

Representation of Women in Nigerian Political News: Analysis of Online Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, women in Nigeria still face challenges in politics both in the local and national offices. In a world where media is one of the most important agencies of identity construction and representation, it is important to study how the media represents women in Nigeria.

This thesis looks at the representation of the women in Nigerian political news during the general election in 2015. The Guardian and Vanguard online newspapers have been reviewed covering the period of February to April 2015. In doing so, the study employs textual analysis from a gender perspective to analyze and understand the approaches used by the media.

The finding reveals that, in political news in Nigerian online newspapers women are marginalized and represented only with “supportive” roles. Women stories mostly covered if the news portrays women under the shadow of men; as wives or/and mother. The study concludes that the online print media in Nigeria portray politics as a male dominated sphere.

The study points out the need for a change in the media coverage of the women stories and news in Nigerian political news, for the benefit of the society.

Keywords: political news, online newspaper, Nigeria, Women, Representation, media coverage, general elections.

ÖZ

21. yüzyılda yaşadığımız bugünlerde Nijerya siyasi hayatında ve bu siyasi hayatın medya temsillerinde kadınların yeterince temsil edilmemesi bu tezin motivasyonunu oluşturur. Bu nedenle, en önemli kimlik kurgu ve temsil kurumlarından biri olan medyada kadının nasıl temsil ettiği önemlidir.

Bu tezde 2015 Genel Seçimlerinde Nijerya'daki çevrim içi gazetelerin politik haberlerinde kadınların nasıl temsil edildiğine bakılmıştır. The Guardian ve Vanguard çevrim içi gazeteleri Şubat-Nisan 2015 tarihleri arasında incelenmiş ve kadının politik haberlerde temsiliyet biçimlerini anlamak için toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifi kullanılarak metin analizi yapılmıştır.

Çalışma sonucunda, Nijerya'daki çevrimiçi gazetelerin politik haberlerde siyasetin erkek egemen bir mecra olarak temsil edildiğini, kadınların bu mecrada marjinalize edildiğini ve sadece “destekleyici” rollerde temsil edildiklerini söylemek mümkün. Kadınlar çok az haberde yer bulabiliyorken, yer bulabildikleri haberlerde ise ya anne yada eş olarak yer bulabildikleri de gözlemlenmiştir.

Çalışma toplumun menfaati için medyadaki kadın temsillerinin değişimine duyulan ihtiyacın altını çiziyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: politik haberler, Nijerya, kadın, temsil, çevrimiçi gazete, medya, genel seçimler,

To all women who are striving every day to be the best version of themselves, to all women who have being discriminated due to their gender and color by the media and society. Thank you for inspiring me.

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LIST OF ABBRIVATION

AU	Action Union
APC	All Progressives Congress
APGA	All Progressives Grand Alliance
AWU	Abekuta women union
BAOBAB	Women Human Right
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CEDAW	Conventions on the Elimination of all Form of Discrimination Against Women
ECOWA	Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative
GMM	Global Media Monitoring
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNDP	Nigeria national democratic party
NWTF	Nigerian Women's Trust Fund
PDP	People Democratic Party
UN	United Nation

WIDF Women International Democracy Federation

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

{United Nation Organization of Women points out} Women are underrepresented as voters, as well as in leading positions, whether in elected office, the civil service, the private sector or academia¹.

In today's Nigeria society where women and men share the same educational system and occupation, gender representation is a subject to be visited. The issue of gender diversity has created an imbalance situation in our society today. Women and men are treated differently in various occupation and social event. The subject of women role in Nigeria has become an issue of concern for decades now. Gender is defined as a social characteristic that is used to identify women and men in various societies and religions and it varies in various societies and religion. Gender in Nigeria society has being a challenging topic and is inevitable in this study. To create an understanding, I will discuss what gender is and why it's important in this study. As mentioned earlier gender is a social construct that is thought in various norms, families, roles, religions and relationships. Gender does not just end with the sex of a person; it goes deep to the identity, expression and body of individuals. These are factors that people used in interacting with individuals and society used gender role in forcing and defining various norms that govern every society. "In this way, genders emerge from the social process as unequal. Their inequality then becomes the foundation for further transformations, and gender relations become fundamental regulating

¹ United Nation Organization (2010) "Women's leadership and political participation".
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation>.

relations in all social formations” (HIMA, 2005, P. 279). Since gender is socially constructed, it’s safe to say that it can be changed. This thesis looks at gender as an issue in the political aspect of Nigeria society. Women in Nigeria have “little” involvement in politics today due to various reasons. Some of these reasons are media bias, patriarchal society, power relations and mis-representation of women in Nigeria politics. Most times, the media content depict women in ways that objectify them, diverting audiences attentions from seeing women effort in various occupation. This thesis is about the media coverage of women participation in politics in Nigeria. Nigeria has recorded a low average of women participation in politics. Politically, women are given less important positions due to gender bias; these leave women with low paid salary jobs, below their accomplishment that does not represent the development in women’s lives. It can be said that women all over the world experience injustice, inequality and mis-representation due to their gender. Compare to the pre-colonial era, Nigeria women have occupied less decision making positions and majority of governmental position are dominated by male leaders. Women in the pre-colonial era (from 1900-1960) were given more positions, positions that contribute to the growth of the country and women that were not given this position protested to get power. “The modern city of Zaria, was founded in the first half of the 16th century by a woman called Queen Bakwa Turuku, she also had a daughter called Amina who subsequently succeeded her as queen. Queen Amina according to many literatures as well as oral accounts was well known as a great and powerful warrior...In all, she turned Zaria into not just an ordinary powerful city but also a prominent commercial center” (Attoe, 2002). Today women are subjected to domestic duties and secondary to men. This gives a full picture of how putting

individuals in political role with different social interest in the representation of every citizen of a given county will play out.

For decades now, being a woman in Nigeria is challenging. The society is masculine and patriarchy constructed given little opportunity for women. Today, women have to fight and work twice as much to be recognized as hard workers in any society or organization. This issue has being a major issue in various countries including Nigeria. With the advancement of today's generation, the media holds a significant function in societies and people's life. Media is assumed to have influence and contribution to audiences daily life due to the power of various information's it presents to audiences daily. One aspect of the media is the dissemination of information that generates discussions and decision objectively. As mentioned earlier, women in Nigeria experience gender discrimination in various aspects of their daily life as well as politics. These study bases its research on this aspect, looking at media representation of women's participation in politics. Research was conducted using online newspaper in Nigeria. Women generally face similar challenges and are struggling in jobs, businesses, and society etc. in other to get promoted. The issue of equality between women and their male counterpart is still a struggle, despite the development and participation of women in various social groups and politics there are still gaps in the role of women in both developing and developed countries today. "Inequalities between men and women and discrimination against women have also been age-old issues all over the world. Thus, women's quest for equality with man is a universal phenomenon" (Mondal, 2016). Women asking for equality have brought about organizations and movement all over the world. Women demands to be equal with men in every level of social life like

salary, social development, marriage, politics and even religion which is believed to be their right as citizen of a given country. As mentioned earlier, in the pre-colonial era, women were not sidelined and restricted or deprived from involvement in some certain thing like decision making with male leaders and colonial masters, agriculture and trade and when they were not listened to they fought tirelessly to get there desires and aspiration met. Women like the warrior queen Amina of Zauzzau (now Zaria), Margaret Ekpo, etc. were the women among men who were involved in decision making among other women in the Nigeria pre-colonial era, nowadays women are no longer given the privileges anymore to get involved in managerial positions and any activity including politics in Nigeria. All over the world women experiences lack of job opportunities, lesser privileges than men, abuses and discriminations from men on various reasons. Women in some countries like India, Saudi Arabia etc. were restricted from the right to vote, marital right and other rights due to their gender. Women are given less favorable circumstances in various countries round the world due to their gender. According to Mondal (2016), “Two Acts have also been enacted to emancipate women in India. These are: Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and the Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act, 2006. The Domestic Violence Act recognizes that abuse be physical as well as mental” (p.1). These were part of the things that made women struggle for their right. In the 20th century it’s believed that women have experience increases in various aspect of life in various countries but this improvement hasn’t brought women equality as men in some situations like politics as we have fewer women as president, governors, etc. globally compare to men.

Women have being conceived with an idea that men should be in authority and power to protect the society and family. This idea is considered a gender relation ideology, where men are represented as powerful figures; even the movies and action figures round the world portray men as authoritative and supreme. Gender relations talks about how human beings are categorized socially by men and women, male and female, this categories goes deep in exercising power and authority, political and religious activities. “Gender is important in establishing people’s behavior and the outcome of any social interaction” (The Will Nigeria.com, 2016, p. 1)². The theme gender is a very important issue discussed in this thesis. Gender in not only a theme in the online print media but other forms of media have produced issues that at the end are considered as discrimination and women are mostly victims of this discrimination.

The international standard argues that both women and men should have equal right in everything and opportunity in the world. Is the Nigeria constitutions that govern the entire country made with women’s involvement? A constitution cannot be effectively established if women are not involved in the decision making of this constitution, Nigeria in the pre-colonial era even with the influence of the colonial masters practiced more unity and democratic movement than it does now. Gender is socially constructed and today society uses various way of including gender role.

Julianne Greco (2013) stated that:

Differences within the world are evident with regards to culture; race and many other structural variables, the presence of these variables are important yet not salient. The salience of gender is clear from the moment of birth; the child begins socialization into a male or female. Both the constructions of masculinity and femininity serve as a prominent feature in one’s life and act as a substantial influence on how their life is lead (p.2).

² THEWILL is an online news service founded in October 2009.

As stated above, gender role is socially constructed and this gives meaning to our everyday life and society, creating a meaning that define and divide people differently. The media uses various methods from media content to advertising on pushing gender roles on both adult and children. Women faces gender discrimination and media play a role in contributing to this issue. My reasons for saying this is because women are not given more opportunity to contribute to the change experienced in various countries in other to help advance the growth and stability in the country. The 1999 constitution in Nigeria that talked a lot about Nigerian citizens and its privileges, it focuses on how the constitution covers all Nigerians no matter what part. My main focus in this constitution is who were involved in the writing of this constitution? This will be one issue that will be explained broadly in this research. The word h-i-s-t-o-r-y in the introduction to communication tell us that stories are being told by a particular group of people “his” we see this from the spelling, meaning male not female are given the role of storytelling but in this constitution they (meaning men/male) stretch to the point of making the rules that govern the country Nigeria in 1999. According to Ketefe (2011):

The 1999 constitution was made without the inputs of women who constitute about half the population of Nigeria. The 1999 constitution was made by Constitutional Debating Committee comprising 25 members headed by Justice Niki Tobi, which was set up by General Abdusalam Abubakar on November 11 1998. The committee did not make adequate consultations with all segments of peoples and shades of opinions required in a country as complex as Nigeria (p.1).

These constitutions that govern both men and women in Nigeria was not made with the presence of any woman during the creation of this constitution, this is considered an example of ‘history’. Before the 1999 constitution, constitution made was under the leadership of the colonial masters and after the independent in 1960, the constitution used was that of Queen Elizabeth II. The next constitution was a

Westminster constitution with the desire to establish democracy with a third republic but wasn't implemented because of military regime. The 1999 constitution is considered the constitution that restored democracy rule in Nigeria. But this constitution was not fully democratic as it eliminated women voice featuring just man. In July 11 2003, the Action Union (AU) brought up women issues where it focused on strengthen and protection of women's right. It tried to bring up some etiquette regarding women's right. Article 2 of the African charter on human and peoples' rights, which principle was focused on non-discrimination. Other articles like article 18 was made to eliminate discrimination against women, and establish the role of women development and recognitions, the aim is to promote the principle of gender equality in the consultative act of the AU and new partnerships to develop Africa (Odigie-Emmanuel, 2010, p. 1).

In the population of Nigeria, women constitute 50% of the population like in every other country and they contribute in vital ways to the growth of the country. The media recorded women who are seen as icons in the pre-colonial era for their brave contribution to the role and placement of women in decision making processes. As mentioned earlier, these women as well as others that will be mentioned in next chapters, worked side by side with men to ensure the growth of the country among other women. Women like Fumilayo Ransome-kuti who was a woman activist around the 1945, Adunni Oluwole a right activist who founded Nigeria Commoners Liberal Party in 1954, who is popularly known to be committed to social justice. Hajia Gambo who is the first woman to identify with professional politics in Muslim northern Nigeria, she also advocated voting and political right for the northern women in Nigeria, and many other women but gradually these roles are diminishing

to the likes of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Diazani Madueke and are dominated by men. It has been pointed out by scholars that gender relation, had made it difficult for women to make effective change and significant contribution to development. Even as women strive to play roles in the society and county as large, this roles are yet to be recognized and most of these ideas are dominated from patriarchal system, religious, cultural stereotypes, and traditional practice. Every country has its constitution that governs these countries. According to Thomas Paine (1971):

The Constitution of a Country is not the act of its Government, but of the People constituting a Government. It is the Body of Elements to which you can refer and quote article by article; and which contains the principles upon which the Government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organized, the powers it shall have (p.4).

So constitutions are rules and regulation which is binds by the supreme law legal document that govern a given country. It contains governmental power as well as norms and objective of the nation. A fair and legit constitution should govern everybody no matter your society, gender, sex etc. and have no unfair protection and discrimination against any group of people. “The 1999 constitution of Nigeria is afflicted with many defects, notable among which is the explicit and implicit discrimination against women. The explicit discriminatory provisions may be gleaned from section 26 and 29 on lopsided citizenship right and unfair prescription on renunciation of Nigerian citizenship respectively” (Ketefe, 2011, p. 1).

Women in Nigeria are allowed to vote and it’s believed that Nigeria women involvement in voting during election period is more than men. “In Nigeria, women who take part in voting during elections are about 51 percent³. Despite these, women

³ 51% represent the amount of women involve in voting during election, showing more women participation in election period in the area of voting. While men are 49%, showing more women interest in election.

are the minority in election and appointive positions and are underrepresented in the country. Statistic conducted on the overall political representation in government of Nigeria shows less than 7 percent of women in politics” (Agbalajobi, 2010, p. 75).

In 1995 an international women conference was held in Beijing⁴ where the role of women in politics was being discuss and how It can be enhanced and from this we understand that women in Nigeria has being recorded absent for about 30 percent corroborative as directed by the Beijing. The involvement of women in politics all through 1995 to 2015 has being below 30% in Nigeria. Nigerian women are recorded low in newspapers in both appointive positions in the government and in election. Newspaper uses headlines like:

- Elective positions: Why Nigeria records more women losers not winners⁵
- What has President Buhari delivered for Nigerian women? No change⁶

The media is one platform that reflects the representation of any activity. The traditional media will help in creating a more understanding picture to this topic. The traditional media is the mass media that present information prior to its existence. Mass media is considered the oldest form of mass media that existed like print media, CD, DVD, film studios, radio and television etc.

1.1 General background of study: A personal note

Looking at Nigeria national online newspaper, I found out that the papers draws its focus from men and uses them more as lesson and good examples to readers. It’s said

⁴ Beijing is the capital of China.

⁵ Nigeria national newspaper
<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/05/elective-positions-why-nigeria-records-more-women-losers-than-winners/>.

⁶ Nigeria national newspaper
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/16/president-buhari-nigeria-women-politics>.

that women were always victims in newspapers, which underrepresent women, creating a different frame on individual and new generations on a woman. Nigeria is about 186 million and half of this population are women, the representation of half this women was what got me provoked and concern about the issue of women especially women role in polices in a country as Nigeria is considered to be a male dominated society.

Media in Nigeria consist of print, electronic and social media. The ownership of the media in Nigeria is mostly national/private newspaper and state government owned newspaper. Government owned papers were sold out to private organization due to lack of funds and low salary provided to the reporters and journalist. State owned papers do not cover much general news of the entire country but mostly the particular state news it represents. The private owned print and broadcast media is mostly considered as an independent and is ideologically based on commercial interest and business model. While the state owned media is censored by the government it's considered as a strict media and not independent, it's headed by government employee of any given state and it's mostly interested in promoting the government of Nigeria.

Section 22 of the constitution of Nigeria says the press, radio, television and other mass media agencies should be free at all time to uphold the fundamental objective and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the federal republic of Nigeria to the people. Only in 2015, 2016 and 2017 they have being about 10 detainment and arrest of journalist and bloggers on slandering of politicians, sedition, defamation etc. the government try to control what goes out of the media concise the government and it politician. Looking through the Nigeria newspaper, the representation of women in

political position are depicted in an unethical way. Women are associated with corruption, incompetence, including the identity of their husbands, speaking on their fashion sense not their work etc. Nwagbara (2005) stated that “stories about women make headlines when they are portrayed in a negative light as suffering, helpless and deprived women, the criminally-minded women or women of easy virtue” (p. 1). Nigerian women that are involved in political position are associated with unseriousness. This is one of the issues that got me interested in this topic. I made a comparison on men in regards to the way media represent them and how women are being represented and I noticed that women are always associated with dependency while men are depicted to be the problem solvers. The way the media frames women in politics has changed drastically.

The government as well as the media makes it difficult for women to get involved in politics in this 21st century. When a woman is in the spotlight of the media, they are prodded and picked on every aspect of their life, making their personal life become the public topic of discussion. In the early time, during colonial era, women were given the opportunity to be involved in sensitive positions without them being exposed and represented negatively by the media even though the media was not popularly used, the stories behind the women involved in decision making was one impressive story. There were numerous amounts of women activists in the pre-colonial era. According to Effah Attoe (2002):

During the pre-colonial era, Nigerian women made a key contribution to various groups and society. The economy of Nigeria in the pre-colonial era was on a sustenance level with the help of women who effectively contribute to the growth of the economy. Women took charge in the production and distribution of goods and services in other domestic sectors like mothers and wives (p. 1). Women like:

- Fumilayo Ransome-kuti was a woman activist in 1945. She was part of the women in the early time in Nigeria that started the fight of equality between women and men. She believe that women needed to fight for there right and this lead to the creation of women union like Abekuta women union (AWU) in 1948 and women international democracy federation (WIDF). She was elected in 1950 among other two women into the house of chiefs and was also elected into western Nigeria house. In 1948, King Alake Ademola of Kgbaland wanted to impose taxes on women, she mobilized Abekuta women union (AWU) to protest against it, it was stated that this protest took days and this women protested using the slogan “no taxation without representation”. She was one woman that had face-off with kings and was said to be the most popular woman that colonial officers were frighten anytime her name was mention.
- Madam Alimotu Pelewura was the trade leader in Lagos where she led Ereko women association Lagos. She was a major focus in the nationalist activities of tie first political party in Nigeria ‘the Nigeria national democratic party (NNDP)’ founded by Sir Herbert Macaulay in 1923. She lead the women union in Lagos against several obnoxious protest in the colonial gaveled from 1920s-1951 when she died.
- Hajia Gambo who is popularly known in the northern part of Nigeria (Kano, Kaduna, Zaria etc.) as a freedom fighter. She is the first woman to publicly identify with professional politics in Muslim northern Nigeria. She also advocated political right and right to vote for northern women in Nigeria.

These women are repeatedly used in this study because they were among the first women in pre-colonial era that started making decisions alongside men and other women as mention earlier. Unfortunately now we are at the age where as much as women try to advocate rights and make change in the government, the media depict them in way that they become victims and not victors. Women in political positions are framed by the media as second under men and their husbands. The governments are dominated by men; women have less political activity involvement. Fewer women are involved in today's political positions and because of this decisions made in the government have little or no say by women. It's said that women are often mentioned as wives and mother not as leaders and advocates no matter their political position. This is a general issue that happens all over the world where women are not given a full media coverage without mentioning the influence of their husbands and sons. These general issue happens both in Nigeria and in the western world, examples are Patient Jonathan who was the reason her husband got lots of female votes in the presidential election in 2010 is mostly referred to as the former Nigerian president wife or Mrs. Jonathan, Michel Obama and Gloria James are as well associated to well-known politicians like Goodluck Jonathan, Barack Obama and LeBron James, these women in various countries are respected, but they are also undermined and wrongly represented in the media due to their husband and sons position. This has effect on women in this position when given the opportunity to effect change in the country. The media frame women to look dependent on men, soft and indecisive. With the media coverage, fewer women get involved in politics. Today women are self-employed and house wives, because they find it difficult to get positions of their choice due to gender discrimination and stereotyping. Anyanwu (2001) observed that "the media continues to be selective in the nature of news

carried and covered relegating and obscuring woman issues and the visibility of women in elected offices” (p.1). The mis-representation of women by the media increases the challenges faced by women in today’s society.

Throughout the history of Nigeria, women have struggle with the problem of economic limitation, objectification, discrimination and social disparities, and a situation that impact on their status. For women to get accepted in various sectors, it will require effectiveness and strategic political participation. It is important to note those social conditions such as raising families, taking care of the home, plagued women participation in politics. The totalistic view of society concerning women believes that women are home makers. (Oyinade, Daramola, & Lamidi, 2013, p. 30).

Due to the broad nature of the media, the research will only focus on Nigeria online print media. As mentioned earlier in the introduction, women are considered lower and their political position is not as successfully framed by the media as such this research will look at how the online print media talks on the representation of women in Nigeria politics from past era and present times.

1.2 Purpose of study

Since the early days the media has being considered one of the most popular way of communication and transferring of information across the world and is known to be a very important tool for communication thus meaning maker. It is considered an essential tool for growth in any given economy, business and political carrier. It is used in so many areas where different identities are constructed. This research is aimed to examine the coverage/ historical and contemporary role of women in politics in Nigeria online newspaper. It aims to find out how the media represent women in politics. In doing so it will find out various ways the online newspaper portray or represent women in this present days looking at the content of the news stories used by the selected media in this research.

In the pre-colonial time, women were considered and consulted when making decisions of the country, these change totally and the country fate depend on patriarchal system, where women are considered secondary and shadow to men in Nigeria. Due to the nature and region this research is focusing on it is significant to consider different culture and ethnicity in Nigeria as everyone have a different lifestyle and as such have their own opinion and reason in regards to the contemporary role of women in politics in Nigeria media. These means that the investigation will be from online national newspapers on the way it has depict the idea of various female Nigerians in politics.

The outcome of this research will give a clear picture of the role online print media play in politics in regards to women who are significantly important in any society. Hence it will reflect the media influence on story and why the media doesn't project a better picture of women in other to create a better idea about women to the general population in other to enable women get more opportunity in different field including politics.

1.3 Research design

This research study is conducted within two national online newspapers in Nigeria. The Guardian and Vanguard are the newspapers used in this research. The main method used in this thesis is textual analysis, I am inspired by different methods such as content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis was used to point out the media content on women representation in politics using numbers, while discourse analysis help me understand the language use and how it has contributed differently on media representation of women participation in politics. The use of these methods helps me gather information from the online newspaper and enable an unbiased

interpretation of the newspaper content. I believe in the field such as media studies, it is important to benefit from different methods in order to reach an effective result. I decided to look at these newspapers based on their publication of women stories which is the general focus of these studies, availability and the similarities between their print version and online version of news stories. From searching through archives on each of the online newspaper and reading the newspapers, the research study draws its guide on four research questions. The following question will be used to guide this study.

RQ1: How are women represented by the online print media outlet in general?

RQ2: Did the media frame women in politics as objectified candidate to promote their perception as less competent in handling political position?

RQ3: Who tells the story on women role in politics articles that are reported in the online print media?

RQ4: Is there any difference in the positive and negative coverage on women and men stories in politics?

As mentioned above, Textual analysis is used as a main tool in the methodology. However, I am inspired by content analysis and discourse analysis as ways to reach the meaning of the texts. Content analysis is used to review the data I used in this thesis. It enabled me to see the whole picture within the analyzed material used in this study. Discourse analysis is used to understand the system we live (e.g. patriarchal system) and how it is represented by the media. Discourse analysis shows us how to read text. So, with the use of these methodologies, the newspaper article was analyzed in a gender perspective. Textual reading was done for the selected political sections in the online newspaper.

1.4 Significance of study

The media is a tool for information and education to a wide range of audiences. This thesis produces significance contribution in the online newspaper roles in women politics in Nigeria. Findings from this research will display how the online print media content and representation of women and women political roles has being represented. It looks at the language used by the media in the representation of women during the election period. This will enable the consideration of different values, culture and language of this news content. Media is one of the most important 'medium' in constructing 'women' and men daily activities and with the numerous amount of media platform, daily update of various people are made available. This study employs the use of online newspaper to conduct a textual analysis. The demonstration of the intent and target will be clearly pointed out. The media responds goes a long way in influencing idea positively or negatively in women roles in politics and this effect can sometimes be permanent as the media can create and generate new meaning. The research will be an important tool to women and also the print media both online and print version as it will help them see how much effort they put in their today political roles and how it's being represented and portrayed by the media. It will show the media how much information is missing and how much is to be giving in other to represent the full citizen of the country.

