

## GENDERED DIPLOMACY: AN ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### Abstract

*Gendered diplomacy: An Analysis of Nigerian Women Participation in International Relations has been a long time issue of concern so that Scholars and practitioners alike have been interested in the place of women in international relations. There are still substantial obstacles preventing women from being fully included in diplomacy, despite recent increases in their engagement. Therefore, while looking at how Nigerian women are involved in international relations; the objective of this research work is look at how gender is involved diplomacy can be minimized if not totally abolished. Documentary research method was adopted using secondary sources data collection. Content Analysis and Logical Inference was used as a method of data analysis. Feminist theory and Charles Darwin's notion of superiority were both selected as appropriate theoretical frameworks. The study found that because of the importance women are to inclusivity and femininity, women are essential to peace, stability, and progress in the international system. The study recommends that in order to promote inclusive and diverse diplomatic approaches, gendered diplomacy must evolve, that women at all levels should be given an opportunity to display their talents for the development of the nation, that women should be given an affirmation of at least thirty percent of appointment at the national level and representation at the international issues among others.*

**Keywords: Women, Gender, Diplomacy, International Relations, Feminism**

### Introduction

The social sciences as a whole have given much more attention in recent years to gender issues, particularly those pertaining to the position and function of women. The agenda and ideas explored in a variety of academic fields have significantly changed in reaction to the growth of a women's movement and the production of an expanding body of analytical literature relevant to women's situation. This has been particularly apparent in history and sociology, but it has also been prominent in political science, economics, anthropology, and international relations. It has also gained significant relevance in the humanities that are most ideologically fundamental (Halliday, 1988).

UN Women has already said that "gender equality will not be reached for another 130 years" (UN, 2021) despite the fact that the presence of women in political decision-making areas at the national and international levels appears to be increasing. Only 14 out of 195 nations have attained 50% or more women in cabinets, with only 21% of ministers in government being female (UN, 2021). "Only three countries globally have 50% or more women in parliament, and the same number have no women in parliament at all," according to the United Nations (UN, 2021). This is despite the fact that more than two-thirds of nations have implemented gender quotas to increase space for women's involvement in parliaments.

It is crucial for women to be included in important political institutions and to play a leadership role in global governance if we are to put an end to all forms of discrimination against them around the world. Equal involvement in political decision-making within states offers a more accurate portrayal of the social structure, hence improving the legitimacy of political processes by making them democratic and responsive (Mlambo, Kapingura, and Meissner: 2019). It is crucial that women take on roles in global governance such as ministers of international relations, ambassadors, Foreign Service employees, committee members for international organizations, board members for multinational corporations (MNCs), and heads of organizations involved in global governance. One strategy for encouraging change in institutional policies and behavior is to advance women's roles in these fields. In addition, changing how international relations are now dominated by men requires the participation of women in diplomacy (Townes, 2020). In order to depart from the patriarchal standard of upholding males as decision-makers and women as subjects of decisions related to conflict, women's participation in peace and security systems is also required. In terms of economics, it is critical that women participate in trade organizations' and international financial institutions' (IFIs) decision-making processes.

The need for more diverse and inclusive approaches to diplomacy, as well as gendered diplomacy, has been highlighted in a growing body of literature to address these difficulties. In order to achieve its goal of promoting full and equal participation of women in all facets of international relations, gendered diplomacy acknowledges the significance of women's input in determining foreign policy. The role of Nigerian women in international relations has grown throughout time, particularly in fields of diplomacy, peacekeeping missions, and involvement in United Nations activities, in response to the needs for gendered diplomacy around the world. In spite of this development, Nigeria is still falling short in closing the gender gap, and the nation must work to close this gap. As a result, this analysis of gendered diplomacy focuses on the role of Nigerian women in international relations.

