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The Effect Gender Representation in Politics Has on Policy Making in The Federal Government of Nigeria

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The Effect Gender Representation in Politics Has on Policy Making in The Federal Government of Nigeria.

Akowe Joy

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DISCLAIMER

The opinion and views expressed in this research are unbiased towards any religion, tradition, and cultural practices, but rather solely for academic purposes in reaching the aim and objective of this academic write-up. Also, this research is not written to advocate for women's supremacy over men but to contribute to knowledge by identifying the effect of gender representation in the federal government of Nigeria.

The names of the respondent listed in this research are their first names. Their full names are withheld for privacy reasons.

Lastly, the content of this research should not be used in whole or part without the consent of the researcher and thesis supervisors.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to answer the question "*How gender representation in politics affects the outcome of policymaking in the federal government of Nigeria"*. And to help answer the questions, two hypotheses were formulated which are H1: greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking leading to economic growth and development of a country; H2: increasing the number of women decision-makers in politics leads to an outcome that is beneficial for women as well as their male counterparts. To test these hypotheses, a combination of desk research and informal/unstructured interview was carried out. It is emphasized that the gender representation in this research is focused on politics at the federal government level. Gender representation in politics at the federal level is selected because laws, policies, and decisions made at the federal government supersede all other levels (states and local government levels) of governance in Nigeria. The findings of this research support the two hypotheses as the desk research shows that the few women in politics who served on the federal level have positively impacted life's in diverse ways while contributing to the economic growth of the country; from empowering the poor and vulnerable, providing jobs, developing new policies, challenge previous unfavorable status quo and above all alleviating poverty and thereby boosting the economic situation of the country. These findings were also supported by the interviewees. When women are included in political affairs such as decision making, it led to the development of laws and regulations that every inhabitant of the country benefit from. The research also contributed to knowledge by enumerating factors limiting the political representation of women at the federal government level. These main factors identified include religion, culture, marriage, fear, perception, education, and less or no fund. The dominant factors seem to be religion, culture, and marriage; these factors were further substantiated by the interviewees.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

PDP: People Democratic Party

APC: All progressive congress

ADC: African democratic congress

ADP: Action Democratic Party

SDP: Social democratic party

NAFDAC: National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control

LIST OF KEYWORDS

Gender, representation, participation

Politics, women, political, Nigeria

Policy-making decision-making

1 INTRODUCTION

A vital tenet of any democratic framework is the human rights principle, as well as the granting and the exercising of the political rights of both men and women. Globally, there has been steady but slow and uneven progress in political roles played by women in politics owing to the nature and domination of men, thereby outnumbering women (Dahlerup, 2007; Carroll & Sanbonmatsu, 2013). The low representation and the exclusion of women in politics have been recognized in recent times as one of the foremost impediments for economic growth (Delys, 2014). Women are strong support and pillar for grassroots politics drivers of women's political participation at the grassroots level are being met with challenges, making it tough for them to harness opportunities available for economic development (Orisadare A. M., 2019). Studies have shown that a higher proportion of women in decision-making committees (such as parliament) greatly contribute to strong attention to issues regarding women, children, and the community at large (UN Women, n.d.; Delys, 2014).

Decision-making bodies in government around the world have made great steps towards removing the barriers that make entering the political sphere difficult or impossible for women (Vos, 2013). Mainstreaming gender issues in the management and leadership established in West Africa is yet to be been given ample attention. The prevailing belief is that there is however much to be done to stimulate more participation of women in politics as women are being faced with gender stereotyping (Hayes, 2011, p. 133).

Some democratic countries around the globe have recorded lower participation of women in both elective/political positions; this has become a growing public concern as well as in academia (Zohal, 2018; Rieko, Seiki, & Rosenbluth, 2018). Scholars have revealed that women constitute about half of the country's population yet, they are less represented in political activities as well as in governmental decision-making (Delys, 2014). However, gender inclusion and equality in decision-making are recognized to have significant benefits on individuals, the country, and the overall economy of the country (Paola, 2017). According to Paola, (2017), a country efficiently gains when gender gaps in politics and its affairs such as decision-making are being removed. Thereby promoting equal participation of both sexes in decision-making positions. This will therefore lead to more opportunities as more talent (women) have been added into the decision-making bodies.

It is vital to state that in this study, the emphasis on gender representation is on female/women political representation in the federal government of Nigeria, a country in the western part of Africa. The participation of women in Nigerian politics is one of the most contemporary issues discussed in the country's political, social, and administrative arena. Nigeria is selected because Nigeria is a developing country, the most populous country in Africa, multi-cultural, and multi-religious. The main uniqueness within the context of this research is that women constitute around half of the country's population, yet

their participation in politics and decision making is extremely low when compared to their male counterparts (Delys, 2014). Women's political representation in Nigeria is low and should be significantly improved to comply with the international standards of gender equality. According to the regional parliamentary assembly (2019), in 2019, the Nigerian federation ranked very low in the percentage of women representation in the federal House of Parliaments globally. The country ranked 180 out of 192 countries worldwide (Regional Parliamentary Assemblies, 2019). This means that a large percentage of the group are largely left out in important issues of the country such as decision-making.

Few of the governmental arms of the country such as the house of parliament, law-makers, senators, and agencies that develop and implement policies, women are largely left out (PLAC, 2018). In 2019, it was reported that the federation house of parliament consists of less than 5% women (UNWomen, 2019). Similarly, studies have revealed that in the last two decades, there has been a major increase in East, West, and South Africa regarding women's participation and representation in politics and government affairs; however, Nigeria which is known as the giant of African and the most populous country in Africa (World Bank, 2016; Investment Fund, 2020) and the 6th in the world (United State Census Bureau, 2020) seems not to follow this trend (PLAC, 2018). Scholars think that when women are widely represented in politics particularly in political decision-making; it will lead to the formulation and development of friendly laws with will be beneficial to not just the women but to all (Delys, 2014; Didi, 2020).

This thesis research aims to answer the following question: ***How does gender representation in politics affect the outcome of policymaking in the federal government of Nigeria*****?**

The outcome explored via this research focuses on decision-making such as law and regulation. Scholars such as Toshkov (2016), and Creswell (2009), specify that the goal of an explanatory study is to answer the "how" and "why" questions. To be specific, the explanatory study seeks to explain causes and also providing evidence in support or rebut a prediction or explanation. The research question begins with the 'how' which makes it an explanatory question. Therefore, the aim of this research (as stated in the research question) is to identify the effect of gender representation in the federal government of Nigeria.

In this study, the emphasis on gender representation is on female/women representation. It is vital to emphasize that the gender representation in this research is focused on politics at the federal government level. Gender representation in politics at the federal level is selected because laws, policies, and decisions made at the federal government supersede all other levels (states and local government levels) of governance in Nigeria. Extensive research was conducted into ascertaining the effect of gender representation in politics has on the outcome of policymaking in the federal government of Nigeria.

Previous studies have revealed that women are less represented in political activities such as policymaking around the world. Studies also highlighted that women play a vital role as mothers, time managers entrepreneurs (Delys, 2014; Leung, 2011) and as such will do better in terms of developing friendly policies, shaping regulations as well as behavior, and push for the growth of the country if given as many opportunities as their male counterpart to actively participate in politics (Lawless & Pearson, 2008). There has been a growing debate by scholars and intelligentsia regarding roles women play in politics and this issue has triggered serious controversies rather than providing solutions or advice on how to solve the gender inequality in politics and hereby increasing women representation in politics and decision making (Apap, Claros, & Zamfir, 2019). This statement, therefore, means that women are underrepresented in politics globally; therefore, this study aims to contribute to knowledge and literature by exploring the factors or causes that limit the political representation of women in the political sphere of the federal government of Nigeria.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

This section is grouped into 3 parts, the first part presents the definition of politics and representation. The second part highlights the general idea of gender inequality and the third part presents the impact of women's representation in politics. The Beijing Platform for Affirmative Action and the National Gender Policy and the theory of representative bureaucracy was used in this section to strengthen the provided arguments.

2.1 WHAT IS POLITICS AND (POLITICAL) REPRESENTATION?

Politics and its activities are not gender-based, and as such anyone can participate in political activities either by voting or being voted for.

(Political) representation involves making citizens of a particular state or country present in the process of public policy and decision making (Dovi, 2018). The representation can be viewed as a person or persons who have been approved or authorized to act on behalf of others, alternatively, representation can be seen as one who will be accountable by those they are representing (Pitkin, 1967).

2.2 GENDER INEQUALITY IN POLITICS

The Beijing Platform for Affirmative Action and the National Gender Policy advocates for redress in gender inequality and women under-representation in the political system across nations. The policy suggests the implementation of increasing equality in politics by increasing women's participation and empowering women to actively take part in politics; as their active involvement will lead to a great development (Ekwugha, Uzochukwu, & Ebeze, 2015). These policies do not only recommend women empowerment, but it also calls for the eradication of actions that marginalize women particularly in the area of decision/policymaking (United Nations ESCAP, 2019).

According to development theory, desired changes and development can be achieved via equality. societies are characterized by the differences in gender roles, this role discourages women from actively participating in politics just like their male counterparts (The Lewis theory of development, 2010; Delys, 2014). The theory stipulates that they are a significant recognition between gender equality and development and as such most development agencies and countries recognize the positive effect gender equality has on goal attainment and development (Jones, 2009).

According to Sarah Delys (2014), a variety of studies such as demography, sociology, social sciences/management, anthropology, and social psychology have cited gender role as a cause of de-modernization. The statement reveals that the underrepresentation of women in politics and its affairs hampers development.

Drawing insight from the development theory, one can say that gender equality in politics is a key factor in contributing to the economic as well as the overall growth of a country. The author argues that low women representation in Nigeria is hampering the growth of the country. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (2015), gender equality leads to economic growth and these two should go hand in hand as gender inequality holds back individual growth, economic growth, and development of a country. Thus, the first hypothesis is that increasing the number of women in politics and decision-making positions will foster the economic growth and development of a country.

