

**THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN ENHANCING WOMEN'S  
REPRESENTATION IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**BY**

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## CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled “*The Role of Political Parties in Enhancing Women Representation in Nigeria’s National Assembly*” presented by Balure Ajibola Mohammed (PG/NLS/1714010) has met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies (MLS) of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin, Edo State.

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of my research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Abdullahi Zainawa. It is an original work and no part of it has ever been presented for the award of any degree anywhere. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged through the references.

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**APPROVAL PAGE**

This is to certify that this dissertation “*The Role of Political Parties in Enhancing Women Participation in Nigerian Democracy (A Case Study of National Assembly)*” has been read and approved as having met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies is approved for contribution to knowledge.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to Allah (SWT) who sustained and gave me all I needed throughout my studies. My unquantifiable gratitude goes to my parent, siblings, colleagues for their unending love, support and encouragement and all those who are in pursuit of academic excellence.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise and adoration is due to Almighty who enabled me through His infinite mercy to come to the completion of this research work and Master Degree in this great institution of learning, may the peace and blessings be upon the holy prophet Muhammad (SAW) and members of his household and companions till the day of accountability

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ACE – the Electoral Knowledge Network

ASK – Associates for Scriptural Knowledge

CRF – Constitutional Rights Foundation

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

IEBC – Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission

IFES – International Foundation for Electoral Systems

INEC – Independent National Electoral Commission

LGA – Local Government Area

NASS – National Assembly

NBS – National Bureau of Statistics

NPC – National Population Commission

ODIHR – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

USA – United States of America

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## ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine the characteristics of political parties that could be conducive to women legislative representation in Nigeria's National Assembly from 1999 to 2019. The objectives of the study were to: examine the variations in women legislative representation of successive National Assemblies in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic; determine whether or not women are being or have been underrepresented in Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic; identify the role of political parties in ensuring parity in legislative representation in the National Assembly; and suggest possible ways of enhancing the role of political parties for improved women representation in National Assembly.

The study adopted the survey research design, using both qualitative and quantitative data. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the key informants that provided the primary data, while the secondary data were taken from published materials such as the official gazettes of the National Assembly, books, journals, magazines, the internet, and so on. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted for data analysis. Therefore, while the content analysis which emphasizes textual representation of data was employed in analyzing qualitative data, quantitative data were represented using percentages.

The study revealed a sharp disagreement between political administrators and lawmakers on the factors responsible for women underrepresentation in the National Assembly. Hence, the study showed that the introduction of gender-based quotas and the percentage of women in the National Executive Committee, as party attributes that may undermine women legislative representation.

Given the above, strategies suggested to enhance the role of political parties in women legislative representation includes but not limited to; entrenching Affirmative action principles in party constitutions, reduction of undue interference in party workings by its leaders, avoiding the conduct of party affairs at such time that may not be conducive for female aspirants, etc.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the Study

The presence and effectiveness of women has far-reaching implications for the notion of democratic citizenship (Hassim, 1999). Over the years, women have played important roles to the growth and development of democratic politics in Nigeria. Studies have shown that right from the pre-colonial era, through the post-colonial period, to the present modern day, women have actively participated in laying solid foundations for democratization process in Nigeria (Ngara & Ayabam, 2013; Olatunde, 2010). However, this role seems to be largely unrewarded, hence, Sirleaf (2010) argued that globally, the political participation and representation of women in political leadership is increasingly low.

Asan (2019) pointed out that the role of women in decision making and economic development has evolved from ancient times where women were generally seen as chattels. Hence, Powley (2006, p. 2) asserted that “women’s ability to make an impact in male-dominated institutions will be limited until they are represented in numbers large enough to have a collective voice, until they reach a ‘critical mass’.” However, as much as women’s participation in social and political life has been given literary prominence, their involvement in legislative representation has been relegated to the background. This was confirmed by an Inter-Parliamentarian Union, IPU (2012) report indicating that the global average of female parliamentary representation stood at 23.8% in the year 2018. This is, however, despite the 1995 Beijing declaration of affirmative action for women for at least 30% of appointed and elective positions, women political positions have continued to dwindle in the last 20 years. Allah-Mensah (2005) posits that stereotyping of the feminine gender is largely responsible for this.

In 1999, Nigeria ushered in the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic where a negligible number of women were elected into the National Assembly. The number steadily increased in 2007. However, the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly recorded a low turnout of women representatives in 2015. In the 2019 legislative elections also, the number declined sharply but for the intervention of the Court of Appeal, in restoring the legislative mandate of a former Senate Minority Leader (Pulse Nigeria, 2019, November 6<sup>th</sup>; Tribune Online, 2019, November 11<sup>th</sup>). This however, took the number in the Senate to where it was in the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly. The seeming low legislative turnover of women, is largely attributable to various interplays within the party system. These interactions according Okoosi-Simbine (2010), ranges from “method of candidate nomination, influence of party elders, deliberate obstruction, etc.” Thus, Kittilson (1995) opined that “a national level analysis overlooks the fact that individual parties vary greatly in the proportion of women MPs within each nation”.

Kittilson further observed that women representation in parliament are determined by political parties, since, “parties differ in the number of women they nominate, where they rank women on the party lists, and the proportion of women that they send to parliament”. Hence, Norris and Lovenduski (as cited in Kittilson, 1995) noted that “parties are the real gate-keepers to elected office; they control which candidates are recruited”. The view expressed by Norris and Lovenduski was re-echoed by Ogunnoiki (2018) when he averred that “a political party is an organised group of people with a *sui generis* label and possibly an acronym that, primarily recruit, train and field candidates to be elected to vacant public offices by eligible electorates through the constitutional means of periodic election.” Hence, reasserting the position of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA (2015, p. 11) which stated that “as the gatekeepers to elected posts in almost all countries, political parties are consistently identified as responsible for women’s political underrepresentation.” Therefore, since political parties play such an important role in the composition of parliament, it is

important to understand how parties differ in encouraging or discouraging women's access to parliament (Kittilson, 1995), and its role critically examined.

For a country's development, particularly a country like Nigeria, a vantage position should be accorded to women, as they constitute 49.5% of the population (National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, 2015; 2018). This position was re-echoed by the International IDEA (2016, p. 11) when it argued "this over-representation of men is not only problematic in and of itself, but the under-representation of women's interests in decision-making bodies also acts as an obstacle to equitable and sustainable development." Thus, equal opportunity in social sphere as argued Fraser (2003), engenders development.

Therefore, this study analyses party-level variation in women's representation in parliament. Kittilson (1995) argued that "prior research addressing the impact of party upon women's representation is limited to case studies of individual parties or single national party systems". Hence, this study will examine the characteristics of political parties that are conducive to women legislative representation.

## **1.2.Statement of the Research Problem**

Women participation in politics have gained global attention, thus, re-echoing the catchwords of democracy being – majority rule, equality and justice. Stemming from the component of equality, a part of the ingredients of democratic governance, there exist a need for parity of participation in the political system. As mentioned by Sawer (as cited in Tremblay, 2008, p. xv), "The representation of women in particular is now widely accepted as an indicator of the quality of democracy. It has become a proxy for equality of citizenship and equal opportunity as is seen as contributing to the legitimacy of parliamentary institutions and their capacity for inclusive deliberation."

As rightly argued by Asan (2019) to the effect that



*While Nigerian women have always been politically and economically active, the extent and significance of their activism has not always been rewarded by commensurate degrees of political power, contrary to the men. Over the years, women in Nigeria have been relegated to the background on issues of overall development, especially in democratic leadership (Legislative positions) (P. 3).*

However, Asan contends further that “since the return to democratic rule in 1999, available statistics<sup>1</sup> reveal that women are underrepresented in the National Assembly compared to their counterpart in other climes, especially Africa<sup>2</sup>.” She noted further that though concerted efforts have been made by women groups, women advocacy groups and activists, civil society organizations, international agencies and; donor communities to increase women’s participation in politics and decision making, their efforts have not yielded the desired results of equal distribution of political positions between the genders<sup>3</sup>.

Having examined the results of women legislative representation since the Beijing Conference (1995), have the Beijing efforts had any impact on Nigeria? The percentage of women representation in Nigeria’s National Assembly have continued to stagger around 6%-7% (Agbalajobi, 2010). Therefore, this study seeks to examine the characteristics of political parties that are conducive to women legislative representation in Nigeria’s National Assembly from 1999 to 2019.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The following questions will guide the focus of this study:

1. How have women been represented in the National Assembly since 1999?
2. Can women be said to be underrepresented in the National Assembly in the Fourth Republic?

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Statistics, National Assembly, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 & 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Olatunde, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Punch Nigeria, Only 62 women won elections in 2019, says INEC. See <https://punchng.com/only-62-women-won-elections-in-2019-says-inec/>

3. What roles do political parties play in ensuring parity in women legislative representation?
4. What are the possible ways the role of political parties be enhanced to achieve improved women representation in the National Assembly?

