

**Title Page**

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN NIGERIAN POLITICS:  
(CASE STUDY OF UDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA)**

**BY**

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PS/2009/286**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE  
IN POLITICAL SCIENCE.**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
CARITAS UNIVERSITY, AMORJI-NIKE, EMENE,  
ENUGU STATE**

**AUGUST, 2013**

## Approval Page

This is to certify that the project has been approved as meeting the requirements of the Department of Political Science, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike, Enugu for the Award of B.Sc. Degree in Political Science.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this project to God Almighty, my parent Mr. and Mrs. Scholarstica, Nwanneka Ene, Mr. Sylvanus Ene and Mrs. Syliva Ajoku.

## **Acknowledgement**

First and foremost, I will like to acknowledge God Almighty for seeing me through in this research work. My supervisor, the person of Mr. Duhu J. O. for his support, morally and contributions, other lecturers in the Department of Political Science, Caritas University. H.O.D, Dr. Omemma D.A., Chief Agu C.F., Dr. Owoh D.O, Dr. Eze M. O, Mr. Nwankwo J.C, and finally Mr. Ugwu I.C. for all their fatherly advise, impacts, and moral supports. My Aunt the person of Mrs. Lolo Syliva Ajoku and her husband Prince Osita Ajoku for their moral motherly advise and financial supports. My sibling, Chidimma Ene, Chigozie Ene, Emmanuel Ene and finally Beauty Ajoku, and Ezichi, my Uncles, Mr. Oliver Ene, Mr. Chime, Mr. Gerard Ene, Mr. Damian Ene, Mr. Chukwuma Ene, Aunty Georgina Uchaku, my friends, Faith Idawuoji, Emmanuella N.G, Juliet Inikpi Omede, Christian Anitube, Osarome Adams, Rabbi Tijana, Alice Abbah, My roommates Comfort Egba, Alice Agbo, Nancy Imbul, and Nnenna and many others.

**Ene Adaorah Rosemary**

## **Abstract**

This study or research on women empowerment in Nigerian politics is divided into five (5) chapters. The first chapter is on the topic that deals with the introductory part of the study by providing a comprehensive historical background to the study, identifying the major problems, grapples with the review of relevant literatures and the methodological issues involved in the research process. Chapter two (2) highlights the relationship between politics and women participation in Nigeria, taking into cognizance the periods of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial. Chapter three (3) focuses on how culture is hindrance to women participation in Nigeria, other factors affect the participation of women in politics. Chapter four (4), how high educational attainment enhances women participation in Nigerian politics. Finally, my chapter five (5) is based on my summary, conclusion, and recommendation. Then this study tends to establish gap between the existing literatures in terms of whether there is any relationship between politics and women participation in politics, as well as how culture hinders women participation in politics, and the enhancement of women participation in politics by high educational attainment.



**Chapter Two: The Relationship between Politics and Women's Participation in Nigeria 59-79**

- 2.1 Women educational attainment in pre-colonial era
- 2.2 Women educational attainment in colonial era -
- 2.3 Women educational attainment in post colonial era

**Chapter Three: The Culture and the Hindrance to Women Participation in Nigeria - 80-94**

- 3.1 Educational Factor - - - - -
- 3.2 Cultural Factor - - - - -
- 3.3 Social – Economic Factor - - - - -
- 3.4 Political Factor - - - - -

**Chapter Four: How High Educational Attainment Enhances Women's Participation in Nigerian Politics 95-107**

- 4.1 Recognition and Funding of the Office of the First Ladies
- 4.2 Establishment of Ministry of Women Affairs and National Council for Women Societies.

**Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation - - - - - 108-116**

- 5.1 Summary - - - - -

5.2	Conclusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.3	Recommendations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>Bibliography</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>- 117-120</b>



## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Politics is very important in every human society. According to Pennock et al (1967) “Politics refers to the forces that constitute and shape the government of the state and its politics and actions” According to (Goodnow, 1904: 1959). Politics involves the activities of the officials institutions of state. This can be ascertained that the stability, cohesion and level of socio-economic development that any society enjoys are reflective of its political leadership. It ensures that human, natural and economic resources are controlled by few people who are interested in the art of management, on behalf of the generality of the people. These are of course positions of responsibility that confer on the holders, certain rights, authorities and privileges of the politicians. In order to take care of all human interests, the two genders are supposed to be fully engaged in politics. However, the reverse is largely

dominated by the male gender, often to the detriment of the female (Afolabi, 2008). The result is a “malevolent” militarization of politics in Nigeria.

Participation in politics refers to different ways in which people exercise their rights over the political process. It is seen as a means to an end, where the end may be referred to as political leadership. Milbrath (1955) sees it as ranging from voting to taking part in decision process, attendance, at political meetings, funding and holding public and party offices. Participation according to him involves discussion, debates, and lobbying (both formally and informally).

The concept of participation lies in the culture of democracy. The first principle of democracy adopted by the council of the inter-parliamentary union Cairo, 16<sup>th</sup> September 1997, is stated as being

“... a universally recognized idea as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by people through out the world community irrespective of cultural, political, social and

economic differences. It is thus a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and the interest of the policy.”

This concept gives room to every human being to have rights to share in the making of decisions that affect their lives and that of their community. This right was affirmed by the establishment of the commission on the status of women (to promote women’s political and economic rights) by the United Nation in 1946. The year 1952 saw the adoption of the convention on political rights of women world; wide, and in 1967, the convention for the elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CE DAW) was endorsed. This convention is upheld by all international, regional and national legal instruments that concern children and women, such as the convention on the Right of child (CRC) and the organization of African unity (ONU, New African Union, AU). Charter on the Rights and welfare of the child. It also includes

the National policy on women (NPW) adopted by the federal government of Nigeria. In July 2000, with the ratification of CEDAW in 1985, Nigeria undertook to work towards the elimination of discrimination against women and goals in all fields, whether political, economic, social or cultural. Since the adoption of this policy by the government, very little improvement in the exercise of women's rights (especially in the area of politics) has been witnessed. The Beijing conference of 1995 on women articulated some areas crucial to the empowerment of women. These include poverty, education, healthcare, violence against women, effects of conflicts on women, power-sharing and decision-making mechanisms to promote the government of women, management of natural resources and the environment and the girl child. The Beijing platform for action made concrete plans to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures as one of its strategic objectives. It also affirms the need to increase women's capacity to participate

leadership and decision-making processes and bodies. One of the key initiatives in this ongoing process was the security council resolution of 1325, which urged member states to ensure increased representation of all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institution and mechanism for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict (UN, 2000AD/1325).

Taking the census of political activities both in the country and in the world at large, the number of political practitioners is quite insignificant as it is infinitesimal compared with men. In African, with particular reference to Nigeria, no women have been elected as governor of a state either during the civilian or military rule. Much they have been commissioners in the state or ministers at the federal level not to take of presidency, though some critics may be quick to mention, the case of Dame V. Etieba of Anambra State, but the truth remains that she was not elected. However, when the seat became vacant due to the treacherous and kangaroo

impeachment of the PDP led house of Assemble, being the second in command she had to boss the show for the in term which she did credibly well more than most of her male counterparts in other states. No other event can adequately represents the inhibitions and political road-blocks set for women than, in which even when Hon. Patricia Etteh managed to emerge as the first female speaker of the National House of representatives, these male chauvinists working round the clock saw to her exist.

It is therefore, on this background that this work. “Women Empowerment and Politics in Nigeria” is born.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Women empowerment is revolutionary development in the political history of Nigeria, Africa and the contemporary global society. Since Nigeria independence women in Nigeria have been given unfair representation in public affairs and with increased demonstration of their managerial capabilities

in all spheres of human endeavour, there is therefore, the need to give attention to the quest for wider participation of women in public affairs especially in leadership responsibilities.

Politics as well as I know is a game of numbers, the history of Nigerian politics is mostly with male domination, which have systematically excluded women from equal participation in Nigeria political activities.

Women usually constitute a smaller of political party membership because of the social, cultural and religious attitudes of different Nigerian societies which most often lend to relegate women to the background. As a result, only very few men, even among the educated, allow their wives to come out and participate in politics. In Northern Nigeria, for instance, an important factor inhibiting women's participation is the purdah system (i.e. house seclusion of women).

The essence of this research work is to investigate the various causes of marginalization of women in Nigeria politics, were the call for women empowerment.

To achieve this target, we therefore, pose the following research questions:

1. Is there any relationship between politics and women participation?
2. Does culture constitute a hindrance to women's participation in politics in Udi Local Government?
3. Can high educational attainment enhance women participation in politics and lack of finance?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of this study is to investigate women's participation and factors that affect their participation in Nigeria. The specific objective are therefore, as follows:

1. To examine the relationship between politics and women's participation in politics.
2. To determine how culture hinders women's participation in Udi Local Government Area.



3. To find out how high educational attainment enhances women's participation in politics.

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

Every research endeavor is prompted by a societal need to address a pressing problem. This study therefore is no exception, it has both academic and political importance.

The study will fill the existing gap in knowledge, it will also serve as an academic contribution to the movement for the recognition and realization of gender quality in the Nigeria matrix, particularly since Nigeria is a nation constitutionally based on the principle of democracy and justice.

The practical significance of this study include among other things that its findings and recommendations will be useful to policy makers, non-governmental organization, women organization and other stakeholders in the quest for gender equality.

It will equally be of importance to students, scholars and researchers in the field of political science and public administration that are saddled with the task of organizing and managing the public issues and affairs of the larger Nigerian society.

### **1.5 Literature Review**

The need for empowerment arises from the inability of an individual or a group of people to actualize their dreams and reach their greatest potentials due to artificial barriers created by individual and other groups within the same society. It is the manifestation of an incontrovertible inequality, segregation or marginalization.

To Oxfam (1995) empowerment involves challenging oppression, which compels millions of people to play a part in their society in terms which deny them their human rights.