### **Methodology**

To meet the objective of this study, Documentary research method was adopted using secondary sources data and content analysis and logical inference was used as a method of data analysis. Information relevant to the study was sourced from books, journals, web articles, newspapers, government publications, government gazettes and government circulars. To achieve the study's goal, these data were evaluated using content analysis and logical inference.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper adopts two theories, Charles Darwin's Theory of the Superiority and the Feminist Theory. In his well-known works from the late 19th century, Charles Darwin acknowledged that men were superior to women and based this belief on the concepts of evolution and the survival of the fittest (Jerry, 2000 cited in Bello, 2020).

Darwin's claim that males are superior to women was supported by natural selection and the idea that, because of their greater military experience, men should be seen as women's defenders and providers (Darwin, 1888 cited in Bello, 200). The inferiority of women was compared to that of weaker species in Darwin's theory since men were viewed as the defenders of women and children. One of the justifications for women's inferiority and men's superiority in the growth and evolution of the mind is the Darwinian Theory, particularly the concepts of natural and sexual selection. This theory explains why men dominate the international system.

In contrast to the aforementioned theory, feminist theory centers on the idea that men and women are on an equal footing and that it is necessary to fight against the marginalization of women in all

areas of human effort. Feminist theory, according to Stacy (1993), offers some sort of analysis and justification for why and how women hold less power than males as well as suggestions for how to change and confront this inequality. The majority of feminism ideas place a strong emphasis on direct social action, such as demonstrating against institutions that are dominated by males and creating organizations that will represent and advance women's interests in society and politics (Rich, 20011).

According to Attah (2006), liberal feminists believe that socialization processes are the root of inequality and that, given equal opportunity and conditions, men and women will behave similarly. They support gender equality in the sense of giving men and women the same opportunity. The fundamental goal in this case has been to fight for equality and freedom through efforts to reform laws that discriminate against women, to provide women rights that were previously exclusively available to men, and to oppose initiatives that are ostensibly meant to protect women.

### Conceptual Clarification

**Gender:** Men and women are classified by society according to what they should do and how to behave. This categorization is explained by the social construct of gender. The distinctions between men and women, girls and boys, and their duties and obligations in society are explained by this social and cultural construct. Notably, gender-based roles and other characteristics evolve throughout time and alter depending on various cultural circumstances. According to Adebajo, Adenuga, and Osikoya (2002), it explains the socially constructed and sustained behaviors that men and women are expected to exhibit, despite claims that these expectations alter over time and depend on cultural context.

**Gender Equality:** It is better to refer to gender equity as gender equality. The concept of gender equality states that a person's opportunities, rights, and duties do not depend on their gender at birth. Achieving gender equality implies giving both men and women an equal voice in choosing the priorities and results of development. Equality simply means that both men and women will be given equal consideration in planning and making decisions based on their views, interests, needs, and priorities. According to UNICEF (2017), gender equality means that men and women, girls and boys, all have access to the same chances, conditions, and treatment to realize their full potentials, human rights, and dignity. This enables everyone to participate in and benefit from society's democratic systems.

**Gendered Diplomacy:** A new approach called "gendered diplomacy" acknowledges the significance of diversity in determining foreign policy. The goal of gendered diplomacy is to encourage women's full and equal participation in all facets of the diplomatic process, including the choice to support gender-sensitive policies and practices. An important foundation for gendered diplomacy is the understanding that gender is a social construction and that gender norms differ between countries. The concept of gender overlaps with other social identities like race, ethnicity, and class to influence experiences of discrimination and exclusion, is also significant in gendered diplomacy. The practice of diplomacy is significantly impacted by gendered diplomacy. It necessitates a more open-minded and inclusive approach to diplomacy, one that values the contribution of women's views and experiences to the development of foreign policy (Dasanayaka, 2023).

**Diplomacy:** In a broad sense, diplomacy is the use of tact in dealing with people so that, even if their hearts are not won, they are carried. Diplomacy originally came from the Latin and Greek word diploma, which denotes a folded formal document. But in our situation, diplomacy is only the management of International Relations. The art of conducting relations (treaties, external trade,

peacemaking, war, issues of environment, culture, and external representation) on behalf of a state through the use of professionals has been characterized as diplomacy by Kissinger (1999) and some other scholars and practitioners. This point of view makes an effort to define diplomacy as an official act or formal practice of the state to achieve a strategic advantage or find amicable solutions to common problems. Therefore, diplomacy is both a theory and a practice.