#### **1.4. Research Objective**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of political parties in women legislative representation in Nigeria, thus examining those characteristics that are conducive to women legislative representation. The specific objectives are;

1. Examine the variations in women legislative representation of successive National Assemblies in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic.
2. Determine whether or not women are/have been underrepresented in Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic.
3. Identify the role of political parties in ensuring parity in legislative representation in the National Assembly.
4. Suggest possible ways of enhancing the role of political parties for improved women representation in National Assembly.

#### **1.5. Research Propositions**

The Research Propositions of the study are:

1. Political parties do not have a role to play in ensuring parity in legislative representation in the National Assembly.
2. Women are not underrepresented in Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic.

## **1.6.Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The focus of this study is on the role of political parties in women legislative representation. To achieve this, the study will employ the extensive review of relevant literatures to x – ray the factors responsible for this contestation. In addition, the study will review the National Assembly composition in the Fourth Republic. The choice of the National Assembly is deliberate because the behaviour of political parties that would be examined in the course of the study, nominate and sponsor candidates both for National and State legislative positions.

## **1.7.Significance of the Study**

Similar studies have been carried out by various scholars, governments, NGOs and international organisations interested in promoting the rights of women to decision making, economic prosperity health and other aspects of human welfare. The Policy and Legal Advocacy centre, PLAC (2018), and Tremblay (2008), have contributed in this research area of study. While PLAC undertook a holistic study on the challenges to women political representation and suggested solutions, Tremblay assumed a comparative approach, examining the role of political parties, electoral system and sex quotas.

On the practical significance of this study, the National Assembly will be the first beneficiary as it will enable it to pursue passionately, gender related policies. Other beneficiaries are: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC), etc.; for sustained advocacy for women inclusion in governance.

## **1.8. Conceptual Clarifications**

**Parity of Participation:** equitable distribution of political power barring any such hindrances that may be caused by sex.

**Women Legislative Representation:** the number of legitimate return of women made in a legislative election.

**Political Party:** association of people driven by a common goal of ceasing power through the democratic means of election, via shared ideals.

## **1.9. Organization of Chapters**

Chapter one contains the general introduction which consists of the background, statement of the research problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and the outline of the chapters. Chapter two provides a thorough review of literatures and theoretical framework. Also, chapter three focuses on a comprehensive statement of the research methodology. In addition, chapter four will provide the presentation of data and discussion of results.

Finally, chapter five provides a summary of the study, recommendations, contributions of the research to the body of knowledge and conclusions based on the findings from this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews literatures related to the variables being studied. Therefore, it is divided into three sections, namely; Review of related content, empirical review, and theoretical framework.

#### 2.1. Review of Related Content

##### 2.1.1. Conceptual Framework

Omotola (as cited in Akubo & Yakubu, 2014) suggested that “one of the most complex and critical institutions of democracy is the political party (ies)”. Hence, Momoh (2013, p. 1) asserted that their “roles and activities are critical in any assessment of democratic practice”. Therefore, Marume, Chikasha and Ndudzo (2016) defined a political party as “an organized and presumably durable association, either of individuals or of distinguishable groups of individuals, which endeavours to place its members in governmental offices for the purpose of bringing about the adoption of favoured political policies or programmes”.

However, Urbinati and Warren (2008: 388) notes that “the topic of political representation has become increasingly visible”. According to Lovenduski (2005: 1), “the representation of women in a political system is a good test of its claims to democracy”. Lovenduski opined that political representation is a fundamental feminist concern, noting however, that its importance has not always been acknowledged.

Therefore, as the representative and legislative body, parliament remains a cornerstone of democracy, the world over (Inter – Parliamentary Union, IPU, 2018). This assertion was buttressed by IPU when it further averred that:

*A democratic parliament reflects the views and interests of the society from which it is drawn, in its composition, agenda setting, and policy direction, hence, a representative parliament also allows the different experiences of men and women*

*to shape policy priorities and legislative outputs, thereby influencing the social, political and economic future of society (IPU, 2018: 1).*

The above statement agrees with Nancy Fraser's principle of parity of participation in which she stated in an interview with Varghese (as cited in 3 Quarks Daily, 3 QD, 2008) as follows:

*My idea is that the justice requires requires social arrangements that permit all members to participate in social interactions on a par with one another. So that means they must be able to participate as peers in all the major forms of social interaction: whether its politics, whether it's the labour market, whether its family life and so on (3 QD, 2008)<sup>4</sup>.*

According to Fraser's model, recognition is achievable only when parity of participation is not obstructed by a society's status order (Asan, 2019). Hence, Fraser (as cited in Asan, 2019) argued that there are three distinct and mutually irreducible principles of justice, namely;

- a) "Status order"; often met by eradicating status inequality which stands in the way of parity of participation;
- b) "Economic structure"; endows citizens with the resources needed to enjoy parity with peers;
- c) "Political constitution of society"; met if political decision rules and political boundaries facilitate parity of participation.

The categorization of the principles required for the attainment of justice by Fraser captures the various points intended in this study, hence, its adoption as the framework for the conceptualization of the variables of this research. Therefore, this study will invoke the spirit of each of the principles of justice put forward by Fraser to critically analyse the role of political parties in women parliamentary representation. Thus, the role of political parties in women

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<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2008/08/nancy-fraser-on.html>

legislative representation will be analysed from the prism of the principles of justice as enunciated by Fraser.

Succinctly, conclusions will be drawn after the careful analysis of the: institutionalized cultural value construct such as patriarchy (status order), etc.; disparity in the distribution of economic wealth/opportunities (economic structure); and percentages of women legislative committee chairperson, and also, holding various positions within the party structure (political organization).

### **2.1.2. Women Legislative Representation: The Case of the Americas, Asia, Uganda, South Africa, Rwanda and Nigeria**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU (2018) notes that elections in 2018 consolidated the gains in women's parliamentary representation around the world. In the Americas, IPU (2018) opined that

*Parliaments in the Americas built on prior gains to become the first region to achieve a “critical mass” average of more than 30 per cent women across both chambers of parliament. The number of chambers surpassing this goal overall grew to 76 in 2018. 24 of those chambers showcase a 40 per cent representation or more (P. 1).*

While the majority of chambers renewed in 2018 have experienced an increase in the percentage of women members, IPU notes that “no region was immune to setbacks”. In Asia, IPU (2018) observed that “parliaments across Asia followed the Americas over their progress in women's representation, with gains in the 2018 elections surpassing the region's average of 19.6 per cent women members of parliament”. This according IPU could be seen in “the share of women winning seats in single and lower chambers in the Asian region was of 23.3 per cent and their share of seats won in upper chambers was of 17.2 per cent”.

The Inter – Parliamentary Union, IPU (2016: 3) report suggests that elections in Europe resulted in an increase in women's parliamentary representation. The regional average of

women across Europe (both houses combined) increased from 25.4 percent in 2015 to 26.3 percent (+0.9 percent points). In its yearly review of women in parliaments in 2016, it stated thus:

*There were significant gains in both Cyprus and Montenegro of over eight percentage points. Both countries used a proportional representation electoral system and legally binding temporary special measures. In Cyprus, the increase in the number of women occurred in the context of one of the greatest swings in Cypriot election history. A strong undercurrent of disillusionment with traditional political parties resulted in the election of the largest number of parties (many small) in 15 years. Four of the eight parties represented in parliament now include at least one woman (IPU, 2016: 3 – 4).*

Elsewhere in Iceland within the year, the female – led pirate party won a significant proportion of seats in the parliament. Succinctly, this inclusivity as portrayed by the representation of women in politics and parliament is a testament of the catchwords of democracy which are majority rule, equality and justice.

African parliaments witnessed relatively modest progress in 2018. The regional average of women parliamentarians stood at 23.7 per cent. Women won 19.4 per cent of seats in lower and single houses and 27.5 per cent in upper houses (IPU, 2018). IPU (2018) notes that “since 2003, Rwanda has occupied the top position in the world in terms of the percentage of women in parliament”. IPU further stated that “in 2018, the proportion of women dropped slightly from 63.8 per cent to 61.3 per cent. However, this share still far exceeds the 30 per cent of seats reserved for women in the lower house, as stipulated in the 2003 Constitution”. According to a study by the Centre for Women in Government and Civil Society (2016), in Uganda, “women currently occupy around 34% of the seats in the Ugandan Parliament. Women Representatives make up around 29% of total MPs in Parliament and 84% of all female members of Parliament. Within the Parliament, almost 8% of women are in Constituency seats”. The report further stated that “women also have a sizable share of Cabinet, State Minister and Shadow Minister Appointments”. Thus, women make up around 32% of Cabinet Minister Positions, 30% of State Minister seats and 30% of Shadow Minister Positions. Women occupy almost 30% of



Parliament's leadership. Among all Members of Parliament (MPs) who currently hold a position in a Cabinet or State ministry, 23.7% are females while 76.3% are males. The leadership representation for this particular position is 10.1% females and 17.5% males, while for Shadow ministries, 29.0% are females and 64.5% are males.

