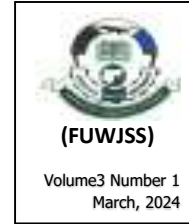


PATRIARCHY AND POLITICAL DOMINATION OF WOMEN IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA



ILLAH, Obadiah¹

ABDULLAHI, Okuwa Abubakar²

^{1&2}Department of General Studies

Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic,

Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria

illah4real@yahoo.com; illobed82@gmail.com

abukuwa50@gmail.com

Abstract

All through human history, the issue of patriarchy has continued to dominate intellectual discourses in attempts to expound the plight of women in society. In Nasarawa State, Nigeria, despite the active involvement of women in politics, no woman has been elected into a key decision making position such as Governor, Deputy Governor or Speaker of the State House of Assembly. In order to unravel complexities that surround women's involvement in politics in Nasarawa State; this study examines factors engendering women political domination in the State. Analyses in the study were anchored within assumptions of radical feminism. Instruments for data collection consist of a structured questionnaire administered to 470 respondents and key informant interviews involving five participants in . The study's results revealed that patriarchal structures, traditional beliefs, economic disadvantages, cultural practices, and gender policy gaps are foundations to women political domination in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study recommends that governments at all levels in the State should formulate and implement gender-responsive policies and laws that deliberately provide funds and support for women political empowerment. Also, the Nasarawa State Government should establish a Gender Equality Commission in the State with a view to advancing advocacies on inclusive development and evolve networking platforms and mentorship programmes that connect women aspiring to enter politics with established female leaders in the State and beyond.

Keywords: Gender equality, patriarchy, political domination, political participation

Introduction

The issue of patriarchy has continued to permeate the intellectual space regarding what constitutes the plight of women in the society. According to the research conducted by the United Nations, women make up just over 24% of parliamentary seats worldwide (UN Women, 2021). Accordingly, Ojeh (2020) points out that by United Nation's figure, women constitute one half of the world's population and perform nearly two third of its work hours, receive one tenth of its income and own less than one hundred of its property. These indicators define political marginalization against women in the global scale. These imbalances mean that women voices and perspectives are underrepresented in policy-making decisions around the world. In Nigeria and by implication Nasarawa State, it is no exaggeration that women are born into a culture of male supremacy and will continue to cope with the issue of patriarchal structure of male dominance if there are no policy interventions protective of the future (Ifejika & Ogoemeka, 2020). In this light, the issue of gender inequality between male and female particularly in the political sphere will require critical attention in Nigeria's development.

In their study, Otite and Ogionwo (2004) attested to the dominance of patriarchy in Nigeria and how women are generally socialized into recognizing and accepting their subordinate position in both monogamous and polygamous marriages. In the same vein, Olurode and Soyombo (2001) are of the opinion that women and men are not relating as equals within the family or household. Children are socialized into this kind of family relationship and that is consequently manifested in the nature and character of their political chances later in life whether male or female. This has arguably led to the exclusion of women in the politics of Nigeria and in this instance, Nasarawa State. For reasons that gender serves as a critical factor in structuring life chances with which individuals and groups are treated, this study among other things investigated patriarchy and women presence in politics, which may have necessarily invigorated social discrimination against women in the politics of Nasarawa State. While analyzing gender and labor relations, Nwoye (2019) asserts that decision to migrate among married couple is an exclusive right of the husband for which the wife must comply if the marriage is to last. To him, it requires a husband to attest to his wife's visa application document to be approved by the foreign country's embassy. Hence, the issue of how patriarchy constitutes a threat to the woman's place in the political structure of Nasarawa State and how that can be addressed formed the specific objectives of this study.

Against the global call for gender equality between men and women (Nigerian Constitution inclusive), reverse seems to be the case as men are

more valued and seen occupying more political positions in Nasarawa State than their women counterpart (Nwoye, 2019). For instance, no woman has been governor, Deputy Governor and Speaker of the State House of Assembly since the creation of Nasarawa State in 1996. This situation appears to be different when compared to Ekiti and other States that were created the same day with Nasarawa State in Nigeria. Reflecting on the woman's plight, Okolo and Igbozuruike (2013) posited that the Nigerian wife is most likely to be at a disadvantage position in decision making if she lacks independent source of income. While the finding of Okolo and Igbozuruike is not in doubt, it ignores the fact that patriarchy is key to gender biased political practice and engenders little or no presence of women in the role of governance which may have affected their source of income in the study area. Though Young (2019) differently blamed religion as a cause of patriarchy in the society, it is obvious the forces of social life are often relative hence, the urge to investigate the causes of patriarchy in Nasarawa State.