**Diplomats:** Envoys who represent their nations abroad are known as diplomats. They are chosen by a state or an intergovernmental organization, such as the United Nations or the European Union, to carry out diplomatic duties with one or more governments or international organizations. The role of a diplomat is to advance information, trade, commerce, technology, and cordial relations while also representing and safeguarding the nationals and interests of their respective countries (Stevenson, 2014).

**International Relations:** Nicholas J. Spykman defines it as "relationship between individuals belonging to different states" while Quincy Wright argues that International Relations include "relations between many entities of uncertain sovereignty" (Mingst, 2004). This implies that international relations cover all aspect of relations between countries in the international system whether formal or informal.

#### Women in International Relations

It is important to note that until 1933, when at least 13 countries employed female ambassadors, women were not historically accepted in significant numbers to diplomatic or consular duty stations. When it came to women influencing foreign policy, it used to be that ladies had to marry diplomats or consular officials in order to administer diplomatic families, preside as hostesses, and support the work of foreign missions through volunteer work in the community (Bloch, 2004).

In comparison to the 1980s and 1990s, when there were only 15 to 20 female Permanent Representatives to the UN (PRUNs), 50 out of 193 PRUNs in 2019 were female (Deen, 2019). The prospects for gender parity in the field of foreign policy continue to be undermined by contextual barriers related to unequal access to opportunities, discriminatory norms and attitudes, and the fact that women are still disproportionately posted to less important positions. Despite recent advances made by women in diplomacy, such as those in Finland (44%), Sweden (40%), Norway (33%), the United States of America (30%), and Colombia (28%), as of five years ago, women still held lower statuses and positions than men (Towns and Niklasson, 2017). The male predominance in ministry of foreign affairs statuses and posts has been documented in literature.

In addition to the underrepresentation of women in the diplomatic community, discriminatory hiring practices that maintain patriarchy in the field of foreign policy result in the appointment of few women to low level and inconsequential positions. The deployment of important officials into the major political economies of the world, including New York, Beijing, France, London, Vienna, and others, is overwhelmingly done by men. In order to assist male ambassadors in their engagements, women are frequently nominated as deputies and assigned administrative tasks.

Adebanjo, Adenuga, and Osikoya (2022) noted that male diplomats kept in touch with their counterparts by taking advantage of women's unpaid labor. In order to bridge the gap between the male members of diplomatic missions, women are employed as diplomat wives who perform unpaid work for the men. Male ambassadors also relied on their spouses' assistance at various events by acting as their eyes and ears. In order for their husbands and other diplomats to undertake the business of international relations, diplomat wives used to provide a suitable environment (Adebanjo, Adenuga, and Osikoya, 2022).

Richard Nixon once said that women have no business working for the government. When

compared to their male counterparts in leadership positions, particularly in foreign policy interactions, stereotyped perceptions and discriminatory practices have consistently put women in a situation Whitton (2020) refers to as a "double bind dilemma." Women have made some progress in terms of representation in diplomacy since the early 2000s, with the number of female permanent representatives to the United Nations in New York rising from 5% in the early 2000s to 15% today in 2011 (Stewart, 2012, cited in Whitton, 2020). According to Adebajo, Adenuga, and Osikoya (2022) the proportion of female heads of mission in London has climbed from 9% to 13%.

From 8.5% in 1995 to 33% in 2021, Norway will have more female ambassadors than any other country in Europe. Women make up 27% of American diplomats. Grenada has 57% female ambassadors, which is more than any other country in the Caribbean. Additionally, 25% of Panama's ambassadors are women in the Americas. Despite the Middle East and North Africa having a relatively small number of female diplomats, this number is rising. In the Asia-Pacific area, nations like the Philippines (40%) and Australia (29%) as well as Bahrain (15%) and Australia (4%) all have women serving as heads of mission, whereas in Armenia 4(5%) out of 80 missions are led by women. Only 10% of senior diplomatic positions in Belgium are held by women. Less than 30% of diplomats are women in South Africa and Rwanda, the top two countries in Africa(Adebajo, Adenuga and Osikoya, 2022). Affirmative action has been used more frequently, which has led to an increase in the number of women working in diplomacy.