Studies concerning gender within the public administration field, have discovered that women have less organizational and political power than men (Bonman, 2010). Historically, around the globe women have been discriminated against in the work-force (Broderick, 2012), and politically under-represented when compared to men (Humprecht & Esser, 2017). The Affirmation Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), advocates for equal opportunity for all regardless of gender and ensures a level playing field for women (Fullinwider, 2018). The AA and EEO policy is focused on numerical representation (in this case increasing the number of women in politics) this is therefore a procedure designed to bring discrimination to a minimal level thereby increasing equality in politics.

The role played and occupied by women in politics has shown slow progress and development globally; owing to men's nature and domination, thus outnumbering women in the political sphere. The statement is supported by a study conducted by Jennifer L. Lawless, and Kathryn Pearson (2008), which states that gender dynamics should be upheld in all political field even though women, in general, do not win most primary election as their male counterparts due to the competition (men dominance) they are being faced with (Lawless & Pearson, 2008). Scholars such as Tanaja Maier; & Lunenborg Margreth (2014), have stated that gendering continues to be an issue in the political filed across the globe as politics have been inscribed as a male filed even when embodied by women.

A study conducted by Euro Gender (2019), stated that women in politics matters, as they will help in decision-making, in shaping policies, and above all their involvement will lead to economic increase and development. The absence of women in decision-making positions means that the needs of a predominant number of people will be left unattended to (Euro Gender, 2019). Hence, the author argues that to ensure that the needs of people are being considered and met, women should be actively involved in political activities such as decision-making. As their active participation fosters economic growth and development. It is thus stated that women in politics have a better approach in dealing with issues that foster growth than men do. For the reason that women are more business-oriented and are better at working out a business compromise (Horowitz, Parker, & Igielnik, 2018).

Research has it that having more women in politics does not only guarantee collaboration but also leads to a substantive contribution to government spending (Carles & Edwin, 2019). This, therefore, means that increase in women's participation in politics will increase collaborations, improved spending culture, and in turn increase government savings. Women are said to be drivers of economic growth and are a market force with ample power to reform or shape the economic situation of a country as well as shaping the economic trend of the world (Peterson & Powers, 2020). When women participate in politics and its affairs such as decision-making; they have more tendency to push for more economic growth via developing policies that are economically driven. They also develop some empowerment schemes that its outcome will either be job creation or establishing a small-scale business which in the end will lead to more tax-payers. And through the taxes, the government gets more money to invest in the country which then leads to development. The absence of women from politics and decision-making positions is at odd, with the strategy of benefiting from talent to promote performance, growth, and development. One can say that this is particularly vital in times of modest economic growth and development.

Drawing a conclusion from the development theory and the work of scholars, inequality in politics hampers economic growth and overall development of the country. Gender dynamics in the political sphere can boost individual development as well as the development of the country; as gender dynamism (can) creates room for integration and learning, more leadership skills can be gained, better strategies in decision-making can be gained, and most importantly fair policies can be formulated which will safeguard the integrity of all citizens thereby reducing any sort of discrimination. Therefore, the author proposes the following hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis H1:** Greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking leading to economic growth and development of a country.

2.3 IMPACT OF WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS AND POLICYMAKING

The theory of representative bureaucracy states that women are not supposed to be under-represented in politics, as public/government organizations should look like the population they serve (Rhys, Boyne, Kenneth, O'Toole, & Walker, 2006). The theory of representative bureaucracy, therefore, implies that the public (government) workforce representation of persons such as sex, race, and ethnicity help in ensuring that the interest of all groups is adequately considered in the process of bureaucratic decision-making (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010).

The second hypothesis focuses on how gender representation will enable more policymaking outcomes to favor and consider the interest of the gender that is increasingly represented. The representative bureaucracy theorizes that active representation of group interests occurs for the reason that individual bureaucrats mirror the views and opinions of those they share their demographic backgrounds with (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010). The theory place emphasis on the social group should have a "spokesperson" and "officeholder" in both administrative and political position regardless of the gender, ethnicity, and race of the person (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010). The reason for having a spokesperson is so that the concerns and needs of the people will be taking into consideration during decision-making. Meier (2019), made a differentiation between passive representative bureaucracy (PR) and active representation (AR). Meier (2019), clarifies that PR refers to the degree to which the bureaucrats mirror the demographic origin regarding gender, race, social status, and other characteristics. While AR refers to a condition where bureaucrats do something for the general public. From the definition of passive representation, it is seen that PR have the tendency to pursue the needs and interest people. Moreover, the representative bureaucracy theory holds that people (in this case women) have the right to work and function in public groups, by so doing, the group they represent benefits.

Studies have shown that higher numbers of women in politics as well as in decision-making positions usually present and contribute to stronger attention to issues concerning women (Paxton & Kunovich, 2003; Women Deliver, 2018). The political participation of women is an essential prerequisite for gender equality and sincere democracy (Didi, 2020); as it enables direct engagement of women in governmental decision-making and it is a means of guaranteeing better accountability to women (Delys, 2014). More so, research has shown that when they are more women in politics, the mortality rate decreases leading to a healthier population. For the reason that; the female politicians are more likely to uphold the left-wig (civil and social rights, social equality, and egalitarianism) this, therefore, leads to the development of policies such as health care and family policy, social empowerment policy, and educational policy that every inhabitant of the country benefits from (Carles & Edwin, 2019).

When fewer women hold political positions in the government, political decisions may not reflect the needs and preferences of women (Born, Andreas, & Sandberg, 2018). Drawing an example from the

public provision of childcare in Germany, a report had it that municipalities with a greater number of women councilors expanded the public childcare more swiftly (Baskaran & Hessami, 2020). This shows that the presence and active participation of women in politics produces decisions that are not just beneficial to women but children as well as parents.

The author thus, argues that have more representation of women in politics and actively participating in political affairs such as decision-making is recognized to have benefits for individuals and the country. When women are well represented in politics and decision-making new agenda that its impact will be positively felt will make its way into the program of discussion. As women are known to pay more attention to social issues such as: health, education welfare than men do (Paola, 2017). These social issues are majorly the concerns and needs of the people. Having such issues discussed during decision making is a step forward to solving social and societal problems that every inhabitant will benefit from. Therefore, if women are well represented in decision-making, the outcome should to a large extent favor or be in the interest of the women as well. Thus, following the preceding articles on representation and bureaucratic decision-making, the hypothesis below is generated:

- **Hypothesis H2**: Increasing the number of women decision-makers in politics leads to an outcome that is beneficial for women as well as their male counterparts.

3 STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF NIGERIA

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, generally known as Nigeria is a republic in West Africa surrounded by Cameroon, Benin Republic, Chad, and Niger Republic (Holmes, 1987), *(See **Figure 1** below)*. In Nigeria, three (3) dissimilar legal systems known as; the civil legislative, the customary, and the Islamic-Sharia law operates concurrently (Nigeria Legal System, 2018). Nigeria is often referred to as the Giant of Africa, due to the abundance of natural resources plus her massive population of over 90 million inhabitants. This places her beyond other African countries; Because of her massive population, the country; Nigeria ranks as the world's Seventh highest populous country (World Bank, 2016; Investment Fund, 2020).

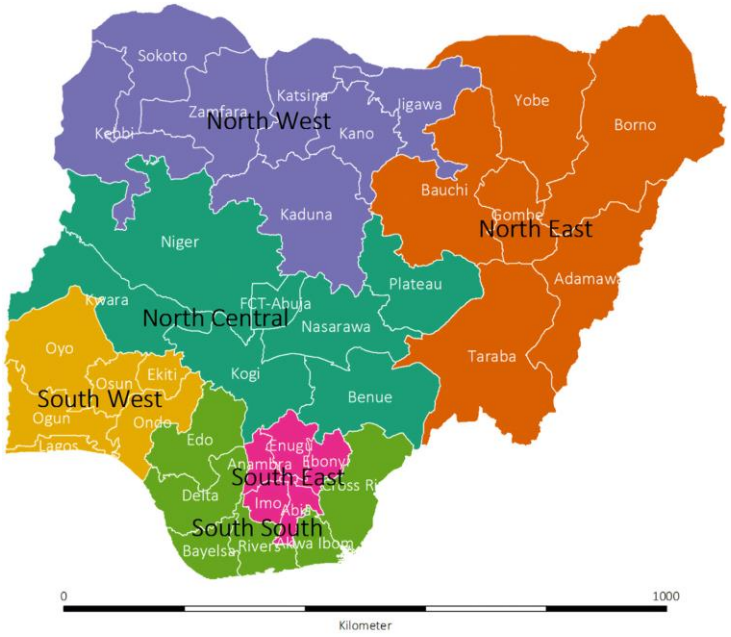

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria

Nigeria comprises 36 states, 774 local governments, and a federal capital territory (FCT) (Holmes, 1987). These states are headed by elected governors and these governors are administered by the Federal Capital Territory which is headed by a minister often appointed by the president of the country. Laws and decision making are being done on the federal level; decisions made on the state and local government level must be approved on the federal level before it can be made binding (Holmes, 1987). According to PLAC (2018), about half of the Nigerian populace are women, yet underrepresented in politics and decision making. As stated earlier, the country comprises of 36 states a Federal Capital Territory, which is Abuja, and 774 local government areas. The states and capital are divided into five regions known as the South-South region, the Eastern region, the Middle Belt the Western region, and the Northern region. The origin of Nigeria is rooted in the British colonial rule from the 19th century. Via the amalgamation of the Northern Nigerian protectorates in conjunction with the Southern protectorate, Nigeria took her present territorial shape in 1914 (Kwarteng, 2012).

