

**WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN HOUSES OF
ASSEMBLY OF SELECTED STATES IN SOUTHWESTERN
NIGERIA, 1999-2019**

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CERTIFICATION

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In loving memory of my mother Oluwatoyin Adebayo who died on Tuesday May 17, 2022

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ABSTRACT

Democracy drives social development and enhances political participation. Women in Nigeria remain underrepresented in all levels of politics, especially the legislature. Existing studies have focused largely on Women's Political Representation (WPR) at the national level, with little consideration given to state's legislature and its contributions to women's issues. This study was, therefore, designed to assess WPR in southwestern Nigeria from 1999 to 2019, a period that falls after the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and the beginning of Nigeria nascent democracy. Factors that influence the selection of women into legislative Committees, women's contributions to lawmaking with reference to women's issues and constituency services were also examined.

Anne Phillips' Politics of Presence Theory was adopted as the framework, while exploratory and case study designs were used. Houses of Assembly (HoAs) in Ekiti (EKSHA), Lagos (LSHA) and Ogun (OGSHA) states were purposively selected based on more representation of female lawmakers than others. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 63 respondents. Key Informant Interviews were conducted with 18 lawmakers (15 females and three males), 21 party leaders and nine gender activists, based on their positions as constitutional representatives of the people, importance to political recruitment, and knowledge of women issues, respectively. In-depth Interviews were conducted with nine legislative support staff and six members of the Executive arm of government. Legislative and constituency records, as well as newspaper reports and journal articles, provided the secondary data. Data were thematically analysed.

Only the LSHA had female representatives among the three HoAs as of 1999. The situation however improved when a female became the Speaker in OGSHA in 2003. The level of WPR in EKSHA rose from one in 2003 to four in 2011 and 2019. In LSHA, WPR witnessed a decline from seven in 2011 to three in 2019. In OGSHA, WPR maintained a steady increase from one in 2003 to four in 2019. However, these numerical increases fell below the number required as tipping point for women's effective representation. Female representatives in the HoAs featured prominently in Committees normatively associated with women, such as women affairs, poverty alleviation, health, information, education and finance. Lawmakers' policy preferences, academic backgrounds, as well as professional and legislative experience, were identified as factors that influenced selection of women into the Committees. Out of the 34 female representatives who served in the HoAs, only four (two in OGSHA, and one each in EKSHA and LSHA) sponsored bills, though none addressed women-specific issues. Constituency services carried out by female representatives revealed their policy preferences for health, education, women empowerment and financial support for widows and the elderly.

Women's political representation in Houses of Assembly in southwestern Nigeria from 1999 to 2019 was low with minimal impact on women's issues. Hence, there is the need for women to contribute more to legislative policymaking.

Keywords: Women's representation, Legislative Committees, Nigeria's democracy, Political office holders.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APC	All Progressives Congress
APM	Allied People’s Movement
AWDF	Africa Women Development Fund
CPN	Child Protection Network
CS	Commonwealth Secretariat
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWC	Central Working Committee
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EKSHA	Ekiti State House of Assembly
FIN	Female in Nigeria
FNWS	Federation of Nigerian Women Societies
FOMWAN	Federation of Muslim Women’s Association in Nigeria
FPTP	First Past the Post
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GERAC	Girl Education, Rehabilitation and Care
HND	Higher National Diploma
HoA	House of Assembly
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDI	In-depth Interview
IFRA	French Institute for Research in Africa
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IRI	International Republican Institute
JAMB	Joint Admission and Matriculation Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
LASU	Lagos State University
LSHA	Lagos State House of Assembly
MDGS	Millenium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NCNC	National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon

NCS	Nigeria Customs Service
NCWS	National Council of Women Societies
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGP	National Gender Policy
NNCR	Nigerian National Conference Report
NUJ	Nigerian Union of Journalists
NURTW	National Union of Road Transport Workers
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGSHA	Ogun State House of Assembly
PDP	Peoples Democratic Party
PoKI	Panel of Knowledgeable Informant
PR	Proportional Representation
PTF	Priceless Trust Foundation
PWAN	Partners West Africa Initiative, Nigeria
SSCE	Secondary School Certificate Examination
WAPA	Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation
WARD-C	Women Advocacy and Research Documentation Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WIN	Women in Nigeria
WLC	Women's Legislative Caucus
WORDOC	Women's Research and Documentation Centre
WOWICAN	Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria
WPR	Women's Political Representation
WSR	Women Substantive Representation
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In Nigeria, as in most countries of the world, elective offices and gender parity have not enjoyed strong relationship (Inter-parliamentary Union, 2020; Bauer, 2019). Since Hanna Pitkin's seminal work on the concept of representation in 1967, scholars of politics of gender representation have theorized and analyzed the dynamics of political representation. Basically, they try to decipher the effect of numerical presence on policies initiated and passed. According to Childs and Krooks (2009), a very important question for scholars in this regard is to understand female legislators' policymaking experiences, and whether, or not they act for women.

Throughout the course of history, the debarment of different groups of people has been incorporated into the political structure especially on yardsticks such as gender, ethnicity, and social status, phenomena which have warranted great deal of struggle to be remediated and privileges for government responsibilities expanded to even the commoners (Hoodfar and Tajali, 2011). In the specific case of women, although they make up about half of the world's total population and have also achieved equal citizenship status to men, in some countries, there is clear absence of their involvement in the basic leadership process whether at the grassroots, regional/state/provincial and the national levels (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012). Montgomery (2017) observed that their endeavour to get into governance have been historically restricted through patriarchal cultures.

The sphere of politics has always been dominated by men and this has created a chilly environment that inhibits women's representation. Lawless and Fox (2012) in their investigation on women in politics in the United States revealed some of the factors that contribute to gender disparity in governmental representation, some of which suggested that women are more likely to see the political environments as very biased against them and that female potential candidates are less aggressive and more scared of the dynamic

of politics than their male partners. Additionally, Kevane (2014: 269) remarks that “women support democracy less, participate less, and are less likely to present themselves, be nominated, and be elected for political office”. Although, these perceptions probably would not be completely adaptable to the understanding of women’s encounters in Nigeria, nonetheless, they still provide a conduit through which the experiences of women in the country can be understood. Differential perception along gender line still stifles women’s inclusion, the implication of which is the danger that it presages to their citizenship rights and benefits.

Today, it has been physiologically affirmed that the accepted contrast between men and women are misleadingly developed and overstated, and as such, inconsequential as to legitimize the social holes and general imbalance between them (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2008). The perspective of an inflexible gender role compartmentalization on the hypothesis of biological determinism is thus presently impossible to support. Gender role contrasts are flexible and are available to controls and changes over time. Indeed, gender roles have experienced gigantic changes which had debilitated the establishment on which a simple natural determinism was introduced. The fact that the biological school of gender roles has commanded the considerations of numerous researchers for long is not surprising, since nature is an argument commonly used in debates on the politics of gender representation. Religious narratives, sentiments and conclusions are also readily mobilised and activated in defence of an inflexible gender regime (Olurode, 2013).

While some indicators for measuring gender equality are progressing, the decrease in the prevalence of early marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for example, progress on structural issues at the roots of gender inequality, such as, unfair social norms and attitudes and low level of political representation remains very limited. In the perspective of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), gender parity has turned out to be the key to development undertakings all over and in international meetings particularly (Muleya, 2012). Although women’s involvement in electoral politics is low, Firestone (1970), (1972), Dali (1978), Therborn (2004) and many other researchers have distinguished male-centric societal structure as the most essential framework that can be utilized for analysing gender inequalities across social strata including politics or any power structured relationship. This is the reason women have had to struggle throughout

political history to be enfranchised, an evolution of their electoral rights which is reflected in the suffragettes' movement (MacDonald, 2006).

As noted in the 2006 National Gender Policy (NGP) in Nigeria, women's interest in taking part in the electoral process is regularly dampened for various reasons such as electoral mal-practices and harsh political environment. These factors and many more like religious and cultural inclinations against women's involvement as well as lack of adequate resources to contend with the men in politics have increased general political apathy among them. As such, women constitute a minority in virtually all legislative assemblies across the world (Inter-Parliamentary Union. 2020). Although, empirical evidence regarding the effect of critical mass is inconclusive (Bauer and Burnet, 2013), the implication of low descriptive representation on substantive representation is huge, since substantive representation flows directly from descriptive representation (Allen and Childs, 2019).

The national government of Nigeria and the international bodies have been proactive in their commitment to improving women's representation through other different measures and set of strategies, apart from the constitution which does not provide any dichotomy between the political right of both men and women. However, the discrimination along gender line continues to exist. With over two decades of uninterrupted democratic governance in Nigeria, women still grapple with political marginalization as they are hardly ever heard. According to Ekundayo and Ama (2014), noticeable improvements were observed in women's representation in elective offices between 2003 and 2007 (see figure in Tamunosaki and Davies, 2019: 24), however apart from the fact that such improvement does not reflect women's numerical strength, it also does not register any achievement in policies advancements for women.

Attention to this phenomenon has encouraged the Nigerian government to make enabling policies in an attempt to improve women's participation in electoral politics as gladiators rather than being onlookers as it were. Nonetheless, the response to take up this responsibility has been low. Additionally, the debate on the politics of gender representation has expanded beyond numerical gains to achieving sustainable development through effective legislative policymaking. Dahlerup (1988) argues that it is not enough to get more women elected to the parliament for example, rather it is equally important to scrutinize the quality of their representation. In view of the foregoing, the

research focused not only on women's numerical presence, but it also assessed the contributions of women in legislative policymaking and constituency engagements in selected states Houses of Assembly (HoAs) in Southwestern, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Promoting political representational symmetry along gender line has now been internationally established as an advancement strategy which could help both women and men get out of destitution, enhance their livelihood, and also promote peace and security (Akiyode-Afolabi and Arogundade, 2003; Muleya, 2012; Kevane, 2014; Paffenholz, Ross, Dixon, Schluchter and True, 2016). Expanding Women's Political Representation (WPR) especially ensures noticeable gain for democratic governance. Such gains include citizen's needs centered policy development, cooperation across party lines and more sustainable peace (National Democratic Institute, 2012). While significant attention has been made to call attention to increased WPR, the average share of women in legislative houses at both national and regional tiers across countries of the world remains very low (IPU, 2020).

In Nigeria, despite the introduction of a NGP which seeks to improve WPR in 2006, an analysis of the trend of political development reveals the negligible role of women in politics. While women continue to participate effectively in politics, such participation has been as voters and mobilizers during elections (Olutayo and Adebayo, 2017). Moreover, of the few that are elected in legislative bodies, little is known about their contributions in legislative policymaking.

The WPR discourse has attracted attention from different scholars globally. Existing literatures have pointed to the fact that patriarchal culture has over the years concretized the masculine and the dominant nature of men in politics (Lovenduski, 2005; Wangnerud, 2009; Omodia, Erunke and Shuaibu, 2013; Nkenkana, 2015; Oloyede, 2016). Scholars like Lawless and Fox (2012) have also identified women's lack of interest. Additionally, Luka (2011), Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014), Omenma, Onu and Omenma (2016) and Rosen (2017) in their works emphasised patriarchy and several socio-economic variables such as religion, violence, night meetings, blackmail and finance to be responsible for women's low representation especially in the legislative policymaking.

For Preece and Stoddard (2015), while women's political underrepresentation has been well documented, the reasons behind it are still not well understood. Importantly, Dahlerup's 1988 classic work on the analysis of the critical mass theory in WPR discourse has also called for a new perspective which has often been neglected by Nigerian scholars working on women's political participation who more often than not focus on women's numerical representation rather than their activities and contributions to legislative activities (Wangnerud, 2009; Domingo et al., 2015). The closest work in this regard which was carried out by (Nwankwor, 2019), was limited to the executive arm of government. This has created a gap in which the present study filled. Therefore, the study assessed the level of female legislators in selected HoAs. Importantly, it interrogated the factors that inform the composition of house committees for women along with their contributions to lawmaking, particularly with regards to the promotion of women's issues and constituency services. This study was carried out in three selected HoAs in southwestern Nigeria where women's descriptive representation currently peaks at 27% (INEC Database).

1.3 Research questions

1. What is the level of female lawmakers' representation in the selected Houses of Assembly?
2. Are there factors that influence the composition of house committees for women?
3. What are the contributions of women representatives in law making activities particularly with respect to women's issues?
4. What are the contributions of women representatives to constituency services?

1.4 Research aim and objectives

The research examined the activities of women's representatives in Ekiti, Lagos and Ogun States Houses of Assembly and how such activities contributed to the promotion of women issues. Specifically, the study:

1. assessed the level of women's representation in the selected HoAs
2. identify the factors that influence the selection of women into house committees
3. examined the contribution of female lawmakers in legislative policymaking particularly with respect to women's issues.
4. analyse the contributions of female lawmakers to constituency services

1.5 Scope of the study

The geographical scope of the study was limited to southwestern Nigeria. Southwestern Nigeria comprises six states or federating units: Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ogun, Lagos and Ekiti. The geographical scope is chosen basically from the high representation of women when compared to the other five geo-political zones of the country which is presently at 27%. The states were ranked and the first three (Lagos, Ekiti and Ogun) were selected for the study (INEC Database).

The time scope for this research covers six legislative assemblies which is from 1999 to 2019.

1.6 Significance of the study

On the one hand, the persistence of gender representational asymmetry keeps on representing a serious obstruction to human development in Africa (Montgomery, 2017). In Nigeria for instance, women's upward political mobility seems, by all account, to be a difficult task. The insignificant descriptive representation of women has been identified as one critical issue which needs to be focused on in order to reverse the socio-cultural and institutional discrimination against them (Mofoluwawo, 2014). On the other hand, beyond the effort to increase WPR by activating measures to counter underrepresentation, it is equally important to take stock of these representations in substantive term, that is, advancing women's (in this context) policy preferences and interests (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013).

The importance of this work to scholarship is emphasized by the perspective it provides for the exploration of the nature of violence, which is not physical, but deeply rooted in the culture of patriarchy to have marginalized women and diminish their numerical presence and contributions to legislative policymaking. It is also convenient to conclude that this phenomenon is generalised enough to have warranted international corrective effort. A meso-level analysis as this is also important in Nigeria where its federal system dictates that several policies affecting women and welfare of the people are articulated and legislated upon at the state level.

It is believed that this study will be a useful source of information for institutions, agencies and NGOs in the effort to enlighten women on the need to be more active in electoral

politics and also to emphasize the quality and not only the quantity of representation. It will likewise be helpful for an individual researcher who intends to research further in the same area of study in any other location in the country.

1.7 Operational definition of terms

Democracy: In this study, democracy refers to a governmental system in which every qualified adult citizen share in the supreme power of the state.

Democratic governance: In this study, democratic governance refers to a system of government where institutional functions and practices are shaped by democratic principles and norms. Such norms include the constitution and rule of law, fundamental human rights, independent judiciary, free press, periodic elections and so on.

Election: In this study, it refers to a process by which a candidate vies for position of authority through the ballot. It can also be described as the process of choosing representatives to a legislative or executive governmental position.

Gender: In this study, gender refers to the social and cultural prescriptions and proscriptions for people in their social roles as either men or women.

Major political parties: In this study, major political parties are defined as those parties which are capable of winning an election at the state/region/province or at the national level.

Patriarchy: In this study, patriarchy refers to a cultural and societal system that privileges men in all areas and at all levels of decision-making.

Political participation: In this study, political participation refers to the ways in which people get involved in choosing their leaders and formulating and implementing policies for governance.

Political representation: In this study, it refers to the activities of registering citizens' opinions and positions in public policymaking process. Specifically, political representation occurs when elected or selected representatives of people through their various electoral district/constituencies or political regions speaks and act on behalf of others most especially in the legislative arm of government.

Power: In this study, power refers to the recognized right to make decisions, to direct and demand compliance that aligns with the law of any given state.

Representative democracy: In this study, representative democracy refers to an indirect form of democracy where eligible members of the electorate vote to choose representatives among themselves to represent their interest in government.

Substantive representation: In this study, substantive representation refers to actions and contributions of the lawmakers in legislative assemblies, rather than just their presence.

Republic: In this study, a republic is defined as a sovereign state with a government elected periodically. Nigeria became a republic on 1 October 1963 and has since experienced four republics in all albeit at different intervals. For example, the 1st republic ended on the 15th of January 1966 through a military coup. The 2nd and 3rd republics were experienced between 1979 to 1983 and 1993 respectively. Nigeria's 4th and current republic commenced in 1999 and has since recorded 6 elections which are conducted every four years.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Democratic governance

The concept of democracy or what is otherwise known as popular government has been a point of convergence of great research since the establishment of its classical or direct model in Athens, Greece. Yet, to the vast majority, it remains an idea vulnerable to misinterpretations in principles and practice. For example, in Africa, there is the tendency for sit tight and junta leaders to assert popular support, and in this way see their regime as also democratic (Ehindero, 2016). Be that as it may, democratic ideas and traditions have endured through a long and tumultuous history the world over.

Etymological examination of the concept of democracy affirms its coinage from two Greek words which are, *demos* and *kratein*. The former which means people while the latter means, to govern. Thus, it can literally be deciphered as people's government or alternatively, a type of government where the opinion of most of the people hold sway (Anifowoshe and Enemu, 1999). As such, this system of government is to be distinguished from monarchy; a form of government headed by an emperor or empress, king or queen, Oba [in Yoruba], Sarki [in Hausa], Igwe [in Igbo] or as specific cultural naming would imply. It is also to be differentiated from oligarchy which is a form of minority rule (Becker and Raveloson, 2008). The definition basically suggests that democracy is a type of government where the power of the state is vested in the all-inclusive community.

This definition gives an understanding into the typology of democratic governance which from one perspective can directly involve every qualified adult citizen of a given political entity. However, population explosion has required a modification of this governance practice. While people are still much involved, their governmental responsibilities are entrusted in the hands of their representatives who are elected at different intervals. Brennan and Hamlin (1999) made a classification of direct and indirect democracy. For

them, there is the indirect democracy which is the process whereby the people temporarily delegate the proprietary right over their sovereignty to the elected government. This is opposed to a circumstance whereby citizens express their political rights directly.

Moreover, governance is one word that crops up everywhere. However, the ubiquity of the word does not make its meaning clearer (Bevir, 2010). Originally, the word “governance” is gleaned from the old French word “governor”, and it has to do with the administration of the affairs of a socio-political entity which is defined by three key yardsticks: leadership, administration, and national development (Nwolise 2014). A new emphasis among scholars tries to link governance with security. They define illegitimate governance as a security concern which should warrant international corrective attention (Gardner, 2011). As such, governments would try to defend its hold by claiming that its right to rule ensues from its people.

In summary, democratic governance in a chronological order is meant to emanate from a democratic process. Ikelegbe *et al* (2014: 65) identified the following yardsticks for measuring a democratic government. They are, popular participation, the rule of law and a guarantee of fundamental rights of the people. Even though the combination of these attributes would characterize the yardstick for measuring the development of democracy in any given political entity, elections in a democracy and the environment under which it is conducted gives off an impression of being a greater evaluative instrument for understanding the responsibility of the government as well as its people in advancing democratic values.

2.2 Women and political representation

From a common perspective, political representation is assumed to be highly connected to activities within the practice of representative democracy by citizens elected to political offices. While this is not true in absolute term, it still provides a basis for the understanding of representation in the political arena. Similar to numerous other ideas in the social sciences, there is the lack of consensus in political literature on not only what constitute political representation but also on how to identify a representative of the people and what responsibility they are meant to carry out (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013). In modern times, the concept of representation is significantly used, as every human institution wants representation. Also, every government would most likely claim to be representative of

its people (Pitkin, 1967). However, unravelling the authenticity of these representations and many ways in which they can be institutionalized remains the crux of the politics of political representation.

Representation involves indirect decision-making. In her seminal work, Pitkin (1967) defined political representation as a way to make present again. This suggests that even without the actual full population of electoral districts/constituencies for instance, people's interests are still being well represented. In his analysis, Schweber (2016), with a clearer and calculated thoughts described representation as an idea captured in the metaphor of a map where every detail is included.

For advocates of democracy, delegating and entrusting the representation of people's interest in legislative assemblies solves the problem of representation (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013). The attempt to understand the component of political representation in the words of Childs and Lovenduski (2013: 2) has led to "industry of taxonomy construction". However, the most influential classification has been Pitkin's (1967) which are; authorized representation (representatives are legally empowered to act for another); descriptive representation (representatives stand for a group characterized by sexual, race, ethnic and other similarities); symbolic representation (representative stand for a national idea); substantive representation (representative advances a group's policy preference). However, in recent times, research agenda are also beginning to focus not just only on descriptive representation which have dominated gender and politics scholarship for so long.

Women's political underrepresentation is an enduring problem. For instance, until recently, political actors were presumed to be absolutely males. Only with the emergence of scholarship on the politics of gender representation toward the end of 20th century were discourse on WPR addressed by political scientists (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013). As the number of women lawmakers increased, it then became possible to probe their activities in legislative policymaking.

Writings on politics and political participation are packed with information on women and hindrances to their chances in their quest for upward political mobility. Many of these factors incorporate religion, colonial heritage (in colonized territories, many of which are in the Global South), poverty, illiteracy, finance and high cost of elections, envy among

women, property ownership/right of inheritance, party funding, household division of labour, violence, blackmail, rigging and so on (Luka, 2011, Awofeso and Odeyemi, 2014; Akpan, 2018). However, as can be gathered from Hoodfar and Tajali (2011) in their study on women and electoral politics, recent discoveries from investigations have rejected basic conditions as these. They argued that such variables are a given, and as such, recommended that researchers and activists as well as all those concerned with discourse on WPR must scrutinize this experience in the fight against women's political underrepresentation.

For instance, political entities such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and South Korea with high level of women's enrolment in post-primary institutions have to a great degree, low dimension of female lawmakers which is below 10% when contrasted with countries with amazingly low dimension of female education such as Nepal and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with higher level of female representation. Correspondingly, the level of women's economic capital probably would not associate with their share in parliamentary representation. This is justified in the case of Kingdom of Cambodia and The Gambia where female economic activities range from 70% to 80% as indicated by UNDP gauges, yet the share of women's representatives in parliament is below 10%. Such investigations show the intricacy of components that mitigate WPR. Hoodfar and Tajali in this manner clarified three wide and covering factors that could affect women's entry into politics. They are:

- i. State gender ideology: The gender orientation of a state which is typically reflected in its assemblage of laws can affirm, recognize, or limit women's interventions and contribution in governmental issues. The American and French revolution for example denied women citizenship and rejected their involvement in electoral politics. Also, the progressive belief systems of socialists China and Cuba regarded women as important political actors and advances such thought. Besides, the fall of communist states and their turn towards democratization in the mid-1990s led to a drop in the level of female representation. These instances demonstrate that women's representation is basically associated with state's ideology on gender, as opposed to the predominant political system. In Nigeria, the number of inhibitive measures against women's representation in elective positions is not constrained just by cultural and social boundaries alone, but also by state gender policies and commitments. In contrast to the constitution of South Africa

and Uganda for instance, Nigeria's constitution takes no discernment of the impeded position of women and gives no constitutional measure to ensure gender equality. According to Akiyode-Afolabi and Arogundade (2003), there is nothing in the constitution which aimed at reviewing obtainable variations along gender line. However, by 2014, the country's national conference articulated a robust recommendation to address many of these issues different areas including education, commerce, agriculture and politics (Nigerian National Conference Report, 2014). Yet, government's lack of commitment as pegged its implementation.

ii. Cultural and social barriers: Another obstacle to women's inclusion in electioneering process can be observed in the way of life of the society, including its religious belief system. These impediments prevent women's involvement in electoral politics in diverse ways. However, it, for the most part incorporate socialization and cultural as well as religious mentalities that consider political activities as solely male endeavours. In elections, public opinion matters greatly, and therefore, how people view women's position in the society is very important. For instance, if a typical conviction is that a woman's voice ought not to be heard by men outside the family, or when societal standards suggest that women's role ought to be restricted to the domestic sphere as mothers and wives, their entrance into politics will be severely constrained. In this way, women who are actively involved in politics or public may be seen as undermining the values of the society in order to express and satisfy individual inspirations and self-centred desire. This experience was explicitly perceptible amid the British colonial period in Nigeria. Correspondingly, Praxton (2000) noted that in a social milieu where women are viewed as unopinionated, second-rate incapable of acting independently from men, the propensity of not considering them important might be exceptionally articulated.

iii. Institutional and structural barriers: These barriers incorporate the political system, electoral guidelines, political party structures as well as institutional cultures such as campaign financing patterns which might affect women. Several scholars have contended that the components structure of a political party could work to confine qualified and experienced women's entry into leadership positions (Kittilson, 2006; Paxton, 2007). In fact, studies demonstrate that institutional change frequently prompts the disintegration or adjustment of social obstacle, while the reverse does not really remain constant.

Other factors may also include the following:

iv. Financial Inducement: Critical to the analysis of the barriers to WPR is the issue of inducement. Eligible voters are patronised, and their vote are bought over by politicians, with money and other non-material items as well as promises which they might have no intention of fulfilling. Several contributory factors which include but not limited to poverty can be adduced to this. While the experience portends no good for a developing democracy or any other fully formed democratic institutions, it is important to investigate its dynamics. Huge amount of money goes into vote buying, as such, the source of this needs to be investigated. Democratic elections achieve greater credibility when elections are deemed free, fair, and without inducement whatsoever. Once elections become the business of the highest bidder, the danger it portends to democracy is that people increasingly lose confidence in the process.

v. Consistency: In Nigeria, every four-year interval heralds the period when political candidates vie for elective offices. In these contests, some names have become so familiar that people could easily relate with their political trajectory. For example, several names which are well known in the political terrain include Gboyega Nasiru Isiaka of Ogun State who has contested the gubernatorial election for four times now, Jimi Agbaje of Lagos State who has contested for the same position in Lagos state for three times now, same for Iyiola Omisore of Osun State. Seyi Makinde of Oyo State eventually won the gubernatorial election after three attempts. Political onlookers have observed that this trend of consistency is peculiar only to the men. Many of the known female candidates only try contesting once and quit when they lose. The history of democracy all over the world reflects the trajectory of consistent candidates. Examples that readily come to mind include United States' Abraham Lincoln and Nigeria's Muhammadu Buhari. However, this is not the case with Remi Sonaiya, a presidential candidate in 2015 (Sonaiya, 2018) or Kofoworola Akerele Bucknor of Lagos State for example. Winning elections requires a political capital which must be built over a long period of time.

2.2.1 Women in Nigerian politics

Despite efforts by women's organisations and state-led initiatives to promote WPR, women's representation, has been met with limited success (Dagunduro and Adenugba, 2020; Eniola, 2018). Although, as a country, Nigeria has a constitution that ensures gender equality, the share of WPR has been low in HoAs in all states (Oloyede, 2016; Eniola, 2018). Interestingly, literature is replete with factors inhibiting WPR in Nigeria. Scholars

such as Luka (2011), Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014), Omenma, Onu and Omenma (2016), Aluko (2015) Okoosi-Simbine and Obi (2020) have identified patriarchal social structure, cultural and religious practices, finance, political violence and intimidation as well as the question of nativity, all of which have resulted in increased women's political apathy.

Investigating the history of women in Nigerian public life by generally beginning in the pre-colonial era is fundamentally important in order to understand their historical trajectory in politics. For example, the period preceding the British colonial administration of the country is stuffed with the adventure of energetically enterprising women whose contribution to their pre-colonial societies were not to be evaluated by number, but by the quality of their interventions. An example in the northern part of the country was the soldier Queen Amina of Zaria (Fatile *et al*, 2017; Eniola, 2018). In the Yoruba space down south, Moremi who, in an invasion amid a war surrendered herself to be caught just to understand the combat strategy of their enemy. She returned to prepare her people and later vanquished their adversaries. Additionally, Oba Orumpoto, one of the few Yoruba female rulers (Oyewumi, 1997) was also able to lead a campaign that subdued the Nupe invaders during her reign (Mba, 1982).

Moreover, in the colonial period, historical records depict, in clear terms, the exploits of prominent women leaders like Funmilayo Kuti, whom during her lifetime no one took notice of the vacancy of the office of Iyalode in Egba land, one of the Yoruba Kingdoms in Abeokuta. Additionally, there was Wuraola Esan; the first Nigerian female senator, as well as many others (Mba, 1982). Some notable female politicians also featured in Nigeria's 2nd and 3rd republic.

In the general elections of 1999, which brought about the commencement of the country's fourth republic, only three women emerged as senators. They are Stella Omu, Florence Ita-Giwa, Khairat Abdulrazaq. The investigation beneath by Iheduru (2010 in Eme, Onyishi and Nwaoha, 2014) analyses the circumstance of women in politics in Nigeria more succinctly. For example, in comparison to 347 men, only 12 women were elected to the state HoAs and 13 to the House of Representatives. By 2003, there had been a slight increment to 39 women in the State legislative houses; while female individuals from the lower chamber of the central legislature increased to 21 against 339 males, and four becoming senators.

Although the focus of this study is not on women's numerical presence but their activities in legislative policymaking, this analysis requires evidence of their descriptive representation, especially in Nigeria where women's entry into elective offices remains largely difficult on socio-cultural ground. The table below further gives a succinct analysis of women in all elective offices between 1999 and 2019.

Table 2. 1: Distribution of women in elective positions between 1999 and 2019

S/N	Position	Number of available seats	Number and % of elected women in 1999	Number and % of elected women in 2003	Number and % of elected women in 2007	Number and % of elected women in 2011	Number and % of elected women in 2015	Number and % of elected women in 2019
1	Presidency	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Senate	109	3 (2.8%)	4 (3.7%)	9 (8.3%)	7 (6.4%)	8 (7.3%)	8 (7.3%)
3	House of Representatives	360	13 (3.6%)	21 (6%)	25 (7%)	19(5.28%)	20 (5.6)	12 (3.3%)
4	Governorship	36	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Deputy Governorship	36	-	2(5.55%)	6 (16.6%)	1(0.09%)	4 (11.1)	4 (11.1)
6	Houses of Assembly (States)	990	12 (1.2%)	39 (4%)	54 (5.5%)	68 (6.9%)	39 (3.9%)	51(5%)

Source: Adapted from Eme et al. (2014) and the Independent National Electoral Commission Headquarters, Abuja.