1.5 Limitation of study

The research analysis is on online newspapers in Nigeria in regards to women roles in politics around the election period of 2015. The study covers three month general election period from February 2015 to April 2015. The study covers one month before the election, the election month which was March 28th 2015 and one month after the election. This date is consider due to its recent occurrence and Nigeria press

media were under democratic regime and not military regime so press are considered and expected to be free and truthful. These newspapers are selected due to their daily circulation, they are online and available, and they are national newspapers and are published in English. This will help give more clarity in the research on women representation by the media. This research looks at textual analysis in online newspapers.

- The study was limited to online newspaper version as it is impossible to get the print version of these newspapers due to the location of the study conducted in north Cyprus on Nigeria women politics.
- The study was limited to a timeframe three (3) month period in 2015.
- The study was limited to national newspaper as Nigeria government owned newspapers are state owned and is secluded to state news stories.
- The study is limited to political section in the newspaper.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter focuses on providing literature review to give broader knowledge to the study of women in politics representation by the media. As mentioned before these study looks at the newspaper articles and content on the representation of women in politics in the Nigeria online print media. Research has shown that women around the world have little involvement in political position as it's considered a male dominated position, these study aim on pointing out media representation of women in Nigeria government. The literature review will explore and discuss the following subjects: media, media representation, politics, women in Nigeria politics, brief history of women in Nigeria, history of women in politics women in Nigeria, Under-representation of women in political position by the media, Framing of under-representation of women in political and media ethics.

2.1 Defining Media

Media in this recent era is different from the early times. According to McLuhan (1964), "Media is the extension of ourselves all technology are extension of our physical and nervous systems to increase power and speed" (p. 90). The media is more than a platform as explained by McLuhan it's associated to our physical appearances, having various form of media associated to part of our bodies.

There are three senses of the word media. The first is as an ‘intervening or intermediate agency or substance’, the second is a “conscious technical sense, as in the distinction between print and sound and vision as media and lastly ‘the specialized capitalist sense’ in which the news and the broadcast services that already exists is seen as a medium for something else as in advertising (Williams, 1976, p. 203).

Media is gotten from medium which is a Latin word from ‘mediums’ meaning middle. Media consist of different forms/part of communication, that comes together and form the mass media which are newspaper, radio, TV etc. Cole and Daniel (2005) noted that “media convey messages that potentially inform and influence attitudes and behaviors” (p. xii). People place a close attention to the media and what is presented and written on the media, based on this it’s advisable to consider thoughtfully what the media present to the general public. The term mass media came out in the 1920s and finally made a distinction between face-to-face and mass communication (Peters, 1999, p. 2). One way to define mass media is “the intersection of mass communication, culture and technology” (Gilies, 2003. p. 7). This thesis will be conducted using online newspaper in Nigeria as a case study to give a clear understanding to how women in politics are being represented by the media.

2.2 Media representation

Representation by the media against women politically is common not only in Nigeria but all over the world. This thesis will deeply look into the discrepancies in various ways, to be able to cover the representation of women in Nigeria online newspaper. Women in our today society get involved in politics, the underrepresentation of women or name calling became a popular media entertainment, the media depict this issue in ways that women are not taken seriously

when seen in the news outlets. We can say that the women reality is invisible in the media.

Women working in managerial position like politics has being a topic of interest as it's believed that women are expected to do more home duties and less professional duties. The media create an understanding in audiences mind about women in the way women are being portrayed in the media coverage. Feminist and other democratic research has emphasis the importance of accurate representation of women by the media as research has showed that having women in decision making position helps the growth of any government. The online print media as mention earlier is considered a prominent and effective source of information. These study looks at newspaper content presented to the public and how the information passed a crossed mold public opinion in various issues especially the role of women in political position. This study will adopt topics like how media context in regards to women in politics in Nigeria are represented.

The mis-representation of women by the media (those in politics, decision making position or women in various academic field), can result to various abuse and violence experience against women around the world regardless of their race, color, age circumstances etc. this is referenced due to various women around the world are willing to get involved in politics if given the opportunity but this are major factors that limit. It is important to note that women experience various abuses both physically, emotionally and image wise due to what the media portray and how it's being interpreted by the audience examples are media coverage of women physical appearances or fashion sense on political section of the online newspaper. Men also experience abuses and body shaming but not that much compare to women.

Nigeria has ratified regional and international women right institutions that help in protecting and enforcing women right. Conventions on the Elimination of all form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) protocol on gender and equal opportunity, BAOBAB for women human right is a non-profit organization, that protect women's right, under religion, customary law in Nigeria and statutory. The organization helps in educating audience on media awareness towards media content as well as produce publications on women right issues.

The negative portrayal of women by the media produces discrimination in every society. Some government, society, culture and religious beliefs are convinced by the narrow range of information about women that are presented by the media; these groups consider this information to be accurate. Women image is a form of critical study through feminist groups and other research on women representation by advert and film, the study believe that this concept plays roles in the interpretation of women in societies. Media coverage on women general issues becomes crucial in all women related news, representing less accuracy when reporting women stories.

These current studies examine and draw insight from previous studies on media representation of women role in politics. Findings from this studies highlights key roles on media coverage on women in politics

- “Stories on women receive 16.0% of which the portrayal of women in a negative image was 5.1%” (Tseayo, 1996).

The overall effort of the portrayal of women in the media is to reinforce, rather to reduce prejudice and stereotypes. In other words the way in which the Nigeria woman are presented... in the mass media images reflect in

interplay of social, cultural and ideological forces dominant in the Nigeria society (Tseayo, 1996, p. 47)

- “The systematic tendencies to the discourse on female politicians by the journalist and reporters leads to the conclusion that media highly contribute to women difficulties in their political careers” (Opyd, 2014)

Opyd added that “these misrepresented description of female in political positions often damages their reputation as leaders and many instances creates an impediment to their future political carrier, (Opyd, 2014, p. 39)

- “Media coverage on media’s image on women politicians is their sexual representations” (Ross 2002)

The scholar notes “post-menopausal, too emotional, too female and the once who has stolen another woman husband” (Ross 2002, p. 1). Media ‘generate despicable name and identity for female politicians, this attracts the audience giving them an impression of the politician that isn’t real and this create dislike.

- “Coverage of women parliamentarian is that woman parliamentarians are that women politician’s images are very often based on gender stereotype” (Walsh 2001).

Walsh attests that “this representation of women weakness and emotionality differed from the representation of men who were characterized as strong, rational and strategic” (Walsh, 2001, p. 46).

- “Women issues are usually not the stuff of which headlines are made, nor are gender related concerns considered news or a good copy” (Kalpana & Ammu, 2006)

Ammu and Kalpana (2006) “ when women’s issues draw the attention of the media they are often sensationalized trivialized or otherwise distorted and thus their coverage involve a series of hits and misinformation as well” (p. 5)

- “There are two major myths on women existence in society “the myth of female weakness and the myth of female strength” (River 1996, p. 17).

The scholar illustrated Media’s representation of working women saying “hardly a month goes by without major publication offerings a dire portent for working women. They are going to start having heart attacks, they are never going to get husband, they’ll send their kids running to shrinks couches, they will be sure bundles of nerves that they need a mommy trace to keep working at all”.(River 1996, p. 61).

- “.... Findings, most of which suggest that women’s electoral success is compromised by a journalistic emphasis on personal and corporeal characteristic (trivializing) rather than a rendering of their policy positions” (OpCit, 2013)

OpCit (2013) concurs with other scholar noting that “even woman who compete for and then win the top are vulnerable to the media personalizing proximity, so that Johanna Siguroardottir’s same sex marriage and Angela Merkel’s dress sense are subject to as much media scrutiny and discussion as the way they govern their respective countries or their position on global terrorism” (OpCit, 2013, p. 34)

The above finding is based on research made by scholars on media representation on women in political position and women in decision making positions⁷.

⁷ These scholar findings are used to support this study by creating clarity to the aim of these study and point to more challenges women face due to media mis-representation.

2.3 History of politics in Nigeria

Nigeria is located in the continent of Africa and was colonized by Britain. Her independent was gotten in 1960. The name “Nigeria” was the combination of two words “Niger” and “Area”. Before the independent in 1960, power struggle started between three major regions in Nigeria.

Nigeria was scheduled for Independence from Britain in 1960, and three main political parties ran in the preparatory elections in 1959. the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) which had control of the Eastern Region (**Igbo**) led by Nnamdi Azikiwe. the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which had control of the Northern Region (**Hausa-Fulani**), led by Ahmadu Bello. the Action Group (AG) which had control of the Western Region (**Yoruba**), led by Obafemi Awolowo. (Crawford,2018).

These political parties represented the major regions in Nigeria. In 1960, Nigeria obtained both the political and military control of her territory. The amalgamation of the south and north region of Nigeria made the country the most populous African country. After the amalgamation, regional leaders started struggling for power making it difficult to find who will lead the country and what part of the country will the leader come from. During that time, Nigeria still followed the British system of governing in which there was a prime minister and ceremonial president (governor general).

The ceremonial president of Nigeria then was Nnamdi Azikiwe, while the Prime Minister was Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. The two of them assumed reigns of leadership due to the partnership that was foisted between the National Congress of Nigeria and Cameroun and the Northern People's Congress in 1959 during the general election that was held then to choose the president, prime minister and members of the house of assembly (Nigeriafinder, 2018).

In 1963, Nigeria became a republic and Nnamdi Azikiwe was the elected president of the federal republic while Tafawa Balewa remained as prime minister. However, the northern leaders opposed the leadership and unification of the country as they

fear the southerners based on their exposure, educational level and development. This was because in the pre-colonial era, the British colonial masters came into Nigeria through the southern region by sea, providing western education and Christianity to the southerners first before reaching the northern people. The northerners on the other hand, Arabian merchant who came through the center Africa for business was received by the northern people, the Arabs introduced Islamic religion to the northern people in Arabic language. This is why the southern region is dominated by Christians and the northerners observe Islamic religion. According to Jacob (2012) on the effect of historical amalgamation in Nigeria he stated that “to the colonial transgressions that forced the ethnic groups of the northern and southern provinces to become an entity called Nigeria in 1914” (p. 14). The political and economic factors were influenced by religion and this became an unforgettable memory in Nigeria history. Politics in Nigeria cannot be fully defined if religion and ethnic differences are not mentioned.

In 1966, Nigeria experienced its first coup d'état. With the president out of the country, some Igbo armed men killed the prime minister and some senior officers. The coup was considered a bloody overthrow of government as Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi was the new military governor who promised a progressive government, stop corruption and violence, and return of civilian rule by election. “Though Aguiyi-Ironsi gave some concessions to northerners, many Hausa-Fulani felt the coup was a plot to make the Igbo dominant in Nigeria” (Crawfords, 2018). That same year, another coup was led by the northern people killing the Aguiyi-Ironsi and lots of Igbo people. The northern people who were Muslim chose a Yakubu "Jack" Gowon who was a Christian to lead the country. Gowon split the 4 existing regions to 12

states. The eastern regional leader refused the division and decided to start an independent republic name Biafra this lead to civil war. “This incidence led Nigeria to a civil war since officers of eastern region could not take the idea of their kinsmen being killed up north lightly. The civil war was fought from 1967 to 1970. However, military rule continued in Nigeria for 9 more years after the civil war” (nigeriafinder, 2018). In 1979, Nigeria experienced it second republic. Nigeria had Shehu Shagari as the president and Alex Ekweme as the vice president. This government ended in 1983 due to corruption. Michael Ogbeidi (2012) stated that “Indeed, from the first generation of political leadership class through the successive military and civilian generation of political leaders, Nigerian political leadership had grown continually in corrupt practices. Political corruption has become a cancerous phenomenon that pervades Nigerian state unrestrained” (p. 5). The country was ruled by four different military officers before Olusegun Obasanjo⁸ who was the first democratic president who was inaugurated as newest democratic leader in 1999. He remained president for 8 years and he left office in 2007. After then Nigeria had 2 more president before the 2015 election. All through the history of Nigerian, there was no mention of any female presidential participation as men have always rule the country.

2.4 Histories of women in politics

Its argued in gender studies that gender is a mere human discursive process and as such is not to be considered a firm source of identity or inequality, but in a social context like Nigeria where social construct, religion and tradition are dominant factors. Gender is not just a human discursive process as it matters a lot. The issue of gender discrimination problem has been an issue of great distress to women all over the world. This has been a great struggle for years.

⁸ He was a military dictator from 1976-1979.

Gender injustice/gender balance has however been a sad issue that has brought great concern in Nigeria since the 29 May 1999 where the country maintains a democratic dispensation but the political aspect is dominated predominantly by men who are the majority and women who are the minority. Despite the progress women have made in different professions and the growth achieved in various professions, politics has seemed not to be one of them.

Traditional and patriarchal society in Africa believes that men should be the head of the family and the action makers while women controls the home and take orders from the men, which is considered a sign of respect and deemed as good wife. This ideology is not just in the home alone, but is now being taken in to the political sphere. Traditional and patriarchal system is executed.

Kabeer (2003) breaks equality into three formal substantives and agential equality. Formal equality according to her looks at equal treatment and opportunity between all genders under the law. Substantive equality implies that the peculiar circumstances between individuals and group need to be taken into account in order not to have disadvantages or unfair outcome. Agential equality is when both men and women make strategic choices for themselves.

This will help you understand where the equality between men and women in politics lies. Anorue, Obayi & Onyebuchi (2012) state that

In some cases, it's difficult for men to serve under a woman's administration even in positions like vice and deputy. In order to nurture men's ego, women are placed as subordinate to men. In situations where women are appointed leadership positions, the subordinate who is most likely to be a man, finds it difficult to allow the women perform effectively. These men would like to dictate at the helm of affairs. (p. 16)

Furthermore Anorue, Obayi& Onyebuchi (2012) Notes that "While women work two third of the world's working hours, they own less than 1% of the world's property, women generally still have 36% of the world total wage employment and 1/3 of the share of national income" (p. 3). Women in Nigeria get to donate more to be recognized by the men in position and they still are sidelined in any competition that involves male counterpart.

Olatunde (2010) adopted a statistic analysis which reveals a record of women position and representation in politics which was presented in April 2009 by the government. It reveals that

In 1999, they were only 12 women elected into the states assemblies against 978 men. 3 female senators were elected out of 109 senate seats. The house of representative had 13 women appointed. In 2003, women parliament had increased slightly, where 39 women out of 951 were elected in the house of assembly. Against 339 men, 21 women were elected in the house of representative. The senate seat had only 4 women from a total of 109 senators, making 105 men (p. 29).

Women were appointed hardly any positions in political positions, irrespective of their knowledge and skill. The study furthers its statistic record stating by giving a clear average of women and men. According to Olatunde (2010) "in the 1999 elective office 86 women out of 833 persons were appointed, indicating the average of about 11.9% women's participation and representation so far in the political sector"(p. 28). This shows the position women are involved in terms of their involvements in politics in Nigeria. Gender divergence is still a problem in Nigeria that is still difficult to solve. This is because women all over the world are aware of the gender problem against them. They work harder than their male counterparts to be able to qualify for a political position but they are still undermined and played and this position goes to men who are sometimes under qualified compared to women.

Women right has being one controversial issue all over the world. It is fair to note that the fundamental human right of women is not acknowledged and can be classified as highly unexpected and unfair. (Tremblay 2007, p. 534, Olatunde, 2010 p. 6, Anorue, Obayi& Onyebuchi, 2012, p. 20). Often, women go through challenges in their day life. Politic is a great challenge that women still face today instead of being treated equally they are sidelined. It often shapes the way people think of politics.

Sharma (2014) speaks on Pakistan women challenges and the position of women in Pakistan society. These study looks at the denial of women education, women under-representation in politics and how women in power faces a great threat by a specific interest group including Tribalism and Tahreek e Taliban. Effortlessly women groups like NGOs, PAWLs, WAF, APWA and many women groups has tried to help women situation in Pakistan both socially and politically but it remains excluded in the study conducted by Ndinangu, Onkwars Chitrec (2017)⁹

This study further talked on women excluding themselves from political positions as it has a common norm, making women convince to an ideology where they believe politics and political positions/leadership are men. Shamakafu (2014) shares more light on the study conducted on the challenges the women face in their endeavor to participate in politics. The findings from these study point out that inaccessibility of shelter, education, food and self-determination made by women due to poverty, social ideology, culture and other reasons can be considered a violation of their democratic rights and equal participation in politics and political election. The

⁹ Pakistan is referenced to create a relationship between the situation experienced in Nigeria and other countries. Pakistan is a country where women are decided for and are expected to follow, this present women with less opinion in society as there voice are not head by both the government and media.

representation of women is biased on their gender which goes further to print a clear picture of women's place in the community. Getting this ideology is also why women in Nigeria are not involved in some political positions. Also, this ideology can be rooted to religion as it's stated that men are the head and women should submit.

Agbalajobi (2010) in his study on women's participation and political process in Nigeria argues that this ideology on men being in power, gender discrimination and society belief and ethnic can be biased on religious doctrines and norms most time which has then turned into a self-fulfilled prophesy (P.75).

In essence, the role of women in politics is mostly attached to the religious role in their lives. Agendas are set on what not to be done by women in order not to over step men's supposed act. "In politics, women face repression because dominant image of political actors in today's world is man. Political right and political pluralism is therefore a man's right" (Semakafu, 2014, p. 7). Consequently, the power of politics is influenced in by the social and religious believe and context.

2.5 Brief history of women in Nigeria

In the pre-colonial era, women played various major roles in both social and economic areas as mention in previous chapter. Women were involved in politics but they were mostly involved in the agricultural aspect of the growth in the country. Women controlled the occupation of food processing, pottery making, weaving and cooking. Women were the center of trade, they controlled both import and export of good from one part of the country to another. Women were active in various sectors like agriculture and trade of various kinds both local and long distance trade. The contribution made by women socially in kin groups and provision in health care sector had effect in the administration of the state and kingdom. At that time, women

were not inactive as they are made out today (Attoe, 2002 cited by Olatude, 2010, p. 19-20). The use of food production gave women access to protest and organization of feminist movement in the country. At this point, women could make decisions. Politically women were involved in most decision making. It is believed that these women could make these political moves due to their husband's positions. According to McNeese, Parker and Castillo (2014) "only those women who were the wives of kings and leaders could act politically and gain title" (p.3). Women in the early days were framed in this manner by the media in regards to women political involvement in Nigeria. With the colonization of local areas, the role of women drastically changed, women no longer had the freedom both economically and politically. The rate of women involvement in power related position was low as women were considered house wives and most girls were sent for marriage at their early age. Okafor (2014) noted that "some Northern states in Nigeria subscribe to Sharia law, at least their own version of it. In Nigeria, the federal law prohibits the marriage of persons that are below eighteen. However, various states in Nigeria that implement Sharia law do not prohibit child marriage" (p.1).

Women in Nigeria are believed to be in power only in the house hold. They were considered to have power over the children and influence power on men through the house hold authoritative position they handled. In various religions, women were usually considered as goddess of peace and fertility this is because women give birth to children so they are expected to sit at home while the men work and feed them¹⁰. All power was given to man as they dominated most of the decision making in the country. According to McNeese, Parker and Castillo (2014) "suddenly women no

¹⁰ This was done in the early Nigeria traditions, where they worship various gods that where both men and women.

longer had the freedom of being able to sell their handmade crafts and the vegetable they grew at the village market. They were expected to stay at home, work on the farm and take care of the children” (p. 9)

All this change when educational system came into existence. The emerging of education, presented a powerful agency of change with a large number of intelligent, educated, confident and elite women emerging to various occupations. Education system in Nigeria gave a larger number of women the ability to challenge patriarchy system. Due to women educational level, almost half the populations of Nigeria women are refused employment in their area of study, they are skilled in various areas which enable them become self-employed. Economic commission of Africa (1969) stated in its study that Nigeria women are mostly self-employed, displaying their skills, ingenuity and resourcefulness in various areas of profession in different part of the country, both in the urban and rural areas. It is advisable in the development of the country both at the-local and national levels to encourage and nourish such talent as it will be of great disadvantage if it dormant (p. 2). Even with education, Nigeria women are expected to get married and have family. It is believed that marriage is the important aspects that complete a Nigeria woman. Some women who get married are in a polygamist relationship and they have to work their way to the top in order to be recognized in society. The value of education is now seen by Nigeria men and fathers as educated women present a helping hand in the household and family.

2.6 Women representation in Nigerian politics

Women in politics and their participation in Nigeria politics are often not portrayed positively and emphasized sufficiently. Women position in the structure of Nigeria politics differs based on various cultural orientations, religion and ethnic groups.

A formal definition of politics often defines women's political participation out of the picture. Female participation in politics can be associated to both gender and class linked. Working class women have more chance when involved in politics, society or square than middle or upper class women. (Cited by Joshep.S. 2016).

In the 1957, during pre-independent era women political activist were considered back bone in providing voices for Nigerians. According to Yusuf, "Nigerian women were the era of inactivity especially in politics. This is because this administration brought with it the assumptions of European patriarchy into Nigerian society" (cited in Badejo, 1985, p.5). As mention in the introduction chapter, Women in the pre-colonial era where political activist such as Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, Mrs. Janet Mokelu and Ms. Young were members of the Eastern House of Assembly. Late Mrs. Fumilayo Ransome-kuti was a very strong focused in politics in the western region even though she was not a full-fledged politician. Hajia Gambo Sawaba fought for women in the northern Nigeria on political and cultural emancipation. Women played a vital political role in Nigeria in spite of the limitation. Even though it wasn't a great number of women, this women mentioned effected a change in Nigeria politics¹¹. Badmus (2006) argues that although women have no major contributors within political parties and do not have their franchise, but are still involved outside the parties either as women right activist or supporters of various parties (cited olatunde, 2010, p.22).

¹¹ These women are used in this study repeatedly to point out the difference between women involvement in decision making in the pre-colonial era and now. These women were the most commonly recorded activist in Nigeria around that time.

Women played significant role in pre-colonial era, but it wasn't an equal scale when compared to men. Culture and religion in Nigeria have reduced their independent. Patriarchy is considered values and this define societies in Nigeria. This is one aspect that influences women ability in gaining access to male dominated positions like politics as they desire. According to Olatunde (2010) noted that "women strive to change their present positions as subordinates, socio-cultural principles not only define the position of women within the society but also the way the women view and project themselves" (p.23). Feminist argues that society that is dominated by men, values are set in some position hindering women the opportunity to achieve certain position no matter their achievement so as to avoid having competition. This could be a factor that contributes to the issue behind omen participation in politics today.

Even though the colonial era can be considered an eventful period of women involvement in politics, the lack of recognition can be considered one of the aspect that contribute to women participation in politics. In 1987, Maryam babangida became the first working woman as she instituted the office off the first lady; she lunched the 'better life for rural women' program. May 29th 1999 was when the first republic started and women advanced in many areas including politics. "Today women are coming out more but their visibility and leadership opportunities are still negligible, though the political and personal liberties of women are theoretically granted" (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1985, p.126). Till this era, women in Nigeria still have a long way to go in obtaining equality with their male counterpart. According to the former governor of Lagos¹² state babatunde fashola (2009) stated that

Lagos is a state in the western part of Nigeria. It was formerly the capital city and the office of the president, but was changed in 1992 to Abuja.

In 1999, there were only 12 women elected into the state assemblies against 978 men. In the senate, 3 female senators out of 109 senators selected having men as majority. House of Representatives elected 13 women. After the elections in 2003, female parliamentarians had increased slightly, 39 women were elected in the house of assembly against 951 men. House of Representatives had 21 women won seats against 339 men. As much as women increased, the number of men dominated most of these positions (cited by olatunde, 2010, p. 28).

This statistic shows women role in politics in Nigeria. The governor added that in 2003 election, merely 2% of women role in politics was increased. Over the years, Nigerian women role in politics has changed from good to bad, bad to worst. Nigerian women play crucial roles in politics this has helped in shaping the political system in the country.

2.7 Media coverage: Underrepresentation of women in politics

Women involvement in politics is not wildly achieved all over the world. However few women who are part of political administration around the world (few here is used comparing men and women involvement in politics). United Nation stated that “there is a slow increase of women participation in national parliamentarians from 11.3 per cent in 1995 to 22.8 per cent where women in 2016” (p. 1). Media coverage of women political leaders is astonishingly diverted and its information differs as it known to present women in an untruth worthy and idiotic way. Media is a powerful tool of communication that can idea make you or break you, this is a popular say that about the media. Print media as old as it has being does lots of damages to women’s image.

These study shows that the representation of women and men political leaders in the media is presented differently and is certainly not equal, leaving the women with distorted images. As Gallagher (2001) stated, “ women and their voices maybe

considered unworthy of serious consideration even in media content that is destined specifically for them” (p.6).

When women in power get the attention of the media, they are not framed in a serious and empowering manner. Scholar’s studies have shown Media’s underrepresentation of women. Studies like that of Nelson and Chowdhury (1994) have presented that equality between men and women politically is difficult to achieve “in no country do women have political status, access or influence equal as men” (Nelson and Chowdhury 1994, p. 3) . This spreads far into the media outlet. Representation of women in politics has been diverted to entertainment, fashion show and comedy instead of seriousness and power, so as to present the right picture of the women instilling change and contributing to the development in various countries and society. The media only gives attention to women when framing them in an unjustified and unfair manner in order to improve their viewers and readers.