Batliwa (1995) in her definition of the term empowerment stated that “empowerment is the process and result of the

process whereby the powerful members of the society gain greater access and control over materials and knowledge, resources, challenges the ideologies of discrimination and subordination and transform the institutions and structures via which unequal access and control over resources is sustained and perpetuated.

The above definition means that an individual or a group of people had either lacked power nor authority by conditions of denial or default.

For Unicef (2003), illiteracy remains at the central of women empowerment problem in Nigeria. Majority of the women folk and large number of girls in this country are still grappling, with the problem of basic reading and writing skills.

Moreover, women in Nigeria are discriminated against from access to education for social and economics reasons. For instance, the Islamic practice of purdah prevented many women from benefiting from school instructions for participating in economic activities which are likely to evaluate

their positions. The most negative segregation is probably the prevention of girls from going to school in some society. This has probably led to the greatest social harm of the twentieth century.

The fundamental problem is the low importance which women themselves attached to education many of them believe that the life of successful women revolves around her children, her husband and domestic chores. This lack of self ambition is problematic and prevent her from pursuing other education goals.

Aliazuem and Emezue (1986) explained that the Nigerian women especially those from eastern side of the country are known to have some kind of social expectation from role set dating back to the period of unrecorded history.

Ocheoha (1988) noted that one unanimous cry of women is that government should take positive step to balance the number of men and women in government bodies and committee as well as in public administrative entitles

including the armed forces and the judiciary. In with the above, Ocheoha recommended hence gender in appointment into public offices.

She also believed that this should equally be supervised government should monitor and evaluate progress, in the representation of women through dissemination of qualitative and quantitative including empowerment process.

Ekeocha (1992) in his contribution opined that women represent in most countries, the most restricted and marginalized group. They are under represented in policy articulation and conception by the elites that perceive them as only playing a biological functions or roles.

He advised that, time has come for more established structures which will focus on more exhortation of concrete programme of empowerment. It is the responsibility of these critical ministries to enlighten women, to fashion out programmes for women education. Institute measures against

domestic violence abuse integrate women in the economy and articulate a clear out role of women in empowerment process.

Omenuiyi (1992) remarked that though there is an increase in recent time in the area of women empowerment and political participation especially with the present waves of democratization that is sweeping through the country. However, there is still mismatch between the right incidence of female voter turn-out and the number of female presently, occupying elective political offices.

Etzioni (1968) was impliedly taking of empowerment when he noted that mobilization is a process by which latent energy from the view points of the active units in made available for collective actions.

However, mobilization may be used to connote a process of re-orientation to encouraging rather hitherto dormant potential units for a more culture nation. Empowerment connotes the authorization of oriented but subjugated units to engage actively in the pursuits and achievement of collective

goals, empowerment is therefore used to imply the giving of energy or authority to someone or group of people who were hitherto deprived of such powers or roles in the collective scheme of things consequently while mobilization is the first step to encouraging women participation in partism politics, empowerment is the finishing touch on the programme of women participation in politics.

From historical antecedents we may now advance the cultural belief of some pre-colonial societies with a view to understanding the practical and invaluable roles women played in those societies in the period. This will help us to make or debunk a linkage of limited women participation in politics to tradi-cultural orientation of the people.

According to Azikwe (1993), empowerment could be explained to the layman to man-giving or providing power, providing the means to and opportunities for self-reliance and independence. She went on to elucidate that an empowered woman is one who can and has transformed herself into a

subject and is no longer an object as defined by culture and tradition. In specific terms, an empowered women is one who has asses to and control over resources such as land, money and assets, learns to say no or yes in the struggle for her rights, and possess. Some abilities and capabilities. In addition, empowerment involves, having a voice and being heard in national issues, a broadening of choices brining, about changes in the unequal relationships between the two sexes, and between government and women.

Everett (1991) observed that an empowered women, has greater control over her life, is able to define and create from women's perceptive, is able to influence the social areas that are recognized as women's issues makes the contribution of women ties, responsibilities and authorities.

It is important to note that the main areas of empowerment are education, politics, economic and socio-cultural. However, educational empowerment forms a base structural. However, educational empowerment forms a base



structure for all other empowerment of women. In other words a women who is educationally empowered might be able to achieve economic and political empowerment all things being equal. Furthermore, programmes should be organized both at the micro and macro levels such as women's village meetings and associations. Most importantly, empowerment should start from the home and family because from observation, some husbands disempowered their wives at home, in other words, some women have power in their place of work but loose it at home as a result of the chauvinistic attitude of their husband (Azikwe U., 1993).

The type of education needed by the rural women for empowerment ahs been developed by Azikwe (1993). Based on the expressed needs of rural women. It is classified into live areas namely: Basic literacy nutrition and home management, income generating activities, agriculture, food production and appropriate technology and primary health care. Any intervention programme developed on those expressed needs

will no doubt improve the status of our sisters in the rural areas. The women in the village needs practical skills that will improve her income and life style. Some barriers to empowering women include tradition and culture, which form the fabric of the society. Secondly, most women are aware of some existing laws that are favorable to them, but do not exercise them. These are areas, where the contribution of FIDA is greatly required by Nigerian women. Laws should be promulgated to eradicate traditions and culture that are repressive towards women. FIDA should also organize seminars and enlightenment campaigns to make women, especially the non-literate ones, aware of favorable laws, how to fight for their right, and provide legal assistance to women who are unable to afford it. There is the need for validation in the process of development programmes and planning education programmes for women is not an exception. Effective empowerment programmes should be based on valid primary and secondary data; provision of enough resources

(Human and material), involvement of women, women's co-operatives associations and organization in the planning and implementation of the programmes, establishment of women's centers and the introduction of women's studies as an academic discipline in our educational system. There is need therefore for data bank (Everett: 1991).

A very important strategy for women empowerment that is often overlooked is the relationship that exist between, bearing in mind the doctrine that "united we stand, but divided we fail". We should love ourselves (women) and appreciate each other efforts and contribution. According to Everett, this cordial relationship and friendship with other women and colleagues. We should trust one another, be honest with our fellow women, encourage and support other women.

Currel (1974) Posits that women as the child bring gender, impedes their entry into the political arena. H also, said that for women to bated from this traditional bondage,

that education is important. However, available data show that for economic reasons, boys are given educational preference at the expense of the girls who might be brighter.

Nwankwo (1992) enunciates that “the problem with Nigerian women in politics goes beyond awareness.” She identifies financials problem as a factor that makes most women in achieve in politics. She posits that politics has become monetized and this was obviously responsible for the eventual dropout of the female presidential aspirant, Mrs. Sarah Jubril under the platform of the social Democratic party (S.D.P) in 1992.

Asase (2003) noted that among the fundamental factors, which constrains and serves as inhibitions to female participation in politics today is the issue of finance. She also opined that people who do not support the idea of women in politics says that it is wrong for a woman to go out of her way to lobby others. Probably makes, for fund. She might as well kill her political ambition good bye before she starts.

Suleiman (2009) “The minister of women Affairs and social Development,” in her reaction to the issue of women empowerment, decried low participation and marginalization of women in Nigeria political system, attributing it to unfavorable political climate in the country. She is addition blamed the situation on violence and male chauvinism prevalent in the political climates, plus lack of financial capabilities, as some of the reasons why Nigerian women are discouraged from contesting elections, resulting in low percentage of women public office holders.

Ogbonna (2009) opined that some of the impediments to participating, contesting and wining elections in the country are money politics and power play that effectively scheme women out. Money has always been seen as major factor in the game politics, along with the relative absence of financial empowerment of women. Besides, there have always been cases of much violence and assassinations, violent clashes at

rallies and sheer thug which are not really welcomed in a women's world.

Etiaba (2009) in an interview with Emma-Enyinnaya was of the, that one of the reasons why the full potentials of women (especially in the area of politics) have been difficult to realize is due to family role expectation. Thus:

*A lot of married women who strive to achieve career (political) or business success are faced with a heat wrenching conflict of roles. Again, women's involvement in the top league of entrepreneurship in Nigeria is very limited only a few women who I can count on my finger tips sit at the a per of the organizational chart of big corporations in the oil, gas, communications, banking, manufacturing, transport, publishing and trading sectors of our economy.*

In furtherance, she maintained that financial constraints have not helped matter either and the moat female

entrepreneurs end up in the middle and lower cadre most especially as it concerns political participations.

Asase (2003) equally posited that new obstacle have teamed up with old ones to work against women in governance. Sharia (as a religious and penal code) as being practiced in Zamfara state and some other northern states, for instance, is obviously a drawback to the anticipation of women in politics. Here women are not expected to mix with men in public and separate transportation has been provided for more political relevant roles for women in the polity should not be viewed as at the party. Thus, Mrs. Josephine Anenih was cautious in her response to how Sharia world affect the involvement of Northern women in politics.

*“I have spoken to one or two of the governors practicing sharia, and they have assured me that it would not limit the participation of women (in governance) and that if they now say that because of sharia they will not present women candidates we” 11.deal with that when we get there.”*

Ozigbo (1998) in his study noted that the traditional Nigerian society paid particular attention to women education in the home. Thus informal education was geared towards training young girls to acquire good manners and household chores. They were socialized into feminine roles of cooking, home craft child rearing practice and so in. they were saddled with heavy household, chores and sent to schools with skepticism and lack of parental support. Boys on the other hand went to school with parental and community support and approval which gave them a feeling of importance and superiority. Knowingly or unknowingly, schools added to the disadvantage through administrative practice, school curriculum, teacher behaviors and classroom environment that reflect societal values on gender. There was this attitude of marrying girls at first opportunity regardless of their ages and feelings because of the fear that girls who waited too long might not find suitable husband.



In many parts of the world, females are the victims of educational inequalities. Statistical analysis on access to education shows a disparity between girls and boys, at all levels of education. In African countries, sons receive education before daughters. Even when education is free, parents can only afford to educate some of their children. They may decide to send their sons to school rather than their daughters.