2.3 Increasing women's descriptive representation through gender quotas

Women often have a significant role in influencing political changes both in Africa and the world at large. They frequently lead the charge in the fight for democracy under authoritarian regimes and for peace in conflict and post-conflict settings. However, they are usually side-lined by the formal processes of representation that follows (Dagunduro and Adenugba, 2020; George, Saeed, and Abdelgalil 2019). As such, discourse around WPR has moved from 'incremental approach' (relying on cultural, socio-political and economic developments over time) to a 'fast track approach' through the introduction of gender quota (Bauer and Burnet, 2013; Edgell, 2018). Through this measure, women's share of the global parliamentary representation increased by 70% in the new century, although unevenly across countries (Rosen, 2017).

Interestingly, developing countries have outpaced the more developed democracies in the drive for increased WPR. This is due largely to the adoption of national gender quota legislations (Clayton, Josefsson and Wang, 2016). The volume of research examining the dynamics and impact of gender quotas have also increased and they have largely shown that this affirmative action strategy has the potential to significantly increase WPR in the legislature over a short period of time. According to Rosen (2017), only a few nations in the past 20 years have passed laws mandating a certain proportion of women in their national legislative chambers. Nonetheless, through changes to electoral rules and constitutions, more than 70 nations have now enacted some type of gender quota (International IDEA, 2015).

Numerous countries in Africa have taken a leading role in expanding women's share of parliamentary representation by adopting different forms of gender quota. This adoption has occurred in two waves. Bauer (2019) observed that the first set of African countries to adopt gender quotas were post-conflict countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. These countries leveraged on the opportunity offered by political transition which requires, among other things, adoption of new laws with changes in electoral rules and regulations. The countries which fall into this category include Rwanda, South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique. More recently, countries such as Cameroon, Senegal, Cape Verde, Zimbabwe, Lesotho have followed suit through the mobilization effort of women's movement who collaborate with regional and international organisations (Ennaji 2016; Darhour and Dahlerup 2013).

According to Edgell (2018), the embrace of a fast-track model for women's political equality could lead to a lasting effect on political equality. Proponents of this model argue that reliance on incremental model might not result in women's political equality (Dalherup, 2006). They contend that, to ensure proper representation of women in the legislature, gender-specific election procedures are required, at least temporarily. However, the limitation to this model is that it only addresses the strength that could be derived from number, rather than what role individual representatives could play in terms of legislative policymaking. For example, it is not unlikely that a quota system may be in place, and yet issues of women's concerns are still neglected. For this reason, putting the substantive representation of women into account would more likely help in translating the gains of increased women's descriptive or numerical representation into positive changes in the lives of women (Okedele, 2020).

2.4 Women's Substantive Representation (WSR)

As noted by Nwankwor (2019: 9), conceptually understanding Substantive Representation, or Women's Substantive Representation (WSR) poses serious challenges. This is because the activities which constitute WSR are "analytically obscure and conceptually layered presenting theoretical and quantifying challenges". However, the crux of WSR study is not what women do, but rather how much the proportion of women elected, particularly to legislative assemblies, affects women's interests (Wangnerud). According to Childs and Lovenduski (2013), WSR builds on at least three arguments.

One, there is the pragmatic argument which stresses some of the advantages which come with having women representatives. Such advantages include a more women friendly perception of a government or a political administration which is believed to attract women's involvement in the general polity. Two, there is the justice argument which is usually mobilised wherever women demand political inclusion and representation. Men have been noted to unfairly dominate in legislatures, especially in democracies. The "difference argument," the third point of dispute, asserts that female legislators bring a unique approach and style to the legislative process.

These arguments all suggest that having more women in legislative bodies will increase their substantive representation, and as a result, they will be better positioned and equipped to speak for all women (Mansbridge, 1999). Furthermore, there are several

scholarly works which shows that female lawmakers do express a greater desire to act in the interest of women (Dodson, 2006; Dimitrova and Obasanjo, 2019, Okedele, 2020), and that they introduce, sponsor and co-sponsor bills with potentials to promote gender issues to a greater extent than their male counterparts even when they constitute a numerical minority (Ayata and Tütüncü, 2008).

However, most studies on WSR often focus on the connection between the proportion of women in offices and the responsibilities they may have to represent women's interests (Nwankwor, 2019; Clayton, Josefsson, and Wang, 2017). These studies recognise the importance of quantity and emphasize its importance (Dalherup, 1988; Lloren, 2015), but they do not go far enough to draw attention to women's policy preferences and interests in the formulation of legislative policies. As such, researchers are increasingly using “Hansards” to articulate and develop legislative policymaking activities (Back, Debus, and Muller, 2014). Legislative transcripts or Hansards provide needed information to track the activities of legislative policymaking of lawmakers. Scholars who examined these records discovered that, compared to their male counterparts, female lawmakers are more likely to raise issues that are sensitive to gender (Celis *et al.*, 2008).

Also important is the global need to recognize and challenge women’s exclusion from peace process which was brought to the fore through the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2000. The resolution outlined how women can be included in order to address women’s concerns in resolving conflicts. This concern shows that there is hardly any endeavour which does not require critical input of women and their experiences. Therefore, just as WDR does matter for WSR (Ellerby, 2016), having a framework of substantive representation is equally important.

2.4.1 Factors influencing women’s selection to legislative house committees

It is impossible to overstate the value of committees in the legislative process. Even today, academics are mostly in agreement that committees are where legislative operations and acts take place (Swift, 2020). Other than a mere division of labour, legislative committees provide policy-specific information, specialization of functions as well as giving the opportunity to influence policy outcomes in the chamber. While legislative committees have been studied in established democracies, it remains an understudied area of research in the developing ones. (Shalaby, 2020). With respect to female lawmakers, legislative

committees are very important in many ways. For example, it provides the opportunity for them to acquire political experience and build their reputation. However, while findings remain inconsistent when compared across different political contexts and tiers of government (Shalaby, 2020), numerous works in the areas of WPR and legislative committee formation have revealed that female lawmakers tend to be underrepresented in influential committees and overrepresented in committees that deal with social issues. Therefore, having more women in legislative bodies does not automatically translate to more political power (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009).

In trying to understand why this is so, generally, studies have focused on three main arguments on women's marginal representation especially in influential committees. The first argument is the marginalization which is usually due to newness in legislative chambers where female representatives may likely face an incumbency disadvantage as male political party leaders and lawmakers find it easier to relegate new and less experienced members to less influential legislative committees such as social issues or women issues committees (Heath, Schwindt-Bayer and Robinson, 2005; Beckwith, 2007). The second argument focuses on gender stereotyping where party chairs or legislative committee leaderships tend to assign women to committees because they are women (Towns 2003). According to Darcy (1996), Although women do not necessarily chair committees at disproportionately lesser rate than their male counterparts, they are more likely to be assigned to chair committees that address presumed women issues such as education, social and human services, health and so on. Lastly, female lawmakers may simply opt for committees that align with their policy preferences or traditional roles expected of them or expertise (Baekgaard and Kjaer, 2012).

Shalaby (2020) noted that over time, the marginalization of women could diminish through redistribution of power dynamics and their political expertise. However, for this to happen, she argued that there must first be a sustainable women's representation. By this expression, she has also reinforced the importance of affirmative action policies such as gender quotas as an important instrument to women's political recruitment especially in a patriarchal society. A classification of legislative committees is given below:

Table 2.2: Types of committees

Category	Definition(s)	Committee Topics
Influential	Committees that confer prestige among members and within the legislature	Finance and Budget, Judicial, legislative, National Defense, Administrative
Technical and Foreign Affairs	Development committees, Manufacturing, Regional and International Affairs	Regional and International Affairs, Economic Planning and Development, Agriculture, Manufacturing and Industries
Social Issues	Social welfare committees, social issues and “compassion issues”	Health, Education, Housing, Sport and Youth
Women’s Issues	Women affairs and women’s and equality rights	Children, Women and Family

Source: Heath, Schwindt-Bayer and Robinson (2005).

2.4.2 Female lawmakers and legislative experience

Enduring stereotypes in many societies place women in the home and family and males in the public or political realm (Hoodfar and Tajali, 2011; Kuperberg, 2018). Consequently, women who venture into politics are often referred to as intruders into the men's space, giving rise to hostilities against them. An extensive body of research on women and politics has explored the importance of having women included in legislative policymaking. Although women do not form a homogenous political group (Shea and Christian, 2017), their political experience is still largely shaped by social construction of gender based on stereotypes and traditional expectations of women.

Despite these observations, many scholars are optimistic, arguing that sex and gender no longer pose strong impediments to women's involvements in politics. However, in identifying actors that push for agenda which addresses important issues, Grey (2006) points to several essentiality preconditions for change which includes the time a lawmaker has spent in office. According to Beckwith (2007), in the analysis of legislative business, experience is a vital attribute and newness of lawmakers must be taken into consideration. In their research on how gender plays a part in legislative debates in seven different European nations Bäck and Debus (2018) noted that female lawmakers delivered fewer speeches than their male counterparts on policy areas that are characterized as masculine and those considered as feminine as well. In addition, they observed consistent effects for legislative experience which reveals that lawmakers who have served in legislative assemblies for a considerable amount of time are much more likely to speak.

Therefore, the presence of women only might not necessarily add to the contributions of women in legislative assemblies. Even though formal rules no longer discriminate on the grounds of gender and sex, but because legislative assemblies are yet to shed its masculine attributes which privilege men and masculine behaviours (Nwankwor, 2019), first time female lawmakers are more likely to experience a chilly legislative environment. As such, it is common for female politicians to have to contend with barriers such as stereotypical labels, verbal harassment and aggressive behaviours flowing from systemic historical discrimination against women inside the legislative assemblies, and sometimes outside of it (Erikson and Josefsson, 2019). A growing number of sources have reported female lawmakers to be target of intimidation, harassment, and sometimes physical

attacks.(Eniola, 2018; Okoosi-simbine and Obi, 2020), reflecting to reinforce prevailing gender norms and also restricting women’s policy contributions.

This experience at first, may push many female legislators off balance, until they are able to develop a thick skin to ward it off. For example, a woman MP noted, “I have heard when women are speaking in the plenary, men say ‘oh that is what the quotas bring us’” (NDI, 2012). Another experience in Nigeria’s 8th Assembly captures the misogyny that female lawmakers face when a male lawmaker threatened to beat and impregnate his female colleague, and that nothing would happen if he did so (Krook, 2017). In Africa, there is ample evidence to show that such experience about women politicians is generalized enough, and as such, should warrant genuine corrective interventions.

Furthermore, the need to understudy older members could reduce female legislator’s capacity to act decisively and independently (Palaniswamy *et al.*, 2019). Typically, new lawmakers are less likely to be aware of the modus operandi of legislative assemblies. For this reason, they tend to take their time to observe and learn the rules that guides the conducts of members. For female lawmakers, who are usually very limited in number and are more likely to be first timers, the combination of their newness and number do have implications on their policymaking responsibilities. And so, in minority parties for example, while male lawmakers may choose to obstruct and delay, one of the coping strategies observed to be employed by women in legislative business is consensus building and issue specialization to be about new policies. Those in minority parties exert high pressure that sustains most of their bill to the committee stage, votes on the floor of the house, and ultimately getting passed into law (Volden, Wiseman and Wittmer, 2010).

Additionally, in the specific case of Nigeria, the fourth republic had experienced a rather considerable increase in WPR up 2015. However, the general belief and the objective of advocacies among female politicians and women activists is that more women are needed to be elected into legislative assemblies to encourage and help in making laws to address the challenges of women (Igwe and Udefuna, 2019). Although, the implication of low descriptive representation on substantive representation can be significant, since substantive representation flows directly from descriptive representation (Allen and Childs, 2019), number alone is not enough to call attention to women issues in legislative business.

Most female lawmakers have less experience than their male counterparts. Also, those with political experience might not have the necessary skills to navigate a political milieu which is typically male-dominated political environment (Došek *et al.*, 2017). Seniority and experience are relevant to investigations of legislative efficacy, and extremely important in the context of issues of women concerns. In a federal political system such as Nigeria, state legislatures could serve as a platform for female lawmakers to acquire experience before moving to the central parliament. Carroll (2003), for instance, noted that more than 40% of the female representatives in the United States in the 107th Congress had previously held office in the state legislature, a platform which may be expected to increase their efficacy in formulating legislative policies in the national legislative assembly.

2.4.3 Female lawmakers' policy preferences

The course of research has steadily moved towards substantive representation, and importantly, how descriptive representation reflects on SR (Allen and Childs, 2019; Celis, Childs, Kantola, and Krook, 2008; Childs, 2018; Childs and Krook, 2008; Childs and Lovenduski, 2013). One important question that has dominated most of the research on the influence of female MPs on legislative policymaking is whether electing more women could alter the content of legislation. It is generally acknowledged that nations often experience greater living standards and positive development in education, infrastructure, and health when women are empowered as political leaders (Beaman *et al.*, 2007). Assumptions such as this is usually leveraged on by women in their campaign for political offices.

Bauer (2019) observed a considerable number of literatures focusing on the impact of female legislators in national parliaments with higher representation of women. One of such is Yoon (2011) who identified numerous positive effects of women's increasing legislative presence on parliamentary culture, particularly the establishment and growth of the women's caucus that offers parliamentary trainings to female lawmakers. These trainings help female lawmakers to articulate women's interests better and to contribute more meaningfully to parliamentary debates.

According to Phillips (1995) and Young (2000), in a world where issues are usually discussed from a single, and more often a masculine perspective, it is usually argued that

increasing the inclusiveness of legislative assemblies would provide a voice for the under-represented groups (women in this context). From this logic, we may then deduce two important assumptions. One is that women's political preferences differ from men's. Two, that elected female representatives would speak for women's interests. If these assumptions are true, it then means that the marginal descriptive participation of women coupled with policy differentials of men from those of women could sustain the gender inequalities in various socio-political and economic domains. While these assumptions are plausible and commonplace in both academic and policy spheres, Gottlieb *et al.*, (2016) observed that they have not been subjected to sufficient and thorough empirical test by scholars. Also, beyond number game, Osborn (2014) noted that the manipulation and control of legislative processes, political parties, ideological structures, women's caucuses and legislative assemblies could have implications for either individual or collective women's legislators efforts.

Traditional scholarship on this subject believe that whether or not women change the content of policymaking is importantly dependent on gender consciousness on the part of lawmakers [female] (Schreiber, 2002). Yet, even when women do not necessarily form a homogenous group, displeasure with women's socio-economic and political status may motivate them to come in unity to promote women issues. However, scholars have identified enough evidence that justifies the necessity of evaluating diversity within group of women, given that women have substantial lived experiences differentials (Barnes and Holman, 2018). According to Mügge (2013), it's critical to recognize that substantive representation is a process made up of various claims and viewpoints that cater to various opposing factions in society, and as a result, we shouldn't strive to impose consensus.

With regards to SR, there is a challenge of finding a tool of measurement, and as such identifying which women's interest might constitute WSR could be difficult in the face of women's priority differentials (Nwankwor, 2019). Thus far, researchers who are particularly interested in the extent to which getting women elected in the legislature improves the possibility of achieving the interests of women through public policies formulation and implementation have discovered that, generally, female legislators are much more concerned about issues such as women's rights and equality, education, social welfare, health, families and children, violence against women and the environment (NDI,

2008; Osborn, 2014; Bauer, 2019; Akirav, 2020; Obidike and Eucharia, 2020), which they could represent either in legislative or non-legislative ways or in both ways.

According to Wittmer and Bouché (2013) and Gerrity, Osborn, and Mendez (2007), research in this regard has consistently pointed out that female representatives are more likely to care about, sponsor and or vote for “women’s issues” bills than their male counterparts. One of the most common explanations for this is shared life experience (Mansbridge, 1999). In the case of legislations addressing sexual harassment, female lawmakers get so involved because they may have experienced it personally or be obliged to represent other women who have (Wittmer and Bouché, 2013). In addition to prioritizing such issues as this as well as other women issues, there is also a perception around female lawmakers which suggests that they have peculiar knowledge and as such are experts on women’s issues and wider feminists’ policies coverage (Mansbridge, 1999).

2.4.4 Contributions of female lawmakers to gender equality

Gender equality debate is undoubtedly a global phenomenon which has warranted international corrective efforts over the years. According to Aguoru (2020), its importance is discernible in the kind of amplified attention which it has been accorded in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and several other policies articulations preceding it. Nevertheless, gender inequality persists. Even with the adoption of gender quotas in many political contexts to improve WPR, this ‘fast track’ approach to aiding women’s upward political mobility have been unable to guarantee the equality of gender or reverse the patriarchal culture that hinders women’s political empowerment (Piscopo, 2015). At the global and continental level, nations have assented to, and domesticated some international and regional human rights conventions that promote women’s rights and gender equality. Some of such covenants include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979; African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, 2003; and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004 (Eniola, 2018).

While the idea of gender equality is established by the constitution of Nigeria, as well as many other places in the world, especially in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC), notably with regard to political participation (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019), every

aspect of Nigerian society suffers from gender disparity. In general, it is believed that women are most suited for domestic and reproductive responsibilities. (Eniola, 2018). Hence, they are less regarded in the political and public sphere as important stakeholders. The societal head start which men enjoy has helped them wield enormous decision-making powers (Anifowoshe and Enemuo, 1999). This impact of men's decision-making powers is nowhere more glaring than in Nigeria's legislative assemblies where women have very limited numerical presence.

According to Clayton, Josefsson and Wang (2017), there are empirical evidence to show that women elected as representatives do not necessarily defend gender-specific issues. This is because the responsibility of achieving gender equality policy outcomes rest with the parliament (male and female members). Other factors include the institutional policies and legal frameworks for monitoring and evaluation as well as gender mainstreaming to eliminate institutional cultures that promote and perpetuate discriminatory practices against female members and staff. For men, promoting women's issues comes with some advantages. First, electoral constituencies are composed of equal numbers of both males and females. This population configuration may likely enhance men's electoral victories when they are seen to be supportive of women issues. Secondly, they could be strong advocates for women's issues as they are not women who could be accused of being too emotionally involved and thus lacking in objective analysis (Celis *et al.* 2014).

Osborn (2014) emphasized that, through the control of legislative process and party ideology, political parties and institutional configurations can influence women's legislative efforts. This study queried the role which political parties, women's positions in legislative assemblies (committee chairs for example), unity among women in legislative assemblies (whether a women's caucus exists) could play in the articulations of programmes, policies and legislations. In the case of political parties, party control and ideology could have significant implication for women's representation. For example, the capacity and ability of a ruling party to resources and legislative agenda could strategically affect what policies women pursue, and how they pursue those policies. Swers (2002) citing an example from the United States' congress demonstrated how Democratic Party's house control in the early 1990's accommodated moderate Republican women's support for bills that would advance "feminists concerns". However, when the congress came under the control of the Republican Party, they became less likely to support these causes

as they were worried that they might be penalised for not supporting party's policies. Although this example was cited using the US political context, it is relatable to many political contexts where party discipline appears to be strong.

However, party control does not foreclose the tendency for female lawmakers to be sympathetic towards women's concerns owing to certain relatable experiences with respect to anatomy and socially constructed gender roles expectations (Smith, 1989; Clay, Josefsson and Wang, 2017). Some of these lawmakers have succeeded in promoting gender equality legislations in some parliaments. According to Raaum (2006), evidence of such gender equality legislative policymaking is replete in the Nordic countries.

2.4.5 Building synergy between women's organisations and lawmakers

The contribution of various women's policy organizations to the advancement of women's rights concerns has been evaluated by academics. They contended that these organizations could collaborate with women's organizations and activist groups to advance legislations that could set the stage for legal reforms which would further safeguard women's rights (Piscopo, 2015). Women's organisations have been particularly singled out for the increased rate of women's descriptive representation in Africa (Tripp, 2016; Chesoni, Muigai and Kanyinga, 2006). In Africa, there is a long history of women's organizations. For instance, Steady (2005) detailed how ten thousand Sierra Leonean women protested against a planned increase in market dues and food prices that was caused by the Lebanese traders in 1951 while Sierra Leone was ruled by the British. These women came together to create the Sierra Leone Women's Movement after winning the fight to end this monopoly (SLWM). Similarly, Oladejo (2016) in her book, *Ibadan Market Women and Politics 1990 - 1995* gave account of how Lagos market women under the leadership of Alimotu Pelewura supported the Railway workers in their agitation for an increase in the cost-of-living allowance through the Workers' Relief Fund which was designed to cushion the effect of their strike.

Prior to this time, women's involvement in political mobilization had begun to gather momentum. One of the events that marked this development was the Aba women's war of 1929 (Eniola, 2018). Over the years, a few groups for women's rights have emerged in the country. Among them are Women in Nigeria, the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), and, more recently, Female in Nigeria (FIN) (Dagunduro and

Adenugba, 2020). Women's movement have persisted in protesting political and socio-economic injustices and have significantly contributed to the promotion of women's rights despite some limitations that have weakened their ability to hold the government accountable (as in the case where some of these organizations were co-opted into ruling parties) (Medie, 2013).

According to Bauer (2019), a cordial relationship between women's organisations and female lawmakers across party lines is very important. To advance women friendly policies, female legislatures must build a synergy with women's organisation and women's activists. For example, while the articulation of issues of women concerns and how best to manage them cuts across different spheres, in terms of constitutional arrangement, important decisions are at least formally decided in the legislature. As such, most studies emphasize the role of legislative assemblies when trying to understand the issues that surround women's legislature. However, women's representation could take place in multiple locations and through variety of organisations and institutions (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013). The family, religious institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations, social movements, media are some of these organizations and institutions. They have been shown to be organizations where women have sought representation and pushed for policy enactment, and they have a significant influence on political decision-making.

2.4.6 State legislations on gender-related issues

Nigeria operates a federal presidential constitutional republic. As such, its laws assign legislative powers which are contained in three lists to its layers of government, namely: federal, state and local government. While the exclusive and the residual legislative lists are within the purview of the federal and local governments respectively, the concurrent legislative list contained responsibilities which both the federal and the state could legislate upon. Furthermore, concerns relating to women's rights are included in this list. By implication, when laws regarding women issues are enacted at the federal level, the constitution also empowers state governments to domesticate such through their various HoAs to be legally and fully operational within the specific federating unit.

Many states in the federation have made efforts to advance these rights. In the fourth republic, Edo State, South-south Nigeria was the first to enact a law in this regard with

the state's Female Circumcision and Genital Mutilation Prohibition law (1999). Cross River State followed the year after with the Girl-child Marriages and Female Circumcision Prohibition Law (2000). Other states laws that have followed in this line include Rivers State Abolition of Female Circumcision Law (2001), Ogun State Female Circumcision and Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Law (2000); and Ekiti State Gender-Based Violence (GBV) (Prohibition) Law (2001); Enugu State Protection of Widows and Widowers Fundamental Rights Law (2001); Oyo State Widowers Empowerment Laws (2002); and Anambra State Malpractices against Widows and Widowers Prohibition Laws (2004); Kebbi State Prohibition of Early Marriage Law (2001); Kano State Retention in School and against withdrawal of Girls from School Law; Violence against Women Law among others (Eniola, 2018).

While it is important to acknowledge these efforts of the state's governments through their respective HoAs, the persistence of gender inequality and women's rights challenges indicates its complicated and difficult nature which requires more efforts specifically in terms of additional legislations.

2.5 Female representatives and constituency services

As the lawmaking branch of government, the legislature is a platform where the opinion of constituents is expressed in policymaking process. Also, it carries out oversight duties to guarantee that the executive branch of government is effectively delivering public goods to the populace. In Nigeria, until the fourth republic, the responsibility of legislators was peculiar only to lawmaking and oversight functions. However, in a bid to ensure the presence of government in every electoral district, constituency services were introduced as an additional responsibility for them during the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 (Usman, 2014). Arguably, this was to ensure that the nascent democracy hits the ground running by promoting physical infrastructures and meeting the immediate needs of the people in every electoral district (what Murana and Bakare (2020) describe as a way of taking care of the enormous request of the people for democratic dividends).

A measure put in place to drive this development is constituency funds appropriated to the legislature for public goods (drilling of boreholes, provision of primary health centres, renovation of roads, parking facilities, market stalls and so on) through constituency-based projects (Oshewolo and Adedire, 2020). Presently, constituency projects have become

more popular owing to some embedded attributes which include constituents' participation in the choice of projects to be provided and acting against prolonged executive bureaucracies (Orimogunje, 2015). While some are sceptical about the effects of these projects being undertaken by lawmakers, owing to the questions of transparency and accountability of implementation, this practice remains a constitutional exercise in Nigeria (Duruji and Duruji-Moses, 2017) and a legislative culture in many other countries including the United States (Chibomba, 2013; International Budget Partnership, 2010).

To address the question of transparency, Okurounmu (2009) noted that the implementation process was redesigned to ensure accountability. Lawmakers were restricted from awarding contract and could only consult with members of their constituencies to identify projects of choice which would eventually be included in the budget by the executive arm. However, since project funds are routed through lawmakers, they continue to enjoy an overbearing influence of choice of projects (Murana and Bakare, 2020).

Women in legislative roles see themselves more as problem solvers and enablers of improved and quality life for members of their constituencies than men who are more likely to categorize themselves as either leaders or advertisers. As such, constituents are more important to them not because of re-election but for the strength of their commitment to ensuring community service. Analysis of Grace Akinyi Ogot's contribution to Kenyan politics as a Member of Parliament (MP) representing Gem constituency strongly supports this claim. Maloiy (2018) noted that Ogot initiated many constituency projects in the field of education and women empowerment and exited the political stage leaving her constituency in a better shape than when she was newly elected. This gesture is not uncommon with female representatives in legislative assemblies.

2.6 State of the literature

Women represent almost half of the world's population. Nevertheless, they are less likely to occupy important political positions. Even when they do, some argue that their representation is more descriptive than substantive (Eniola 2018; Olurode 2013). However, much as a response to the opinions and agitations of women activists and women's organisations (Bauer 2019), multiple domestic and international corrective

measures have ensured an increase in the number of women in parliaments in recent times (Wangnerud 2009; Tripp 2016; Bauer, 2019).

Currently, the field of women's representation has moved a step further. Rather than focusing on just numbers, researchers have become particularly interested in the extent to which getting women elected to the legislature improves the possibility of advancing women's interests through public policy formulation and implementation. In the "politics of presence" literature, a more equitable representation of women in legislative assemblies is believed to be a likely measure to addressing women's concern (Phillips 1995; Mansbridge 1999; Childs and Lovenduski 2013; Celis and Childs 2018; Okoosi-Simbine and Obi 2020).

According to Wangnerud (2009), societies that elect a significant number of women are likely to be more gender equitable than societies that elect few women. As such, proponents of this line of argument believe that getting an equal number or at least a "critical mass" of women elected in the parliament has a positive effect on how issues affecting them are addressed. However, having more women in legislative assemblies has not always led to adequate substantive gains for women (Bauer 2019). For example, Overseas Development Institute's (ODI) research has shown that the share of women in legislative assemblies should not be relied on as a pure indicator of gender equality (O'Neill and Domingo, 2016). Parliaments and the process of policymaking is not flexible. For these reasons, expectations that female politicians can affect policy outcomes in specific ways might not necessarily come easy. Nevertheless, getting enough women into parliaments is an important step in addressing women's interests.

The establishment of gender quotas is largely responsible for the advances in women's descriptive representation that have been observed in some nations (Hoodfar and Tajali 2011; Bauer and Burnet 2013). The Nordic countries – Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland still dominates the global ranking in the share of women in National parliaments averaging 42.4%. However, among individual countries, the eastern African country of Rwanda continues to lead with 61.3% (IPU 2020).

It is vital to clarify that, although the share of seats in the parliament as an indicator of political inclusion has been, and is still widely used, women do not necessarily form a category of common interest. According to Osborn (2014), even when women legislators

pursue women's interests by putting forward policies to address them, party ideologies and institutional configuration could constrain this process. Theoretically, researchers have arrived at more ambiguous conclusions. They query the consideration of women as a homogenous and organized group who bear a common attribute.

One avenue in which women have sought to achieve some commonality of purpose is through women's party caucuses. These caucuses are often organized to dissolve party lines and provide peer support to promote gender equality legislation and policy agendas (Osborn 2014). Although women's positions may differ, Wangnerud (2009) noted that similar lists of women's interests always emerge owing to specific experiences peculiar to them. Even if male legislators are aware of gender differences and seek to address women's issues, they might not have the necessary information, just in the same way that mainstream policymakers might lack vital information to address the concerns of minority groups in the society. Anne Phillips made the case in support of women's peculiarities:

Women have [a] distinct interest in relation to childbearing...; and as society is currently constituted, they also have particular interest arising from their exposure to sexual harassment and violence, their unequal position in the division of paid and unpaid labour and their exclusion from most arena of economic and political power (Phillips 1995, pp.67-68).

Women's inclusion in legislative assemblies comes with a very important diversity component, which has greater incentives to represent women as a group (Mansbridge 1999). Evidence of the link between women legislators' descriptive and substantive representation has also emerged in several studies, which include Wang (2013), Clayton, Josefsson and Wang (2017), Bauer and Burnet (2013). Wang (2013) observed that women lawmakers in Uganda and Rwanda, Tanzania and South Africa made use of the little opportunity the legislature affords them to advance their concerns, including legislation against GBV, inheritance and land rights, family laws and so on. In South Africa, apart from the parliamentary women group, a parliamentary standing committee on improving women's quality of life and status also exists. Many of the gendered legislation in the country were articulated and promoted through the standing committee. Additionally, to achieve more broad-based support, women legislators also cultivate male allies who could speak on their behalf (Clayton, Josefsson and Wang 2017).