“The gap is widest in news about politics and government in which women are only 16% of the people in the stories. . . In 2015, women still constitute only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in the news, exactly as they did in 2010” (GMMP, 2015, p. 31).

The narrow and negative portrayal of women by the media presents women all around the world with less respect from the opposite sex, these legitimized women to all sort of abuses but physically and emotionally.

Heinz forum (2012), conducted a research on leadership gap titled “*women in the media and women as leaders*”, which stated that “ the ability of women to acquire and retain leadership position as well as the propensity of women to seek those position has been adversely affected in everything from movie, video game, news channel, sports channel to children cartoons”(p.1).

Media inspires messages in recipients/audience consciousness concerning women in every aspect of media outlet. These ideology steaks with the recipient/audience generating all kind of attitudes and believe towards women that can generate to violence against women. Women work twice as hard in other to change this perception in the minds audiences towards women, but the media keeps objectifying women more and more. Tuchman (1978) cited by Thuo (2012) observed that “women were subjected to ‘symbolic annihilation’ by the media because they are often absent from news discourse but when they are made visible, then they are often rendered childish and or in need of men’s protection, or else consigned to the homes as their only legitimate domain” (p. 37). The media presents its recipients with little or no factual information about women and women in political positions and more unrealistic, untactful and stereotypical comments giving just one correct perspective on women.

Heinz form (2012) further asks questions on when last women hold positions as owners of print media or directors in print? Having women in such position is likely to change the negative content of the media in regards to women. “The lack of women in the media is parallel by the scarcity of women in charge of media. Only about 5% of television, writers, executives and producers are women” (Linchter & Rothman, 1986, p. 16). This is a proven fact that has being research and discussed by scholars, the media sector has lesser women than it should have, so majority of women stories or women in political stories that are presented by the news media is from a man’s point of view which is difficult to relate with or should be believed totally as they are not women. Basow (1992) stated that “a primary way in which media distort reality is in underrepresentation of women. Weather it is prime-time,

television, in which there are three times as many white men as women” (p. 159). The reality presented by the media on women is a reconstruction of reality. According to Woods (1993) “we are tempted to believe that men constitute majority of the population than women and men are the cultural stand” (p. 31).

This is another aspect of the media underrepresenting women to look lesser in number and academic degree/excellence than men. Politically, this perception of men outnumbering women can make audience believe what the media present concerning women. Wood (1993) added that, “as a country we are aging so that people over 60 make up a major part of our population; within this group, women significantly outnumber men” (p. 5). When women are being reported in any news issue the media make their news content ordinary even if it’s a serious issue that affects group of women or one woman. It is believed that if more women are holding critical positions in the media (behind the scenes), the portrayal of women by the media will be mostly positive.

Wood (1994) “typically men are given the patriarch role in society to be viewed as sexually aggressive, bold and they are portray as strong and muscular who are rarely involved in human relationship” (p. 4). Stereotyping men in this manner create a sense of believe towards this character created by the media. The representation of women “as sex object is common in the media, the image of such women are usually thin, younger and beautiful. There are made to look passive and dependent which can be sometimes seen as unprofessional and dumb” (wood, 1993, p. 4). Yet in reality women are totally different and are opposite to what is portrayed by the media. The idea of a woman presented by the media to the audience makes women who do not physically fit in to this description feel insecure and not confident of their physical

body and identity and this become an issue where women battle to be like this media image of a woman. Most times, this can result to death or suicide due to women fell ugly.

Media mis-represent gender and distort what we see as right and wrong, normal and desirable, creating a new sense of reality. According to J.A Doyle (1989) study on masculinity children's television noted that "male are aggressive, dominant and engaged in exciting activities from which they are receive towards from others for their masculine accomplishment" (p. 111). Concepts like this are what produce wrong representation of women as they cannot be two dominant character of opposite sex. Media has created two images of women and women in politics. There is the idea/perfect woman who is also known as the good woman and there's the competitive, powerful and bad woman. The media construct the good woman as the one who is focused on her family, stay home, help mate to her husband, loyal wife, pretty and angelic while the bad woman is everything a good woman is not, independent, involved in work, decision maker in situation where men are involved, powerful and respected, manages carrier and family. Women in political position are considered by the media as the bad and evil women as they are outs the norm created for women. According to Faludi (1991), "exemplifying the evil woman is Alex in fatal attraction, which grossed more than 100 million dollar in the first four month" (p. 113). The media portray strong and independent women as the 'wicked step mothers'. O'connor (1989) cited by Julie woods (1994) noted that " women as well as minority are cast in supporting roles rather than leading roles in both children shows and the commercials interspersed within them" (p. 7).

News media set the agenda, provides information that will interest the audience and offer prime topic of interest, Hall (1997, p. 340) cited by Deborah Rhode (1995). In media images, feminist issues state that “the press is expected to be responsible for providing truthful information and images that present a clear understanding of our daily lives” (p. 1). The media sexualizing women body in order to advertise product for profit, reducing the value of a woman to the shape of a product like Coca-Cola bottle where women body shape is associated to the product. Stannard (1971) stated in his study on women in sexist society that women are made to see beauty in a different way, media creates the image of ideal beauty that is being looked at by millions, women in the society are converted by the idea of beauty, teaching women in society how to look, having the idea that women are article of conscious consumption in the male market. Women are made to believe that survival in this world is only possible through their looks (p. 123). All the usage of women and women body is what create the mis-representation of women even when trying to make a difference in the society.

Argument arose between scholars in regards to women in politics and powerful position being underrepresented by the media. Some scholar believe that if women are given executive position in the media, they will make positive representation on women, while some still argued that women in such position will make very little change if not non. The study went further to present different view on female editor. According to Pahlen (2000) “women in management position are often pressured to adopt management style that reflect men’s perspective more than their own” (cited by Shor, Rijt, Miltsov, Kulkarni and Skiena, 2015, p. 965). With the rate the media content keeps idealizing women as sex object, it’s reasonable to have women in

editorial positions and publishers of news to change the knowledge release about women. By do this, stereotype and gender inequality will reduce to an extent.

Noticeable, different versions of print media always sexualize women idea by image or text any time they are mentioned. The underrepresentation in the media is based on stereotypic, belittling and portray in a demeaning manner.

2.8 Media: How women are represented in political news

It's important to note that the media plays a representative role in the construction of women identity and the shared information constitute by the audience. News media both online and print version is one common and major source of information in Africa. Research has shown that the media in terms of politics are fare towards men than women all over the world. As Ross (2003) noted "Trivialize their (women) political contributions, undermine their political authority and more generally render them invisible" (p. 1).

The media coverage on women gives diminishing report. The media contributes in the undermining of women in today's world, it is believed that the 1997 British general election had numerous amount of underrepresentation issues from about 22 newspapers, the media makes most of its reports in the personal life of women political position, changing the focus of the audience and setting the agenda to be based on their personal life and gender. Scholars argued that most women politician's images are based on stereotype (Kroom and Ekstrom, 2008). This is one issue faced by women when contesting in politics, the media points towards the personal and private life of female candidate.

Ross (2002) stated in the study on women politics and media that most female candidate who are represented by the media are mostly presented and portray in the image of their husbands wealth. Language used in media frames women as unqualified and props, showing how women are preserved by the media and as such, it's difficult for the media to present a good and respectful picture on women. The way the media represent women can be a great set back to achieving equality professionally and politically as well as gender equality. According to Gloria Steinem (1983) "We've moved from ridicule and invisibility to serious opposition" (p. 21). The opposition faced by women is much greater than expected. Women work twice as hard but they are still in the shadow of men, receiving lesser income and wages than men. Gloria Steinem study further speaks on woman facing sexism in the media and politically which she believe is ridiculous. Additionally, scholarly research has shown that media coverage differs when female candidates are involved in an election. A comparative report on the role of mass media in the (re)distribution of power (2004) talks on how "women who wish to insinuate themselves into the media and be successful as politicians has to be women the capital W" (p. 6). The study continues to talk on how the media portray female politicians and their work as if they are characters in fairy tales who has to work so hard and make so many sacrifices to obtain their goals. Further discussions in the study speaks on media text analysis and interview says it's found that women are evaluated in other to find out if they are perfectly normal in their private sphere as its considered to be a sensitive aspect of life by doing this evaluation, it will help to determine if women can take part in public sphere. Sturken and Cartwright (2001) cited by Opyd (2014) asserted that "Image... provides a complex field in which power relation are excited and

looks are exchanged. As both spectator and subject of images, we engage in and are subject to complex practices of looking and being looked at” (p. 40).

The usage of image in political event and this image are mostly to present sexual and attractiveness of women. The images presented on female candidate in polices are different from that of men. Women are given positions where they look like supporters to men not winners, in other not to attach women with the idea of power. To further emphasis, Opyd (2014) looks at a case presented by Swedish politician Gudrun Schyman who said media pointed out her femininity by highlighting physical aspect of her femininity that goes in line with the conventional stereotype, relating her personality physically to that of fairy tales stories in the character of a princess, pointing out how her mental and emotional world is being reflected and how her actions and crimes can be associated to her going against her fundamental behavior and feminine behavior and traits (Kroon and Ekstrom 2008: 895, Opyd 2014, p. 40).

The media always gives report on women from different aspect, molding them to be object of attraction and distraction. News media set the agenda in other to diver the attention of the recipient from the real work put in by women in any position appointed to them. This way, it’s impossible for women to get the support of citizens in any political allocations. The question that should be focused and asked is, are all women in politics incompetent in their duties and object of distraction? Does the media account for every negative and failed women administration that faces challenges due to what is displayed by the media about women?

Report on Media unfriendliness towards women in 2003, the New York Times and Washington post wrote on a female senator where it meanly focused on her purse and not the work being done in the advancement of the government. Adding to this the media also wrote on the shoe collection on the white house counselor. News media on women politicians are mostly based on styles, character. Personal traits and family but in regards to man it focuses majorly on political issues.

Ukozor (2004) research on Gender justice in media, presented an x-ray of media coverage on gender issues in Nigeria portray women image negatively. Women are being marginalized and are covered from one point of view. “Rather than reporting women stories fairly from woman and men angles, the media portray women as object and exclude women voices on various opinions, depicting an inglorious image of women as model in advertising that do not have opinions” (cited by Amobi, 2013, p. 5).

Women are all alone when it comes to presenting the truth. The media continues to be the enemy to women that appears in the public eyes and politically. Women are considered friends to the media when they are objectified.

2.8.1 Media framing on under-representation of women in politics

The media is responsible for framing what we see, think and talk about in today’s society. The print media is a vital source of information and more reliable source of information they are able to control what the people understand from any event that occur around the world. Method in which this information is passed across to the recipients is framed in way to meet the target and goal of the source. Framing plays a significant role in affecting the decoding, interpreting and understanding of any news content given to recipients of any kind. Under-representation of women is considered

a problem that affects a large number of women around the world, however the way the news is framed to the recipient create a sense of understanding towards that issue providing public opinion at large and this present response from agencies and public makers regarding women. According to Goffman, (1974) framing is "Schemata of interpretation that enable individuals/users to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences or life experiences"(P. 21). This implies that framing aims to create an understanding to common life occurrence and influence the way recipient perceive issues or event presented in the news and life experiences.

Scholars reports on media under-representation of women and those in political position as stereotyping frames which affect and influence the perception of women. According to the Global media monitoring (GMM) (2010) project which conducts a research in 2015 shows that the represented of people in print, radio and television news are 23% women and 77% men, it stated that “the period 2010–2015 saw a three percentage point decrease of the proportion of women in political news stories . . . They have remained 26%- 27% of the people seen, heard and spoken about in local news over the past 10 years, following a relatively large four percentage point change between 2000 and 2005. Their presence in national stories during the past five years has not changed; in 2015 and in 2010, women are 23% of the people in stories of this scope.” (p. 36). As pointed out in previous chapter, at least one half of the world's populations are female but the media coverage of women and men is of great difference. Women and young girls are underrepresented in the media and society.

This implies that the news media is covered in the perception of men. There is lots of framing addressing the under-representation of women. The media selects and slices

information before giving it to the recipient. Media coverage involves the reduction and selection of various pieces of information allowing certain attributes to be highlighted and others to be excluded in communication context (Knight 1999, Entman 1993, Chyi&Mc Combs 2004, Nicely 2007, P. 4). The salience given to certain information can influence the audience personal opinion storing in their memory the issue in question.

Significantly, the power of framing can be of various uses, to change public minds as well as divert attention to a certain issue omitting selective information. The danger in understanding or omitting information is that it limits the alternative or knowledge the public is exposed too (Entman, 1993, Nicely, 2007, p. 4).

This is how the media are able to present certain information about women to citizens, selecting their audiences who will be available at a certain time in order to affect their emotions, give them a bit of negative information about women and slice out the real reality about women. The power of frames in the news construction process is a relevant aspect of study, as the presentation of the news serves as a tool of social control. (Taylor & Sorenson, 2002 cited in Bonnes, 2011). Media coverage on under-representation of women, tend to represent its content as a reliable News media are one problem that women all around the world faces. They present women issues as insignificant, same way women are perceived by the media and news media.

Today's culture is overwhelmed with media frames which is commonly shared and accepted by the majorities in relation to women (Entman 1993, Nicely 2007, P. 5). Despite the numerous researches on framing of news content, audience are still not

aware of the media content frame. One major reason why media discourse is commonly used in news media and culture is that they are driven and found in all levels of communication process. Scholars have employed discourse analysis in their studies, agreeing that the media uses language in its contents and continue to influence women politicians in gender terms. The framing and political content of media content makes audience move beyond the news context to real world context. This appears to be dangerous because issues framed by the media regarding women will be broadcasted to the mass audience.

Mainstream media frame is often blamed for contributing to the way society views marginalized group and its members and how women are being undermined in this groups due to media coverage (Ward, 2004, Nicely, 2007 P. 4). Framing of media context plays a huge role in the understanding and interpreting of issues such as role of women in the society and the under-representation of women in politics. According to Eastman & Billing (2001) “The hidden racism and sexism found in the media portrayals has an impact on younger generation who looks to the media for socialization” (p. 187). Young adult of this generation focuses and learn from the media. It's easy to colonize the mind of the younger once that depend on media for information. Framing of media content can go a long way in hurting women in various ways.

Framing plays a vital role in the understanding of various women issues presented by the media. However, it said to say very little has being done in Nigeria media inn regards to framing of women in political position and the under-representation of women in political position by the media. This current study will go further in

researching on framing of women in political position in the early times and now, in selected Nigerian Newspapers.

2.9 Media's responsibility

The media is a platform of information and education in this era and is responsible for providing adequate and proper information to citizens regarding various topics and issues. This approach focuses on Media's obligation to society.

The media is obliged to report all sides of a story and provide perspective of various people including background information's to any story to help create a clear understanding. Lots of people follows the media daily all over the world in blind faith believing in the media for update of daily activates across the globe as such, the media is in great dept. to the audience in educating and guiding people and societies in various issues including women's role in polities.

Mcquail (2005) is considered one of the most popular communication scholars and these study will dwell on his summary on media's basic social responsibility which are:

- Media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society.
- The obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standard of information, truth, accuracy, objectives and balance.
- In accepting and applying the obligation, media should be self-regulating within the frame work of law and established institution.
- Media as a whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various point of view and right of reply.

- Journalists and media profession should be accountable to society as well as to employers and market.

From the above content, the media has an obligation to society in accepting issues happening in the society and reporting these issues in a truthful manner. The media are to report objectives, covering all groups including women in stories without applying hateful, wrong and rouge to their reports.

Professional standard, accuracy and truthfulness should be the motto of every daily journalist and reporter regarding the role of women in politics, women issues in general and any other issues regarding citizens in any society. Media are required to present diverse citizenry information and not avoid any topic that is against the news agency agenda or does not bring certain interest to this agencies as long as this news are not offensive content that will trigger crime, violence and insecurity in any society.

Social responsibility approach calls on the media to uphold its professional standard in news making and avoid censoring news contents. Journalist is to give access to various points of view when reporting news stories. Journalists covering any news are expected to be transparent and reflect any news to society as a mirror image. The media are expected to behave in an ethical standard

It's advisable if the media set aside certain professionals to help journalist, reporters and the media corporation at large to help uphold the law and standard, checking media conduct and news content so as to sanction anyone in the media agency or corporation who is wrongly censoring specific new (like women news in general or

women in the political position or decision making position) intended for the audience and society.

This study through this approach seeks to establish through content analysis a clear understanding on the women objectivity in news report as well as if the media ethically report issues regarding women roles in political position in Nigeria during this study time frame. The media are to be accountable to society and reflex divers point of view. The society depends on media content to be able to educate them on what is happening around the world if the media refuse to be transparent in the media content, it fails in its duty in educating and informing the audience accurately.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

These qualitative research was conducted using textual analysis of 2015 Nigeria general election. It presents data collected from the online newspaper on women participation in politics. This thesis uses qualitative approach to analyze the content with the aim of pointing out the role and effect of media on women in politics. The study uses the combination of various analyses to support data's collected in this study to present a strong argument. The content analysis uses table and chat to be able to present clear findings from the research material used in this thesis. Furthermore, Discourse analysis is used to look at languages used in the online media coverage of women politics stories. According to weber (1990), "qualitative content goes beyond merely counting words to examine languages intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of texts into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meaning (cited Hsieh, H.F and Shannon,S.E, 2005, p. 1278). Discourse analysis allows the provision of detail and contextual examination of languages in print media.

The main aim of this research study is to interpret the representation of media coverage in the role of women in political position using textual analysis approach on newspaper published in Nigeria two national online daily newspapers during the period of February 2015 to April 2015. This study explores the following themes: gender bias, distrust of women, sexual objectification of women, gender stereotype

and underrepresentation of women. These study looks at this period due to the Nigeria general election conduct, which ignited various opinion and discussion on women's participation. Online Print media during this period had less news articles on women in politics but had various coverage on man as such is considered a major factor in this discourse.

The research uses textual analysis to conduct an expletory research on the newspaper article. Qualitative study approach was used to give a clearer understanding to the pattern established through this study.

3.1 Online newspapers: The Guardian and Vanguard

This research focuses on news article in regards to the representation of women in political position covering two national newspapers online version The Guardian and Vanguard covering the period of February 2015 to April 2015. Although these papers are privately own, Vanguard newspaper is considered partisan. Newspapers in Nigeria were government controlled and owned until the 1990, where private newspaper was exposed. The government own newspaper in Nigeria are sold out to private cooperation. Presently newspapers in Nigeria are considered national and private owned. I decided to use two newspapers in this study, one of which is completely private and the other is also private but the government influences some of the media content. The two newspaper where selected due to their national daily online publication which is the most popular in Nigeria print media outlet and the similarities in media content between the print and online version where the study looks at the content of news stories on different days in the period before and after election. The online version of this newspapers where selected due to accessibility and availability. The research looks at the political section of The Guardian and

Vanguard newspaper during the election period in the area of women participation and the media framing of women in the newspaper content. These thesis considers the online newspaper more detailed and resource worthy than broadcast, as highlighted by Lawrence (2000) argues in the politics of force (mediating reality) that “Despite the advent of television as most news consumers primary news source, there’s evidence that newspaper remain a crucial information source for well-informed citizens (p.11)”.

From the above argument, newspaper is considered accessible and crucial to information when looking at news content. The news article related to women in politics during the three month election period had limited amount of news stories compare to men in both newspapers in the political section. The newspapers had not just men and women political stories in the political section but also Boko Haram stories¹³. These study collects data from this national newspapers and look at the media representation of female candidate and involvement in the 2015 election in Nigeria, the media coverage on women politicians and women involved in politics in the three month news articles used in these study will be examined in other to create an understanding on how women politics are being represented and portray by the media. This will enable the study point out the aim and objective of this research. From my research conducted on various popular Nigeria newspapers before resulting to this two newspapers used in these study, I found out that this newspaper had the highest online publication of women politics stories for the three month period used in these study. These two newspaper stories where selected based on their availability, highest newspaper report rate on women during election. The Guardian

¹³ Boko haram is a group of religious freedom fighters against education and any social activity that goes against their religious belief.

is a well established newspaper and have been publishing for over thirty years. It's owned by Alex Ibru (an entrepreneur) and Stanley Macebuh (top journalist with daily times newspaper), it's considered a private owned newspaper. It has a wide national readership and is published in most national languages including English. The Guardian newspaper is reliable, durable in its broad range of issues published. It's considered independent of any ethnic group, political party, religion and any interest group. It's considered one of the long lasting newspapers in Nigeria. The Vanguard newspaper is a daily print and online newspaper, which runs over 130,000 copies and 80% sales daily. It's considered the highest selling newspaper in Nigeria it started its weekly publication in 1984. The target audiences of this newspaper are audiences from the age of 18-45 years. It's a private owned paper but is considered partisan as it takes side with the government.

3.2 Research questions

The research question is used as a guide in this study to answer important questions related to these study using textual analysis and various approach on the next chapter. Textual analysis was used to make sense out of news text on the representation of women in the online newspapers. Content analysis points to the examination of newspaper content presenting various observations on women political participation. Discourse analysis was also employed to look at the language used by the media to present a clear understanding and a depth analysis on how the language used by the media has effect on women news stories. The content and discourse analysis through textual analysis examine the online newspaper on women in politics addressing by the following question:

RQ1: How are women represented by the online print media outlet in general?

RQ2: Did the media frame women in politics as objectified candidate to promote their perception as less competent in handling political position?

RQ3: Who tells the story on women role in politics articles that are reported in the online print media?

RQ4: Is there any difference in the positive and negative coverage on women and men stories in politics?

3.3 Research design

During this analysis I am inspired by different methods such as textual, content analysis and discourse analysis. They helped me to gather and interpret my data. The research examined the Guardian and Vanguard newspaper publication on the election period coverage and analyzed the women representation by the media during the 2015 election. Content analysis helps me present a clear result using numbers. The qualitative approach was useful in analyzing and generalizing the media content while the discourse analysis aspect was used to look at the media language in women news stories and the pattern employed. I found out that in 364 news stories only 16 news stories were related to women's political involvement in 2015 election. I believe it is important to see the general picture of the representation of women. However, it is also important to read between the lines in order to get the details in this picture. So, discourse analysis helped me to see how meanings are constructed in the news stories.

Textual analysis looks at the human behaviors pointed out in newspaper content, interpreting its effect on the news stories. The political section in the newspaper had various women news article that contained these themes: underrepresentation, gender bias, distrust of women and gender stereotype as key note in this article. This was

done to provide more clearer and conclusive result on what category of women participation in politics news articles were most prevalent in the two online newspaper used in these study. It is recognized that some women involvement in politics differs as some are candidates and others are voter and supporters of different candidate. Women participation in politics varies.

Textual analysis was used to study the role of women in political participation. The study examines 16 news articles so as to gain a clear picture of the two national newspaper represented and the framing of women in political positions in the 2015 election period. The research made note of some key development during this period that is related to women participation in politics.

3.4 Main Methodology: Textual analysis

In this study, in-dept. analysis was conducted on the online newspaper using textual analysis. Through, the study incorporates other approach like content and discourse analysis, textual analysis remains the most dominate analysis in these study. Textual analysis is the deconstruction and interpretation of text. Textual analysis allows individuals to understand and decode human behavior. The use of textual analysis in a study provides the ability to interpret reality, deeper meaning and seeing various limitation, disadvantage and problem in a text. As Alan McKee (2003) puts it:

Textual analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world. It is a methodology ... for those researchers who want to understand the ways in which members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are and of how they fit into the world in which they live. Textual analysis is useful for researchers working in cultural studies, media studies, in mass communication, and perhaps even in sociology and philosophy (p. 1).

With using textual analysis I tried to interpret political news in Nigerian online newspapers. I tried to show which discourses dominates the women related news in

selected newspapers. These newspapers are among the most consumed newspapers in the Nigeria so it is important to understand how they interpret and represent the realities about the women in politics. The use of textual analysis present and interpret various information discover in the newspaper content.

The aim of text analysis is to provide expert tools such as literary criticism, philology, or content analysis to decode the texts which would otherwise be inaccessible for a simple reader; text analysis aims to observe and discover the attitudes, behaviors, concerns, motivations and culture of the text producer from an expert point of view” (Bauer, Biquelet, & Suerdem, 2014, p. 2)

Media frames the realities around us, and we as readers understand and make sense of our word with using these frames. The media content are presented with various intention and agenda. So, I believe it is important to understand how the meaning is constructed by the media, and how the media frames the realities among us. The study employs the use of quantitative study to enable more elaborative analysis. According to Flick et al (2004) textual analysis uses qualitative approach as a principled method, pointing out that:

Social reality is understood as a shared product which makes sense to the members of a community. This sense is not a fact to be discovered, but an unfolding reflexive process. ‘Objective’ circumstances are relevant to a life-world through subjective meanings. The communicative nature of social reality permits the reconstruction of constructions of social reality to become the starting point for research (p. 7).