*(**Figure 1** is derived from BMC (2018).*

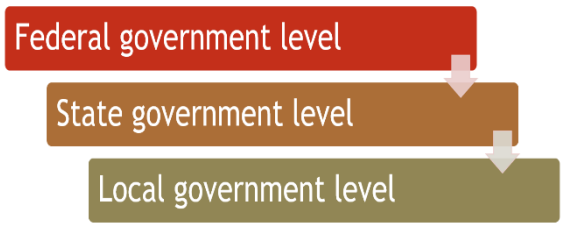

Figure 2: Levels of Government in Nigeria

Officially, Nigeria is a democratic regime, her government consists of 3 tiers (*See **Figure 2***). The Federal government, the State government, and the Local government. These 3 tiers of government collectively work together to develop and implement policies. However, the federal government is supreme and the most powerful and as such can formulate and implement policies on its own (Fadlullah, Abbas, Abdulazeez, & Abdullahi, 2014).

The Republic of Nigeria is a federation that conducts its election for political offices every four years. The election for the political offices are in three phases; these phases include the presidential, the gubernatorial, and the state assembly election (Nigerian Election Law, 2011). The Nigerian federal system of government composes of three district branches namely: the legislative, executive, and judicial, the power of these three districts is vested upon the Constitution of Nigeria (Khemani, 2001).

The politics of Nigeria take place within the framework of a federal, presidential, representative democracy also known as indirect democracy or representative government[1] (Nigeria Legal System, 2018). The functions of the federal government of Nigeria vary, it includes but not limited to policy development such as the introduction of new law(s) and changing of existing law(s), enforcing laws via governmental department (Hochstetter, 2020).

3.1 THE STATE OF GENDER REPRESENTATION IN NIGERIAN POLITICS

In 2019, Nigeria was ranked the lowest percentage of women representation in the Federal House of Parliaments globally. The country ranked 186 out of 193 countries worldwide (PLAC, 2019). The 28th Section 42 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (1999 Constitution), shuns discrimination of any sort by making available for non-discrimination and/or limitations against any Nigerian citizen, either male or female or by the virtue of his/her political belief (PLAC, 2019). The political participation of women in politics and the decision-making process is very important to bring about development to the federation. Like many countries in the globe, Nigeria upholds a national democratic constitution, which strengthens inclusive and impartial access to political participation (Orokpo, Maha, & Enoja, 2017; Richard, 2014). The Federation of Nigeria has a total of 27 political parties; however, the prominent party that has interchangeably governed (either winning presidential election, gubernatorial, house of representatives, commissioners and local government chairman) the federation are just five and are:

- People Democratic Party (PDP)
- All progressive congress (APC) – *currently the ruling party*
- African democratic congress (ADC)
- Action Democratic Party (ADP)
- Social democratic party (SDP)

PDP and APC have been the parties ruling the Nigerian federation periodically after the end of the military rule. PDP ruled the Nigerian federation from 1999 to 2015; power was vested on APC after the election on May 29th, 2015 to date (See **appendix 1**). During the rule of PDP, women's representation in politics experienced steady but low growth as women's participation was very low compared to their male counterparts (see **Table 1** below).

[1] Representative democracy or representative government is a type of democracy created on the principal officials elected to represent a group as against direct democracy.

Legislative	1999-2003		2003 - 2007		2007 - 2011		2011 - 2015		2015 - 2019	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	454	96.8	443	94.5	433	92.32	438	93	440	93.82
Female	15	3.2	26	5.5	36	7.68	34	6.6	29	6.18
Total	469	100	469	100	469	100	469	100	469	100

Table 1: Comparative analysis of the distribution of the 469 legislators at the joint session in the National Assembly of Nigeria by gender 1999 - 2019

Table 1 above shows the percentage of women who won the national assembly seats from 1999 to 2019. Nigeria's federal legislative body "the National Assembly" comprises of two political arms; the House of Representatives of 360 members and the Senate of 109 members (About the House, 2018). These bodies are responsible for formulating policies, developing, and regulating laws and orders in the country. As seen in ***Table 1*** above, from 1999-2003 under the rule of PDP; only 15 seats (3.2%) were given to women either through election or by appointment. Whereas men occupied 454 seats (96.8%); between 2003-2007 still under the political reign of PDP, a little increase in women's representation in the legislative arm of the government was seen as 10 more women joined the assembly bringing their numbers to 26. Although, when compared to the number of men, women were still very much under-represented despite the increase. From 2007 to 2011, women took over 10 more seats thereby bringing their number to 36 and a percentage of 7.68 while the men still dominated in large number. The reason for the steady but slow/low increase between 1999 to 2007 may be due to (a) power was held and sustained by a political party (PDP) between the aforementioned period. Research has it that political change or unexpected resignation can lead to a collapse of a political landscape and in some cases can lead to little or no development (Wagner, 2020). The reason for the increase could also be (b) linked to the belief that women tend to have a positive feeling with the presence of their fellow women in decision and policymaking positions. As it can positively affect the future of women by encouraging more women to participate actively in politics thereby increasing women's representation in politics.

APC took over the political power of the federation after the party won the election in 2015; during this period women's representation in the legislative arm of government experienced a noticeable drop from 36 to 34 and finally to 29 in 2019. The decrease could be a result of power change. There is a prevalent political culture practiced in Nigeria which is; when a political candidate from an opposition political party wins the office of either the presidency or the gubernatorial position, he discontinues or cancels any laws or policy/policies formulated and implemented by the previous leader or political party as soon as he/party emerges the elected position (Olarewaju, 2020).

Aside from the representation of women in the legislature-national assembly; a woman is yet to assume the position of the president or vice president and the gubernatorial position of the federation. Women however have won the seat of the vice governor a few times in some Nigerian states. See ***Table 2*** below.

Position	Number of seats available	1999		2003		2007		2011	
		Number of women	% total	Number of women	% total	Number of women	% total	Number of women	% total
President	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senate	109	3	2.75	4	3.7	9	8.3	7	6.4
House of Representation	360	12	3.3	21	6.1	26	7.2	24	6.7
Governors	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deputy governors	36	1	2.8	2	5.6	6	16.7	2	5.6
State houses of assembly	990	12	1.21	38	3.48	52	5.25	69	7.0
Total	**1531**	**27**		**67**		**94**		**102**	

Table 2: Source: Adapted from INEC 1999, 2003, 2007 & 2011 results

Table 2 above shows the number of women representations in Nigerian's top elective positions between 1999 to 2011. It is evidenced from the table above that woman has not ruled the Nigerian federation to date. The table also shows the number of seats available in these top political positions; taking the governorship position as an instance, as seen in the table in 1999 out of 36 gubernatorial seats only one was won by women. In 2007, the number of women who won the position of the vice governor increased to 6 but dropped in the next election year (2011) to 2. As stated earlier, one of the political cultures constantly adopted in Nigeria is that when a candidate from an opposition political party wins either the presidency or the gubernatorial position, he discontinues or cancels any laws or policy/policies formulated and implemented by the previous leader or political party as soon as he emerges the position (Olarewaju, 2020). In this case, the same political party (PDP) ruled the Nigerian federation from 2007 to 2011 but different persons (See **appendix 1**); could it mean that those leaders have their different views on women? Hence the increase and decrease of women representation between the aforementioned years?

Striving to involve more Nigerian women into the political sphere should not be or misinterpreted to mean a fight in disagreement and competition with the men, it is a scuffle that will result in achieving great success and can only be attained by both genders working/collaborating. There is a great need for Nigerian women to actively participate in politics and its affairs, as about half or more of the whole population are women and as such, there is a great need for their interest to be well-thought-out and taken into consideration during decision making. Men and women are often being affected differently and as such experience circumstances and issues differently, even where such issues are similar. A certain degree of these issues and circumstances may or may not be associated specifically with women,

but issues with great consequences for all of humanity. Therefore, men cannot represent and replace women, regardless of the (good) intentions. Thus, the exclusion of women from the political sphere is a big loss for the country.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS

This section discusses the research design and instruments employed in this thesis. The data and how these data were collected are also discussed in this section. Finally, these sections briefly discuss the selected dependent and independent variables.

4.1 DATA COLLECTION

The validity of research is strengthened when a variation of multiple sources are being utilized (Yin, 2009). In collecting data, this study made use of the Triangulation research method. This method refers to using more than one method of data sources in qualitative research in developing a wide range of understanding a phenomenon (Toshkov, 2016). This data collection method has been seen as a qualitative research strategy used in testing the validity via the convergence of information derived from more than one source (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). This study uses both ***desk research and interview*** in deriving information.

4.1.1 Desk research

The online sources used in deriving information journal articles, policy papers, documented interviews, government cooperate and published by the Nigerian government for the government. Palinkas et al. (2013), argued that searching for information via pre-existing data demands a comprehensive search strategy, especially when searching for quality sources in relevant databases such as JSTOR, and the Leiden university database. A search strategy was developed; the key search words used were: gender, political representation + Nigeria, inequality and politics, women and politics, gender and politics, politics, policymaking, and Nigerian women. The eligibility criteria for this study are as follows:

- *Language*: only English written publications were searched and selected. Most importantly, the official language of Nigeria is English; this made the search easy for the searcher.
- *Publication status*: only national (Nigerian) and international reports, journals, and articles published were utilized.
- *Year of publication*: Publications from 2010-2020 were used in this study as one can consider it to be recent and good enough to investigate the low representation of women in Nigerian politics.

4.1.2 Informal/unstructured interview

The researcher conducted an informal interview in addition to the desk research carried out. The interview was done via zoom and teams due to logistics reasons.