2.6.1 The “critical mass” and “critical act” as a framework of analysis of WPR

The “critical act” by Drude Dahlerup (1988), which is a build-up on “critical mass” are two concepts which are used to analyse WPR. Childs and Lovenduski (2013) noted that the requirement for women descriptive representation are easily understood. However, this is not the case in the analysis of their activities in legislative policymaking. To them, critical mass and critical acts are two notions that are utilized to predict representation. Dahlerup claims that the idea of critical mass is drawn from nuclear physics and refers to the amount required to start a chain reaction. It was first applied by Rosabeth Moss Kanter in 1977 to assess organizational change. In essence, it contends that politics will change because a tipping point of some type is achieved once women make up a certain proportion of a legislative assembly. It is often very common to hear female legislators argue that much should not be expected from them because they constitute only marginal number.

However, this viewpoint fails to adequately convey the complex ways that feminists have approached the issue. It is also troubling to assume that women are all the same and representing a general women’s interest. As such, Dahlerup reengaged this debate from another perspective in 1988. For her, critical act (the quality of representation) rather than critical mass (the number of women there) is what matters. This insight, while not necessarily playing down the importance of presence, extends the argument to the scrutiny of women’s engagement vis a vis their numbers. The state of scholarship of politics of gender representation leaves open, the identity of those who act for women, defining them in terms of what they do rather than who they are. It establishes that “crucial actors” may take up critical acts for women, regardless of their number or gender (Dahlerup, 1988; Childs and Krook, 2008, Bauer and Burnet, 2013).

According to critical act, it is not conceivable to deduce that these changes follow from any definite number of women, e.g., thirty percent as suggested by proponents of critical mass, and that women do not obtain power merely because they are in the majority solely (Dahlerup, 1988). Example of few successful women who have occupied top government positions (like Indira Ghandi, Margaret Thatcher, Angela Merkel and so on) has reflected and has contributed to the substantial change in perception of women politicians. And in these cases, it is not the number, but the performance of one or a few outstanding women which counts. The greater danger for WPR is not about getting women elected to

legislative assemblies, it is more about getting those women who truly understand the issues of women's concern.

According to Baumgardner (2011 in Gillis and Jacobs, 2017), the central objective of the first wave feminism was the political enfranchisement of women which was achieved in 1920. Many leading suffragists believed that women's entrance into politics would positively influence the political culture. However, being a female politician or lawmaker is not enough. For example, a female representative of a particular electoral district is first, a representative of the people. As such, to represent women's cause, they themselves must express feminist attitudes. It claims that the capacity to affect change does not necessarily depend on quantity, because human beings do not automatically act like particles. As such Drude Dahlerup suggests replacing the concept of "critical mass" with the new concept "critical act" because this would better explain human behaviour. Therefore, these concepts provide an understanding that aims to analyse the contributions of female legislators to gender equality debate in Nigeria.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The study was integrated into an existing body of knowledge using Anne Phillips' (1995) theory of the politics of presence. The central tenet of this theory is that the ethnic or gender composition of elected legislative bodies is a legitimate democratic concern. As such, a proportionate representation based on these attributes is essential (Phillips 1995). Therefore, in the specific case of gender, the theory suggests that women should represent women's interests because they are in the best position to do so. This argument is premised upon the differences between men and women in their everyday life experiences (See Wängnerud, 2009; Anne, 1995), owing to the fact that, at least to some extent, female lawmakers share the experiences of other women.

While there are few arguments which plays down the importance of gender in legislative policymaking, and that legislative assemblies influence politicians more than politicians influence them, there are more agreement in research that gender has an impact. According to Lovenduski and Norris (2003), what varies is the level of impact. As research has demonstrated that female politicians support the interests of women, WPR literature highlights the need of electing more women to positions of power across all branches of government (Wängnerud, 2009). Moreover, it is believed that women

legislators embrace priorities list which deals with issues of women, children, and the family, and that generally, women favour more liberal welfare policy preference than men.

The choice of this theory is predicated on the premise of its fundamental suppositions which provides reasons for the quantity of women's representation on legislative policy outcomes. An important question Phillips raised was how men legitimately fit in for the representation of women especially on women's specific issues (Phillips 1995). This concern has given rise to a measure of reforms in some democracies across the world, as with the gender quotas which have been adopted by a number of African countries including Algeria, Cote'd'Ivoire, Eritrea, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique and Uganda (Dimitrova and Obasanjo, 2019).

By acknowledging the importance of numerical presence on legislative outcomes, the theory of the politics of presence establishes a link between descriptive representation (who hold office) and substantive representation (policies initiated and passed).

2.8 Concluding thought

The study reviewed existing literatures on WPR. Importantly, works on women's descriptive and substantive representations were explored. While women's activities in legislative policymaking have been extensively studied in established democracies, it has been less studied in developing democracies in general and Nigeria in particular, where scholars of gender and political participation often focus majorly on women's numerical presence in legislative assemblies.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study employed an exploratory and case study designs. According to Iheanacho and Iheanacho (2012), an exploratory research design probes into problems that have not been clearly defined. In other words, it examines a phenomenon which has not been adequately investigated in previous research with the purpose of gaining more insight. The study found the exploratory research design very useful and adopted it because the experiences of female representatives in Southwestern Nigeria (at least in the specific cases of the selected states) and their contributions to legislative process have largely been unexplored. This grants the researcher the opportunity to contribute to the growing debate on women in legislative policymaking activities. To achieve this, a qualitative method of data gathering, and document analysis were employed. This was deemed appropriate for the research because it assisted the researcher to obtain in-depth account of the activities and contributions of women who have served (some of whom are still serving) in the selected HoAs in legislative policymaking.

3.2 Study area

This study was conducted in HoAs of three selected states in southwestern Nigeria (Ekiti, Lagos and Ogun). The study was primarily conducted in the states' HoAs complexes and political parties' secretariats. These are Ado Ekiti, Ekiti state; Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos state and Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun state. The justification for the selected states' HoAs was their higher number of female legislators in the fourth republic (INEC Database). The researcher observed a total of seven legislative sessions in the selected HoAs between October 2019 and August 2020. Interviews were also conducted at the secretariats of the two major political parties (APC and PDP) in the selected states. In the specific case of Ogun state, additional interviews were conducted at the Allied People's Movement (APM) Secretariat – a political party on whose platform, the state's governor's anointed

candidate contested the 2019 gubernatorial election. In addition, interviews were conducted, and observations made in private residences, offices and pavilions where research participants were located. In the specific case of Ogun state, the researcher observed the meeting of Partners West Africa Initiative, Nigeria (PWAN) and interviewed some individual gender activists from Lagos and Ogun states as well as members of the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN) and the Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN).

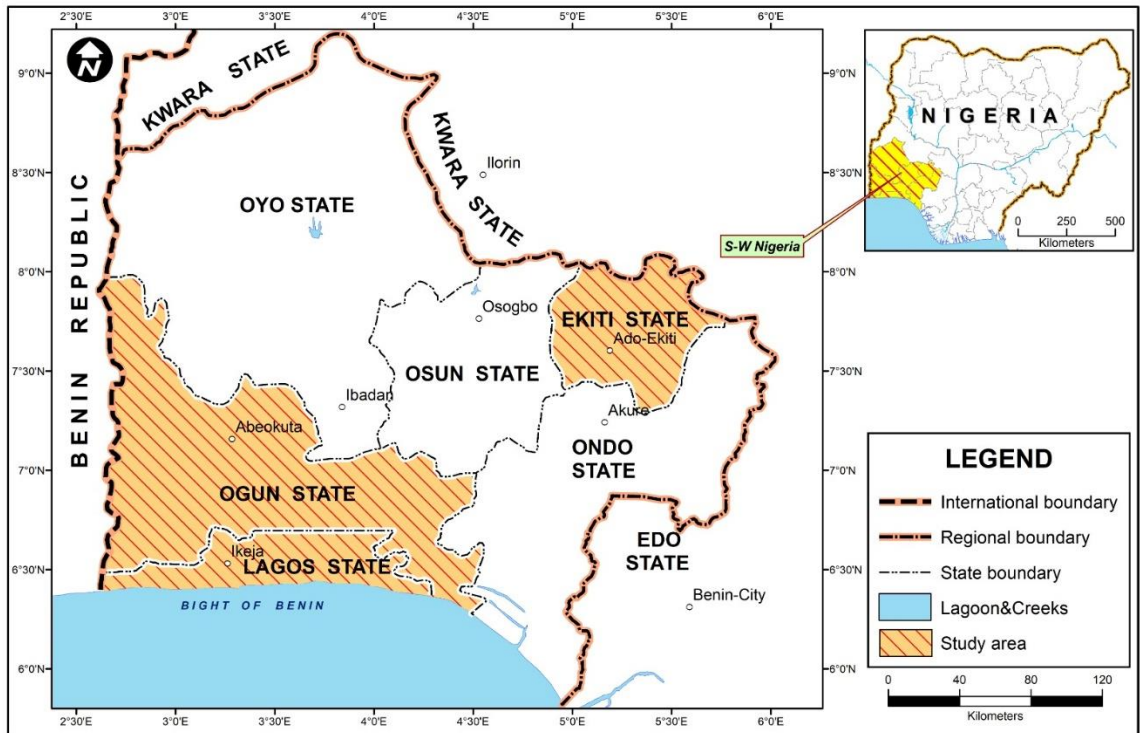


Figure 3.1: Map of southwestern Nigeria showing the three selected study areas
 Source: Researcher

3.3 Study population

The target population comprised female lawmakers in the three selected states' HoAs. This study examined their activities in the lawmaking assembly and their constituencies. In addition, male lawmakers, political party leaders and gender activists drawn from National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), an umbrella for women's organisations in Nigeria were interviewed. Moreover, individuals who directly or indirectly work with the lawmakers or have a good knowledge of the polity were interviewed. These included legislative support staff and some members of states' executive branch of government. Their views were very important in further validating the accounts of the female lawmakers.

3.4 Sampling size and sampling technique

This study employed the purposive and snowball sampling technique to select 63 interviewees. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to identify and select interviewees needed for the research. Since the study aimed at examining women's representation, the researcher searched, identified, and purposively selected interviewees he considered had robust experience on the subject under investigation. Hence, female legislators drawn from states with highest female representation in the Southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria were selected. Also, legislative support staff (the Clerks and others junior civil servants attached to the legislative houses) and HoAs leadership which include the deputy speakers in (EKSHA and OGSHA) were selected.

The snowball sampling technique was used to further identify other respondents through those who were purposively selected. Most of these respondents were accessed through referrals from party leaders and gender activists. In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 female lawmakers and three male lawmakers across the three states. In addition, nine legislative support staff and 21 respondents drawn from the political parties' leadership across the three states were interviewed as well.

Table 3.1: Distribution of research participants

S/N	List of Interviewees		Number
1	Female lawmakers	KII	15
2	Male lawmakers	KII	3
3	Legislative support staff (drawn from the civil service	IDI	9
4	Political party leaders	KII	21
5	Gender activists	KII	9
6	Members of the executive arm of government	IDI	6
	Total		63

3.5 Method and instrument of data collection

To provide answers to the research questions, the study relied on both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary sources of data collection were in-depth and key informant interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. Secondary data collection sources included legislative and constituency documents from the selected HoAs, newspaper reports, party publications, journal articles, visual and audio-visual materials, dissertations and other relevant publications. The instruments for data collection included an interview guide, voice recorder and a field notebook.

3.5.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Key informants or PoKI are those whose knowledge and opinions are essential in understanding the phenomenon under study. A total of 34 female lawmakers have served in the HoA of the selected states. Of this, KIIs were conducted with 15 lawmakers (five from each of the states). Physical and telephone interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview guide. Follow-up interviews were conducted as the transcription of data progressed. This was done mainly through telephone conversation and Voice Over Internet Protocol (WhatsApp). Additional KIIs were conducted with three male lawmakers and 21 political party leaders, and nine gender activists based on their position as the constitutional representatives of the people through constituencies delimitations, their importance to political recruitment and knowledge of women issues.

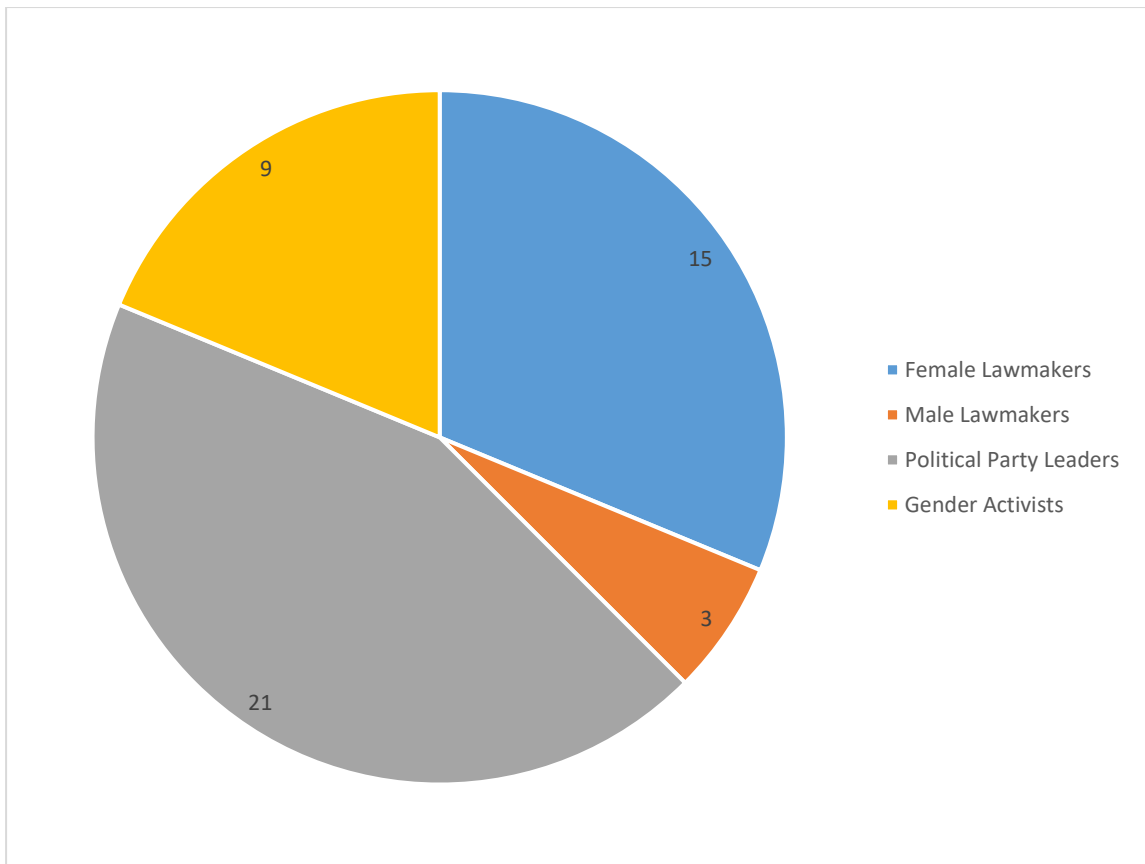


Figure 3.2: Chart representing the distribution of In-depth Interviews

3.5.2 In-depth Interviews (IDIs)

IDIs were conducted with nine legislative support staff and six members of the executives. Interview sessions were recorded, and important points were also written in fieldnotes.

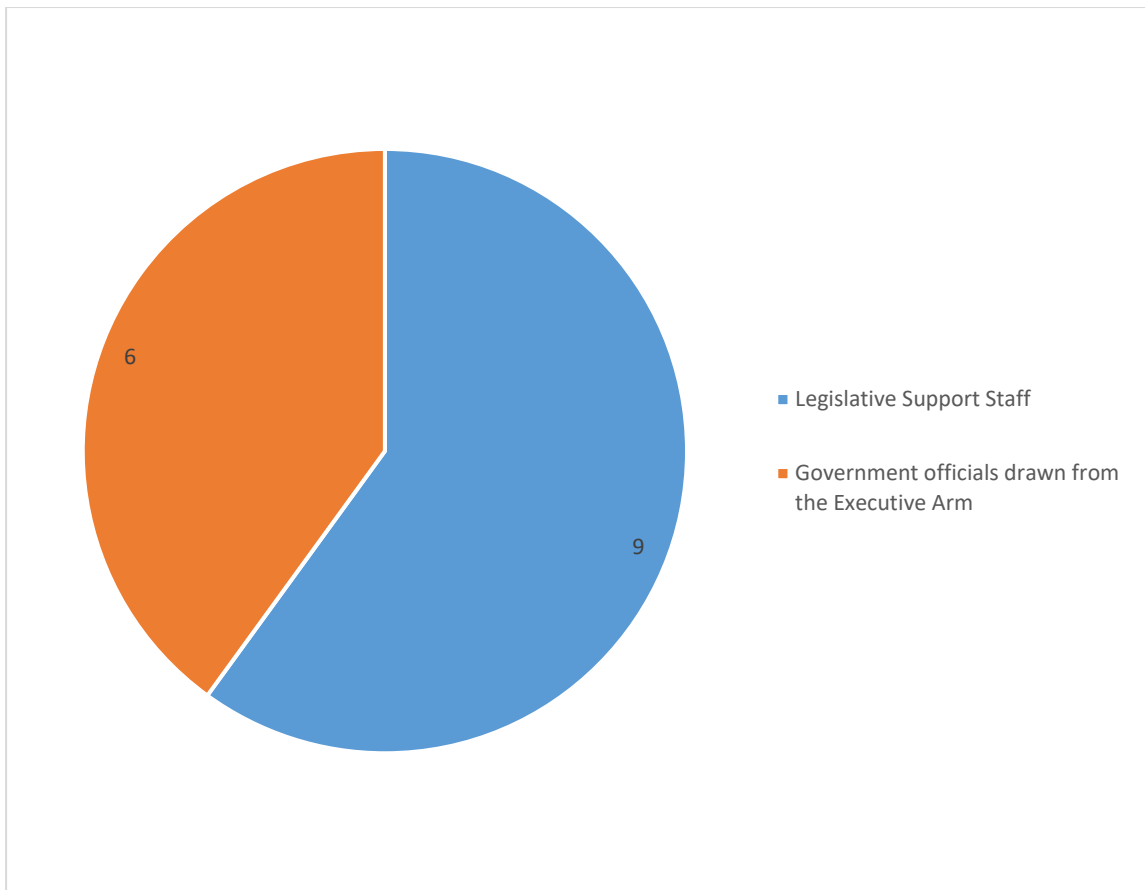


Figure 3.3: Chart representing the distribution of Key Informant Interviews

3.5.3 Review of official documents

According to Bowen (2009), documents from institutions and organisations for qualitative research analysis could provide supplementary data which can be valuable addition to a knowledge base. Such documents can either be printed texts or electronic materials. Legislative assemblies across the world have now enriched their websites to improve access to legislative information (Salgado, 2016). Other examples of documents that may be used as part of a study are attendance register, advertisements, minutes of meetings, diaries, letters and memoranda, maps and charts, newspaper clippings and articles, radio and television programme scripts, organisational or institutional reports and documents and photo albums.

The researcher obtained legislative records from the office of the Clerk (in Ekiti state), research and education unit in (Lagos state) and office of the director, Committee Department (in Ogun state). Additionally, the researcher made use of the websites of the selected HoAs to obtain additional information. Among the documents collected were the biodata of members, committee compositions and list of bills and plenary debates from 1999 to 2019. Bowen further noted that it is important for a qualitative researcher draw on different sources of evidence for corroboration (Bowen, 2009). By doing this, a researcher would have reduced the impact of potential bias in the study.

3.6 Method of data analysis

A majority of the interviews were conducted in English language. However, those conducted in Yoruba language were translated to English. The data was grouped into emerging themes and sub-themes according to the research questions. Data obtained from the IDIs and KIIs, which provided the bulk of the data used in this analysis, were manually coded and thematically analysed. Also, data obtained from secondary sources were analysed in like manner.

3.7 Ethical considerations

A letter of introduction indicating the purpose of the research was presented to every respondent. Each respondent's consent was also verbally sought at the commencement of every interview session. Approvals were granted by the Speaker of the House (Ogun state) and Clerks (Ekiti and Lagos state) to interview the lawmakers and also access relevant documents in their respective HoAs. All stakeholders were adequately informed about the purpose of the study.

3.8 Limitation of the study

During the process of data collection, getting access to the female lawmakers who were the subjects of study was difficult. However, approvals were sought from the Speaker of the Ogun state HoA and the Clerks of Ekiti and Lagos states HoAs. This ensured the granting of interviews especially by the serving lawmakers during working hours. Of the 33 female lawmakers who have served (some of whom are still serving) from 1999 to 2019, only 15 were successfully interviewed. Six declined while twelve could not be traced for reasons which included death or relocation. In addition, while the study gives an in-depth analysis of women's representation in selected states in Southwestern Nigeria, it relies basically on qualitative data. As such, the result cannot be generalized to all HoA in Southwestern Nigeria or Nigeria as a whole.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 The selected states' Houses of Assembly

The study offers a discussion of a meso-level dimension of WPR. It focused on the representation of female legislators in three selected states (Ekiti state House of Assembly [EKSHA], Lagos state House of Assembly [LSHA] and Ogun state House of Assembly [OGSHA]) legislatures. Typically, studies of women's representation focus on the behavior of political actors, parties of government in terms of legislative interventions and outcomes, policy commitments, and public remarks (Childs and Lovenduski, 2014). To this end, this study's endeavour is particularly important in a country such as the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), where the principle of federalism requires that many policies directly affecting women are contained in the concurrent legislative list. As such, when these laws are made at the national level, they are still required to be domesticated at the individual state level. The appropriateness of the selected states Houses of Assemblies (HoAs) was first established. This was done by ranking the levels of female representation in all the six HoAs in the Southwestern geo-political zone of the country, after which the first three were picked for the study.

Table 4.1: List of female members of selected Houses of Assembly from 1999 to 2019

S/N	NAME	CONSTITUENCY	STATE	YEAR(S)
1.	Hon. C. O Oluwafemi	Efon Constituency	EKITI	2003-2007
2.	Hon. Omowunmi Olubunmi Ogunlola	Ijero Constituency	EKITI	2011-2015
3.	Hon. Modupe Abeni Olayinka	Ado Constituency II	EKITI	2011-2015
4.	Hon. Olubunmi Abeni Oriniowo	Ido/Osi I Constituency	EKITI	2011-2015
5.	Hon. Ayo Olajide Fatunbi	Moba Constituency II	EKITI	2011-2015
6.	Hon. Cecilia Bosedede Dada	Ilejemeje Constituency	EKITI	2015-2019
7.	Hon. Titilayo Owolabi-Akerele	Ikole Constituency	EKITI	2015-2019
8.	Hon. Olubunmi Adelugba	Emure Constituency	EKITI	2019-2023
9.	Hon. Yemisi Ayokunle	Ekiti Southwest Constituency I	EKITI	2019-2023
10.	Hon. Adekemi Balogun	Ado Constituency II	EKITI	2019-2023
11.	Hon. Adeteju Eyitayo Okuyiga	Gbonyin Constituency	EKITI	2019-2023
12.	Hon. Mutiat Adetoun Adediran	Surulere Constituency I	LAGOS	1999-2003
13.	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan	Alimosho Constituency II	LAGOS	1999-2003 2015-2019
14.	Hon. Ramota Adebayo Oseni	Ojo Constituency I	LAGOS	1999-2003
15.	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso	Mushin Constituency I	LAGOS	1999-2003 2003-2007 2007-2011 2015-2019
16.	Hon. Bola Olujobi-Badmus	Amuwo-Odofin Constituency I	LAGOS	2003-2007 2007-2011
17.	Hon. Ajoke Adegeye-Adeniyi	Amuwo-Odofin Constituency II	LAGOS	2007-2011
18.	Hon. Lola Fibisola Akande	Ikeja Constituency II	LAGOS	2007-2011 2011-2015
19.	Hon. R. Akinola-Hassan	Amuwo-Odofin II	LAGOS	2011-2015
20.	Hon. Adebimpe Akinsola	Ikorodu Constituency II	LAGOS	2011-2015
21.	Hon. Omowunmi Olatunji-Edet	Oshodi/Isolo Constituency II	LAGOS	2011-2015
22.	Hon. Rufai Adeyemi M	Ojo I	LAGOS	2011-2015
23.	Hon. Mosunmola Rotimi Sangodara	Surulere Constituency II	LAGOS	2015-2019 2019-2023
24.	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda	Apapa Constituency II	LAGOS	2015-2019 2019-2023
25.	Hon. Mojisola K. Alli-Macauley	Amuwo-Odofin Constituency I	LAGOS	2019-2023

Source: Compiled by the researcher from official records

Table 4.1.1: List of female members of selected Houses of Assembly from 1999 to 2019

26	Rt. Hon. Titi Oseni	Abeokuta South II	OGUN	2003-2007 2007-2011
27	Hon. Oladapo T. [Adija] Adeleye	Ifo Constituency II	OGUN	2003-2011
28	Hon. Elizabeth Anifowoshe	Obafemi Owode Constituency	OGUN	2007-2011
29	Hon. Yetunde Adekambi Sogbein	Odeda Constituency	OGUN	2015-2019
30	Hon. Juliana Folakemi Akintayo	Egbado South Constituency	OGUN	2015-2019
31	Hon. Modupe Onikepo Mujota	Abeokuta North Constituency	OGUN	2019-2023
32	Hon. Lateefat Bolanle Ajayi	Yewa South Constituency	OGUN	2019-2023
33	Hon. Sikirat Ajibola	Ipokia (2019-2023)	OGUN	2019-2023
34.	Hon. Atinuke Bello	Odogbolu (2019-2023)	OGUN	2019-2023

Source: Compiled by the researcher from official records

Table 4.2: Distribution of female lawmakers across southwestern Nigeria

State	Number of Seats	Number of Women						State Total
		1999	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019	
Lagos	40	3	2	5	7	4	3	24
Ekiti	26	0	1	0	4	2	4	11
Ogun	26	0	1	2	2	2	4	11
Ondo	26	0	1	1	1	2	1	6
Oyo	26	0	0	1	1	2	1	5
Osun	26	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Total	177	3	6	10	15	12	14	57

Sources: INEC database and official records from HoAs in southwestern Nigeria

To address the objectives of the study, it was highly imperative to establish the level of women's representation in the selected states. To understand various perspectives of the discourse, official documents and the views of the following groups were considered relevant to the production of findings:

- i. Current and past female lawmakers in the selected HoAs
- ii. Male lawmakers
- iii. Civil servants
- iv. Political party leaders
- v. Gender activists and members of different women's organisations
- vi. Members of the executive arm of government
- vii. Members of the academia

Also, attention was paid to the processes of legislative policymaking thereby giving insight into the modus-operandi of the institution. Legislative sessions were observed in the selected HoAs from 10 October 2019 to 7 July 2020. Furthermore, several meetings of women's organisations were observed. They include a Town Hall Awareness organized by Rule of Law and Empowerment Initiative (also known as West African Partners – Nigeria) in Abeokuta, Ogun state on 27 November 2019, and the Ekiti state International Women's Day programme held on 4 March 2020. The Abeokuta Town Hall meeting brought women across different women's organisations together to discuss their current political involvement and its prospects.

Although there is no singular perfect model for democratic governance, capable and effective legislative assemblies serve as “foundational pillars” of democracy around the world (National Democratic Institute, 2012). In an ideal democratic constitution, a legislature is a separate, co-equal branch that shares governmental powers with other branches (the executive and judiciary) of government. Accordingly, a legislature must be relatively independent of the executive. It must also insist on regulating the initiation of policies and refuse to rubber-stamp executive proposals without thorough scrutiny. One major function of the legislature is representation. The legislature represents people in

their various constituencies, as well as groups (for instance, women, ethnic minorities) and individuals elsewhere in the state (ncsl).

State legislative assemblies or HoAs are replicas of the national assembly of a country (Wapmuk, 2008), especially in a federal system of government. The label – HoA – is common with a unicameral (one chamber) legislature. In some bicameral (two chambers) legislatures, the lower chamber is also given this label. In countries like Nigeria, Australia, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, the name is applied to the legislative arm of state governments which are normally unicameral. As the lawmaking body at the state level, it produces the law that defines the yardstick for governance in the state. An extension of its functions includes scrutiny of budget, oversight functions, confirmation of appointments and aggregation and evaluation of the opinions of people they represent (Wapmuk, 2008). The combination of all these measures, if fully and genuinely carried out, ensures provision for effective governance of people.

The evolution of Nigeria's federalism resulted in the establishment of regional assemblies which started through the introduction of Arthur Richards constitution of 1946. It became fully formed when the Oliver Littleton constitution of 1954 entrenched it as a major attribute of the colonial state of Nigeria (Ali and Ahmed, 2019). Simply put, a federal system of government is that in which governmental powers are constitutionally shared between different tiers or levels of government, that is, the central/federal, state/region/province and other lower level of government if any. In the case of Nigeria, there are local governments at the bottom of the pyramid of the country's federal structure. This system of government is particularly attractive to countries with large size and heterogenous population (Babalola, 2019). Depending on the number of levels or tiers available in a federal system, powers and functions are generally grouped into - the exclusive, concurrent, and residual legislative lists, as in Nigeria. While the exclusive and residual function are the preserve of the central and local government respectively, the concurrent legislative list contains those functions in which both the central and states/regional/provincial governments can legislate upon.

Nigeria's federal system as it is presently configured started with a restructuring process through the invocation of State Creation and Transitional Provisions Decree 14 of 1967. With twelve states created on 27 May 1967, additional 24 states were created in 1976 (nine states created), 1987 (two states created), 1991 (nine states created) and 1996 (six

states created) respectively. As an autonomous component of a federal government, their respective HoAs are responsible for making laws that governs the states (Ali and Ahmed, 2019; Babalola, 2019; Amugo *et al.*, 2019).

