

**AN ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS IN  
KADUNA STATE, A STUDY OF 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS.**

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**Abstract**

It is believed that women's participation in politics results in tangible gains for democracy including greater responsiveness to citizens needs, increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and more sustainable peace. Women form 47% of the total number of registered voters in the country. Kaduna state recorded about 3.92 million registered voters putting the State as third largest in terms of voters registered. However, only 13 women contested for the National assembly from the State. The main objective of this paper is to assess women participation in politics in Kaduna state using the 2019 elections as a case study. The study employed the mixed method approach, and linear regression was used in analyzing the data collected. The study revealed that patriarchy hinders women from contesting in the elections. This results in gender based discriminations. The study also found that the financial strength of the women affects their full participation in politics. Educational background was found to be a key factor in the choice of female candidates in the 2019 election. The study concludes that despite measures put in place by government at all levels in enhancing the choice of women in the elections and their active participation in politics, there is need for more to be done. The study therefore recommends more rigorous enlightenment program and campaign on the benefits of women participation in politics, they should also be encouraged to have access and control of financial assets to actively contest in elections with the aim to win.

Key words: Women, Elections, Participation, Politics.

**Introduction**

The involvement of women in the political arena is a call put forward by all in order to ensure equity and fairness. Women marginalization dates back to the colonial era when women were considered the weaker vessels hence their relegation to the background. There has been continuous call for a level playing ground for both men and women politically economically and socially to enhance National growth and development

There have been efforts by developing countries, Nigeria inclusive to enlist women participation in politics as an integral aspect of their development programmes. The agitation for more allocation of

political roles to women dates back to the 1948 Universal declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It laid a foundation for other international commitments in the area of women's rights (PLAC 2018).

When discussing women's participation in governance and politics in a country like Nigeria, various variables of participation such as voting in an election, and contesting for public offices, come readily to mind. It is therefore, important to note that participation could also be used to discuss women's representation in the public offices. For instance, if the number of votes cast by women in an election increase from 10 to 40% of the total votes cast, there is a form of increase in participation. But when the number of women holding public offices is relatively low, compared to men, there is an under-representation, yet women's number of vote increases (Agbalajobi, 2010).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Women political marginalization has become a visible feature in the history of the country. They are barely seen in the political formations and power arena. The challenge faced by women in political process in the country has had significant momentum. The 2015 National Assembly had 94.3% of seats occupied by men while the women had 5.7% seats. At the State and local government levels, women seem not to appear in the power equation even at the judiciary (NBS 2015). This is inspite of women having about 46% of the total population in the county. 47% of the total numbers of registered voters in the 2019 General elections were women and in terms of occupation, housewives hold the third majority position (2019 Election feedback). 62 women were recorded to have been elected into various positions following the 2019 election results; this represents 4.17% of the total elected officials (Centre for democracy and development 2019).

From 1999 to 2015, Kaduna State has had just twelve (12) women as chairpersons in the local governments. No female legislator in the State house of assembly in 1999, 2003 and 2015. Two were however elected in 2007 and 2011. Since the return to civilian government in Nigeria, the State house of Assembly has had neither a female speaker nor a deputy speaker (SPARC 2014).The 2019 election however saw the emergency of a female deputy governor and five commissioners as appointed.

Efforts have been made in addressing the level of women participation in both elective and appointive positions in government. The fourth women conference on women in Beijing made a declaration that advocated for 30% affirmative action for women. The national gender policy advocated for 35% (Oluyemi 2015). The UNDP in its bid to further encourage equal women participation highlighted goals amongst which is training of women candidates, promoting gender parity in electoral management bodies, promoting use of special measures including gender quotas and removing all barriers in the participation of women at all levels of government(UNDP 2019).

Inspite of all these, gaps still exist as they voting rights is still trampled upon and elective appointments remain evasive. It is against this back drop that this study seeks to assess women participation in politics using the 2019 elections as a case study.

### **Research Questions**

- i. To what extent were women involved in the voting exercise during the 2019 General elections in Kaduna State?
- ii. How effective was the participation of women in the 2019 general elections in Kaduna State?
- iii. What are the strategies adopted in enhancing women participation in Politics in Kaduna State using the 2019 general elections as a case study?

### **Objectives**

- i. To ascertain the extent of women involvement in the voting exercise in the 2019 General elections in Kaduna State.
- ii. To assess the participation of women in the 2019 general elections in Kaduna State.
- iii. To identify the challenges of women in political participation in Kaduna State.

#### Hypothesis

H0: there is no significant relationship between the political process and women participation in the 2019 general elections in Kaduna State.