In Nigeria, however, “despite the fact that women constitute about 49 percent of its population, their participation and representation in the governing process remains in the shadow” (Olatunde, 2010, p. 31; National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, 2018). In a seeming agreement to this position, the International Republican Institute, IRI (2016, p. 14) posited that “women are categorized as half the world's population”. IRI, however, argued that male and females in an actual population differs from a perfect 50/50 split. Hence, it asserted further that the percentage of women in Nigeria ranged from a low 49.1%.

Despite the huge numbers (women population), the NBS (2018, p. 31) noted that “from the return of democracy in 1999 to the latest election in 2015, women had the highest representation of 7.2 per cent in 2007-2011 and the lowest of 3.2 per cent in 1999-2003 for both houses.” The NBS supported its position with the Table below;

**Table 2.1: Representation in the National Assembly by year and sex**

Legislator	1999-2003		2003-2007		2007-2011		2011-2015		2015-2019	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>SENATE</b>										
<b>Male</b>	106	97.2	106	97.2	100	91.7	102	93.6	101	92.7
<b>Female</b>	3	2.8	3	2.8	9	8.3	7	6.4	8	7.3
<b>Total</b>	109	100	109	100	109	100	109	100	109	100
<b>HOUSE OF REPS.</b>										
<b>Male</b>	348	96.7	339	94.2	335	93.1	336	93.3	337	93.6
<b>Female</b>	12	3.3	21	5.8	25	6.9	24	6.7	23	6.4
<b>Total</b>	360	100	360	100	360	100	360	100	360	100
<b>BOTH HOUSES</b>										
<b>Male</b>	454	96.8	445	94.9	435	92.8	438	93.4	438	93.4
<b>Female</b>	15	3.2	24	5.1	34	7.2	31	6.6	31	6.6
<b>Total</b>	469	100	469	100	469	100	469	100	469	100

Source: National Assembly (as cited in the NBS, 2018, p. 32)

The 2019 general elections was yet another repeat of visible women underrepresentation in the National Assembly, which the National Bureau Statistics, NBS, (2018; 2019); and the British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC (2019, March 12<sup>th</sup>) attributed separately to patriarchy, poverty, illiteracy, religious and cultural norms. To buttress the underrepresentation of women in the National Assembly, the Punch News (2019, May 16<sup>th</sup>) reported that seven out of the total of two hundred and thirty-two female senatorial aspirants, were elected into the Ninth Senate (All Africa, 2019, March 4<sup>th</sup>), while eleven out of a total of five hundred and thirty-two House of Representatives aspirants got elected. However, with the victory of a former Senate Minority Leader at the Court of Appeal (Pulse Nigeria, 2019, November 6<sup>th</sup>; Tribune Online, 2019, November 11<sup>th</sup>), the tally of female Senators is expected to rise to eight. This figure, remains insignificant as the percentages of women in the Senate and the House of Representatives will stand at 7.3% and 3.1% respectively. This figure is insufficient considering the provisions of protocols/conventions Nigeria is a party to (30% Affirmative Action, Beijing Conference, 1995)

Similarly, the number of female legislators in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Assemblies according to the NBS (2018; 2019), was not enough to influence leadership positions (Presiding Officers) in their respective Houses for its caucus. This, however, is attributable to the multi levels interaction within political parties such as; method candidate nomination, excessive use of money in politics, influence of party elders, etc. (Okoosi-Simbine, 2012). Perhaps, this may be the reason the number of women elected into the National Assembly have not been able to effect enough legislations with regards to women issues<sup>5</sup>.

Badmus (2006) believes that studies and literatures on women in politics often highlight various reasons for the feminine subordination dichotomy often experienced. Hence, Olatunde avers that those reasons gave rise to the challenges or obstacles to women advancement in political participation and proper representation. The Table below shows the composition of the principal positions in the National Assembly in the Eighth and Ninth Assemblies;

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://placng.org/legist/gender-equality-bill-fails-senates-2nd-reading/>

**Table 2.2: Composition of the Principal Officers in the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly by Sex**

<i>S/No</i>	<i>Assembly</i>	<i>Majority Leader</i>	<i>Deputy Majority Leader</i>	<i>Chief Whip</i>	<i>Deputy Chief Whip</i>	<i>Minority Leader</i>	<i>Deputy Minority Leader</i>	<i>Minority Whip</i>	<i>Deputy Minority Whip</i>
1	8 <sup>th</sup> Senate	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	F
2	9 <sup>th</sup> Senate	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
3	8 <sup>th</sup> House	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	F
4	9 <sup>th</sup> House	M	M	M	F	M	M	M	M

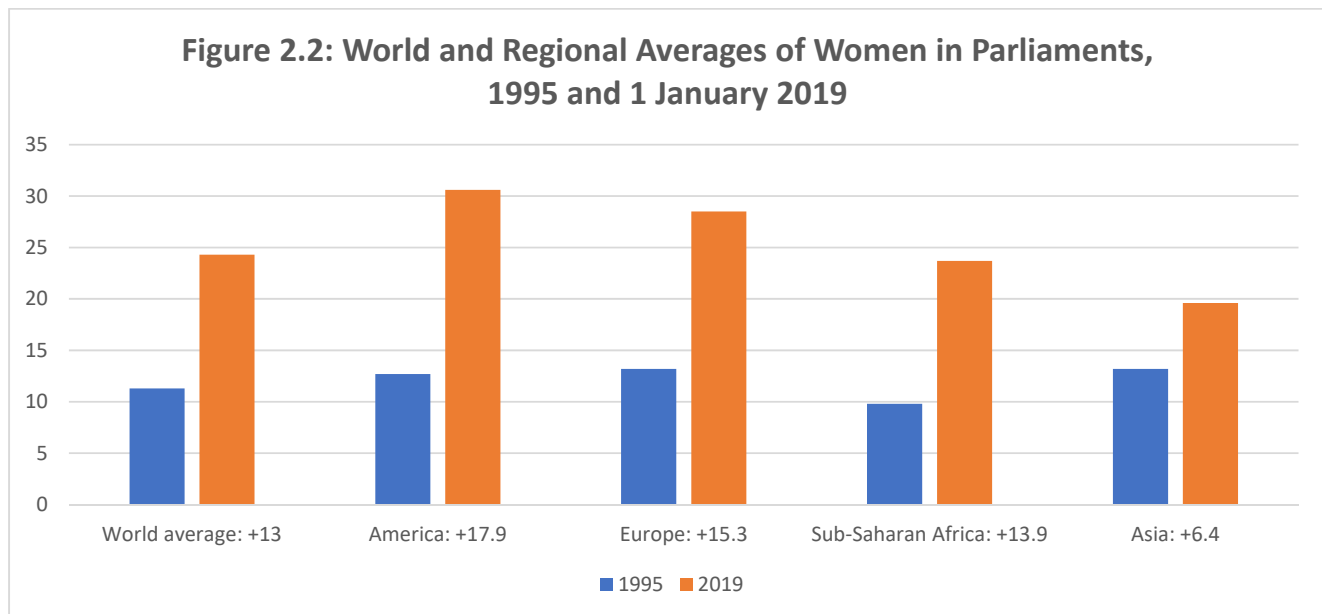
Sources: PLAC (2019, July 5<sup>th</sup>); Sanyaolu and Sanyaolu (2019, p. 3); Punch Nigeria (2019, June 15<sup>th</sup>).

It is imperative to note that the number of women in the composition of the principal officer’s positions would have little or no influence on policy decisions, as policy directions are decided during the meetings of principal officers. Hence, this study aligns with the view expressed by the NBS (2018; 2019). Furthermore, within the legislative periods stated above, women were not elected into Presiding Officers positions in both Houses (NBS, 2018; 2019).

According to the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, PLAC (2015), “the past two decades have witnessed an impressive rise in women’s political representation around the world, with the global average in the share of women in national parliaments doubling during that time, and all regions making substantial progress towards the goal of 30 percent women’s representation in decision making”. PLAC further noted that, “nowhere in has the rate of increase in the political representation of women been as fast as in sub-Sahara Africa”. Hence, PLAC (2015) averred that

*Since 2003, Rwanda has maintained the record as the country with the highest female legislative representation in the world, surpassing the Nordic countries. Four of the world's top 10 countries, in terms of women's share of single or lower house of parliament, are in Sub-Saharan Africa: Rwanda, Seychelles, Senegal, and South Africa (PLAC, 2015: 4).*

However, recent report (IPU, 2018) suggests the following



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU (2018).

Form the Figure above, there have been obvious improvement of women parliamentary representation, however, not much can be said of Nigeria where the figures are always on the decline (PLAC, 2015). However, the roles of political parties' remains largely visible in activities culminating into the election of women as represented in the parliaments above.