I consider using textual analysis to help discover the media coverage of women in newspaper text. The analysis help make sense of the 16 news article by slicing and dicing the document to present a clear structured analysis. It focuses on examining the underline, implicit and conceals meaning in a text that is taken for granted. Textual analysis is a research method that interprets social reality. It describes the structure, content and interprets messages in a text. Textual analysis most especially

determine the approach used in the analysis. This study employs content analysis as one of the approaches to textual analysis.

3.4.1 Content analysis

As it is mentioned earlier in the beginning stage of this thesis content analysis is used in order to reach some numerical data. Content analysis is one effective method use in communication study, it enables researcher to find and analyze various research topics. Content analysis allows researcher to study human behaviors without influencing and being bias in the findings. After going through the archive of both newspapers, I found 16 news articles that will be analyzed. Krippendorf (2004) argues all content analysis is qualitative in nature stating: “Text is qualitative even when certain words are later converted into numbers, adding that qualitative approaches have several characteristics: (a) they require a thorough reading of small amounts of textual material, (b) they require the interpretation of texts into new narratives, and (c) analysts acknowledge they are working within particular hermeneutic contexts that parallel their socially and culturally understanding of texts” (p. 16). This research employ the use of qualitative research method focusing on the influence of the media on various women in politics issues, it looks at the perception of media influence on individuals and societies. There are five forms of qualitative content analysis: discourse analysis, rhetorical analysis, conversation analysis, social constructivist analysis and ethnographic content analysis (Krippendorf, 2004, p). This research uses the form of discourse analyses in other to give border knowledge on the issue of women role in politics.

3.4.2 Discourse analysis (DA)

Discourse analysis is the process of examining underline meanings in text and other forms of communication. Different scholars have various definitions of Discourse

analysis and what it entails. Define Discourse analysis as the “detail analyzing of various forms of language used in a text, idea as speech or text” (Hammersley, 2002, p. 1). Texts are practically analyzed, since speech is usually transcribed from audio or video recordings in any form of analysis. Discourse Analysis is a research method that question issues raise in a research, providing an ontological and epistemological assumption behind a given research. Discourse analyses reveal any motives in a text where by revealing any given problem in that text and give a clear understanding to the problem and resolution that exist. The approach looks at the construction of language in a given text which is given orientation of discourse.

Considering how serious women issue is rising in the Nigeria especially women participation in politics in Nigeria, studies that goes beyond interpretation of text is evidential in constructive assuagement on issues like women participation in politics.

Discourse analysis has no generally agreed definition, it also has distinct categories of discourse analysis but three of this are mostly used which are linguistic studies, non-linguistic study and interdisciplinary research study. Linguistic studies of Discourse analysis have to do with language which is beyond sentences, words or unit, language is used to form meanings. Discourse analysis is “a semantic unit, a unit not of form but of meaning” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 2). Discourse analysis is linguistic regularity in discourse, interpreting text using grammatical and phonological approach in text and speech interpretation of social context. There are few areas in the study of language and literature that are more exciting than discourse analysis. This is because discourse has been variously by scholars who defined discourse analysis as an interpretation of language, as cognitive process between individuals in verbal interaction, message decoding, and as culture and ideology.

Discourse is considered a rich field of enquiry that is Centre of the humanities and social sciences (Steen, 2004, p. 161). Discourse analysis in a nutshell is one important approach in this study as it will interpret the media content and how it shapes the public discourse on women role in politics.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

These chapters incorporate the findings and analysis of this research study on media representation of women in political participation. It looks at how women involved in politics are reported by the online newspaper on the selected period used in this study. As discussed in previous chapter, the findings will be analyzed using textual analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis of news coverage on women representation in politics. The Guardian and Vanguard nation newspaper publication on the 2015 election period will be analyzed. During the election period in Nigeria, the country was undergoing attack from Boko Haram,¹⁴ this was also major news coverage in the media and due to this attract and to ensure the safety of citizen in the country, the government and the electoral commission decided to postpone the election from 14 February to 28 March 2015. The Boko Haram story was also included in the political section of the national newspaper; this resulted to having fewer women in political stories and more male stories and Boko Haram stories.

4.1 Comparative coverage of women news on The Guardian and Vanguard to others

The analyzed data suggest that women political stories were event-oriented and selected based on their importance on certain political issues. This analysis draws its conclusion based on the amount of women political articles compared to men and

¹⁴ Boko Haram is an Islamic terrorist organization that started in Nigeria around 2015 and is based in the northern part of Nigeria. Boko Haram in the northern language means 'education is a sin'.

others. The news article on women from the two national daily newspapers is much lower than any other political stories. For example articles from the Vanguard national daily newspaper on politics has the total of 177 news stories from the three month period analyzed in these study, only 7 out of this news were on women politics. The Guardian which published the highest women stories in this three month election period had only 9 articles on women political stories. Compare to men news stories, women has the lowest news articles in both newspapers. These speak a lot on media coverage of women news in Nigeria in 2015.

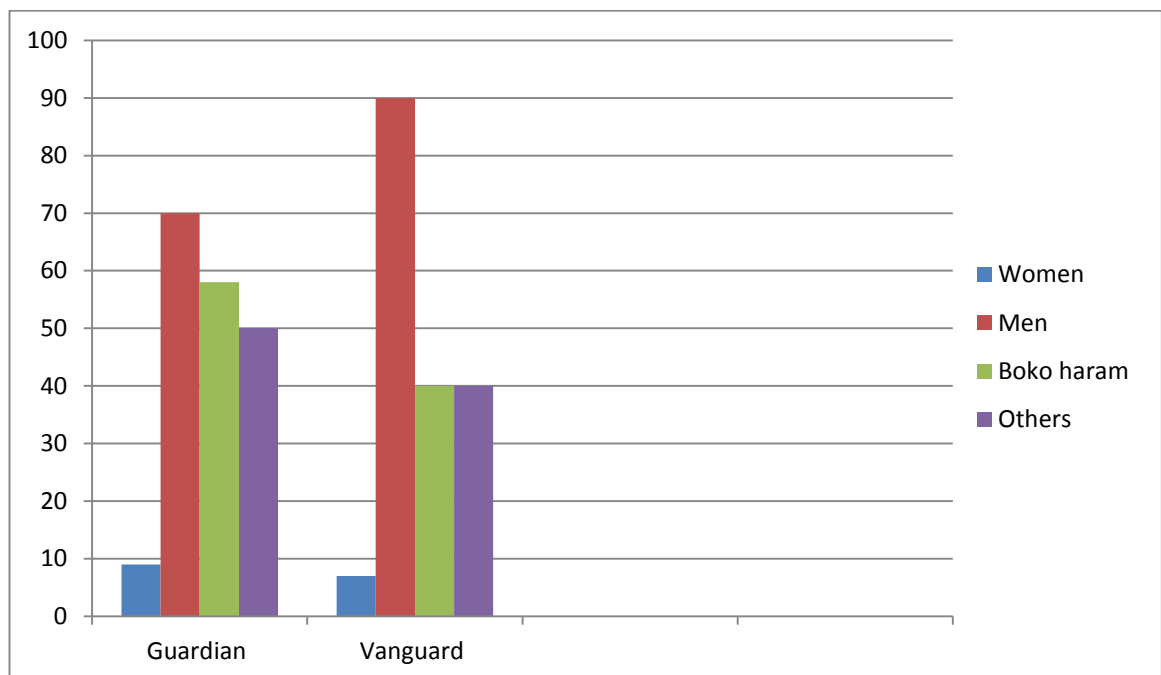


Figure 1: The total number of news coverage by the study in the two newspapers on various political issues.

Given the reporting, one will expect women political stories to be about 50% as women constitute half of Nigeria population as mention in chapter two of this study. The analysis shows that The Guardian online newspaper had 187 news stories in the 3 month period 70 men news, 9 women news, 58 Boko haram news and 50 other news stories, while Vanguard has 90 men stories, 40 Boko haram stories and 40

other news stories. This shows that men politics stories in both newspapers are more than women political news stories. From one of the articles considered in these study, the ex-president wife mentioned that her husband had 35% increase of women involvement in power related positions like politics, senators, house of assemble etc. in Imo state¹⁵ government. She said:

Imo 35 per cent is real. Minister, D.G., Women Centre, Chairman of board, na women from Imo State. 35 per cent, u don get am. I have come to tell you that Goodluck Sambo ticket na real. E go better for you. (The Guardian, March 07 2015).

This was to point to women's involvement in the government. Women are not candidates in politics compare to men and this makes it difficult for women to win in certain political position as it is dominated by men and the media has very little coverage of women who participate in the election period.

4.2 Women role in politics: Article on The Guardian and Vanguard newspaper coverage

Several news content from the two online newspapers were examined by discourse analysis on women role in politics, considering "Elective positions: Why Nigeria records more women losers than winners" as an important news story. Even though this news is few day over the selection period in this study, the study uses this news to make an important observation on women involvement in politics. This aspect of the news coverage was one significant point in the 2015 election for women participating in politics. During the election period in March 2015, the unexpected inconclusive result presented by the INEC office and the re-run on the result created an unforeseen lost in the change of history for women in Nigeria. Aisha Jumai

¹⁵ Imo state is the capital of owerri among the 36 states in Nigeria. It is located in the southern part of Nigeria.

Alhassan described the result as “daylight robbery”¹⁶. The finding from these study, revealed how the online print media under-played the seriousness of this issue, ignoring the snatching of ballot and abuse of card as an act of mis-representation against women political careers. The media coverage on “Elective positions: Why Nigeria records more women losers than winners” points to an unwelcoming idea of female candidate, promoting the idea those women are being too dramatic when it accepting there lost and repeatedly pointing to the face that the Course of history for women politics didn’t change wile congratulating men.

Alhassan has rejected the result and headed for the elections petitions tribunal. ... She contended that results ascribed to Wukari, Donga, Takum, Sardauna, Zing, Yorro, Kurmi and some parts of Ussa, Karim-Lamido, Bali, Ardo-Kola and Lau local government areas were not acceptable as they did not reflect the true results of the election in Taraba. (Vanguard, May 2 2015)

Statement like this is interpreted as a case of lack of acceptance as a petition tribunal is asked by the candidate. This case is unique because a female candidate is asking; this will be interpreted as being dramatic by the audience. The audience interpretation of this will differ when it’s a male candidate. The total numbers of 16 articles were available for the analysis of these study, 9 news stories from the Guardian and 7 from Vanguard.

4.3 Online (print) media coverage on women political stories

These study analyzed women stories used in these research and identify various themes namely positive portrayal, gender stereotyping (associating women success to men), underrepresentation, gender bias, distrust of women and sexual objectification. The study found out that even though women stories has less media coverage

¹⁶ This statement was made by Aisha Jumai Alhassan is the female candidate in the 2015 gubernatorial election in vanguard online newspaper.
<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/05/elective-positions-why-nigeria-records-more-women-losers-than-winners/>.

compare to men politicians and other news stories, women negative and mixed description were more numerous compare to positive description of women in political participation.

This textual analysis was used to give a clear illustration to the finding in the 16 news articles. The newspaper article was listed to indicating the content of women coverage in politics. According to the fourth research question, it enquires if there is any difference in the positive and negative coverage of women stories in politics. After going through the online newspaper it's discovered that particular negative representation of women are more than others. The analysis revealed that the article has little positive representation for example from (appendix A: women on the move), "The group of four ladies from *different professions* and backgrounds are united with the common bond of ensuring that women and the electorate are not misled in the ensuring electoral contests"(Vanguard, February 3 2015).¹⁷ "AYISHA Osori is the CEO of the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF), a not-for-profit organization created from a public-civil society partnership to increase the quality and quantity of women in government"¹⁸ (The Guardian, February 28 2015). This is an example of a positive representation. The women in this news were not referenced as a wife in the whole content of the news story but as hardworking ladies. "Women group, under the aegis of Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative (ECOWA)" (the Guardian, March 09 2015). All through these stories, this women profession came first before their personal lives. Their profession was mentioned to give a define meaning on how audiences should interpret the news story and in these articles, this was the first sentences. Gender stereotype was discovered in several news articles

¹⁷ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/02/women-move-2/>.

¹⁸ <https://guardian.ng/politics/we-need-more-women-participation-in-politics/>.

that were used in this study from both national newspapers. Case of “Dame Jonathan in Owerri¹⁹ move justify husband’s re-election bid, Receives 2,000 APC, APGA decamping women”²⁰ (The Guardian, March 07 2015), “WIFE of Nigeria’s President, Dame Patience Jonathan” (The Gurdian, February 29 2015), is an example of stereotype. This news story focused on the husband achievement in office and impact made by him to help involve women in political position and positions of power. The second news story started with the “wife” not her office as the first lady. The use of this word point to her feminine role, this points to her personal life emphasizing how she got the political position she occupies. This makes similarities between her personal and professional life. It’s important to note that this news coverage was based on Dame Jonathan. The newspaper article presented her as a loyal and supportive wife who had the opportunity to speak to the women of Owerri due to her husband position.

Her words mixed with English, pidgin and Igbo said: “What are you going to do if you did not perform before when you were there? They should tell Nigerians what they have done when they were president. I can tell what Goodluck has performed. We don’t tell lie. We say what we can do; we say what we have done... Imo women, this is time to pay back. Goodluck has done a lot. *Goodluck has wiped our tears...* Make una ask APC whether na liar. (The Guardian, March 07 2015).

The analysis shows that women in politics are distrusted and seen as incompetent to handle political positions unless it involves a man. That was why although these news stories, she was refered to as ‘Mrs’ and then her husband name, her name was exempted. In the speech she made, she said “WE don’t tell lie”, while referring to her husband. As much as she is involved in the campaign and administration, it’s difficult to see her hard work as the power she holds on citizen are used for her husband and the media representation of this particular story only talk on the reason

¹⁹ Owerri is the capital of Imo state in Nigeria.

²⁰ Dame Jonathan is the wife of the ex-president of Nigeria Goodluck Jonathan.

she is there and the speech she made, without focusing on her who is the character in this particular story.

THE wife of President Goodluck Jonathan, Dame Patience, on Friday at the 25,000 sitting capacity Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri, Imo State, said her husband has offered quality dividend of democracy to Nigerians in the past years he has been on the saddle of leadership, urging women and electorate in Imo State to cast their votes in the March 28 polls for the President to complete his second term... the President's wife insisted that her husband has been fair enough to offer the 35 per cent affirmative stance on women recognition having offered appointment to women (The Guardian, March 07 2015).

Women in Nigeria during election have certain amount of power and platform. These platforms are given to them by their husbands to help facilitate their campaign using the power they hold on citizen to their benefit. This platform gives women the opportunity to get closer to citizen for various campaign reasons. The above news story point to the fact that Dame Jonathan has about 25,000 sitting in Imo state; this shows the influence she has on citizens. This power was used for her husband campaign. She believes that 35 per cent of women involvement is fair enough while 65 per cent are dominated by men. This points to the common ideology in Nigeria where it is believed that it's okay for women to be less in politics as politics is a man's game. The media also facilitate this idea by covering more men stories than women. The media portray women as unworthy unless they are supporting their husband or are supported by their husband in politics or social issues.

Most media coverage on women politicians had positive, negative, and neutral tone attached to their stories. My analysis shows that the media coverage of women role in politics was not only constrained to just positive and negative tone but also had other tone pointing to how the media content depicts women political stories.

Here are some examples pointing out the neutral and mixed news content. The news story on “the women behind south south govts” (appendix A), is an example of a mixed news.

THEY say behind every successful man, there is a woman. So it is with the incumbent governor of Edo State, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole. His resilient wife, Mrs. Clara Oshiomhole, who died 2010, would have aptly fit into the position, but for untimely death. In her absence, however, her husband’s government is not lacking in women of substance, who have distinguished themselves in their various fields of endeavor (Vanguard, April 14 2015)²¹.

The news story focuses on how the governor of Edo state²² who’s administration had the involvement of female politicians. He stated that all this was done by the influence of his died wife who would have fought to have more women in power in his administration. The question here is if his wife was alive, would she have being the governor? This point to my result of mixed news, as much as the governor has women involvement in politics to honor his wife, which is an increase in women participation in politics, his wife wouldn’t have govern the state but her husband who makes the decisions. Negative news are considered to contain stereotyping women, underrepresent and present less information on the female politicians, this we can see in majority of the news stories used in these study. The media hardly present positive news on women but some of the news stories had less negative themes and gave substantial information on the particular role played by female politicians.

Table 1: headlines and non-headlines represented sentences of women political stories.²³

²¹ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/04/the-women-behind-south-south-govts/>.

²² Edo state is among the 36 states in Nigeria and it’s located in the southern part of Nigeria.

²³ The colored sentences are done to point out the media hidden words and sentences used in women news that has effect on the representation and interpretation of various women politic news stories.

Headline of articles	Newspapers	Headline or not	Striking sentences
Aisha Buhari: a new style of First Lady in Nigeria?	The guardian	Not headline ²⁴	<p>Few would have believed that the taciturn, austere General Buhari had a <i>soft, smiling and sweet woman at home</i>...Aisha Buhari remained in the <i>shadows for most of the election campaign</i> but could now impose a very different style from the current First Lady</p> <p>She is 44, married her 72-year-old husband in 1989 after he divorced his first wife the previous year, and they have five children together.</p>
'Women Want A Chance In All Leadership Positions'	The guardian	Not headline	<p>Actually, I started my ambition in 2006, when my husband, Chief Owolabi Salis, contested for the governorship of Lagos State...<i>I had to resign my appointment with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)</i> and since then, I have been in politics in Lagos and helped so many people in the state. (These points out that women end up making great sacrifices for their husbands, with little application from the media and society at the end of the day. It's important to ask if men are capable of making similar life changing decisions)</p> <p><i>Our people</i> are not adequately represented at the senate. We need to eradicate poverty, empower the women and ensure that their voice is heard</p>

²⁴ While print media has headlines, online newspaper also has headlines that can be located differently depending on the website. I made a compares between the print versions and online version to figure out which news stories are headline or not headlines.

			in society.
Dame Jonathan in Owerri, moves to justify husband's re-election bid, Receives 2,000 APC, APGA decamping women	The guardian	Headline	<i>THE wife of President Goodluck Jonathan, Dame Patience, on Friday at the 25,000 sitting capacity Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri, Imo State, said her husband has offered quality dividend of democracy to Nigerians in the past years... "What we want is peace".</i>
Nigeria's first female presidential candidate done with 'cheerleading'	The guardian	Not headline	<i>Former World Bank executive Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is finance minister and Diezani Alison-Madueke is oil minister as well as the first woman to hold the rotating presidency of the oil cartel OPEC</i> <i>Elsewhere, strong-willed women such as Arunma Oteh headed the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), cracking down on corruption that has long blighted Nigeria.</i> <i>Sonaiya, a 60-year-old former French professor in Ile-Ife in southwestern Osun state, has not been discouraged by the challenge.</i>
Taraba Women Support Jonathan Re-election Bid	The guardian	Headline	<i>The women, who thronged out Friday in their numbers, believed President Jonathan government "is the only government that implemented gender policy that has also resulted in an increase in women's representation in government.</i> <i>... there was a urgent need for the people to discard politicians missing politics with religion.</i>

<p>President's wife woos Delta women</p>	<p>The guardian</p>	<p>Not headline</p>	<p>At a rally organized by the Delta State chapter of the Women of Change Initiative, <i>Mrs. Jonathan</i> said this administration has empowered more women than any other, adding that women have now become heads of organizations hitherto the exclusive preserve of men.</p> <p>... She said Nigeria belongs to all the constituent units that make up the country and that <i>other units</i> should equally be given the opportunity to rule.</p>
<p>Women in Clergy endorses Jonathan</p>	<p>Vanguard</p>	<p>Not headline</p>	<p>... the women decided to endorse the president because, after seeking the face of God, "we heard Him tell us that President Jonathan is the man for the season," adding that God has not removed the mandate from the president.</p> <p>Women in Clergy are a faith-based women group parading women who believe that they have <i>strong and united voice to always stand and defend the truth</i>. The women believe that <i>the nation can only move forward through the prayers of women...</i> if we are to take off our spiritual cap and put on that of intellect, he is still the best man for the job. (this news story point to women as more spiritual, associating prayer to women as a job while men get involved in politics)</p>
<p>Aisha and Patience: Style and sophistry in Ilorin</p>	<p>Vanguard</p>	<p>Headline</p>	<p>With their husbands embedded in last minute strategy schemes, <i>the wives of the two major presidential candidates, Mrs. Patience Jonathan and Aisha Buhari are moving round the country in mobilization schemes to bring</i></p>

			<p><i>out the votes.</i></p> <p>We wives of political leaders should not make trouble. Even if they come to you to make trouble, don't fall for their trick.</p> <p>(Women are considered wives who are actively participating in their husband's campaign. They are considered advocate for their husbands).</p>
Ezekwesili urges Nigerians to choose quality legislators	Vanguard	Not headline	No matter how good the President might be, <i>he</i> could not develop the country alone
Aisha: Brain and beauty in the villa	Vanguard	Not headline	What manner of style Mrs. Buhari would bring to her time in the villa would <i>undoubtedly be dictated by her husband.</i> Given that the general finally unbuckled to expose his wife to the rudiments of the campaign, it would not be a surprise if he allows her to perform the perfunctory duties of the wife of the president.
'We Need More Women Participation In Politics'	The guardian	Not headline	"AYISHA Osori is the CEO of the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF), a not-for-profit organization created from a public-civil society partnership to increase the quality and quantity of women in government."
Nigerian Women's Scorecard In 2015 Polls	The Guardian	Not headline	"Out of the <i>14 candidates that contested for the seat of the president, the only woman amongst the contenders came out in the 12th position.</i> Just as men have always dominated the National Assembly, the 2015 election result does not present a different picture in the number of women who will represent their

			<p>constituencies in the next four years.</p> <p>So far, <i>eight women made it to the 109-member senate</i> as opposed to seven elected in 2011. Three of the eight women senators are of the All Progressives Congress (APC).</p>
Nigeria's first female presidential candidate done with 'cheerleading'	Vanguard	Not headline	<p><i>Remi Sonaiya — the first woman running for president in Nigeria's history</i> — took the floor she did so to a round of applause that lasted several minutes. "We have done enough of cheerleading," she told some of Nigeria's most influential businesswoman and company executives at the meeting on women's participation in politics.</p>
The women behind South-South govts	Vanguard	Not headline	<p>Governor Oshiomhole is wont to tell anyone who cares to listen: "<i>Give any of these women a job, you can go and sleep.</i>" And to be fair to him, the women have executed their various duties with passion over the years and that has endeared them to the Comrade Governor.</p>
Women on the move	Vanguard	Not headline	<p>The group of four ladies from <i>different professions and backgrounds are united</i> with the common bond of ensuring that women and the electorate are not misled in the ensuring electoral contest</p>
Women warn against elections' shift	The guardian	Not headline	<p>The Executive Director, ECOWA, Louisa Ono Eikhomun, who made the call, said: "We all know that the political tension in Nigeria is largely because of the election postponement and we are saying today that come March 28, election should be held. We don't want further postponement because anything that will trigger</p>

			another June 12 crisis will be detrimental to the nation and the end sufferers are women.
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4.4 Women reporters and women stories

In order to understand who tell the stories, the research question 3 “who tells the story on women role in politics articles that are reported in the online print media”, provide a guide to clear understanding of women stories and women reporters.. This question can be answered in two ways. Firstly, it’s important to say that women in this news articles where NGOs, politicians and wives to politicians. These women are considered to be the characters that represent a large amount of women in Nigeria. These women have different agenda and possess different amount of power. The NGOs tries to get women involved in politics and advocate for women in the 2015 election. This organization points out how they use their power and the kind of audience they attract. (Appendix A: women want a change in all leadership position)

I think we are ready now; women are ready to support fellow women. We are not our own problems; we were marginalised and relegated to the background . . . we are ready because we believe a woman would understand a woman better. In most cases, when I go out to campaign, women troop out en-masse and support me more than men. (The Guardian, February 20 2015).

From the above article, its understood that women support other women who are trying to pave way in political sectors. Politicians wives on the other hand, holds power but this power is used for their husbands. From the news article, its discovered that women in this news coverage tell the stories but what stories do they tell? While NGOs tell stories on the unification and the empowerment of women in nigeria politics, politicians wives tell stories on how their husbands should be elected, and what their husbands have done and will do if he is given certain poistion. These women dont use this power for themselves or show other women what it means to be

in such position and what they can do if they are given such amount of authority rather they focus on empowering men to rule in politics and make citizen believe this men are the right choice. Secondly, the study shows that women political news stories from the two national dailies were not all written by women journalist. The analysis shows that four news stories from the two national daily newspapers were written by women and twelve were written by male journalist. Finding from the news stories shows that most of the stories written by women portrayed women positively. Stories written by men were the majority out of 16 news stories and most of it was negative, neutral and underrepresentation of women politicians. It's believed from this analysis that women reporters tend to portray women as strong, united, believers, competent and productive. The news stories used in these study shows women reporters portray women strong, united, believers, and sometimes uses the word strong and united.