#### **Significance of the Study**

The participation of women in administration and governance in a country is of utmost importance in the quest for gender equity agitation.. There have been various researches on the role and participation of women in politics. This study will assess the political process in the 2019 general elections and women in Participation in Kaduna State. In the study carried out by Ogbogu 2012 on the role of women in politics and in the sustenance of Democracy in Nigeria, the study found that some of the challenges facing women in politics are lack of resources or finance, large scale discrimination from men folks, conflict in multiple roles of women. This study will however examine participation of women in politics with specific emphasis on the 2019 elections.

The findings of the research will be of immense assistance to development agencies, non-governmental organizations and key stakeholders with the objective of promoting women involvement and occupying key positions in government in Kaduna State and Nigeria in general.

#### Review Of Related Literature

##### Introduction

Political participation involves the inclusion of citizens in the decision making exercise within the political systems. When the word participation is used within the political context, it means voluntary involvement of individuals in political activities like voting, membership of political parties/movements and groups (Israel 2015).

#### **Historical Background of Women in Politics in Nigeria**

In the pre colonial era, women played varying roles in their various communities. A significant figure worthy of mention is Queen Amina of Zaria. She was a key character in the political structure and administration of the ancient Zaria. The modern city of Zaria was founded in the first half of the 16th century by a woman called Queen Bakwa Turuku. She had a daughter called Amina who later succeeded her as Queen. Queen Amina was a great and powerful warrior. She built a high wall around Zaria in order to protect the city from invasion and extended the boundaries of her territory beyond Bauchi and she made Zaria prominent Commercial Centre. The significant role played by prominent women such as Moremi of Ife, Emotan of Benin and Omu Okwei of Ossomari cannot be ignored. Moremi and Emotan were great amazons who displayed wonderful bravery and strength in the politics of Ife and Benin respectively, while Omu Okwei dominated the commercial scene of Ossomari in present day Delta State (Oluyemi 2014).

During the colonial era, women were denied franchise. The colonial government did not appreciate the important contributions of women and their sense of independence in certain matters such as education. The traditional participation of women in governance and administration of their local communities were not recognized. This stance buttressed the educational programme of the colonial government which did not give room for the status of women. The policy was based on the home policy which did not enfranchise woman until British Act of 1918 (Warner in Olugbemi, 2011). The Aba women crises of 1929 was a turning point as women protested against their continuous marginalization. The reforms by King George VI in 1936 gave women full citizenship and equal right with men. Before then women could not enter into any profession termed as male oriented like medicine, law, engineering, etc (Ajogbeje 2016)

In the 1950s, women in the Southern part of Nigeria were finally given franchise. This brought about the likes of Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, Margaret Ekpo and Janet Mokuolu into government.

In Northern Nigeria, women, in spite of the introduction of Islamic religion, responded to the politics of the time. According to (Arifalo, in Olugbemi, 2011) " Alhaja Malama Gambo Sawaba was under the

tutelage of the late Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, and acquired political education under the late Malam Aminu Kano at the NEPU School of Agitation and Propaganda". She also was a woman organizer who founded the women's wing of NEPU in Kano and had confrontations that led to her being jailed by the British Government. This shows that Nigerians fought tirelessly during the British rule to participate actively in political administration and to also have recognizable role with significance (Olugbemi 2011).

#### Women Participation in Politics

Between 1990 and 1993, under Babangida's transitional arrangements, Nigerian women became very politically conscious and involved. There was female presidential candidate amongst the thirteen presidential candidates the first of its kind in the history of Nigeria. Women were so involved that many were appointed to government parastatals, and commissions. (Olugbemi, 2011).

The year 2009 experienced a boom in terms of women participation, this was due to increased sensitization efforts on the many benefits of their involvement in politics. A female speaker of the House of Representatives emerged for the first time in the history of Nigeria. Two deputy Governors in Lagos and Benue States also emerged. The Obasanjo led administration at that time also assented to the bill on 'Policy on women' which gives 30% parliamentary seats to women (Ajogbe 2016).

Under the Jonathan led administration, there was improvement in the Ministerial appointment of women in Nigeria. The country was ranked 23rd due to their efforts in allocating ministerial positions to women. Elective positions however was ranked low with the country being in the 125th position in the world (Esuene 2014).

The Buhari administration appointed five (5) female ministers. The 2015 elections saw only seven females occupying senatorial seats and fourteen in the House of Representatives.

#### Women and 2019 General Elections

Women form 49.4% of the total population in Nigeria. However, female representatives in the 2019 elections was quite negligible in relation to the approximately half of the population they constituted. 2,970 women were on the electoral ballot representing only 11.36% of nominated candidates. 62 women have been recorded as elected; this represents a meager 4.17% of elected officials. This shows a decline from 2015-19 period where women formed 5.65% of the elected official (2019 Election Facts books).

Statistics from the election showed that there was an increase in the total number of women contested in the 2019 Elections. The Position of the President recorded six (6) women contestants; the position of the Vice president also recorded a significant number. The National assembly elections had 768 female candidates vying for the seats of which 3.84% of the total number has been elected. 235 women forming 12.34% of candidates contested for the senate of which seven (6.42%) were elected (2019 Election Factbook).