### **2.1.3. Roles of Political Parties on Women Legislative Representation**

As real gate keepers to elected offices (Norris and Lovenduski, as cited in Kittilson, 1995), the role of political parties in women legislative representation cannot be oversized. According to Kittilson (1995), the following factors have been found to affect the proportion of women parliamentary representation:

### **2.1.3.1. Party Organizational Structure**

Prior research suggests four aspects of a party organizational structure that may influence women representation: the degree of centralization, the degree of institutionalization, the location of candidate nomination, and the party size (Kittilson, 1995). Kittilson argued that the first component, centralization, describes the distribution of control over decision-making among the levels of the party hierarchy. Matland and Studlar (1996), for example stated that centralized procedures specifically allow the party leadership to respond to pressures for greater representation. In response to pressures from other parties and the electorate, party leaders generally want to gain votes by broadening the diversity of party Members of Parliament (MPs). Therefore, we can expect that women will be better represented where the party leaders can effectively make an effort to promote women candidates through the use of particular party policies. Further, a central party organization can more directly be held accountable for low proportions of female candidates. Groups pressuring for increased representation have central target at which to aim their demands are not met, the groups can fault the party leaders. In more decentralized system each region or locality must be individually pressured to support women. The regions or localities may be less likely to do so without the possibility of sanctions from central party control. On the other hand, Marume, Chikasha and Ndudzo (2016) notes that “a decentralized party is characterized by lack of unified and effective national leadership, by the weakness of party discipline, and by the resultant freedom of action of party members who attain seats in the legislature”. The second component, degree of institutionalization, determines the nature of the rules by which MPs are recruited.

Highly institutionalized parties are bureaucratic; they are full of rules formalized, explicit rules. The degree of institutionalization may affect the career ladder of officeholders. Highly institutionalized parties provide all potential MPs, especially those without ties to the

power- center, with a set of understandable rules. According to Czudnowski (as cited in Kittilson, 1995), “the more institutionalized the selection process, the easier it is for any outsider to understand how the selection process works”. It suggests that those not in power know how candidates are recruited and also can anticipate the criteria by which each applicant will be judged. The aspiring officeholders are privy to the way the selection process works and know how to prepare. Thirdly, party size have been seen as a key determinant in political party organizational structure. Matland and Studlar (1996) noted that smaller Norwegian parties began promoting women. Hence, Czudnowski (1975, p. 181) opined that majority parties would be less concerned with “problems of socio-demographic representation” than would a minority party. Essentially, minority parties have less to lose in nominating women to the parliament.

Lastly, on the level of nomination for parliamentary candidates, Kittilson (1995) suggested that localized nomination is more hospitable to women because women are more likely to work in community politics. Hence, Lovenduski and Norris (1993) averred that “those women who aspire to political office can start by holding office at the local level and working their way up to the national level”.

#### **2.1.3.2. Party Ideology**

An ideology is defined as a “Set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved” (Erikson & Tedin, 2003). To Denzau & North (1994/2000), an ideology is “the shared framework of mental models that group of individuals possess that provide both an interpretation of the environment and a prescription as to how that environment should be structured”. On his part, Gauba (2003, p. 13) averred that “in the realm of political theory the term ‘ideology’ is applied in two contexts: (a) a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group, party or nation without further examination; and (b) the science of ideas which

examines as to how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted, and how we can overcome distortions to discover true knowledge.” Therefore, Political ideologies, defines the policy direction of a political party. Hence, Kittilson (1995) argued that left parties are more likely to support women’s candidacies than right parties. This according to Kittilson is because left parties espouse more egalitarian ideologies (Duverger, 1955; Beckwith, 1986). Hence, Jenson (as cited in Kittilson, 1995) opined that “women’s movement has been linked to left parties”.

However, there seem to be a shift in this argument because a new set of issues such as; “environmental quality, alternative lifestyles, minority rights, participation, and social equality” (Dalton 1986, p.153) have overtaken the discus, and have provided new political parties with opportunities to “open their doors to less powerful groups such as women and to encourage them to run for office” (Kittilson, 1995).

### **2.1.3.3. Proportion of Women Activists**

According to Lovenduski and Norris; Sainsbury (as cited in Kittilson 1995), during the 1970s, when gender equality became part of the social agenda of advanced industrial societies, increasing number of women tool their demands for increased participation to the parties. Lovenduski and Norris suggested that women participation in parties at the grass roots level has increased to rival men’s in recent years in Sudan and Germany. Thus, Kittilson (1995) opined that “Once women began to enter the lower party ranks, they could directly increase pressure for representation at the highest level—Parliament”.

In Nigeria, women political activism have been topical, dating back to precolonial history. Oluyemi (2016), noted the role played by Queen Amina, Chief (Mrs) Margaret Ekpo, Janet Mokelu, etc. as prominent during their times. Most recently, Oluyemi stated that the likes of chief (Mrs) Florence Ita Giwa, Chief (Mrs) Onikepo Akande, Dr Laraba Gambo Abdullahi,



etc. dominated their time. Therefore, Oluyemi averred that of all the roles ascribed to women, which includes; mother, producer, home-manager, and community organizer, political activism, etc., the last is engendered by women movement.

#### **2.1.3.4. Party Gender-Related Representation Rules**

The rules of a party concerning the gender of candidates may be the most direct influence on the proportion of a party's female Members of Parliament (MPs) (Kittilson, 1995). Parties can act to increase the proportion of nominated female candidates by creating formal rules that prescribe more equal proportions of women in the party's overall composition of candidates. Such direct action can take the form of a quota, mandated percentages of women, or a target, recommended percentages of women. This use of gender quotas denotes a process of changing attitudes toward women in politics which has led to a change in the formal rules. Implementation of gender quotas or targets by parties not only reflects the acceptance that gender underrepresentation is a problem, it also demonstrates a willingness to act to fix the problem. Gender goals and quotas within parties first emerged in the late 1970s. The number of parties implementing these goals and quotas rose throughout the 1980s. In advanced industrial societies, the number of parties establishing quotas and targets doubled between 1975 and 1985.

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, PLAC (2018; p. 28 – 33) noted such party gender-related representation rules to include:

- a) “The adoption of the National Gender Policy by the Ministry for Women Affairs which provided a basis for the adoption of gender policy by various state institutions”.
- b) “Entrenchment of Affirmative Action (AA) principles in party constitutions with specific and actionable commitments of number of spaces as some of the guidelines for registration by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)”

Advocacy and sustained agitation for 30 percent Affirmative Action<sup>6</sup> in favour of women to bridge the gaps in both elective and appointive positions at all levels by 2015. This has also translated into gains for women in the military and para-military systems as more of them are being promoted into the top level decision-making positions.

Also, the IRI (2016) opined that legislative gender quotas has afforded increased women legislative representation. Some of these quotas which it noted, could be; provided for in the country's constitution, regulated by the national legislation overseeing electoral laws or a voluntary option for political parties when compiling candidates list. The quotas as enunciated by the IRI (2016, 21), includes:

- a) "Voluntary political party quota": rules or targets set by political parties to include a certain percentage of women as election candidates. This is entirely a prerogative of a political party.
- b) "Legislated candidate quota": this quota reserves a number of places on electoral lists for female candidates. This system, however, applicable in climes that practice plurality voting system.
- c) "Reserved seats": Reserves a number of seats in a legislative assembly.

Operationally, the voluntary political party quota is most practicable in Nigeria given that our electoral system and the provision of the constitution. While our electoral system – plurality (First-Past-the-Post) discountenances IRI's proposed legislated candidate quota, reservation of seats is inconsistent with the constitution<sup>7</sup> and various electoral laws. However, the practicability of political parties' voluntary quota, is in light of the fact that such processes could be borne out of soft laws (Ladan, 2018) which in most cases are pursued as policies.

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<sup>6</sup> See [https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing\\_Declaration\\_and\\_Platform\\_for\\_Action.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Chapter V of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, CFRN (1999, Section 49)

In agreement with the multi-level role of political parties stated by Kittilson (1995), Okoosi-Simbine (2012) noted various levels of interactions within the political party – culminating ultimately into party politics. Okoosi-Simbine suggested the following as those various activities constraining women’s political representation which this study identified as crucial features of the interplays within political parties;

- a) “Method of candidate nomination”, which most times involve an expensive procedure requiring candidates to conduct their own campaigns.
- b) “Excessive use of money in politics”, to procure support of party leaders and officials, and to encourage voters to support particular candidates. Since male aspirants are generally more affluent than female aspirants, many women are eliminated because they simply cannot match their male opponents.
- c) “Influence of party elders”, who sometimes simply select, endorse and present a candidate supposedly to ease tension among contestants.
- d) “Deliberate obstruction”, arising from arbitrary behaviour by party officials who may nominate candidates without an election; change the election rules or voting system without proper notice to candidates, change the venues for primary elections, hold unscheduled meetings in unannounced venues, rig elections and cause violence and use “zoning” and other criteria selectively to eliminate unwanted (often female) aspirants.
- e) “Violence”, including physical violence, pressure, threat, and intimidation. Without a doubt, Nigerian politics leans toward the “masculine model” of political life in which men largely dominate the political arena by setting the rules of the political game and defining the standards for evaluation.

Therefore, this study notes that these interplays that characterize the conduct of party affairs as espoused by Okoosi-Simbine is most suitable for it. This is because most of the multi-level

activities within the party as mentioned by Kittilson are in most cases lacking in the Nigerian system. For instance, in terms of party ideology, the All Progressives Congress (APC) is believed to be centre-left leaning, while the People's Democratic Party (PDP) is said to be centre-right. From Kittilson's position, APC should be more conducive to women. However, empirical data shows that PDP operates an ideology renowned for egalitarianism, e.g. PDP have five (5) Senators in the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly while APC have two (2) (Vanguard News, 2019, March 4<sup>th</sup>).