Women in Clergy is a faith-based women group parading women who believe that they have strong and united voice to always stand and defend the truth. The women believe that the nation can only move forward through the prayers of women. (Vanguard, March 08 2015)

This call was made at the commemoration of the International Women's Day with the theme, "Make it happen", organized by the Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative (ECOWA).(The Guardian, March 09 2015)

Nigerians are belief to be religious. This news article points to a religious group of women who believes that the country can only moves forward through prayer. Textual analysis points to the way this group of women makes sense of how their religion fit in the political sector in Nigeria and their roles as women which is to pray. The media report of this news story, associates women as spiritual and united. Religion in Nigeria is one important factor both socially and politically. From this

news article, religion is pointed out as an important factor and women are considered to have the leading role in this area.

These stories were reported by a female journalist from both newspapers vanguard and the guardian newspaper. They are considered leaders who are making impact on women involvement in politics and national development nationwide and in families.

Women journalist sometimes portray women from men's point of view, nonetheless, its women journalist who makes conscious effort to conduct an unbiased interview on women in politics to project an unbiased image of women effort politically.

(Table 2)

Table 2: coverage of women political stories by women and men reporters

Item	Guardian	Vanguard	Total
Total articles	187	177	364
Article on women in politics	9	7	16
Women reporters	25	27	52
Men reporters	70	65	135
Women articles by women reporters	2	3	5
Women articles by men reporters	7	4	11
Positive stories on women by women reporters.	3	1	4
Positive stories on women by men reporters	2	2	4
Negative stories on women by women	1	0	1
Negative stories on women by men	5	2	7

Number of NGO news stories	4	4	8
Number of Politicians and politicians wives news stories	5	3	8

From the above table, we can agree that women news is dominated by male reporters. It can be argued that men political journalists are mostly portray negatively, this can be seen as part of patriarchal value system in Nigeria society. From the above table we can see that the guardian newspaper was recorded the highest female journalist stories from the two national newspapers, even though it was less compare to male journalist on women politics stories. Women journalist gets little political involvement in both women and men news articles, this makes women journalist get involve in other aspect of news and avoid political stories to safeguard their individual aspiration.

This gives a clear answer to the third research question which talks on who tell the stories, the stories on women role in politics articles that are reported in the online newspapers. With less female reporter in political stories it's discovered that most stories are told by men, who base their stories on particular themes and idea about women based on the social construct that given the society we leave in. The analysis conducted on the two national online newspapers that are both private and sometimes government influence depending on the sector of the stories, means that not only are women stories in the hand of men, they are also in the hand of influential and powerful people that can be both government and private, this can influence the content of this news stories, leaving women stories with constructed truth to create an ideology in the mind of the audience consigning women politicians. It's Found

further that women are given little media presence and their stories are reported by male journalist. According to Dr. Aimee Karam (2010) study on the portrayal of women by the media,

In general, men were highly more likely than women to appear in all the categories of major, News topics, especially ‘Politics and Government’ and ‘Economy’ where the invisibility of Women is at its peak. In their actual lived experiences, women have historically been marginalized under these topics (p 56-57).

Vanguard national daily newspaper presented news on April 1st 2015, which was reported by a male journalist on the present Nigeria president’s wife titles “Aisha: brain and beauty in the villa”. This news report was based on the physical appearance of the Aisha Buhari, her personal life was also revealed by the reporter stating her marriage to the president after his divorce with his first wife. The media “softening” political issues, point out the physical appearance of a woman and making her image a topic of discussion. The article continued by talking about the educational aspect of her life, making reference to her as a ‘makeup artist’ as well as an investor. The nature of this news coverage points out how women stories are mostly written by majority of men journalist and some female journalist as well. To some, this is considered a good way to report a woman story but these study notes the sexual objectification, underrepresentation and gender bias in this news coverage as male political news don’t contain such content. Statement such as these looking at it from a discourse analysis point of view can be calculated to mean women are more because of their beauty and not there brain and intelligence. In the news article, it is mentioned that “Given that the general finally unbuckled to expose his wife to the rudiments of the campaign, it would not be a surprise if he allows her to perform the perfunctory duties of the wife of the president”. Why does he have to allow her? Is this a religious, social, cultural or masculine ideology? The statement associates the

general's wife as his property which is owned and not a partner who has the power to make decision consigning her life. She is made to look like a woman who doesn't bring any useful idea to the table aside her beauty. The context here gives power to the man and making her look secondary in the marriage. The article point out the age of Buhari's when he got married making refers to the beauty of the wife as if it was her beauty that attracted him to her. Even though the headline started with brain before beauty, the content focuses more on the beauty.

The media portrays women in stereotypical images of wives and mothers who are responsible, submissive and supportive and can be trusted due to their family statuses. Such women are mostly given political position in Nigeria society. Women of such standard are added value to by the media. Its belief that women in various society are expected to get involves in family and marriage. "Nigeria has become more advanced and urbanized as such, female children attend schools, and a significant amount of women are getting involved with education and are acclimatizing to the idea even with the challenges faced in society" (Smith, J.D, 2013, p. 2). In Nigeria, a married woman is accorded more respect and social/political involvement. They are most considered for public offices like positions of power and politics compare to single ladies. Single women are portray as over ambitious when applying for political/social offices in Nigeria. Due to this believe, the politics are mostly occupied by married women. This cultural and social believe points to women value being associated to marital status.

4.5 How are women in politics represented by the online media?

The purpose of this study is to look at the representation of women in politics by the online newspaper. As stated in previous chapters, after 1999, women involvement in

various economic and political positions was reduced as women were sideline. Nigeria women in the 50s and 70s were involved in decision making which today can be seen as business and politics, but now a days it's different. The investigation conducted in the online print media text when presenting the result in percentage, point to the fact that 50% of the online print media representation of women are negative from the news article analyze in these study. While the other 30% neutral meaning where generated from the media content and 20% are positive. The study through textual analysis look at the illustration and focus on the perception through languages that represent women negatively, positively and neutral, trying to interpret the data and point out the difference in the intention of the news outlet in regards to women political news. Even though most of this news stories had to do with the wife of politicians, the representation of this women in the article was also analyzed. The study establish that majority of this reports are written by men reporter, rendering an invisibility of women and as such cannot represent women political involvement carefully as they are not of the same gender (so cant not work in their shoes). The analysis point to some tones mention earlier which does not represent women positively. This renders women imperceptibly in the media. The media representation of women stories is depressing as media is considered to be a source of information and accuracy. It is delighting to point out that few of the women politics stories written by men are positive and women also write negative stories on women as will but not as much as male journalist.

Vanguard newspaper of February 3, 2015 reported a story on women who came together to encourage other women to not be misled by electorate contest. (Appendix B). These stories was written by a male journalist, who showed a unity between

women who are looking out for Nigerian women. The stories quote leaders/constitute, who are came to gather to form a non-governmental organization to educate and inform women on good government. Clearly, the paper did not talk on the responds of Nigeria women towards them or look at the positive effect this organization has had on Nigeria women towards the 2015 election. It's important to note that leader/constitute are used to refer to those who work together to promote women politics and the report had a positive coverage.

4.6 Locations of stories on women in online print media

It's discovered from the analyses conducted in this study that women in politics are not only giving limited coverage; women are mostly not in the first pages of the newspapers (Table 2). The headline page in an online print media is considered the most important page which has important news headlines on them. With the online print media placement of women stories, it gives an idea of media placement of women stories in term of importance and preferences. News stories are placed based on their importance and significance in newspapers. Stories attached in the front page on an online newspaper site is considered important and significant, the stories in the back page of the print are placed to catch the eyes and attention of audiences. The news which is considered important but not significant is placed on the sub-headline pages in the newspaper with no reference on the cover. Various studies has pointed to the fact that women stories aside from fashion and lifestyle or women are associated to crime and victims (example, the chibok girls²⁵ that were abducted by Boko haram in Nigeria, this news made various front pages in Nigeria newspapers), do not make it to the headline page especially political and business news. These study finding also shows that women in politics do not end upon the headline page of

²⁵ Chibok girls are the 276 female government secondary school students in Borno state Nigeria that was kidnapped by Boko haram.

most newspaper. Out of the 16 women related news analyzed in these study for the period of three month, 3 women political news was

on the headline page of the online print media but as “riders” the news article used on this front page portrayed women negatively. The rest of women politics stories were placed on the sub-headlines of the newspaper.

4.7 Does the media frame women in politics as objectified candidate to promote their perception as less competent in handling political position?

For the purpose of answering the research question properly, this section looks at language choice as a discourse used to promote the perception of female candidate. “Language choice is another tool used in media framing that scholars argue can influence female candidates’ political campaigns and election outcomes. Verb choice is one way that the media frames female candidates differently” (Burke and Mazarella 2008, p.399). Media tend to use languages that will appear audiences as complain or attach. These languages are mostly used on female candidate than male candidate. The analysis done in these study showed that the media reported women stories with tone, themes and language choice. As such, much research study has sort to find out various language choice used by the media when reporting women political news. According to Uscinski and Goren (2011) stated that:

Reporters often refer to female candidates by their first names rather than their formal titles. The choice to refer to female candidates by their first names shows bias by the reporters because doing so detracts from female candidates’ power and legitimacy and undermines their authority (p. 885-886).

Men in government are given title and are address by this title, the media refusing to associate women political candidate are reinforcing stereotype, meaning men are fit

to be in political positions than women. Here are various titles supporting the above statement on media coverage in men and women news

Women in Taraba state have collectively resolved to throw their weights in support of the re-election of President Goodluck Jonathan. (The Guardian, February 20 2015)

Former World Bank executive Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is finance minister Diezani Alison-Madueke is oil minister as well as the first woman to hold the rotating presidency of the oil cartel OPEC. (The Guardian, April 18 2015)

The newspaper uses women title from the above example because she isn't in office "former" and the second female minister was referred to by her first name before her title. The research questions which ask if media frame women in politics as objectified candidate to promote their perception as less competent in handling political position can be answered using language choice framing. "Studies have shown that people feel that female candidates are inferior when they are only referred to by their first name" (Lawrence and Rose 2010, p.12). Most of the concept used in the online newspaper, point to female candidate as incompetent and dependent, pointing to female politicians as wives and not candidate contesting for a political position.

They (the men) set the rules, said Ebere Ifendu, who runs the non-governmental organisation Women in Politics Forum in the capital Abuja ... They made us understand that one, politics is dirty; two, politics is not for women; three, they brought out the violent nature of politics. Those were the things they put before us and women became sceptical. They became afraid and didn't believe they will be able to participate. (Vanguard, March 18 2015)

The news article above speaks on the reasons why women are not in government and point to the fact that the rules are set by men and not women. If the men set the rules, it difficult for women to be depict as leaders as men create a particular idea about politics making women uninterested but at the same time making women look

incompetent and unable to meet political expectation. The media help in spreading this idea through the representation of women and the area of focus when reporting women news. It's true that less women holds political offices today and the above news report is one of the reasons why women are not holding this positions. (See appendix A for full story: Nigeria's first female presidential candidate done with 'cheerleading'). The media also uses physical appearances to draw the focus of the reader to the sexual aspect of the candidate instead of the intellectual. The analysis shows that the media are bias in their reporting when it comes to male and female candidate in an election. As mention early, the Nigeria societies describe politics to be a men job and women are to be assigning home and family duties. This social construct also have effect on the way news are reported in politics. Study has shown that male and female candidate do not receive same coverage and media presence. This study also found out that the media coverage on men and women difference both in reporters and content. "Male political candidates coverage in the media are portrayed as competitive and winners, while female candidates are falsely represented and are themed incompetent and losers in elections" (Kahn and Goldberg 1991, p.188). The two online print media have similar media frame on women in politics. Women are underrepresented, and pointed out as soft for politics. This is revealed through the analysis made on the representation of women in the online print media articles. The newspaper, generally depict women in politics negatively. One the newspaper article talked on politics stating that

I met Aisha Buhari three times, and she seems to be a very humble person, very friendly and a good listener... (The Guardian, April 08 2015)

This point to how politics in Nigeria are depict to the general society which create an understanding in the mind of audience about women politicians. The article, decides

to present feminine characters. The themes used in answering these questions are language, coverage of women news and representation. The media create an imbalance in political framing of both women and men news, covering more men stories with content that make men look hard working and strong while framing women as wick, too friendly and dependent not capable of handling a country issue like crime and economic issues.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the data collected for this study, I discovered some interesting points in the online print media content of women in politics in Nigeria. The time period used in this study, brought about some element such as patriarchy in the online newspaper, the existence of mis-representation and approach/tone used by the online newspaper toward women in politics. The involvement of women and men in every given profession and social activities are inevitable, but are not of equal class in our today society. The media is one factory that presents the clear difference in power relation between women and men in politics. According to Jean Elshtain (1993) “there is an ‘essential difference’ between great (free, male) and lesser (un-free, female) person although these two categories of person are linked in relationships of necessary dominance and sub-ordinary” (p.45). This ideology and underrepresentation of women in politics and generally function in our daily life. While men are allowed to do everything and anything; women are confined to a particular constructed system. This heritage and culture has rooted deep into our today’s society, spreading into the media. The gradual change in women involvement in decisions making in various aspects in countries has influenced on female power. All these elements are considered to have an effect on the way media portray women in political news articles in the online print media. Like the news report mention in chapter 4 on president Buhari description of his wife “I don't know which party my wife belongs to, but she belongs to my kitchen and my living room and the other

room”(Vanguard, October 14 2016) . This news story created an out bust for over a month on social media where various women pointed out there place in society and family and few men talk on their wives value being beyond various rooms and kitchen. This issue resulted to the president Senior Special Assistant, Media and Publicity says the president statement was a joke. “Shortly, after this presidential faux pas, Garba Shehu lamely attempted to disabuse the minds of Nigerians as to the innocuous import and purport of that statement by attributing it to Mr. President’s sense of humor” (The Guardian, October 20 2016). The media distort reality when reporting women news. Men are associated to social and public activities, while women are associated to domestic activities, feminist perspective does not accept this procedure as women are entitled to public sphere and men can also take part in domestic activities. It’s considered impossible by researchers to draw a line between the public and private sphere in our daily life (Elshtain, 1981, p. 3).

It’s discovered in the analysis that women in politics news coverage were framed in a patriarchal nature, depicting women who are involved in politics negatively. The news titles used in this study had themes like wives to politicians, non-profit organization and few female politicians etc. The analysis points out that the media still cover women political news in traditional roles such as patriarchy, wives, physical objectification, family and marital status. From the analysis shown in chapter 4, The Guardian online newspaper had 187 news stories in the 3 month period 70 men news, 9 women news, 58 Boko Haram news and 50 other news stories, while Vanguard had 177 news, 7 women stories, 90 men stories, 40 Boko Haram stories and 40 other news stories. This shows that men politics stories in both newspapers where more than women political news stories. The research finding,

points to men playing more role in women issue than expected, from the journalist who covers the story to the to the content and opinion in the story, this was revealed in The Guardian and Vanguard national newspaper of 2015.

The news source in this research was mainly from a male point of view as most of the news stories where from male reporters and the meaning generated from the news articles has effect on the reader. As much as women politics stories sounds like a woman story, the coverage of this story is consider a man story as the media find a way to include a man in every aspect of women politics story. “Prism of gender on women news coverage considers women representation and perspective are not accurately presented. Even though female journalists are increasing daily in the media sector, women involvement is limited in news organization is considered invisible” (Turley & Hermano, 2001, p. 1). News stories from the article used in these analysis speaks on a woman academic achievement and also incorporate beauty and fashion see (Appendix A, Aisha brain and beauty in the villa). It’s important to note that this news story was reported by a male reporter. Women are not given the chance to speak on any issue raced by the media as the media has influence the public opinion. Kahn and Goldberg further stated that “studies have shown that the media influences the information that voters get about candidates and the way that voters evaluate candidates” (p. 181).

The news discourse deprive women the opportunity to air their opinion concerning politics. When they are now given their opinion, they won’t appear strong as the media stereotype has affected the media citizen’s opinion. This happens when the media portray unnecessary information and news story about the private life of candidates, giving a clear difference in information between female and male

political candidate. The media report various women political news as rivals, making the audience believe that female candidates are jealous of each other progress politically. Article from the online newspaper on (Appendix A, Aisha and Patience: Style and sophistry in Ilorin) reported that “.....We wives of political leaders should not make trouble” (Vanguard, March 19 2015). The media report men and women political conflict stories differently, reporting men conflict stories as power, sovereignty and authority debate while women stories are constructed to present its self as jealousy and insecurity. The media often uses stereotypes when covering male and female candidates, which leads to differences in coverage. This leads a person to evaluate male and female candidates differently, which often leads to a harsher evaluation of female candidates (Kahn and Goldberg 1991, p.181).

For instance a female candidate story will contain her age, marital status, husband position and physical appearances. Strong emphasis placed on a woman's appearance, making a person into an Object devoid of humanity (Heflick and Goldenberg 2011, p.150). Objectification occurs when media coverage focuses on a particular aspect of a candidate looks, instead of the candidate herself. As mention in the analysis section of these study, on the article title on a female politician Aisha brain and “beauty” in the villa (vanguard, April 1 2015), this title gives meaning behind this news article. The stories covered on women lack information about the candidate capacity, working experience, ideas and agenda toward the office applied to and when mention is presented with little information.

The lack of women politics news on election period automatically exclude them form the news discourse. The coverage of more male stories frames man as the ideal candidate for any political position which excludes women and presenting a

patriarchal system. It can be said that it's common phenomenon to ignore female candidate news in the news discourse. What we keep reading in the media is male political candidate agenda, what a male candidate will do if elected, a male candidate have conversation with a media outlet to address the nation on his desire and ideas. From this studies analysis, the media content on women politicians where subjected to secondary actors who were covered due to various reasons like campaign for husbands election, NGO etc. The media fail to portray women news positively and to be able to understand media report on women, the study of media text through language is needed. These studies analyze media text using content analysis approach through language to point out various ways media portray women. Women in politics are hardly represented in the media when they do something great, but the media can report female politician's as wives, losers, beauty, cheerleader and supporter of male political candidates.

It is safe to say that the analysis of this research reveals that reporters report more of women political news stories when portraying a man as their back bones. Political issues like women role in politics requires in-dept. content, textual and discourse analysis to point to the seriousness of the issues of media representation of women when involved in politics. In this study, it is revealed that the media reduces the seriousness of women role in politics, reducing it to the physical and private affairs of women. The stories are reduced to "she's the beautiful wife of" "She's also a makeup and fashion artist" "through her husband's influence, she is" Etc. Statement like this is what the media uses when covering women politic news. This reveals that if women are not married to powerful men or are not beautiful (medias definition of a beautiful woman), they won't be women news in political section as

most of these stories include such statements. Women political news in various countries has similar sound-bites attach to the media report.

Suggestions: I believe that it is time for the media to stop the objectification of women politicians and start reporting the truth about women in politics idea and the importance of women involvement in politics, so that research on this discourse can be generated and this will be the focus of discourse analysis so that significant awareness will be generated. Ross (2003) notes that “If news is a commodity and we are all consumers, then how women politicians are ‘sold’ to us in qualitative terms is as important as how often they appear in the news: volume matters but context matters more” (p.12). The report on women in politics was made by reporters who lack exposure, knowledge and skill on what women goes through on a daily bases and how difficult it is to be a women in politics among lots of men. The media fails to treat women role in politics as a serious issue instead they normalize it leaving female politicians to struggle with various abuses daily due to media news report. The online print media in 2015 help in creating nation wild awareness about the missing chibok girls and report the difficulties Nigeria faced during this period. If the online newspaper can put similar effort on the qualitative term in women politics stories report, the analysis of these study will contain more positive report on the media article.

Discourse analysis conducted on the two national newspaper used in this research does not differ from how women are generally reported. The media in general has an extensive issue with women politics news. The media does not present full information to audiences concerning women in politics issues. Information presented in newspaper analyzed in this research pointed out the motive behind the news

report, the major problem in the news coverage on women politicians was the structure and language used in this story pointing the general meaning of the news to men, women advocating for women and NGO. News stories which involved female politicians as wives focused on the men and not the women, placing the women as minor actors in politics while the men are major actors. The media does not inform audiences on the various approaches taken by female politicians in their political journey and policies that can be seen as a big concern when women are involved in politics. The media continue to present less news on women and continue to simplify the effort made by these women in politics making women look incompetent. The reason for less media coverage on women in politics are not fully explored, lack of accuracy in media coverage are not explained to society on why the media agenda are set to exclude women success stories in political sections. It can be said that the media repeatedly report every little men achievement making it available on various print media outlet.

Women participation in politics coverage is still reported as a case of win and lost, pointing out to audience to expect a different result next time. This creates difficulties for lots of women and young girls in getting involved in politics due to society, culture and media representation of women. Abnormalities in the news report needs to change and the coverage of women political news from a patriarchal point of view needs to stop. News reporters both men and women needs to be aware of the social responsibilities and ethics attach to news report, so as to present an adequate news report as well as equality in news stories and avoid discrimination and stereotyping when covering both women and men political news. It is believe that the media has the ability to construct social opinion on women political participation, so

it is important for media to triple check their news report when covering women stories and present creative news stories in order to represent women positively. It is important for media to make sensitive news stories on various women issues. It is safe to say that the media has the power to change and eliminate its stereotyping content by transforming the language used in the media text and employ more effective women editors and journalist who are equip with gender sensitive perspective. The media should look at important and useful themes when covering women politics stories and avoid sexualizing and focusing on the physical appearance of women who are involved in politics.

In conclusion, from the online newspapers used in the analysis of this study, we discover that female politicians are very important factors in politics and the media role in society is to informing and educating audiences socially and politically. The position held by women in the pre-colonial era had more recognition and women took advantage of this positions compare to today. This was easier due to lack of media presence at that time to create opinions on women and various issues. The media should find and publish more women news, present and equal publication of both men and women so that the gender gap will be eradicated. The media should avoid repeating existing stereotypes which hinders women from getting political appointment. It's important for the media agencies to present the NGO with more spaces to educate, help and inform women. As stated by McQuail (2003), "the media can legitimately be hold accountable for what they do and do not do and be liable to some claims that they do things which they might not choose to do. (p. 68).

5.1 Further research

This study does not cover all aspect of women participation in politics in Nigeria online print media. There could be further studies and explanation on this subject and media portrayal of women. The analysis should contain media coverage monitoring of its content in respect to women role in politics news. I recommend further studies on the same are, looking at the agenda setters and editorial journalist report on women politics news and guidelines used for these study can be considered. Similar approach, technique and methodology can be used or different once can be considered depending on the researcher.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Online newspaper article analyzed

Vanguard newspaper 2015 articles n=7

Aisha: Brain and beauty in the villa

By Emmanuel Aziken, Political Editor/ in Election 2015, politics

On April 1, 2015 12:31AM

Few would have believed that the taciturn, austere General Buhari had a soft, smiling and sweet woman at home. She was finally unveiled to Nigerians as the campaign unfolded, and to some extent, also got her own campaign bruises. While her husband suffered the pains and knocks from the hard hitting PDP campaign, Mrs. Buhari's pains were not just that her man was under attack, but she at one time during the campaign came under physical attack of hoodlums in Ilorin, Kwara State. Aisha Buhari What manner of style Mrs. Buhari would bring to her time in the villa would undoubtedly be dictated by her husband. Given that the general finally unbuckled to expose his wife to the rudiments of the campaign, it would not be a surprise if he allows her to perform the perfunctory duties of the wife of the president. However, suggestions to the flamboyance that has lately been the culture of recent presidential spouses would not be expected. Mrs. Buhari is, however, no stranger to high society, having been born into the family of Nigeria's first minister of defence, Alhaji Muhammadu Buhari, after whom the road to Nigeria's second State House in Lagos is named. The 44 year old was born on 17th February 1971 and married Buhari on 2nd December 1989 following the general's divorce from his first wife, Safinatu who herself passed on in the 1990s. A graduate of Public Administration from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Mrs. Buhari subsequently trained in beauty therapy and is an alumnus of the Carlton Institute of London and the Academy Esthetique Beauty, Institute of France, Dubai. A professional make-up artist, besides being an entrepreneur, she had in the past also helped to advocate women empowerment through capacity building. An indication that Mrs. Buhari would be a hard political fighter came after her husband was attacked by Boko Haram when she called for the resignation of President Goodluck Jonathan from office.

