intelligentsia concerning the role of women in politics globally. Over the years, several disputes have arisen around the position of women in politics. Thus, whereas liberal theorists (Yetunde, 2003; Agbalajobi, 2010 and Erunke, 2009) have variously argued that women's political process is like those of their male counterparts, and thus, such responsibilities cannot be washed away in the grand scheme of things, conservative theorists (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010) argue that the actual role of women and in fact, female folks generally end in the kitchen. The question of whether women's roles are primarily domestic or whether they can participate meaningfully in other socioeconomic and political activities alongside their male counterparts, so filling their quotas in the progression and growth of the polity, is controversial.

Therefore, while liberal theorists (Yetunde, 2003; Agbalajobi, 2010 and Erunke, 2009) have argued in various ways that women's political processes are like those of their male counterparts, and thus such responsibilities cannot be washed away in the grand scheme of things, conservative theorists (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010) argue that the actual role of women and in fact, female people generally ends in the kitchen. The extent to which women can meaningfully participate in other economic and political activities alongside their male counterparts, thus meeting their quotas in the development and expansion of the polity, raises the question of whether or not women's duties are essentially domestic. This is not to imply, according to Agbalajobi (2010), that gender inequality did not exist in traditional state and stateless communities in Nigeria, but the colonial order accentuated it. For instance, women held prominent political positions like the Iyalode, Iyalaja, Iyalaje, Sarauniya (Queen in Hausa language) and even the office of the Oba in old Yoruba states, and their political effects in such cultures were felt in a variety of ways. However, after the colonial system was established, women lost political access to these rights but continued to play their traditional responsibilities.

According to Falola and Fwatshak (2003), the position of women in politics throughout the pre-colonial era is fairly well known. So it's easy to think of the adventures of legendary women like Queen Amina of Zazau in Zaria, Iyalode Efunsetan Aniwura of Ibadan, Princess Moremi of Ife, Princess Inikpi of Igala, and Emotan of Benin. Women made political statements and expressed themselves during the colonial era. Mrs Margaret Ekpo of the infamous Aba women riots of 1929, Madam Tinubu of Lagos and Egba land, Mrs Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of the Abeokuta Women Union of 1948, and Hajia Swaba Gambo of the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU), to name a few, were some of the women who made political waves during that time. Though women held positions of greater responsibility in Southern Nigeria, men have always held disproportionate power in the political system, leaving women to fill sedentary roles as inferior and subservient partners (Erunke, 2009). Despite this, the resolutions and modules designed to enforce and put into practice a practical manifestation within the Nigerian state have had little to no impact. According to the World Population Review, there were 1.04 males for every 1 female or 50.67 per cent of men and 49.33 per cent of women in 2017. Despite this ratio, Nigerian women have been disproportionately underrepresented (Yetunde, 2003; Agbalajobi, 2010 and Erunke, 2009).

## 2. 2.0 CONCEPTUAL DISCUSS

### 2.1 Globalisation

Globalization is defined as "a multidimensional economic, political, cultural, and geographical phenomenon in which the movement of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken on a global or transnational dimension" (Moghadam, 1999). Globalization is the process by which market exchange relationships and multimedia communication capabilities spread from the core of economically and technologically advanced countries to other parts of the world, making it easier for goods, services and people to move across national borders. This process is fueled by and reinforces an image of the world as a unified whole and humanity, even though it has different cultures and keeps changing (Waks, 2006). Globalization, according to Ake (1995), is about growing cultural differentiation and functional integration in the world economy; it is growing interdependence across the globe, it is about the nation slate coming under pressure from the surge of transnational phenomena; it is about the emergence of a global mass culture driven by mass advertising and technical advances in mass communication (Falola and Fwatshak, 2003).

According to Nikoloz (2009), the term, globalization, refers to the exchange of information among nations, cultures, and diverse social, economic, and political organizations. As such, it comprises the following: reorganization of the state, the market, and society's functions and obligations (Rhoten, 2000). The word emphasizes product and service trade, which has been made easier and more efficient through technological improvements such as electronic money and cross border communication (Giddens, 1999). Nikiti & Elliott, as cited in Gaburro & O'Boyle (2003), assert that globalization entails economic integration; the transmission of policies across borders; cultural stability; the reproduction, relations, and discourses of power; it is a global process, a concept, a revolution, and "the development of a global market free of socio-political control." Global connectivity has become easier to achieve as a result of technological advancements. The ease

with which nations communicate has encouraged 'cultural homogeneity,' leading to the formation of a single global civilization (Waks, 2006). Similarly, Turner (2011) asserted that modern communities are becoming increasingly multi-cultural and, as a result, multi-faith as a result of globalization. Globalization launched the world into a global village; there are no more restrictions in terms of trade; instead, with technological advancements, there is trade openness. It also has implications for gender equality. Global interconnectedness has the potential to be both useful and detrimental to the world's nations.