An informal or unstructured interview is a non-formal or casual form of an interview in which the interviewer follows the lead of the interviewee; but ask infrequent and follow-up question to focus on the topic and to explain and simplify points he/she does not understand (Kathleen & Billie, 2011).
The researcher opted for an informal interview because of the sensitivity of the topic. The researcher believes that when a topic is sensitive it is suitable to ask indirect questions, and in some cases when an indirect question is been asked an indirect response is or should be expected. In cases like this, a follow-up question(s) should be asked to get detailed information from the interviewee. Opting for a formal interview or a survey was not an option due to the following reasons: the researcher aim on finding out the effect of having women in politics, the researcher's aim was also to know why women are politically underrepresented at the federal government level plus getting to know the sentiment surrounding it; therefore, a formal interview or a survey would not have been feasible as the researcher will not be able to ask follow-up questions. The interview questions are given in **appendix 3,** however, these questions were only used as a guide. Depending on how active they are politically and their responses to some questions, follow-up questions that deviated from the listed questions were asked.

The book 'Participant Observation' by Dewalt Billie R; was read and utilized by the researcher. Anthropologist uses this book to get some techniques on how to efficiently conduct an informal interview. After reading completely chapter 8 of the book, which is an informal interview, more informal interview techniques were gained. These techniques include but are not limited to: active listening, when and how to ask follow-up questions, reactions such as really" "wow" "yes" "uh-huh" should be used when the interviewee wants to gain more information from the interviewee. This interviewee interaction is to enhance a verbal component to the active listening which interprets, I am following you, I am listening, please go on.

4.1.3 Participant and sampling

All respondents are citizens of Nigeria and are all living in Nigeria and actively involved in Nigerian politics both on the federal and state levels. It was ensured that different categories of people conversant with the politics of Nigeria were interviewed to obtain varied opinions and different perspectives on the subject. A total of 10 interviewees were selected but due to time constraints and the COVID situation, it was difficult to interview all of the 10 interviewees. The researcher was able to interview only 5 out while the other 5 interviewees were either unreachable or declined the request to be interviewed.

Interviewee	Gender	Occupation	Date interviewed
Onojah (Respondent 1)	Male	Director of governor's forum/initiator EBIGO [2]	15-12-2020
Tinyan (Respondent 2)	Female	Special adviser to the first lady Founder, African women association.	17-12-2020
Glory (Respondent 3)	Female	Journalist	22-12-2020
Oliver (Respondent 4)	Male	Politician (contested for national house of representative- law maker) and a banker.	22-12-2020
George (Respondent 5)	Male	PDP youth ambassador and campaign manager	27-12-2020

Table 3: Overview of interview respondents

Research has been conducted in previous years by individual and multiple (international) organizations on the topic effect of gender representation in Nigerian politics on the federal government level. However, the research on the aforementioned topic seen online was based on desk research and surveys. A predominant number of the articles were purely based on analyzing research done by either the Nigerian government, United Nations, or Amnesty international, but none has taken a further step into having to interview politicians to get information directly from them. Therefore, this is another gap filled by this research.

4.1.4 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is said to work differently from other methods as this method (qualitative) is made up of documented words derived from previous scholars, interviews, observations, images, and symbols. This form is mostly used on an explanatory question that begins with "How" "Why" (Creswell, 2009; Toshkov, 2016; Robson, 2002). The analytical method implemented in this study is the triangulation method. The triangulation method means that the same problem is approached using different methods (Toshkov, Research design in political science, 2016). According to Toshkov (2016, p. 313), the triangulation method can be used at the data analysis stage as data collected in the analysis section involves more than one. In other words, more than one data collection source is analyzed to form an understanding and reach a conclusion. This method was chosen because, via the analysis of interview and online sources (theories, scholarly works) a powerful contribution to support existing research in social science and answering the hypothesis of this study is made possible.

4.1.5 Variables and operationalization

4.1.5.1 Dependent variables

The focus of this thesis is on the outcome of the policy-making as dependent on how different genders are represented in the policymakers. These outcomes in this thesis are limited to laws, regulations, and policies that are well balanced favoring both men and women. These outcomes will also effectively lead to the growth and development of Nigeria.

4.1.5.2 Independent variables

Gender is the independent variable selected. Gender presentation in this case is the number of policymakers that are women.

5 ANALYTICAL SECTION

This section presents the analysis of the findings of this research. This section is divided into two parts: the desk-research findings and findings from the informal/unstructured interview conducted. Both findings show empirical evidence to support the selected hypothesis and to answer the research question.

5.1 DESK RESEARCH ANALYSIS

As stated earlier under Section 3.1 above; *women are politically underrepresented in all political issues on the Nigerian federal level. However, the few who have been involved in politics thus far have made great achievements for themselves, the group they represent(ed), and for the country*. From the desk research, women in politics who have done and still doing well in politics and for the country by making a positive impact, boosting the economic state of the country were politically appointed by the president of the federation and not elected. This will be further discussed in the subsequent section.

The analysis of the desk research begins with a list of 4 women who have held political positions in the last 8 years in **Table 4** below. ***More women (albeit very few) have held a political position at the Federal level in Nigeria other than the 4 listed women, however, these women were selected because the positions they held were strategic and most relevant to this research. The achievements of most of the women that have held a political position at the federal government are either not well documented or not documented at all. Also, the 4 listed women were selected because the positions they held could be evaluated via information/data available on-line and via the interview conducted***. The desk research analysis concludes with an in-depth analysis of the impact these women made while in politics. These explanations also provide empirical evidence to support/prove the formulated hypothesis and thereby answering the research question.

NO	Name	Political Position and Party
1	Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala	Two term Minister of finance 2003-2006 and 2011-2015 (PDP). Presidential aspirant in year 2015 (PDP).
2	Kemi Adeosun	Ex-minister of finance 2015-2018 (APC)
3	Obageli Ezekwesili	Federal mister of solid minerals and Federal Minister of Education. Contested for president in 2019. Was in PDP later joined ACPN
4	Dora Akunyili	Director General of NAFDAC in April 2001. Contested for senatorial position (APGA) and (PDP)

Table 4: Selected women that have held political appointments in the past 8 years *(Abumere, 2017)****;*** *(Nwaezi, 2018)****.***

Building on the information obtained from the theories, hypothesis, and desk research, the following framework in form of a chart is constructed to summarize the findings of the desk research. The details of this chart and its interconnections are subsequently explained.

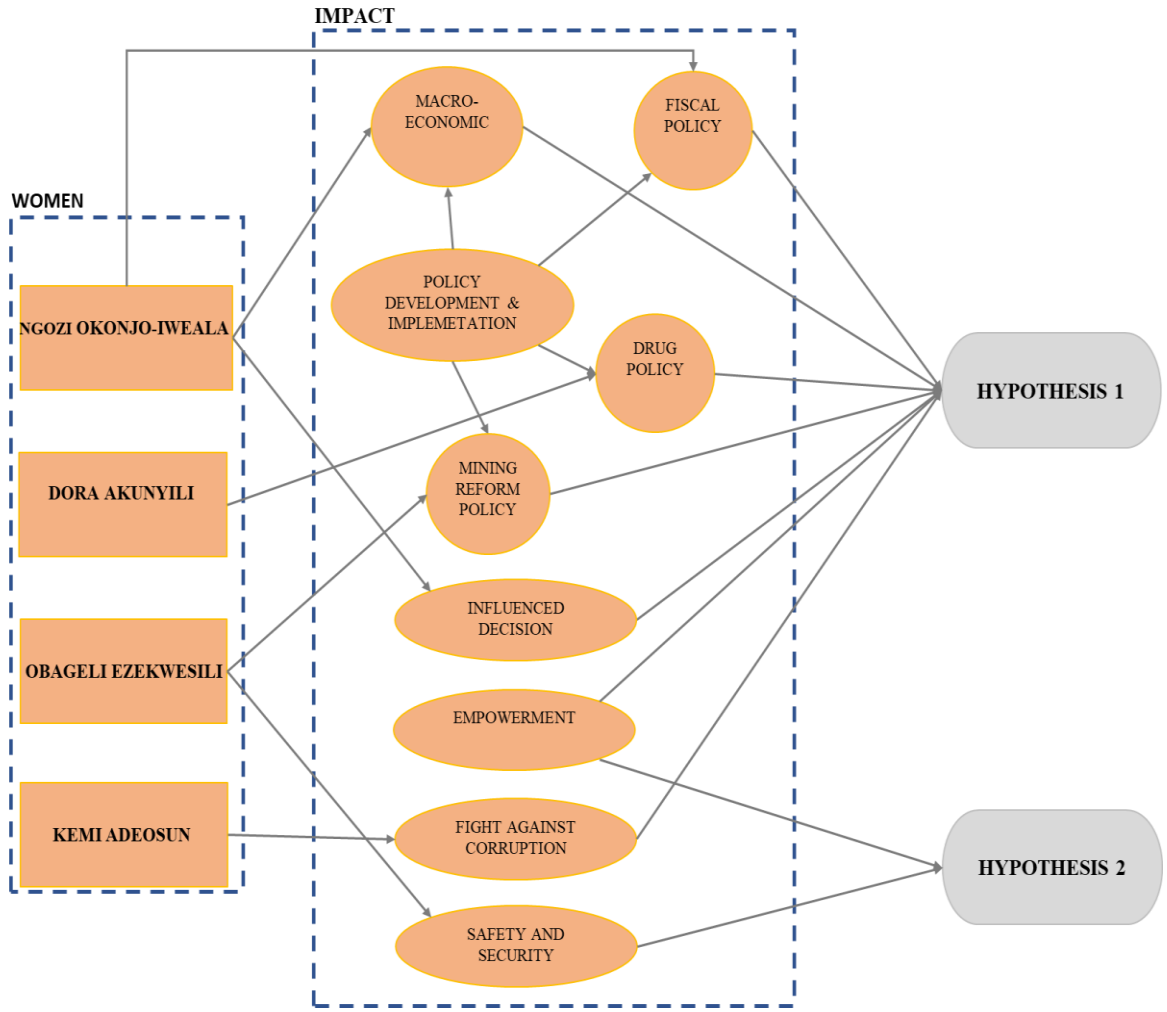

Figure 3: Framework summarizing desk research findings

5.1.1 Ngozi Okonjo-Iwela: Effect of her political representation in Nigeria

Ngozi Okonjo-Iwela: First woman elected as the minister for finance in the Federal government of Nigerian from 2003-2006 under the presidential leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo and was politically appointed into the same position by the Succeeding president Goodluck Jonathan from 2011-2015 (Forbes, 2020). Okonjo-Iwela who obtained her bachelor's degree at Harvard University and her Master's and Ph.D. degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; had a 25 years career at World Bank, Washington DC. She served the bank as a managing director (World Bank Line, 2013), in 2008-2009 she assisted low-income countries during the food crisis. In 2010, Okonjo-Iwela Chaired the then International Development Association (IDA) replenishment, together with the World Bank and she successfully raised $49.3 billion in grants and low-interest credit for the poorest countries in the globe (The World Bank, 2010).