Aisha and Patience: Style and sophistry in Ilorin

By Emmanuel Aziken, Political Editor and Demola Akinyemi

On March 19, 2015 2:59 AM / in Politics

With their husbands embedded in last minute strategy schemes, the wives of the two major presidential candidates, Mrs. Patience Jonathan and Aisha Buhari are moving round the country in mobilisation schemes to bring out the votes. By Emmanuel Aziken, Political Editor and Demola Akinyemi Ilorin, the town where two of the country's major cultural streaks, Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba melt into one was the host to two of the country's major political icons this week. Aisha Buhari and Patience Jonathan, the wives of the two major presidential candidates, passed through the town leaving behind tell-tale signs of how the two women could carry on as First Lady after Nigeria's next presidential inauguration. Mrs Aisha Buhari and Patience Jonathan Remarkably, news of Aisha's visit to Ilorin on Monday did not catch attention until news of the attack on her convoy by a group of yet unidentified hoodlums. Patience's visit the following day, however, was not a hidden affair as it was broadcast on nationwide television. The two women were in Ilorin as they have been going round the country to sensitize the womenfolk ahead of the presidential elections due on March 28. The style, strategies and sophistry employed by the two women were clearly evident in Ilorin. Mrs. Buhari was accompanied to the town by her new best friend, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo, the wife of the vice-presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress, APC, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo. Given the punch and power that Patience has brought to the campaign it was not surprising that once she arrived Ilorin last Tuesday that she took on Aisha, her perceived challenger, who in her view is shadowing her movements. Governor Adams Oshiomhole had intervened last week when the two women took the same day to speak to women at the state owned stadium. Oshiomhole had to cancel shelve Aisha's engagement despite his claim that the APC made the first booking. Against the background of the avoided confrontation in Benin, Mrs. Jonathan was quick to spew: "Before I went to Edo State, the APC was there, all to make trouble. I have always been telling them that they like to make trouble. I wanted to go to Edo; they were there. Why? To make trouble. "I wanted to come to Kwara; they were there. Why? To make trouble. As I was coming today at the airport, they were also coming so that there will be trouble but I told my security people that I am Mama Peace, so let them go in peace. We wives of political leaders should not make trouble. Even if they come to you to make trouble, don't fall for their trick," she said in her address to women at the Ilorin Township Stadium. Charging the crowd, she said: "I don't kill, I don't stone people, I preach peace, let them go with their problems because my God has fought my battle. Should someone who has won fight? She asked, and the crowd said no. We don't need to fight because we have won." Giving some touch of spiritual approval of her husband's pursuit, she said: "My God that I serve has told me that they will fail. So, don't be deceived, don't listen to their lies. Kwara is PDP. They only stole

the mandate because the Government House they are occupying today is in the name of PDP. We shall take it over.” “Everyday they change from one name to another and very soon, they will change to Ebola and then, death will come”. ‘They are shouting change, when they fail finish, they will change their name. Do not be afraid, we are going to win this election. My God that I serve has told me that we will win this election. The person wey don win, no dey fight, wetin we go take fight do, let them go with their problem”. “The airport wey dey here, na we PDP wey do am, wetin dem don do, nothing, dem just they shout change, change”.. Mrs. Jonathan’s mockery of the change of name of the rival parties that formed the opposition APC was itself the issue that brought Mrs. Buhari and her entourage to Ilorin. The matter of mobilising women and the rural folks to understand the symbol of the party on the ballot paper was at the core of Mrs. Buhari’s message last Monday. Mrs. Buhari’s education was significant given the fact that Buhari contested the past two presidential elections on two different political platforms and the coming election would still be on another platform. “It behoves on women political leaders to go out and educate women on party activities and logo bearing in mind that, many APC candidates particularly, the party’s presidential candidate, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari has moved from ANPP to CPC and finally to a mega party called APC”. “Thus, there is dire need to register the name of the party and logo on the minds of our rural women to avoid confusion on the day of the polls since our women are the masses”. During her visit to Governor Abdulfatah Ahmed, Mrs. Buhari applauded the political chemistry that has worked in Kwara State that has for the first time seen an incumbent governor supported by a godfather get a re-election ticket without bickering. According to her, Kwara State is lucky to have such a system which ordinarily in some other places would have inspired much political rivalry and internal dissension on account of the friction between an incumbent governor and the political godfather. While Mrs. Buhari pursues her objective with tact and seeming lack of interest, Mrs. Jonathan is carrying out a bold and aggressive campaign to protect a legacy she has inspired which according to her could be undermined if Buhari is elected. Despite claims by Muhammadu Buhari himself that he would pursue female gender participation in his government, Mrs. Jonathan was unsparing of him citing his record as military head of state when according to her he, Buhari did not appoint women into the highest ruling organ.

Women in Clergy endorses Jonathan

By Ayo Onikoyi

On March 8, 2015 12:14 AM / IN POLITICS

The re-election bid of President Goodluck Jonathan received a boost as a group, Women in Clergy, threw its weight behind his aspiration for second term. The decision of the group, comprising female pastors and other Christian women, was disclosed by its President, Prophetess Nonie Roberson, in a statement. Roberson said the women decided to endorse the president because, after seeking the face of God, ‘we heard Him tell us that President Jonathan is the man for the season,’ adding that God has not removed the mandate from the president. Women in Clergy is a faith-based women group parading women who believe that they have strong and united voice to always stand and defend the truth. The women believe that the nation can only move forward through the prayers of women. The women have remained very critical of happenings in the country since its inception. They had been at the forefront of the campaign against bombing of soft targets by Boko Haram and had at different points picked up the sponsorship of victims of blasts. Speaking on the reasons behind their endorsement, Roberson said the number one reason is the fact that God instructed them to do so. “The most important reason is the fact that God said so. And aside that, if we are to take off our spiritual cap and put on that of intellect, he is still the best man for the job”, the group leader said. “Forget about the propaganda that is going on; there is no leader in this country that has affected and pushed the cause of womanhood as President Jonathan has done. “As women, we have been able to move away from the noise about change or transformation and researched into things President Jonathan has accomplished in office and discovered that he has outperformed all those that came before him”.

Women on the move

By Charles Kumolu

On February 3, 2015 1:04 AM / IN POLITICS

A group of Lagos women are determined to ensure women and indeed the electorate do not err in the forthcoming elections.

The group of four ladies from different professions and backgrounds are united with the common bond of ensuring that women and the electorate are not misled in the ensuring electoral contests. All four women who visited the corporate headquarters of Vanguard Media Limited in their mobilisation drive are also driven by a passion to ensure that the elections are violence free. The quartet of Ifeyinwa Osime, Amaka Okosieme, Oluchi Chibueze and Theresa Ijewere are the linchpins of the Coalition of Concerned Women For Good Governance, CCWGG spearheading town hall meetings to enable political office contestants showcase their stock for the electorate. The initiative of the group is being sponsored by the Erelu Abiola Foundation, ERAF and is to start tomorrow with a debate by the governorship candidates in Lagos State. L-R; Mrs Oluchi Chibueze; Caterer; Mrs Ifeyinwa Osime, Legal Practitioner; Mrs Amaka Okosieme, Event Manager and Ms Theresa Ijewere, Educationist all of the Coalition of Concerned women for Good Governance [CCWGG] during their visit to Vanguard Newspapers in Apapa Lagos. Photo; Akeem Salau Ijewere, vice-chairperson of the six person organising committee cited the need to elect leaders, who will have regard for accountability as the main motivation of the group. "The CCWGG is a non-governmental, non-profit, non partisan organisation set up for the purpose of educating and informing the public and especially women on issues of good governance. CCWGG is committed to raising awareness among Nigerians about the importance of making an informed decision and voting with a clear conscience for the right candidate, knowing that whoever is elected to a political office is accountable to the electorate," she noted. Explaining further, Ijewere said: "We hope to have a lot of women there. We are involving women groups and other agencies that can also send male representatives. We hope to have a lot of women in attendance. That does not mean that we are gender biased. We want a situation whereby questions affecting women can be asked while suggestions would be made. We also want to ask the various candidates what their plans for women are. It is not going to be a one-off thing. "There would be town hall meetings with the candidates. We want to hold them accountable and responsible. We want a situation whereby we will hold our political office holders accountable when they are elected." Lending her voice, Okosieme said: "The project is under Erelu Abiola Foundation. We will also remind participants of the need for voters sensitization. We assume that most of the candidates must have done that, but we have to remind the candidates that they have to be accountable to the people. It is going to be a two-pronged programme. "There are a couple of other people, who wanted to be part of us but since we are not partisan, we did not allow them. We asked them to come and ask their questions on that day. "We are concerned about the spate of violence. We will task the aspirants

and ask them what they are doing about the spate of violence. We will also sensitize the women groups by telling them that there is nothing to be gained from political violence. But it has to come from our conversation with the aspirants.” Continuing, she said: “Right now we are focusing on the candidates of the 26 political parties, if they cant come, they can send their representatives. We want the candidates to recognise that they have to be accountable to the people. The point is to ask them questions and hold them accountable when they are elected. We are asking people to believe in this cause because this is the only contra we have.”

Nigeria's first female presidential candidate done with 'cheerleading'

On March 18, 2015 11:44 AM / IN ELECTIONS 2015

The two main candidates for the governorship of Nigeria's Lagos state took to the stage, making a flurry of promises to the all-female audience at the select Cosmopolitan Women's Club. The men even pledged a 35 percent quota of women in the state government and initiatives on girls' education. But when Remi Sonaiya — the first woman running for president in Nigeria's history — took the floor she did so to a round of applause that lasted several minutes. "We have done enough of cheerleading," she told some of Nigeria's most influential businesswomen and company executives at the meeting on women's participation in Remi Sonaiya politics. "Women cannot keep on being cheerleaders in this country." There may be many women at the head of businesses in Africa's most populous nation and leading economy but as in the rest of the continent, politics remains for the most part a man's world. Sonaiya is hoping to change all that, following the example of presidents such as Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf or Malawi's Joyce Banda, to break through the glass ceiling to high office. In reality, she has no chance of beating the two main candidates — President Goodluck Jonathan and ex-military ruler Muhammadu Buhari — but she has brought, for reformers, a welcomed fresh voice to the campaign. – Exception to the rule – According to a 2012 report from the British Council, just nine percent of candidates at the last Nigerian general election in 2011 were women. The situation has hardly improved this year, with a presidential and parliamentary vote scheduled for March 28 followed by governorship and state assembly polls two weeks later. "They (the men) set the rules," said Ebere Ifendu, who runs the non-governmental organisation Women in Politics Forum in the capital Abuja. "They made us understand that one, politics is dirty; two, politics is not for women; three, they brought out the violent nature of politics. "Those were the things they put before us and women became sceptical. They became afraid and didn't believe they will be able to participate." Two women in Jonathan's cabinet have nevertheless bucked the trend of women's participation in the cut-throat world of Nigerian politics. Former World Bank executive Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is finance minister and Diezani Alison-Madueke is oil minister as well as the first woman to hold the rotating presidency of the oil cartel OPEC. Elsewhere, strong-willed women such as Arunma Oteh headed the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), cracking down on corruption that has long blighted Nigeria. – Shoestring budget – Sonaiya, a 60-year-old former French professor in Ile-Ife in southwestern Osun state, has not been discouraged by the challenge. She and her party KOWA decided to prove that it was possible to campaign without a wealthy "godfather" or a private jet in a country where male politicians spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on huge public rallies and gifts for supporters. "Politics has a bad name in Nigeria. Even recently a governor said that you could not be in politics (unless) you're a liar," she told AFP in an interview at a Lagos hotel. With a small budget of donations from supporters and a reduced campaign team, Sonaiya has been travelling across Nigeria

in economy class on commercial flights like a common citizen. On the road, she puts across the values of her party — “honesty, truth, diligence, hard work, transparency” — to voters on the street. With 10,000 to 15,000 members, KOWA is a featherweight compared with the heavyweight electoral juggernaut behind Jonathan and his main rival Buhari. – ‘Break the jinx’ – Whatever the final result on March 28, for the businesswomen of the Cosmopolitan Women’s Club Sonaiya deserves praise for bringing a different voice to the political debate. “Most women see politics as the dirty game in Nigeria. The good women need to come out,” said businesswoman Amodugbe Okanlawon. For Ifendu, whose NGO supports young female politicians and campaigns for a quota to make it easier for women to win elected positions, there is still a way to go before a woman can govern Africa’s most populous country. But she added: “In these 2015 elections that we are facing in Nigeria today, we have strong women contesting as governors. “We have a woman who is a very strong contender in Taraba state. There is another woman in Akwa-Ibom state and then women are coming up for the Senate and other positions. “I think we need this period to make a statement. “If we are able to break the jinx of having a woman as a governor of a state in Nigeria in 2015, I tell you, having a women as a vice president or as president will be a thing that we can achieve in a very short while.”

The women behind South-South govts

By Simon Ebegbulem

On April 14, 2015 5:14 PM / IN POLITICS

BENIN—THEY say behind every successful man, there is a woman. So it is with the incumbent governor of Edo State, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole. His resilient wife, Mrs. Clara Oshiomhole, who died 2010, would have aptly fit into the position, but for untimely death. In her absence, however, her husband's government is not lacking in women of substance, who have distinguished themselves in their various fields of endeavour. Sevenfold political army From top-left: Princess Inneh, Dr. Dickson, Mrs. Semenitari: Mrs. Imoke, Lady Ebe & Dr. Ashiedu The list of women who have been instrumental in his administration include the present chairman of the Edo State Civil Service Commission, Princess Ekiuwa Inneh, Executive Director Office of the First lady, Hajia Memunat Momodu, Managing Director, Information Communication Technology, Edo State Government, Yemi Keri, former APC state woman Leader, Madam Modino Emovon, Chairman of Ovia North East Local Government Council, Mrs. Lucy Omagbon and Chairman, Edo State Market Women Association, Madam Blackky Omoregie. Politicalfoot soldiers While some of the women are solidly involved in ensuring that the economy of the state and the civil service run without interruption, some are political foot soldiers of the governor and are ready to confront any opposition once they are called upon by the Comrade Governor. Governor Oshiomhole is wont to tell anyone who cares to listen: "Give any of these women a job, you can go and sleep." And to be fair to him, the women have executed their various duties with passion over the years and that has endeared them to the Comrade Governor. Princess Inneh- proven performer Princess (Mrs.) Ekiuwa Inneh is from the Benin Royal family. She was Head of Service and now Chairman of the State Civil Service. Hear Oshiomhole on the day she was sworn-in: "The choice of Princess (Mrs.) Ekiuwa Inneh as Chairman of the Commission was prompted by her numerous contributions and achievement as Head of Service in moving the civil service to greater height." Niger Delta Voice observed that her office and that of the Managing Director, Information Communication Technology, Yemi Keri, had weeded the state of ghost workers through biometrics. The Benin princess has never wavered in this direction and the state is getting results Keri- ICT guru Apart from being a member of the state Economic Team, Yemi Keri brought her intellectual capabilities in ICT to bear in the affairs of the state government. While the Benin princess is from Edo South, Keri is from the North Senatorial district like Oshiomhole. She ensured that all government offices and parastatals were computerized while identities of staff of the state government were properly documented for effective payment of their salaries and wages. She created a website for the state government and today, 1,000 persons have been employed and trained in that department. She drives government policies effectively and never compromise due process in all her dealings. She has been with Oshiomhole from the inception of his administration and has made the state one of the leading role models in ICT in the country. Hajia Momodu's Mrs Integrity Hajia Memunat Momodu was former

Commissioner for Women Affairs, but following the sad demise of the First Lady, Mrs. Clara Oshiomhole, she was redeployed to the office of the First Lady, as Executive Director. She is a calm mother that can hardly be involved in any controversy. She is from the same Etsako race like Oshiomhole. To ensure that monies appropriated for flood victims in the state in 2012 were properly managed, the governor calculatingly gave her the responsibility to take care of the victims. And she never disappointed any one as all the funds allocated and food items were distributed to the affected persons. She has been handling strategic responsibilities in the Oshiomhole administration.

Emovon: Political Iroko

The trio of Modino Emovon, Madam Blacky and Lucy Omagbon are high-quality officials to Oshiomhole and the APC interest in Edo South. Madam Emovon, who is generally called Mummy by many is about 72 years old, but still dogged when it comes to politics. Both the opposition PDP and APC leaders respect her a lot because of her influence, not only on women but men too in Edo South. She was very active during the defunct SDP days which brought Chief John Odigie- Oyegun as Governor of the state then. Daughter of the Arala of Benin Kingdom, she is a born politician. Her late mother was a very strong politician during the Otuedo days. Oshiomhole calls her Mummy and has absolute trust in her. In fact, during the last APC state congress when some leaders of the party such as Chief Tom Ikimi, who is now in the PDP brought the current Woman Leader of the APC, Mrs. Amadasun, to replace Madam Emovon as state Woman Leader, the singular action almost threatened the dominance of APC in the South, as PDP leaders swooped on her with a view to pull her to the party knowing her political strength. But Mummy told the hawks that she could not leave Oshiomhole because she believes that the Comrade Governor means well for the people of the state. She shunned the PDP overtures and stuck with APC.

Madam Blacky, great mobilizer

Madam Blacky is the state Chairman of Market Women Association and a staunch supporter of the Comrade Governor. She is a great mobilizer of women and capable of leading any assault against any perceived enemy of the Oshiomhole administration. In Benin Kingdom, market women are basically 100 per cent loyal to the Oba of Benin and whoever the Oba loves, they love too, and whoever the Oba hates, they dislike as well. Despite attempts by the opposition PDP to break their ranks, the women have remained solidly with Oshiomhole.

Omagbon, political giant killer

Mrs. Lucy Omagbon is regarded as the iron lady of Edo politics. She was formerly the PDP state Woman leader before dumping the PDP to join Oshiomhole. She is currently the chairman of Ovia North East Local Government Council and Oshiomhole's eyes in the politics of that area. The Esama of Benin Kingdom, Chief Gabriel Igbinedion is from that axis and during the 2012 governorship election she proved to Oshiomhole that she is a woman he can rely on by doggedly demobilizing Esama's foot soldiers in the PDP to win the area for APC. Even though she is a woman, she is politically ruthless when battling the PDP, no wonder she is feared by her opponents and respected by the Comrade Governor and other APC leaders in the South.

Ezekwesili urges Nigerians to choose quality legislators

On April 3, 2015 7:52 PM / IN ELECTIONS 2015

Lagos – A former Minister of Education, Dr Oby Ezekwesili on Friday advised Nigerians to assess the quality of each candidate before electing members of the House of Assembly. The nationwide House of Assembly election is scheduled for April 11. Speaking at a public presentation of the book entitled “Strategic Intervention in Governance” written by Pastor Tunde Bakare in Lagos, Ezekwesili decried the situation where people voted for those they knew little about. In her speech entitled “Reflections on Nigeria” the former education minister said no matter how good the President might be, he could not develop the country alone. She said that legislators were germane to the development of any nation. “I am sure many Nigerians voted along party lines for the legislators rather than based on individual merit in the National Assembly election.” Ezekwesili said it was time for Nigerians to stand up and make demands of those in power as that was the only way to make a difference. Although she applauded Nigerians for trying to consolidate on the nation’s democracy, the former Minister, however, bemoaned the absence of strong institutions in the country. “Individuals build the institutions. The quality of the individual determines the quality of institutions.” she said. She said Bakare’s approach to issues in governance, especially education, was commendable. Also speaking, a former Minister of External Affairs, Prof Bolaji Akinyemi, who chaired the occasion, lauded Nigerians for conducting an election that, for the first time, received praise from the world. “President Goodluck Jonathan has achieved a legacy with this election” Akinyemi said. Presenting the book, Dr John Ayeni, Chairman Skye Bank Plc, said that Nigeria was very lucky to have people such as Bakare. “The book will enrich our knowledge and help us to know more about our society and what our character should be in building the nation. In his speech Bakare, the Convener of the Save Nigeria Group and Overseer of the Later Rain Assembly Church, said Nigeria urgently needed men and women of goodwill, who are selfless and determined to make the country great. (NAN)

‘We Need More Women Participation in Politics’

By Ijeoma Opara

28 February 2015 | 11:00 pm / Politics

AYISHA Osori is the CEO of the Nigerian Women’s Trust Fund (NWTF), a not-for-profit organisation created from a public-civil society partnership to increase the quality and quantity of women in government. Created in 2011, the organisation focuses on getting more women into government through elections or appointments and in line with the National Gender Policy (NGP) of 2006, one of the goals Nigeria is committed to under Goal three of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

“The NGP says all decision making boards, agencies and departments should have at least 35 per cent gender representation and the MDG Goal is to have 35 per cent women in the National Assembly by 2015. We work on achieving this goal by focusing on four areas: Leadership development, research and communication, gender advocacy and fundraising and grant making. This is the framework within which we work to support women, advocate for more women and create a more enabling environment for women to participate in politics and governance,” Osori explains.

She says that the level of women’s participation to nation building could be seen in terms of the numbers of women in public office and the number of women and young girls that are more aware of their role/right to contribute to nation building.

“For the former, the global standard of measure is to use the number of women in parliament, that is, the National Assembly and in our case, the numbers did not increase during the last elections in 2011. We went from 9 per cent representation in the NASS to 6.7 per cent. The average globally and regionally is 19 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. However, more women are contesting and from the list of candidates for the 2015 general elections, this number has also increased from that of 2011. And so, more women are prepared to enter into the public sector to serve.

“However, in increasing awareness of an interest in participating, the NWTF does this through advocacy and projects, particularly targeted at the younger generation of women and girls as young as 15, because by the next election cycle, they will be eligible to vote. We believe we need to start early to get millions of women and girls to join political parties, register to vote, vote and also contest. I would say we are doing relatively well with this, particularly with our short film titled, A New Dawn.”

While commenting on factors that hinder women from getting more elective positions, Osori is of the view that some of them are obvious and well known, but chief among them is the culture of patriarchy that largely insists on women taking the back seat, when it comes to leading or taking part in public matters. There are also the high costs of contesting, the violence and political culture of late meetings.

“Less well known is that the political parties themselves, which are the only vehicles we have recognised in the 1999 Constitution for contesting, do not also want women. They do little to promote women within the party, restrict them to ‘woman leader’ positions and thwart all their best efforts to take other positions. A look at how the national conventions of these parties are conducted is proof and the candidate lists of the two major parties for the NASS also provide more evidence.

“For instance, out of over 1,600 candidates, PDP has only 19 women with tickets to the House, while APC has 26. For the Senate, out of over 700 candidates, both parties have only seven female candidates each. So, the parties, through their constitution and their manifestoes, are sending a clear message that women are not welcome.”

While commenting on the possibility of the less than 20 per cent representation of women in politics being increased, she says: “There is hope. However, it will take time and there must be a will to see this happen. This is because it would take either an affirmative action clause in the Constitution, which over 60 countries around the world have done, to get the numbers up, or at least an internal party quota, which South Africa’s ANC operates. But for this to happen, it is becoming clearer that the strategy most gender advocates are most comfortable with will not work, and so that has to change too.

“In the first few years of President Jonathan’s administration, we had 33 percent women inclusion, which was close to the 35 per cent for the first time and with all the campaign promises being made to women, there is clear acknowledgement that as a country, we understand that our government and agencies should have more female representative. What remains is the will to follow through in a more meaningful manner.

“Elective office and not appointive is more important because it grants more legitimacy. Appointments are more subjective and independent. No doubt we have to do more to combat the negative narrative around women in general; so that there is more trust and acceptance within our public commentary whether directly or subliminally through art and movies among others about the immense benefits we can all reap from having more inclusive representation.”

She, however, applauds the courage of Nigerian women seeking political position.

“It is daunting to step out into such a hostile arena as the Nigerian politics. The truth is that the environment is toxic for all decent people that really want to make positive change. But we still need more of this type of people coming in. I would also tell them to start early. Although they do not need to declare early, but if they know by now for example that they would run in 2019, then they have to start today to reach out to their constituencies, bond with them and start doing things with them.

Starting early also includes ensuring you have made the right strategic decision about the platform or party upon which to run and the desired position and constituency. They must remain confident, bold, continue to put themselves out, ensure they are in the media as consistently as possible, talking about the issues they should be talking about and building a brand/message that will help them to successfully contest,” she explains.

Nigerian Women's Scorecard In 2015 Polls

By Ekwy P. Uzoanya and Tobi Awodipe

18 April 2015 | 6:45 am / Politics

DEVELOPMENT experts and gender activists have continuously advocate the active participation of women in governance for the good of society. The result of the just concluded 2015 elections in the country has however, not shown improved women representation in elective positions in the country.

Out of the 14 candidates that contested for the seat of the president, the only woman amongst the contenders came out in the 12th position. Just as men have always dominated the National Assembly, the 2015 election result does not present a different picture in the number of women who will represent their constituencies in the next four years.