## 2.2 Democratic Governance

Democracy is a system of government that derives its power from the people for the benefit of the people. It is a system comprising of two principal elements, that of political freedom and social justice. Democracy means that there should be fair and adequate representation which means adequate and fair sharing, Nigeria cannot, therefore, talk about democracy in a situation where more than half of her citizenry is almost excluded from an important process of democratization.

“Governance” basically means the exercise of authority, direction, control, leadership and management in a society or organization. It is the specific system by which a political system is ruled. Governance here also refers to the group of people who make up an administrative body in all spheres of life, the act, process or power of governing. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; the concept of governance is not new. It is as old as humans’ civilization. Governance means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Governance has also been defined as the act of governing. It relates to decisions that define expectations, grant power, or verify performance. It consists of either a separate process or part of management, or leadership processes typically administered by government (Falola and Fwatshak (2003).

In the case of a business or a non-profit organization, governance relates to consistent management, cohesive policies, and guidance, process and decision-making rights for a given area of responsibility. The two terms governance and government, can be distinguished. Governance is what a government is, its limit and scope. It might be geo-political governance (Nations state), or corporate government (business entity), or social political government (tribe, family etc.). Governance is the physical exercise of management power and policy while government is the instrument use by management and leaders to achieve their purposes (usually collective). As a process, governance may operate in an organization of any size: from a single human being to all of humanity; it may function for any purpose, good or evil, for profit or not. A reasonable purpose of governance is to ensure (sometimes on behalf of others) that an organization produces a worthwhile pattern of good result while avoiding an undesirable and bad pattern of circumstances.

According to the United Nations Development Programmers Regional Project on local government for Latin American in 2011, governance can be defined as the rules of political system to solve conflicts between actors and adopt decision (legality). The concept of governance has been used to describe the proper functioning of institutions and their acceptance by the public (legitimacy). It has also been used to invoke the efficacy of government and the achievement of consensus by democratic means. The distinction between the concepts of governance and politics is that politics involves processes by which group of people with initially divergent opinions or interests reach collective decisions which are generally regarded as binding on the group, and enforced as common policy. Governance on the other hand conveys the administrative and process-oriented elements of governing rather than its antagonistic ones (United Nations Report on MDG Priorities 2011).

## 2.3 Politics

Politics is said to be, the means through which values and resources are shared. Politics can be said to be the act of making a public choice and making decision on behalf of people through the medium of the State and its apparatus. It is accepted that for development of any kind to be successful, women, who constitute a large proportion of the population, should not be left out, because there is no doubt that both men and women have some potentials and rights to contribute meaningfully to the development of their countries throughout the world, especially in Africa. A situation where more than half of the whole population is excluded from or is underrepresented in the process of the value allocation will result in unfair allocation, and giving others undue advantage resulting in cries of marginalization (Milbrath, 1965). The term “politics” is derived from Greek word polis which means city-state; this is why politics is used in reference to states. Harold D. Laswell and Abraham Kaplan define political science as “the study of shaping and sharing of power”. For him, it comprised of family, property and other social institutions. The Marxist approach from the studies of the German Philosopher Karl Marx, views politics as:

A study of irreconcilable conflicts between the two classes “haves” (those who have private property or simply the rich) and the “have nots” (those who do not have any private property or simply the poor). This resembles the Nigerian Society in which women stand for the “have nots”. They do not have the power; neither do they have authority over who accesses power. Maclosky (1968) defines political participation as “voluntary activities shared by members of a society in the selection of their rulers and directly or indirectly involve in the formation of public policies”. Also speaking, Weiner

also conceives political participation in the following words “There are voluntary activities shared by members of a society in the selection of their rulers and directly or indirectly involve themselves in the formation of public policies”. This definition shows that women in Nigeria do not participate in politics because they are not involved majorly with formation of public policies.

Women make up more than half of the world’s population and contribute in various ways to societal development in general. In most societies women assume five key roles: producer, mother, community organizer, home-manager, socio-cultural and political activists. The last role had been engineered by women movements associated to historical gender discrimination and inequality, before which, gender roles was divided between the female and male sexes. Lester Milbrath (1965) segments these activities into three, namely: transitional activities, gladiatorial activities and spectator activities. Political activities that include canvassing for party funds, handling public or party offices, contesting at election, etc. are all classified under gladiatorial activities, while transitional activities include activities like making monetary contribution to political parties, attending political meetings or political rally etc. Spectator activities on the other hand includes political activities like wearing of party caps, badges, emblems or uniforms, voting at elections, running errands for political leaders, etc.

Applying Milbrath’s classification of political participation and representation, the very best category of political participation is the gladiatorial activities. It has always favoured the male gender in Nigeria since the day of our independence till now. Current statistics on gender representation in public offices, especially, at the very best deciding levels such as the offices of the president(head of state), the state governor and native government chairman(local government), shows that female representation was almost non-existent. Except on few occasions where women were elected as local government chairpersons, women has never in the history of Nigerian elections, been elected as chief executive, both at the national and state levels of government. Similarly, a brief summary of gender representation within the National Assembly during the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 elections joined together, shows that women are incredibly under-represented by 5% in each of the two Houses of Assembly. By the way, no woman had ever been elected for the office of the Senate President, while the female, Patricia Etteh, who was elected in 2007 as Speaker of the House of Representatives, was later impeached by a male dominated House before the end of her tenure. On the opposite hand, current statistics also shows that female gender in Nigeria, in most circumstances, and for many reasons, participate in politics at the smallest amount.