In Nigeria, the universal education (UPE) was one of the factors that led to a sudden increase in the enrollment of girls in schools. In most less developed countries, boys dominate in schools. But statistics in some developed countries indicate that girls enroll in school to the same extent as or more than boys (UNDP, 1990). At the tertiary level, women participate less in education than men in all regions of the world. Projections to the year 2000 suggest that these inequalities in education will persist in many parts of the world, especially in the areas of science and technology (UNDP, 1990).

Education is the key to success and index of empowerment. It equips the individuals with skills and knowledge needed to make her an effective member of the society with education, the individual is able to initiate, embrace and manage changes. It widens the information base of the recipient, improving her skills and knowledge as well as increasing her potential for creativity. Azikwe (1993) adds that education has been recognized as one of the best instruments for social control and change, also an essential tool for national development. Education facilitates the liberation of the mind beyond self, ethnic or religious groupings into a more macro conceptualization of human relations and associations (Ndu; 1994).

Access to education has given women a greater sense of fulfillment. The payoff of investing in a woman cannot be estimated especially in terms of the children's performance in school. It provides significant social returns in that women are more influential in maintaining the health and nutritional

standards. Better educated female population is very lively to poster national development through changed that can be expected in the nature of labour forces participation. These will promote efficient use of resources. Female education lower fertility and thereby slows population growth because educated women prefer to have fewer children and smaller family size. Women are largely identified with the transmission of cultural and moral values of the society. A better educated population is likely to contribute not only to a more politically active adult population but also to transmission of political values as well (Okeke, 2000).

To further portray the importance of women education it was pointed out by scholars that “out of 100 typical American women, 21 years of age (6) will never marry, or the (94) who will marry (33) will see the first marriage end in divorce of the remaining (61) who are married, (46) will outlive their husbands. Thus (85) out of (100) women will be on their own sometimes during their lives”. Since education is *sin qua non*

to individual and national development, and women make up a larger segment of most nations, than suffice it to state that any nation that is able to provide her citizens, male and female, without discrimination and biases, all things being equal. Sustainable development of a nation depends, to a large extent on full participation and contribution of every member of the society, not just the male or the educated.

To educationally neglected, a significant proportion of the society (women) could be therefore disastrous and retrogressive. Hence, Obasanjo (1992) warn that a significant stride in development is unrealistic for any country that marginalizes women who constitute a large and important segments of the society.

However, it is not exaggerating to say that certain women have not one time or the other held positions of high responsibilities, to the world reputable political leadership qualities in various capabilities in the politics of their respective national, for instance, Mrs. Felix Fortune (of the

NDP). Mrs. Biola Baba tope and Mrs. Justina Eze (both in house of representative) Mrs. Florence Ita Giwa a senator between 1999 – 2003, one time personal adviser to president on legislature matters, Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo Iwela. Iwela former minister of finance.

Prof. (Mrs.) Dora Akunyili former boss NAFDAC and minister of information and communication. Hadjia Zainab Maina, minister of Woman Affairs and Social Development

Not withstanding all the non-governmental organization (NGO's) international women's group and the awareness created by these women who participated in politics directly or indirectly and those who were appointed either as advisers. It would appear that political participation among women is still not much especially in the rural area where there are less emancipated and political oriented women.

The literatures reviewed above consider various issues and factors that hinder and limits the political space for women participation and empowerment in politics, which

include educational factor, religious, cultural and financial factors.

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

This work is based on “Group theory” as the framework of analysis. The intellectual roots of the group theory lies in the doctrine of pluralism as explained by a number of early twentieth century English writers. Particularly by John FIGGIS, F.W. Mattland and G.D.H Cole. On the other hand, the group theorist tried to establish the group, rather than the individual or society as the basic unit in the study of politics. Bentley stated that the “raw material we study in politics is never found in one man by himself, it can not even be stated by adding, men to men. It must be taken as it comes in many men together”. It is an a relation between men or the action of men with or upon each other.

Group theory begins with the proposition that interaction among group is the central fact of politics. Individuals with

common interest band together formally or informally to press their demands upon governments. According to David Truman, an interest group is “a shared attitude group that makes certain claims upon groups in the society” such a group becomes political if and when it makes a claim through or upon any of the institutions of government. Individual are important in politics only when they act as part of or on behalf of group interest. The group becomes the essential bridge among group to influence public policy. The tasks of the political system is to manage group conflict by establishing rules of the game in the group struggle, arrange compromises and balancing interest enacting compromises in the form of public policy and enforcing these compromises.

According to the group theorists; public policy of any given time is the equilibrium reaction in the group struggle. The equilibrium is determined by the relative influence of interest groups. Changes in the relative influence of any interest groups can be expected to result in change in public

policy, numbers, wealth, organizational strength, leadership, access to decision makers, and internal cohesion.

Group theory purports to describe all meaningful political activity in terms of the group struggle. Policy makers are viewed as constantly responding to group pressure, bargaining, negotiating and compromising among competing demands of influential groups. The politicians attempts to form a majority coalition of groups, in so doing, they have some latitude in determining what groups are to be included in the majority collation. The larger the constituency of the politician the greater, the number of diverse interest and greater his latitude in selecting groups to form a majority coalition.

The group theory leads logically to a particular concept of the social system and of political behavior. It is therefore, through the social system that the various groups seek to realize or maximize their interest. The group theorists are



interest in the fact that the society keeps going in spite of the perpetual conflict among groups in which each is frantically pursuing its own narrow self-interest. Groups theorist have shown a great deal of interests in the internal organization and process of various groups and discussed questions concerning boundary, size, territory and forms of integration.

Claiming to understand politics and political behavior in terms of group's conflict, the group theorists have evaded any clear – cut definition of politics. Politics according to Bentley was a rather high-level activity carried on largely by groups that some how reflected or represented the underlying force in society. Since groups could be taken as representing, than political activities, political activities could be regarded as simply one part or aspect of the total activity of groups.

Further more, since group theory deals with the interaction amongst various groups which aim at upholding and satisfying specific objectives as determined by group interest. It can then be said that women empowerment and

participation in politics is a reflection of the product of the product of the group deliberation. It is note worthy to understand that individuals with common interest could come together to press home and struggle for their political right. As a result of these individual not withstanding their sex can, as important or principal factors in political participation.

The group's internal cohesion, leadership, strength, and access to decision-making determine the impact of groups on politics in Nigeria since the actors determine the question of "who get what, when and how". The authoritative allocation of societal values is determined by how strong a group is, that is why the more powerful a group is, the more favored it will be in terms of how it part in government decision-making. It is for this reason that group serves as the best approach to the topical issue of women empowerment and political participation, because it is an approach that incorporates the individual and group interest towards participating in politics.

Finally, since group theory conscientizes people on the need to struggle and gain access to decision-making, it has gone a long way to reduce women, under representation and gender in equality among both sex.

This theory, has been chosen for this work to its practical application in the analysis and understanding of the behaviors of political actors, especially as it affect the place and insignificant role of the “women group” when it comes to political participation and activities in Nigeria.

## **1.7 Hypotheses**

The hypotheses advanced to give direction to this research such as:

1. There is relationship between politics and women participation in Nigerian politics especially in Udi Local Government Area where Fidelia Njeneze was once Minister of Aviation, and Ifeoma Nwobodo the present Enugu State Chief of Staff.

2. There are some cultural hindrances to women participation in politics such as some religious practices that hinder women's participation.
3. High Educational Attainment enhances women's participation in politics because it makes them to be literate and free from gender discrimination.

### **1.8 Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The method of my data collection includes thus:

1. Primary sources which include; questionnaire, direct observation and interview.
2. Secondary sources, which include collection of relevant text books, Journals, Magazines, Government Publications, Periodical and Internet.

### **1.9 Method of Data Presentation and Analysis**

This study will present data collected from the primary sources in tables and it will adopt simple percentage as the statistical tool of analysis. This will enable the researcher to conduct a reliable and valid analysis.

The analysis and illustration below shows the data analysis of. The link between low participation and lack of finance. The source of my analysis was as interview carried out on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 in Udi Local Government.

The chairman: Chinendu Ileje. Councillor Okechukwu Owoh.

My interview goes as follows:

What is your Educational qualification?

Qualification	Responses	Percentage (%)
FSLC	100	31.1
WASC/SSC/GCE/NECO	120	37.3
OND/HND/B.A/B.SC	50	15.6
M.ED/M.A/M.SC/Ph.D	50	15.6
Total	320	100

The table shows that 100 respondents are holders of FSLC, while 120 respondents are holders of

WASC/SSCE/NECO, 50 respondents have OND/B.SC, whereas, the same 50 respondents representing 15.6% of the population hold M.ED/M.A/M.SC./PH.D.

The representation above, interviewed, indicates that 120 respondents hold WASC/SSCE/GCE/NECO, they have played the major roles in this work. They are more representative to the point of providing the reliable data on women empowerment and politics in Udi Local Government Enugu State Nigeria.

A. What is your occupation?

Occupation	Responses	Percentage (%)
House wife	50	15.6
Trader	70	21.8
Farmer	60	18.8
Politician	40	12.5
Civil servant/public servant	100	31.3
Total	320	100

In the table above, 50 respondents are house wives, 70 are traders, 60 respondents are farmers, 40 respondents are politicians and 100 respondents are civil servants/public servants.

According to my interview gathered, civil servants/public servants are majority (100), it is concluded that they form the greatest percentage of the respondents. They must have participated in one way or the other in policy making and formation in a way that their responses will do justice in women empowerment and politics in Nigeria.

B. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AGE RANGES DO YOU BELONG?

Age	Responses	Percentage (%)
Less than 26	50	15.6

26 – 35	120	37.5
36 – 45	100	31.3
46 – above	50	15.6
Total	320	100

The table interpreted above shows that 50 respondents or above 15.6% falls within the age range of less than 26.120 or 37.5% fall within the range of 26 – 35, 100 or 31.3% are in the range of 36 – 45 whereas 50 or 15.6% falls within 46 years and above.

In conclusion, the majority of the interviewed respondents (120) are mainly within the age of 26 – 35 years as can be seen in the table above.