5.1.1.1 Macroeconomic and Fiscal policy- H1

In 2003, Okonjo-Iweala proposed two policies to President Olusegun Obasanjo, this policy was a two-in-one policy that emphasizes on macroeconomics management and a fiscal policy regarding oil price in the federation. This policy supports the first hypothesis H1 which states that greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking. The policy was developed by Okonjo-Iweala due to the fluctuation of the oil price; the proposed policy was such that, she placed a benchmark on the oil price, and if/when the oil price goes up (e.g., from the benchmark of $60 to $65) the excess ($5) will be deposited in a specially created account. The approval and implementation of this policy brought about a new saving culture and thus increased the country's financial reserve. This support H1 as the more women of her kind are represented in politics and decision-making, the more positive policies of this type that affects the outcome of policymaking leading to economic growth and development of a country can be made. A country having financial reserves is said to be an asset as the country will have something to fall back on during austerity, this ensures development and prevents a country from plunging into heavy financial crisis and in the long run (if it continues) leads to the economic growth of a country (International Monetary Funds, 2000).

5.1.1.2 Influenced decision- H1

Okonjo-Iweala was the first woman in Nigeria to serve twice as the Minister of Finance and also as the Minister of Foreign affairs. She was only appointed by the president because she belonged to the then ruling political party (PDP). During her first term as Minister of Finance under the presidential leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo, she influenced and spearheaded a financial negotiation with the Paris Club; her involvement and negotiation resulted in the wiping out of $30 billion of Nigeria's long debt which the country has been unable to pay as well as an outright cancellation of US$18 billion (Nigerian Debt Relief, 2017). The federal government of Nigeria has been one of the most indebted nations according to Nigerian Relief (2017). Okonjo-Iweala made history and a great achievement in

Nigeria and for Nigerians by opening a dialogue with the Paris Club in 2005, thereby reaching an agreement and relieving Nigeria of a huge debt that was accumulated before she was elected into office. This ratifies the first hypothesis H1 which states that greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking. Okonjo-Iweala was able to influence the decision of the Paris Club thereby leading to a positive economic outcome for the country. A debt canceled is tantamount to money being saved which can be used to develop infrastructures, used for investments, or even service other debts. Besides the national saving rate is also a measure of the growth of the country.

5.1.1.3 Empowerment- H1 & H2

Additionally, Okonjo-Iweala developed two empowerment schemes called "Growing Girls in Nigeria (GWIN) (Gwin, 2015) and a "Youth Enterprise with Innovation" (YouWin) to give support to entrepreneurs and create more jobs (Mckenzie, 2019). According to David Mckenzie (2019), both programs were evaluated by the World Bank and was recorded to be the most effective programs of their kind globally. These programs created by Okojo-Iweala supports hypothesis H2 as both women and men are beneficiaries of the programs. Most importantly, it leads to a great outcome for the country as the more people are employed, the more the unemployment rate reduces and the more tax the government gets, the more tax leads to more investments, innovation, and development (Listokin & Schizer, 2013). This, in the end, fosters economic growth plus development. When there are economic growth and development the poverty rate reduces (The world Bank, 2020), thus, confirming hypothesis H1.

5.1.2 Kemi Adeosun: Effect of her political representation in Nigeria

In 2015, the ruling political party changed from PDP to APC at the federal level. This led to the end of Okojo-Iweala as the minister of finance. She was replaced by Kemi Adeosun, a member of the ruling party (APC).

Kemi Adeosun served the federal government as the Finance minister from 2015 to 2018 (National Assembly, 2015). Kemi was born in London, England; she earned a Bachelor of Science in Economics from East London University and a postgraduate Diploma in Finance and Public Management from University London (International Standards of Accounting, 2017). She is also a Chartered Accountant, she earned it from the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales (International Standards of Accounting, 2017).

Leading the ministry of finance, Kemi built on the foundation Okonjo-Iweala had in place. Kemi ensured that she continued with the monetary and fiscal policy her predecessor minister (Okonjo-

Iweala) developed. Kemi initiated and implemented a policy called the whistle-blower policy in all the federal government ministries (Adaoyichie, 2018). According to the federal ministry of finance (2017), the policy entails reporting or pointing out wrongdoing; this is to ensure that the ministry's reputation stays clean and corruption-free. Via the implementation of this policy the sum of N540 billion looted fund was discovered and recovered (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2017). Furthermore, the implementation of this policy exposed thousands of ghost workers [2] in the ministry of finance and its parastatals in the federal government of Nigeria. These ghost workers were immediately taken out of government payroll via the integrated payroll and personal information system (IPPIS) (Adaoyichie, 2018). Kemi also implemented the Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy across all the federal government ministries and this policy also saved billions of federal government funds that were channeled towards providing adequate infrastructure in the country (Adaoyichie, 2018).

A clear continuation is seen between of Okojo-Iweala and Kemi Adeosun; they are both women who support different political parties yet share a common goal which is, to make the country a better place for everyone by empowering the vulnerable and those in need, fighting against corruption and saving lives. They did achieve this by challenging the old status quo and formulating and implementing new policies. This proves the second hypothesis H2 of this research rights; as these women's involvement in politics led to a positive outcome that many including the country benefited from. Taking out these ghost workers freed up employment opportunities for both men and women alike to be employed.

5.1.3 Obiageli Ezekwesili: Effect of her political representation in Nigeria

Obiageli Ezekwesili is a politician and a Nigerian chartered accountant, a co-founder of Transparency International where she serves as one of the pioneer directors of the global anti-corruption body in Berlin Germany (UNESCO, 2019). Ezekwesili was elected as the Federal Minister of Solid Minerals after which she was politically appointed by president Olusegun Obasanjo to serve as the Federal Minister of education (PRIO, 2019). Thereafter, she became the vice president of the World Bank African Division from May 2007 to May 2012 (World Bank Blog, 2013; UNESCO, 2019). In 2018 Ezekwesili campaigned for the office of the president in the 2019 presidential election but lost (Daniel, 2018). In 2018, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize owing to her work for transparency and against corruption (Research Institute, 2019).

[2] A ghost worker, also known as ghost employee is a person who is listed on the payroll system but does not work (Hawley, n.d.).

5.1.3.1 Mining reform policy – H1

During Ezekwesili's term as the Minister of Solid, she initiated a vibrant reform program; this reform led to the global recognition of Nigeria as a credible mining investment destination (The Global Ocean Commission, 2015). It was reported that after the recognition, Nigeria started attracting investors as countries began to invest and partner with Nigeria's mining sectors (Legar Resources, 2019). Countries from Europe, Asia, North America, and the Middle East are partners of this investment initiated by Ezekwesili (Tree Mines Global Limited, 2019). This partnership led to a significant development in the country; development such as infrastructure is vital for functional and efficient mining (Erhun, 2015). According to Erhun (2015), The development in infrastructure brought economic prosperity via job creation and revenue enhancement. This establishes the first hypothesis H1 as development and economic growth was achieved via Ezekwesili mining reforms and policies.

5.1.3.2 Fight against insecurity and girl's advocacy- H2

In 2014 when the Nigerian Jihadist terror group called Boko-haram (which means Western education is forbidden) kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from the Chibok community (Strochlic, 2016). Ezekwesili initiated the viral #BringBackOurGirls social media campaign which trended internationally thereby drawing global attention (Daniel, 2018). Ezekwesili used her advocacy group in drawing global attention to the plight of all individuals that have been abducted by the Jihadist group (Nugent, 2018). The outcome of the campaign led to the release of 107 girls (BringBack our girls, n.d.). The release of 107 girls brought some relief to Nigerians as well as to parents whose daughters were among those released. This supports H2 of this research; as the hypothesis states that increasing the number of women decision-makers in politics leads to an outcome that is beneficial for women as well as their male counterparts. Ezekwesili took a bold decision and acted accordingly; she captured the world's attention with the hashtag. The outcome of the decision is evidence as it led to drawing global attention which resulted in the release of some of the adopted girls. The mothers of the released girls benefited from the campaign, their fathers and family did as well. Although some of the adopted girls are still held captive, but, the release of the 107 brought some relief and hope.

5.1.4 Dora Akunyili: Effect of her political representation in Nigeria

Dora Akunyili was the director-general of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Nigeria from 2001 to 2008 (The Guardian, 2019; Harding, 2016). Dora served as the minister of information and communication from 2008 to 2010 (Federal Ministry of Information, n.d.). Dora was a pharmacist and a government administrator, she gained international recognition and won multiple awards for her pharmacology and human rights work (Nigeria Galleria, 2019; Life & Times News, 2017). Dora contested for a senatorial position in April 2011 but lost (SaharaReporters New York, 2011).