In view of the foregoing, the characteristic features of political parties as noted by Kittilson (1995) being party organizational structure, party ideology, proportion of women activists, and party gender-related representation rules, suffice adequately for the categorization of the behaviour of political parties in enhancing women legislative representation. However, the intra political party interactions listed by Okoosi-Simbine (2012), captured aptly, the Nigerian situation. Therefore, while the factors listed by Kittilson will be deployed as a tool for conceptualizing this study, those suggested by Okoosi-Simbine will be adopted to advance the functionalist perception depicted by the various components of multilevel activities in a political party known as intra party interactions, which a major focus in this research.

## **2.2. Empirical Review**

Women participation in democracy, ditto legislative representation, have gained global attention. Hence, scholarly contributions from Kittilson (1995), Oluyemi (2016), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA (2011), and Asan (2019) are all worthy of mention. According to the IDEA (2011) in its study titled *Gender and Political Parties: far From Parity*, it noted that the election of four women presidents in Latin America in recent years has cast a spotlight on the issue of women's political participation and their access to public

decision-making positions. IDEA, however, notes that the numbers shows that Latin America is still far from attaining gender parity. To IDEA, the institution in which, as a rule in modern democracies, those who aspire to public office begin and develop their political careers: political parties, was examined. As a result, in 2009 the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), through its Program for the Support of Women's Leadership and Representation (PROLEAD), and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) gathered objective and verifiable information about the activities of the 94 political parties in Latin America with the highest levels of representation in their respective legislatures. The Gender and Political Parties in Latin America database (GEPPAL) was created using the data obtained.<sup>8</sup>

Going further, the IDEA observed that the political parties that were studied had few women in parliamentary seats. The candidate lists offered to voters, according it, also lacked gender balance. Thus, only one in every four candidates was a woman. Therefore, the IDEA recommended among other things; expansion of the application and regulation of quotas to address women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in political parties and movements, with parity as the goal, promotion of parity of participation by women in all party venues through concrete policies, reflection of national and international gender equality mandates in all party organizational documents, especially party rules, procedures, standing orders or founding documents, as well as in government programs, etc.

Similarly, Oluyemi (2016) in her study, *Monitoring Participation of Women in Politics in Nigeria*, observed that Nigeria has been recording low participation of women in both elective and appointive positions. According to Oluyemi, since the return to democratic governance (1999-2015), Nigeria is yet to produce a female governor in any of the 36 states of

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<sup>8</sup> See [www.iadb.org/research/geppal](http://www.iadb.org/research/geppal)

the Federation. Also, in the National Assembly, women constitute 5.6 percent of members of the House of Representatives and 6.5 percent of the Senators. She however, noted that the underrepresentation of women in political participation gained root due to the patriarchal practice inherent in our society, much of which were obvious from pre-colonial era till date. Going further, Oluyemi recounted efforts being made by various organizations to increase the level of participation of women in politics in line with the declaration made at the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, which advocated 30% affirmative action to include:, the extant National Gender Policy (NGP) which recommends 35% affirmative action instead and sought for a more inclusive representation of women with at least 35% of both elective political and appointive public service positions respectively.

To Asan (2019) in her study *Women and Legislative Representation in Nigeria: A Study of the National Assembly, 1999-2019*, revealed that there was a significant decline in women legislative representation in Nigeria, comparatively, she averred that great successes have been recorded in this regards in Rwanda, Sweden, Bolivia and South Africa. This scenario, Asan attributed to cultural/political/socio-economic issues, gender issues, violence and the inherent electoral process. However, Asan concluded that women legislative representation can be improved by strengthening of the electoral laws, imposing stiff and stringent measures against the sponsors and perpetrators of electoral violence, provision of funding incentives to candidates irrespective of gender, and enacting parity renowned policies that would enhance women legislative representation in Nigeria

Finally, Kittilson's (1995) *Women's representation in Parliament: The role of Political Parties*, noted that parties vary substantially in the proportion of women they send to parliament. Thus, party characteristics that affect women's representation in the parliamentary parties of 12 advanced industrial nations she examined, were noted as four. According to kittilson, these party-level factors include: organizational structure, ideology, women party

activists and gender-related candidate rules. However, she pointed out that these factors and electoral rules directly and indirectly affect women's representation. Therefore, she concluded that women party activists and gender-related rules are the more direct mechanisms affecting women's legislative representation. In view of this, Kittilson proposes that new left values and high levels of women activists within the party both enhance the likelihood that gender-related candidate rules will be implemented.

From the literatures reviewed above, there seem to be a general consensus on the need for improved women political participation. While some of the studies, like those by Asan and Oluyemi argued generally about women legislative representation and political participation respectively, those by the IDEA and Kittilson pin pointedly, noted the roles of political parties in women parliamentary representation. However, whereas the IDEAs' was a question of electoral system, Kittilsons' was focused on identifying the features exhibited by political parties, which are conducive to women legislative representation. On this note, this study adopts the espouse by Kittilson, but would further attempt to explicate Kittilson's propositions in this course of this study. While the environmental peculiarities of her study and this are noted, the present research would investigate the characteristics of political parties conducive to women legislative within the Nigerian context.

### **2.3. Theoretical Framework**

A theory is a unique way of describing, analysing, interpreting and predicting phenomena. It is a set of statement or propositions that seek to explain or predict a particular aspect of life (Schrenguber, 2005). Singer (1963) on his part defined theory as a body of internally consistent empirical generalizations of descriptive, predictive and explanatory power. Johnson and Christensen (2007:7), sees a theory as that which explains "how and

‘‘why’’ something operates as it does. The basic function of a theory is that it offers explanations to a phenomenon and hence, it helps in the better understanding of phenomenon.

For further clarification on the research work carried out, there is need to adopt a suitable theoretical framework which will enable us make a better assessment of the subject matter. The theoretical framework adopted for research work is ‘‘structural-functionalism approach’’.

### **2.3.1. Structural-Functionalism Approach**

This work is to be anchored on the synthesis of structural-functionalism. This theory was developed by Gabriel Almond and James S. Coleman in their book *“Introduction to the Politics of Developing Area (1960)”*. Further development of the approach was carried out by Gabriel Almond and G.B Powell in their book *“comparative politics: A Development Approach (1966)”*.

Almond et al contended that all political systems, regardless of their type, must perform a specific set of tasks if they are to remain in existence as a system in working order or in equilibrium. Similarly, “Structural Functionalism” (2010, p. 1) averred that “structural functionalism, or in many contexts simply functionalism, is a broad perspective in sociology and anthropology which sets out to interpret society as a nature with interrelated parts.” “Structural Functional” further opined that functionalism addresses the society’s performance in terms of the functionality of its components of norms, customs, traditions and institutions. According Urry (2000), Herbert Spencer advanced an analogy that “presents these parts of society as ‘organs’ that work toward the proper functioning of the ‘body’ as a whole.”

Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2007) argued that the functionalist perspective is based largely on the works of Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton. According to them, “the functionalist perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of society by focusing on how each part influences and is influenced by other parts”. Mooney et al added



that functionalists use the term *functional* if the parts of society contribute to social stability and '*dysfunctional*' if they disrupt social stability.

Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2007) identified yet another perspective to the structural-functionalism approach – conflict perspective. To Mooney et al (2007, p. 2), “the origin of the conflict perspective can be traced to the classic works of Karl Marx”. The conflict perspective views society as composed of different groups and interest competing for power and resources”. This perspective explains the aspects of social world by looking at which groups have power and benefit from a social arrangement (Mooney, Knox & Schacht, 2007). Mooney et al further identified the symbolic interactionist perspective which according to them, is concerned with the social psychological dynamics of individuals interacting in small groups. The symbolic interactionist perspective, they argued was advanced by the works of George Simmel, Charles Cooley, George Herbert Mead and Erving Goffman.

Thus, since political parties which are viewed as a part of a larger system – renowned for nominating and sponsoring candidates for elective positions – cannot be discountenanced as a part of the democratic system. Put succinctly, the effectiveness of such roles will be investigated vis a vis the participation of women in legislative elections.

Therefore, this study will adopt the functionalist perspective offered by Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2007) for a better analysis and understanding of the variables under review. This is because, this study views political parties as a part of a whole (political system), which candidates evidently rely on for the actualisation of their respective political goals.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the procedure that would be adopted by the researcher in conducting this study. It would describe how data and information will be obtained to answer the research questions raised. Popoola (2011) identifies the following as major components of a research methodology – research design, the population of the study, sampling procedure, sample size, research instrument(s), validity and reliability of research instrument and method of data analysis. Succinctly, the methodology is central in acceptability of the research results.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

Anikpo (1986) sees research design as a plan or structure of any aspect of the research procedure. Such plan according to him will be realized in the selection of the most appropriate concepts, hypotheses, analytical paradigms and also the most effective format to present research report. Therefore, this study adopts the survey research design. According to Isaac and Michael (1997, p. 136), survey research is used “to answer questions that have been raised, to solve problems that have been posed or observed, to assess needs and set goals, to determine whether or not specific objectives have been met, to establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made, to analyze trends across time, and generally, to describe what exists, in what amount, and in what context.”