## **SECTION B**

### 1. WOMEN PARTICIPATE WELL IN POLITICS

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	48	15



Agreed	58	18.1
Strongly disagreed	80	25
Disagreed	74	23.1
Undecided	60	18.8
Total	320	100

In this table above, 48 respondents or 15% strongly agreed on the statement above, 58 or 18.1% respondents agreed, 80 or 25% respondents strongly disagreed, 74 or 23.1% disagreed, where as, 60 or 18.8% respondents remained undecided. This indicates that the majority of 80 respondents strongly disagreed on the point that women participate well in politics. The reason for such conclusion is basically informed by the fact that politics in Nigeria right from the days of colonialism had been a male dominated affair. In collaboration to this view, Adereti (2005:511) opined that “despite their large population and crucial functions, available

documents show that the level of women political participation is low compared to their male counterparts.

## 2. Good number of Nigerian women vote during election

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	80	25
Agreed	54	16.9
Strongly disagreed	70	21.9
Disagreed	68	21.3
Undecided	38	14.9
Total	320	100

In this table (1) above, 80 respondents strongly agreed on the assertion above, 54 respondents agreed, 70 respondents strongly disagreed, 68 respondents disagreed, whereas 38 respondents did not take any decision.

In my interview data, it could be inferred that a majority of 80 respondents strongly agreed. Therefore, I now conclude that a good number of Nigerian women normally vote during elections. They would always cast their votes as citizens of Nigeria. This should be supported by every Nigerian.

3. Cultural Practices hinder women from taking an active part in politics.

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	100	31.3
Agreed	65	20.3
Strongly disagreed	55	17.1
Disagreed	60	18.8
Undecided	40	12.5
Total	320	100

In this table above, 100 respondents strongly agreed on the statement above, 65 or 31.3% respondents agreed. 55 respondents strongly disagreed, 60 or 18.8% respondents disagreed, whereas, 40 respondents remained undecided.

In this interviewed data gathered from the table above, where a greater number of the respondent representing 31.3% of the question posed. It therefore, becomes obvious that cultural practices hinder women from talking active part in politics some cultures in Nigeria prevent women from exposing themselves to politics for fear of being corrupted and led astray. To further support the above, claim Ezife (1993) maintains that it is a reality that there exist deep rooted cultural and traditional customs which are not only discriminatory but also inimical to women's advancement. He further stressed that traditions reduces women to a state of powerlessness as their lives are crushed by hegemony of wicked tradition.

Hence, I therefore validate the hypothesis that states cultural practice hinder women from taking active part in politics.

4. Religious practice and injunctions hinder women from participating politics

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	59	18.4
Agreed	90	28.1
Strongly disagreed	70	21.9
Disagreed	61	19.1
Undecided	40	12.5
Total	320	100

From the table above, we observed that 59 respondents or 15% strongly agreed on the statement above, 90 respondents agreed, 70 respondents strongly disagreed, 61

respondents disagreed, whereas, 40 respondents remained undecided. The result from the table as provided by the respondents implicates the fact that religious injunctions and practices hinders the level of women participation in politics. Thus Adereti (2005:525-526) was of the view that Nigerian women have been marginalized in the formal political system owing to traditional beliefs and practices (cultural) which inhabit their advancement and participation in public life. It is perceived as an aberration for women to participate in public affairs. Women who venture into politics are labeled as “prostitutes or way ward women”. This has been in spite of the rich and heroic history of women’s political activism in both pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria.

5. Majority of women engage in political rallies and campaign.

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	43	13.4
Agreed	68	21.3
Strongly disagreed	125	39.1
Disagreed	59	18.4
Undecided	25	7.8
Total	320	100

In table (5) above, 43 respondents strongly agreed on the statement above, 68 or 21.3% respondents agreed, 125 or 39.1% respondents strongly disagreed, whereas, 25 or 7.8% respondents remained undecided.

The result of the interviewed above, showed that 125 respondents strongly disagreed to the proposition, which argues that greater number of women take part in political rallies and campaign. To this, we find that there exist a multi-dimensional factors and variables that accounts for the low

level of women turnout and participation in political activities such as marital status, pregnancy, domestic chores and male chauvinism. There is also the issue of thug and violent nature of electoral campaign and rallies that naturally characterize Nigeria politics.

6. Husbands influence their level of participation in politics.

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	90	30.9
Agreed	87	27.2
Strongly disagreed	70	21.9
Disagreed	49	15.3
Undecided	15	4.7
Total	320	100

In table (6) above, 90 respondents or strongly agreed on the statement above, 87 respondents agreed, 70 respondents



strongly disagreed, 49 respondents disagreed, whereas, 15 or 4.7% respondents remained undecided. Judging from the displayed in the table above, we assert that husbands in no small measure influence their wives pattern and degree of participation in politics as indicated by majority of the respondents interviewed. In the course of this study, they also posited that those husbands usually contend that women that took active parts in politics are not only wayward but that they are in addition promiscuous.

7. Women hold significant party leadership positions.

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	71	22.2
Agreed	62	19.4
Strongly disagreed	120	37.5
Disagreed	53	16.5
Undecided	14	4.4
Total	320	100

In the table (7) above, 71 respondents strongly agreed on the statement above, 62 respondents agreed, 120 respondents strongly disagreed, 53 or 16.5% respondents disagreed, whereas, 14 or 4.4% respondents remained undecided.

In my interview, with a reasonable number of the respondents disagreeing strongly on this questionnaire, item, we therefore, posit that women do not hold significant party position, which is basically attributed to the unmitigated prevalence of gender politics in Nigeria that hinders women empowerment.

8. Women are given more opportunity to contest any elective position than men

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	25	7.8
Agreed	59	18.4

Strongly disagreed	125	39.1
Disagreed	68	21.3
Undecided	43	13.4
Total	320	100

In this table above, 25 respondents or 7.80% respondents agreed, 125 or 39.1% respondents strongly disagreed, 68 or 21.3% respondents disagreed, whereas, 43 or 13.4% respondents did not make any official contribution.

Going by the interviewed data, in the table analyzed above, in which majority of the people interviewed disagreed (strongly) that women are not given more opportunity to contest elective positions. It is this view that accounts for the wide gap that exist between the number of male and female politician in Nigeria.

9. Lack of fund is one of the major factors constraining women's participation in politics

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	109	34.1
Agreed	99	30.8
Strongly disagreed	47	14.7
Disagreed	36	11.3
Undecided	29	9.1
Total	320	100

In table 9 above, 109 respondents strongly agreed on the statement above, 99 or 30.8% respondents agreed, 47 or 14.7% respondents strongly disagreed, 36 or 11.3% respondents disagreed, whereas 29 or 9.1 respondents remain undecided.

Based on the interview provided and observations made from the table, we noticed that lack of access to fund and finance to a large extent limits and constrains women from participating meaningfully in politics. This is so because modern politics is money intensive. It was in the light of this, that Nwankwo (1992) identifies financial problem as a factor that makes most women inactive in politics. She posits that politics has become monetized and this was obviously responsible for the eventual dropout of the female presidential aspirant, Mrs. Sarah Jubrill under the platform of the social Democratic Party (S.D.P) in 1992.

10. Poor access to quality education impact negativity on women's level of political participation.

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	72	22.5
Agreed	47	15

Strongly disagreed	111	34.7
Disagreed	45	14
Undecided	44	13.8
Total	320	100

In this table 10 above, 72 respondents strongly agreed on the statement above. 47 respondents agreed, 111 respondents strongly disagreed, 45 respondents disagreed, whereas, 44 respondents remain undecided.

It is noticed from the result gotten from the interviewed. This table shows that high proportion of the respondents indicated that lack of access to quality education do not hinder women participation, in politics. This contradicts with the popular opinion and of modern politics that requires eloquence in speech and high command of the English language with which the political activities can convince his or she would be voters on the need to cast their votes for the

candidate in question. Hence for Unicef (2003), argues that “illiteracy remained at the centre of women empowerment problem in Nigeria majority of the women folk and large number of girls in this country are still grappling with the problems of basic reading and writing skills.

11. Women should be voted for as local government chairman, senators and governors

Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	93	29.1
Agreed	50	15.4
Strongly disagreed	84	26.3
Disagreed	72	22.5
Undecided	21	6.5
Total	320	100

In table 11 above, 93 respondents or 21.1% strongly agreed on the statement above. 50 respondents agreed, 84 or 26.3% respondents strongly disagreed, 72 or 22.5% respondents disagreed, whereas, 21 or 6.5% respondents remained undecided.

Though much of the respondents interviewed posited that women should be voted into elective political offices as indicated with the 29.1% that agreed strongly opposed the idea, the truth however remains that in real politics that even women on their part votes against their male counterpart. This is largely due to socio-cultural believed amongst the people of Nigeria that politics is male affair while the women should primarily concern themselves to the kitchen and such other domestic chores.

12. Providing educational facilities for women will enhance their participation in politics



Question	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	61	19.1%
Agreed	70	21.9
Strongly disagreed	90	28.1
Disagreed	59	18.4
Undecided	40	12.5
Total	320	100

In this table 12 above, 61 respondents or 19.1% strongly agreed on the statement above, 70 or 21.9% respondents remained undecided. Respondents agreed, 90 or 28.1% respondents strongly disagreed, 59 or 18.4% respondents disagreed, whereas, 40 or 12.5% respondents remained undecided.

As corollary to the item in table 12, the research once more contend with the information provided by his respondents, wherein they maintained that provision of

educational facilities will not enhance the level of women participation in politics has transcended the more orchestration of the façade of clannish interests and affiliation rather it has metamorphosed into political simulation and games that requires critical intellectual thinking and calculations, which only the educated one's can comfortable manipulate to their advantage in the acclaimed process survival of the fittest called politics. This accounts for the reason why Azikwe (1993) maintained that education has been recognized as one of the best in instrument for social control and change and also an essential tool for national development. Education facilitate the liberation of the mind beyond self, ethnic or religions groupings into a more macro conceptualization of human relations and association (Ndu, 1994).