4.1.1 Ekiti State House of Assembly (EKSHA)

On October 1st, 1996, Ekiti state was established. However, the first EKSHA legislative assembly did not convene until May 1999, when a democratically elected leader replaced the military administration of General Abdulsalami Abubakar. EKSHA comprises 26 lawmakers (subsequently, lawmakers are used interchangeably with legislators), each one representing the 26 constituencies carved out from the 16 local governments in the state. The 26 constituencies are: Ado I, Ado II, Efon, Ekiti East I, Ekiti East II, Ekiti South-West I, Ekiti South-West II, Ekiti West I, Ekiti West II, Emure, Gbonyin, Ido/Osi I, Ido/Osi II, Ijero, Ikere I, Ikere II, Ikole I, Ikole II, Ilejemeje, Irepodun I, Irepodun II, Ise/Orun, Moba I, Moba II, Oye I, Oye II. Out of the 26 constituencies, only four (Gbonyin, Ekiti South-west I, Ado II and Emure) are represented by women. The HoA also has twelve Principal Officers (PO) drawn from the state's civil service who assist in the running of the day-to-day activities of the HoA. The career arm of the HoA is divided into 10 units, with each having its own director who reports directly to the Clerk. EKSHA is currently in its sixth legislative assembly under the leadership of Rt. Honourable Funminiyi Afuye (EKSHA).

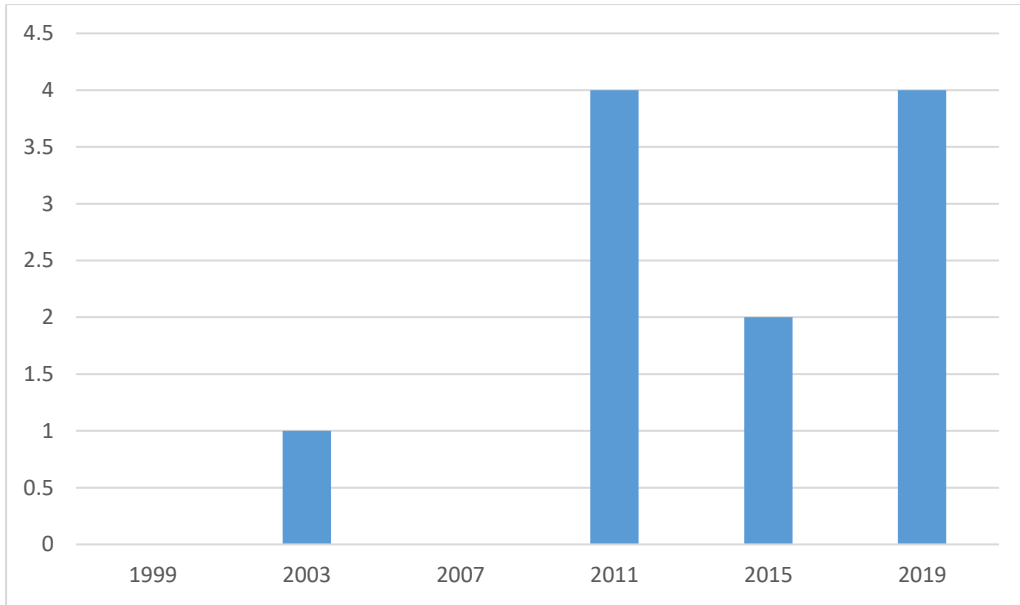


Figure 4.1: Chart showing the trend of women's representation in Ekiti state from 1999 to 2019

4.1.2 Lagos State House of Assembly (LSHA)

The first assembly of LSHA was inaugurated on 2 October 1979. The assembly is made up of 40 lawmakers representing each of the constituencies drawn from the 20 Local Government Areas and 37 Local Council Development Areas in the state. The constituencies are; Agege I, Agege II, Alimosho I, Alimosho II, Amuwo-Odofin I, Amuwo-Odofin II, Apapa I, Apapa II, Ajeromi-Ifelodun I, Ajeromi-Ifelodun II, Badagry I, Badagry II, Epe I, Epe II, Eti-Osa I, Eti-Osa II, Ibeju Lekki I, Ibeju Lekki II, Ifako-Ijaiye I, Ifako-Ijaiye II, Ikeja I, Ikeja II, Ikorodu I, Ikorodu II, Kosofe I, Kosofe II, Lagos Island I, Lagos Island II, Lagos Mainland I, Lagos Mainland II, Mushin I, Mushin II, Ojo, I, Ojo II, Oshodi-Isolo I, Oshodi-Isolo II, Somolu I, Somolu II, Surulere I, Surulere II. Out of the forty constituencies, only three (Apapa I, Amuwo-Odofin I and Surulere II) are represented by women. The career arm of LSHA is divided into four directorates which are further sub-divided into 27 units. The legislative chamber which is currently in its ninth assembly is being presided over by Rt. Honourable Mudashiru Obasa who is currently serving as its speaker (LSHA).

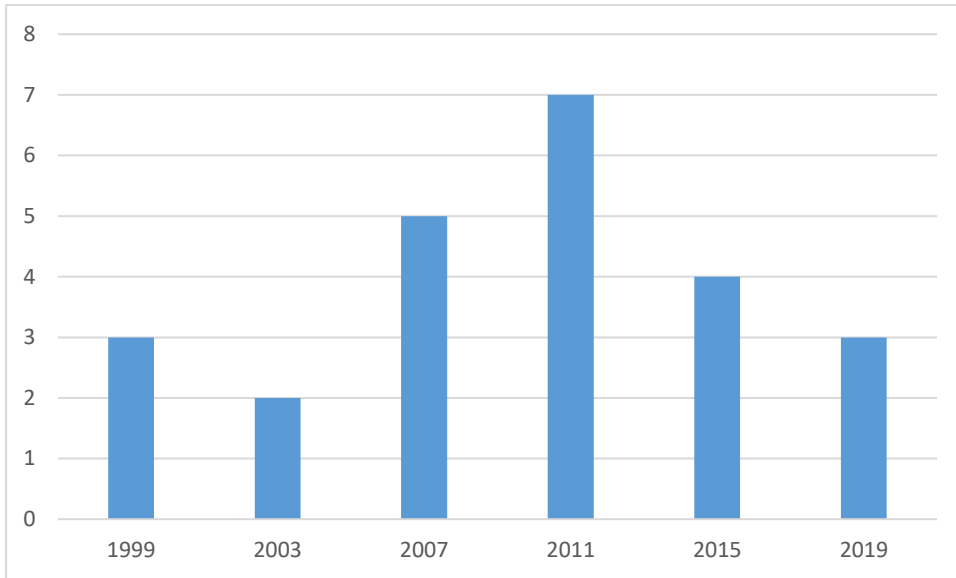


Figure 4.2: Chart showing the trend of women's representation in Lagos state from 1999 to 2019.

4.1.3 Ogun State House of Assembly (OGSHA)

Ogun state was created on 1 October 1976, nine years after the creation of Lagos state. However, the HoAs of both states were established at the beginning of Nigeria's second republic in 1979. The OGSHA comprises 26 legislators, each representing the 26 constituencies carved out from the 20 Local Government Areas in the state. The constituencies are: Abeokuta South I, Abeokuta South II, Abeokuta North, Ado-Odo/Ota I, Ado-Odo/Ota II, Egbado North I, Egbado North II, Ewekoro, Ifo I, Ifo II, Ijebu East, Ijebu Ode, Ijebu North I, Ijebu North II, Ijebu North-East, Ikenne, Imeko/Afon, Ipokia, Obafemi Owode, Odeda, Odogbolu, Ogun Waterside, Sagamu I, Sagamu II, Remo-North, Yewa South. Out of the 26 constituencies, only four (Odogbolu, Abeokuta North, Yewa South and Ipokia) are represented by women. Also, just as in other federating units, the OGSHA is structured into two management arms. The political arm which recruits through periodic elections, and the career arm, which is further sub divided into 12 departments, each under a director (Interview, Director of the Committee Department, 09/07/2020). These directors are directly under the control of the Clerk of the House who is the administrative head of the HoA. The OGSHA is currently in its ninth assembly under the leadership of Rt. Hon. Olakunle Taiwo Oluomo (OGSHA).

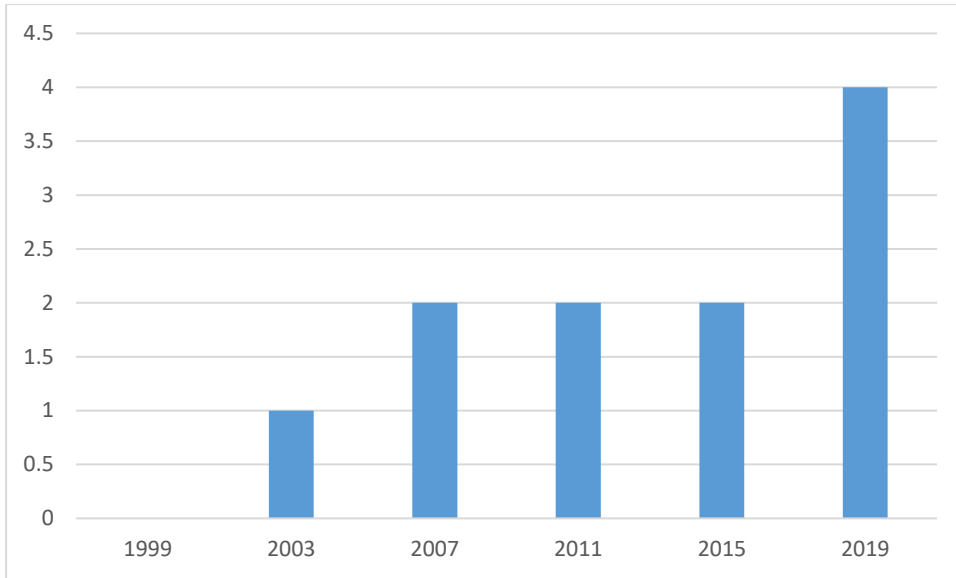


Figure 4.3: Chart showing the trend of women's representation in Ogun state from 1999 to 2019.

4.2 Women's representation in selected HoAs

The first objective examined the levels of women's representation in the selected HoAs. The purpose was to understand the conditions that surround the political recruitment of the female legislators. The emerging themes and sub themes in this section were categorized and analysed based on questions posed. Findings from this objective revealed a very low level of WPR in the selected HoAs which currently peaks at 17.5 percent in the LSHA seventh assembly (2011-2015), 15.3 percent in the EKSHA and 15.3 percent in the OGSHA, all of which falls below the 30 percent critical mass prescribed as a tipping point for effective representation. Simbine (2019)'s position that if WPR remains low, it is because women's participation is still mostly spectatorial, aptly highlighted this issue.

While women continue to play an active role in politics, their participation has remained at the level of voting, organizing, performing and providing logistics assistance for electoral candidates. They have not yet transformed from being a class "in itself" to a class for itself", an action which was eminently demonstrated by the "EndSARS" protest in 2020 when the Nigerian youth went all out to demand their rights against police harassment and brutality. The "Obidient movements" in the build-up to the general elections of 2023 also shared somewhat similar trajectory. As such, they remain at the mercy of the patriarchal party structure which has continued to marginalise them in decision-making roles, demonstrating to them that power is not served a la carte.

Women turn up in large numbers to carry out their civic responsibilities, but they are excluded from party power politics, which reduces their chances of achieving political influence or gaining support from constituencies. The crux of the conversation on WPR is thus succinctly captured by this paradox. Women's political participation is high, but WPR is low. Therefore, it is important to address this male-centric political configuration by all ethical means necessary, and most importantly through women's empowerment (Alliyu, 2016).

Women's effort in electioneering was also acknowledged by a party leader who said:

We know their involvement in the party, we know their support, we know their ability to in fact, to bring people to the party [sic]. They are the largest voters. When we talk of elections, we saw them, they participated well. When you have rally, if you have 1000 people in a rally, minimally we have 700 women **(KII, Party Leader, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state, 04/03/2020)**.

This statement further corrects the notions of women's low political participation which is often put forward by scholars of WPR. To understand and provide panacea for addressing women's political marginalization, analyzing the process of women's upward political mobility from the configuration of the gender make up of those who vote would provide a useful standpoint. Why has the participation of women at the level of campaigning and voting not translated to increased representation of women in legislative assemblies? This question was extensively discussed at the West African Partners – Nigeria meeting held in Abeokuta, Ogun state on 27 November 2019. In the submission of the anchor:

Women, let's be wise, let's be wise. What happened at the last election in [name of state withheld], you know we had four women in the House of Assembly. So, they said, somebody has been their [for some time] oya [sic: So] let's remove her, and they did. When they were saying let's remove, I was saying let us replace with another women, but nobody cared. But did you know that at the end of the day, she was replaced with a man. Now we are left with three female members **(In-depth Interview, Anonymous, Partners West Africa Initiative Nigeria (PWAN), 27/11/2019).**

Although the issue of women's political marginalization must be understood beyond the solidarity among women, beaming a search light on this impediment and sensitizing women on the dangers of working against their fellow women could help turn the tide of women's low political representation.

In the African historical context, the political sphere has never been strange to women. To some extent, equality prevailed, and this enabled them to feature collegially in political administration (Falola and Fwatshak, 2003; Agbalajobi, 2010; Eniola, 2018). However, the introduction of the Victorian concept which encouraged public invisibility of women through colonialism, has had a telling effect on Nigerian women's perception of politics. Over the years, women have been made to accept the role of a second fiddle in several contexts – religion, administration and so on (Adefemi and Agunbiade, 2019). Of course, this viewpoint has solidified the dominance of men in politics, even in democracy where leaders are presumed to be freely chosen. As such, a lot of women believe that they are only good enough as voters and not as competitors in the contest for political power. As noted by Nwankwor and Nkereuwen (2019), political participation does not translate to power gain for women. The emerging themes in this section were categorized and analysed based on questions posed as given below.

4.2.1 Women's descriptive representation

“Even when women really want to make change happen, if there are very few [of them], it might also become a great challenge” so the number also matters. This was the position of one of the foremost women's rights activists in Nigeria when she was interviewed on the state of women in Nigeria (Olawale, 2019: 17). While simply having more female lawmakers does not guarantee that there will be more laws addressing women's issues, (Childs and Krook, 2006; Osborn, 2014), expressions as these are commonplace in the discourse on WPR, and has often provoked the curiosity of many scholars.

Basically, descriptive representation establishes the proportional presence of a social group in a representative institution. Although there is disagreement in the literature regarding the outcomes that might be anticipated as the proportion of women in parliament rises (Wangnerud, 2009). Generally, it is believed that such increase is laced with a lot of benefit for both women, men, girls and boys. The politics of presence, that is, getting the underrepresented groups to come on board rather speaking for them, was amplified by Anne Phillips (1995; Osborn, 2014). However, despite well publicized gains embedded in increased women's descriptive representation, demonstrating how women's presence directly or positively affects women's interest has been difficult (Weldon, 2002; Childs and Lovenduski, 2013).

In Nigeria, women represent less than 10% of political positions (INEC database, 2020). Particularities within the context of political party constitutions and individual country's culture accounts for the supply of women to legislative assemblies. Hoodfar and Tajali (2011) identified three factors that keeps women out of politics. They are state gender ideology, cultural and social barriers and institutional or structural barriers. In the specific case of Nigeria, social barriers appear to be relentlessly enduring.

Also, electoral systems have huge impacts on women's political victories. For example, Proportional Representation (PR) has been identified to be suited for women's upward political mobility than the simple majority system of First Past the Post (FPTP) that Nigeria practices. With respect to voting, women's voters' turnout has remained steadily impressive even in less mature democracies. However, this is yet to reflect in the number of women in national parliaments. Nigeria ranks 180 globally and falls at the bottom of the ladder in Africa (IPU, 2019). Analysis of lawmakers' register across the six states of

the Southwestern Nigeria from 1999 to 2019 revealed that while the southwest of the country has the highest number of female legislators at the state level, the percentage, when compared to men is abysmally low at 6%.

Some argue that women are poor in networking and fostering solidarity especially among themselves (Arise News Interview, Chief Kemi Nelson, 31/12/2018). Empirical and theoretical studies on women's political participation have also revealed evidence of jealousy and envy. This is reflected in the campaigns of calumny against a female lawmaker earlier referred to in one of the HoA, which eventually made her lose her seat without another female replacement. Tamale (2000) also noted that some women politicians have no difficulty in openly criticizing other women. They do this by engaging in slanderous campaigns which always make reconciliation difficult, reinforcing the idea of a house divided against itself which cannot stand. As such, eliminating hostility among women in the pursuit of their upward political mobility remains painstakingly slow. Gender activists, politicians and leaders of women organisations share the same argument.

We are our worst enemies now. For men, they will see their opponent and still greet, but women [will] start talking [anyhow]. For men, when one win that election, the other will go and collaborate. If you are not given any position, then that person is taking contracts **(KII, Gender Activist, 27/11/2019)**.

At times, working with other women is a problem, because women like gossiping. The moment they see you, you are going higher more than them, they will start backbiting, and it is not common to our men... **(IDI, Female aspirant, 30/11/2019)**.

Women happen to be enemies of women that is why they are not equal to men. Had it been we use our voice to fight for each other, we would have overpowered men as the strength of number that God has given us. Those women at the senate, they are there for themselves not for women. They will tell you that it is men that help them, not women **(KII with member, National Council of Women Societies and a gender activist, 27/11/2019)**.

Apart from the lack of cordiality among women which could be largely adduced to how power is used and distributed, electoral politics in Nigeria's history, and as it stands today is laced with pockets of violence conflicts in many contexts (Okoosi-Simbine and Obi, 2020). When one looks at the Nigerian political terrain, the question "where are the women?" becomes very apt. Desperate as well as over ambitious politicians across party

lines, ideology and ethno-religious variables flame the embers of physical violence that drives even men who are concerned about their reputation away from partisan politics. In the words of a female lawmaker:

Politics comes with a whole lot of challenges. Aspiring, I won't cut that off, it comes with violence and what have you. So not everybody has that strength, and you know a whole lot of negative energy when people will just say things that are not true **(KII, Female Lawmaker C, 13/01/2020)**.

Corroborating this position, Mojubaolu Olufunke Okome, in a seminar presentation on gender and the politics of marginalization at Women's Research and Documentation Centre (WORDOC) and IFRA-Nigeria seminar series captured some of the inhibitions responsible for women's marginalization. She states:

There is also lack of resources, particularly money and social capital for women. Men have more access. A lot of young women who are part of this not too young to run have spoken out about how many men try to extort sex in exchange for donating money to them, or even in exchange for having them being able to access the money that is donated to the party. So, there is a lot of sexual harassment, there is a lot of sexual assault of women, or threats thereof. So, this is a very formidable barrier to scale over. Now I also put this sexual thing, harassment and assault possibility in the category of violence and intimidation. There is the violence of the guns, there is the violence of people threatening [...]. Then our political institutions are in a very rudimentary and poor condition **(WORDOC Lecture Series, 09/07/2019)**

The United States Institutes of Peace in Cohen (2015) in its study on violence between and within political parties in Nigeria, observes that political parties are controlled by godfathers who use money and violence to control the process. Yet increasing women's numerical minority has been globally acknowledged, not just in terms of fairness, but outcomes which could make legislative agenda more robust. Interestingly, the Nigerian National Conference Report held in 2014 delved elaborately into the conversation around WPR. It recommended several measures that could both in the immediate as well as in the near future, lead to women's numerical increase. Specifically, under the resolution on policy matters, number 36, it reinforced the need for the implementation of 35% affirmative action for women in all levels of governance, a recommendation which was had initially features in the country's National Gender Policy of 2006. However, the government has not demonstrated the willingness to bring this to fruition.

For some, the debate around WPR might have been overstressed. According to a party chairman, the popular argument of gender equality in political leadership should never de-emphasize quality of representation in the name of promoting women's upward political mobility. In his word:

... the issues of increase of women's representation must not be at the expense of quality. Otherwise, we will be veering towards what they call national policy, national geopolitical balancing which is always at the expense of quality, which sometimes could even be offensive to justice. When somebody scores 60% and you want to have the person with 40% because it's a woman, it's not right. Nobody can say women are inferior, so you exhibit yourself... **(KII, Party Chairman, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state, 04/03/2020).**

Even in contexts where female legislators have recorded substantive achievements as in Botswana, there potentials continue to be hampered by their small number (Bauer and Burnet, 2013). Women's low descriptive representation continues to affect their capacity to promote and protect women's rights in Nigeria (Eniola, 2018). Almost all the respondents emphasized the need for women to come together to forge a formidable force capable of giving the men a good fight.

4.2.2 Women's entry into politics

The political space in general has long been dominated by the male gender. Over the years, it has become clearer that universal adult suffrage does not result in legislative assemblies that ensures equal representation of the entire society (Došek *et al.*, 2017). Although, many sectors of the population remained marginalized, the underrepresentation of women has remained a global phenomenon despite various international corrective measures. This has continued to negatively impact the rights of women and how such rights are being respected. Even in contemporary times, empirical evidence reveals that men have been observed to have longer seniority than women. As such, women have to play according to the rules of the men both within the political parties and at governmental levels in order to get along. According to the APC Southwest women leader, most of the time, men even forget that there are women when they are constituting some of their committees. In her words,

First and foremost, we must realise that nothing comes easy. The men have taken over the space in a long time. Now we are pushing. We had very few

women in the past, so it was convenient for the men to do whatever they needed to do... (**Arise News Interview, Chief Kemi Nelson, 31/12/2018**).

However, around last millennium, women's leadership roles in all areas of development—including their participation in governance decision-making at all levels—became more widely acknowledged. Women started changing the narratives of cultural and structural barriers which has held them down and has restricted their upward political mobility in elective offices. This they do largely through the efforts of local women's organisations and international networks by working towards securing favourable covenants at the international, regional, and national levels (Gouws, 2010; Tripp, 2016). Despite formal assurance of political equality at least along the binary division of gender, the political sphere is undoubtedly still male-dominated (Palaniswamy, Parthasarathy and Rao, 2019). As such, understanding why and how women enter politics could provide an illumination to the constraints they face.

Unlike before, there are more evidence of Nigerian women coming out of their shells to contest for elective offices in all tiers of government, yet this has not reflected the numerical strength of women (Olutayo and Adebayo, 2017; Quadri, 2018; Umoh and Ayamba, 2018). Literature is replete with several factors affecting women's active engagement in politics, some of which include religion, cultural practices, finance, violence, indigeneity question and poverty (Luka, 2011; Wangnerud, 2009; Chaney, 2016; Eniola, 2018; Agbaje, 2019). However, Hoodfar and Tajali (2011) singled out political party platforms on which women run as one big impediment to winning elections into elective offices. Most times, the domination of the political party executives by men do not give women the necessary considerations and the support in intra-party (primary) elections. According to Quadri (2018), it appears as though the democratic space for inclusion is constricting as more women push for it. This circumstance thus, push a majority of the women especially those who are not allegiance activists to switch to other political parties which are the “weak” ones in most cases (**AJStream Interview, Christina Ude, 14/02/2019**).

Except in few cases where deliberate efforts are initiated to ensure equality of gender in party executive committees as in the case of Demos (a Romanian political party) (Bogdan, 2018), the experience is generalised enough as many democracies still grapple with gender parity issues within its political parties. Although, this is in a way not unconnected to the

fewer numbers of women who join party politics, women's lack of interest which becomes more obvious as they climb the political ladder has been artificially created by men who finds it very convenient to dominate the public space (Quadri, 2018).

In Nigeria, gender roles have been so defined that politics appears to be primarily the business of men. Just like in other political entities, major political parties are always less likely to have women leaders. Bako and Syed (2018) captured the dynamics of leadership in political parties. They observed the same pattern of marginalization – a very wide gender gap in the political system – in the political parties. It is then obvious that, while women still contend with several socio-cultural and institutional barriers in their struggle to attain upward political mobility, the formal machinery for political recruitment – political parties – is still not fully ready to help create conditions necessary to achieve this objective. To redress this phenomenon, Momodu (2003) agrees that it is important to re-examine the issue of WPR from at least four important perspectives which are: access to political institutions, participation, and representation (in descriptive and substantive terms). All of these, all things being equal would result in the fourth: positive social and political transformation.

4.2.3 Electioneering experiences from the primaries to the main elections

Given the essential role of the state level legislature, the attributes of elections that produce its members are very fundamental. While elections aim to get those that matter (the people) the power to decide who governs them and how they are governed, elections in Nigeria are yet to meet the standard of the core attributes of democracy (freedom, fairness, and accountability) (Wapmuk, 2008). The process of seeking election into a political office in a developing democracy such as Nigeria can be daunting for politicians. For women especially, their persistent failures at attaining upward political mobility have remained an important part of the major debates in the politics of gender representation. The role of gender norms and practices foremost of which has been blamed on patriarchal cultures and several other factors, including dual nativity (Eniola, 2018), gender, biological roles, stigmatization of women in politics, finance and cultural and religious inhibitions continue to stand in the way of women's upward political mobility (Agbalajobi, 2010; Hoodfar and Tajali, 2011; Pogoson, 2013; Olurode, 2013).

The provision of the Nigerian Constitution of 1999, in section 65 sub-section 2a, explicitly makes it clear that a person shall be qualified for election if s/he is a member of a political party and is sponsored by one. This provision makes intra-party-political dynamics very active in every election year. In the case of Nigeria for example, intra-party conflict remains one of the major sources of conflict that have assumed crises dimension and have accounted for most political instabilities than any other singular political activity since independence (Oloko, 2007; Cohen, 2015; Basiru, 2019). This experience has made the terrain of politics “a violence ridden profession” which is always difficult to attract women’s interest **(IDI, Party Chairman, 30/10/2019)**.

For those who are courageous enough to participate, intra-party elections provide party leaders (who are usually male) the opportunity to make women experience the reality of what it means to be a second fiddle, as it is common for candidates, especially women to be unjustly denied of party tickets even when they stand a better chance of winning an election. In an interview with Femi Oke and Malika Bilal on the Nigerian 2019 general elections, Christina Ude, a House of Representatives candidate running on the platform of Social Democratic Party narrated her experience:

Now when I decided to run, I joined the political party in office, APC. And when I joined, the governor of the state had a mock primary, and he told me to step down... There is [was] a mock primary, and he said to me [that] I scored 87%, and he looked at another guy and said, “you scored 90%”. And I was standing there wondering how he scored us **(AJStream Interview, Christina Ude, 14/02/2019)**.

Also, a political appointee in the study area narrated how her ambition to contest for the state’s HoA in 2015 was aborted despite her huge contributions to building the party structure in the state, and specifically in her constituency. She felt unappreciated and very uncomfortable at the conclusion of the party leaders who found it convenient to convince her to accept their choice of candidate (a male) without any contest. In her words:

... So, when it was time for the primary elections o [emphasis]. I bought form [and] we started all the underground work. One day, the leader of our party in the state, a former governor, just called me ... He begged me and asked me to forgo my ambition and support the other candidate. He is a man I respect a lot. So, what will I do? **(IDI, Political Appointee, 09/01/2020)**.

This experience is usually common with women who are contesting elective posts for the first time. In the study conducted by NDI (2012) on Tunisia’s constituent assembly, a

female Member of Parliament (MP) recounted how her request to run for the parliament was initially denied. Political parties are very hierarchical with the bulk of those who dominate the chain of command being male (Stoiciu and Gherghina, 2020), therefore making it very difficult for women to secure party platforms to stand in for elections. For those women who were able to secure party tickets and eventually succeed in winning elections, results from this study revealed they were the ones who have strong links with political godfathers.

According to Irabor (2012) in Ekundayo and Ama (2014), female candidates who have strong ties with important political figures succeed more easily in elections than others who do not. This experience more evidently finds expression with female politicians who associate their political success stories to either their husbands or parents as with Senator Oluremi Tinubu whose husband was a two-time Lagos state Governor, and one of the leaders of a major political party, and Lola Abiola-Edewor and Iyabo Obasanjo-Bello whose parents had played important roles politically in the country, as the winner of the annulled presidential elections of 1993 and the first democratic leader in the country's fourth republic respectively. Additionally, in the case of women who do not share marriage or blood ties with political godfathers, there were still evidences of political patronage with strong party leaders in the course of their political quest. A female legislator expresses this succinctly:

Most of the people who were my bosses at the TV Continental where I was a management staff... who were also politicians, who were also heads you know, of the company. They were the ones who actually encouraged me to take up position in politics ... **(KII, Female Lawmaker, 13/01/2020)**.

Corroborating this position was the account of political recruitment given by the lawmaker representing Abeokuta-North state constituency who through the years of her professional experience the state governor found relevant to his administration. In her words:

I was in the private sector for almost 25 years. I was called to serve by ... the past Governor of Ogun state as commissioner. I served [first] as commissioner of education, science and technology for three and half years and my interest was picked in continuing to serve my community as far as I could **(KII, Honourable Mujota, Modupe Onikepo, 21/01/2020)**.

Yet, female politicians irrespective of the configuration of their political network, are usually not spared the skirmishes that features in political party primaries. The first huddle is to be able to ensure the solidarity of women which sometimes can be very difficult to

achieve. A female legislator recounted her experience in securing party ticket. In her words:

Hmmmm! Power is not gotten like that... Even amongst your fellow women, it was not easy. The good thing was that we were favoured by our first lady who is gender sensitive person. And the husband, the governor was actually willing even to have more women. So that one gave us an edge a little... though we had primaries, but it was a consensus **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

The question of lack of solidarity among women within political parties was extensively engaged at the Town Hall Awareness organized by Rule of Law and Empowerment Initiative (WAPN) in Abeokuta, Ogun state on 27 November 2019. One of the speakers [name withheld] who was engaged in the conversation narrated the Lagos and Ogun experience where the men usually find willing women to engage in disrupting the political calculations of female candidates.

What they do is ... they will go and talk to another woman at the die minutes of primary election, and so they bring that woman up. They will tell you to step down?" They are already talking to another woman whether you step down or not. And so, a week to the election, another woman, whether you step down or not [...]. The other one, she has nothing to lose **(KII, Gender Activist, 27/11/2019)**.