Kaduna State has no female senate member representing her in the National assembly. Nineteen states had no female candidates for the National Assembly election on either of the two dominant political parties, Kaduna State is notable amongst them ([www.dailytrust.com.ng](http://www.dailytrust.com.ng) visited Thursday 26th July 2019). In addition, Kaduna State house of assembly has no female member. The only female candidate in the last election is in court battling her candidature.

#### Challenges of Women Participation in Kaduna State

The intra party politics in political parties makes it difficult for women to get party nomination to contest elective posts because there are few women party members; even the few party women are unable to capture significant party offices. As a result, only very few men, even among the educated, allow their

wives to participate in politics (Ajogbeje 2016). The low participation of women in education is also part of the shortcomings. In Kaduna State, out of 317,012 students in public junior secondary schools, only 142, 839 were girls (Africa primetime news 2018). The percentage of female students that sat for NECO in 2015 was 45%, majority however to pursue further. The number of Kaduna NYSC female members in 2015 was 2169 as against the male members of 3161 while in 2016, the number dropped to 472 female members as compared to the male members that stood at 1409 (NBS 2018).

The huge financial requirement in contesting for political positions leaves most women stranded. This is due to inadequate economic strength and occupation of the women aspirants which leaves them highly disadvantaged as against their male counterparts (Oluyemi 2015)

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Kanter's "Glass-Ceiling Theory" (1977).

This theory focuses on the ways in which the structure of work organizations, especially those with large proportion of white-collar workers, establish women in subordinate positions i.e, they put a 'glass-ceiling' over women's opportunities (Kanter, 1977). The important positions or offices in the Nigerian's political setting can be related to the organization referred to in Kanter's theory. He stated that the work organization can be assessed in three dimensions:

**Opportunity:** People who have less opportunity tend to be low in self-esteem and aspiration while people with more opportunity are competitive and have greater self esteem.

**Power:** Kanter defined power as capacity to mobilize resources in support of individual interests. People with low power tend to be authoritarian, subordinating, coercive, critical, territorial and are not well linked. People with high power tend to be non-directive, encouraging to subordinates, helpful and popular.

**Proportions:** This is a social mix. The small proportion tends to be highly visible, highly stressed and stereotyped. The large proportions invisibly fit in with the group, find networking and the acquisition of sponsors.

With the dimensions clearly discussed by Kanter, there are visible similarities with Nigerian political system. Women are not given adequate opportunity to participate fully in the politics of the country. They are marginalized in the aspect of occupying key positions, political rights and top positions in the decision making cadre of government. They are best suited for behind the scene roles or home front.

In terms of power, Nigerian women are just like as Kanter described those with low power, while men are those with high power, both at the federal state and local levels. In addition, Nigerian women are the small proportion that is highly visible and stereotyped. It is an indisputable fact that Nigerian women are not only limited by patriarchy that are duly and unduly stereotyped and highly stressed with responsibilities (Adeleke 2014).

### **Methodology**

The study adopted the elements of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, hence it's a mixed method research. Primary data was sourced using questionnaires and unstructured interviews while secondary sources were sourced using documented researches, journal publications, academic papers, newspapers and internet sources.

#### **Population and Sample size**

The total population of the study is 6,113, 503 based on the 2006 census. Sample size is 384 based on the krejcie and morgan formular (see table attached).

#### **Study Area**

Kaduna state covers a land area of 46,053 square kilometers with an average density of about 75 persons per squared kilometre. The state shares boundaries with Niger state to the west, Zamfara, Katsina, and Kano to the north, Bauchi and Plateau States to the east and FCT Abuja and Nassarawa states to the

south. Kaduna state provides the meeting point of the earliest histories of Nigeria. According to the 2006 census, Kaduna state has a total population of 6,113,503 which account for 4.3% of Nigeria's total population. Females constitute 3,023,065 of the population while males are 3,090,438. The state is divided politically into three senatorial districts, Kaduna North, Kaduna Central and Kaduna South. The state has 23 local government areas. Inhabitants are mostly Christians and Muslims belonging to different ethnicities. Agriculture and other associated activities constitute the mainstay of the economy of the state.

#### Data Presentation And Analysis Administration of Questionnaire

A total of 420 questionnaires were distributed and 384 returned dully filled. Random sampling technique was adopted in distributing the questionnaires in the State. The table below shows the rate of distribution.

#### **Distribution and Return of Questionnaire**

Name of organization	Total No of questionnaire distributed	Total number of questionnaire returned
NDA (Igabi LG)	200	190
Kaduna South LG	90	80
Kaduna North lg	100	90
CODE (NGO in Kaduna North)	20	18
Ministry of women affairs KADUNA STATE	10	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>384</b>

Source: Field survey 2019.