5.1.4.1 Developed the national Drug policy and Changed drugs regulations - H2

Dora Akunyili courageously fought the greed and ignorance that made way for drug/medicine counterfeits in Nigeria from 2001 to 2009 (Barriaux, 2007). Since she entered into politics and was given a political position and then became director-general of the National Agency of Food and Drug Administration (NAFDAC) the percentage of fake drugs sold in Nigeria experienced a reduction from 70% in 1989 to about 10% (Harding, 2016; Muanya, 2019) and in 2012 it further reduced to 6.4% (Muanya, 2019). While serving her term, Dora led a high-profile campaign against fake and ineffective drugs in the country's marketplace (Kingsley, 2014). Dora was given, according to New Scientist magazine (2015), "the most dangerous job in Nigeria" she accepted the position because her sister died in 1988 after a fake insulin injection was administered to her for that reason Dora decided to save the life of many (Barriaux, 2007). After her appointment into the office, she challenged the status quo and developed a new drug regulation for Nigeria which was approved by the ex-president Olusegun Obasanjo (NAFDAC, n.d.).

Thereafter, Dora implemented a drug registration system and then spread the information across Nigeria via the national system which consists of television programs, campaigns, and workshops to enlighten consumers on the new development (Encyclopedia, n.d.). The drug regulation developed by Dora is such that any drug sold in Nigeria must have a registered NAFDAC number/code; any drug store or hospital that sells drugs without a registered code will be faced with a penalty (NAFDAC, n.d.). To help citizens and inhabitant of Nigeria know if the code is fake or real, NAFDAC developed a verification strategy which buyers can use in verifying any drug bought. This process is called the Mobile Authentication Service; by which a short message containing the code on the package is sent to 38353, 38351, 20966, and 1393 for free (Pharmapproach, 2020; NAFDAC, 2010). Via this drug regulation developed by Dora, many lives have been and are still being saved as the rate of death, untreated disease, treatment failure has reduced drastically (Nigeria Galleria, 2019; NAFDAC, 2010).

This, therefore, proves H2 as the decision Dora took (challenging the status quo and developing a new drug regulation) led to an outcome that every Nigerian benefited from. The benefit here includes the lives that have been saved owing to the drug regulation and the enlightenment program invented by Dora. She laid a good foundation while serving her term. She brought more women into the limelight of politics by giving them some political appointments such as NAFDAC inspectors. She believed that women are less corrupted when compared to men (Encyclopedia, n.d.).

5.2 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

This section analyzes the transcripts of the interview conducted. To aid adequate comprehension, the interview transcripts are analyzed by comparing the interviewee responses using the hypothesis as a basis. The comparison of the interview response is summarized in the table below. In the subsequent analysis, reference is made to ***Table 5*** *below.*

Labels for ***Table 5****:* It should be noted that ***Table 5*** below summarizes the responses of the interviewees (these are the statements of the interviewees and have not been modified by the researcher). **Positive** means the respondents believe that greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking leading to economic growth and development of a country (H1) and increasing the number of women decision-makers in politics leads to an outcome that is beneficial for women as well as their male counterparts (H2). **Neutral** means the respondent is uncertain or in doubt.

Respondent	Hypothesis 1	Hypothesis 2	Are women underrepresented?	Causes of underrepresentation
R 1	Electing women who are technocrats and politically minded often lead to a good outcome. **(Neutral)**	Women does great in-home management imagine them doing so for the country. **(Positive)**	On the federal level Yes, but on the state level women are more represented.	• Cultural stereotype • Religion • Marriage • Education
R 2	Men dominate the political field of Nigeria and that is why corruption is on the rise. And development is slow. **(Positive)**	Women are less corrupt than men and will make good decisions from a motherly perspective we will all benefits from. **(Positive)**	Yes, the representation is poor	• Less fund • Fear • Religion
R 3	Women are not much in the federal government, but the little there have done very well and I am happy with that. **(Positive)**	If women are much in politics of the Federal government, Nigeria will be much better than it is now. **(Positive)**	Women are very few in the federal government. And it has always been so.	• Fear • Culture
R 4	Women are less corrupt and they make better political leader than men. This foster prosperity. **(Positive)**	Women perform extremely well than men in managing the home. More of such in government will be great. **(Positive)**	Women are politically under-represented in the Nigerian politics in general. The Nigerian culture is a masculine one which place women at a disadvantage.	• Religion • Perception
R 5	Some of them are hardworking, having more of them here will lead to collaboration and when collaboration is present, growth is assured. **(Positive)**	The few women I have worked with are the ones that makes the decision for every campaign. And since I joined, we have always been successful. All thanks to them. **(Positive)**	Yes, there are. But it is being deliberated as we speak.	• Culture • Religion

Table 5: Summary of the responses of the interviewees

R2 stated that women are less corrupt than men and that they (women) have the tendency for doing good to people, to the community, and themselves than men do. Therefore, having more women in politics or an equivalent of women and men in politics will birth more opportunities for youth, young girls, children and will also foster growth and development. R4 Concours to this, he also stated that men are very corrupt when compared to women as men (sometimes) think only about themselves and family, and how to enrich themselves. R4 further stated thus:

> *"Nigerian women are more honest and less corrupt than Nigerian men. A lot of Nigerian men are too corrupt. To be honest, the more we bring in more women into parliament and they bring in the motherly touch and also into governance the better"*

R4 then stated that such corrupt nature, hampers the growth and development of a country, as the funds allocated for wealth creation are often being looted by these corrupt men. This is why he supports and advocated for more women's representation in politics. He believes women tend to speak against evil, act good, show care, and support thereby fostering a positive and desired change. R5 shares similar believe as R4; R5 stated that, due to the empathetic nature of women, they often strive to perform well while serving the country and they also strive to do things that others can benefit from. The belief of R4 and R5 proves hypothesis H2. R2 mentioned that the few women in politics who have done extremely well (*she mentioned the following names: Okonjo Iwela, Mrs. Akuniyi)* in terms of developing policies and empowerment programs that have helped in alleviating poverty and thereby making better the economic situation of the country are women who were given political appointments as a result of their active involvement in politics. They perform better as compared to women who were elected because they are rich, or their Godfather helped them in winning elections.

R2 stated that such women *(women who were elected and do not take their position in politics seriously)* contribute to the reason why women are not given good political positions that will enable them to challenge the status quo and propose a positive change. R1 also shares the same thought as R2 as he draws examples from the good and bad experiences he had working with women in governance. R1 also stated that the majority of the women who were elected "are out for patronage" thereby not taking their job seriously. And as such contributes nothing to the betterment of the country and the group they represent; for this reason, R1 does seem to doubt the capability of women in fostering economic growth and development. R5 thinks otherwise, as he stated that some of the women he has been working with within PDP were elected and have done and still doing significantly well. As seen in **Table 5,** R1's statement does not seem to support nor go against H1. Although R2 initial view on women fostering economic growth in the country proves the H1 correct. However, she still thinks that

some of the elected women in politics are less capable and have not made any positive impact on politics. R5 and R1, however, believes that women can make a better decision than men which will lead to the desired outcome. R1 stated thus:

> *"You see women, I must give it to you when you pick women that are technocratic and intellectually savvy. You rarely have problems; you will greatly benefit from their hard work. Look at Okonjo see what that women did for Nigeria and the world at large; Nigeria is not just benefiting from her hard work alone but the world"*

Even though R1's view seems not to be in full support of H1, he in some way believes that women who are well educated and well skilled exist, and a few of them are in politics and have done well for themselves and for the country Nigeria; which is what H2 is about. He, therefore, stated that women are great decision-makers in their homes thus, if a large number of these great decision-makers are highly represented in politics, they will make decisions that the outcome will be greatly benefited by the Nigerians home and in diaspora. R4 also shares the same light as R5 and R1 on women being great decision-makers as he affirmed that women make decisions that lead to a better outcome than men. The reason being that, when women make a decision, they consider the needs of others which is why sometimes they take long in arriving at a decision. Despite the long time spent in deciding, they often arrive at a decision that benefits everyone. His statement and belief show a strong connection to the H2 of this research. Correspondingly, R2 seems to have a strong belief in women, she stated that:

> *"Women cannot stand to see people suffering and dying in pain. If they are being given as much quotas as the men women will make a huge change in the country. Life will be impacted positively. I am telling you because I work closely with them"*

The statement above by R2 confirms hypothesis H2. Having more women in politics and decision-making will lead to a positive outcome. R3 stated that women are politically under-represented on the federal level, however, the few that have been there *(she mentioned Dora Akuniyi and Iwela Okonjo)* or where there served the country well. According to her; she is happy (as seen in ***Table 5***) with the few women who have been involved in politics thus far. As they have been able to empower women financially via a social scheme called N-Power. She explained that the scheme has produced thousands of jobs for both men and women in the country. She also stated that from the scheme, some applicants became schoolteachers, and some were giving money to begin any business of their choice. The explanation she gave coupled with her thought and believes is in line with the hypothesis H1 of this

research. R3 stated that she is a journalist who works closely with politicians as well as their political party. Her journalism is focused on politics and its affairs; therefore, she said she is politically oriented. R3 believes that if the few women in politics can develop such empowerment schemes that have been successful in poverty alleviation, thus, more of these women in politics and in decision-making positions will lead to a better decision that is beneficial to all irrespective of their gender. Her explanations and thoughts support the H2 of this research.

R3 went further into stating that the majority of the policies which the federal government implemented that has brought about financial comfortability were developed by women, but the men who dominate the federal politics take the glory. When R3 was asked how accurate her statements were; she stated that she knows these because she works with a company that partners with the law firm that assisted some of these women in developing and writing some of the policies. R3 also affirmed that, out of the few women in politics, some of them have not been able to document their progress or achievement or what they are doing in politics. According to R2, this is one of the major reasons why much of their achievements and impact made in politics are not known publicly. R2 stated that some of the women in politics cannot record and articulate to the general public what they have done and still doing. They rather spend money on getting more bodyguards to protect them owing to the nature of the country. This makes people oblivious of the positive effect they have made while in politics.