Fewer women serve as ambassadors and high commissioners in some African nations, such as Ethiopia (21%), Rwanda (26%), Uganda (41%), Sudan (6%), South Africa (30%), and Zimbabwe (22.2%) (Adebajo, Adenuga, and Osikoya, 2022). In Nigeria, in spite of the significant improvement in women engagement in the international relations, only about 15% of diplomats are women, therefore gender disparity still existsat national and international levels and that has served as a bane to inclusive development.

### **Nigeria Women in Diplomacy**

The Nigerian government gave portfolio to 52 non-career and 43 career ambassadors in 2021. A glance at the postings made public revealed that 11 envoys were re-appointed, with eight staying in their original countries of duty and the other three were redeployed.The list also revealed that only 12 of the 52 non-career ambassadors are women, adding three career ambassadors and heads of mission to the total of 15, for a total of 52 non-career ambassadors and three career ambassadors(Awodipe, 2021).The head of the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF), MufuliatFijabi, responded to this situation by saying that the paltry number of women nominated as ambassadors further exemplifies the absence of political will to include women in key roles and in the government process at all levels.

Despite the insignificant number of women diplomats, appointing Dr. Uzoma Emenikeas the first female ambassador to the US is a positive development. She represented Nigeria's final envoy to Ireland. She began her career in the Nigerian Foreign Service over 30 years ago, working in the Africa and Protocol Divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She then received a posting in 1992 to the Nigerian Embassy in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where she worked for six years.The last ambassador to France was Modupe Irele, who is currently assigned to Hungary. She was the first woman to occupy the position since the diplomatic mission named its first representative in 1966 at the time she was transferred to France.

Eniola Ajayi, formerly the ambassador to Hungary, was posted to the Netherlands.She strives to bring Nigeria and the nations to which she is accredited as near as she can by fostering

cooperation in different areas. Along with her priorities, she sees agriculture, solid minerals and steel, the oil and gas industry, and information technology as the major sectors where developing bilateral cooperation between Nigeria and other concurrently accredited countries has the greatest potential. Citizenship diplomacy, economic diplomacy, and social diplomacy are her top concerns when she enters the realm of diplomacy; these three areas form the core of her ideology of the three I's; inclusion, investment, and image building.

Hajara Salim took over as the envoy to Malaysia, replacing Monique Ekpong. She was a career civil servant and politician prior to her appointment, having retired as a Director from the National Assembly. Obiezuljeoma Chinyeren was posted to Ireland and succeeded Emenike at the Irish embassy. Zarah Umar undertakes the position of ambassador in Malawi, and Sadiya Nuhu would succeed her in Romania as her equivalent. Before being appointed, Umar was the first woman to hold the position of Head of Service in Kwara. Despite all odds, Opunimi Akinkugbewas appointed as the envoy to Greece. The appointed Deputy Ambassador to Germany, Ingekem Regina Ocheni is in charge of the career ambassadors in Germany. Ocheni's appointment wasn't without some controversy of its own, as certain groups were pushing for her to be removed. The Kogi-born diplomat, however, managed to avoid injury and went on to become Germany's deputy ambassador while Lami Sauda Remawa-Ahmed is the Nigeria ambassador to Chad (Awodipe, 2021; Oti, 2022).

Despite growing lobbying over the years and the abundance of qualified women who could undoubtedly flourish at the position, Ola Olaniyi, of HEIR Woman Development, said it is shameful and shocking that the number of women appointees remains so low. According to her "there are a ton of talented, intelligent women who are willing to work, but take a look at the meager number of women who were appointed out of roughly a hundred applicants. Derivative action and allowing women to serve have been topics of discussion for years. Nevertheless, nothing has come of it. How much longer will this go on?" she questioned.