The choice of survey research design is deliberate because the study relies on questionnaires as research instrument to provide answers to set research questions.

#### **3.2. Population of the Study**

Population refers to “the total set of individuals of interest to a researcher” (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009). Population is a group of people from which a sample can be selected from for

the purpose of conducting a research (Varden Bergh and Katz, 1999). Similarly, Akinade and Owolabi (2009) defines it as “the total set of observations from which a sample can be drawn”. While Avwokeni (2006) define population as a “set of all participants that qualify for a study”. It represents all conceivable elements, subjects, or observations relating to a particular area of interest to the researcher (Adeniyi, Oyekanmi & Tijani, 2011). Therefore, a population is the total collection of elements from which inference is drawn.

The population for this study are political parties, politicians (old and serving members of the National Assembly).

**Table 3.1: Population of the Study**

S/N	Target Population	Size of population
1	Political parties	91
2	Lawmakers (female)	18
3	Lawmakers (male)	451
4	Total	560

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC (2019)<sup>9</sup>; and Punch Nigeria (2019, May 16<sup>th</sup>)<sup>10</sup>

### 3.3.Sampling Procedure

This means the process of selecting individual or elements for a study. The sampling technique that would be used is proportionate stratified sampling technique. In proportionate stratified sampling, the number of elements allocated to the various strata is proportional to the representation of the strata in the target population. Therefore, proportionate stratified sampling

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.inecnigeria.org/political-parties/>

<sup>10</sup> See <https://punchng.com/only-62-women-won-elections-in-2019-says-inec/>

was used to select the respondents needed for this study because it presents an aggregated view of the population identified in this study.

### 3.4. Sample Size

A sample is a fraction, a representative or a sub-group of the population of a study. It can also be seen as a manageable section of a population which has similar characteristics. The sample is the elements making up the sample that is actually studied and a generalization made on the population.

Given the population in Table 3.1 above, the sample size would be determined using Taro Yamane's as given below:

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

Where: n = corrected sample size

$$N = 560 \text{ (Punch Nigeria, 2019, May 16<sup>th</sup>).$$

$$e = \text{Margin of Error (MoE)} = 0.05$$

$$n = \frac{560}{1+560(0.05^2)}$$

$$= \frac{560}{1+560(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{560}{1+1.4}$$

$$= \frac{560}{2.4}$$

$$= 233.333 \approx 233.$$

Hence, based on proportionality, the following sample sizes will be drawn from each strata

$$\text{Political parties} = 233 \times \frac{91}{560}$$

$$= 233 \times 0.1625$$

$$= 38$$

$$\text{Female lawmakers} = 233 \times \frac{18}{560}$$

$$= 233 \times 0.0321428571$$

$$= 7$$

$$\text{Male lawmakers} = 233 \times \frac{451}{560}$$

$$= 233 \times 0.8053571429$$

$$= 188$$

### 3.5. Research Instrument

The research instrument that would be used for the study is the questionnaire. According Keinath and Neuner (2014, p. 4), questionnaires are used to “reach a large number of people, obtain standardized data...” The choice of this instrument is deliberate because the study desires key informants. In view of the sampling procedure which is proportionate stratified sampling, two hundred and thirty-three respondents would be chosen in the manner shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Administration of Questionnaire**

S/N	Respondents	Sample size
1	Political parties	38
2	Lawmakers (female)	7
3	Lawmakers (male)	188
4	Total	233

Source: Field Survey (2020)

### **3.6. Validity and Reliability**

Chakrabarty (2013) asserted that reliability measures consistency, precision, repeatability, and trustworthiness of a research. Hence, the test-retest reliability would be adopted for the study. The test-retest reliability is obtained by repeating the same measure over a second time (Mohajan, 2017). For this study, the retest of the instrument for data collection was done after one month.

On the other hand, validity refers to the extent to which the research instrument measures what it was designed to measure (Robson, 2011). Therefore, the content validity would be adopted for the study. According Creswell (as cited in Mohajan, 2017, p. 15) content validity “is the extent to which the questions on the instrument and the scores from these questions represent all possible questions that could be asked about the content or skill.” Hence, Mohajan posited that the questionnaire includes adequate set of items that tap the concept. Thus, the content validity is considered suitable for this study, since, the items designed to be covered by the questionnaire would suffice adequately for the roles of political parties in enhancing women legislative representation.

### **3.7. Sources of Data**

This study accommodates both primary and secondary sources of data.

#### ***Primary data***

Primary data would be sourced through the use questionnaire.

#### ***Secondary data***

Secondary data would be sourced from books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines etc. and other relevant materials from the internet.

### **3.8.Method of Data Analysis and Presentation**

The primary data collected would be analyzed, reframed and edited where necessary, in order to get rid of errors and ensure consistency. Responses to each question will also be categorized, discussed, summarized and classified. These processes, aids in discarding unwanted responses and as well reducing the stress of tabulation. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to analyze quantitative data. Content analysis would be used for qualitative data.

Finally, the data will be presented in tables, charts, and graphs for easy comprehension

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter covers the presentation, analysis and discussion of the data that were collected in the field. Two Hundred and Thirty-three (233) questionnaires were administered to respondents but only Two Hundred and Nineteen (219) were returned completely filled. Table 4.1 shows the summary of administered questionnaires according to the various strata identified in Chapter Three.

**Table 4.1: Summary of Administered Questionnaire**

S/N	Questionnaire	Returned	Not Returned	% Returned	% Not Returned
1	Party Administrators	27	11	71.1	28.9
2	Female Lawmakers	6	1	85.7	14.3
3	Male Lawmakers	186	2	98.9	1.1

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Finally, the presentation, analysis and discussion of data was done according to the objectives of the study outlined in chapter one.



#### 4.1. Social demography

##### Sex

The Table below shows the sex distribution of the population.

**Table 4.2: Sex**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	208	95.0	95.0	95.0
	FEMALE	11	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the Table above, the sample size was made up of two hundred and eight (208), 95.0% males and eleven (11), 5.0% females. The high number of male respondents underscores the contestation this study was designed to investigate.

##### Age

Age distribution of a population is a vital component of the social demography of a study. Thus, the age bracket of the study population is shown in the Table below.

**Table 4.3: Age Bracket**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-28	3	1.4	1.4	1.4
	29-39	18	8.2	8.2	9.6
	40-50	64	29.2	29.2	38.8
	51 AND ABOVE	134	61.2	61.2	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the Table above, the frequencies for the age brackets 18-28, 29-39, 40-50 and, 51 and above are represented by 3 (1.4%), 18 (8.2), 64 (29.2%) and 134 (61.2%) respectively. The high frequency of age bracket 51 and above is unconnected to the renewed drive for the inclusion of youth in governance in Nigeria, which birthed the Constitutional Amendment/Age Reduction Bill in the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly.

### Education

As a part of the social demography of the study area, Table 4.3 presents respondent's level of education.

**Table 4.4: Level of Education**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	OND/HND	5	2.3	2.3	2.3
	BSC/BENG/BED/BA	90	41.1	41.1	43.4
	POSTGRADUATE	124	56.6	56.6	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The Table above shows that 5 (2.3%) of the respondents are OND/HND Certificate holders, 90 (41.1%) are holders of various Bachelor's degrees, while 124 (56.6%) have postgraduate degrees. However, the seeming literate composition of the study area may be due to the Constitutional Requirement for contesting a position in the National Assembly, as well as the educational demand for party administration.

## Professional Designation

To this study, the professional designation of respondents is a *sine qua non*, especially in view of the sampling procedure adopted in Chapter Three. Table 4.5 presents the professional designation of respondents.

**Table 4.5: Professional Designation**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LAWMAKER	192	87.7	87.7	87.7
	POLITICAL PARTY ADMINISTRATOR	27	12.3	12.3	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 4.5 shows that 192 and 27 respondents are lawmakers and political party administrators respectively. However, of the desired 7 female lawmakers, only six obliged to fill a questionnaire. Relatively, the representation of the sizes of each stratum<sup>11</sup> is fair.

## 4.2. Research Findings

This section provided findings based on the objectives stated in Chapter One.

### 4.2.1. Examine the Variations in Women Legislative Representation of Successive National Assemblies in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic

Field data revealed that 136 respondents agreed that women representation varies with successive Assemblies, 76 disagreed that women representation did not vary, while 7 respondents did not know if it varied or not. These responses are shown below.

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<sup>11</sup> See Table 4.1 (Summary of administered questionnaire) above

**Table 4.6: Agree that Women Representation Varied with Assemblies?**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	136	62.1	62.1	62.1
	NO	76	34.7	34.7	96.8
	DON'T KNOW	7	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

However, when respondents were probed on the consistency of the variation of women representation in the National Assembly, 10.5% noted that it was poorly consistent, 62.6% argued it was fairly consistent, 2.3% opined it was averagely consistent, while 24.7% observed it was consistent. Comparatively, rating of consistency agrees with the positions of Oluyemi (2016), Asan (2019) and the NBA (2018; 2019). The below, presents the rating of the variation of women representation in the National Assembly.