The general lack of solidarity among women is well captured with the classic example of the PDP's presidential primaries in 2011. With just one woman (Sarah Jibril) among three aspirants to be chosen by over 5 000 delegates in an indirect primary party election, the female presidential candidate secured only one vote, which was the one she gave herself (Dagunduro and Adenugba, 2020). The results generated a lot of debate among scholars and onlookers alike, shifting the blame of female political retrogression on women. Solidarity is an important ingredient to strengthening groups position (Okedele, 2020). According to a female lawmaker in an interview:

You know before, if you have a woman coming out to contest, it is the same gender that would go against you... but now, we have people supporting each other. We have our leaders, our mamas [mothers] that have been in politics, supporting. And we have experienced women there. What we preach there is to always support one another ... **(KII, Female Lawmaker F, 26/11/2019)**.

Dagunduro and Adenugba (2020: 32) further stressed that “women’s legacy of woman-hating has to be eliminated in order for women to be able to come together successfully to fight for a common cause”.

4.2.4 Women, political party leadership and internal democracy

One of the most significant institutions influencing women's engagement in politics is political parties. This is because in most countries, they determine which candidate runs on their platform, and what issue receives more attention. Consequently, the role of women in political parties determines to a large extent their prospect for political empowerment. The history of women’s involvement in political parties date back to the period of mass enfranchisement in late 19th century to mid-20th century. Childs (2016), in the study of the evolution of women’s involvements in political party activities noted the employment of ‘ladies auxiliaries’ who were hired as administrative support staff to help in the running of the day-to-day activities of party secretariats. Much later, some feminists engaged the political process, though in an uneven and limited number across different polities and parties. Today, the full mainstreaming of women in all areas and at all levels of decision making has been acknowledged through several international documents and covenants such that women’s upward political mobility is no longer a strange engagement.

In a democracy, political parties typically serve as the forum through which women, just like their male counterparts, mobilise for political engagement. As such, the dynamics of interaction within this platform could matter substantially to the configuration of the general polity. A political party is understood to be a voluntary organisation of like-minded people seeking to gain the control of government through elections, and whose mode of operation is largely outside the scope of government regulation so long as its internal organisation conforms with democratic principles (Biezen and Piccio, 2013). It also provides a robust practical training platform for political leaders to hone their ability in the art of governance (Okedele, 2020). Internal processes within political parties remain the main gate keeper in political recruitment process in a multi-party democracy. It is an important principle that drive the operations and efficiency of a democracy (Babayo and Muhammed, 2019).

Internal democracy also provides an avenue where political parties can promote transparency, accountability, and fair play in terms of equal opportunity and access to all party member irrespective of gender, ethnicity or religion (Ojukwu and Olaiifa 2011).

However, according to Acker (2006), because gender is typically enacted in institutional contexts through “complex” interconnecting processes that maintain inequities, gender is inherently political. A fundamental problem that continues to affect democracy is the lack of gender equality in party leadership, just as in the general polity (Neill and Stewart, 2009).

Evidence from empirical research and observations from onlookers continue to validate women’s marginalization in political party hierarchies (Bako and Syed, 2018; Ekundayo and Ama, 2014; Eniola, 2018). For female politicians, gender discrimination in the society still evidently reflects itself even at this level. Lovenduski (2005) noted that party organisational configurations are also biased towards certain kinds of masculinity expressed in recruitment processes and ideas of gender appropriate behaviours.

According to Okoosi-Simbine and Obi (2020), the mere existence of political parties does not ensure women’s representation. This is principally because, over the years, institutions, such as the political parties have been inadvertently structured to favour men over the women. As earlier noted, political parties have been observed to constrain women’s effort at attaining upward political mobility largely through the instrumentality of patriarchal culture. Evidence from O’Neill and Stewart’s study on *gender and political leadership in Canada* corroborates the claim that only ideological left and small parties are more likely than other parties to have women as their leaders (Neill and Stewart, 2009).

Findings from this study revealed significant higher number of men to women, and a pervasive gender power relation in political parties’ leadership structure and the administrative committees that matter. A women’s leader lamented the underrepresentation of women in political party leadership and committees where important decisions are taken. In her words:

At the state level? CWC [Central Working Committee], I am the only woman there. We are almost 16 in number... We are 36 in number [in all, including deputies], but it is only the principal officers that are [in] the CWC. For the principal officers, anybody in the assistant position is not eligible to enter that [sic: not eligible for inclusion] **(KII, Party/Women’s Leader, 30/10/2019)**.

Women are less likely to receive party nominations for elective seats as a result of the unequal gender representation in party leadership, particularly in "strong" or large political parties where the already small chances for women to be elected on party platforms are

further diminished. A female legislator who is presently serving in one of the selected HoAs recollected how lack of internal democracy within her party almost truncated her ambition during her primaries. In her words:

The time the governor was announcing the consensus candidate, he said "...I am paying for every candidate, which I have done". On getting to the secretariat, the secretary said "ah, didn't you hear? The governor said if you collect any form, you are on your own" ... I was given another form. [Yet] the governor did not announce any candidate for my constituency... But by the time they took the names to INEC, I was the only candidate for the constituency **(KII, Female Lawmaker F, 26/11/2019)**.

Except for positions peculiar to them, a generally observed trend has found men to enjoy longer tenures as party leaders than women (Neill and Stewart, 2009). To address the issue of representation from the party level, studies have identified conscious effort by political parties in the implementation of gender-specific measures – party gender quotas for instance – as a crucial initial step. The demand for gender quotas, either as part of the state electoral systems or to address political parties structure increased particularly following the Fourth World Congress on Women in Beijing, China in 1995. National governments at the conference agreed to increasing women's descriptive representation in political decision-making positions with a minimum target of 30 percent (Dahlerup, 2006b in (Hoodfar and Tajali, 2011). While some countries have formally adopted one form of gender quota or another, countries like Nigeria and Botswana for example are yet to formally integrate it into its political structure, although they have in some of their respective countries political parties who have stipulated internal gender quotas for party executive bodies. For example, a party leader in the PDP, a major political party in one of the selected states) revealed that the party could no longer ignore the subject of women's representation within its ranks, and as such has put in place a plan to increase their proportion in party leadership. In his words:

The party has mandated that in every ward, they should give women at least 30% of executive [positions]. ...any ward that fails to give that prescribed percentage to women will be disqualified... So, by that, women will be given their place. And if they are given their place in the state exco [sic: executive] then contesting for an election will not be difficult again **(KII, Party Leader/Secretary, 04/03/2020)**.

Gender quotas are commonly used in an electoral system with proportional representation. By establishing a numerical range, particularly for party lists, it is a specific measure typically adopted to improve the proportion of women among party candidates or

legislators. Party quotas, in accordance with Hoodfar and Tajali (2011)'s analysis can aid in redressing the patriarchal bias of most political parties and aid in boosting the likelihood that women will be nominated for, and ultimately elected to, representative assemblies at the state or federal levels. Interestingly, findings from this study also revealed the possibility of adapting this measure to political party leadership as in the case of Nigeria's PDP where at least 30% are required to be part of the party leadership at all levels. If genuinely implemented, gender action measures within political parties can contribute to re-gendering party leadership structure by increasing women's numerical presence.

4.2.5 Women and political violence

It has been observed that entry and succession in politics, especially when viewed from the perspective of elections, has been problematic in Africa as a whole, and Nigeria in particular (Okoosi-Simbine, 2008). The Nigerian Code of Conduct states that "no political party shall engage in violent activities of any kind, as a way of demonstrating its strength" (Article 6). However, extensive research continues to confirm widespread violence as one major impediment to female political inclusion.

First, women encounter physical and emotional violence on the road to elective offices, and secondly, on how and to what extent they can represent a policy position (Luka, 2011, Eniola, 2018; Okoosi-simbine and Obi, 2020); Okedele, 2020). This evidence has raised serious questions about democratic consolidation in Nigeria. In the first case, just as in the First Republic where intra-party-political violence ultimately led to a full-blown civil war, violence connected to the organisation of politics in Nigeria (Osaghae, 2002; Mohammed, 2008) is still commonplace in the present political dispensation.

Since returning to democratic governance in 1999, Nigerian democratic politics has been marred by political violence and intimidation of both the voters, and candidates standing for elections (Eniola, 2018; Omobowale, 2008) before, during and even after elections. Ibrahim (2007) argued that the way elections are conducted in Nigeria's present democracy reveals that democracy in the country is more or less a ridicule of its core values. This situation has paved way for "people of questionable character to occupy various positions of public trust, including the post of legislators" (Wapmuk, 2008: 82).

Omobowale (2008) highlighted violence as a veritable tool in political relations in postcolonial Nigeria. For older men and women in the Southwestern geo-political zone

who witnessed the political crises in the Nigeria's old Western region in the 1960s, the memories of kidnapping, assassination, arson, and several other measures of political violence remains fresh (Oloko, 2007). These memories have been passed down to the young generation, many of whom still believe that politics is a "do or die" affair. Even in recent elections, Nigeria's democracy has not been devoid of violence. For example, the 2007 general elections in Ibadan provides a clear scenario of political violence. As can be gleaned from Omobowale's study:

The use of violence was not limited to one party. For example, when you know that if Alhaji Lagbaja [sic: a certain Alhaji or individual] is not there on the day of the election, your chance of winning is certain, few days to the election, you get him kidnapped... (Oral Interview/PDP supporter (a) 06/15/2007, Source: Omobowale, 2008).

Although not a conventional means of political participation, political violence as a tool to secure electoral victories have proved effective and has been overtly or covertly sustained by many political godfathers. Observations revealed the mobilization of motor park workers and their chiefs as well as 'area boys' during election periods to either protect or attack the political bases of their patrons or opponents respectively. Evidence of this mobilization surfaced on the internet when Musiliu Ayinde Akinsanya (also known as MC Oluomo), a former chairman of the Lagos state branch of the National Union of Road Transport Workers and the current chairman of Lagos State Parks Management Committee was seen celebrating the victory of the APC gubernatorial candidate (Gboyega Oyetola) in Osun state [another state in the Southwestern geopolitical zone] in the September 22, 2018 election. In his words:

... We are presently at Osogbo [the capital of Osun state]. I am very happy. Where is PDP [sic: People's Democratic Party. What is the worth of PDP]. You, [Bukola] Saraki [the president of the Nigerian Senate at the time] You brought money here to give, is your money not a waste now? [Beating his chest while the people behind were hailing him] ... **(Source: <https://youtu.be/JpvldxSTdfY>).**

This specific election which was at first declared inconclusive had the opposition PDP taking the lead. Electoral officials and the security personnel sometimes tends to be partisan (Olurode, 2013). The phenomenon of 'competitive rigging' among political parties have shifted the question or blame of rigging from a singular party to a situation where all political parties are culpable. The desperation of some politicians encourages them to deliberately enlist thugs in their campaign teams (Wapmuk, 2008). An experience

such as this validates the claim of physical violence as an entrenched attribute of Nigeria's democratic politics. This experience is also an evidential indictment on the role of major political parties in Nigeria's democratic process who have devastatingly embraced politics of inducement and have continued to sustain patrimonialism which often brings about development retarding outcomes (Bratton, 2008; Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019; Okeke and Nwali, 2020).

The focus on women and political violence is understandable in the context of this prevalent reality, which is generalized enough in Nigeria. According to a party leader, politics constitute one of those activities characterized by violent conflicts. Such kinds of activities, like many others, limit women's participation as they are well more aware of risk and are less likely to get involved in risk ridden activities. In his words:

Activities that are ridden with risk... Look at armed robbery, how many women do you find there? Because of the risk there. Go to kidnapping. These are negative things though, but I am only telling you of the risk content. It is different from apostolic callings... Reverend fathers, Reverend sisters... I think the two of them I have told you would explain what I am saying **(KII, Party Leader/Chairman, 04/03/2019)**.

For female politicians, they face violence of different shades and dimensions. First there is the threat of physical violence. According to a survey-based estimate, fewer than one in ten individuals' experience threats of electoral violence (Bratton, 2008). Ngara and Ayabam (2013) noted that the mobilization of thugs before, during, and sometimes after elections and the general atmosphere of insecurity during the electioneering period makes politics a "no go" area for most women.

Historically, the agency of political violence has been dominated by men. This has conditioned the understanding of the phenomenon to be something always perpetuated by men, and never the other way round. However, in recent times, some feminist scholars have begun to move away from the notion of women as victims. They try to explore the complexities of the gendered nature of violent conflicts in politics by also focusing on the role of women as perpetrators. While the study acknowledges the men to be the dominant perpetrators of political violence. Findings from the study also revealed that women can also be perpetrators of violence mostly expressed in form of self-defense. In an interview with a female politician:

When I was contesting in 2015, I have [had] my own strong boys o [emphasis]. Strong boys. You have to have them. They are the ones who will defend you when there is trouble. I remember. When we were campaigning at [location withheld] My car is [was] always in the middle. I can't say more than that **(IDI, Female politician and currently a political appointee, 09/01/2020)**.

Experiences of political violence were less reported by female politicians in the study area especially in the last two general elections (2015 and 2019). This is not unconnected to the gradual and steady democratic growth in the country (See Ihemeje 2019). Nigeria's fourth republic has recorded six general elections. According to Orji (2017), specific measures taken by the electoral commission to stem the tide of political violence include introduction of technological innovations. Such innovations include the use of card reader device and uploading of election results electronically from polling units in election administration. All these measures are aimed at enhancing electoral transparency. Also, hard, and soft security measures such as increased and joint mobilization of officers from different security agencies, and peace messaging as well as preventive diplomacy urging candidates and political elites to eschew violence.

Also important are the efforts of and interventions by former political leaders, religious leaders and some leaders of thoughts at ensuring peace during elections in Nigeria. A notable example is the initiative of the National Peace Committee (NPC) chaired by General Abdulsalam Abubakar (a former Head of State of Federal Republic of Nigeria). This committee ensures that major contenders affirm their commitment to free, fair and peaceful elections by signing the NPC documents, and by also calling on their supporters to shun violence (Kofi Annan Foundation, n.d; National Peace Committee, n.d).

Additionally, very important is the commitment of international Civil Society Organisations, development partners and supranational institutions at the regional, continental and global level to improve global democratic governance and culture. These institutions send observers to monitor elections, report incidences of violence and impose sanctions if necessary. Ihemeje (2019) in his study on international election monitoring groups identified at least six international election observation bodies; National Democratic Institute (NDI), The Commonwealth Secretariat (CS), European Commission (EC), International Republican Institute (IRI), Human Right Watch (HRW) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Their efforts have continued to yield good results through their dynamic reporting and recommendations.

Moreover, another interesting revelation from the findings touched on the personality of politicians. According to a female legislator, a politician who believes in, and adheres to the principles of conventional means of political participation would not only find it hard to enlist thugs on his/her campaign train but would also discourage the use of thuggery even when they are readily available, either as original supporters or sympathizers. In her words:

...there are those who will present themselves as political thugs... Like when I started campaigning in my town, I just felt I was born and bred in Ilawe Ekiti, I know every nook and cranny... so I felt if I need to get something from them, I don't need to use thuggery... well, some boys came pretending to say, "we will protect you, everywhere you go". I told them "I don't need any protection (**KII, Female Lawmaker, 06/03/2020**).

Another dimension to the occurrence of political violence has to do with the reactions of the people to governance. When the people have confidence in a particular administration and could conveniently evaluate the dividend of political development, then it is unlikely that they would turn to violence. In the words of a female lawmaker:

I didn't [experience any form of political violence] and I never had more than one policeman or two policemen with me when we felt it could get untidy. But my boss [name withheld] had always said if you are afraid of the people, then you don't deserve to serve them. That was the same mentality we carried through our campaigning (**KII, Female Lawmaker H, 21/01/2020**).

Democracy gives the citizens the leeway which allows them to choose their leaders and hold them accountable by judging their performance and ultimately determining their stay in office. However, sustaining democratic values and increasing participation of women depends largely on how credible an election (the instrument for achieving this) can be (Ihemeje, 2019). When safeguards against the culture of politics as "do or die" venture is provided, and when the conditions surrounding the totality of electioneering process is considered peaceful, women are more likely to participate in larger number both as voters and candidates (Nwankwor and Nkereuzem, 2019).

4.2.6 Women's preference for appointive positions

Participation in politics in Nigeria reveals patterns of disadvantage for women seeking entry to both elective and appointed posts. This is as a result of carefully orchestrated strategies of exclusion which has continued to defy many corrective interventions strategies. Although women have severally alleged that men prefer them in appointive positions where they can be done without at will (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019). The study reveals that, it is not the men who take pleasure in restricting women to appointive positions. Rather, it is the women who contest in very limited number. Many women would rather lobby to get appointed into a political office rather than subject themselves to electoral challenge. In an interview, a party leader asserts that:

We say women should occupy certain number or percentages [sic] but our women don't come out to contest... they are only interested in appointments... Because it is not practicable, for example, House of Assembly, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 men collect form to contest, we will now say because of quota system [or] rationale that says we should give women larger percentage, we now go and pick someone ... **(KII, Party Leader, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti state, 04/03/2020).**

A female politician contesting as a running mate for a local government chairmanship seat was asked, "how many women showed interest in this position?" Her response was simply "I was the only person; I was the only female". In a similar vein, a serving lawmaker recalled that seven individuals contested to get the party ticket with her, and they were all men. All but one of the serving female lawmakers shared a similar experience. In the case where two female candidates emerged, one of them negotiated her ambition with a political appointment in one of the commissions under the executive arm of government in one of the selected states. In many instances, larger number of women have been appointed into political offices (Bauer, 2019). This finding is consistent with Scherpereel *et al.* (2018) in their study on divergent institutional patterns in WPR where they discovered that appointing women into political office may be done far more easily than getting them to run for elections.

4.2.7 Addressing the challenge of women as mere token representatives in party leadership structure

According to the 1999 constitution, to be eligible to contest in an election, a candidate must be a member of a political party and be supported by it. This legal provision thus designates political parties as the “official arena” for political participation (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019). In 1995, *the Politics of Presence*, an influential book by Anne Phillips, was published. According to the politics of presence hypothesis, female politicians, including those in the leadership positions of political parties, are better suited to represent the interests of women in legislative bodies. As such, women must be willing to run for office to be elected. In Nigeria, political parties determine which women, and when they can run for office.

The study observes that gender parity within political party leadership remains highly unencouraging (See page 19; KII, Women’s Leader, 30/10/2019), with the most common position women occupy being that of the women’s leader. Although women’s leader position within the party leadership structure was created to represent women’s interest, Nwankwor and Nkezeuwem (2019: 34) observed that such position is used by party patrons to keep women away from important “discussions and negotiations that shape resource and power distributions”.

As a result, women leaders often act as enforcers of patriarchal authority. An interview with a female councillor captured this experience as follows:

Using my own case as an example, when I was on the race contesting, about nine of us contested but I was the only female among them. What I noticed is that the female leaders of the party believed once I emerge, I will be their automatic leader [sic: leader automatically] so they felt threatened... **(KII, Female Supervisory Councilor, 16/08/2015).**

This finding is consistent with Nwankwor and Nkezeuwem’ (2019) who observed that women leaders within political parties, rather than working to increase women’s representation, are complicit in women’s exclusion through party structure.

In every interview with male and female respondents, it was agreed that there is insufficient representation of women among party executives, which hinders women’s political participation and upward political mobility. When there are only a few women,

they are forced to deputize men in offices, making it exceedingly challenging to object to the positions of the men.

Activists and scholars have identified that primary elections expose myriads of dishonest practices in the candidacy process. These practices were well captured in Aisha Osori's (2017) memoir where she lucidly documents her struggle to win a seat in the Abuja Municipal Council. Interestingly, the few influential women she reached out to for help were not holding any leadership positions in her political party. The entire working of the party was conveniently in the grip of leaders who were all men.

It is evident that women have historically been marginalized in the political party structures (See page 14; KII, Interview, Political Appointee, 09/01/2020). To address this issue, some political parties now require that women hold 30% of party leadership positions. Such is the case with the PDP, the leading opposition party in Nigeria. According to the state's party secretary in Ekiti state:

My party, has made it compulsory to have at least 30% women in her executives... The People's Democratic Party has even made it mandatory that any ward that fails to give that prescribed percentage to women will be disqualified. So that is what the PDP is doing to give women enough relevance in politics **(KII, Party Leader, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state, 04/03/2020)**.

According to Article 6.7 of the PDP constitution, women must hold at least 15% of party offices. However, the party is yet to put this constitutional provision into practice (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019). Every female candidate that lost elections had a similar story of how the male subjugation of women within the party structures impeded her chances of advancing beyond the party primaries. Many of the injustices faced by women do not appear to be at the top of the list of priorities of political leaders (Abdela, 2010). Since political parties are conduit through which representatives gain the platform to speak for the people. Changing the gender configuration of its leadership structure such that women are sufficiently represented in positions of leadership would positively reflect on the number of women who are able to be elected as representatives of the people.

4.2.8 First ladies and women's political representation

Gender analysis involves a serious intellectual endeavour to examine the various ways that men and women have been portrayed, particularly through western lenses. In the

West, Oyewumi (1997) noted that biological explanations appear to be highly privileged over other ways of explaining gender. However, gender does reflect more than what the narrow definition based on the parameter of sex ascribes to it. According to Kevane (2014), gender refers to a set of shared and evolving discursive habits which prescribe or proscribe behaviour for persons in their social roles as men and women and that structure analysis and decision making about the actions of others. For the World Health Organisation (Gillis and Jacob, 2017), it is a socially constructed attributes of both men and women such as norms, roles and relationships of, and between groups of men and women, boys and girls. As such, gender construction is basically sociological rather than biological.

First ladies in Nigeria have a history of being politically involved in ways that restrict women's engagement in politics, both at the national and state levels (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019). Also, to preserve their positions, other powerful women likewise find it challenging to accept the rise of other women on the political stage. Therefore, it is rare to see female politicians identify with godmothers whom they hold in high esteem as guarantors for their successes in politics. However, in Ekiti state, one name consistently emerged in nearly every interview with APC members and supporters, expressing appreciation for the effort of the governor's wife's in promoting women's rights.

The study reveals the effort of Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi whom, owing to her training and experience and in her capacity as the wife of the governor of a state to address gender restrictive issues and promote women's political participation either by lobbying the legislative arm of the government or initiating bills directly from the executive branch where her office is domiciled. Many of the respondents spoke of her efforts in glowing terms, two of whom are a running mate of a local government chairmanship aspirant and the women leader of APC:

If women are part of decision making, you will see that everything will work *pari passu*. Nobody will be left out. Even a day-old baby will benefit... You can see mother-general going from hospitals to hospitals, paying bills. Whether she is around or not, once she sees [receives a] messages, especially [from] women, she doesn't waste time **(KII, Mrs Abimbola Ameobi, 03/10/2019)**.

Out of that state [house] of assembly, if not because of the first lady, they shouldn't [wouldn't] have given us anything. The case of rep now [sic:

referring to the federal house of representatives' seat] we were able to have one female. So, to get those four females there [referring to the HoA], it is tedious work... **(KII, Party/Women Leader, 30/10/2019)**.

Mrs. Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi is a feminist activist and development specialist, social entrepreneur, policy advocate, writer, businesswoman (Ekiti State Government, undated). Apart from the details of her activities in the gender and development sector which is well captured in the Ekiti state's government official website, her passion and intervention in improving the life of women particularly in Ekiti was also observed in her office, with several sections which sees to different women's issues. For example, Mrs Atane, a lawyer, takes charge of cases of domestic violence against women. There are other sections of the first lady's office complex which sees to women empowerment and skills acquisition as well **(Observation, 24/02/2020)**.

Although, it is common for wives of the presidents or governors to embark on projects during the tenure of their husbands (Archibong, Bassey and Nwagbara, 2018; Iheanacho, 2016; Morrison, Justice and Mesko, 2004), not every wife of the governor is a feminist or gender specialist. This understanding makes Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi's life, work and experience worthy of attention in this study. From her title as Erelu (a woman title holder in an Ogboni secret society which has become largely ceremonial in modern times), to her description as mother-general by her admirers, Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi has encouraged many women to join political parties and contest for elective offices.

To understand the edge which men have over women in power relations, it is important to get to know how a patriarchal society works. It is in this understanding that a fruitful alternative for gender equality and a better future can be developed. The patriarchal system continues to restrict the true liberation of women. Nkenkana (2015) explained this experience as a global phenomenon which must change to eliminate inequality between sexes. To her, the deliberate neglect of women in politics by colonialists, who prioritized men over women, served as a forerunner to this pervasive reality, particularly in Africa (Agbaje, 2019).

According to NDI (2012), no country in the world offers women and men the same access to the rights and resources of the nation-state. The society is essentially patriarchal to such an extent that male dominance in party politics is not spared. However, in several pre-colonial African societies, the expected roles conferred on women and men although

different in some areas, nevertheless, reflects similarities and significant level of complementarity designed to capitalize on the strength of both sexes for the development of the society (Agbaje, 2019). This implies that any initiative aimed at addressing development questions must address the fundamental question of equality of women to the men.

One misconception about the liberation of women has been to incorporate them within the patriarchal system or what Nkenkana, (2015) calls the 'menization' of women whereby men's role in the society is used as a yardstick to evaluate the transformation of women. The clarification of this misconception is very fundamental for charting productive alternatives. Although Nigeria epitomizes diversity in a sense of having people of different ethnicities live together under one government, the country remains a good example of a typical patriarchal African society (Adisa, Abdulraheem and Issa, 2019). Separating patriarchy from our lived experiences is difficult (Makama, 2013), as women are often viewed as less equal and less qualified to men.

While it is important to state that the status of African women has never been directly equal to those of men (Amadiume, 1987), sexual division of labour was not divided along productive and reproductive line during the pre-colonial period. African women played extremely important and diverse socio-political roles during pre-colonial periods (Tamale, 2000). They wielded substantial political and economic powers in many parts of the continents. For example, in Ghana, women had total control of the proceeds from their businesses (Tamale, 2000). Also, in the specific case of southwestern Nigeria where adult women's employment in a trade is regarded as norm, the control of the market spaces is firmly established within the grip of their influence. This gave them relative autonomy from men. According to Agbalajobi (2010) and Falola and Fwatshak (2003), the position of women during the pre-colonial era was sufficiently well-known in politics. Thus, women's achievements obtainable in African history and as captured by plethora of literatures readily comes to mind (Bako and Syed, 2018).

Although, Nigerian women recorded great political achievements in the pre-colonial era, these political achievements nosedived during the colonial period. The period of colonization marked the period of women's relative neglect in the society (Agbaje, 2019). This was as a result of the introduction of the Victorian concept of women which encouraged their public invisibility and advocated that a woman should be seen and not

heard (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2008). The way that women were portrayed by this foreign concept—as simple appendages and displays of their husbands' wealth—led to systematic marginalization of Nigerian women and ultimately to a reduction in the economic, political, and social roles they played in traditional Nigerian society. The loss of influence has continued to leave them trailing far behind men – an expression which is well captured in local and international data bases working in the area of politics of gender representation.

The decrease in political activity that characterized the life of women during the colonial period was never to last so long. While men continued to hold to position of power, women were also able to register their grievances through conventional and unconventional protests. A case for reference is the 1929 Aba women's war (Tamale, 2000) and the attempted deposition of an Egba king (Ademola II) in 1949 (Johnson-Odim and Mba, 1997). Oladejo (2016) explained how market women were mainstreamed into the growing political conversations that address the welfare of workers. The 1945 general strike – a landmark in Nigeria's labour history – saw the collaboration between the labour union and Lagos market women under the leadership of Alimotu Pelewura pay off.

Gender transformation that will bring about the desired representational outcomes must incorporate structural transformation of patriarchy. Efforts to neutralize patriarchal strength must be embraced by all. Because a tree does not make a forest, Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi effort needs to be complemented by other women of substance and men alike.

4.3 Factors influencing women's committees' selection

“Congress in its committee-room is Congress at work.” This quote by Wilson in 1885 has been used a few times to accentuate the importance of committees in the legislative process (Swift, 2020: 1). Committees are usually the epicentre of a legislature's influence and as such their composition matters. One of the most important responsibilities with respect to committees is their role in advancing policy agendas in legislative assemblies. This study focuses on committees because they are commonly seen as important instruments for enhancing “specialization, decentralizing power within legislature” among other things (Shalaby, 2020: 139).

In many contexts, committees are formed to address issues important to legislatures or constituents. While men are commonly overrepresented in committees which are

considered more influential and respected, women are usually found to be more in the low-status ones (Murray and Sénac, 2018). According to Swift (2020), the composition of legislative committees is a function of requesting behaviour of members and the disposition of the leadership to such request. However, findings from the second objective identified female lawmakers' policy preferences, academic background, and professional experience as well as their legislative experience as the most important factors which influence the House Selection Committee in the composition of house committees for women.

Most of the scholarship on the impact of female lawmakers in legislative policymaking have centered on one key question: Does having more women in legislative assemblies affect the overall legislative structure and compositions? (Brien and Piscopo, 2019). It is generally accepted that nations often experience greater living standards and positive development in education, infrastructure, and health when women are empowered as political leaders (Beaman *et al.*, 2007). However, to retain their hegemony, men often react in at least three ways. First, they could group women into traditionally feminine interest: education and health for example. Second, they could keep women out of the legislative power structure and important committees, and third, they could be condescending (Whitmire, 2007). For example, a woman MP noted, "I have heard when women are speaking in the plenary, men say 'oh that is what the quotas bring us; this is why we refused the quotas'" (NDI, 2012:9).

Since state legislators remains numerically dominated by the men, subjective assessment of performance will tend to include "the auxiliary characteristics of the dominant males" (Whitmire, 2007:889). As such, female representatives could be seen as lacking leadership qualifications and unfit for important positions. This could make them feel like outsiders and be hesitant in lobbying or competing for positions of powers and leadership. The emerging themes in this section were categorized and analysed below.

4.3.1 Policy preference of female legislators

Descriptive representation does not give the needed understanding of the problems of gender and women oppression. To make better policies and laws, it is important that women's perspectives be included. According to Atkinson and Windett (2019), large, diverse legislative agendas that cover a wide variety of issues are formulated by women.

These topics include general social phenomenon, and several specific women issues. This is because they have access to, and an understanding of some different problems than men (NDI, 2012).