## **Chapter Two: The relationship between politics and women participation in Nigeria**

The literature concerning women educational attainment and their participation in Nigeria has been reviewed under the following sub-headings.

Women Political Participation in pre-colonial era

Women Political Participation in colonial era.

Women Political Participation in post colonial era.

The history of women relationship and Politics Participation in Nigeria will be treated here starting from pre-colonial down to the present post colonial period. In all these epochs, women constitute a very vital force not only in the making of our indigenous cultural and institutions but also in determining some of the ways we have reached and adjusted to the challenges of pre-colonial times. This historical analysis of women educational attainment and their participation in Nigeria is necessary because, the experience of women in the past might also help to explain their present. Luke Wornness,

their past strategies for influencing decision making and the constraints to their active participation in modern politics and national development.

We are going to analysis this under (3) three significant periods as listed above

## **2.1 Women Educational Attainment in Pre-Colonial Era.**

During this period, the geographical entity known as Nigeria did not exist, only different ethnic groups with different social and political structures existed. Some were highly centralized communities like the kingdom of Benin, the Yoruba and Hausa. Others were decentralized like the Igbo and Ijaw. Whether maybe the nature of the kingdom, the emphasis is in the historical writing, particularly in the beginning of the societies which was more of men's contribution. However, a look at oral tradition shows quite dearly that women featured prominently in our traditional

societies and took part in the decision-making that affected those societies.

During this period, Nigeria women contributed to the sustenance of the kin group the institution of “Umuada” which comprises of the eldest married daughters of the lineage who also still have definite ritual and political role to play in the village. These associations existed among women right from the grand root to the highest land of society, they made it possible for women to express their views on the political situation. From being mothers and wives, taking charge of the domestic sectors, women contributes substantially to the production, distribution of goods and services.

Women in pre-colonial Nigeria were fully involved in food production processing, for example. Fish drying (especially Niger Delta). Garri processing et cetera.

In eastern Nigeria, the women of Okposi, Uburu and Yala were very active in salt production. Women were engaged in pottery making especially in Afikpo in present day Ebonyi

State, and in weaving. In Northern Nigeria even the women in purdah were involved in food processing and also traded with the aid of their children.

Pre-colonial Nigerian women also provided health care and spiritual services, extensively. Most traditional religions feature immortal females as goddesses and most goddess in Nigeria were portrayed as river goddesses, fertility and earth goddesses.

In the Niger Delta region, women provided music, song and dances required during religious activities. Women also officiated as priests, diviners, healers, traditional birth attendants, and oftentimes as custodians of sanctuaries for gods and goddesses.

The legal status of Nigerian women in pre-colonial times needs highlighting. Under the pre-colonial customary laws in most Nigerian societies, women were considered free adults. At the same time, certain limitations were imposed which subordinated them to male authority. Women had

independent access to income. Since land was usually owned communally, whoever worked or tilled the land, whether male or female, derived the benefits. Nevertheless, women in many societies could not inherit land.

Education in pre-colonial times was functional, it enabled women to obtain a skill in order to earn a living. Ogunsheye (1985). Observe that “a woman who was without a craft or trade or who was totally dependent on her husband, was not only very low rated but was regarded with contempt”. (Aliyu, 1992) as regards, women politics, in pre-colonial Nigeria, women were an integral part of the political set up of their communities. Most often, they carried out separate functions from the men. These functions were fully complementary. To men such as keeping within the women folks in the area of specimen of children, age for girls bearing etc.

Among the traditional women of Owerri Igbo, the “otu Alutaradi” (an association of the married women of the town) had great influence. They participate in the political affairs of

their own but were not as active as umuada. They tried other women for stealing, for committing adultery or having sexual relations with their brother-in-law or with an “osu” (an out cast) or for listening to the conversation of a husband with a co-wife at night.

In pre-colonial Bornu, for instance, women played active parts in the administration of state. They held very important offices in the royal family, including the office of the megira (the Queen mother) and the Gumsu (the first wife of the mai or king) (Ola, 1978).

Women also play very significant role in the political history of ancient zaria. The modern city of zaria was found in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, by a woman called Queen Bakwa Turku. 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 Zaira in order to protect the city from invasion and extended the boundaries of her Zaria into a very prominent commercial centre.



The story was not different in ancient Yoruba land. The Oba ruled with the assistance of a number of women referred to as ladies of the highest rank.

Among the river line and western Igbo political system, which has some what been modified by practices and institutions borrowed from the states of Benin and Igala. There is amongst many of the communities in this group the institution of Omu (Queen) as the female counter part of the Obi (king).

In the river line Igbo city state of ossomari, for example, there is the institution of omu igili which was on of the most elevated titles in that village state. The occupant of that title, usually a distinguished women of wealth, intellect and character, reigned with the obi as a co. sovereign, talking responsibility largely for regulating women's affairs. Apart from being the chairman and spoke women of Ossomari mother's council, she took responsibility for maintaining law, order, advising the obi on state matters to touching the interest of

women. She also played a leading military role. According to tradition, her war canoe led to the ossomari fleet into battle as she was believed to be the possessor and keeper of a particular powerful charm which made her shield impenetrable to enemy's arrows and could make ossomari warriors invisible in battle. (Affigbo 1990).

Uchendu (1993) observed that "otu umuada" like other Igbo associations did not stress the age group system. It functioned like other Igbo association where wealth, wisdom and eloquence gained prominence and leadership for a person irrespective of one's age. The influence of "Otu umuada" maintained its efficiency even beyond the villages and town. The married women of the town supported otu umuada as the former used the later when necessary to carry out their sanctions.

## **2.2 Women educational attainment in Colonial Era**

The success of the colonial government triumphed with the amalgamation of southern and Northern Province in 1914 and various nations that now make up Nigeria lost their independence and gained a new master, the British. By this amalgamation a new era began, ethnic groups that were completely independent of one another were all merged together. New rulers and regulations were introduced and new political system emerged. Despite some positive gains brought by the colonial government such as the removal of some of our obnoxious customs and traditions, it was essentially a regime that sets out to exploit Nigerians for the benefit of Britain. In the process, both men and women were affected but women suffered more in terms of deprivation in economic opportunities, allocation of resources and political office thereby legitimizing the Victorian concept of place of women in society (Ayoade 1992).

The colonial masters brought the value system of English people and interpretation of those rulers to our people, the pre-colonial status of women as equal to man changed and married women who formally answered the name of their original families in their husband's family names as canvassed by western value. Hence it was the value system of the British that changed the role of women in Nigerian politics. The colonial master changed and governed using traditional rulers and in the process, the traditional fillers were given overwhelming power and as a consequence many of them stopped sharing powers with other women chiefs women chiefs of all. Categories, be the palace women or leaders of women ceased to have recognition and any input in the decision making process of their societies.

The Igbo women noted with bitterness the deprivation of their long acquired political rights. The role of the warrant chiefs brought this home to them, because of arrogant disregard of women's views on issues affecting them. Women

on a number of times revolved against that type of treatment because for them it signified a great departure from the normal way of life and the dual sex political system which characterized pre-colonial Igbo society.

As Uchendu (1993), noted, the climax of Igbo women response to their economic and political suppression was women's uprising and protest in Eastern Nigeria precisely. In Aba in 1929 in which about fifty (50) women lost their lives. It was a protest against policy and population census. According to Mba (1982), "Most writers on Aba women's riot sees the main census of the protest as primarily political and only secondarily economic". They argue that women were impelled to take the action which they did because the colonial administration allowed them no other means of expressing their grievances. They were rejecting not only the system of administration but the whole colonial order. These women employed their traditional organization which still exists till today, to mobilize all women in most parts of southern Nigeria

to assert their rights politically as had been the use in the pre-colonial era. The warrant chiefs were the women's principal target during the riot. They believed that those chiefs were foreign affairs who were destroying their societies.

Ross (1965), colonial anthropologists, in her book titled "African Women" described Aba women riot to "for the first time in our imperial history, we were faced with and insulted by mobs of trade women who marched up and down the country decreeing our rule and pulling down local institutions of our authority." Igbo women like Margaret Ekpo helped in the struggle for independence. Janet Mokelu and Olu Fumilayo Ransom Kuti (Chief Mrs.) appointed into the western Nigeria house of chiefs both Mrs. Margaret Ekpo and Janet Mokelu were appointed into the Eastern Nigeria House of chiefs in the 1950's. They featured prominently in the national council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) the organizer of Igbo women who participated in politics during that times.

Prior to the arrival of the colonial masters, Iyadole was designated as the women's political leader and spoken person, but the colonial government looked down on her recognition along with others as the direct link between the women folk and government. According to Chief Mrs. Akintude Ighodala, "The greatest impact which British colonial rule had on Nigeria women was her marginalization". This made them to organize themselves against the government which confessed unprecedented power on the traditional rulers and excluded them from participating in decision making.

Another women pressure group movement organized Chief Elizabeth Adekogbe at Ibadan also led a delegation to the governor-general to protest against other things, but essentially the electoral college system which she argued would continue to eliminate women even if they were elected at the primary level. On 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1952. The women movement was inaugurated and later in 1958, the National Council of women societies was formed with branches in

Lagos, Enugu and Kaduna although it declared itself a non-political body looking after the interest of women (Iyadode 1990). Other women like Abayomi Adekogbe, wuroala Esan Alhaja Humani Alagba and Alhaja A. Alude were with the Action Group (AG) as leaders of the women wing thereby becoming members of the vanguard in Nigeria independence.

The political role of women in Northern Nigeria had been symbolized in the titles of Magajiya, Iyasaraki, Gabasai Yarkunti and Maidaki Prior to colonial regime but with the advent of colonial government these titles were abolished and women were usurped of their traditional political role for example the magajiya was the princess who presided over gain sellers in local market. Then they were excluded from the political institution of women in the colonial period. This non-involvement of women was also encouraged by the Islamic religion which advocated that women had no place in public affairs.