Apparently, women are mostly involved in campaign activities and rallies where caps, badges and the uniforms of respective political parties are freely displayed on them. In this regard, Okoronkwo (2013) during a study on the 2011 general elections in Nigeria refers to women “as active participants within the success of their male counterparts during elections”. Consistent with Kant (2001), men have always called on women as assistants so as to further their ambitions. Babaginda (1992) confirmed women to be a part of any major developmental process and therefore the reason consistent with him is their numerical strength, they’re industrious and enterprising and that they are good managers. Nowadays, women have shown more interest in politics and governance. They created such a lot awareness and have proved that they’re not mere spectators in politics. In addition to Fumilayo Kuti, among the more prominent and influential of the leaders have been; Mabel Dere, Oveza and Margaret Ekpo, who have increasingly played roles in politics and governance sometime on their own. Nigerian women have thus far been showing what they’re made of by not only been spectators on the political scene but by providing effective leadership and positive contribution to world socio-economic advancement.

Ekpe et al. (2014, p.15) examines gender discrimination and culture, and affirms that ‘cultural stereotype and abuse of traditional practices have created patriarchal societal structures dominated by men’. In essence, the subservience of women features its root in traditional cultural values that perceive women as subordinate to men. While traditional cultural values still influence societal perception of gender, the effect of traditional culture on gender issues is gradually eroding as a result of modernization and the influence of globalization on cultures across the world.

Momodu (2003) highlighted four perspectives that the issues of women’s political participation and representation in politics and governance should be seen from. They are; Access, participation, representation and transformation. Access to political institutions, participation (which includes control of power within such institutions), quantitative and qualitative representation and the end result will be social and political transformation in the polity.

Women’s political empowerment can be enhanced when these four conditions are fulfilled. Ogbonna (2009) stated that “some of the impediments to participating, contesting and winning elections in the country are money politics and power play that effectively scheme women out.” This shows that money is a major factor in the game politics, along with the relative absence of financial empowerment of women. There have also been cases of much violence and assassinations, violent clashes at rallies and sheer thuggery which are not really welcomed in a women’s world.

Asase (2003) noted that “new obstacle have teamed up with old ones to work against women in governance”. Sharia (as a religious and penal code) for instance is being practiced in Zamfara state and some other northern states, is a drawback to the anticipation of women in politics. In a state where women are not expected to mix with men in public it will be difficult to integrate them polity. Thus, Mrs. Josephine Anenih was cautious in her response to how Sharia world affect

the involvement of Northern women in politics. Finally, Obasanjo (1992) warned that making significant progress in a country's development is next to impossible for any country that marginalizes women; because, women constitute large and important segments of the society.

Nations have adopted different approaches but have achieved the same results to ensure that women are equally represented in governance because women make up a major part of society. Some of the needs of women, such as education for the girl child, the ban on early marriage and increasing the age of sexual consent, can best be represented by fellow women. This is why there should be a legal requirement for parties to put a certain proportion of female candidates as legislature members and ensure that politics is favourable to all genders. Suppose there is a dearth of women at the country's highest level of decision making, due to an absence of laws that encourage the participation of women in politics. In that case, the growth of the next generation of girls will be deficient, stagnant and sad. The right that everyone should be treated equally under the law and no one is above or under the law to discriminate even from politics.

#### **2.4 An Exposition of Globalisation in a Globalizing World**

With globalization, discussions have initially centred on grand narratives, embracing developing and encompassing visions. Scientific standpoints were illustrated rather than empirically researched. The phenomenon globalization has now reached the stage in which its manifestations are analyzed in a precise manner in concrete geographical context and pertaining to different topics. It is in a stage of examining the manifestation of its interconnectivity in cities in the advanced economies, and whether it reflects the inequalities of the past, that were only visible at the continental level. Discourse on globalization today, focuses on local manifestations of global developments in terms of lifestyles, cultures, social cohesion, social conflict, identity formation, economic opportunity, survival strategies and above all inequalities and particularly with reference to this article, gender inequality and rights. Globalization has given many countries access to a wide range of products and services from around the globe. It has afforded people the opportunity to buy at a relatively cheap price, products and food that do not grow in their own countries, and all the year round. Like most good things in life, globalization is not without its disadvantages and short comings, so while one interpretation of globalization has to do with equal exchange and sharing of goods and services between countries and cultures, the reality of a globalized world is much different.