**Table 4.7: Consistency of Women Representation in the National Assembly**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	POORLY CONSISTENT	23	10.5	10.5	10.5
	FAIRLY CONSISTENT	137	62.6	62.6	73.1
	AVERAGELY CONSISTENT	5	2.3	2.3	75.3
	CONSISTENT	54	24.7	24.7	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

**4.2.2. Determine whether or not Women are/have been Underrepresented in Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic**

The Table below presents respondents' views on the representation of women in the 9<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. It is pertinent to note also that, this section was exclusively for lawmakers.

**Table 4.8: Women Representation in the 9<sup>th</sup> National Assembly**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UNDERREPRESENTED	136	62.1	70.8	70.8
	ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED	53	24.2	27.6	98.4
	DON'T KNOW	3	1.4	1.6	100.0
	Total	192	87.7	100.0	
Missing	System	27	12.3		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the Table above, responses shows that 136 (62.1%), respondents noted that women are underrepresented in the 9<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, 53 (24.2%) argued that are adequately represented, 3 (1.4%) respondents do not know if they are sufficiently represented, while 27 (12.3%) – representing party administrators, did not present their views. Field data aligned wholly with the views of IDEA (2011), Asan (2019), Oluyemi (2016) and Kittilson (1995). These positions, separately, agrees that women legislative representation is poor globally (those of IDEA, 2011 and Kittilson, 1995), and locally – National Assembly (Asan, 2109 and Oluyemi, 2016).

To further buttress the above assertion, field data revealed that 1, 135, 2, 54 and 27 respondents, were ‘very dissatisfied’, ‘dissatisfied’, ‘ok’, ‘satisfied’, and missing respectively, in stating the percentage of women serving in the National Assembly. Table 4.9 presents these views.

**Table 4.9: Percentage of Women Serving in the National Assembly**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY DISSATISFIED	1	.5	.5	.5
	DISSATISFIED	135	61.6	70.3	70.8
	OK	2	.9	1.0	71.9
	SATISFIED	54	24.7	28.1	100.0
	Total	192	87.7	100.0	
Missing	System	27	12.3		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Going further, the Table below shows the percentage of women committee chair.

**Table 4.10: Percentage Women as Committee Chair**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY DISSATISFIED	68	31.1	35.4	35.4
	DISSATISFIED	1	.5	.5	35.9
	OK	68	31.1	35.4	71.4
	SATISFIED	2	.9	1.0	72.4
	VERY SATISFIED	53	24.2	27.6	100.0
	Total	192	87.7	100.0	
Missing	System	27	12.3		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the above, 68 respondents, were very dissatisfied with the number of women committee chairs, 1 was ‘dissatisfied’ with the composition of committee chair, 68 were ‘ok’ with configuration of committees in the National Assembly, 2 showed satisfaction with the percentage of women committee chair, while 53 respondents were ‘very satisfied’ with the number of women committee chair. However, 27 respondents being number of party administrators did not provide responses to this question. This may not be unconnected to the fact that most of the lawmakers are first timers.

In view of the above, lawmakers noted the proportion of women in committees as follows: 2, 188, 2 and 27, were ‘dissatisfied, ok, satisfied, and missing’ respectively. The missing responses represents those of party administrators. These positions are shown below.

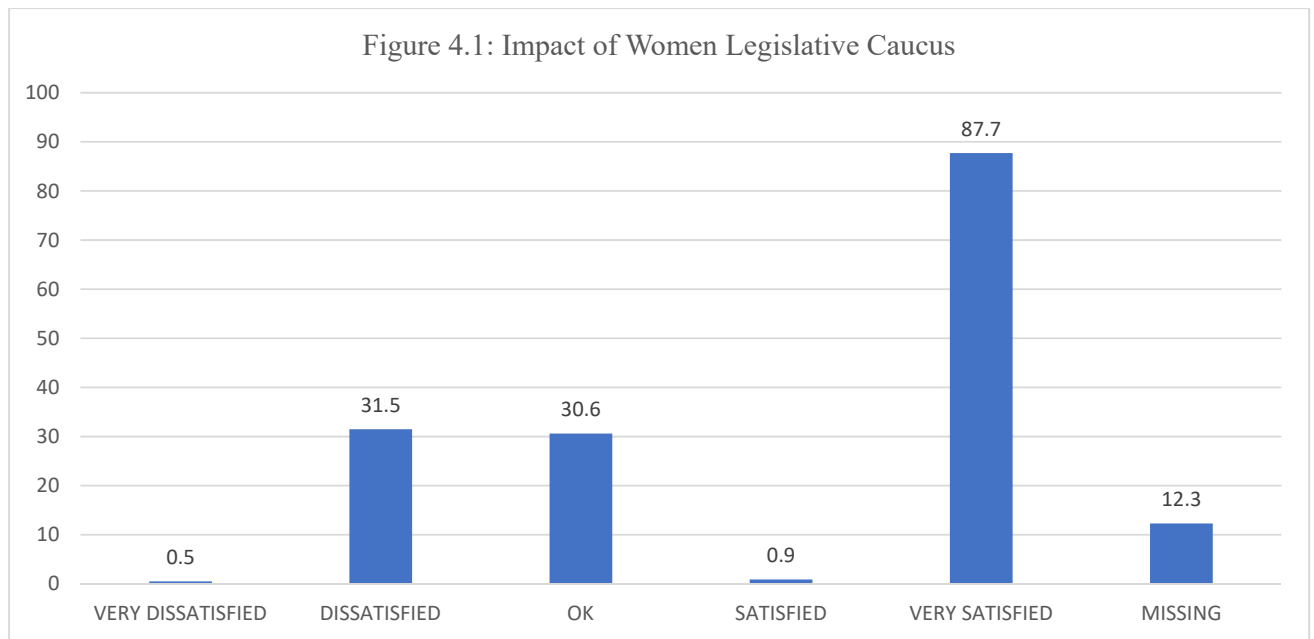


**Table 4.11: Proportion of Women in Committees**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DISSATISFIED	2	.9	1.0	1.0
	OK	188	85.8	97.9	99.0
	SATISFIED	2	.9	1.0	100.0
	Total	192	87.7	100.0	
Missing	System	27	12.3		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

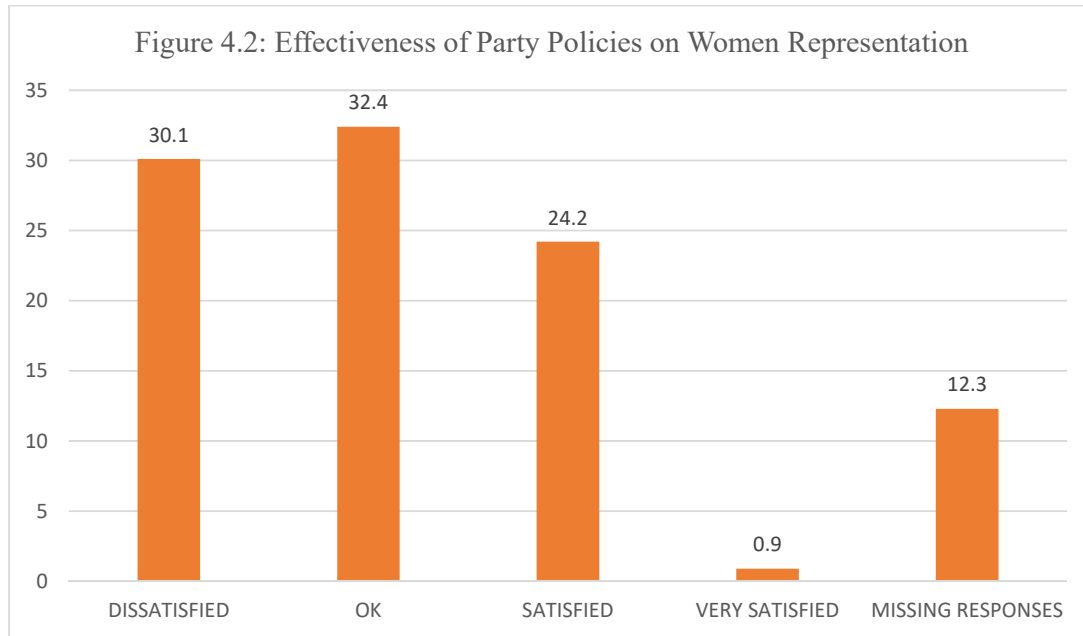
Similarly, the impact of women caucuses on legislative issues are provided in the chart below.



Source: Field Survey (2020)

The chart above shows that women legislative caucuses are quite impactful of legislative issues according to lawmakers. It is worthy of mention that 12.3% of respondents

did not provide responses to this question, hence, those were party administrators. However, responses on the effectiveness of party policies on women legislative representation is shown thus:



Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the chart above, a good number of respondents do not believe that party policies have immediate effect on women legislative representation in the National Assembly. Even though Oluyemi (2016) noted that attempts have been made by political parties to inculcate the National Gender Policy, field data suggests that the adoption of such document, have not had any impact on women legislative representation.