### **Nigeria women in Peacekeeping Operations**

Concern over the harmful effects of war on women, particularly the pervasive sexual assault seen in the civil conflicts in Bosnia, West Africa, and Rwanda, grew starting in the 1990s. This trying experience led to the unanimous ratification of UNSCR 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" by the UN Security Council in 2000. The Resolution emphasizes women's rights to equal participation in international peacekeeping and peace building missions and applies a gender perspective to conflict resolution. It expressly urges peacekeepers to receive specialist training on women's rights, needs, and protection (Akinjobi, 2016).

On October 31, 2000, the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted as a result of efforts made by all parties to address the problems of women in conflict. This resolution stressed "the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures." Since then, a number of resolutions have urged more female involvement in peacekeeping, and all current peacekeeping mandates mention the inclusion of female peacekeepers (Kumalo, 2021). Nigeria ranked first among troop-contributing nations in 2010 for the percentage of women among its military and police personnel wearing the Blue Helmet in ongoing peacekeeping operations. This is because female peacekeepers have a comparative advantage when liaising with local communities on issues like sexual exploitation, abuse, and violence (Ogwu, 2010). Nigeria also established two units of an all-female FPU in 2010 and 373 female peacekeepers.

The actions adopted by Nigeria, according to Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Ellen Margrethe Lj, would ensure that women effectively participate in peacekeeping. She



praised Nigeria's dedication to post-conflict nation rehabilitation and noted that Nigeria has earned the honor of assisting in stabilizing and enhancing peace-building efforts in the West African sub-region. "This dedication to global peacekeeping truly deserves the deepest respect from all of us," she concluded.

### **Nigerian Women in United Nations**

Because of their active participation and responsibilities in United Nations activities, Nigerian women have also gained prominence on a global stage. A handful of these women and their contributions are detailed below.

**Okonjo-Iweala, Ngozi:** In March 2021, she was chosen to be the Director-General of the World Trade Organization. She is an economist, an advocate for fair trade, a proponent of environmental sustainability, a champion of human welfare, an expert in sustainable finance, and a specialist in international development. She is also the first woman and the first African to chair the World Trade Organization (Sanusi, 2022). Additionally, Okonjo-Iweala serves on the boards of numerous prestigious businesses and institutions, including Danone, Standard Chartered Bank, Twitter, the Mandela Institute for Development Studies, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, One Campaign, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, the Rockefeller Foundation, Results for Development, African Risk Capacity, and the Earthshot Prize.

The talented economist worked for the World Bank in Washington, D.C., for 25 years, eventually rising to the position of managing director. She also works for the Brookings Institution as a non-resident distinguished fellow for the Global Economy and Development Programme's Africa Growth Initiative. She also serves as Co-Chair of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate and is a retired commissioner. After leaving government, Okonjo-Iweala became a member of the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (2015–2016), chaired by Gordon Brown, and the Eminent Persons Group on Global Financial Governance, which was established by the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (2017–2018). Since 2014, she has been co-chairing the Global Commission for the Economy and Climate, with Nicholas Stern and Paul Polman. Since 2019, Okonjo-Iweala has been part of UNESCO's International Commission on the Futures of Education (Sanusi, 2022).

Okonjo-Iweala was the first woman to hold the position of Minister of Finance for two terms in Nigeria, one of the numerous records she broke during the course of her remarkable career. Between 2003 and 2006, President Olusegun Obasanjo appointed her; then, from 2011 to 2015, President Goodluck Jonathan did. She was the nation's foreign affairs minister from June to August of 2006 and conducted discussions with the Paris Club that resulted in the elimination of \$30 billion of the nation's debt, including the outright cancellation of US\$18 billion, during her first stint as Minister of Finance under President Olusegun Obasanjo (Sanusi, 2022).