Generally, women express significantly more liberal welfare policy preferences than men. These issues range from culture, family, and socialization, GBV, to issues on agriculture, poverty, labour and employment, health, political representation and so on (Osborn, 2014). However, much of feminist theorists, including Phillips who emphasized the politics of presence, suggested that relatively fewer women are motivated to take these causes. Still, it will be implausible to conclude that women's chances to affect legislations is severely undermined by their gender (Wängnerud, 2009). In the politics of gender representation, a core idea is that certain concerns arise from the experiences of women which can never be adequately address in politics dominated by men. Women and men are viewed as having different policy preference and competences. Bauer and Burnet (2013) in their study on women's representation in Africa compared the cases of Botswana with lower female representation and Rwanda which has been variously hailed for the height of representation it has achieved for women. Their findings revealed that the way women's interests are represented must be understood broadly, both from the theoretical point of view and through empirical experiences. Recent scholarship has also suggested that, even when critical actors are small, they can still undertake critical acts for women.

However, thus far, researchers who are particularly interested in the extent to which getting women elected in the legislature improves the possibility of achieving the interests of women through public policies formulation and implementation have discovered that, generally, female legislators are much more concerned about issues such as women's rights and equality, education, social welfare, health care, families and children, violence against women and the environment (NDI, 2008; Osborn, 2014; Bauer, 2019; Akirav, 2020; Obidike and Eucharia, 2020), and they feature prominently more in committees that seeks to address them.

4.3.2 Academic background and professional experience

Legislative assemblies constitute a platform where a variety of complex issues that affect the governance of people are discussed. As such, collaboration among individuals of diverse academic background and professional experience is very effective for expanding

the pool of available information at government's disposal (Barnes, 2016). Pitkin (1967) argues that diversity in legislative assemblies is very important because it would reflect a variety of viewpoints of constituents from which policy decisions could be taken. Individuals vary in areas of expertise. In the course of serving, engaging this complex policy milieu, a politician's academic background and professional expertise may help provide the necessary information to identify a problem, and choose among alternative solutions in the process of policy information (Nyabola and Pommerolle, 2017). For legislators to champion citizen's causes and help develop solution to challenges they face, they must understand their role and the modus operandi of the legislative processes. Because politicians can be very busy, creating time to develop specific expertise might be difficult (Barnes and Holman, 2018). Politicians' academic background and professional expertise could help provide more robust and accurate information about policies development.

With very minor exceptions, the data from the study is consistent with findings from similar studies elsewhere where female politicians report high educational attainment and good income generating jobs (OECD, 2012; Kaba, 2017; Profeta and Woodhouse, 2018). According to Volden, Wiseman and Wittmer (2010), female candidates who succeed in being elected are usually of highly educated. The study revealed that all the female legislators in the current assembly have academic qualification higher than the minimum entry requirement for political recruitment in Nigeria, which is the Senior Secondary School level or its equivalent (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999), with the least being a Higher National Diploma (HND), and cutting across diverse professional engagements such as law, education, public administration, media, finance and business. Unlike some of their male counterparts who do not have more than the Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and ordinary diploma certificates, female legislators in the selected HoAs in most cases have multiple academic and professional certificates with wealth of experience in reputable institutions backing them up (See Lagos house of assembly; ogha). In an interview with one of the respondents:

I read History and International Relations at the Lagos State University in first degree, proceeded to the Open University, Nottingham, Milton Keynes, Upon Tyne, UK to study Social Science. I am currently a final year law student at the Lagos State University (LASU)... Originally, I am a broadcast journalist. I didn't study broadcasting, it just happened... **(KII, Honourable Mojisolaoluwa [Kehinde] Alli-Macaulay, 13/01/2020).**

Honourable Modupe Onikepo Mujota of the OGSHA is another female legislator with a very rich Curriculum Vitae particularly in terms of administrative experience. In her words:

I have always been encouraged to be the best of self. So that best of self was not respecting of gender. I have made it to the board room several times as a serial C.E.O (**KII, Honourable Modupe Onikepo, Mujota, 21/01/2020**).

In the analysis of the academic and professional background of the members of the OGSHA (both male and female), Honourable Mujota's profile represents the most impressive, the reason she was appointed by the former Governor, Ibikunle Amosun into his cabinet in 2015 as a technocrat who could use her private sector competencies to add value to the public sector.

An equally impressive profile was obtained from the EKSHA. Honourable Olubunmi Adelugba is the current Chief Whip and the chairman house committee on appropriation in the HoA. Honourable Adelugba is a chartered accountant who has worked with both the private and the public sector in different capacities. She was with Action Aid until 2010 when she joined the Ekiti State Public Service as a government appointee. During the first tenure of Governor John Kayode Fayemi, she was first appointed as a Special Adviser on Revenue Matters and Taxation. She also temporarily served as commissioner in the Ministry of Labour, Productivity and Human Capital Development from 11 June 2010 to 31 December 2011). As a legislator, she still serves as consultant to financial institutions and corporate organisations in the country (**IDI, Daughter/Personal Assistant, 20/08/2020**).

These revelations are however not surprising. In a country-wide study conducted by Nwankwor and Nkereuwem (2019), they observed that only 17% of the male were similarly qualified as the women who contested the presidential elections in 2019. According to Bauer (2019), female lawmakers tend to be more educated and more affluent and more likely to be in one of a few high-status professions in education, finance, law, or medicine than the rest of the population. These findings also corroborate Tamale's initial findings in Uganda where she observed that women MPs directly elected and those elected on gender quotas from both the ruling and the opposition parties were highly

educated professionals (Tamale, 1999). Britton (2005) also noted this attribute among women MPs in South Africa.

As a lawyer, Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso was on the committee on judiciary all through her the tenures she served in the LSHA except in the sixth assembly (2007 to 2009) when she assumed the office of the deputy speaker. She also served on the Human Rights and Public Petitions committee in the 7th and 8th assembly. Also, official records revealed that, except for Hon. Lateefat Bolanle Ajayi, all the female representatives who trained in the field of education served on the House Committee on Education, Science and Technology. Moreover, those who had academic background and professional experience in social and management sciences such as Mujota and Adelugba served on such committees as finance and appropriation and social development. It is also important to note that principal officers are made automatic members of certain committees by the virtue of the office they hold. For example, a speaker would routinely chair the selection committee while his or her deputy will be a member. Additionally, House Whips, in the case of Lagos and Ogun states would chair the Ethics, Protocols and Privileges Committee.

4.3.3 Legislative experience

In identifying actors that push for agenda which addresses important issues, Grey (2006) points to several essentiality preconditions for change which includes the time lawmakers have spent in office. Beckwith (2007) adding to this conversation states that, in addition to numbers, newness must be considered when analyzing politics of gender representation. Experience is one major political capital in legislative business (Berkman and Eisenstein, 1999) as legislators tend to benefit in terms of their efficiency from greater experience in legislative assemblies. Lawmakers perform several tasks. For example, they research proposed legislation and work informally with fellow law legislators to build support for bills. They scrutinize the functions of government agencies while they also keep in touch with their constituencies/electoral districts (Barrett, 1997), among other things. In addition to these responsibilities, women are expected to represent the specific interest of women and are very likely to be assessed based on how well this is done.

In the HoAs considered for this study, and as it might apply to many other legislative assemblies, as a first timer, the possibilities of female legislatures to act or contribute

substantively limited. It is expected that a legislator learns the *modus operandi* of the institution. Only in cases where there are no old members to occupy a position (committee chairs and principal officers) would a new lawmaker be considered. The context of the study presents an interesting account of the female legislators where, of all the 11 current female legislators in the selected HoAs, only two (18%) were identified not to be first timers. Document analysis also revealed the total share of female legislators in all the six states in the Southwestern geo-political zone and the three selected states to be 14 of 177 (8%) and 11 of 92 (12%) respectively. The proportion of the women's representation in the selected HoAs which peaks at 44 of 552 (8%) signifies the highest proportion of women's legislative representation in Nigeria since 1999, both at the national and state levels. This proportion of women is yet to advance beyond token minority – what Rosabeth Moss Kanter defined as the skewed group which is 15% at the maximum (Kanter, 1977 in Dalherup, 1988).

A further analysis of the female representation in the selected HoAs also revealed certain peculiarities with the selected HoAs. In the LSHA, in addition to having the highest number of female legislators, it has recorded female representation in all its six legislative assemblies in the fourth republic. In addition, some female legislators have been able to win re-election and at least one of them (Adefunmilayo Tejuoso representing Mushin I constituency) was able to represent her constituency for four terms (2003 to 2007; 2007 to 2011; 2011 to 2015; 2015 to 2019). In the specific case of Lagos state, one important factor which has contributed to this level of consistency is the relative continuity and stability that characterizes the state's ruling political party structure. Although, the political party governing the state since the re-introduction of democracy in 1999 has taken on different names, its structure has remained in the grip of a single godfather.

OGSHA also have an account of female legislators who have been re-elected in their constituencies, albeit to a lesser degree. For example, Titi Oseni (Abeokuta South II) and Adeleye Oladapo T.A (Ifo II) represented their constituencies two times each; from 2003 to 2007; 2007 to 2011 and from 2007 to 2011 and 2011 to 2015 respectively. In the case of EKSHA, analysis revealed that no female legislator has represented her constituency more than once since the inauguration of its first assembly in 1999. This revelation amplifies legislative experience asymmetry of female lawmakers to their male counterparts. Document analysis shows that a lot of men have been re-elected multiple times, and this has helped them dominate key positions and chair most important house

committees. The legislative experience of the current speakers of the selected HoAs who (are all men) accentuates the importance and considerations for this singular factor in the allocation of assembly positions.

Rt. Hon. Funminiyi Afuye who is the speaker of the EKSHA was first elected to the house in 2007. His membership of the current assembly makes it the second time that he has been elected to represent Ikere Constituency I. He had served as minority leader, majority leader and the chairman, House Committee on Judiciary. He also served as Commissioner for Information and later, information and intergovernmental affairs in Ekiti state between 2010 and 2014 (Legislative Records; Interview, Special Adviser to the Speaker on Media, 26/09/2020). In the OGSHA, Rt. Hon Olakunle Taiwo Oluomo has been elected for three consecutive terms (2011 to 2016; 2015 to 2019 and 2019 to 2023). He was the Deputy Speaker in the OGSHA 8th Assembly (2015 to 2019), which had Rt. Hon. Adekunbi, Suraj Ishola as the speaker (Legislative Records; IDI, Director [Committee Department], 09/07/2020).

The current speaker of the LSHA has the highest number of re-elections. He was first elected in 2003 and has won all subsequent re-election. He had served as the Chairman, House Committee on Rural Development in the 5th Assembly (2003 to 2007); Chairman, House Committee on Public Accounts in the 6th Assembly (2007 to 2011) and Chairman, House Committee on Appropriation and Budget in the 7th Assembly (2011 to 2015), before emerging in the Speaker of the House in 2015 (**Legislative Records, Akinyemi and Associates, 2012; IDI, Deputy Director, Legislature, 21/08/2020**).

In the study, it was observed that, the lack of legislative experience and the need to understudy older members to learn how to go by legislative business reduces female legislator's capacity to act decisively and independently. These findings are consistent with Palaniswamy *et al.*'s (2019) study of women's civic participation in rural Tamil Nadu, India, where the mere presence of female incumbents does not necessarily increase the contributions of women in deliberative forums. Also, this study discovers that it is extremely difficult for female lawmakers to achieve political autonomy given that virtually all of them emerged through the support and influence of political godfathers whom they are indebted to and are obliged to repay with unwavering loyalty.

Although formal rules no longer discriminate against women, over the years, legislative bodies have grown to embrace masculine attributes which reflect high institutional sexism

that privileges men and masculine behaviours (Erikson and Josefsson, 2019). As such, it is common for female politicians to have to contend with barriers such as stereotypical labels, verbal harassment and aggressive behaviours flowing from systemic historical discrimination against women both inside and outside the legislative assemblies (Erikson and Josefsson, 2019). This experience at first, often push many female legislators off balance, until they are able to develop a thick skin to ward it off. Yet, experience was brought to the fore in the consideration for the inclusion of Hon. Omotayo Oduntan in the Selection Committee and the Ethics, Protocols and Privileges in the eight assembly of the LSHA from 2015 to 2019. Oduntan had earlier served in the fourth assembly of from 1999 to 2003. The tables below show a breakdown of committee composition for women across the selected states from 1999 to 2019.

Table 4.3: Composition of house committees for women in EKSHA from 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2003-2007	Hon. C. O Oluwafemi	-Women affairs and Social Development		-Health -Finance and Appropriation
2011-2015	Hon. Omowunmi Olubunmi Ogunlola	Committee on Information and Civic Orientation.	Committee on SIEC and other Agencies.	-Committee on Selection. -Committee on Health and Human Services -Committee on Women Affairs, Social Development and Gender Equality. -Committee on Judiciary and Legal Matters
	Hon. Modupe Abeni Olayinka (Deputy Speaker, 2014-2015)	Committee on Women Affairs, Social Development and Gender Equality	Committee on Ethics Privileges and Constitutional Review.	-Committee on Governor's Office and Government House. -Committee on Education, Science and Technology. -Committee on Commerce, Industry and Co-operatives.
	Hon. Olubunmi Abeni Oriniowo	Committee on Culture, Arts and Tourism.	Committee on Rules and Business	-Committee on Selection. -Committee on HIV/AIDS. -Committee on Finance and Appropriation. -Committee on Women Affairs, Social Development and Gender Equality.
	Hon. Olajide Ayo Fatunbi	Committee on Commerce, Industry and Co-operatives	Committee on Governor's Office and Government House	-Committee on SIEC and other Agencies -Committee on Health and Human Services. -Committee on Culture, Arts and Tourism

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Ekiti state HoAs records

Table 4.3.1: Composition of house committees for women in EKSHA 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2015-2019	Hon. Cecilia Bosede Dada	Women affairs, social development and gender equality	Committee on Women's Affairs, Social Development and Gender Equality.	-Selection -Finance and appropriation -Local Government and Chietaincy Affairs -Governor's Office, Government House and Constituencies
	Hon. Titilayo Owolabi-Akerele	Committee on Public Petition.		-Committee on Fund Management and Self Accounting Law. -Committee on Environment. -Committee on Women's Affairs, Social Development and Gender Equality. -Committee on Commerce and Industry. -Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Constitutional Review.
2019 to 2023	Hon. Olubunmi Adelugba (Chief Whip) (Hon. Speaker)	Finance and Appropriation		-Women affairs and Social Development -Ethics and priviledges -Education
	Hon. Yemisi Ayokunle	-Media and Information [media and public affairs]	-Women Affairs and Social Development	
	Hon. Adekemi Balogun	-Women Affairs and Social Development		-Health, Human Services, HIV and AIDS
	Hon. Adeteju E. Okuyiga	-Health, Human Services, HIV and AIDS		-Finance and Appropriation -Environment -Women Affairs and Social Development -Media and Information -Intergovernmental Affairs

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Ekiti state HoA records

Table 4.4: Composition of house committees for women in LSHA from 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
1999-2003	Hon. Mutiat Adetoun Adediran (Deputy Speaker)	-	-	Selection Committee
	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan	Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation	-	-House Services -Health -Home Affairs and Culture -Education -Local Government Administration and Chieftaincy Affairs -Business Rules and Standing Order
	Hon. Ramota Adebayo Oseni	-	-	-Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation -Establishments, Training and Job Creation -Transportation -Hotel and Tourism -Chieftaincy affairs -Home Affairs -Inter-Governmental Relations
2003-2007	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso (Deputy Chief Whip)	Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-Selection -Business, Rules and Standing Orders -Ethics, Protocols and Privileges -Public Accounts (State) - Education -Judiciary, Ethics and Privileges -House Services -Economic Planning and Budget -Hotels and Tourism -Lands
	Hon. Bola Olujobi-Badmus		-	House Services, Establishment, Training, Pensions and Public Service;

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Lagos state HoA records

Table 4.4.1: Composition of house committees for women in LSHA from 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2007-2011	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso (Deputy Speaker from 2007 to 18/08/2009)		-	-Selection -Business Rules and Standing Order -Judiciary
	Hon. Bola Olujobi-Badmus (Deputy Speaker till 2011)	-Home Affairs and Culture	-Selection	-Selection -Lands
	Hon. Ajoke Adegeye-Adeniyi	-Women affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-House Services -Commerce and Industry -Establishment, Training, Pensions and Public Service -Health Services -Information, Strategy and Security
	Hon. Lola Fibisola Akande (Deputy Chief Whip)	-	-	-Selection -Business, Rules and Standing Orders -Ethics, Protocols and Privileges -Public Accounts (Local Governments) -Education -Finance -Local Government Administration
	Hon. Omowunmi Olatunji-Edet	-Science and Technology	-	-Education -House Committees -Women affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation -Youth, Sports and Social Development

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Lagos state HoA records

Table 4.4.2: Composition of house committees for women in LSHA from 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2011-2015	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso	Finance	-	Judiciary, Human Rights and Public Petitions, Women affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation
	Hon. Lola Fibisola Akande (Deputy Leader)	-	-	-Selection -Business, Rules and Standing Order -Ethics, Protocol and Privileges
	Hon. Omowunmi Olatunji-Edet	Establishments, Training, Pensions and Public Services	-	-Public Accounts (State) -Health Services -Home Affairs and Culture -Tourism and Inter-governmental Affairs -Physical Planning and Urban Development -Central Business Districts.
	Hon. Adebimpe Akinsola	-	-	-Ethics, Protocol and Privileges -House Services and Special Duties -Agriculture and Cooperatives and Rural Development -Economic Planning and Budget -Education, Science and Technology -Environment,
	Hon. Akinola-Hassan Ramotalai	Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-House Services and Special Duties -Education, Science and Technology -Judiciary -Human Rights and Public Petitions -Transportation -Commerce and Industry
	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan	Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-House Services and Special Duties -Education, Science and Technology -Judiciary -Human Rights and Public Petitions -Transportation -Commerce and Industry
	Hon. Rufai-Adeyemi M.	-	-	-Ethics, protocols and privileges -House Services and Special Duties -Home affairs and culture and Inter-governmental affairs - Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Lagos state HoA records

Table 4.4.3: Composition of house committees for women in LSHA from 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2015-2019	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso	Information and Strategy	-	Judiciary, Human Rights and Public Petitions and LASIEC Economic Planning and Budget, Education, Environment, Public Accounts (State), Public Accounts (Local Govt.)
	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan	-	-	Selection -Business, Rules and Standing Orders, -Ethics, Protocols and Privileges.
	Hon. Mosunmola Rotimi Sangodara	Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-Energy and Mineral Resources -Health -Local Government Administration and Community Affairs -Public Accounts (State) -Energy and Mineral Resources
	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda	Establishments, Training Pensions and Public Service	-	-Commerce, Industry and Cooperative -Judiciary, Human Rights, Public Petitions and LASIEC -Special Duties and Intergovernmental Relation -Youth and Social Development
2019-2023	Hon. Mosunmola Rotimi Sangodara (Dep. Chief Whip)	-Inter-parliamentary relations	-	-Business, Rules and Standing Order -Ethics, Protocols and Privileges -Inter-parliamentary relations
	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda (Chief Whip)	Ethics, Protocols and Privileges.	-	Central Business District
	Hon. Mojisola K. Alli-Macauley	Women Affairs, Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation	-	-Ethics, Protocols and Privileges -House Services -Public Accounts (Local Govt.) -Works and Infrastructure -Judiciary, Human Rights and Public Petitions and LASIEC -Information and Strategy

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Lagos state HoA records

Table 4.5: Composition of house committees for women in OGSHA 1999 to 2019

YEAR	NAME	COMMITTEES		
		Chair	Vice Chair	Member
2003-2007	Rt. Hon. Titi Oseni (Speaker)	Speaker and Selection Committee	-	-
2007-2011	Hon. Titi Oseni (Speaker till 2008)	Not Available		
	Hon. T. A. Adeleye-Oladapo			
2011-2015	Hon. T. A. Adeleye-Oladapo	House Services	-	-Education, Science and Technology -Finance and Appropriation -Women Affairs and Social Welfare
	Hon. Elizabeth F. Anifowoshe	Women Affairs and Social Welfare	Health	-Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs -Lands and Housing
2015-2019	Hon. Yetunde Adekanbi-Sogbein	Lands and Housing	Special Duties	-Works -Health -Commerce, Investment and Industry -Rules, Bills and Resolutions
	Hon. Juliana Folakemi Akintayo	Women Affairs and Social Development	Education, Science and Technology	-Transport -House Services
2019 till date	-Hon. Atinuke Bello (Chief Whip)	-	-	-Special Duties
	- Hon. Modupe Onikepo Mujota	Establishments and Public Service Matters	Youth, Sports and Employment Generation	-Finance and Appropriation -Oil, Gas, Energy Water Resources and Rural Development
	-Hon. Lateefat Bolanle Ajayi	-Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs -House Services	-Youth, Sports and Employment Generation	-Health -Selection
	-Hon. Sikirat O. Ajibola	-	-	-Works -Oil, Gas, Energy Water Resources and Rural Development -Public Account and Anti-Corruption

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Ogun state HoA records

4.4 Contributions of women representatives to lawmaking

Findings from the third objective revealed that majority of the bills passed in the selected HoAs are executive bills. Rather than sponsor or initiate private member bills, women representatives are more prominent as co-sponsors in legislative policymaking. In Nigeria, several issues touching on human development and women's rights fall under the concurrent legislative list which both the federal and the state governments are to simultaneously legislate upon. By implication, when laws regarding these issues are enacted at the federal level, the constitution also empowers state governments to domesticate such through their various HoAs to be fully operational within the specific federating unit (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Wapmuk (2008), in his study of HoA, scored representatives very low on legislation initiation. And for women who are few, he observed that very little is known about their interventions in legislative policymaking.

One way employed to decipher this is through the analysis of documents which included list of bills passed from 1999 to 2019 as well as secondary sources such as books which directly analyses the subject being explored (For example, Omoyele, 2011; Akinyemi and Associates 2012). This approach enabled the researcher to scrutinize the contributions of past lawmakers. For the present female members of HoAs, in addition to document analysis, in-depth interviews were conducted to balance perspectives. The emerging themes in this section were categorized and analysed based on questions posed as given below.

4.4.1 The illusion of female representation

“Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all other things shall be added unto you” The popular statement accredited to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (Pierre, 2012) could be aptly adapted to how the push for women's equality in political representation has been valorized. Does electing more women change the content of policymaking along gender line? This is one key question that the literature has extensively researched, with finding suggesting it to be true (Atkinson and Windett, 2019).

Over the last four decades, a ‘fast track’ approach of gender quotas to improve women's representation in legislative parliaments has been embraced. For example, in Africa, Rwanda, Angola, Mozambique, Burundi and Namibia are some of the countries that have

adopted this strategy (Hoodfar and Tajali, 2011). Also, in Nigeria where the representation of women in the legislature is abysmally low both at the national and state levels, in 2006, a National Gender Policy (NGP) was put in place to address the issue of women's numerical increase.

According to Brien and Piscoso (2019), arguments in favour of increased female political representation is globally acknowledged. Female politicians (legislators inclusive) view the representation of women's interest as part of their duty. Female legislators have been observed to diversify legislative agenda and have also challenged masculine bias of legislative organisations. However, their ability to change policy and influence attitudes and behaviour vary depending on the political and institutional context, the phase of policymaking process, and the number of women.

Also, there are scholars who still contest the validity of the general assumption that female legislators do typically represent women. Extant literature sometimes obscures the presence and effort of pro-feminist men (Childs and Krooks, 2009; Wängnerud, 2009; Young, 2000) who not only support, but also initiate legislations to address women's issues. Moreover, in the Nigerian contexts "90 percent of bills are executive bill" (**IDI, Oludotun AbdulQadir Omoyele, 10/07/2021**). While this is not outrightly out of place as the executive have as part of its responsibility the initiation of policies which must pass through the conduit of the legislature before ratification, it is expected that the legislature also does more in their primary responsibility.

Findings from the study strengthen this line of argument. In the EKSHA, the total number of bills passed from 5 October 1999 to 14 October 2019 was 232. While there was no Hansard to reveal the identity of sponsors of the bills, available records of bills when juxtaposed with women's descriptive representation reveals no significant difference when women are represented and when they are not (**See Appendix VII**). However, Ekiti state has pushed different frontiers in ensuring that the quality of life that women live is improved. Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi, a feminist activist and the wife of the governor of Ekiti state, John Kayode Fayemi has been noticeably active regarding the promotion of women's rights by proposing areas of laws that female lawmakers need to promote in the legislature. According to a female law maker:

I came across the wife of Fayemi, that is Erelu Bisi Fayemi, I met her for the first time about 2009 or 2008, I can't remember. And I saw her flair, love, zeal and passion for women things. I began to change my orientation little by little till I started working with her. You know, working with her now brought [out] the feminism in me... **(KII, Female Lawmaker B, 30/10/2019).**

Records of bills passed in the EKSHA reveals very little intervention of women either as sponsors or co-sponsors of bill. Much of the bills passed and those that address women and gender issues emanated from the executive branch of government through the governor's wife. The Ekiti State Gender-Based Violence (Prohibition) Law was first passed on 3 November 2011. Only one bill was identified to have been sponsored by a female lawmaker **(See Appendix V)**. On 14 October 2019, its enactment process was eventually completed. These two time periods fall within the gubernatorial administration of John Kayode Fayemi's first and second tenures in office as the executive governor of Ekiti state.

In OGSHA, the total number of bills recorded from 1 September 1999 to 10 June 2020 was 254. Records also revealed that only one woman initiated a bill. For the LSHA, records revealed that 250 bills were passed from the fourth assembly in 1999 till 6th June 2020 in the ninth assembly **(See Appendix VI)**. In 2007, Adefunmilayo Tejuosho took it upon herself to organize a colloquium on domestic violence to shed more light on its implementation. She eventually sponsored the widely celebrated Lagos State Domestic Violence Law, 2007.

The crux of the argument here is that, initiating gender sensitive legislations does not share any gender advantage. This finding is not consistent with studies on women bill sponsorship and bill successes (Lee, 2020; Edigheji, 2006). For example, taking a step further by looking at how legislators come together to craft bills, Shim (2020) discovered that legislative effectiveness on women's bills varies by lawmakers' gender and party affiliations.

4.4.2 Women's Legislative Caucus (WLC) and women's leadership at the committee or chamber level

Political parties vary on their level of support or commitment to feminist concerns. As such, WLC constitute an important policy machinery for women. To further understand this specific objective of women's policies preferences, the study explores the nature and

objectives of WLC within the selected HoA. A WLC is a voluntary body that exist within the legislature (although with no formal role in the legislative process) with the aim of increasing women's impact on political decisions. The study adopts Adams, Scherpereel and Wylie's (2019) definition:

Associations of legislators that are focused on women and/or gender in their membership and/or objectives, that are open to members of more than one political party, that possess a name, a membership roll, and a leadership, and that establish arrangements for managing their collective work. (Adams, Scherpereel, and Wylie 2019: 4-5).

It is common to have women form small minorities in broader legislative chambers. However, they may constitute larger minorities at the committee level where their policy preferences may have greater impact on policy formulation (Childs and Krook, 2009). Having WLC has continued to be important in the context of continued masculinized environment that exclude female lawmakers from power and leadership roles (Adams, Scherpereel and Wylie, 2019). According to Yoon (2011), women's caucus provides an avenue for female legislators to acquire trainings necessary for legislative businesses and helps them to better articulate women's position. Creating institutional powers through women's caucus and women's leadership can open platforms where important women's issues can be presented, discussed, and ultimately addressed. Furthermore, the presence of a women's caucuses as well as women's leadership at the committee or chamber level has the potential to influence the choice of policies to be pursued and the character and flows of legislation (Osborn, 2014).

While some WLC have explicit policy agenda, some are loosely organized to promote informal ties between legislators (Osborn, 2014; iknowpolitics.org). As can be gleaned from Adams, Scherpereel, and Wylie (2019)'s definition, women's caucuses are organized to dissolve party lines and provide peer support needed to promote gender equality legislation and policy agenda. Although some researchers still doubt the effectiveness of this groups in influencing political decision-making, the number of legislative assemblies with a WLC has continued to grow. Having a WLC can facilitate women's work, especially in male-dominated legislative assemblies and help to advance women's issues (Sawer, 2017). Also, to be an effective platform, its organisation, management, objectives, and strategies must be well articulated to promote teamwork.

Although, there is an existence of WLC in Nigeria at the national level (Adams, Scherpereel and Wylie, 2019), the study observes that no such institution exists in the selected state HoA. Instead, women's groups are loosely organized just to promote informal ties between female legislators, as there are no formalized WLC. According to Mujota, female legislators relate with each other quite seamlessly, and are quite comfortable with one another **(KII, Hon. Modupe Onikepo Mujota, 13/08/2020)**. Corroborating this position, another female member in the OGSHA said, "If you ask me, I will say we are all friendly. If you see us, the way we talk, the way we do, you will see us that we are all one [sic]" **(KII, Female Lawmaker, 4/11/2020)**.

In the LSHA, the House Committee on Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA) doubles as the WLC. Although this committee has men as members, they are normally excused whenever issues peculiar to women are needed to be discussed. Some of these female lawmakers also build relationship that transcend official interactions. According to Mojisola Ali-Macauley, who is the current committee chair of the Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation:

We have a very lovely relationship. I think it depends on the new member; you open to let them say (hey)... When I came in, I came in with an open heart, I am very friendly even from the gate and the security, I am very accessible, everybody is free to see me, I don't have any barricade or protocols **(KII, Hon. Mojisola Ali-Macauley, 14/01/2020)**.

In the specific case of EKSHA, interviews and observation reveal that the female lawmakers are quite cordial. All the four women in the house had had working relationship in the state in John Kayode Fayemi first administration from 2011 to 2014. For example, one of the female legislators facilitated the organisation of the study interview session with another female law maker who was not available in the HoA complex in Ado-Ekiti. As can be gleaned in her words:

We just came from Abuja yesterday...We are just like sisters basically. And interestingly, the four of us, in the first dispensation of Governor Fayemi, we were all together then. So, for us coming here, it is a reunion **(KII, Female Lawmaker B, 20/03/2020)**.