**4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis**

Question	SA		Agree		Undecided		SD		Disagree		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Freq	%
1. Patriarchy has an influence on women involvement in politics	148	38.5	152	40	20	5.3	-	-	64	16.8	384	100
2. The active participation and presence of women in the political process enhanced the election exercise in the State	138	35	145	38	44	12	57	15	-	-	384	100
3. The spate of electoral violence hindered women from voting and actively participating in the 2019 elections in Kaduna	74	19	167	44	45	12	98	25	-	-	384	100
4. The antecedents of past women political officer holders affected the choice of women in the 2019 elections.	89	23	111	29	14	3	140	37	30	8	384	100
5. The financial requirements in securing a ticket as well as campaigning affected the performance of women in the 2019 elections in Kaduna State?	84	22	185	48	17	4	58	15	40	11	384	100
6. Religious beliefs and sentiments is a significant determinant in the involvement of women in governance in Kaduna State?	168	44	116	30	30	8	86	15	14	3	384	100
7. Education is a key influencer in women holding key positions in politics	186	48	161	42	-	-	30	8	7	2	384	100

Source: Survey Research 2019.

From the data above, majority of the respondents agree that patriarchy affects the presence of women in politics. Majority also agreed that the participation of women enhanced the political process in the 2019 elections in Kaduna State. A significant number of the respondents agree that the spate of electoral violence affected women's voting in the elections. The respondents were divided on whether the antecedents of past female office holders affected the choice of women in the elections. It was majorly agreed by the respondents that the financial implication of securing party tickets hindered women in the 2019 elections as well as Religious beliefs and sentiments.

**Test of Hypothesis**

The null (H0) to be tested states that: H0: There is no significant relationship between the political process in the 2019 general elections and women participation in Kaduna State.

The independent variable for the study is the 'Political Process in the 2019 General Elections' while the dependent variable is 'Women Participation'. For the purpose of performing linear regression on the computer for the hypothesis, responses from respondents in 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 for independent variable, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 for dependent variable were coded in the computer using SPSS package to produce the output presented in table 4.3, and 4.4 below:

**Table 4.3: Linear Regression Result (Model Summary) between Political process in the 2019 General elections and Women Participation in Kaduna State .**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.	Durbin-Watson
1	.797 <sup>a</sup>	.635	.634	.77286	664.146	.000 <sup>b</sup>	.185

Source: SPSS Version 20.0 output, (2015).

The result in table 4.3 above showed that the Women Participation can account for or explain about 63.4% (adj. r = 0.634) of Political Process in the 2019 General Elections in Kaduna State. The implication is that, the remaining 36.6% of the Political Process in the 2019 General Elections in Kaduna State can be explain by other factors outside the model.

**Table 4.4: Linear Regression Result (Coefficients<sup>a</sup>) between Women Participation and Political Process in the 2019 General Elections in Kaduna State.**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	.093	.131		.707	.000	1.672	2.111
1 POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE 2019 ELECTIONS (Independent Variable)	.827	.032	.797	25.771	.000	.649	.758

a. Dependent Variable: Women Participation (Dependent Variable)

Source: SPSS Version 20.0 output, (2015).

The table above shows the overall result of the tested hypothesis. The model contributes about 63.4% of Women Participation to Political Process in the 2019 General Elections. The hypothesis which states that There is no significant relationship between Women Participation and Political Process in the 2019 General Elections in Kaduna State is significant at 1% level (P = 0.000) with a positive relationship (Beta = 0.797) which shows that the P value is less than the level of significant. The study therefore rejected the null hypotheses and concluded that there is a significant relationship between Women Participation and Political process in the 2019 General Elections in Kaduna State.

**Major Findings**

From the literature reviewed above as well as the data presented and analyzed, the following are the major findings:

1. Patriarchy remains visible in the political processes in Kaduna State. However the 2019 elections saw the emergency of a female deputy governor in the state and the appointment of four (4) commissioners, this is commendable but there is still need for more to be done. The only female contestant in the 2019 Elections for the State house of assembly is still in court.
2. Education remains a setback in the quest for women participating and holding key elective positions in government.



3. Religious sentiments and affiliations affect the participation of women. Women are considered home makers and viewed as behind the picture support system for their husbands.

**Conclusion and Recommendations.**

Women's participation in politics and governance is of strategic importance, not only for women's empowerment, but because it has wider benefits and impact (GNR, 2012). The importance of women participation and representation has been emphasized in several quarters as this is believed to be a significant contributor to the National development of any country. (Adeleke 2014). Despite the difficulties faced by women in contesting for elective positions, their ambition continues to wax stronger.

The study recommends that there is need for rigorous sensitization programs on the demerits of patriarchy and the many benefits of women involvement in politics for even development.

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