#### **4.2.3. Identify the Role of Political Parties in Ensuring Parity in Legislative Representation in the National Assembly**

This section was exclusively for party administrators. In this vein, 23 respondents rated the strength of its women population 'ok', 2 stated its women strong is considerably 'strong',

while 2 noted its women population is ‘very strong’ as shown below. Note that the missing responses are those of lawmakers, who by design are not requested to attempt this section.

**Table 4.12: Strength of Political party Women Population**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	OK	23	10.5	85.2	85.2
	STRONG	2	.9	7.4	92.6
	VERY STRONG	2	.9	7.4	100.0
	Total	27	12.3	100.0	
Missing	System	192	87.7		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

However, all party administrators agreed that political parties have a role to play in enhancing women legislative representation. In this vein, responses to the performance of political parties in the nomination of female candidates showed that while 19 respondents note that it was good, 8 respondents stated it was excellent. On this note, this study wishes to state that incidences of bias cannot not be divorced completely from the responses provided by respondents. However, Punch Nigeria (2019, May 16<sup>th</sup>) noted that a breakdown of the figure given by INEC showed that while only seven women were elected into the Senate during the 2019 elections, the House of Representatives has 11 women. Inferentially, the rate of political party nomination of female candidates is low.

On the drive of political parties building mass coalition for female candidates, 22 respondents noted that it was ‘good’, while 5 observed that it was ‘excellent’. This information is at variance with the position of Premium Times (2019, April 20<sup>th</sup>) which noted that 2019 election, 235 women, forming 12.34 per cent of candidates, contested for a seat in the Senate

of which seven (6.42 per cent) were elected. This remained constant in the 8th Senate, which also accounted for 6.42 per cent of the total number of elected senators. Premium Times observed that the two dominant political parties, the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and its main opposition, the PDP, fielded seven and 10 candidates respectively. It listed Female Senators that lost to include Binta Garba and the former minority leader of the 8<sup>th</sup> Senate, Abiodun Olujimi. However, the Court of Appeal restored the mandate of Senator Abiodun Olujimi (Sahara Reporters, 2019, November 6<sup>th</sup>).

In the House of Representatives, Premium Times alluded that 533 women contested, with the major parties fielding a total of 31 (15 APC and 16 PDP) candidates. However, only 11 (3.05 per cent) have been elected. The figures from the 8th House have thus been halved, as it had 22 female lawmakers.

Going further, 24 respondents stated that that their respective parties performed fairly in the introduction of gender quotas, while 3 noted that theirs performed averagely. This is shown in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Introduction of Gender based Quotas**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FAIR	24	11.0	88.9	88.9
	AVERAGE	3	1.4	11.1	100.0
	Total	27	12.3	100.0	
Missing	System	192	87.7		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Similarly, 70.4% of respondents noted ‘average’ on the establishment of legal by political parties, while 29.6% stated ‘good’ with regards to the establishment of legal aid by political parties for female aspirants. This result is shown below.

**Table 4.14: Establishment of Legal Aid**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AVERAGE	19	8.7	70.4	70.4
	GOOD	8	3.7	29.6	100.0
	Total	27	12.3	100.0	
Missing	System	192	87.7		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Furthermore, 20 party administrators observed that their parties are ‘good’ at creating support network for younger politician by establishing mentorship programmes, while 7 respondents stated that their respective parties were ‘excellent at creating support network for younger politicians via the establishment of mentorship programmes. Their responses are contained in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Creation of Support Programme via Mentoring**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	GOOD	20	9.1	74.1	74.1
	EXCELLENT	7	3.2	25.9	100.0
	Total	27	12.3	100.0	
Missing	System	192	87.7		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Finally, 25 respondents observed that women were represented averagely in their party’s National Executive Committees, while 2 party administrators noted ‘good’ on the percentage of women representation in their respective national Executive Committees as shown in the Table below.

**Table 4.16: Percentage of Women Representation in Party’s National Executive**

	Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AVERAGE	25	11.4	92.6	92.6
	GOOD	2	.9	7.4	100.0
	Total	27	12.3	100.0	
Missing	System	192	87.7		
Total		219	100.0		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

#### **4.2.4. Suggest Possible ways of Enhancing the Role of Political Parties for Improved Women Representation in National Assembly**

Suggested strategies to improve women legislative representation are presented in the Table below.

**Table 4.17: Strategies for Improved Women Legislative Representation**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ENTRENCHING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PRINCIPLES IN PARTY CONSTITUTION	73	33.3	33.3	33.3
	REDUCTION OF UNDUE INTERFERENCE IN PARTY WORKINGS BY ITS LEADERS	84	38.4	38.4	71.7
	IMPROVED INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE MODE OF CANDIDATE NOMINATION	3	1.4	1.4	73.1
	AVOID THE CONDUCT OF PARTY AFFAIRS AT SUCH TIME THAT MAY NOT BE CONDUCTIVE FOR FEMALE ASPIRANTS	59	26.9	26.9	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

In an order fashion, respondent's preferred strategies are listed as follows: reduction of undue interference in party workings by its leaders, entrenching Affirmative Action principles in party constitution, avoiding the conduct of party affairs at such time that may not be conducive for female aspirants and, improved internal democracy in the mode of candidate nomination.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter covered the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

#### 5.1. Summary

The study was designed to examine the characteristics of political parties that are conducive to women legislative representation in Nigeria's National Assembly from 1999 to 2019. In this study, parity of participation refers to the equitable distribution of political power barring any such hindrances that may be caused by sex, while a political party means an association of people driven by a common goal of ceasing power through the democratic means of election, via shared ideals. On this note, women legislative representation describes the number of legitimate return of women made in a legislative election.

The objectives of the study were to: examine the variations in women legislative representation of successive National Assemblies in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic, determine whether or not women are/have been underrepresented in Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic, identify the role of political parties in ensuring parity in legislative representation in the National Assembly, and suggest possible ways of enhancing the role of political parties for improved women representation in National Assembly. These objectives were pursued vigorously using properly laid out research methodology.

Based on the above, the study adopted the survey research design, employing the proportionate stratified sampling technique. Data was collected with the use of questionnaires. The Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select the key informants that provided the primary data, while the secondary data were taken from published materials. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used to analyze quantitative data, while the content analysis was employed in analyzing qualitative data.



Findings showed that there seem to be a consensus on the underrepresentation of women in the National Assembly. Different reasons were given for this unfortunate situation by the various stratum. While lawmakers sounded somewhat objective on the percentage of women serving in the National Assembly, percentage of women as committee chair, proportion of women in committees, impact of women caucuses on legislative issues and the effects of party policies on women legislative representation, party administrators were all up in defence of the underrepresentation of women in the National Assembly. Party issues such as the nomination of candidates, building of mass coalition of women advocacy depicting Kittilson's categorization of women activists within a party, creation of support network for younger politicians via mentoring, were all vehemently defended by party administrators. However, political parties noted that they have fairly in the areas of percentage of women in their respective National Executive Committees and the introduction of legal aid organizations to assist female politicians.

Stemming from the above, the study suggested reduction of undue interference in party workings by its leaders, entrenching Affirmative Action principles in party constitution, avoiding the conduct of party affairs at such time that may not be conducive for female aspirants and, improved internal democracy in the mode of candidate nomination, among others, as strategies to enhance the role of political parties for improve women legislative representation.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

Women constitute at least half of Nigeria's population. As rightly argued by various scholars, they make important and largely unacknowledged contributions to economic life and play crucial roles in all spheres of society. Despite this, they are discriminated against in the political process and their marginalisation is most pronounced in the democratisation

processes. Women in Nigeria hold less than 8% of important decision-making positions. The present National Assembly has an inexcusably low number of women in both houses. Despite Nigeria's long history of political parties, very few Nigerian women have been either elected or appointed to party office. The passive participation of women in the nation's political parties and policymaking bodies suggests that Nigerian political parties, like most others, are strongly flawed in its administration. Hence, this study sought to investigate party characteristics that were conducive to women legislative representation.

In view of the above, the study noted that while there seem to be a consensus on women legislative underrepresentation, causes however, varied among quarters raising issues of bias. In essence, respondents argued along lines of convenience, thus, necessitating a reliance on documentary evidence to validate various assertions. Nevertheless, respondents of all works argued in support of women underrepresentation but differed on its immediate causes.

Conclusively, it is imperative that the recommendations outlined in this study be implemented, so as to ensure improved representation of women in the National Assembly. Efforts should therefore be made to inculcate gender based quota system as well as encouraging political parties to elect more women into its National Executive Committees.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

In view of the findings in this study, the recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Introduction of Gender Based Quota System: as a matter of policy, parties should have a number of seats reserved for women in its fold.
- 2) Encouraging the Election of Women in Party's National Executive Committee: Away from the traditional seats often left for women in political parties National

Executive Committee, some more seats should be conceded to women. In this regards, women should be encouraged or nominated into seats without gender embargo like those of the party's chairman and his/her vice.

- 3) Equal funding incentives should be provided for aspirants within the party. That is to say, preference should not be accorded to genders.

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