In contrast to Igbo and Yoruba Hausa women did not exhibit their administration acumen through the organization of revolt against the colonial government.

### **2.3 Women Educational attainment in Post Colonial Era**

The history of women educational attainment will be discussed by examining two types of government. The military and the democratic civilian rule. Starting with the militarized character of the Nigerian state. Nigerians have now probably enjoyed more years of military dictatorship than any other African country, with the catastrophic exception of Somali (Mana, 1995: 42). The military have ruled Nigeria for twenty-eight years of the thirty-five years that have passed since her independence. The period has also affected the quality and the level of women participation towards the national development in Nigeria. Five years after independence, only 6.9 percent of the salaries workforces were women, by 1970, 8.7 percent of the total number of established staff in the federal civil service

were women. In 1980, women has risen to 12.6 percent. Similar patterns were maintained in state civil services.

Under Gowon's regime, women were included in state cabinets and not the federal cabinet, the tradition of at least one women in each state cabinet was continued. As it was, the first women commissioner was Flora Nwapa, who was appointed in 1970 by the civilian administrator of east central state. She was followed by Dorothy miller in North Eastern state and Kofoworola pratt in Lagos State (Mba, 1989: 72).

The Murtala Mohammad/Obasanjo Administration (1975 – 1979) which replaced Gowon's administration (1966 – 1975) did not pursue significantly different politics, continuing the non involvement of women at the federal level, or in any of the major commission they set up. From (1979 – 1983) there was further progress. A few Nigeria won election into the House of Representatives at the National level. Some of these women were Mrs. J. C. Eze of the Nigerian People Party (NNP) who represented Uzo-Uwani constituency in old Anambra State,

Mrs. V.O. Nnaji, also of NPP who represented Isu and Abiola Babatope of the unity party of Nigeria (UPN) who represented mushin central II of Lagos State. Very few women won elections into the state house of Assembly during the second republic.

During the same period, only two women were appointed federal ministers. They were chief (Mrs.) Janet Akinirinade who was minister for internal affairs and Mrs. Adenike Ebun Oyagbda (ministry of health). In 1983, Mrs. Franca Afegbua became the only woman to be elected into senate. Very few women contested and won elections into the local government councils during this time.

In December 1983, the first formal quota system was introduced by the federal government. The Buhari Administration directed that at least one female must be appointed a member of the executive council in every state. All the stage complied, some state even had two or three female members in the executive council.

In the early 1990, two women were appointed Deputy Governors. They are, Alahaji Latifat Okunu of Lagos State and Mrs. Pamela Saduki of Kaduna State. Chief (Mrs.) D.B.A. Kaliford Olubi Served as chair person of a bank, that is the untied bank for Africa plc. Later on Dr. Simi Johnson and Eriola Eadayomi served as Chairpersons of Afribank international Nigeria and Allied Bank Nigeria plc, respectively.

In the 1990 election into local government heralding the third republic, very few women emerged as councilors and only one as chairperson of a local government council in the west. During the gubernatorial election, no female governor emerged in any of the state. Only two female deputy governor, namely; Alhaji Sinatu Ojikutu of Lagos State and Mrs. Cecilia Ekpenyong of Cross River State in the senatorial elections held in 1992, Mrs. Koto Bucknor was the only woman who won a seat in the senate.

Very few women won election into house of representative one of there few was Chief (Mrs.) Florence Ita Giwa who won in

the Calabar constituency under the banner of the National Republic Convention the banner of the National Republic Convention (NRC). Amongst the member of the traditional council appointed by president Babangida in January 1993, only two women, namely Mrs. Emily Aiklmhokuede and Mrs. Laraba Dagash.

In the interim National Government of Chief Ernest SHonekan two female ministers served at various post in his cabinet. General Abacha had a number of female ministers at various time in his cabinet, including Chief (Mrs.) Onikepo Akanda and Ambassador Judith Attah.

During the military regime of General Abduisalami Abubakar (June 9, 1998 – May 29, 1999). There were two women in the federal Executive council; Chief (Mrs.) Onikepo Akanda (Minister for Commerce) and Dr. Larabo Ganbo Abdullah (Minister of women Affairs).

Women had welcomed independence with enthusiasm and hoped that together with the men they would shape the destiny of Nigeria.

In the National Assembly, there are only three women in the senate, namely Chief (Mrs.) Florence Ita Giwea representing Cross River State South Senatorial District Mrs. Stella Omu from Delta State and Hajiya Khairat Abdul-Rasaq, (now Hajiya Gwadabe). Representing the federal capital territory. There are only 12 women in the House of representatives and they are; Barrister Iguo Minimah, Mrs. Patience Ogbodo, Lola Abiola Edewor, Patricia O. Etteh, Docars Odujinri, J.F. Adeyemi, Binta Garba Koji, Temi Harrinnam, Florence Aya, Linda Ikpeazu and Mercy Almona Iseli.

In states like Cross river, Akwibom State, Rivers, Lagos and many other do not have female members in their state legislatures. Former president obasanjo appointed a number of women into federal executive council. They are Dr. (Mrs.)

Becky Ketebu`igwe (minister of women Affairs). Chief (Mrs.) Titilayo Ajanaku is the special Adviser to the president on women Affairs.

Former president Umaru Yaradua, such as: Mrs. Fidelia A. Njeze (Minister of State, Agric and water resources; Prof. Dora Akunyizi (Minister of State, Communication) Mrs. Dezina Allison – Madueke (Ministers of information and development). Mrs. S.H. Sulaiman (minister of women Affairs). Mrs. Grace Epiwehere (Minister of State works and Housing Affairs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala minister of finance. President Goodluck Jonathan.

Mrs. Adejoke Adefulire; Lagos State Commission for environment. Mrs. Rukait rutai; Minister of Education. Hadjia Zainab Maina, minister of Women Affairs and Social Development.

## **Chapter Three: The Culture and the Hindrances to Women**

### **Participation in Politics of Nigeria**

The cultural and hindrances to women participation to politics in Nigeria.

This chapter is set out to examine the various factors, the factors that have contributed to the near absence of women participation to politics.

In spite of the growth in the numerical strength of women in recent times, men still play a dominant role in the political life of our country. For ease of analysis, we will attempt a clarification of these under four broad headings, namely: educational factors, cultural factors, socio-economic factor and political factor. These obstacles are examined individually as follows:

#### **Educational Factor**

The missionaries introduced formal (western) education to Nigeria when they set up schools to train clergymen and



teachers for the church in the early 1900. As Mba (1989) noted, from the beginning, more men than women had access to formal education. Also the early educational system was modeled on the literary.

*Education of the English public school system of the second half of the nineteenth century. in this system, there were far fewer schools for girls than boys and curriculum for girls considered of painting, singing, dancing and accomplishment in order to prepare girls to become wives and mothers. Accordingly, in the mission schools in Nigeria, the emphasis in the education of girls was on character training. Domestic services, and marriage training. The proportion of girls to boys in the mission secondary schools was extremely low.*

In effect, the few females who were getting any education at all were deliberately being steered away from any preparation for public life. Yet those in school were not sent to school at all. One reason for this being that it was believed

that the best women was the one that mastered the traditional female chores and roles, a quality she did not need the school to learn and perfect in. education opportunities for women were even fewer at the higher levels. For instance, when the country's first university, the university college, Ibadan opened in 1948, out of the 104 students admitted, only three were female. Although the situation has improved greatly over the years and according to Onyekanmi the female population in Nigeria universities has risen from the ration of 140 ground 1950, 1:4 in 1980, and about 4:4 in 2000, women still lag way behind particularly in those courses that did not lead to teaching and social care. Iyabo Olorede (1992) has suggested that women were geared towards social care courses. She noted that:

*Since the government was neither interested nor had the money to provide educational arena. Since missionaries had a virtual monopoly off schools, they were able to use them as a means of further conversion in all aspects of*

*life. Women were inculcated with spiritual values for the home and the needy. It is no surprise that most of the first Nigerian women who attended schools felt obliged to become teachers and nurses. Sexism became manifest in educational practices. Lange of subjects open to girls, content of textbooks and teachers attitudes. Thus, women were encouraged to take subjects which are complementary to their domestic roles while men were oriented towards professions which tend to enhance their leadership.*

The fact that men get most of the publicly relevant training is evidence by the finding of a manpower survey of 27 technical scientific and professional occupations in Nigeria in 1980. The survey showed that women occupied only 2.2 percent of those positions. In other words, a majority of women are still not being trained and employed in areas that will enhance their chances at competing for position in public life.

As can be expected, denying women comparable educational opportunities and public organizational training help for worsen the in balance of power that has been existing between the sexes. One of the legacies of this denial is the absence of the female equivalent of the male political class. This class comprises mostly men who have honed their organizational and public speaking skills, through their occupation of decision-making position in their workplace and their membership of various boards.

Available data in Niger (particularly in the northern parts of the country) show that fewer girls than boys go to school, and that this disparity widens in higher education, Jegede (1994:203). For economic reasons, boys are given educational training preference at the expense of the girls who might be brighter. This educational disparity between males and females, as noted earlier in this work originated under colonial rule which discouraged and de-emphasized women education

with their high level of education, men are placed at an advantage politically.

### **Cultural Factor**

In the traditional African setting and by nature, women are expected to be passive, while the men are told that quest for money, power and career achievement is not only permissible but desirable. It is the only way to be masculine.

Most of Nigeria's 250 different ethnic groups share the notion that a woman's place is in the home. Women have to consider their primary roles as wives and mothers before engaging in any other. Spheres of human endeavour. Thus, family attachments are placed above every other thing in a women scale of preference. Proficiency in these roles is what earns a woman society's acknowledgement and respect. By extension, in Nigeria's world view only those who are married are respectable women. Several local proverbs allude to the belief that a woman gets dignity only through a husband for

instance, the Ibos would say “Ugwu Nwanyi bu di”. Meaning “a woman’s dignity is her husband.” Obviously without being married, a woman cannot fit into the highly regarded role of life.