**Amina Mohammed:** Amina Mohammed is a politician and diplomat who presently serves as the UN's deputy secretary general. She held the position of Environment Minister of Nigeria from 2015 to 2016. She served as Nigeria's representative on the African Union Reform Steering Committee, which was led by Paul Kagame, the president of Rwanda. On February 24, 2017, she later submitted her resignation from the Federal Executive Council. Later that year, Mohammed was named the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations by António Guterres, who also indicated his intention to do so. She serves as a representative for the UN Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance in this role (Sanusi, 2022).

Mohammed played a significant role in the Post-2015 Development Agenda process starting in

2012, serving as Ban Ki-Moon's special adviser on post-2015 development planning. She served as a liaison in that capacity between the Secretary-General, his High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, and the Open Working Group of the General Assembly, among other parties. She also participated in the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development for the Secretary-General beginning in 2014. Mohammed later rose to prominence as the founder and CEO of the Centre for Development Policy Solutions and as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's Masters in Development Practice program in the United States (Sanusi, 2022). She was given the responsibility of coordinating the Nigerian debt reduction funding for the Millennium Development Goals in 2005. Her responsibilities included creating a Virtual Poverty Fund with cutting-edge strategies for reducing poverty, coordinating and monitoring the budget, and giving advice on topical problems involving poverty, public sector reform, and sustainable development. Mohammed oversaw the UN Millennium Project's Task Force on Gender and Education between 2002 and 2005 (Sanusi, 2022).

**Olufunmilayo Abosede Balogun-Alexander:** As the UN Resident Coordinator in Timor-Leste, this woman is another one from Nigeria. At a top level in the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations, Olufunmilayo has more than 30 years of experience managing initiatives promoting peace, development, and humanitarian aid (UN, 2022).

Prior to being named the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Balogun-Alexander headed UN-Women's global response to humanitarian crises and worked with the UN-Women Country Office to strengthen gender mainstreaming in UN-led humanitarian coordinated responses in crisis-affected countries. She also served as head of UN-Women's Humanitarian Normative and Coordination Action. Prior to that, she served as the country representative for UN-Women, the deputy representative for UN-Women Ethiopia, the director of advocacy and external relations for the Africa Region and Kenya of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and the program manager for the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

In order to be effective and produce results, Ms. Balogun-Alexander led and assisted multifunctional teams at the national level, focusing especially on the relationship between peace, development, and humanitarian issues. She oversaw the coordination of inter-agency efforts at the United Nations to establish and carry out collaborative programs, including those on gender-based violence, governance, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (Sanusi, 2022).

To make sure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, she has coordinated national support and government priorities for development and social policy funding. This includes driving and co-creating solutions on contentious issues like gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and minority groups, among others. She has created and maintained strategic alliances with governments, international bodies, bilateral donors, the media, and the corporate sector for the purpose of securing funds and implementing innovative programs (UN, 2022).

### **Imperative of Gendered Diplomacy**

Nothing less than a sincere effort to comprehend how a policy affects people of all sexes, socioeconomic classes, and racial backgrounds constitutes feminist foreign policy (Lunz and Bernading, 2019). A feminist approach to gendered diplomacy in foreign policy is one that prioritizes gender equality in international relations because it recognizes that gender equality is a sign of societies that will be peaceful and prosperous (Lal, 2021). These distinguishing impacts, meanwhile, are frequently ignored in both academic and practical circles.

Gains for a sustainable global security policy are one of the main benefits of nominating more



women for diplomatic careers. Nigeria must put a priority on eliminating inequities if it is serious about conflict prevention, attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, and fostering peace. Therefore, when a nation or institution lacks a feminist foreign policy, it ultimately lacks an understanding of what foreign policy should be about. The most effective way to combat the rise of populism and authoritarianism may be through a feminist foreign policy (Lunz and Bernading, 2019). Feminist foreign policy is essential if the nation is to genuinely pursue a viable global security strategy. A feminist foreign policy places the individual rather than the state as the main referent of security and seeks to create human security by focusing on the needs and viewpoints of underrepresented groups in foreign policy.