So far, eight women made it to the 109-member senate as opposed to seven elected in 2011. Three of the eight women senators are of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

They are; current member of the senate, Oluremi Tinubu (Lagos Central), incumbent Speaker of the Oyo State House of Assembly, Monsurat Sunmonu (Oyo Central), and Binta Masi Garba (Adamawa North). The five other women who will be joining the Upper Chamber are from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). They are House of Representatives member, Uche Ekwunife (Anambra Central); former aviation minister, Stella Oduah-Ogiemwonyi (Anambra North); Rose Oko (Cross River North); House of Representatives member between 2003 and 2007, Fatimat Raji-Rasaki (Ekiti Central), and Abiodun Olujimi (Ekiti South). For the House of Representatives, some women were elected on the platform of the APC and PDP. These include Nnenna Elendu-Ukeje, PDP (Bende); Nkiruka Chidubem Onyejeocha, PDP (Isuikwuato/Umunneochi); Rita Orji, PDP, (Ajeromi-Ifelodun); Eucharia Azodo Okwunna, PDP, (Aguata); Asabe Vilita Bashir, APC, (Gwoza/Dambo/Chibok); Evelyn Omavovoan Oboro, PDP, (Uvwie/Okpe/Sapele); and Omosede Igbinedion Gabriella, PDP, (Ovia); Stella Ngwu, PDP, (Uzo-Uwani, Igbo Etiti); Fatima Binta Bello, PDP, (Kaltungo/Shon); Aishatu Jibril Dukku, APC, (Dukku/Nafada); and Olufunke Adedoyin, APC,

Ekwunife

Ekwunife(Ekiti/Irepodun/Isin/Oke-Ero).

The gubernatorial elections have so far produced four women deputy governors. They are Oluranti Adebule (Lagos State), Mrs. Yetunde Onanuga (Ogun State), Ipalibo Banigo (Rivers State), and Cecilia Ezeilo (Enugu State). Senator Oluremi Tinubu is the current senator representing Lagos Central. Born in 1960, she had her secondary education at Our Lady of Apostles Secondary School Ijebu-Ode. She obtained National Certificate of Education in Botany and Zoology from the Adeyemi College of Education and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of

Ife. She became the First Lady of Lagos State when her husband, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu was elected governor.

As First Lady, she established the New Era Foundation, dedicated to establishing centres catering for all round development of young people and promotion of public awareness on environmental health and community service. Rose Okoji Oko won the senate seat under the PDP to represent Cross River North. She was born on September 27, 1956 in Okpoma, Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State. She had her primary education at the famous Holy child Secondary School, Mount Carmel, Igoli, Ogoja and obtained the WASC Division One in 1974 before proceeding to acquire a Higher School Certificate from the Federal School of Arts and Science, Ogoja in 1976. Uche Ekwunife, a former banker is currently serving her second term in the House of Representatives for Anaocha/Njikoka/Dunukofia Federal Constituency. She contested for the gubernatorial seat in Anambra State in 2010 on the platform of the Peoples Progressives Alliance (PPA) and again in 2013 under All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) but did not succeed.

She won the senate seat in the 2015 election under the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Stella Oduah was born on January 5, 1962. She is to represent Anambra North. She was Minister of Aviation from July 2011 to February 2014. Oduah studied for her Bachelors degree in Accounting in the United States. She worked at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation briefly as well before venturing into politics. Monsurat Sunmonu, who is to represent Oyo Central in the senate, is currently the Speaker of the Oyo State House of Assembly. She became the first female Speaker in the history of Oyo State on the 10th of June 2011. Sunmonu was born on the April 9, 1959, in Oyo town, Oyo State. She had her primary school education at Children's Boarding School, Oshogbo.

She was at the Ilora Baptist Grammar School, Ilora, Oyo State, for the early part of her secondary school education before transferring to Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo State. She later studied at the Kwara State College of Technology for her 'A' levels. She worked briefly at the Accounts Department of the Property Development Corporation of Oyo State (now Housing Corporation) in Bodija Ibadan, Oyo State before travelling to the United Kingdom in 1979. Adebule is the current Secretary to the State Government (SSG). She was born in Lagos State and earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education in Islamic Studies in 1992 and Master's (M.Ed) in Curriculum Studies in 1997. She equally got a certificate in Early Childhood Development Curriculum and School Administration and Assessment.

Garba

She earned a doctorate degree (PhD) in Curriculum Studies from the Lagos State University in 2012. She began work as a lecturer at the Lagos State College of Primary Education (LACOPED) in Noforija, Epe and later transferred to the Lagos State University as a lecturer in the Department of Curriculum Studies. She served as Commissioner 1 in the Lagos State Post Primary Teaching Service Commission (PP-TESCOM), now Teachers' Establishment and Pensions Office, by former governor Bola Tinubu from October 2000 to February 2005.

She was appointed and sworn in as the Secretary to the State Government by the incumbent governor of Lagos state, Babatunde Fashola on July 2011. Nnenna

Elendu-Ukeje is the Representative for Bende Federal Constituency, Abia State. She got into the office on the platform of the PDP in 2007 and also in 2011.

Born in January 1970 to the late Capt. Elendu-Ukeje and Justice Roseline Elendu-Ukeje, Nnenna attended Federal Government Girls' College, Owerri, the University of Benin and University of Lagos. Prior to her political career, Ukeje enjoyed a successful career in the hotel management industry. Binta Masi Garba was born on 17 April 1967 in Kaduna to Muslim parents. She is the Senator-elect of Adamawa North Senatorial District. She was the Adamawa State chairman of the APC and the first female state chairman of a registered major political party in Nigeria. She was elected into Federal House of Representatives three times from 1999 – 2011. She is the only female Senator-elect in North Eastern Nigeria in 2015.

She won a Senate seat against a sitting governor, Bala James Ngilari. From 1975 to 1981, she attended Army Children School, New Cantonment D, Hayin Banki, Kaduna. From there, she proceeded to Government Day School, Kurmin Mashi, Kaduna South, Kaduna, from 1981 to 1987 for her secondary school education. In 2004, she went to Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and obtained a degree in Public Financial Management.

She is a recipient of an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Theology from Smith Christian University, Miami, Florida. In the House of Assembly election, some women got elected under the platform of the two major parties, APC and PDP in different states. The result, no doubt, runs short of the National Gender Policy, which seeks to encourage women to occupy 35 per cent of elective positions in Nigeria.

President's wife woos Delta women

By Chido Okafor (Warri) and Ali Garba (Bauchi)

26 February 2015 | 8:47 pm

• APC group accuses PDP of using insurgency to avoid polls

WIFE of Nigeria's President, Dame Patience Jonathan, yesterday at Orerokpe, Delta State, urged women in the area to vote for President Goodluck Jonathan.

At a rally organised by the Delta State chapter of the Women of Change Initiative, Mrs. Jonathan said this administration has empowered more women than any other, adding that women have now become heads of organisations hitherto the exclusive preserve of men.

She said Nigeria belongs to all the constituent units that make up the country and that other units should equally be given the opportunity to rule.

At the rally attended by Delta State Governor, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, his wife, Roli; the PDP governorship candidate, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa and other personalities, Mrs. Jonathan said her husband is the best candidate to rule the country.

She appealed to all women in the state to collect their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs).

Insurgency and the polls

Meanwhile, the All Progressive Congress Vanguard for Peace and Tranquility in the north-eastern states has accused President Goodluck Jonathan and the PDP of allegedly using the insurgency challenge to avoid the election.

Taraba Women Support Jonathan Re-election Bid

By Charles Akpeji, Jalingo

20 February 2015 | 8:29 pm

• Urge Jumai-Alhassan To Drop Ambition

CITING the appointment of no fewer than thirteen females out of the 42 Ministers, women in Taraba state have collectively resolved to throw their weights in support of the re-election of President Goodluck Jonathan.

The women, who thronged out Friday in their numbers, believed President Jonathan government “ is the only government that implemented gender policy that has also resulted in an increase in women’s representation in government.”

Coming under the umbrella of Heart-to-Heart for Jonathan, they observed that women representation has increased from 10 per cent in 2011 to over 35 percent in 2013.

Led by Coordinator Victoria Samari, the women who were drawn from the entire 16 local government councils of the state, including Yangtu Development Area, stressed the need for women in the state to queue solidly behind Jonathan in the forthcoming polls slated for next months.

They collectively agreed that “ with the appointment of 13 female ministers out of 42, representing 31 percent and four Special Advisers out of 18, representing 23 percent”, there was a urgent need for the people to discard politicians missing politics with religion.

Stressing their readiness to reach out to eligible women in the nooks and crannies of the state before the presidential poll, they agreed “ these appointments have set the stage for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target number three on Gender Equity and Women Empowerment.”

The need for other aspirants in the state to as well tread the path of President Jonathan especially in the areas of women empowerment, they believed can no longer be ignored.

They said “we are also calling on Darius D. Ishaku and our aspiring senators, members of the House of Representatives and members of State House of Assembly to emulate Mr. president in strengthening gender policy in the state.”

The women, who went further to stressed the need for the governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator Aisha Jumai-Alhassan, to drop her ambition said it was not ideal for a woman to be at the fore front of men.

For this reason, they admonished her to drop her governorship ambition and support the male folks, who according to the women, are created to lead the women.

They also beckoned at those nursing the idea of dumping PDP for opposition political parties to as a matter of urgency change their minds as women in the state would continue to work tirelessly round the clock for the success of the PDP.

Further citing the numerous federal government projects in the state, including a federal university, a federal polytechnic and the ongoing multipurpose Kashimbilla Dam in Takum Local Government Council of the state, the women stated that President Goodluck Jonathan would perform to the admiration of everyone.

Women warn against elections' shift

By Ijeoma Opara

09 March 2015 | 6:15 pm

A WOMEN group, under the aegis of Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative (ECOWA), has called on the Federal Government to ensure that the rescheduled dates of March 28 and April 11 for the polls by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) remain sacrosanct.

This call was made at the commemoration of the International Women's Day with the theme, "Make it happen", organised by the Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative (ECOWA).

The Executive Director, ECOWA, Louisa Ono Eikhomun, who made the call, said: "We all know that the political tension in Nigeria is largely because of the election postponement and we are saying today that come March 28, election should be held. We don't want further postponement because anything that will trigger another June 12 crisis will be detrimental to the nation and the end sufferers are women.

"Right now, we have 3.3 million Nigerians displaced and majority of that number are women who are living in terrible conditions and had become refugees in neighbouring countries like Chad, Niger and Cameroun".

Eikhomun, who also reiterated the need for a national holiday to mark the International Women's Day as observed by some countries which celebrate the achievement of women politically, economically and socially, said: "Nigerian women need safe space to develop, therefore, the government and stakeholders should prioritise the safety and security of women by ensuring the passage of the Violence Against Women and Persons Prohibition Bill before the Fifth Assembly winds up as well as the 50 per cent affirmative action for women in elective and appointive positions."

Dame Jonathan in Owerri, moves to justify husband's re-election bid, Receives 2,000 APC, APGA decamping women

By Charles Ogugbuaja, Owerri

07 March 2015 | 5:15 am

THE wife of President Goodluck Jonathan, Dame Patience, on Friday at the 25,000 sitting capacity Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri, Imo State, said her husband has offered quality dividend of democracy to Nigerians in the past years he has been on the saddle of leadership, urging women and electorate in Imo State to cast their votes in the March 28 polls for the President to complete his second term. She also canvassed for votes from the Imo electorate to usher in the Deputy House of Representatives Speaker and the Imo state People's Democratic Party (PDP), governorship standard bearer, Chief Emeka Ihedioha, in the April 11 governorship polls, among others.

Also, the President's wife received more than 2,000 women who decamped from the All Progressives Congress (APC), and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), in the state.

Mrs. Jonathan from 1.55 p.m to 2.45 p.m, who was on the women campaign in Imo State, came in company of the wife of the Vice President, Hajia Amina Sambo, wife of the Senate President, Mrs. Helen Mark, wife of the Deputy Senate President, Mrs. Nwanneka Ekwerenmadu, wife of the governor of Abia state, Mrs. Orji, former Minister of Aviation and Transport, Dr. Kema Chikwe, Minister of State for Education; and Imo State Deputy Coordinator, PDP presidential campaign, Prof. Viola Adaku Onwuliri, the Imo State PDP Presidential campaign Coordinator, Chief Chike Udenwa, wife of the immediate past governor of Imo State, Mrs. Chioma Ohakim, Imo State chairman of the PDP, Chief Nnamdi Anyaehie, wife of the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mrs. Ebere Ihedioha, former governor of Anambra State, Mr. Peter Obi, the Director General of the Women Development Centre, Onyeka Onwenu, Senators Chris Anyanwu and Hope Uzodinma, the President of the National Council for Women Society, Mrs. Nkechi Mba, among others, warned that the candidates of the All Progressives Congress (APC), including the presidential candidate, Gen.- Muhammadu Buhari, has nothing to offer the nation to warrant his seeking election to get back to the Presidential villa after his sojourn in military incursion between 1983 and 1984.

Her words mixed with English, pidgin and Igbo said: "What are you going to do if you did not perform before when you were there. They should tell Nigerians what they have done when they were president. I can tell what Goodluck has performed. We don't tell lie. We say what we can do; we say what we have done... Imo women,

this is time to pay back. Goodluck has done a lot. Goodluck has wiped our tears... Make una ask APC whether na liar.

“Goodluck said no woman should die while giving birth and he has increased it to 50 per cent. Go and challenge me to that. Goodluck came and he gave us one Nigeria. Who else are you going to vote for. What we want is peace... When you go home, tell your sister, tell your mother, tell your brother that the APC has nothing to offer.”

She regretted that the regime of the APC presidential candidate witnessed rampant imprisonment of prominent Igbo sons, including a former old Anambra state governor, Chief Jim Nwobodo, the late Sam Mbakwe, Dr. Alex Ekwueme and others.

Continuing, the President’s wife insisted that her husband has been fair enough to offer the 35 per cent affirmative stance on women recognition having offered appointment to women, among others, in Imo State.

In the event which the massive audience sang consistently “Mama Peace,” she noted that women appointed in Jonathan administration have soared to become Finance Minister and Coordination Minister for Economy, President of Organization of Oil Exporting countries (OPEC), among others. The Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE- P), free medical treatment for pregnant women, building of 12 universities, health centres among others, she said, were among the good things her husband’s administration brought and sustaining.

She said: “Imo 35 per cent is real. Minister, D.G., Women Centre, Chairman of board, na women from Imo State. 35 per cent, u don get am. I have come to tell you yhat Goodluck Sambo ticket na real. E go better for you.”

Insisting that eight –year rule was okay, she said: “If my husband stay eight years finish, he wants to enter again, i will drag him for cloth enter house. You don’t want your youth to grow. If you vote for Jonathan u go better. She recalled that the president through his Agricultural policy programmes, offered opportunity for farmers in the country.”

The President’s wife who spoke in Igbo appealed to Imo women and her audience to remember that she was their own sister, while Jonathan is their In- Law, urging them to do the needful by obtaining their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs), and cast their votes for the PDP in march 28 and April 11 respectively for various political elective positions, do accreditation, ushering in Jonathan, Ihedioha and other PDP candidates to enable her husband work harmoniously with them.

She rounded her speech: “Come April 11, Imo people, if you make a wrong choice, you will regret it. Give your rightful choice, Emeka Ihedioha. Goodluck is your in-law.”

In their speeches, Sambo, Onwuliri, Ihedioha, Udenwa, a former Deputy Governor in the state, Dr. Douglas Acholonu, Chikwe, among others justified their claims that the PDP government deserves to be given another chance in the Federal Government level and Imo State, stressing that the rail line, roads infrastructure, massive employment among others were the indicators.

Nigeria's first female presidential candidate done with 'cheerleading'

By AFP

18 March 2015 | 10:31 am

The two main candidates for the governorship of Nigeria's Lagos state took to the stage, making a flurry of promises to the all-female audience at the select Cosmopolitan Women's Club. The men even pledged a 35 percent quota of women in the state government and initiatives on girls' education.

But when Remi Sonaiya — the first woman running for president in Nigeria's history — took the floor she did so to a round of applause that lasted several minutes. "We have done enough of cheerleading," she told some of Nigeria's most influential businesswomen and company executives at the meeting on women's participation in politics. "Women cannot keep on being cheerleaders in this country." There may be many women at the head of businesses in Africa's most populous nation and leading economy but as in the rest of the continent, politics remains for the most part a man's world. Sonaiya is hoping to change all that, following the example of presidents such as Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf or Malawi's Joyce Banda, to break through the glass ceiling to high office. In reality, she has no chance of beating the two main candidates — President Goodluck Jonathan and ex-military ruler Muhammadu Buhari — but she has brought, for reformers, a welcomed fresh voice to the campaign.

– Exception to the rule –

According to a 2012 report from the British Council, just nine percent of candidates at the last Nigerian general election in 2011 were women. The situation has hardly improved this year, with a presidential and parliamentary vote scheduled for March 28 followed by governorship and state assembly polls two weeks later. "They (the men) set the rules," said Ebere Ifendu, who runs the non-governmental organisation Women in Politics Forum in the capital Abuja. "They made us understand that one, politics is dirty; two, politics is not for women; three, they brought out the violent nature of politics. "Those were the things they put before us and women became sceptical. They became afraid and didn't believe they will be able to participate." Two women in Jonathan's cabinet have nevertheless bucked the trend of women's participation in the cut-throat world of Nigerian politics. Former World Bank executive Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is finance minister and Diezani Alison-Madueke is oil minister as well as the first woman to hold the rotating presidency of the oil cartel OPEC. Elsewhere, strong-willed women such as Arunma Oteh headed the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), cracking down on corruption that has long blighted Nigeria.

– Shoestring budget –

Sonaiya, a 60-year-old former French professor in Ile-Ife in southwestern Osun state, has not been discouraged by the challenge. She and her party KOWA decided to prove that it was possible to campaign without a wealthy “godfather” or a private jet in a country where male politicians spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on huge public rallies and gifts for supporters. “Politics has a bad name in Nigeria. Even recently a governor said that you could not be in politics (unless) you’re a liar,” she told AFP in an interview at a Lagos hotel. With a small budget of donations from supporters and a reduced campaign team, Sonaiya has been travelling across Nigeria in economy class on commercial flights like a common citizen. On the road, she puts across the values of her party — “honesty, truth, diligence, hard work, transparency” — to voters on the street. With 10,000 to 15,000 members, KOWA is a featherweight compared with the heavyweight electoral juggernaut behind Jonathan and his main rival Buhari.

– ‘Break the jinx’ –

Whatever the final result on March 28, for the businesswomen of the Cosmopolitan Women’s Club Sonaiya deserves praise for bringing a different voice to the political debate. “Most women see politics as the dirty game in Nigeria. The good women need to come out,” said businesswoman Amodugbe Okanlawon. For Ifendu, whose NGO supports young female politicians and campaigns for a quota to make it easier for women to win elected positions, there is still a way to go before a woman can govern Africa’s most populous country. But she added: “In these 2015 elections that we are facing in Nigeria today, we have strong women contesting as governors. “We have a woman who is a very strong contender in Taraba state. There is another woman in Akwa-Ibom state and then women are coming up for the Senate and other positions. “I think we need this period to make a statement. “If we are able to break the jinx of having a woman as a governor of a state in Nigeria in 2015, I tell you, having a women as a vice president or as president will be a thing that we can achieve in a very short while

‘Women Want a Chance in All Leadership Positions’

By WOLE OYEBADE

20 February 2015 | 11:00 pm

Lagos East senatorial candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Mrs. Olabisi Salis, in an interview with reporters during her campaign, spoke on her chances, PDP’s prospect in Lagos and at the centre and the new ‘unity’ among women to give men a run for their money, among other issues. WOLE OYEBADE was there and reports

YOUR first shot into politics is the Senate. Are you not quite ambitious?

Actually, I started my ambition in 2006, when my husband, Chief Owolabi Salis, contested for the governorship of Lagos State.

I had to resign my appointment with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and since then, I have been in politics in Lagos and helped so many people in the state.

I have empowered so many men and women, and would continue to help the poor regularly. I believe that the voice of the people must be heard. Our people are not adequately represented at the senate. We need to eradicate poverty, empower the women and ensure that their voice is heard in society.

I want to initiate and sponsor bills that would enhance the improvement of the people in my district and Nigeria as a whole.

Like politicians would always say, were you also called by the people to contest this election?

The call to run for the Lagos East senatorial seat is from the people; they want me to come and represent them.

When they looked at my performances amongst the poor, how I have been helping them to eradicate poverty, to pay school fees and take care of them, they called on me to represent their interest at the senate.

In my campaign so far, the reception has been very positive. People want a change in Lagos State. People have been telling us they want PDP in Lagos State. Most of their lands are being taken over in several areas. People are being maltreated, the okada (motorcycle) riders are complaining, the market women are complaining, they want the PDP in Lagos at all cost.

What are your chances of winning against a popular and incumbent All Progressives Congress (APC) candidate?

My chances of winning are very bright, looking at it from the feminine perspective. I know the incumbent senator is deep in pocket and has been there for four years, but that doesn't diminish my chances of winning. It would be like the story of David and Goliath in the Bible.

I believe that in this contest, I stand a better chance of winning. I am ready to go there to fight for the people, especially the poor. If you don't take care of the poor, the masses, your chances of winning any election is eroded.

He was given four years to perform and I don't see anything he has done, as people are complaining bitterly. Let them give me four years to perform and see what I can do. Women are better managers, and I believe I have a better chance.

Are you saying the restriction of okada (motorcycle) riders in would be lifted?

No, I am not saying that. I believe Governor Babatunde Fashola should have had a meeting with these people to tell them what is expected of them. It doesn't mean they should be harassing and killing okada riders. Unemployment is affecting them and they decided to look for a means of livelihood.

I am not saying we would return them; we would meet with them, tell them what is expected of them and restrict them to some locations. We should not just harass them or push them into robbery.

These are young people who want to work. We should encourage them by restricting them to certain areas and use better methods to talk to them.

How prepared is PDP to win Lagos State?

We are prepared to win the election; we are ready to battle it out. We want a positive change and the change starts from the electorate to vote for the right candidates, because the power is in the hands to choose whoever they want to represent them at the national and state assemblies.

So, we are ready for this election.

The President of Liberia recently said women are their own problems. Do you think the women would give you their support?

I think we are ready now; women are ready to support fellow women. We are not our own problems; we were marginalised and relegated to the background.

But now, we are ready because we believe a woman would understand a woman better. In most cases, when I go out to campaign, women troop out en-masse and support me more than men.

Women need to be represented in all the leadership positions in this country, so I believe we are not our problems anymore. Women usually support women more than men.

We are ready to ensure that the country is taken to a greater height.

Aisha Buhari: a new style of First Lady in Nigeria?

By AFP

08 April 2015 | 10:14 am

“Few would have believed that the taciturn, austere General Buhari had a soft, smiling and sweet woman at home,” the Vanguard daily said after the former military ruler was elected Nigeria’s next president.

Aisha Buhari remained in the shadows for most of the election campaign but could now impose a very different style from the current First Lady at the presidential villa Aso Rock in Abuja.

Little is known for now about the First Lady elect other than a few details in the Nigerian media: she is 44, married her 72-year-old husband in 1989 after he divorced his first wife the previous year, and they have five children together.

“I met Aisha Buhari three times, and she seems to be a very humble person, very friendly and a good listener,” said lawyer Ebere Ifendu, head of the Women in Politics Forum group in Abuja.

The current First Lady, Patience Jonathan, wife of the outgoing president Goodluck Jonathan, has a very different public profile.

She is well-known to journalists and mimicked by comedians for her boisterous public appearances as well as political and financial scandals.

“Patience has been like a bull in a china shop. No control whatsoever,” said Yemisi Ransome-Kuti, head of the Nigeria Network of NGOs.

“We are very hopeful that we will have a very different First Lady, who will bring calm and harmony at the presidency.”

– Calm and relief –

In the large house in a residential area of Abuja where her husband Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) was watching election results come in, Aisha Buhari’s calm demeanour contrasted with the tumultuous scenes outside.

The official vote count was under way and the electoral commission was drip-feeding results for the presidential election state by state until Buhari took an unassailable lead.

The APC high command announced victory for their candidate and the news spread around the country, sparking scenes of jubilation, notably in the north’s biggest city, Kano.

Dressed in a cream-coloured tunic and an orange and pink embroidered headscarf, Aisha Buhari seemed calm and also relieved, despite the magnitude of what had just happened and what was to come.

“The long journey has come to an end,” she told AFP, referring to the election campaign.

But she admitted to “mixed feelings” about the campaign, a low-key reference to the low blows and personal attacks aimed at her husband from the ruling party.

Jonathan’s Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) accused Buhari, a northern Muslim, of supporting radical Islam, of failing to secure his secondary school certificate and even having terminal cancer. Aisha Buhari preferred instead to talk about the positive aspects of the rollercoaster ride that had led Nigeria to its first democratic transfer of power between parties at the ballot box. Nigeria had nothing to fear from her husband, she said. “I know him personally. Not as a leader of Nigeria. I know him as my husband and I think Nigeria should feel comfortable with him. He will get there,” she added.

– ‘Mama Peace’ –

Patience Jonathan for her part tended to add fuel to the flames during the campaign, going as far as urging PDP supporters to “stone” anyone shouting “change” — the APC campaign slogan.