Globalization involves the idea of viewing the whole world as one mighty village with common trade, culture, social mobility and economic front. It is the process of creating languages, services and products that apply not just to an individual neighbourhood, city or country but to the entire world. It is characterized by a globally integrated economy, where decisions regarding production, consumption and other aspects of social relations increasingly bear transnational dimensions (United Nations, 2019). Globalization entails free trade, free mobility of both financial and real capital, and rapid diffusion of products, technologies, information and consumption patterns. Under globalization, government policy choices have geared towards free trade and financial flows. These policies tend favourably towards higher regulation of industry, privatization of state-owned establishments and reduced expenditures on public issues. Of course, the liberalization policies and technological advancement, made economic fusion very rapid, creating a high level of economic integration causing a loose national state boundary.

Although globalization is about culture, it is mostly about money. Globalization encourages the merging of world economic markets through 'free' trade agreements, the creation of transnational corporations that sell products and services to people all over the globe, and the privatization of government services like health care, water, and mail delivery, in favour of private ownership. Unfortunately, globalization isn't about equal exchange as we are meant to believe, it is about concentrations of profit and power in certain parts of the world and with certain people. The international trade agreements signed under globalization are devoid of any trade barriers and obstacles. This makes it easy for countries to move their factories and services to countries of cheapest labour. With this, they produce at cheap rate which guarantees them maximum profits. The idea of free trade is that whichever country produces the cheapest products wins. Producing cheaply in this context means having cheap labour and conducive atmosphere where the harmful side product is shifted to another country. Globalization has injected into the system the idea that the best way for a country to reduce its spending is to initiate a cut-back on government services, such as health care, electricity, education and even mail delivery (Iglis, 2016). Reduction of expenditure by the government is to ensure that they are able to pay back loans from IMF, and World-Bank which sometimes have been paid over and over again.

#### **2.5 Women's participation in Democratic Governance in Nigeria**

The right to democratic governance is an entitlement conferred on all citizens by law. The Nigerian 1999 constitution (as amended) spells out this privilege very clearly in section 40 viz: Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular, he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests: provided that the provisions of this section shall not derogate from the powers conferred by this constitution on the Independent National Electoral Commission with respect to political parties to which that commission does not accord recognition. Similarly, section 42(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) stated inter alia that: A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin,

sex, religion or political opinion shall not, by reason only that he is such a person be subjected to any form of discrimination. The above excerpts shows that any man or women can proceed to court to seek redress if he or she's right to franchise is being violated and that the constitution in its entirety prohibits discriminations of any kind on the basis of sex or otherwise. Furthermore, section 77 of the Constitution states that: (1) subject to the provisions of this constitution, every senatorial district or federal constituency established in accordance with the provisions of this part of this paper shall return a member who shall be directly elected to the senate or the House of Representatives in such manner as may be prescribed by an act of the National Assembly, (2) Every citizen in Nigeria, who has attained the age of eighteen years residing in Nigeria at the time of the registration of voters for the purposes of election to the legislative house, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter for that election.

The foregoing analysis shows that the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which of course is the reference point for social co-existence amongst groups and persons has not by any means discriminated against anyone, man or woman in the socio-political scheme of things. It is therefore unjustifiable for men to want to dominate the Nigerian political scene and hence, boxed women to the corner. Available statistics however show that since the inception of democratic governance in 1999, women have been scantily represented in public offices either as president (which of course is an impossible fact to try by the female folk), or senate, and members of Houses of Representatives and Assembly at the level of states. Agbalajobi once again corroborated this shortfall in the representation of women in Nigerian politics when he argued that: Following two decades of military rule, statistics revealed that women only secured 3% representation in contested positions in 1999, 4% in 2003, while 2007 they made only 6%. This survey shows a poor representation of women in 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections. In 2003 in states like Adamawa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Oyo, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara, no women was elected as member of the State House of Assembly, they are very few (2010:78). The very many reasons adduced by scholars of Nigerian politics as being responsible for low level of participation and representation of women in Nigeria politics forms the theoretical and ideological basis for analysis of a society that is largely unfair to a section of the same society even when the constitution is very clear on matters of gender equality. This is one issue that has raised critical questions of morality and rationality in the affairs of societies around the world, whether developed or developing.

It therefore calls on serious debates as to how the calamity of misrepresentation of women in politics can be readjusted and amended to put women on the same scale with men as partners in progress considering the critical role of women in global socio-economic and political affairs.