It was also observed that all the female legislators in the selected HoA belong to the same political party, except in the OGSHA where one of the four female legislators emerged on the platform of the APC. As such, the influence of political party ideology on female

legislators' policy preferences does not play out in any form. However, even when some female lawmakers have feminist consciousness, the establishment of WLC could promote feminist institution-building that could further enable collaboration between female lawmakers and women's organisations (Adams, Scherpereel and Wylie, 2019).

4.4.3 Contributions of female legislators to gender equality

Gender equality debate is undoubtedly a global phenomenon which has warranted international corrective efforts over the years. Nigeria as a member of the international community and a strong key player in African regional politics has assented to a few international and regional human rights conventions that promotes women's rights and gender equality. Some of such covenants include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979; African Charter on Human and People's Rights, 2003; and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004 (Eniola, 2018). Although the concept of gender equality is enshrined in the constitution, especially with respect to political participation (Nwankwor and Nkereuwem, 2019), gender inequality pervades every level of the Nigerian society. Women are generally considered to be perfect fit, only for domestic and reproductive roles. The societal head start which men enjoy has helped them wield enormous decision-making powers. The impact of men's decision-making powers is nowhere more glaring than in Nigeria's legislative assemblies both at the macro, meso and micro-level units of analysis where women are very few.

Although, not in all cases do numbers count in policy implementation (Bauer and Burnet, 2013), the implication of low descriptive representation on substantive representation is huge, since substantive representation flows directly from descriptive representation (Allen and Childs, 2019). For example, Eniola (2018) gave an example of the "Gender and Equality Opportunity Bill which was rejected in March 2015. A plausible singular reason for this rejection would be women's weak numerical strength. Although, evidence of men's efforts to promote women's rights abound, this might be hardly sufficient as they do not constitute direct beneficiaries.

While gender inequality remains a global issue for concern, scholars, especially those of African origin sometimes deny that gender is a fundamental social category in all cultures

(Oyewumi, 1997). The study also reveals that some female lawmakers sometimes try to downplay the effect of gender as a matter of perception rather than a reality. In the words of one of the lawmakers:

I don't believe and I don't see what a man can do that I can't do because I believe we both have equal right... Although we have majority of them, the male members, we are just three in the house now and then, we have the way we do relate, you can hardly [...]. We have equal opportunities, we both deliberate together, we do things together in order to move the state forward **(KII, Interview, Female Lawmaker H, 13/01/2020)**.

Although a lot of research see gender as a cross-cultural organizing principle, many people believe that gender inequality has been substantially reduced and that it is no longer an issue in certain contexts (Oyewumi, 1997; Bourke and Kelley, 2005). Supporting this position, Dashper (2018) noted that gender discrimination has become less visible than was the case in the time past. A singular aspiration has been observed to dominate women's position – increase in physical representation that is, the descriptive representation of women. According to some female lawmakers and politicians:

Well, you know that is basically our area because we woman, we don't always accept from men that women should take certain percentage and you know we are even agitating to getting more higher percentage ... and we are even looking up [to] the President and even whoever, to try as much as possible to give us more opportunity... If you train a woman, you train a nation, so that is it **(KII, Party/Women Leader, 30/10/2019)**.

I will go all out like Erelu [referring to the wife of the Governor of Ekiti state] will go all out at the state level to get anything for us women... Working hard, doing all things possible, encouraging them all ways to get them positioned... If we are able to spot a place where we are not been represented, if we cannot handle it, we call our mother Erelu, she will just stand up to it **(KII, Female Lawmaker C, 06/03/2020)**.

Yet there are other representatives who believe in the headship of the men, sometimes mobilizing religious beliefs and doctrines to back their claims. To them, disrupting this order would mean altering the natural and divine template. A succinct position to support this was given by one of the lawmakers who said:

I am not a feminist, but I like to champion the course of women in a very liberal manner that also shows to the men some level of respect as the way God as depicted it in the holy books. God has placed men on thrones. He

has made them the crown on our heads. So... I am just a nobody, therefore, I cannot contest that but I can just appeal that [the] men [should] give room for women **(KII, Interview, Female Lawmaker E, 13/01/2020)**.

Another female lawmaker whose position aligns with that given above emphasized the need to always seek the permission and blessing of one's husband before executing any plan. She argued that when this is done, the odds of rancour within the family would be highly reduced. Her position supports the description of the biblical virtuous woman's account in Proverbs chapter 31. Like the idiomatic expression "half a loaf is better than none", which implies one accepting less than they wanted, many female politicians amplify little interventions either in terms of expansion of participation, or enactment of certain laws that seek to promote women's rights. Such amplification was expressed by a lawmaker. In her words:

We are fortunate anyway because we have a speaker who believes in what we are doing. We have, even our colleagues, the men they key into what the governor is doing and [...]. The governor just got an award yesterday concerning women and all that. So, they key into [...]. We don't really have any problem concerning that **(KII, Female Lawmaker C, 06/03/2020)**.

Others are unapologetically loyal to their party leaders who consistently coach them on the processes and actions to be taken.

Aaah! Politics, politics, politics, politics is very dangerous. Politics is very dynamic. It changes, in politics you don't follow the crowd, you follow the workings, you listen to the dictates of wherever you find yourself. Politics is very mucky and very interesting **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

There are empirical evidences to show that women elected as representatives do not necessarily defend gender-specific issues. Osborn (2014) revealed that, through the control of legislative process and party ideology, political parties and institutional configurations can influence women's legislative efforts. The role of political parties, women's positions in legislative assemblies (committee chairs for example), unity among women in legislative assemblies (whether or not a women's caucus exists).

In the case of political parties, party control and ideology could have significant implication for women's representation. For example, the capacity and ability of a ruling

party to resources and legislative agenda could strategically affect what policies women pursue, and how they pursue those policies. For example, Swers (2002) citing an example from the United States' congress demonstrated how Democratic Party's house control in the early 1990s accommodated moderate Republican women's support for bills that would advance "feminists concerns". However, when the Congress came under the control of the Republican Party, they became less likely to support these issues because of the fear that they would be punished for stepping outside of party lines. Although this study was carried out in the US, nevertheless, its results can be applicable to contexts where party discipline is strong.

In the politics of gender representation, different institutional contexts accounts for the quantity of feminist activities. According to Htun, Lacalle and Micozzi (2013), women defend gender equality at variant degrees, some men also give more support to women issues. Bisi Fayemi in 2016 at Women Advancement Forum International Exchanges, Research and Academia in Nigeria (WAFIRAN) held at the University of Lagos described such men who have feminist inclinations as "Patricks". The study discovered very little interventions of female lawmakers on gender equality issues. Gender activists and members of women's organisations have proven to be more involved and more effective with regards to women's rights concerns than female lawmakers.

Additionally, the study reveals lack of synergy between women's organisations and female members of the selected HoA. For example, members of women organisations were always quick to accuse female lawmakers of exposing their plans each time they try to carry them along on their programmes. According to one of the members of a women's organisations interviewed: "we map out our strategy and then we go to the government. We don't involve the representatives who are used to gossip" (**Interview, Women's Activist, 27/11/2019**).

4.4.4 Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is generally believed to be actions perpetrated against women by men, "with wealth and well-being impact being worse for female victims than male victims of GBV (Gangoli, 2020). For majority of the lawmakers, and especially women organisations, GBV remains very important on their scale of policy preference.

Legislative records (especially those on bills and laws) reflect actions on domestic and GBV to have received the greatest attention with respect to gender related issues. However, the most significant bill on GBV was passed by a man (**See Appendix VII (36/OG/2009)**). In a similar vein, the bill for a law prohibiting all forms of Violence Against Persons Including Physical, Psychological, Sexual, Domestic and to provide for Maximum Protection and Effective Remedies and Punishment of Offenders Other Related Matters Connected Therewith in Ogun state (13/OG/2017), was also sponsored by a male legislator, with the two female representatives Hon.Adekanbi-Sogbein Yetunde (Mrs.) and Hon. Akintayo Juliana Folakemi (Mrs.) being among the 7 co-sponsors.

Although, Childs 2006 and Swers's (2006) study on substantive representation suggests women to be more likely to vote for stricter laws relating to domestic and gender violence like laws on domestic abuse, sexual assault and rape, evidence from literature and document analysis reveal that it is the men who initiate most of these bills in legislative assemblies. For example, several male lawmakers in HoA in the federation have made concerted efforts to advance women's rights. Edo state, South-south of Nigeria was the first to enact a law in this regard with the state Female Circumcision and Genital Mutilation Prohibition Law (1999). Cross River state followed the year after with the Girl-child Marriages and Female Circumcision Prohibition Law (2000). Other states laws that have followed in this line include Rivers State Abolition of Female Circumcision Law (2001), Ogun State Female Circumcision and Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Law (2000); and Ekiti State GBV (Prohibition) Law (2001); Kebbi State Prohibition of Early Marriage Law (2001); Kano State Retention in School and against withdrawal of Girls from School Law; Violence against Women Law among others (Eniola, 2018). The reason for this might not be far-fetched. Women still constitute a minority in elected assemblies (Childs, Sarah; Krook, 2009) and men are in many ways intricately linked them either as husbands, fathers, or relatives.

As can be gleaned from the interviews conducted, addressing GBV remains an important agenda for female lawmakers. However, this objective appears to be only conversational with the female lawmakers. Little evidence supports their proactiveness with respect to initiating legislative proposal to address these issues. Instead, it is the actors within the executive arm of government who set the pace for lawmakers to follow, just as in the case of Ekiti state whose first lady (Bisi Fayemi) is known to be a prominent feminist in Africa.

An important aspect of her activities to mitigate sexual assault and rape is well captured by a gender activist in her account:

You know, now, for instance, there is something I saw recently. It was something about Sex Offender Register. This is a register in which all perpetrators of rape... it means there is no covering for them anymore. Well, I think it is at the national level, but Ekiti state also has their [its] own... **(KII, Interview, Lawmaker B, 06/03/2020)**.

On 25 November 2011, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, the governor of Ekiti state signed into law the GBV bill, which was initiated and promoted by his wife, Bisi Fayemi, through the Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Development and Gender Empowerment. The law was created in response to the need for women, children, and a minority of men to be protected against physical, financial, mental, or sexual abuse. The new law not only forbids such threats, coercion, and other forms of infringement on people's freedom in public or private spaces, but also punishes child marriage and harmful traditional practices including FGM and widowhood rites (Ekiti State Government, n.d). On December 1, 2015, the Lagos state governor, Babatunde Fashola also signed an executive order establishing its own Sex Offender's Register. Till date, only Ekiti and Lagos states have sex offenders register at the state level. At the national level, NAP TIP also launched an online national Sexual Offenders Register to help members of the public and security agencies conduct background checks and identify sex offenders.

More than elected female representatives, women from various women's organisations and gender activists alike also show more enthusiasm in engaging GBV issues. They decried its sustenance by the cultural norms. Giving instances of injustices against women, a member of an NGO interested in women issues narrated:

Women are more vulnerable to issues of sexual assault, domestic violence and the rest of them... In our country today, the custom and tradition has dominated generally [sic: dominated by men] and this has brought timidity to the women and some of them may not really know their right... For instance, in some places, they still believe that women should only be seen and not be heard... **(IDI, Gender Activist, 27/11/2019)**.

Many of the respondent drawn from women organisations and other NGOs expressed confidence in the efficacy of creating sensitization platforms to addressing gender-based issues:

If women are beginning to see things, attend seminars, workshops, when [where] we would talk to ourselves and we allow them realise... As women you are not just limited to the kitchen, you are not just limited to bear and rear children... You can engage in politics; pick a career you love and do well at that. You can contest... Tell people what you think you do not like, and your opinion would definitely be heard **(IDI, Gender Activist, 27/11/2019)**.

This finding is highly consistent with Medie (2013), Morrison, Ellsberg and Bott (2007), Chakraborty, Daruwalla, Jayaraman and Pantvaidya (2016)'s and Hammawa, Wan, Nor, Adnan and Ismail (2018)'s studies on women's organisations and the fight against GBV in Liberia. She identifies range of strategies from legal and policy changes, institutional and programmatic changes to education and awareness raising, being adopted by women's groups.

4.5 Contributions of women representatives to constituency services

Findings from the fourth objective revealed that the constituency projects carried out by female legislators revealed their policy preferences. This was largely in the area of health, education and women empowerment. For the female legislators, constituency projects provide the opportunity to relate better with members of their constituencies by embarking on projects that enhances their wellbeing. Interventions have largely been directed towards making water more accessible through provisions of boreholes, medical screenings for women and the elderly and economic empowerment for women.

With respect to education, back to school packs (which includes notes books and back packs) where usually given out to both primary and secondary school pupils at the beginning of school sessions which usually commences every September. In the specific case of Apapa Constituency I, on the 13th of February 2018, Hon Mojisola Lasbat Meranda donated three hundred sets of classroom furniture to three schools: Randle Junior Secondary School, Apapa Junior High School and the United Christian Junior Secondary School. In addition, an important priority which emerged was the safety of children at school. Therefore, two female lawmakers singlehandedly constructed perimeter fence in two government schools in Gbonyin Local Government of Ekiti state, and Odogbolu Local Government of Ogun state respectively. The emerging themes in this section were categorized and analysed based on questions posed as given below.

In Nigeria, until the fourth republic, the responsibility of legislators was peculiar only to lawmaking. However, in a bid to ensure the presence of government in every electoral district, constituency services were introduced as an additional responsibility for lawmakers during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 (Usman, 2014). A measure put in place to drive this development is constituency funds appropriated to the legislature to ensure equitable distribution of public goods (drilling of boreholes, provision of primary health centres, renovation of roads, parking facilities, market stalls) through constituency-based projects (Oshewolo and Adedire, 2020). Constituency projects have become more popular owing to some embedded attributes which include the participation of constituents in the choice of projects to be provided and acting against prolonged executive bureaucracies (Orimogunje, 2015). While some are sceptical about the effects of constituency projects being undertaken by a lawmaker, this practice remains a constitutional exercise in Nigeria (Duruji and Duruji-Moses, 2017) and a legislative culture in many other countries including the United States of America (Chibomba, 2013; International Budget Partnership, 2010).

4.5.1 Poverty alleviation and women's empowerment

“Poverty seems to wear a woman's face” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2006). This saying has become a common notion and a contemporary discourse in the face of widespread poverty. Some of the challenges of poverty include unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, limited access to social and health services among other, all of which have a more significant effect on women. For these reasons, women empowerment and gender equality conversations have continued to be part of the central themes of development discourse in global treatises and declarations. This is so because, they are now seen as impetus to people centered development strategies which focus on poverty alleviation, improved living standards and equal political representation (NGP, 2006).

To better understand the intricacies of poverty, Zaid and Popoola (2010) in their study on quality of life among Nigerian women in the rural areas, noted the subjective and the objective indicators of quality of life. However, this study emphasizes the objective indicators which seeks to answer the important questions about health, nutrition, housing, education, and finance, rather than the subjective question of pleasure and happiness. Nigeria is one of the few countries richly blessed with human and material resources. Despite this, the level of poverty remains very high. A more recent data from *Statistica*, a

website dedicated to providing market and consumer data and World Data Lab (2018 in Dauda's 2020) study on transactional politics puts the share of people living in poverty at 40% and about 45% respectively.

Although, poverty affects all humans irrespective of gender, there appears to be a stronger link between women and poverty (Lesetedi, 2018). According to Lesetedi (2018), women constitute majority of the poor, primarily because they have little access to quality education, job opportunities and are generally underrepresented politically. Even in the agricultural sector where women are more prominent, ample theoretical and empirical evidence show that they lack control over these resources in terms of commercialization (Fieldwork, Agricultural Policy Research in Africa; Ondo, Osun and Ogun state, 2018/2019).

Extant development literatures have continued to stress the importance of gender as a key element in development process (Kevane, 2014; Lesetedi, 2018). As such, several development strategies have been introduced to improve women's status by enhancing their full participation in the economic life. In the Nigerian political space, women empowerment appears to be a "buzz word", commonly used by both male and female politicians. It connotes the transformation of the lives of women. Such transformation is expected to reflect in their economic, psychological, and socio-political circumstances. Apart from NGOs and the offices of first ladies (at the national and the states levels) (Arum, 2010) who have dominated this gesture over the years, many female legislators also prioritize women empowerment as a core of their political intervention. While this is not out of place as a component from which policies can be developed, female lawmakers' women's empowerment interventions have been largely expressed outside direct legislative responsibilities.

Findings from the study reveal a consensus position, which is, paying special attention to women's economic empowerment. They believe a focus on women's economic well-being would address the issue of poverty in a more efficient way, as women will be better able to contribute to family well-being. In the words of a female lawmaker:

There is [a] saying that says empower a woman and you empower a nation. We all have our different roles to play in development of the country or a society. Our male counterparts can't [ineligible segment]. We need to

balance things, that is the main reason I think is important **(KII, Female Lawmaker C, 13/01/2020)**.

Corroborating this position from another illustration, another women's leader argues that:

It is the women [...]. They are the ones keeping everything together. In fact, the way the country is now, if a woman is not working to support the family there will be serious problems. There are some men who are not just alive to their responsibilities. Will you be happy to see your children suffer? **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

Findings further reveal a multiplicity of approaches and areas through which female lawmakers execute women empowerment programmes. One, whenever there is an opening in institutions where they have influence, female lawmakers help people from their constituency to secure such employment. In the case of white-collar jobs – requiring specific certifications, they reach out to members of their constituency whom they know can provide qualified candidates to fill such positions. The illustration below sheds light on this type of approach:

What we have for women is economic empowerment. You see, if you are empowered, the burden won't be so much on the man. When there is an opening... I just called, aunty, e fun mi ni oruko omo yin, e ni ki won wa ni ola [sic: give me the name of your child, tell him/her to come tomorrow]. I did that, every member here do that **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

Secondly, female lawmakers report that they empower women through financial grants and soft loans. Sometimes, they purposively look out for small scale business owners whom they could support with direct cash as low as 10,000 to 20,000 naira (26 to 52 dollars). On other occasions, they organize women empowerment programmes where no-collateral soft financing is disbursed to women groups and individuals. In the words of a female lawmaker:

You can easily empower women than men. You see some of our women, selling pepper, selling this. If you give them, 10 000, 20 000 to add to their market, they will always appreciate "honourable, she gave me 20 000. You know I can easily buy 20 crates of minerals [sic: Soft drinks or soda] ... that is how we encourage women, which we have been doing **(KII, Female Lawmaker F, 26/11/2019)**.

Thirdly, a female lawmaker emphasized the need to give business mentoring to rural women. She observed that these women work so hard to have a decent living, however, without any business training, financial empowerment will yield little or no result. In her illustration:

We have to put them through a mentoring period. I went to trade with the illiterates. That was when I realise that when we go to Oja Oko [village or rural market], for one garawa [a type of measuring bucket used in the market], you get 17 congo [a small measuring container] from it. When you want to measure back in town, it is 10 congo they call one garawa. The extra seven is our gain. Nobody tells you about the extra 7 **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

Yet, it is important to note that much of these interventions are purposive and politically calculated, leaving out people outside the party coverage. They are designed to further strengthen and expand the political network of representatives to boost their chances of reelection. This nuanced position was well captured from a lawmaker's interview:

When you empower women, you know, they make noise about you than the men. If you empower, 10 women, empower 20 men, you will hear the voice of 10 women more than that of men, because we are the people in the market. You will see us on the road. They will talk about you, "that honourable, I went to her house yesterday, she gave me this, she gave us two, two yards of Ankara ... **(KII, Female Lawmaker F, 26/11/2019)**.

Women empowerment was first popularized during the Ibrahim Babangida regime. Maryam Babangida's institutionalization of the office of the first lady and the launch of the "Better Life for Rural Women" programme marked an important turning point and a great feat for women's struggle in Nigeria (Dagunduro and Adenugba, 2020). From this period onward, virtually all the wives of successive heads of state/presidents and administrators/governors of federating units and lawmakers at both at the national and state levels have promoted one empowerment initiative or the other. While empowerment programme specifically targeted at women is a worthwhile intervention strategy to address widespread poverty, findings from the study suggest that the objectives of these empowerment strategies are only designed to help sustain the relevance of political office holders.

This revelation is consistent with Dauda's (2020) study which notes that, since 1999, Nigerian's democracy cannot be said to have recorded the expected gains. Faced with high

level of poverty, the electorate are vulnerable to the remnants handed over to them by their representatives. This pervasiveness of this practice expresses itself in the coinage of a new terminology for a practice of governance in the Nigerian political system – stomach infrastructure (Busari, 2020). Loosely defined, stomach infrastructure is a corruption of one of the key government’s strategies at addressing food security of the poor. This system of political patronage may be in form of distribution of food items and organisation of empowerment programmes where cash donations and other items such as sewing machines, hair dryers, tricycles and motorcycles are given out, most especially to party members, loyalists and sympathizers. In the face of the continuously rising tide of poverty, women focused empowerment programmes organized by female legislators needs to be genuinely pursued to address the roots cause of poverty, other than the current strategies which is at best cosmetic, as it is reflected in the in its unencouraging outcomes.

4.5.2 Education

Several committees are involved in the configuration of legislative assemblies. Some focus on more stereotypically feminine policy areas (such as children and family issues, education, housing, women and healthcare) (Barnes and Holman, 2018). In Nigeria, education falls under the concurrent legislative list, and as such, the states play a major role in the educational policy development, particularly at the basic level and secondary levels. The state legislative assemblies (HoAs) determine educational policies and expenditures, and have a committee set up to control and implement these policies. Women are usually being seen as better able to handle and have been observed to be more likely to vote in favour of legislations that protects basic education and increase funding for higher levels of education (Dolan and Lynch, 2017; Shea and Christian, 2017). Findings from Clots-Figuera's (2012) study in India also support this claim. It reveals an increase in primary educational attainment in urban areas or districts where at least one female politician has been elected.

Findings from the study reveals majority of the female legislators to having the improvement of children’s education, specifically, the education of the girl-child as an extremely important item on their policy preference lists. According to Modupe Mujota, her experiences working in the development sector and as commissioner for education, science and technology has helped her develop passion for children and the disabled groups. She had worked extensively with the World Bank in ensuring that Ogun state did

become a beneficiary of its effort at strengthening technical and vocational training. While in office as commissioner, she proposed a bill for the reconstitution of board of technical and vocational education for better outputs. In her words: “anything that has to do with children, I am very interested...”. She also hopes to build corporate governance structure into government business in order to make governmental administration more accountable.

For Atinuke Bello, the security and safety of school children is currently on top of her policy priority list. In her words: “I am presently working on compulsory fencing of public schools, for security reasons”. A perimeter fence does not only guide against unauthorized access, it also helps monitor school children and effectively regulate their movement during school hours.

Apart from these motions, virtually all the female legislators contributed to the promotion of education in non-legislative ways. At the commencement of school sessions, they distribute backpacks and notebooks to high school children. Although she emphasized the bounds of her responsibility which is basically to debate issues, Mojisola Lasbat Meranda presented 300 sets of classroom furniture to three junior secondary schools in her constituency (**Magazine – Apapa Mo’Care First Term in Office**).

As can be gleaned from many studies carried out on the effect of female legislators on policies, increased female leadership influences adolescent girls’ career aspirations and educational attainment (Beaman, Duflo, Pande and Topalova, 2012). Clots-Figueras’s (2012) study of female leaders in India also support this position. Just as in India, in Nigeria, children are perceived as an insurance for women, thus female politicians consider investing in education of children as an important way of addressing women’s issues.

4.5.3 Between women and constituency representation

A very important area of curiosity for scholars interested in politics of gender representation is to know whether women act for women. Many advocates for women’s increased presence in legislative assemblies argue that female legislators will represent women’s interest and act as important role models (Bauer, 2012). This seems to be contradictory to the logic of representative democracy which holds that, whether or not

the representatives of a constituency are male or female, they stand in for the totality of the members of a specific electoral district.

Female representatives in this context are caught in between contradicting injunctions. They are expected to perform dual functions of represent women's interest and also their constituency. In many instances, people hold them accountable on the ground of how well they represent their gender rather than the constituency they are meant to stand for. This is not out of place since women still lag far behind men in political positions in both the legislative and executive arm of government. However, the likelihood of women delivering women's substantive representation is mediated by several factors including legislative experience, interest of the constituents' political party ideology, institutional marginalization as well as interests of the legislators themselves (Childs and Lovenduski, 2013; Atkinson and Windett, 2019).

Although women's issues appear to be a default agenda for female legislators, the study revealed that some women lawmakers, while sympathetic towards women issues, are more conscious of their constituency responsibilities. In explaining their responsibilities, some female lawmakers stated:

As a legislator... I will not come and tell people I will tar your roads; it is not my job. Those are supposed to fall under the executive job description. But as a legislator, mine is to lobby the government of the day in order to bring development to the community to meet the people I represent. So, along the line, if I see any cause for me to also do something, I won't hesitate to do it **(KII, Female Lawmaker C, 13/01/2020)**.

We all fall on that side and a whole large number of men too are in align with us. And anything that will bring peace and progress to the town is our priority. Those are things we, we have only one agenda which is Ekiti state and that is what we are here for both men and women **(KII, Female Lawmaker A, 30/10/2019)**.

As can be gleaned from Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda of the LSHA, her empowerment interventions cover such areas as health, education, infrastructure, and the welfare of the widows. The table below details her intervention specifically in the state's 8th Assembly.

Table 4.6: Constituency projects carried out by Hon. (Mrs). Mojisola Meranda representing Apapa Constituency I

S/N	Projects	Date Commissioned
1.	Seven Water Borehole Projects (Oluwole Market; Ijora Fish Market; Agbo-Malu; Ijora GRA; Agbo-Elegba; Sogbo-Dile; Railway Compound)	13/02/2018
2.	300 sets of Classroom Furniture to three Junior Secondary Schools	13/02/2018
3.	Free Health Mission at the 4 th Constituency Stakeholders Meeting Themed: “Towards a Peaceful and Credible Elections	9-12/08/2018
4.	Financial Support for the Elderly and the Widows	6/10/2020
5.	Back to School Packs for all 8 Nursery and Primary Schools in Apapa LGA with 8,000 Books distributed	5/10/2020
6.	Free JAMB (Joint Admission and Matriculation Board – A compulsory examination to gain admission into Nigerian Universities) Forms to indigent students for 3 Years	2015; 2017; 2018
7.	A 5-Day Free Dental Care Programme held in Three Locations (Oluwole Market; Ojora Market and APC Secretariat	12-16/01/2016

Source: Mo’care Meranda Charity Foundation

These findings support studies (see (Atkinson and Windett, 2019) which show that female lawmakers are not automatically women's advocates or women's advocates alone. Bills proposed by female lawmakers spread across more issues which could be women issues, men issues or gender-neutral ones, supporting the idea that women balance their legislative portfolios. On the other hand, the findings are not consistent with that of many scholars of politics of WPR who agreed that female legislators are more active than their male colleagues, especially on issues related to women's rights and women's health (Atkinson and Windett, 2019; MacDonald and O'Brien 2011; Osborn and Mendez 2010; Akirav, 2020).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study interrogated women's representation in HoAs of selected states in Southwestern Nigeria. It analysed the level of women's representation and examined the factors which account for their low numerical presence. Importantly, it engages the activities of women in term of legislative policymaking and constituency services as well as community development. Specifically, it focused on female lawmakers in EKSHA, LSHA and OGSHA. From the data analysed, some major themes emerged, including; factors inhibiting women's entry into politics, electioneering experience of female candidates, internal democracy and women's marginalization in political parties, challenges to women's re-election bid, factors that influence house committee composition for women, contributions of female lawmakers to bills development, the relevance of Women's Legislative Caucus (WLC) and the dual responsibility of representing issues of women concerns.

The underrepresentation of women has remained a global phenomenon despite various international and local corrective measures. This has continued to negatively impact the rights of women and how such rights are being respected. The study employed the theory of the politics of presence and the critical act framework which opined that women do not get power based on their number only, and that "it is not possible to conclude that changes could follow from any fixed number of women. The choice of critical act as a framework of explanation is predicated on the premise of its fundamental suppositions which claims that the capacity to affect change does not necessarily depend on quantity, because human beings do not automatically act like particles.

The first objective revealed a very low of level of WPR in the selected HoAs which peaks at 13 percent in the LSHA sixth and seventh assembly. While women continue to participate effectively in politics, such participation has been as voters, mobilizers,

performers and support staff. They are yet to be sufficiently rewarded with positions of power in political parties and are not given full opportunities to contest for electoral offices such as legislative assemblies.

Findings from the second objective identified female lawmakers' policy preferences, academic background and professional experience as the most important factors which influence the House Selection Committee in the composition of house committees for women. Thus far, researchers who are particularly interested in the extent to which getting women elected in the legislature improves the possibility of achieving the interests of women through public policies formulation and implementation have discovered that, generally, female legislators are much more concerned about issues such as women's rights and equality, education, social welfare, health care, families and children, violence against women and the environment and they are prominently involved in committees that seeks to address these issues.

The third objective revealed that a majority of the bills passed in HoAs are executive bills, and rather than sponsor or initiate private member bill, women representatives are more prominent as co-sponsors in legislative policymaking. Out of the thirty-three female lawmakers who have served in the selected states HoAs (some of whom are still serving), only two have sponsored have ever sponsored private member bills.

Findings from the fourth objective revealed that, rather than the primary responsibility of law making, execution of constituency and community development projects constitute an important aspect of representation.

5.2 Conclusion

The debate on the politics of gender representation has expanded beyond numerical gains to achieving sustainable development and gender equality through policy formulation and implementation. However, in the selected states HoAs, discourse on WPR extends only little beyond numerical representation. Although, institutional sexism that privileges men and masculine behaviours was less reported by the female lawmakers, majority of the participants are quick to identify with godfathers whom they hold in high esteem as guarantors for their successful elections and appointments into legislative assemblies and other appointive governmental offices respectively.