The comments sparked outrage in the APC and led to a furious debate in the Nigerian media. Patience Jonathan — who styled herself “Mama peace” — is used to media scandals. Even before the election of her husband as head of state in 2011, she was suspected by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in 2006 of having laundered a vast sum of money. In 2012, she became “permanent secretary” of the oil-producing southern state of Bayelsa, where Goodluck Jonathan is from and was a former governor. The opposition heavily criticised the appointment, decrying “nepotism” and “favouritism”. She also attracted the ire of civil society when in the aftermath of the mass kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls in April last year, one of the leaders of the “Bring Back Our Girls” movement was arrested after meeting the First Lady at the presidential villa.

“Maybe she misunderstood her role as the First Lady,” suggested Ifendu.

“There’s no official role for the First Lady in Nigeria. It’s not in the constitution,” added Ransome-Kuti.

Instead, it often depends on what weight the president gives it. “What we are hoping for is more decorum from the office of the First Lady,” she said

Appendix B: Illustration 1

Elective positions: Why Nigeria records more women losers than winners

By CHIOMA GABRIEL

ON MAY 2, 2015 2:09 AM / IN SPECIAL REPORT

The gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Congress, APC, in Taraba state Aisha Jumai Alhassan would have made history in the last gubernatorial election in the state as the first woman to scale the hurdles of electioneering campaign and break the jinx that has befuddled Nigerian women over the years from emerging successful at the polls as governors. Mama Taraba as she was fondly called almost made it but then, the near-success syndrome that has been the lot of many Nigerian women in politics cut short her joy. Before the elemental forces played tricks on her, expectations were high that she would emerge successful considering the bent of results being reeled out by the Independent Electoral Commission, INEC. But suddenly, the elements beat a retreat that first led to the results of the election being declared inconclusive and then, a re-run that finally dashed her hopes as she finally lost the race to the People's Democratic Party's candidate, Darius Dickson Ishaku. Ab initio, Aisha Al-Hassan was coming up strong in the race and was almost thought to have won before the table turned. At a point during collation of votes, Al-Hassan had polled 262, 381 votes from all 16 local government areas in the state and was leading and overtook her main challenger, Darius Ishaku of the Peoples Democratic Party. Alhassan Nigerian women would have recorded a rare feat in elective politics had she succeeded in emerging the first elected female governor in Nigeria. Al-Hassan, a lawyer had defected from the PDP and joined the opposition party after she was elected senator for the Taraba North constituency in 2011. She was the Taraba State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice as well as the Chief Registrar of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory. She had polled a large number of votes from the Gasol local government area as vote counting entered its second day in Taraba, allowing her to surpass the PDP's candidate. But as the final results from all 16 local government areas in the state trickled in, Ishaku regained the lead by nearly 64,000 votes and hopes of making history sunk. The re-run turned out worse for her. But Alhassan has rejected the result and headed for the elections petitions tribunal. Addressing a press conference in Jalingo shortly after the announcement of the results, Alhassan described the entire elections process as a "daylight robbery" and said the party would challenge the results in the elections petitions tribunal. "The combined governorship elections in Taraba were characterised by violence, massive rigging, ballot snatching and abuse of the card readers in substantial parts of the state by the PDP and their allies," she said. She contended that results ascribed to Wukari, Donga, Takum, Sardauna, Zing, Yororo, Kurmi and some parts of Ussa, Karim-Lamido, Bali, Ardo-Kola and Lau local government areas were not acceptable as they did not reflect the true results of the election in Taraba. She alleged all the

complaints on the irregularities and abuse of the election guidelines were promptly reported to INEC, but that no action was taken. Who knows, the elections petitions tribunal could turn things around for her. Peculiar traits Over the years, Nigerian women have continued to record very poor performances in elective political offices. This is largely due to the sentimental attachment on feminine gender. Although they have been playing crucial role in political life of the country, this has not yielded results in terms of their performances when it comes to elective offices. Although women are currently participating more actively in politics than ever before, they are besieged with challenges of which discrimination is more rife. The psyche of the Nigerian man is often predominated by a chauvinistic disposition that decision making is exclusively for the menfolk while women are to be instructed on what to do. The preoccupation that women play the number two role at homes is playing itself out in their political life. With her 36 states, the Federal Capital Territory and 774 local government areas, Nigeria is believed to have over 800 women who enjoy positions of eminence as 'first among equals'. Although there is no constitutional provision for the office of the first lady, Nigeria has paraded several First Ladies and many amongst them played roles that made them so prominent. For instance, at Nigeria's independence, Mrs. Flora Azikiwe was known as Nigeria's First Lady and she frequently attended state functions with her husband. After her, there were a few First Ladies that became prominent despite the relative short time they spent in the State house. One of them was Victoria Aguiyi-Ironsi whose stay was short but she was very visible. She was succeeded by Victoria Gowon who stayed in the State House for eight years but her presence was equally felt in several public appearances. When democracy returned in 1999, Stella Obasanjo, the First Lady of Nigeria's former President Olusegun Obasanjo transformed the public view of her "office". She actually became prominent before she became the First Lady, when she started several activism campaigns for release of her husband who was imprisoned in 1995 for allegedly taking part in a coup to overthrow the government. Her activities spurred females to be strong and independent, and as such gathered wide support. She once commented that even though her husband had made a commitment to improving living conditions in Nigeria, "things will continue to deteriorate in the country unless more women are allowed to participate in governance." In the years of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida as Nigeria President, there was a turning point in the history of women struggle in Nigeria, when Maryam Babangida institutionalized the office of the first lady in 1987. She became the first working First Lady and launched the "Better Life for Rural Women" programme. Ever since, other women have followed suit. Okonjo-Iweala: Begs for time Currently, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala is holding sway as Coordinating Minister and Minister of Finance. Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili also laid a land mark in the history of Nigeria politics. The late Prof. Dora Akunyili, the NAFDAC boss and former Information Minister left her footprints in the sand of time, performing credibly and leading the fight against adulterated pharmaceutical drugs. There have been myriads of women in politics even presently that have done very well and are still performing excellently well. But in elective positions, women have not performed well in compliance with the efforts they put in electioneering campaigns. In her view over the poor performance of women in elective offices, Dr. Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, an activist has made a case for a systemic approach to elective positions. According to her, "There is a need for us to have a common agenda as women, and behind this agenda there is also the need to have the will to move beyond mere discussion. Look at the national conference for example; there were 92 women out of the entire 492 delegates and women are

supposed to comprise over half of Nigeria's population! "We have had round-table discussions, open discussions, and I think it is high time we engaged in a more systematic way to be better represented in governance. We need to engage political parties and government because even the National Gender Policy declared 35% affirmative action". Poor history In the past general elections in Nigeria, female candidates consistently performed badly. In 2011 for instance, only 32 women were elected to the national assembly out of 469 members, which is barely 8% representation. Out of the 109 Senators who emerged winners at the 2011 polls, only 7 (6.4%) were women. The successful candidates were Nkechi J. Nwaogu, Mrs. Helen U. Esuene, Nenadi Usman and Aisha Jummai, all of PDP. Others include Christiana N.O. Anyanwu , Joy Emordi both of APGA and lastly, Chief (Mrs) Oluremi Tinubu. The casualties of the 2011 national assembly elections included Senator Iyabo Obasanjo-Bello, Senator Daisy Danjuma and Kema Chikwe. The decrease in the percentage of female candidates that won at the polls is disturbing given the increase in the number of women who contested and the figure dropped significantly when compared to the performance of Senator Gbemi Saraki women in previous elections. In the 2007 general elections, 9 (8.25%) female candidates won the senatorial seats. They were Gbemisola Saraki-Fowora (Kwara State), Christiana Anyanwu (Imo State), Zainab Kure(Niger State), Grace Bent (Adamawa State), Joy Emodi (Anambra State), Eme Ufot Ekaete (Akwa Ibom State), Patricia Akwashiki (Nasarawa State), Iyabo Obasanjo-Bello (Ogun State) and Nkechi Justina Nwaogu (Abia State). In the 2003 elections, there were 4 (3.67%) female senators. Out of the 360 available seats in the Federal House of Representatives, women won only 19 (5.27%). From records, few women emerged members of House of Assembly across the polity and members of the National Assembly. In states like Adamawa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Oyo, Sokoto, Yobe, and Zamfara, no woman was elected as member of the State House of Assembly. In states where women were elected as members, they were very few. Important gains The 2011 election in Nigeria saw some important gains in women's political participation. President Goodluck Jonathan appointed 33% of cabinet positions to women (up from 10% in the last government), including the ministerial portfolios of finance and education. This is in keeping with Nigeria's commitments to gender equality, encapsulated in the National Gender Policy , which sets the benchmark for women's seats in Parliament at 35% – 5% higher than the international standard. From 1999-2007 there were marginal but steady increases in political participation of women through election or appointment. Yet in 2011 women gained no more seats than at the 2007 election (and they lost many at the Federal level). This was a huge disappointment given that in each past election, there has been approximately a 2% increase in numbers of women elected . In the 2011 elections, after the political primaries, women candidates constituted just over 9% of the total number of candidates contesting the polls. No doubt, the nature of Nigerian politics also discourages women's participation. Political meetings are often held late at night on an ad hoc basis, making attendance difficult for women, who face greater personal risk in travelling alone at night and often have to arrange for assistance to care for families. Women who do attend such meetings have, according to numerous anonymised sources, been labelled as women of easy virtues. More generally, politics is considered to be a 'dangerous' pursuit in Nigeria and female politicians are frequently considered of dubious moral character, given their desire to be involved in this profession. In the just-concluded 2015 general elections, only 14 women emerged members of the House of Representatives-elect according to data provided

in INEC website. The exact number of female senators are 7 and those that emerged winners included Binta Masi Garba, Uche Ekwunife, Stella Oduah, Rose Oko, Fatimat Raji-Rasaki, Oluremi Tinubu and Monsurat Sunmonu. The results of some elections held across states in Nigeria have been inconclusive. Looking back, Oby Nwankwo, thinks a time has come for quota system to be applied in the scheme of things. N10.6trn controversy: Oby Ezekwesili “In the 29 states where governorship elections held in 2011, the representation of women seeking the office of governor and deputy governor stood at 87 (22.9 percent) out of the 380 candidates running for the positions. That pathetic percentage was made up of candidates from less known political parties, amounting to no significant increase in women’s representation. “In the contest for Senatorial seats, 122 women out of 747 candidates, representing 16 percent, were cleared by INEC to run. However, only eight of them eventually won elections to the upper chamber. That makes it 101 men against eight women in the Senate. “In the lower chamber of parliament, the situation was not any better as 267 women, out of a total of 1,774 candidates, ran for seats at the House of Representatives. This is just 15 percent. For the womenfolk, this is heartbreaking as the 2011 elections robbed them of the many gains of 2007. “Nigeria must adopt quota system if the affirmative action must be implemented. The Justice Uwais report recommended a proportional representation but that was unfortunately ignored. In Cross River State however, twinning system is being proposed to ensure that if, for example, the governorship candidate is a male, the deputy is a female. That way, more women will come on board. It’s sad to hear that out of 360 seats at the lower house in the National Assembly, we have only 24 women! Out of a Senate House of 109, we also have only four women! This is in spite of the 2006 National Gender Policy raising the affirmative action to 35% which we still do not have!” Bucknor-Akerele Indeed, It has not been smooth for the Nigerian women in terms of representation in top public offices. At present, in the Senate, none of the principal officers is a woman, and only eight of the 109 Senators are women. The House of Representatives has only one female principal officer. However, only 24 (7 per cent) of the 362 members are women. The figures of women in Nigerian politics are in contrast with the situation in countries such as Rwanda, where women make up 61 of 106 parliamentarians (58 per cent), and Senegal where women occupy 65 of the 150 parliamentary seats (43 per cent). In Nigeria’s 36 states, there is no female governor, and the country does not appear ready to have a woman as president. All of these realities exist despite the National Gender Policy’s promise to support women to occupy 35 per cent of elective positions in Nigeria. Remi Sonaiya, KOWA’s presidential candidate, at the twitter conference said, “Women should begin to seek elective positions more; not just appointments. With each woman that rises beyond those limitations, many more get encouraged.” Amy Oyekunle, the Executive Director of the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND), said that for women to remain relevant in parties, there is need to “advocate for greater representation at the party levels, support women through actively identifying, training and building capacity to lead, contest, and advocate for issues, and also create affirmative action like quotas to enable them contest” In the beginning... Before the early 21st century, the role and status of women in Nigeria have continuously evolved. In the precolonial period, women played a major role in social and economic activities. Division of labour was along gender lines, and women controlled such occupations as food processing, mat weaving, pottery making, and cooking. Moreover, land was communally owned, and women had access to it through their husbands or parents. Although a man was the head of the household in a patrilineal system, older women

had control of the labour of younger family members. Outside the home, women were seen but not heard. In the public, power was generally dominated by men, but titles were given to women in specific areas. Yoruba and Hausa legends describe periods when women were either the actual kings or heroines. Such women as Moremi of Ile-Ife and Amina of Zaria are notable legendary figures, as are the powerful queens in the Ondo and Daura histories. Formal education has been the most powerful agency of change for the modern woman, from which a large number of elite women have emerged. Intelligent, educated, and confident, the modern woman can be found in all leading occupations; they now challenge many aspects of patriarchy and are gradually organizing to ensure that the political arena expands sufficiently to accommodate them. Enter the modern woman The transformation undergone by the Nigerian woman over the years as a result of education became manifest in democratic regimes. Since 1999, Nigerian women have been active in Orelupe-Adefulire politics. Their participation in the ongoing Fourth Republic has produced prominent women like Dr Okonjo Iweala, who currently serves as Minister of Finance and Coordinating minister for the Nigerian economy). Women have even run for top political offices, for instance, the case of Sarah Jibril and Prof. Oluremi Sonaiya of Kowa party who contested for the office of President with Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 and 2015 respectively; and Hon. Mulikat and who strongly vied for the seat of Speaker House of Representative. As it were, women are said to constitute over 60% of the Nigerian electorate. The 2006 census puts Nigerian women at about half the population of the entire country. But despite this numerical advantage and the massive participation in voting, less than 20% of political offices are held by women. But despite the difficulties faced by women in politics, they have continued with their political ambition, contributing enormously to the political and national development in their own way. Before independence, a couple of women political activists such as, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, Mrs. Janet Mokelu and Ms. Young were members of the Eastern House of Assembly. The late Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, though not a full-fledged politician, was a very strong force to reckon with in the politics of the Western Region. And Hajia Gambo Sawaba waged a fierce battle for the political and cultural emancipation of women in the North. As democracy matures, there has been an increase in the number of male governorship candidates that had women as their deputies. Political parties in Lagos State often choose women to contest as deputy governors. In 1999, only Lagos State had an elected female Deputy Governor in the person of Mrs Kofoworola Akerele-Bucknor although she was later removed and replaced by Femi Pedro, a man, as a result of party intrigues. In 2003, the number of deputy female governors increased to 2 (5.5%), in 2007 it increased to 6 (16.6%). The 2011 general elections produced only a female deputy governor in the person of Mrs Adejoke Orelupe Adefulire of Lagos State who contested under the platform of Action Congress of Nigeria(ACN). Some of the female candidates contested against male political heavy weights. A case in point is Plateau State where Paullen Tallen (Labour Party) once contested against political heavyweights such as Joshua Dariye who was governor from 1999-2006. Senator Gbemisola Saraki-Fowora (ACPN) who contested for the governor's seat in Kwara State had ethical and religious issues to contend with in addition to contesting against the PDP's candidate which also pitched her against her brother who was the incumbent governor of the State. Quite a number of women in past dispensations won their parties' primary ticket for the National Assembly and the various States' Houses of Assembly. In Lagos State, all the female candidates from ACN won at the polls in the election into the National Assembly and the State House of Assembly.

Women contested for only 7(17.5%) seats out of the 40 seats at the Lagos State House of Assembly. Adamawa State which had 23 women vying for political offices managed to produce only three female winners, they include Hajiya Aishatu, Mrs Wale Fwa and Mrs Wilbina Jackson. Financial challenge Perhaps , the greatest challenge women face in getting elected in Nigeria relates to financial constraints. The costs of running an electoral campaign are high – even more so in the context of Nigeria where politics is highly monetised. Aside from paying for the campaign itself and the materials and coverage that go along with this, many candidates also dispense ‘patronage’, in the form of cash handouts, to voters. Women are at a disadvantage in this regard as they consistently earn less than their male counterparts and are usually not in charge of household finances, limiting their ability to make independent decisions. While many candidates receive donations from patrons, there are few patrons willing to risk their money on female candidates, given the low likelihood of them being elected. As a result, women’s campaigning is frequently smaller-scale, with less coverage than that of men. This helps to explain the lower success rate of women at the Federal, as opposed to State level. But as Nigerian Senator Patricia Akwashiki says, ‘how can 9 women senators or less represent 54 million women in Nigeria?’ In every ramification, the Nigerian woman has come a long way despite her dismal performance in the field of politics. There is no doubt that women have some potentials and rights to contribute meaningfully to the development of their country. The Nigerian government should therefore, work towards achieving gender equality in democratic governance, increase Frontline female politician, Sarah Jubril women participation and access to politics. Dr. Joe Okei-Odumakin thinks internal democracy is very necessary in political parties as efforts to get more women in elective positions have not yielded very good results. “There is no internal democracy in the political parties and this has continued to prevent women from having equal political opportunity. Though the present administration of President Goodluck Jonathan has tried to improve on appointive positions for women, it is yet to meet the 35% affirmative action. This was why women delegates at the national conference identified the urgent need for gender mainstreaming and full implementation of the 35% affirmative action. There are, however, efforts going on right now at different levels, engaging political platforms and demanding that political spaces be opened up for the inclusion of more

Illustration 2

Buhari laughs off wife's comments, says she belongs to 'my kitchen'

By Online Editor

Vanguard newspaper, 14 October 2016 | 2:17 pm



President Muhammadu Buhari is currently in Germany to confer with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel

President Muhammadu Buhari has reacted to comments made by his wife, Aisha, that she may [not support him if he seeks reelection in 2019](#).

“I will not go out and campaign again and ask any woman to vote like I did before. I will never do it again,” Mrs Buhari said in an interview with BBC Hausa’s Naziru Mikailu.

But President Buhari has laughed off his wife’s comment while talking to reporters in Germany where he is meeting with the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel.

“I don’t know which party my wife belongs to, but she belongs to my kitchen and my living room and the other room,” said President Buhari, Associated Press reported.

Mrs Buhari claimed that her husband is surrounded by people he does not know and suggested that the government might have been hijacked from him, a sentiment shared by the president of the Nigerian senate, [Bukola Saraki](#).

Saraki had on June 27, 2016, claimed that there was a cabal in the Federal Government that had taken over the rein of government from President Buhari.

But the president has discounted Mrs Buhari's sentiments. "So I claim superior knowledge over her and the rest of the opposition because in the end I have succeeded," he said.

"It's not easy to satisfy the whole Nigerian opposition parties or to participate in the government."

Illustration 3

Aisha Buhari: We all know where we belong

By Paul John

The Guardian newspaper, 20 October 2016 | 3:11 am



Aisha Buhari

For some time now, our electronic and print media have been awash with news items about a recent interview granted to the BBC by the wife of the President Muhammadu Buhari, Aisha. Following the aftermath of that interview, the President while fielding questions in far away Germany, described his wife as belonging to his kitchen, his living room and ‘the other room.’ This happened in a country where a woman is the Chancellor and in a year when a woman became the British Prime Minister not mentioning the fact the U.S. is about to have its first woman President. Shortly, after this presidential faux pas, Garba Shehu lamely attempted to disabuse the minds of Nigerians as to the innocuous import and purport of that statement by attributing it to Mr. President’s sense of humour.

However, need one remind Garba Shehu that of an Igbo adage: ‘Ebe a na-ama njakiri ka a na-agwa mmadu eziokwu’, one is told the truth through jokes? In other words, it is in the midst of friendly banter that the greatest truth emerges. Even if as Garba Shehu wants the whole world to believe that Mr President was only joking when he said that his wife belongs to his kitchen, his living room and ‘the other room,’ the import and dimension of that message cannot be easily or merely dismissed offhandedly as he wishes to do. The question is: How many women have been

appointed by the President to head Federal establishments or to be part of his cabinet? This is unlike the last administration where many women were given some key positions and allowed to do their jobs without fear or favour. A case in point happened to be the appointment of the first ever female Chief Justice of the Federation by the last administration. What is the President doing currently about the much touted 35% affirmation? Nigerians voted for change. Nigerians wanted to do things right or even better which was why some people opted for President Buhari against former President Goodluck Jonathan. But what are they getting now?

The worst of it all is that the President made the statement in a continent that never plays with women's rights and in a country where a mother of eight is the Minister of Defence, superintending over one of the strongest military forces in the world. Thus, some feminist groups in Germany immediately called it a hate speech and demanded the immediate exit of the President from their territory. Did we not see how visibly angry Mrs. Merkel ended the press conference to save the President further embarrassment? Let the truth be told, as far as this administration is concerned women are meant for the kitchen, the living room and 'the other room.' I may not bother to ask the DSS, EFCC or any of their sister agencies to investigate the meaning of the 'other room' rather I will assume that 'the other room' means the bedroom. But taking the President's speech to a wider context, one would remember that immediately he assumed office in 2015, there was an interview equally credited to him where he said it would be unfair giving the same degree of attention he is giving to those who gave him 97% votes to those who gave him only 5% votes. Is it not absurd that the region classified under 5% is the region that sustains the Nigerian economy through its oil production? The President said this as a cryptic reference to those from the South-southern and the South-eastern states whom the President believed did not give enough support to his presidential bid. Will the presidential spokesperson also come out to tell us that it was equally part of Mr President's numerous humours? But then Nigerians do not need jesters, else they would not have opted for the President, neither do they need a male chauvinist in a country that has more than 43% of its population to be women and girls else they would not have voted him into power.

Before Mr. Garba Shehu comes out to defend his master, I will like to inform him that even the blind can see and the deaf can hear the impacts of the 5% voting pattern on all the Federal roads in both South-southern and south-eastern states respectively. It was a heart wrenching experience to me on September 20, 2016, the day I travelled from Aba to Calabar. The road was so bad that passengers had to come down for the vehicle to wobble over a bridge that was located at a town in Akwa Ibom State, just close to Obingwa in Abia State. A visit to Onitsha-Enugu express road, the most strategic Federal Highway in the Southeast explains in clear terms the true meaning of having 5% voting reward. Road users are now forced to make use of alternate state roads which are farther and longer than the Federal Highway. Talk about the Okigwe-Nnewi-Onitsha Federal Highway, you will see the same 5% voting reward in action. Port Harcourt-Enugu Federal Highway is yet evidence of the 5% voting reward. The road has become so bad that the indefatigable Rivers State Governor, Barrister Ezenwo Wike, decided to extend his 'operation zero pothole' to the road especially along Obigbo Express road.

Before then, any day I remembered I had a patient to go and review in Obigbo, my mind would sink within me because the road was so bad that no sane car owner

would wish to ply it in his or her own car. Fortunately, the Abia State governor has equally come to repair his own part of the federal road thereby providing some albeit temporarily relief to road users by reducing the incessant congestion usually witnessed on it.

Coming to the railway sector, the Eastern Railway District remains the most poorly maintained of all the railway districts in Nigeria today. It has to be noted that Eastern Railway District is the only railway district in Nigeria that still serves two geopolitical zones: the South-south and the Southeast. This is most worrisome given the fact that one of their sons is the current Minister of Transport. But then, the two regions are part of the 5% voters whose reward is maladministration and neglect. Even having a transport minister is not enough to insulate the regions from the consequences giving only 5% of their votes to Mr. President in the last general elections. When travelling on the train, the type of frictions experienced at the Eastern segment disappears once the train passes the Eastern region. The so-called first class coach (which in other railway districts is second class) initially found in the Eastern Railway District has been returned to the exclusive enjoyment of the 97% voters. What will one say about Federal appointments, an issue that has generated a lot of heat among concerned citizens? However, one thing that stands out is that even in the appointments, both south-southern and south-eastern states have not been given the luxury of having their sons and daughters occupy at least the so-called 5% positions in Federal appointments purportedly reserved for them to reflect their voting pattern in the 2015 general elections. Indeed, never in the history of the nation has Nigeria been so polarised! Not even during the civil war! I need not talk about the shooting going on following the clampdown on IPOB members and the wanton killings being perpetrated by terrorists who disguise as Fulani herdsmen. The land is sick thanks to Mr. President's arithmetic of 5% against 97% voting pattern!

Finally, I will not attack Mr. Garba Shehu because he is only doing the job he is being paid for. Nevertheless, it is a joke for him to think that he can convince any reasonable Nigerian that Mr President's statement was merely meant to be a friendly banter, or that the President does not in any way imply by his statement that women in our country are meant for 'the kitchen, sitting room and the other room' by the current administration the same way that people of the South-southern and South-eastern geopolitical zones have been reduced to the enjoyment of only if not less than 5% of government presence and appointments in line with their purported voting pattern in the last presidential election. Indeed, we all know where we belong in this present administration.