Table 1: Showing Women representation in 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria

| S/N | Position                 | No. of available | No. of women elected and % total in 2003 |          | No. of women elected and % total in 2007 |  |
|-----|--------------------------|------------------|--|----------|--|--|
| 1   | Presidency               | 1                | 0  | 0        |  |  |
| 2   | Senate                   | 109              | 3 (2.27)                                 | 9 (6.98) |  |  |
| 3   | House of Representatives | 360              | 21 (5.83)                                |          | 25 (6.98)                                |  |
| 4   | Governorship             | 36               | 0  | 0        |  |  |
| 5   | State House of Assembly  | 990              | 38 (3.84)                                |          | 54 (5.45)                                |  |

**2.6 M Entrenched Gender Inequality in Nigeria**

Gender is a set of visible characteristics that distinguish male and female. Depending on the context, the distinguishing characteristics vary from sex to social role, to gender identity. In recent times, the meaning of gender has in many contexts been extended to include and in many cases used specifically to mean the latter. For the purpose of this article, gender connotes the sexes; that is the male and female sexes and the roles constructed for them by societal acceptance. Gender inequality refers to the unequal opportunities in various spheres of development between men and women, which basically and characteristically tilt in favour of the men. Gender Rights also refer to the fundamental rights of each gender and by virtue of their being human, and how the incidence of gender has affected the exercise of their fundamental freedoms. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) prohibits inter alia discrimination on account of sex, but many factors such as customary and religious laws have conspired together to rob women of the exercise and enjoyment of the right not to be discriminated against in Nigeria. The inequality between men and women (gender inequality) in Nigeria is visible in almost all aspects of human endeavour.

**2.7 Gender Inequality in Politics and Public Voice**

There is no doubt that discriminatory attitudes and unequal power relations, account for the low participation and muffled voice of women in public life, despite the promise of equality of political and civil rights by the Constitution. It is to be noted that participation of women in public life is low all over the world but this varies from country to country and Nigeria has one of the lowest scores in this regard. The discriminatory attitudes have ensured a socialization of women that has left many women too timid to assume positions of leadership, and also makes them untrusting of other women. This invariably makes women reluctant to vote other women into such positions. There has been a recently concluded election in Nigeria, and suffice it to say that, only one female ran for the office of the President, and that of course, the

President is not a female. The election did not produce a female governor either. As for other positions such as Senate, and the various houses of assembly, the usual abysmally low percentages of females were recorded. Men seem to be the officials in the political parties and the electoral process, while women remain essentially supporters, side campaigners and clappers for men's achievements in the field. The effect of non-involvement of women in politics at decision-making levels is that women's gender specific concerns remain unaddressed and the benefit of their perspective on mainstream issues is lost, and thus equality and consequently national development remain an illusion.

Gender Inequality and Socio-cultural Institutions (Family) Nigerian women are not adequately protected, even in family life as several inequalities still play against them because of certain cultural and religious acceptances. The three forms of marriage in the country (customary, monogamous and Islamic) also have a role to play. The minimum legal age for marriage is 18 and the monogamous (civil or Christian marriage) abides by this, but customary and Islamic marriages encourage child marriage in which the bride is not old enough to share in the responsibilities of marriage. While polygamy is prohibited in monogamous (civil or Christian) marriage, every customary and Islamic marriage is potentially polygamous. It is also to be noted that more than one-third of Nigerian women are in a polygamous union. In all the three forms of marriages in Nigeria, husbands alone make decisions concerning the upbringing of their children especially in the area of health, marriage and education, even though in civil or Christian marriages parental authority is supposed to be shared between husband and wife. Customary marriages do not recognize women's right to inheritance especially in the South East of Nigeria where neither wives nor daughters inherit a deceased's estate. Wives do not inherit in Yorubaland but daughters do so equally with their brothers. Islamic marriages recognize inheritance by both wives and daughters although the daughters inherit half what is due to the boys. In both latter cases, there is a sort of equity in the Inequality but it is difficult to fathom out what informed the position in the South East area of Nigeria.

It would seem also that the physical integrity of women is not protected in Nigeria. The Country's Penal Code applicable to the North permits husbands to beat their wives as long as it does not amount to serious bodily harm. Domestic violence is also a luxuriating iniquity against the Nigerian women. Far from women reacting to this obnoxious situation, 64.5 percent of Nigerian women actually believe it is normal for them to be beaten by their husbands as reported by a 2003 Demography and Health Survey. Female Genital Mutilation is prohibited by legislation in many states but it is difficult to eliminate it at the national level and even in the states that have banned it, as the law is difficult to enforce. Rape, a heinous crime carries on conviction, life imprisonment but both the Criminal Code Act (for the South) and Penal Code (for the North) overtly allow spousal rape respectively thus;

Any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girl without her consent or with her consent if the consent is obtained by force or in the case of a married women by impersonating her husband is guilty of an offence which is called rape. And; 1) A man is said to commit rape who, save in the case referred to in sub-section (2) has sexual intercourse with a woman in any of the following circumstances. 2) Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife is not rape, if she has attained puberty.

## **2.8 Theoretical Dispositions on Feminist Theories and the Radical Feminist Theory in Focus**

Feminism first came into use in English during the 1880s, indicating support for women's equal legal and political rights with men. Its meaning has since evolved and is still hotly debated. In general terms, any theory that sees the relationship between the sexes as that of inequality, subordination or oppression, which sees this problem of political power rather than a fact of nature, and that, sees this problem as important for political theory and practice can be regarded as feminist theory. It is evident from most of the history of political theories reviewed above that women have been ignored. As such, women seldom appear in the analysis of who has or should have power. Secondly, political theory has been designed not to notice women, and has usually defended their exclusion from public affairs and their confinement to the home. As a result, rarely have women been seen as political animals worthy of serious consideration. (Bryson, 1995).