The study was also able to establish the low level of women's representation in the legislative policymaking activities in the selected HoAs. Most often than not, female lawmakers represent issues of concerns for women in a non-legislative manner rather than through their primary function of legislative policymaking. As revealed through the analysis of documents, women sponsoring of bills is extremely low.

Lastly, the study was able to establish that the call for increase in the number of WPR is usually amplified at the expense of their responsibilities when they eventually get elected, as such, calls focus less on what female lawmakers do specifically in the area of issues of women's concern. The low level of town hall meetings culture at the constituency levels have also ensured that lawmakers are less accountable to their people.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the study makes the following recommendations for improved WPR in the HoAs of the selected states in Southwestern Nigeria.

One, in recent years, legislative bodies worldwide have enriched their websites to improve access to legislative information and other parliamentary resources. Therefore, HoAs should embrace this global trend and make Hansards and other useful legislative information available on their websites for easy access. This would help observers and political analysts as well as researchers who are interested in interrogating governmental activities especially with regards to law making to have them without any form of bureaucratic bottleneck as the structure currently presents.

Two, political parties should also institute an affirmative action policy for more inclusion of women in party leadership structure. This will enhance internal democracy and address the marginalization of women in party primaries. The status quo in terms of party leadership, in most political parties appears not to give up on its masculine image. In most cases, women are less likely to occupy any position other than the office of women's leader. By increasing the proportion of women in party leadership, a more conducive atmosphere for their recruitment might be created.

Three, seniority constitutes one important asset to a lawmaker's influence and his/her possibility of becoming chairs influential committees and principal officers, as first timers are rarely reckoned with in legislative assemblies' power configuration. As such, women bodies and other relevant organisations should endeavour to give their support to women

who wish to get re-elected in legislative chambers. When more women succeed in their re-election bid and are able to hold important positions in legislative assemblies, the possibility to conveniently push for laws that promotes issues of women concerns would increase.

Four, from the study, it was revealed that female lawmakers have reduced the responsibility of legislative policymaking to executing ill-conceived constituency projects by sharing material gifts, mostly based on party patronage. It is therefore necessary to educate the women and men as well on the functions of the different branches of government. The dying culture of town hall meetings should be revived, and lawmakers should be made to be accountable to their constituencies by giving them feedbacks on legislative activities and discussing upcoming legislations.

Five, women/feminist organisations should regularly monitor empowerment programmes designed and executed by lawmakers. This is to ensure that such programmes are less partisan, not overpriced, and in tune with the environmental contexts and the developmental demands of the people.

Six, the running of legislative activities should be made less capital intensive by changing its mode of operation to part time, such that, an individual lawmaker would be able to maintain his or her means of livelihood. Currently, governmental financial configuration appropriates a very high proportion of amount to politicians' welfare, leaving very little for developmental projects. Stipends (and not salaries) should be paid to them to recognize the service they perform.

5.4 Contributions to knowledge

With the aim of the study focusing on women's representation in legislative policymaking, the major contribution to knowledge is reflected in the limitations to the call for affirmative actions which only address women numerical representation. It reveals that such approach cannot be mutually exclusive in drawing attention to issues of women's concerns. As such, beyond the numbers, following up on the activities of female representatives offers an important evaluative component which could ultimately lead to members of their constituencies and interest groups within them (such as women) to having their needs met.

Also, women's passive acceptance of patriarchal culture is widespread and strong. This passive acceptance remains an important element sustaining men's hegemony in the public space. Numerous women are always readily available as willing tools to be used by political godfathers even when value compensations are far lesser than the effects of their betrayal.

In addition, the study establishes that, assessing female lawmakers' performances based on their representation or policymaking involvement on women's issues constitute a serious bias towards them. It reveals that standing for issues of women's concerns is not a gender specific responsibility. As male lawmakers could either be more or less gender conscious, so are female lawmakers.

Moreover, this study refocuses attention on Anne Phillips' theory on the politics of presence, which appears to be more relevant when studying the politics of the marginalized groups. It beams the search light on actions of female lawmakers which could be another quickening measure to achieving the ultimate goal of women's equality.

Lastly, this study opens a largely unexplored area of research, specifically in the Nigerian contexts for scholars who might be willing to expand the frontiers of knowledge in the same area of research.

5.5 Suggestion for further studies

This study was carried out in only one of the six geo-political zones of the country. Therefore, it would be interesting for any individual researcher, or institution working in the area of women's political representation to conduct similar research in other geo-political zones.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I
LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

S/N	Names	Occupation	Venue	Date
1.	Hon. Adelugba Olubunmi	Lawmaker/Chartered Accountant	EKSHA Complex, Ado Ekiti	04/11/2019
2.	Hon. Balogun Adekemi	Lawmaker/Retired Teacher	EKSHA Complex, Ado Ekiti	30/10/2019
3.	Hon. Ayokunle Yemisi	Lawmaker/Retired Civil Servant	EKSHA Complex, Ado Ekiti	06/03/2020
4.	Hon. Okuyiga Eyitayo Adeteju	Lawmaker/Educationist	EKSHA Complex, Ado Ekiti	06/03/2020
5.	Hon. Sangodara Mosunmola Rotimi	Lawmaker/Businesswoman	LSHA Complex, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos	13/01/2020
6.	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda	Lawmaker/Business Manegement	LSHA Complex, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos	13/01/2020
7.	Hon. Mojisola Kehinde Alli- Macauley	Lawmaker/Broadcast Journalist	LSHA Complex, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos	13/01/2020
8.	Hon. Bello Atinuke	Lawmaker	Telephone Interview	22/01/2020
9.	Hon. Mujota Modupe Onikepo	Lawmaker/Banking and Management	Telephone Interview	21/01/2020
10.	Hon. Ajayi Bolanle Lateefat	Lawmaker/Retired Teacher	OGSHA	26/11/2019
11.	Hon. Ajibola Sikirat	Lawmaker/Businesswoman	OGSHA	26/11/2019
12.	Hon. Owolabi Titilayo	Lawmaker	Telephone Interview	08/03/2020
13.	Hon. Dada Cecilia	Lawmaker	Telephone Interview	04/03/2020
14.	Pastor Adejorin Tope	Politician/Secretary/Ekiti State PDP	PDP Secretariat, Ado Ekiti	04/03/2020
15.	Comrade J.K Oni	Politician		
16.	Hon. Kehinde Agboola	Lawmaker (Former	Telephone interview	

17.	Barrister Gbenga Oguntuase	Legal Practitioner/Chairman, Ekiti State PDP	Ado Ekiti	04/03/2021
18.	Mr. Wasiu Kolapo Adeniran	LSHA	LSHA	21/08/2020
19.	Hon. Christianah M. Afuye	Women's Leader, APC, Ekiti State	APC Secretariat, Ado Ekiti	30/10/2020
20.	Iya Afin Caroline Egunlusi	Deputy Women's Leader, APC, Ekiti State	APC Secretariat, Ado Ekiti	30/10/2020
21.	Mrs. Abimbola Ameobi	Student/ Vice-chairmanship aspirant	APC Secretariat, Ado Ekiti	30/10/2020
22.	Mrs. Adebusola Arifahan	Support Staff	EKSHA	30/10/2020
23.	Mrs. Olufunmilayo Olatunji	Retired Nurse/Gender Activist	Ibara, Abeokuta	27/11/2019
24.	Barrister Olajumoke Peters	Legal Practitioner/Gender Activist	Ibara, Abeokuta	27/11/2019
25.	Mrs. Osinbanjo Francesca Osinyemi	Teacher/Gender Activist	Ibara, Abeokuta	27/11/2019
26.	Mrs. Yetunde Adesanya	Courier services/politician/public servant	Odogbolu, Ogun State	09/01/2020
27.	Alhaja Aroboto	Politician	Ota, Ogun State	03/11/2019
28.	Mrs. Funmi Afuape	Public servant	Oke-Mosan Abeokuta	03/07/2020
29.	Mrs. Nike Osoba	Businesswoman/Public Servant	Telephone Interview	24/10/2019
30.	Engr. Ayo Olubori	Engineer/Politician/Secretary, APC, Ogun State	Party Secretariat, Abiola Way, Abeokuta	02/11/2019
31.	Mr. Oluwaseyi Balogun	Director of Administration, PDP, Ogun State	Abeokuta	02/11/2019
32.	Mrs. Oyegbami	Teacher/Women Activist	Abeokuta	27/11/2019
33.	Mrs. Funmilayo	Office Assistant, ESHA	EKSHA Complex	31/10/2019

34.	Miss. Morounmubo Ola	Personal Assistant	Through WhatsApp	31/10/2019
35.	Mrs. Atane	Legal Practitioner, Office of the wife of governor, Ekiti State	Funmilayo Olayinka Women Centre, Ado Ekiti/WhatsApp	05/03/2020
36.	Hon. Taju Akinpelu	Lawmaker	EKSHA Complex	30/10/2019
37.	Mr. Tope Adeeko	Support Staff, ESHA	EKSHA Complex	31/10/2019
38.	Mr. Temitope Hokon	Director, Committee Department, OGSHA	OGSHA Complex	09/07/2020
39.	Hon. Bimbo Olawuyi Oladeji	Lawmaker	OYSHA Complex	03/10/20
40.	Mrs. Jadesola Akinwunmi	Withheld	EKSHA Complex	31/10/2019
41.	Mrs. Moni Afuye	Withheld	APC Secretariat, Ado Ekiti	01/11/2019
42.	Mrs Sonubi	Withheld	Telephone Interview	03/05/2020
43.	Alhaja Abiola	Politician	Ibara, Abeokuta	05/12/2016
44.	Hon. Kehinde Ajibola	Politician	Abiola Way, Abeokuta	03/11/2019
45.	Mrs. Dada	Politician	Agunlosi, Ado Ekiti	03/11/2019
46.	Alhaja B. A. Orisile	Politician	Ota, Ogun State	26/09/2019
47.	Mrs. F. O. Ogunyemi	Politician	Ota, Ogun State	26/09/2019
48.	Hon. Folakemi Alabi	Councillor	Ado-Odo/Ota LGA	02/07/2015
49.	Mrs. Ashade	Politician/Market Woman	Abeokuta, Ogun State	04/07/2019
50.	Mr. Gboyega Fasiku	Withheld	EKSHA	06/03/2020
51.	Mrs. Omotunde Falusi	Withheld	Ado Ekiti	06/03/2020
52.	Akogun Tai Oguntayo	Politician/SA to EKSHA Speaker on Media	WhatsApp	September ...

53.	Anonymous	Admin. Staff	APC, Acme Rd, Lagos State	21/08/2020
54.	Hon. Adefunmipayo Tejuoso	Lawmaker/Lawyer	Lagos	22/08/2020
55.	Oludotun A. Omoyele	Personal Assistant to the Clerk (LSHA)	Alausa, Ikeja	27/07/2021
56.	Adekunle O. Ogunde	Senior Legislative Officer	Alausa, Ikeja	27/07/2021
57.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	08/03/2020
58.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	08/03/2020
59.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	08/03/2020
60.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	28/08/2020
61.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	28/08/2020
62.	Anonymous	Withheld	Withheld	28/08/2020
63.	Anonymous	NGO Support Staff	Abeokuta	27/11/2019

**APPENDIX II
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Name:
Interview Date:
Contact Address:
Current Livelihood/Profession:
Interview Language:
Highest Educational Qualification Obtained:
Religion:
Marital Status:
Phone Number:
Duration of Interview:

S/N	Question(s)	Probe(s)/Hint(s):
1	What are the political experiences of the female legislators?	Academic and professional background
		Journey into politics
		Chronology of election experiences
		Getting party tickets
		How did you campaign for the main election?
		Are you a feminist?
		Are you a member of any organisation?
		In what ways are women still not equal to men?
2	Are there policy preference for female legislators?	What do female representatives advocate for?
		Legislative activities in the house (Committee membership)
		Agenda to pursue
		Working relationship with any other organisation
		Relationship with other female colleagues
		Relationship with male colleagues
		What are the concerns of your constituency?
3	Does the contribution of female legislators address women's issues and constituency services?	Why (in what ways) do female representation matter?
		Bills sponsored
		Successful ones
		Challenges faced by female legislators

4	What synergy exists between female legislators and women organisations in the effort to promote women's issues	Mentoring programme for young female politicians?
		History of political activism
		Collaboration with women's organisation
		Constituency services

**APPENDIX III
PLATES**



The researcher at the OGSHA Complex



The researcher at the OGSHA Complex, Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta

APPENDIX IV

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION BY THE OGUN STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TELEGRAMS:



TELEPHONE:
08035755527

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OGUN STATE OF NIGERIA P.M.B. 2054, ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE

Your Ref. No. **HA. 7^T/13**
All communications should be addressed
to the Clerk of the House quoting:

29th November, 2019.




**Mr. Adebayo Adedeji V.,
Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies,
University of Ibadan,
Ibadan.**

**RE: REQUEST FOR THE LIST OF HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF HOUSE
OF ASSEMBLY AND BILLS PASSED FROM 1999 TILL DATE**

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 26th November, 2019 on the above subject and to request you to visit the Website of Ogun State House of Assembly on (www.ogha.og.gov.ng) for the list of Honourable Members and Bills passed by the State Assembly.

2. Kindly accept, as always, the assurance of the warm regards of Rt. Hon. Speaker.


Olusola Adebisi (Mrs.)
Admin Officer 1 (Bills)
for: Ag. Clerk of the House

APPENDIX V
EKITI STATE WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE POLICYMAKING
BILLS SPONSORED BY WOMEN LAWMAKERS FROM 1999 TILL DATE

YEAR	NAME	BILLS	DATE PASSED
		Sponsored	
2003-2007	Hon. C. O Oluwafemi	-	
2011-2015	Hon. Omowunmi Olubunmi Ogunlola	-	
	Hon. Modupe Abeni Olayinka	-	
	Hon. Olubunmi Abeni Oriniowo	-	
	Hon. Olajide Ayo Fatunbi	-	
2015-2019	Hon. Cecilia Bosede Dada	-	
	Hon. Titilayo Owolabi-Akerele	Ekiti State Tourism, Arts and Culture Endowment Fund Law (ESTACEF)	14/06/2016
2019 till date	Hon. Olubunmi Adelugba (Chief Whip)	-	
	Hon. Yemisi Ayokunle	-	
	Hon. Adekemi Balogun	-	
	Hon. Adeteju E. Okuyiga	-	

APPENDIX VI
LAGOS STATE WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE POLICYMAKING
LAGOS STATE_BILLS PASSED

YEAR	NAME	BILLS PASSED		DATE PASSED
		Sponsored	Co-sponsored	
1999-2003	Hon. Mutiat Adetoun Adediran (Deputy Speaker)		-Establishment of Lagos State Scholarship Board Law	1999
			-Disabled Persons' Welfare (Enhancement) Law	2003
	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan		-Disabled Persons' Welfare (Enhancement) Law, 2003	2003
	Hon. Ramota Adebayo Oseni		-Disabled Persons' Welfare (Enhancement) Law, 2003	1999
2003-2007	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso (Deputy Chief Whip)		-Lagos State HIV/AIDS Control Agency Law	17/11/2003
		Lagos State Domestic Violence Law		18/05/2007
			Child Rights Law	28/05/2007
	Hon. Bola Olujobi-Badmus		-Lagos State HIV/AIDS Control Agency Law	17/11/2003
			-Lagos State Domestic Violence Law	18/05/2007
			Child Rights Law	28/05/2007
2007-2011	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso (Deputy Speaker till 18/08/2009)		-Lagos State Special People's Bill	2010
			-Lagos State Security Trust Fund Law	03/09/2007

			-Lagos State Safety Commission Law	2011
	Hon. Bola Olujobi-Badmus (Deputy Speaker from 2009 till 2011)		-Lagos State Special People's Bill	2010
	Hon. Ajoke Adegeye-Adeniyi		-Lagos State Special People's Bill	2010
	Hon. Lola Fibisola Akande		-Lagos State Special People's Bill	2010
			-Lagos State Security Trust Fund Law	03/09/2007
	Hon. Omowunmi Olatunji-Edet		-Lagos State Special People's Bill	2010
			-Lagos State Security Trust Fund Law	03/09/2007
2011-2015	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			-Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill	2013
			-Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment in The Work Place Bill	2013
			-Lagos State Tourism Promotion Agency Bill, 2018	2018
			-Public Private Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2018	2018
			-Lagos State House of Assembly Service Commission (Amendment) Bill	2018
	Hon. Lola Fibisola Akande		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			-Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill	2013
			-Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment in The Work Place Bill	2013

			-Lagos State Tourism Promotion Agency Bill	2018
			-Public Private Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2018	2018
			-Lagos State House of Assembly Service Commission (Amendment) Bill	2018
			-Lagos State Sports Commission Bill, 2017	2017
	Hon. Omowunmi Olatunji-Edet		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			-Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill	2013
			-Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment in The Workplace Bill	2013
	Hon. Adebimpe Akinsola		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill	2013
			-Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment in The Work Place Bill	2013
	Hon. Akinola-Hassan Ramotalai		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			-Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill	2013
			-Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment in The Work Place Bill	2013

	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			Gender And Equal Opportunities Bill, 2013	2013
	Hon. Rufai-Adeyemi M.		-Lagos State Properties Protection Bill	2013
			Gender And Equal Opportunities Bill, 2013	2013
2015-2019	Hon. Adefunmilayo Tejuoso		-Kidnapping Prohibition Law	2016
			-Lagos State Post-Primary Teaching Service (Repeal and Re-Enact) Bill	2016
			-Lagos State Tourism Promotion Agency Bill, 2018	2018
			-Public Private Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2018	2018
			-Lagos State House of Assembly Service Commission (Amendment) Bill	2018
	Hon. Omotayo Oduntan		-Kidnapping Prohibition Law	2016
			Shield for Rape Victims and Civil Liability Bill	2016
			-Lagos State Tourism Promotion Agency Bill, 2018	2018
			-Public Private Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2018	2018
			-Lagos State House of Assembly Service Commission (Amendment) Bill	2018
	Hon. Mosunmola Rotimi Sangodara		-Kidnapping Prohibition Law	2016

			Shield for Rape Victims and Civil Liability Bill	2016
	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda		Ibile Holdings Corporations Bill	2015
			-Kidnapping Prohibition Law	2016
			Lagos State Pension Reform (Amendment) Bill, 2016	2016
			Lagos State Post-Primary Teaching Service (Repeal and Re-Enact) Bill	2016
			Lagos State Local Government Service Commission Bill	2016
			Lagos State Cooperative College, Bill	2017
			Lagos State Awards Scheme Bill	2017
			-Lagos State Tourism Promotion Agency Bill	2018
			Lagos State House of Assembly Service Commission (Amendment) Bill	2018
2019 till date	Hon. Mosunmola Rotimi Sangodara			
	Hon. Mojisola Lasbat Meranda			
	Hon. Mojisola K. Alli-Macauley		Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency, Bill, 2020 Second (Allotted Day)	In Progress

APPENDIX VII
OGUN STATE WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE POLICYMAKING
BILLS SPONSORED BY WOMEN LAWMAKERS FROM 1999 TILL DATE

YEAR	NAME	BILL	DATE PASSED	
		Sponsored	Co-sponsored	
2003-2007	Rt. Hon. Titi Oseni (Speaker)		A bill for a law to provide for the protection of children's rights in Ogun State and other related matters	26/02/2004 [2003]
			A bill for a law to make provision for the Ogun State House of Assembly to be self-accounting and for other connected matters	2003
			A bill for a law for the supplementary appropriation of the sum of one hundred and fifty million naira for capital expenditure as well as the transfer for the three hundred and eighty-eight million naira from recurrent expenditure to capital expenditure for the services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria for the financial year ending thirty-first day of December, 2003.	10/11/2003
			A bill for a law for the appropriation [certain amount] for the recurrent expenditure [certain amount] for public dept charges, loan repayments including interest due... for capital expenditure for the services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria for the financial year ending thirty-first day of December, two thousand and four [31/12/2004]	31/12/2004
			A bill for a law for [certain amount] for	22/12/2004

		recurrent expenditure, five billion, nine hundred million naira for Public Dept Charges, loan repayments including interests due and twenty-one billion, three hundred and thirty-three million, forty-eight thousand, five hundred and twenty naira for capital expenditure for the services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria for the financial year ending thirty-first day of December, two thousand and five [2005]	
		A bill for a law to amend the appropriation law, 2006 by re-aligning the recurrent expenditure and the capital expenditure	20/11/2006
		A bill for a law for the appropriation for [certain amount] for dept charges and repayment of loans and liabilities and [certain amount] for the capital expenditure for the services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria for the financial year ending thirty first day of December, 2007 [31/12/2007]	
		A bill for a law to provide for the protection of children's rights in Ogun State and other related matters	26/02/2004 [2003]
2007-2011	Hon. Titi Oseni (Speaker till 2008)		
	Hon. Tunrayo Adijat. Adeleye-Oladapo	A bill for a [law] to provide equal employment opportunities for people living with disabilities in Ogun State and for other matters incidental thereto	Not Given

		A bill for a [law] to provide equal employment opportunities for people living with disabilities in Ogun State and for other matters incidental thereto	Not Given
		A bill for a law to amend the statutory offices (Local Govt. Emoluments) Law.	03/09/2008
		A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Gateway Industrial and Petro-Gas Institute (GIPI) and for other matters incidental thereto	27/04/2008
		A bill for a law to prescribe approval of regulations by resolution of the Ogun State House of Assembly and for connected purposes	Not Given
		A bill for a law to provide for the preservation protection and exercise by traditional rulers of their fundamental rights to be installed and buried according to their religion or belief and for other related matters	03/02/2009
		A bill for a law to provide for the product, sustainable transparent and accountable management of the financial resources of Ogun State of Nigeria and the establishment of the fiscal responsibility commission to ensure sound fiscal management regime and other connected purposes	23/09/2009
		A bill for a law to establish the state council on public procurement and the Bureau of Public procurement,	23/09/2009

		harmonizing the existing Government policies and practice by regulating setting standard and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Ogun State for related matters	
		Ogun State Electoral law No. 36 (Amendment)	15/10/2009
		A bill for a law to amend the social functions (Performance and Special permits) Edict 1994	04/11/2009
		A bill for a law to establish the equal opportunity commission and to vest it with the responsibility to enforce laws promoting equal opportunities for women and men, investigate and prosecute persons suspected to be guilty of any offence thereto and to promote equal opportunities in all fields related	Not Given
		A bill for a law to make provision for the establishment of the Ogun State Water Sector. The Ogun State Water Corporation and for other matters incidental thereto or connected therewith	17/03/2012
		A bill for a law to authorize the issue and appropriation of eighty-eight billion, ninety-eight three hundred- and seventy-four-naira, seventy-five kobo. (#88,098,484,374.75) [sic] from the consolidated revenue fund for the services of Ogun State Government	Not Given

			of Nigeria for the financial year ending Thirty-first Day of December, Two-Thousand and Ten (31/12/2010)	
2011-2015	Hon. T. A. Adeleye-Oladapo		A bill for a law to amend the Ogun State Universal Basic Board Law, 2005	23/11/2011
			A Bill for a Law for the Appropriation of [certain amount] for Recurrent Expenditure [certain amount] for Servicing of Loans, Pension and Gratuities and [certain amount] for Capital Expenditure for the Services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria for the Financial Year Ending Thirty-First Day of December, Two Thousand and Twelve.	21/12/2012
			A Bill for a Law to Amend the Appropriation Law 2011 by Re-Aligning the Recurrent Expenditure, Consolidated Revenue Fund and Changes and the Capital Expenditure	15/12/2011
			The Ogun State Technical and Vocational Education Board Law.	15/08/2012
			A Bill for a Law to Amend the Appropriation Law, 2012 By Re-Aligning the Recurrent and Capital Expenditure.	11/07/2012
			A bill for a law to amend the appropriation law, 2012 by re-aligning the recurrent expenditure, consolidated revenue fund charges and capital expenditure	28/08/2012
			-A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of the	27/09/2012

			Ogun State Debt Management Office and for connected purpose	
			A bill for a law to impose tax on goods consumed in hotels, restaurants and events centers in Ogun State and other matters incidental thereto or connected therewith	02/10/2012
			A bill for a law to provide for the raising of loans through issuance of bonds, notes and other securities for connected purposes	02/10/2012
			A bill for a law to repeal the statistics law, 2006, establish the state statistics system, the state bureau of statistics and other matters incidental thereto	05/02/2013
			A bill for a law to authorize the issue and appropriation of [certain amount] from the consolidated revenue fund for the services of Ogun State of Nigeria, for the financial year ending, thirty first day of December, two thousand and thirteen (31/12/2013).	31/12/2013
			A bill for a law to authorize the issue and appropriation of the sum of two hundred and eleven billion, seven hundred and eighty-nine million, eight hundred and six thousand, eighty-eight-naira, fifty kobo only from the consolidated revenue fund for the services of Ogun State of Nigeria, for the financial year ending, thirty first day of	20/08/2013

			December, two thousand and thirteen (31/12/2013).	
			A bill for a law to provide for the establishment functions and powers of the Ogun State College of Nursing and for other matters incidental thereto.	09/09/2014
			A bill for a law to realign the 2013 appropriation law of Ogun State	18/11/2013
			A bill for a law to provide for public private partnership law, 2013	Not Given
			A bill for a law to establish the State Council on public procurement as the regulatory authority responsible for the monitoring and oversight of public procurement, harmonising, the existing government policies and practice by regulatory setting standards and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Ogun State and for related matters	23/12/2013
			A bill for a law to amend the Ogun State Debt Management Office law, 2012	02/06/2015
			A Bill for a Law to Authorize the issue and Appropriation of the Sum of Two Hundred and Ten Billion, Three Hundred and Fifty-Four Million Naira only from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Services of Ogun State Government of Nigeria, for the Financial Year Ending Thirty-First Day of	31/12/2014

			December, Two Thousand and Fifteen	
	Hon. Elizabeth F. Anifowoshe		-A bill for a law to amend the Local Government Law, 2000	25/10/2011
			The Ogun State Community and Social Development Agency Law	16/08/2012
			A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of the Ogun State Aids Control Agency and other Matters Incidental thereto or connected therewith	10/10/12
			The Ogun State Community and Social Development Agency Law	16/08/2012
			A bill for a law titled the Ogun State New Towns Law and for Other Matters Incidental thereto or connected therewith	18/07/2013
			A bill for a law to make provision for a Land based Charge for Improvement of Town and City Infrastructure Enhancement of Property Value and Collection of Rates on Tenements, Radio and Television Licenses, to be called Land Use and Amenities Charge, to Make Provision for the levying and collection of the Charge and for Connected purposes	16/07/2013
			A bill for a law to amend the Ogun State Council of Obas Law, 2006	27/06/2013
			A bill for a law to provide for the protection, enforcement and	20/08/2013

		advancement of the rights and welfare of the child in Ogun State and other matters incidental thereto or connected therewith		
2015-2019	Hon. Yetunde Adekanbi-Sogbein		A bill for a law to provide for Community Development Programme in Ogun State and for other matters incidental thereto or connected therewith	22/08/2013
			A Law to Provide for the Registration of Community Development Associations and for Matters Incidental There to or Connected Therewith.	In Process [Not Given]
			A Bill for Bill for a Law to Provide Fund for Road accident Victims Emergency Treatment Through the Purchase of Road Accident Emergency Fund Emblem by all Vehicle Plying Roads in Ogun State	09/05/2016
			A Bill for a Law Prohibiting all forms of Violence Against Persons Including Physical, Psychological, Sexual, Domestic and to provide for Maximum Protection and Effective Remedies and Punishment of Offenders Other Related Matters Connected Therewith.	09/11/2017
			A Bill for a Law to Eliminate All forms of	In Process [Not Given]

			Gender Discrimination and Inequalities in Ogun State and Other Matters Connected Therewith or Incidental Thereto.	
			A Bill for a Law to Establish the Ogun State Cash and Food Crops Marketing Board and make Provision for the Purchase of Produce for Export and for Matters Connected Therewith.	Not Given
		A bill for a law to establish the Ogun State Mortgage and Foreclosure Authority, Regulate Mortgage Creation, Foreclosure and Enforcement of Mortgage in Real Property and Connected Purposes		Not Given
			A Bill for a Law to Provide for the Establishment of the Ogun State Health Insurance Scheme and the Ogun State Health Insurance Scheme Governing Board with the Objectives of Ensuring Access to Good HealthCare Services to all Residents of Ogun State and Protecting their Families from Financial Hardship of Huge Medical Bills and other Matters Connected Therewith.	20/12/2018

			Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of Ogun State Law	Not Given
	Hon. Juliana Folakemi Akintayo		A Bill for a Law to Prohibit Forcible Entry and Occupation of Landed Properties, Violet and Fraudulent Conducts in Relation to Landed Properties “Armed Robbery, Cultism and Allied Matters and for other Matters Incidental Thereto or Connected Therewith.	11/10/2016
			A Bill for Bill for a Law to Provide Fund for Road accident Victims Emergency Treatment Through the Purchase of Road Accident Emergency Fund Emblem by all Vehicle Plying Roads in Ogun State	09/05/2017
			A Bill for a Law Prohibiting all forms of Violence Against Persons Including Physical, Psychological, Sexual, Domestic and to provide for Maximum Protection and Effective Remedies and Punishment of Offenders Other Related Matters Connected Therewith.	09/11/17
			A Bill for a Law to Eliminate All forms of Gender Discrimination and Inequalities in Ogun State and Other Matters Connected Therewith or Incidental Thereto.	In Process [Not Given]
			A bill for a law to amend the Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu Law	23/04/2019
			A bill for a law to establish the Ogun State Mortgage and	Not Given

			Foreclosure Authority, Regulate Mortgage Creation, Foreclosure and Enforcement of Mortgage in Real Property and Connected Purposes	
			A bill for a law to amend the Ogun State Technical and Vocational Education Board and for connected purposes	Not Given
2019 till date	-Hon. Atinuke Bello (Chief Whip)			
	- Hon. Modupe Onikepo Mujota			
	-Hon. Lateefat Bolanle Ajayi			
	-Hon. Sikirat O. Ajibola			