According to the United States Agency for International Development (2015), most women have great negotiating abilities, which are essential in diplomacy. This is largely due to the fact that women are willing to sit across from one another at the table and commit to waiting to stand up until showing respect and reciprocity. This suggests that women are prepared to bargain and resolve issues. Sometimes negotiations take a long time and call for traits that this gender possesses, such as patience, cooperation, attentive listening, and mutual understanding. Because of their societal roles as mothers and infant carriers, women have access to greater population groupings, which is another reason why they should be included in diplomacy. In particular in nations where gender segregation hinders gender interaction, this accessibility is seen as crucial to a diplomatic career.

Rahman (2012), argues that in order to analyze and foresee potential risks in vulnerable areas, diplomats must be able to tap into the entire society as part of preventive diplomatic actions. The male gender is unable to freely approach women in several regions of the world where gender segregation is common. The males can only take into account 50% of the population in their analysis as a result. In other words, female diplomats have access to the remaining 50% of the population. In particular, they can ensure that women's voices and concerns are heard in rural and conservative countries. It has been noted that women are morally stronger, have higher ethical standards, and have a special aptitude for building and maintaining relationships with others. These traits make it clear that women are needed in the diplomatic community to strengthen positive connections between states.

Another significance of the female gender in the diplomatic domain is that when appointed, women stand up for the rights of other women. Female diplomats include matters that affect women in their bilateral relationships, such as promoting girls' education and lending support to initiatives that promote women's empowerment. Female diplomats are likely to encounter groups of women who are open to sharing their issues since they are female when they engage at the community level. This makes it possible to present and answer the concerns and interests of women. Women's involvement in leadership and decision-making is advantageous to society because they exhibit diplomatic leadership by bridging regional divides and advocating for gender equality causes like the abolition of gender-based violence, parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender-equality laws, and electoral reform. Their choices will be a reflection of gender inclusion in the host nation, where gender equality is a major concern (Oved, 2017).

The advancement of society as whole and improved and more efficient governance are both results of the appointment of women to diplomatic positions. The effectiveness of worthwhile foreign relations will ultimately be boosted by a stronger representation of women in diplomatic positions, which will enable new issues to be brought to attention on the international affairs agenda and new priorities to be put into action through the adoption and implementation of laws

and policies. Lessening the likelihood of conflict will help Nigeria become a stable and prosperous country when at least 35% of lawmakers are women. A further reason why Nigerian women should be involved in diplomacy is that, in part because of their social roles, they have access to a wider range of population groups. In particular in nations where gender segregation hinders gender interaction, this accessibility is seen as crucial to a diplomatic career.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study noted that in Nigeria, in spite of the significant improvement in women engagement in the international relations, only about 15% of diplomats are women, therefore gender disparity still exists at national and international levels and that has served as a bane to inclusive development.

The study also noted that Women's input is crucial in determining foreign policy, and gendered diplomacy tries to encourage the full and equal engagement of women in all facets of international affairs. Nigeria as a country has also made an effort to advance gender equity in its participation in the international system. In contrast to before, Nigeria now has a sizeable human presence in the international system, including Peacekeeping Operations, Diplomatic Missions, and the United Nations, which demonstrates a positive attitude toward the issue of gender equality and ultimately contributes to peace and stability in the global system. However, Nigeria as a nation still needs to strengthen its commitment to gendered diplomacy to improve inclusive representation of other genders for the nation's overall growth and the propagation of universal values in the international community.

The study therefore recommends that in order to promote inclusive and diverse diplomatic approaches, gendered diplomacy must evolve, that women at all levels should be given an opportunity to display their talents for the development of the nation, that women should be given an affirmation of at least thirty percent of appointment at the national level and representation at the international issues, that government should bring out a blueprint that in serious term abolish gender disparity in all aspect of public engagement, that the leadership of this country should develop the political will to enshrine women in his key appointments as that will indicate preparedness to accommodate women to give out their talents to the nation which will translate to development

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