Today, this exclusion of half of the human race is either perpetuated or dismissed as a trivial oversight. The inequalities that may exist between men and women are deemed practically unimportant and theoretically uninteresting (Bryson up.cit). Feminist political theory, however, sees women and their situation as central to political analysis; it asks why it is that in virtually all known societies, men appear to have power over women, and how this can be changed. To them, feminist theory is engaged theory, which seeks to understand society in order to challenge and change it. They went further to argue that the goal of feminist theory is not abstract knowledge, but knowledge that can be used to guide and inform feminist political practice. Modern feminist however argue that men can never be feminist, either because they are the enemy or because lacking first hand experiences, they can only be at best feminist supporters. The development of feminist thought has not only been uneven, but it has also always involved deep theoretical disagreements. These partly reflect the varied needs and perceptions of women in different societies and situations; feminist theory also stems from feminist's mixed origins in both the liberal and socialist tradition of male- stream political thought as in women's own experiences.

Rather than thinking of feminism as a unified body of thought, many modern commentators identified a number of distinct feminist's positions. Here the approaches most commonly identified are those of liberal Marxist and radical

feminists; the term socialist feminism to some scholars is also rather confusing. Socialist feminist theory often is used to describe all theories that see socialist and feminist goals as related whether or not they are based on a specifically Marxist analysis and some modern attempts to synthesize the ideas of Marxist and the radical feminism. Several feminist schools of thought presented different claims to the status of women. They argue that because women are rational beings as men, they are entitled to the same legal and political rights; In the course of this work some feminist theories were reviewed. These include the Liberal, Radical, Marxist/socialist and postmodern feminist theories. Feminism has a maze of theories that on the surface level may be interconnected and also confusing when trying to separate them. Feminists are profoundly divided as to the cause of and potential cures for women's subordination, inequality or oppression in the civil society and government. They are however in congruity on the definition and function of these theories.

They believe that the task of feminist theory is to contribute to the understanding of the situation of women in order that this can be challenged and changed. All the feminist theories are all hinged on understanding, challenging and answering the woman question. I understand fully-well what the forms of oppressions are connected and that they reinforce each other in application. However, not all the theories reviewed are considered adequate and applicable to the assessment of the leadership role of women in governance in Nigeria. Following this, the theoretical framework of this study was based on one of the theories considered germane to the work. The theory considers appropriate here is the radical feminist theory but before then, the study would give a brief overview of the other theories of feminism (Tor and Terkula, 2017).

**The Marxist Feminism Theory:** Beginning from the orthodox Marxists, women's liberation required economic independence and full participation in economy, believing that the marginalization of women is due to division of society into classes and, corresponding to and reinforcing the development of laws, states and systems of belief. To the Marxist the origin of the family which traced the subordination of women to the first private property and the formation of class society, as well as the over-throw of mother- right, which to the Marxist is the world's historical defeat of the female sex. The Marxist believe that the supremacy of the family is the simple consequence of his economic supremacy and that with the abolition of the economic power of men-women subordination will disappear because men will have no motive to marginalize women. A re-assessment of women's marginalization in governance is not merely about economic position of women. To this end, Marxists feminist theory is not adequate for the Theoretical frame work for this work.

**The Postmodern Feminist Theory:** Recognized the important differences amongst women. Challenging middle-class White feminists and their work on feminism, in post- modern feminism Black feminists argue that when White feminist talk about women, they are talking about themselves. They argue that they do not simply want to be included in White feminism on the existing terms, but that they want to decenter White feminists because in practice, Black women are the ones who have empirical experiences of subordination both from men and from middle-class white women in Europe and America. The assessment of women's marginalization in governance in Nigeria is not about the colour of women but about their social status especially in governance. It is not about the segment of economic position of women but about the involvement of women in women marginalization in all spheres of life especially in governance. To this extent Post-Modern feminist theory is rejected for this study.

**Radical Feminism:** Radical feminism as stated earlier on has its starting point the claim that women should develop their own theories based on their own experiences rather than relying on ideas that had been developed by men. Radical feminism saw women oppression as the most fundamental and universal form of domination. Arguing that women as a group has interests opposed to those of men and that this interest unite them in common sisterhood that surpasses the division of class or race and meant that women should struggle together to achieve their own liberation.

Secondly, radical feminists argue that male supremacy and power transcends the public worlds of governance and paid employment but that it also extended into the private lives of women. Inventing the word "the persona is political", radical feminism challenged the other areas of life of women as the family and sexuality both of which they consider to be cogent instruments of patriarchal domination of women's lives. Furthermore, radical feminism channelled its right for equality through patriarchy which they introduced in feminist thought as a key concept.