Women are therefore conditioned to be dependent on men for their happiness and fulfillment in life. Further, a woman must be respectful and subordinate to her husband. Since, he is the husband is believed to know better and to be more rational, the woman is not only expected to let him make the major decision in the home but also to go along with him. Politics in any form was out of the question. Phenomenon of irrelevance in political affairs amongst women had been entrenched by societal norms and values which only recognize men as the only utility player in the world politics.

With relevance to Nigeria, and other traditional societies, these views have been translated into institutional phenomenon. In these traditional societies there seems to be no place or role for women in politics. Bringing this down to

Nigeria and other traditional society, it is obvious that the men see women as their appendages. It is believed that a man's wife should not venture into politics, and any attempt to the contrary is usually frowned at.

However in Nigeria, the education of women is not paramount significance to most parents. They would prefer to send their male children to school. In many communities in Nigeria, customary laws and practices worsen the position of women. For instance, in some places, females are not allowed to inherit land or other economically important property. As Akin Ibidakpo-Obe (1989) wrote.

Some traditional societies among the Ibo, Ibibio, Annangoron, Obalinko, Abu and Oga (the inheritors of) a man's property, and his successors are his son, brothers, father and uncles, excluding daughters, wives, sisters and mothers.

Even worse, some communities regard a man's wife as part of the property and inheritance of the male members of

the deceased family. One politically hindering aspect of culture is the seclusion of women (also known as Purdah) practiced by some Muslims in some parts of northern and western Nigeria. Said to be rooted in religion, the practice started after the full conquest of the Hausa States in the early nineteenth century which resulted in the gradual introduction of seclusion is that Islam sees women as very sexual creatures who, if not restrained will distract men from the proper and loftier pursuit of religion. Women for long have willingly played the role of second fiddle to men. They have been socialized to believe that they are destined to bolder men's tutelage. This socialization given to the women has regrettably made them to acquire a persisted outlook and world view towards the political world around them.

This traditional denial deprives women of relevant political skills such as the skill for public speeches, lobbying and others. It also combines to ensure the continued limitations and subordination of women. Women find that the



easiest way to avoid frustration and unhappiness is to fall in line with the societal expectations of them. Thus the self-fulfilling prophecy about women's incapability to lead is achieved.

### **Social Economic factor**

The denial of educational opportunities and cultural subordination may be expected, have produced an inferior socio-economic standard for Nigerian women. The lack of comparable educational qualifications alone means that women cannot compete with men in the job market. In well paid professional jobs particularly women are not match for the men since they were not trained for such jobs in the first place. In 1990, women made up of only 20 percent of Nigeria's paid labour force. The few women who have paid employment are concentrated in the low pay jobs, particularly in the teaching and service sectors. On this, Jeanne Henna's observation about African women applies to those in Nigeria.

*The great majority of African women are farmers. Most days they must work in the fields from four to eight hours, aided only by a simple hoe, in order to provide their families basic food. They must also work a second labour day of fetching firewood and water, and drying, shelling, storing and cooking the food from their gardens, all caring for their children.*

The under privileged position of Nigerian women in the leadership of the corporate world of finance, business and industry begins to catch up with them in their bid for high political office. The staggering fee demanded by the parties, for the registration of aspirants to governorship position is a case in point. The nature of Nigerian politics which has recently being tagged “money politics implies that what determines participation in politics is one” financial power. In other words, if one is qualified and has no money to spend, he or she automatically cannot contest in election position unless a sponsor, the so called money bags comes to the person’s rescue. This according to many observers is the situation of

Nigeria politics where mediocrity rather than meritocracy is the rule. This is the fight of women the violent nature of Nigerian politics and cultural sub-ordination may be expected to have produced inferior economic standard for Nigerian women. A perfect example can be seen in the case of Mrs. Sarah Jubril who was asked to pay the sum of N500,000 (half a million) as nomination at the party level. She remarked “the fact that Pam and wealthy is the main factor for my disqualifications in the last primaries”. Women have problems entered around lack of funding of political pursuits.

Princess Franca Afegbu, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic senator from Edo State also supports the above by saying “I can not participate in politics because of the finances involved. The government has replenished the men who spent money but women haven’t been given patronage neither have we been replenished, we have been neglected.

Women’s economic standing is worsened by customary laws of inheritance which make it difficult if not possible for

most women to inherit landed property. Although with the introduction and use of wills by enlightened families. The lack of political influence further erodes the economic power of women since their needs are rarely taken into proper accounts by the men.

The issue of finance is a major problem for women. Since most women lack financial strength in politics especially in the Nigeria context. Since money and authority are critical factors in political participation no matter how much wiser males are about political equality. Between men and women, without the fundamental change in economic positions of the women, political equality will continue to be a farce. As women are also, denied credit facilities such as bank loans women cannot finance their projects Babara, R. (1986).

### **Political Factors**

The underlying nature of the ever changing political system in Nigeria has undoubtedly, severally hindered women

participation to politics in Nigeria. The country has been independent for fifty-three (53) years but has been ruled by the military for over twenty-five of those years women were virtually absent from the military and so were not part of the ruler ship. Even when the military involved civilians in governance, women did not seem to be reckoned with.

Strictly speaking, civilians have not had much chance to develop and adjust to any political system.

Further, in the recent attempt to usher in a civilian democracy, there has been so much tinkering with the political system resulting in the emergence of a yet to be tried political system. The dizzying changes have meant that most people have not learnt how to conduct themselves in any political system. There has been no continuity in the effort to provide any political tradition and all the politicians commonly sought powerful positions only to enrich themselves most appeared to feel no guilt about not giving anything in return to the people and the country. In other words, power became an

end in itself, to be used mainly in the pursuit of self interest of the political ruling class, a class which claimed rights and privileges but refused to recognize any correlative duties or obligations to the rights claimed.

This definition of politics also made it a winner takes all situation since those in power did not feel obligated to improve the lives of their political opponents and the electorate. Elections have therefore been seen as a do or die affair. If people felt that once they lose an election, they have lost everything, they would obviously do anything to win, hence the logical birth of electoral frauds, forgery and bribery violence, fraud, the undue influence of money and ethnicity are identified by many Nigerians as the worst problems with politics. Women naturally are not titled into such activities. They are therefore scared out of the political science. But those features are not typical of democratic elections in other countries, especially in the developed countries. And so, there is no justification for women to allow the situation as it is.

## **Chapter Four: How high educational attainment enhances women's participation in Nigeria politics**

### **4.1 Recognition and Funding of the Office of First Ladies**

“First lady”, a term borrowed from the America system of government, is used to refer to the wife of the president. Ghana may have been the first African Country to give institutional prominence to the first lady, but it is in Nigeria that the phenomenon has flourished. Given the long period of military rule in Nigeria and the masculinity nature of the armed forces, it is not surprising that women played only a marginal role in Nigeria's public life for decades. The public profile of elite women changed dramatically with the coming into power of first Lady Chief Dr. Mrs. Maryam Babaginda, wife of General Babaginda. Mrs. Babanginda had first assumed prominence in 1983, when her husband became chief of army staff. On this basis, she became president of the Nigerian Army Officers lives Association and began seeing herself as a leader. When her husband became president, she

opened an office for herself within the presidency. She was the first wife of a Nigerian head of state to use her spousal position as a basis for playing a prominent role in the national life of the public.

In 1987, five years after Nana Rawlings had established her organization in Ghana, Mrs. Babaginda launched the Better life for rural Women programme (BLP).

In 1993, General Sani Abacha took over power and his wife Mariam Abacha, became the first Lady, occupying the office established by her predecessor. She set out to dismantle the work of her predecessor. The BLP was dissolved and a new similar organization, the family support programme (FSP) was established in its place. The family economic advancement programme was also set in motion to implement the FSP and significant state funds were devoted to it.

Following these first ladies, Nigeria had subsequent first Ladies, such as Justice Fati Abubakar, whose husband, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, held power for only one year



following the death of Sani Abacha; and also Late Mrs. Stella Obasanjo. Though, there office as first ladies was not recognized.

In Nigeria the use of the term “First Lady” has been expanded to include the wives of chief executives at the three tiers of government, efforts are being made to restrict its use to the wife of the president. In the constitutions, the officer of the “First Lady” is not assigned any recognition. Also, the absence of constitutional roles of the office of the wives of Chief executive at the three tiers of government means as well that the office is not recognized by the government. However, on September 2, 2008, in what appears to be an attempt to advocate a re-write of the constitution, wives of the 36 state governors and the 774 local government chairman gathered in Abuja to launch their 2009 Almanac. During the launch, the first lady, Mrs. Turai Yar’ Adua, made a call on behalf of other “First Lady”, for a constitutional recognition for the office of the “First Lady” and also demanded that a percentage of the

federal budget be set aside to fund the office. Furthermore, she also requested that provision be made for special assistants and advisers to first ladies.

Hence, first ladies encourage the promotion of women into positions of power, no matter how dubious their motives, are providing access to political skills and resources that will enable the pool of women politicians to become more competitive in the cut-and thrust of campaigning. For example, during her last year as first lady, Margam Abacha was widely reported to have imposed an affirmative action policy on political parties. She unofficially, directed them to ensure that they each nominated one female gubernatorial candidate for the 1998 election. However, her husband died before his election bring her reign to an end.

We also, have the story of Justic Fati Abubakar, whose husband was Head of State in the one-year interregnum following the death of Sani Abacha. During his tenure at State House, his wife, a High Court Judge, established women's

rights Advancement and protection Alternative 9WRAPA). Unlike the two previous first Ladies, she formally registered this organization. She also refused to use her husband's position to make state governors and government departments contribute to WRAPA's purse, or acquire land allocation by political fiat. Today WRAPA is generally recognized as one of the most effective non-governmental organization fighting for the advancement of women's human rights in Nigeria.

Therefore, a constitutional role is created for the position with precise guideline as to how such roles should be performed. Women can champion this campaign, after all traditional rulers have been lobbying to have an active role in local government councils (Agina-Ude, 2003b:94).