From the findings (desk research and interview responses) analyzed above; it is evidenced that having more women in politics leads to the following outcomes: gender equality, collaboration, (self) development, (economic) growth, favorable policies, and decisions beneficial to all inhabitants. Since Nigeria practices a federal system of governance; governmental policies and decision-making that govern the country are being done/made on the federal level. These policies and decisions are meant to be adhered to by all governmental bodies (state and local government); this makes the federal government supreme. Having more women involved in politics on the federal level brings about the aforementioned positive outcomes.

6 APPLICATION OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*This section presents the application of the development theory and the theory of representation earlier described in Sections **2.2** and Section **2.3** of this research.*

6.1 DEVELOPMENT THEORY

The theoretical review has shown that desired changes and development can be achieved via equality in gender (The Lewis theory of development, 2010; Delys, 2014). In other words, the key factor to (economic) growth and development is the representation and active participation of both sexes in political affairs such as decision-making. Empirical data collected online and via interview confirms

the development theory. When men and women are equally represented and participate actively in politics, laws, and regulations that favor each sex is made; decisions that everyone benefits from is also made.

From the findings presented in the analytical section **(Section 5)**, it is seen that gender dynamics in the political sphere boosted (using the case of Ngozi Okonjo-Iwela) individual development via empowerment schemes that provided business orientation to many and provided a predominant number of them with jobs. And the development of the country by developing a macroeconomic and fiscal policy which brought about a new saving culture thus increased the country's financial reserve. This increased the country's wealth therefore, leading to economic growth and development as the financial reserve serves as an asset for the country and will greatly help the country in the time of austerity. It is also evidenced by the findings of this research that gender dynamism has created room for integration, learning, and growth. Better strategies in decision-making were gained and most importantly fair policies can be formulated which will safeguard the integrity of all citizens thereby reducing any sort of discrimination (e.g., the macroeconomic and fiscal policy, whistle-blower policy, the decision, fight against insecurity, made with the Paris Club, which the country benefited from). This is what the development theory states; that development and economic growth are made possible when there is gender equality.

6.2 THEORY OF REPRESENTATION

The theory of representative bureaucracy implies that the public (government) workforce representation of persons such as sex, race, and ethnicity help in ensuring that the interest of all groups is adequately considered in the process of bureaucratic decision-making (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010). The theory place emphasis on the social group should have a "spokesperson" and "officeholder" in both administrative and political position regardless of the gender, ethnicity, and race of the person (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010). Meier (2019). The reason for having a spokesperson is so that the concerns and needs of the people will be taking into consideration during decision-making.

The findings of this study confirm the theory of representation to be true. As the women who have been and in politics represented their group well. As they developed policies and made decisions that favored a large number of the inhabitant. Taking the case of Dora Akunyili who decided to take the political position given to her by the then president of the country to be the director of NAFDAC. It was said that some persons rejected the political position due to the nature of the job. Even though her life was threatened several times (Transparency International, 2004; Johnson, 2014), Dora continued because, she had the interest, concern, and needs of all inhabitants at heart. Bearing in mind are aim/goal; which was to put an end to the sale of fake medicines therefore putting an end to death caused by the

consumption of fake medicines. Her decisions and action benefited the good citizens of the country as a large proportion of the fake drugs/medicine sellers were caught and brought to justice.

Drawing insight from the fight against insecurity and girls advocacy regarding the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by the Nigerian Islamic Terror group called Boko-Haram; which was initiated by Ezekwesili. Ezekwesili took a brave decision by ensuring that the world knows about the happenings in the country. She invested the hashtag #Bringbackourgirls that went viral. Via her decision and actions, 107 girls were released. The outcome of her decisions and action was positive, families were reunited with their daughters, and this brought some sort of relief. The theory of representation holds that a social group should have a "spokesperson" and "officeholder" in both administrative and political positions regardless of the gender, ethnicity, and race of the person. Ezekwesili being an Igbo from the Eastern part of the country represented the Northerners and fought for the freedom of the Northern girls.

7 KNOWLEDGE GAP FILLED: FACTORS LIMITING WOMEN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

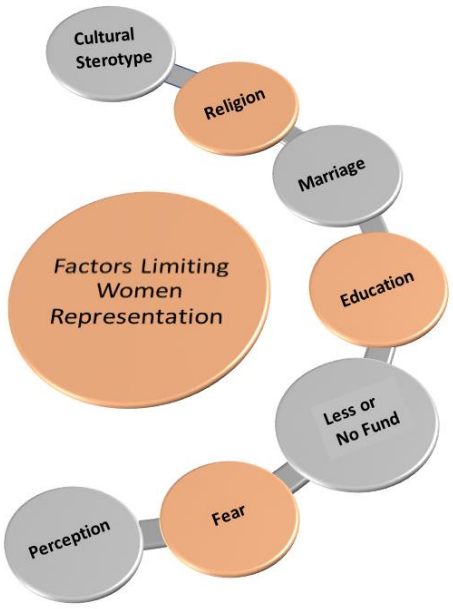

Figure 4: Factors limiting women representation in Nigeria

As stated in the introductory section (Section 1), this research aims to contribute to knowledge and literature by exploring the factors or causes that limit the political representation of women in the political sphere of the federal government of Nigeria. The factors explained in this section is drawn from the interview answers given by the respondents and backed up with some online sources. A shortlist of the limiting factors is listed in ***Table 5*** and represented in ***Figure 4*** above. From ***Table 5,*** it is seen that religion and culture is the most dominant factor stated by all the respondent. Therefore, this section will give a brief explanation of how culture, religion, and marriage act as hindrances to women's political representation.

7.1 CULTURAL STEREOTYPE

According to R1 the culture practiced in a multi-cultural country such as Nigeria seems to render women invisible and submissive to men. Thus, making it tough for women to participate in political activities and live a productive and fulfilling life. This same culture has placed women as nothing but full-time housewives, child bearers, house helps and has also reduced women to taking and indulging in menial jobs such as market women, farmers, and so on (Courage & Kapingura, 2019). Just a few years back, the president of Nigeria visited Germany. In the course of his visit, had a conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel. The conversation was streamed live. Chancellor Angela Merkel asked the Nigerian president what political party his wife belonged to? The president replied with "my wife belongs to my kitchen, my living room, and the other room (i.e., the bedroom) (Andreas & Shalal, 2016). According to Durojaye et al (2016), cultural practices in Nigeria is overpowering as it is rooted in or derived from religion. The fact that the country is very religious makes cultural practice more prevalent.

7.2 RELIGION

Nigeria is divided amongst believers of Christianity, Islam, and traditional religion (Dowd, 2014). The Christians derive their laws and doctrine from the Holy Scriptures (The Bible). The Holy scriptures which the Christians lay reference to forbid women from leading a congregation of men, the scriptures also forbid women from speaking in public. R1 and R2 also mentioned that during their interview session; they are both Christians and they believe that the inequality women suffer in the country is religiously driven. Drawing an example from the scripture of St. Paul; King James Version, stated that in the assembly of believers and of God's holy people (churches), women keep quiet, for the reason that women have no permission to speak; if they have anything to say in church, it should be told to their husbands at home as it is shameful for women to speak in the assembly (Timothy 2:12); (1st Corinthians 14:34). Ephesians 5:22-24[3], says "Wives, submit to your husbands, as you do to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church". Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands". 1stTimothy 2:11-15[4], also says that "Let women learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor".

The researcher realized in the course of this study that Christians are not the only one who preaches women absolute submission to men but also the Islamic believers commonly known as the Muslims. One of the common doctrines/practices of Islam holds that women are not allowed to talk in a public gathering or congregation such as Mosque. Before a woman can go into the Mosque for prayers or to pray, she seeks permission from her parent/guardian or husbands (Pereira & Jibrin, 2010; Audeh, 2019). While in the Mosque where prayers are been done, women are not permitted to call the "Adhan"

[3] https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%205:22-24&version=NIV
[4] https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Timothy%202%3A11-15&version=KJV

(prayers) women can only call the "Adhan" in her home, on the condition that all the congregants are women (Pereira & Jibrin, 2010; Audeh, 2019). Furthermore, the Islamic religion practiced in Nigeria under the Principle of Sharia law prohibits formal education for girls/women for the reason that formal education is secular and derails their daughter/wife away from the teaching of Allah and as such seen as a taboo (Vladimir, Faith, & Greg, 2014). This is the reason why the jihadist group in Nigeria called "Boko Haram" (translates to formal education is forbidden) kidnaps school girls and female school teachers from their various schools in Northern Nigeria (Herrmann, 2019). To be involved in politics, education is required (Persson, 2015) therefore, if a lady is not educated she cannot be involved in politics. Even if she gets involved via the help of anyone, she will not be able to function well. This is what R1 meant by saying when technocratic women are elected, there is barely a problem; but if the other way around, then the problem is assured.

One can see above that both the Christians and the Islamic doctrine on women submitting to men and men having total authority over women is similar and will limit women's participation in leadership positions including politics.

7.3 MARRIAGE

The Muslims practice a doctrine called Nāmūs. Nāmūs is an Arabic concept which means law, reputation, virtue, modesty, respect, female dignity, Chasity, and girl virginity (Kardam, 2017). This Islamic notion or concept called Nāmūs is with respect to keeping the integrity of the Islamic family. For this reason, they adore and strictly adhere to the doctrine of Nāmūs (Kardam, 2017). Owing to the practice of the Nāmūs, most of the Islamic parents or husbands do not allow either their wives or girl children to go into public places without being accompanied by her husband or brother. According to respondents 1, 2, and 4, such doctrine hampers the participation of Muslim women/ladies in politics. As their husbands will not allow their wives out into any public gathering dominated by men. From what respondent 1, 2, and 4 stated, political meetings in Nigeria is often addressed as a "dirty game" and most of their political meetings are being held in the mid-night. It will be very difficult for a man to allow his wife to go to such meeting at that time of the day. Similarly, according to respondent 4, single/unmarried women who are involved in politics are seen as a promiscuous lady and as such, men might not approach them for marriage. This makes single/unmarried ladies stay off politics to be seen as a decent lady ready for marriage. Therefore, one can say that the fear of losing her husband keeps women who have a passion for politics stay off politics. More so, the fear of not being able to marry keeps single/unmarried ladies who are smart and also have a passion for politics stay off politics. The Bible which the Christians lay reference to the state in the book of 2nd Corinthians 6:14; New King James Version "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what a fellowship has

righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?[5]. Politics is generally known as a dirty game (Degirmenci, 2016) thus, most Christians see it as a gathering of unbelievers, and many men will not permit their wife to be part of it.