Radical feminists like Millett stretched the meaning of patriarchy to mean male domination of female. The power of patriarchy extends to all areas of life. Contending that, male domination is so universal, so ubiquitous and so complete that it appears normal and natural. However, drawing on the proposition of the universality and ubiquity of male domination that women have interest which contrast from the interest of men and that these interest should unite women. This study draws the theoretical frame work from the radical feminist theory. Although as per the point developed by radicals' theorists like Millett, the message is that it is a not unjust law or economic systems that are responsible for women's oppression but men. To some radical critics such position is unattainable, and is largely responsible for feminism's negative image as a complaining, whining, and negative creed, irrelevant to the lives of go-ahead young women. Radical feminism is also germane to this work because it pointed out that many men are not in positions of power over women, but may in fact be subordinate to women and that, despite the general imbalance of power, loving, non-exploitative relationship between men and women can and do exist in our society. Men too they say, may suffer in sexist society and not just women. For example, they argue that men in sexist society are forced into the role of breadwinner and



are denied an active role in bringing up their own children. By having to repress the unacceptably feminine aspect of their personality, they are therefore alienated from their own full humanity.

### **2.9 Relevance of Radical Feminist Theory**

Radical feminism opines that there are essential and irreducible biological differences that shape men and women's nature, and that "women" are naturally superior. This view has led some feminists (radicals) to develop an eco-feminist analysis while some have rejected all association with men, social, sexual or political. Radical separatist argument is however distinct from the original patriarchal argument of Millett in her patriarchal argument, man-hating and separatism are not inherent in it. Her argument was far from seeing all men as the undifferentiated enemy, who can never be trusted as fathers, friends, colleagues, sexual partners or political allies. Meanwhile the concept of patriarchy which Millett argued can be used to explore the possibility of male support and political solidarity for women. Also, it can be used to analyse ways in which some or all men may themselves be harmed by patriarchy and so assist women in their quest to dismantle patriarchy. This is why radical feminism was chosen for this work above other feminist thought.

In general, feminism can be seen as a movement to put an end to sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression and to achieve full gender equality in law and in practice. Radical feminists helped to translate the radical protest for racial equality, which many had experienced, over to the struggle for women's rights. They took up the cause and advocated for a variety of women's issues, including equal rights amendments, equal pay and equal political participation and representation. The radical feminism theory is relevant to this study because it is a perspective within feminism that calls for a radical re-ordering of society in which male supremacy is eliminated in all social and economic contexts while recognizing that women's experiences are also affected by other social divisions such as in race, class, and sexual orientation. Radical feminists view society fundamentally as a patriarchy in which men dominate and oppress women. Radical feminists seek to abolish the patriarchy in a struggle to liberate women and girls from an unjust society by challenging existing social norms and institutions. This struggle includes opposing the sexual objectification of women, raising public awareness about such issues as rape and other violence against women, challenging the concept of gender roles, and challenging what radical feminists see as a racialized and gendered capitalism that characterizes Nigeria as a country. Radical feminists locate the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relations, as opposed to legal systems (as in liberal feminism) or class conflict (as in Marxist feminism).

Too many researchers have been focused on the population of women over weighing the authority or affluence women have in the political realm. This poses a question of the kind of political power women in politics wield and the period of their participation

### **2.10 Factors Militating against Women Participation in Nigerian Politics**

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.

Several other factors have been proved to stand on the way of women, thereby preventing them from active participation in politics, especially in the African/Nigerian context. Some of these includes, but not limited to the following:

#### **2.10.1 Region/Cultural Belief System**

Most societies in Nigeria, just like in many other African states prohibits women from taking part in active politics based on religion beliefs. Politics in this part of the world is seen as dirty game and sacrilegious and so, has the capacity of defiling any spiritual individual who is conscious of eternity, considering that there is life after death. There are however very many uncanny things that goes with politics in underdeveloped societies such as vote buying, ballot box stuffing, arson, assassination of political opponents, violence and the like. Therefore engaging in this kind of misdemeanors by adherents of true worshipers of God is a bad process. It therefore becomes a critical element in scaring away persons or groups from circular politics.

#### **2.10.2 Virility Deficiency Syndrome**

Politics generally is a game of wit and the strong appears to take it all in the political gaining that follows. It therefore follows that man by nature are stronger and virile enough to play in the game of politics. As earlier pointed out in this paper, women are physically weak and hence, have no ego to compete favourably with men in the turbulent activities. Agbalajobi (2010) opined that winning public elections in Nigeria is a matter of force or "do-or-die" affairs. Those who possess physical stamina and strength to use brutal force are men. Hence, women would have to give way for the men to take whatever is available by force.

### **2.10.3 Lack of Finance**

The dominant philosophy in Nigerian politics is money. The ‘money’ factor plays very vital role in the conception, mobilization and winning of political offices either at the presidential, governorship, senatorial, local council elections and even age grade meetings. Money is very critical in the shaping, making and unmaking of public office which is supposed to be on trust. Thus, the higher and larger one’s financial muscle is in Nigeria, the greater one’s chances of winning public office. Tor and Terkula (2011) opined that the system of corruption that has infiltrated the Nigerian system has practically put women on edge and everything seems to be working against them (women) in favour of man. Women generality appear to have little or no financial backing. They are by nature sympathetic, caring and think largely towards home-building, and hence, stilling from public offices to enrich themselves is very rare. However, men who are virtually blank, have little sympathy for the suffering masses, in the event that they are in charge of public coffers, steal massively to build their political empires in the future. This scenario is evident in the many cases of corruption scandals witnessed in Nigeria among top bureaucrats and politicians in recent times.