#### **4.2 Establishment of ministry of women affairs and national council for women societies**

Women have played an important role in the socio-economic and political emancipation of Nigeria. They have

been in the forefront of political revolution as was clearly manifested in the Aba women's riot of 1929. Since then, women have emerged and played significance roles in Nigeria's social, economic and political empowerment. In practically every field of human endeavor, Nigerian women have stood their ground regardless of the odds, determined to make significance impact.

The battle for social relevance and political appreciation reached an important climax in 1987 with the creation of a National Commission for women. The activities of this commission which initiated several projects under the umbrella of "Better life programme" remained symbolic and impactful. However, a new dimension was added to the cause of women empowerment in 1994, months after the inception of a new Nigeria Head of State, General Sani Abacha. A new programme known as family support programme" was initiated by the first lady, Mrs. Maryam Abacha. With a move broad based objective and appeal, the family support

programme Blue print was launched by the Head of States, and General Sani Abacha on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1994.

To actualize the aspiration of women and provide a formidable foundation for the implementation of women related polices demanded by the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a full Fledged Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development was created on 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 1995 by the Head of state. The creation of the ministry which also has a woman as the minister is a clear demonstration of government's recognition of women as position agents of realizing development targets through indecent in agenda setting. The new ministry is also manifestation of the Nigerian government's determination to empower women in all aspects of women endeavor through maximum utilization of their resources to make positive contribution to the country's socio-economic and political development.

With the dawn of this glorious era of women empowerment, a seasoned, intelligent, power picked,

experienced technocrat with international credentials, Ambassador Judith Attah was selected to serve as the first Women Affairs Minister in Nigeria, effective from January, 1995. In order to mobilize resources to effectively implement her enormous responsibilities, the ministry was structured into various department, units and sections. It has seven departments and three unities with the office of the Honourable Minister as the apex of the organ gram supported by the office of the Director General.

The establishment of the ministry restructured the organization pattern of its parent body-the then National Commission for women. In the new outlook, the office of the Honourable minister is at the top followed by the office of Director General and then line department and units. The departments are: Family support programme; child development and social Welfare; finance and supplies; personnel management; social rehabilitation and planning,

research and statistics while the units comprise legal, Audit and Public Relations.

The first year of the new ministry was action packed with mountains of aspirations to locally that will improve the civic, political, cultural, social, economic and educational well being of women and children, the disabled, the elderly and the entire family. In spite of the expected teething problems just like any new organization, the ministry was able to implement some of its major policies and programmes.

Under which is, the family support programme Department, mandated to undertake activities which focus on human resources development with emphasis on women in areas such health, commerce and trade, education and agriculture. The impressive response of the members of the public to the call to donate for the support of the programme in virtually all the states is a manifestation of its acceptability. Millions of naira was realized from the launchings for the prosecution of its objectives in the states and grassroots.

To further boost the ideas of the family support programme, the department featured prominently in the celebration of the international women's Day which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly. Through the National programme on immunization (NPI), the family support programme Department intends among other things to reduce measles and other infant killer disease.

The climax of the achievement of the family support programme (FSP) Department and the Ministry as a whole was the successful outing of Nigerian delegation at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Women Conference, Beijing, China. The conference enabled Nigerians to contribute to other issues relating to economics, social, cultural and political empowerment of women to the some level enjoyed by men. Critical issues discussed at the historic conference now take top priority in the agenda of the federal ministry of women affairs and social development.



There is also, the Child Development Department, mandated to handle all matters relating to the general well being and development of the Nigerian child such as protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of the child, prevention of all forms of child abuse and encouragement of recreation, the child Development Department made appreciable progress in 1995. In pursuit of the above objectives, the department sent delegates to a number of workshops and seminars both locally and international to address the social problem that children.

Other activities of the Child Development Department include initiating programmes and politics which will ensure access to an improved quality of education for the girl-child thereby bridge the gap between the level of literacy among boys and girls. To balance the literacy ratio, the department is charged with designing a framework for eliminating the constraints inhibiting girls' education and in doing reduce the level of literacy among girls. It organized an orientation

workshop of the National Child Right Implementation committee between 17 and 20 October, 1995 to evaluate the success of the programme.

Also, the Social Development (Welfare) Department is charged with ensuring proper training and rehabilitation of offenders, settlement of family disputes, care of the elderly and the evaluation of programmes of NGO in the country. Other services of the department include taking care of the family welfare on issues like re-union, adoption and fostering of children.

To enhance the welfare of the elderly, the department , in 1995, organized a training programme for care-givers and residents of the old people's home in the Western zone.

Under the department of planning, research and statistics, its role includes formulating and co-ordination programmes aimed at improving the status of women, children and other related subjects of interest to the ministry of women

Affairs and social development recorded a number of successes in 1995.

## **Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **5.1 Summary**

In traditional Udi society, women particularly during the pre-colonial period were isolated from politics, and decision-making processes in various communities, which make Udi Local Government. They were militated to female sex-role, domestic management and other non-politically related issues appropriate to their gender.

But on March 18, 1999 the international women's day were celebrated world wide. This was in compliance with the united nations General Assembly recommendation to be observed on March 18<sup>th</sup> of every year as international Day of women. It is the day that affords women the opportunity to hold rallies and take stock of the role they have been playing in the society; socially, economically, politically and in other dimensions.

Despite the important role women play in the society, the topic of women empowerment and politics in Nigeria; have not

received adequate research attention. But much more disturbing is the fact that very little work have been done on problems of women empowerment and politics in Udi which is the gap that this study seeks to till. For concise and analytical purposes, the work was divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introductory aspects of the work by providing a comprehensive historical background to the study, identify the major problems of women participation in politics in Udi Local Government Area.

Chapter two highlights the historical background of women political participation in Nigeria, taking into cognizance the periods of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Nigeria as means of appreciating the political fate of women in Nigeria in general and Udi in particularly.

Chapter three, focus on how culture and other factors affects the participation of women in politics.

Chapter four, is presentation and analysis of data, through the instrument of the interview, interviewed to the

320 respondents systematically. In summation the following were discovered;

- A. That Udi women's participation in politics is abysmally low;
- B. That good number of women do not vote for women during election.
- C. That majority of women do not attend political campaign and rallies.
- D. That women generally are marginalized in the allocation of party leadership positions.
- E. That fewer numbers of women are given opportunity to contest elective positions than men.
- F. There exist obvious barriers against women active participation in politics.
- G. That both access to fund and practice of money politics do constitute problems to women political participation.
- H. That majority of the respondents accept to vote for women governorship as well as women presidency.

- I. Women should be given educational opportunity to enhance their chances of political participation.
- J. The constitutional provisions pertaining on gender equality should be respected and honored by the constitutional authorities at all levels of government.
- K. The introduction of free registration and sponsorship (nomination) on the part of women politicians should be adopted and sustained.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The main focus of this research work is to determine and place in better perspective for proper appreciation the various trends and factors in the socio-political, economic and religious cultures of the Nigeria that impedes women from participating activity in politics. This account for the reason why the work is captioned “women empowerment and politics in Nigeria.” A case study of Udi Local Government Area.

The analysis of the forms and possible causes of the low level participation of women in the Udi Local Government Area in politics indicates that there exist cultural, social, political and religious dimensions that place restraints on the part of the women in involving themselves deeply and meaningfully in politics. The above assertion is authenticated by the fact that available information generated from the interview, interviewed on the respondents proves and vindicates the propositions as is contained in our hypotheses that these factors and variable are potential candidates capable of limiting the chances of women in participating in politics through politics of women dis-empowerment. Though at certain points the opinion of the writers still went ahead to validate his claim. For instance, besides the fact that extant literatures proves that lack of access to education hinders women participation which much of the respondents contends, every sane individual that lives in contemporary society knows that without education that is almost difficult for one to make head in any field of human



endeavour not to talk of politics that requires critical intellectual reasoning. Hence we conclude on the bases of the findings made in this work that women in Udi Local Government Area are being marginalized and disempowered in the political sphere as a result of the aforementioned points and factors.

### **5.3 Recommendation**

In views of the findings and conclusions made in this work, the researcher therefore recommends followings as the various ways of improving the participation of women in politics. Udi women should first and foremost strive to attain economic independence. They can embark on joint ventures with their spouses, friends, and relations. In this, they can raise enough funds required to foot the bills of electioneering campaign.

Some obnoxious cultural and religious practices that constitute a hindrance to women participation in politics

should be abolished in order to accord women equal right and opportunity as enjoyed by the men.

Efforts should be made to educate the female child and illiterate women with good education attained, women will have the necessary skill needed to pursue any political career, have feeling of self worth and confidence required for public life.

The electoral law or act should be amended to provide a clause that places limit on the amount of money that both political parties and candidates standing for elective post should possess or involve in the political campaign.

Moreover, there should be a clause inserted both in the constitution and the electoral act, which will provide a number of seats that will be reserved for women in all elective positions across the length and breadth of the country.

Furthermore, all discriminatory laws and traditions in India that militate women's chances of equal participation with men in politics should be annulled. For instance inheritance

law that prevents women from owning children should be nullified.

The women on their part should eschew their bitterness, rancor and “pull her down syndrome” so as to meaningfully pool their numerical strength and resources together for a progressive dynamic, radical, and collective political front in the 21st century socio-political activism.

We also recommend that for women to actually take their rightful place in the political space of the country that, the ministry of information and women affairs to embark on a nation-wide programme aimed at sensitizing women on the need for their active involvement in politics.

Women cannot work in isolation, they need to seek the co-operation of supportive men and work with them. They should try to liaise with those who are in support of women in politics and believe in equal representation in public office.

Conclusively, the researcher optimistically believes that, should these recommendations be adopted, they would better

the lots of the generality of the Udi Local Government Area. The National council of women society (NCWS) the National Commission for Women (NCW) and other women organization should be encouraged to create awareness among the people of Udi.

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