8 CONCLUSION

This research aimed at answering the question "*How gender representation in politics affects the outcome of policymaking in the federal government of Nigeria"*. And to help answer the question two hypothesis were formulated which are: H1: greater women's representation in politics and decision-making positively affects the outcome of policymaking leading to economic growth and development of a country; H2: increasing the number of women decision-makers in politics leads to an outcome that is beneficial for women as well as their male counterparts. To test these hypotheses, a combination of desk research and informal/unstructured interview was carried out. The gender representation in this research is focused on politics and at the federal government level. Gender representation in politics at the federal level is selected because laws, policies, and decisions made at the federal government supersede the states and local government levels of governance in Nigeria.

The outcome of this research shows that women are less represented in politics when compared to their male counterparts. The few women who have been and still into politics on the federal level have positively impacted life's in diverse ways while contributing to the economic growth of the country; from empowering the poor and vulnerable, providing jobs, developing new policies, challenge previous unfavorable status quo and above all alleviating poverty and thereby boosting the economic situation of the country. Increasing women in politics will facilitate a better decision, which will then lead to more economic growth and development of the country. When women are included in political affairs such as decision making, it leads to the development of laws and regulations that every inhabitant of the country benefit from. Since women are deemed to be home managers, they consider the needs of people and cannot watch people suffer when they are in a position to help, they are less corrupt and hence most of them are mothers, they will apply the intrinsic motherly approach when making decisions. Thus, answering the research question of this study; the greater the number of women in politics, the better the policy outcome. And therefore, establishing the formulated hypothesis.

Secondly, one of the aims of this research was to contribute to knowledge and literature by exploring the factors that limit the political representation of women in the political sphere of the federal government of Nigeria. These factors include religion, culture, marriage, fear, perception, education,

[5]Retrieve from New King James Version (NKJV)
https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%206%3A14&version=NKJV

and less or no fund. The dominant factors seem to be religion, culture, and marriage; these factors were further corroborated by the interviewees. Further research was done taking a closer look at the Bible (for the Christians) and the Quran (for the Muslims) to see if the Bible and the Quran talk about gender and equality. The findings revealed that both the Christians and the Islamic doctrines on women submitting to men and men having total authority over women are similar and it is stated in the Bible and Quran. However, it is uncertain if the Bible and the Quran support and teaches gender inequality against women. Therefore, it is suggested that further research should be made on this subject.

8.1 RESEARCH VALIDITY

The content, scope, and conclusion drawn in this research are in accordance with the applied research method as well as the interview results. The information in the analytical sections was collected via online/desk research and an informal/unstructured remote interview. The interview respondents are Nigerians and are politicians who have contested for political positions in previous years in Nigeria or people who work closely with politicians. The findings from the research conducted online and from the interview conducted have thus proven to be useful in confirming and validating the formulated hypothesis. More so, the findings and collusion of the desk research analysis match with that of the interview analysis. As both hypotheses have been tested and proven to be true.

8.2 RESEARCH LIMITATION

This research is not without limitations. First, the few women who were given the opportunity to participate in politics or who have held a political position at the federal level have contributed positively to the economy and development of the country. However, many of these achievements are not well documented or not documented at all online. Documentation of their performances and contributions would have been helpful for this research.

Secondly, a total of 10 respondents were selected but due to time constraints, the COVID situation, and the Christmas holiday; it was difficult to interview all of the 10 interviewees. The researcher was able to interview only 5 out while the other 5 respondents were either unreachable or declined the request to be interviewed: even after giving a date and time for the interview. Interviewing all 10 respondents would have given the researcher a broader perspective on the topic.

8.3 RECOMMENDATION

From the findings presented in this research, it is seen that the few women who have been into politics helped in shaping the country; positively affecting the economy and boosting development. Yet, women are still not given more political positions. This is due to the factors and barriers presented in this research (a) the way women are being perceived (stereotypes). This perception made it such that

political positions given to women are very few; positions such as women leader. Women should be given ample opportunities as men to actively participate in politics on the federal level. Women should be given or elected into positions that will give them the privilege to challenge the existing status-quo and to fight for the concerns and demands of the people they represent. Women should not just be given positions such as “women leader” (as stated by R1 and R2) rather positions such as senators and houses of representatives (who are the law-makers of the country), governors or vice, president or vice.

(b) barriers such as inequality in public offices that place women in a disadvantaged position. Women whose husbands support them politically and have the passion for politics should be given the opportunity to serve the federation just as their male counterparts. Therefore, the federal government of Nigeria should remove all barriers limiting women's political participation and provide political quotas specifically for women rather than electing or appointing women as women leaders.

Also, religious bodies in Nigeria should enlighten their congregation on the teaching of God (for Christians) and the teaching of Allah/Muhammed (for Muslims). Via this enlightenment, it will be made known if the Bible or the Quran actually approves or disapproves of gender inequality against women.

Similarly, cultural practices that place women in disadvantaged positions should be looked into and if possible, abolished. As most of these cultural practices are not in favor of women. An example is drawn from the analytical section of this research in which one culture stipulates that a girl child is not meant to be in school but meant to stay and take care of the home. These kinds of culture should be modified or abolished.

Lastly, the policymakers of Nigeria can address gender inequality against women and women's political under-representation in the country. This can be improved by issuing defined quotas. These quotas should be given to women for a certain position. For example, if the president of Nigeria is a man his assistance should be a woman and vice versa. Also, at least 35-50% of the parliamentary members should be women. Quota as this has been adopted and tested in some African countries with a similar system of government as Nigeria. Namibia for example adopted a policy called the Zebra policy system (O'Riordan, 2015) because the Namibian women suffered political inequality in previous years. This inequality was subdued via dialogue. This dialogue led to the development and implementation of the Zebra policy which simply means if a man is a president a woman will be appointed as the assistance and vice versa (Gender Quotas Database, 2020). This resulted in women filling half of the seats in the country’s parliaments. The implementation of this policy led to a political collaboration which later had a great impact on the country’s economy (O'Riordan, 2015). Nigerian Policymakers can adopt a similar policy to increase women's representation in politics and to strengthen the economy of the country.

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10 APPENDIX

10.1 APPENDIX 1

List of Nigerian Past Presidents

NAME	REIGN	OFFICE HELD	DATE OF BIRTH	Party
Yakubu Gowon	1966-1975	Military ruler	19th October, 1934	Military
Olusegun Obasanjo	1976-1976	Military ruler	5th March, 1937	Military
Shehu Shagari	1979-1983	President	1925-died 2018	National Party Nigeria
Muhammadu Buhari	1983-1985 & 2015 ***till Date***	Military ruler President	17th December, 1942	Military All progressive congress (APC)
Ibrahim Babangida	1985-1993	Military ruler	17th August, 1941	
Ernest Shonekan	1993- for 83 days	President	9th May, 1939	Independent
Sani Abacha	1993-1998	Military ruler	1943, died 1998	Military
Adulsalami Abubakar	1998-1999	Military ruler	13th June, 1942	Military
Olusegun Obasenjo	1999-2007	President	5th March, 1937	People's Democratic Party (PDP)
Umaru Musa Yar'Adua	2007-2010 (Died in office)	President	1951- died 2010	PDP
Goodluck Jonathan	2010-2015	President	20th November, 1957	PDP

10.2 APPENDIX 2

Consent form

Purpose and information: I kindly request that you participate in a research which is on the effect gender representation in politics have on decision-making in the federal government of Nigeria. The research aims at answering the following question: how does gender representation in politics affect the outcome of policymaking in the federal government of Nigeria? and to highlights factors limiting gender representation in the federal government of Nigeria.

Your participation: if giving the consent, your participation comprises of an informal or unstructured interview with the researcher (myself). This interview will last approximately 45 minutes as it is known how busy you are given your (political) position in the federal government. With your permission, call can be made across to you if there is need for more or further follow-up question or clarification.

Privacy and confidentiality: your privacy shall be ensured via confidentiality. All given information such as full names shall be withheld and kept confidential unless if you do not mind your full names being shared. This will be asked before the interview commence to get your final decision on this. If giving your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded for transcribing purpose and it shall be kept confidential. This again shall be asked before the interview commence. The transcript of the interview comprising of all identifying information shall be retained by the interviewer after the interview and until the end of the study.

Via this, you can comply with national standards and university rules regarding scientific integrity, impartiality and confidentiality will be respected.

❍ I understand the above text and agree to participate in the study

❍ I do not agree with participation in the study

Name of contestant:

Signature: Date: --/--/----

Contact information

For further question(s), concern (s) and contribution (s) regarding this study, contact

Researcher: Akowe Joy

Email: joyuyoakowe@ymail.com

10.3 APPENDIX 3

Interview questions

1. What is the name of your organization or parastatal?
2. What is your position in your organization?
3. What political party do you belong to?
4. How many men and women are in your department, or committee you belong to?
5. What is your view on gender representation in Nigeria?
6. How many women are really in a leadership position in your organization/department?
7. How are they performing? Also, what is their general attitude especially those in place of authority
8. What impact have these women made thus far?
9. Politically, on the federal government level, a woman is yet to be the president or vice do you think they are any obstacle limiting women from attaining that position?
   -do you think women are being discriminated against?
   -If No, why are they underrepresented in politics?
   -If yes, do you think women will make a good leader?
10. Based on your experience with women in place of authority, would you support more women to be given more opportunity to lead especially in policymaking, decision making