### **2.10.4 Lack of Effective means of implementation of Affirmative Action**

According to Agbalajobi (2010) wrote that Affirmative Action is usually a measure intended to supplement non-discrimination. It is a broad term encompassing a host of policies that seek to support weak groups in society, especially women. They include policies where deliberate action is used to stop discrimination. Thus, a policy process of this kind, according to him allows for rules that have the objective of enhancing equal opportunity for individuals and the improvements in the situation of marginalized groups. Accordingly, argues Agbalajobi (2010) the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The convention has been aptly described as the singular article of gender empowerment and Women’s International Bill of Rights. Thus, the convention has since become a reference point since its adoption in the demand for the equality of women in the socio-political scheme of things.

The convention largely reflects the depth of neglect of the fundamental rights of women arising from biological differences by calling for equal rights for women notwithstanding their social status in virtually all aspects of life. The convention provides clearly that: Adoption by states parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved (Yetunde, 2013). It is however instructive to note that the framing of the specifications of Affirmative Action is not the problem in the elimination of gender bias. It is however the critical question of lack of implementation. And this appears to be a mosaic affecting virtually all nation-states of the world in terms of the place of women in both elective and appointive offices. The experiences and evidence from the previous public elections in Nigeria, specifically those of the 2003 and 2007 general elections are worthy of illustration. The table below depicts the aforementioned.

## **2.11 Strategies for Redressing the Gender Effects of Globalisation**

Although globalisation has led to economic growth, it has been criticized for the absence of gender-disaggregated indicators and data in sectors such as agricultural production or the informal sector. Many indicators show that women are affected by trade policies that are not gender sensitive. More research is therefore needed to document the number of people in the informal sector, and working conditions of specific groups of workers in specific informal sectors; so as to assess the impact of globalization on them. Furthermore, there is a need for gender-disaggregated data on migrants as data on migrant workers tends to be scant particularly, on the number of females who migrate and their type of work or working conditions. Moreover, the policy making process tends to be gender blind and limits gender injustices in terms of sex or gender. However, women’s experiences of gender oppression are shaped by other forms of oppression, such as race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation or disability. More needs to be done to integrate gender equality dimensions in policy and operational work so as to promote gender equality across various social categories. It is further important that indigenous women’s movements are involved in the policy process to enable them to reflect the needs of women and contribute meaningfully development policies. Modifying decision-making processes on gender strategies needs community ownership due to the fact that the process takes place within complex social and political environments.

In inference, although the process of globalization has resulted in new possibilities of economic growth, it has led to the uneven development of the world which has mostly affected women. Trade liberalization policies have not eliminated pre-existing inequalities in access to resources, power and decision making but have exacerbated the situation of women in developing countries. This has been mainly due to the neo-liberal ideology associated with globalisation which has aimed at enforcing universal labour market participation instead of taking into account the care responsibilities of women and unequal social relations between men or women. There is therefore need for a more social or human centred development to address the impact of globalization, particularly trade and investment policies impact on gender so as to promote gender equality and sustainable human development.

## 2.12 Conclusion and Recommendations

Women Participation in Nigerian politics is a topic of importance. Politically, women have been relegated to the background, despite the tremendous effort put forward by government and non-governmental organizations following the declaration made at the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, which advocated 30% affirmative action and National Gender Policy (NGP) recommendation of 35% affirmative action for a more inclusive representation of women both in elective and appointive positions. It is worthy to note that Nigerian women are still being marginalized due to the style of leadership inherent in the country. Despite the challenges women are facing, women activism and advocacy, education of women, positivity on the part of successive governments towards women empowerment and interest of women to participate in politics is getting a lot of positive energy. This is an indication that the participation of women in politics has a bright future. Therefore, the relevant stakeholders are advised to advocate for the protection of women from abuse, empower them economically and politically and review the necessary legislations to accommodate the growing interest of women in politics both elective and appointive positions.

In the light of the above summary and conclusion, the following recommendations are drawn:

1. There should be equality in the sharing of political offices on the basis of quota system between competing candidates. This will enable both men and women have equal chances of control in such public offices.
2. The Federal government should make it mandatory that certain public offices be allotted to women on equal basis. This will dissolve any form of discrimination of women.
3. Political parties should create a support network for prospective aspirant by pairing them with established women politicians who will be playing key role as mentors and provide capacity building for young or aspiring female politicians as to enhance and develop them ahead of subsequent elections.
4. There should be establishment of structures such as the legal funds to enable women politicians to challenge any form of electoral malpractice in Nigeria political terrain.

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