Patriarchy and Political Participation of Women in Africa

The concept of patriarchy which is otherwise known as male dominance has deep historical roots in cultural, political, and economic structures. In recent years, scholars have increasingly critiqued patriarchy as a source of inequality and injustice, particularly for women and the marginalized groups (Connell, 2005). According to Crenshaw (1991), patriarchy is defined as a system of power, which is reinforced through different forms of oppression such as racism, ableism, and homophobia. The study argues that patriarchy is reinforced through the intersection of these various forms of oppression which create unique experiences of oppression for different groups of women. To the author, this misrepresentation of women reinforces male power and privilege as well as the subordination of women and other marginalized groups. Accordingly, Walby (1990) defines patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices that create and maintain gender inequality. She argues that patriarchy is manifested in various institutions such as the state, the family, religion and the economy, which all contribute to women's subordination. In this light, the concept of patriarchy is synonymous to males as the norm while females the other.

At its core, politics involves the distribution and exercise of power within a society or group, and the processes and institutions through which decisions are made and implemented (Heywood, 2013). Opining classically, David Easton considered politics as "the authoritative allocation of resources and values in society" (Easton, 1957). He argued that politics is the process of legitimizing decisions that affect the distribution of

resources and values within a society. For Nwoye (2019), politics is considered as the process by which a group of people, through various institutions make decisions that shape the direction and content of a society. On his part, Harold Laswell defined politics as "who gets what, when and how" (Laswell, 1936). Laswell argued that politics is about the distribution of power and resources and who has the ability to make decisions that affect the lives of others. In a more critical term, Karl Marx saw politics as "the struggle for power between different social classes" (Marx, 1852). Marx argued that politics is determined by economic forces and the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Thus, politics is what is exercised through a variety of institutions and processes, such as elections, bureaucracy, and the judiciary which are essentially political.

Women have often been subjected to various forms of relegation in various aspects of life, including education, employment, health care and political participation. According to Kabeer (2015), women relegation in politics is closely linked to the patriarchal social system which assigns roles based on gender. Women are regarded as inferior and therefore, relegated to specific roles in the society. For instance, in Northern Nigeria, women are often expected to get married, have children, and take care of the home. This is why they are hardly enrolled in school, making them more impoverished and economically powerless. Such treatment has made women to be hugely underrepresented in many sectors, including politics, education and the economy (Berdahl & Cooper, 2016). Despite the strides women have made in recent years towards political representation, they appeared to remain underrepresented in political leadership positions around the world. In the opinion of Makama (2013), women have been put at the background politically for years by men; either as a result of women's perceived gender weakness or due to lack in the needed financial resources when compared to men and this has engendered a consciousness of women under-representation in public life.

Another issue of patriarchy against women is what they face in political campaigns. Women candidates often face sexist and gendered attacks from opponents and the media, which can undermine their credibility and damage their chances of winning (Lawless & Fox, 2010). The view of these authors rarely explain the plight of one Hajiya Gambo Sawaba, a Northern female political activist that was publicly flogged, had her hair shaved off with a broken bottle and imprisoned 16 times for venturing into politics as revealed by Agunbiade (2021). Against the practice of purdah, a form of social seclusion against the women in Northern Nigeria, Sawaba was reported to have gone house to house doing political campaigns and that was the cause of her humiliation. Agunbiade thus, rated Hajiya Gambo Sawaba as the most jailed female politician in Nigeria. This biased

maltreatment towards the women also extends to the fundraising process, as women candidates often struggle to raise as much money as their male counterparts (Caul & Mujtaba, 2019).

Political Relegation of Women in Nasarawa State

Generally, Nigeria appears to be a country with a policy milieu favouring the growth of women since Nigeria is a signatory to numbered international conventions on gender equality and women empowerment. Nigeria also has established institutional structures for the development and implementation of gender policies, either as Federal Ministry of Women Affairs at the federal level of government or the State Ministry of Women Affairs at the state level as well as the Directorate of Women Affairs at the local government level (Ford Foundation, 2018). The role of non-governmental organizations on gender mainstreaming activities in Nigeria is also not in doubt. Although these prospects sound strong about the issue under study, a close review of the situation in the recent decades leave much to be bothered about. According to Walby (1990), patriarchy is indispensable in understanding the dominance of men in political offices, with female political representation historically being low. The table below illustrates the current situation in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Table 1: Comparison of Women Representation in 2015, 2019 and 2023 General Elections in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

| Position | No. of available slots/positions | No. of women elected in 2015 | No. of women elected in 2019 | No. of women elected in 2023 |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| President | 1 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Senate | 3 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| House of Reps | 4 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Governorship | 1 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| House of Assembly | 24 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (0.24%) |
| L.G.A Chairman | 13 | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |

Source: Authors analytical computation, 2023; Ford Foundation, 2018

A close follow of the table above shows that women have had low show ups over these periods and there seems not to be targeted efforts toward women recognition and representation in the politics of Nasarawa State. While trying to explain this culture in the country, the study of Laryea and Fakorode (2019) found that patriarchal beliefs and practices in Nigeria undermine the participation of women in politics, perpetuate gender

inequality and limit women political influence. Indeed, the plight of women has not only been low participation in politics but also outright domination by men largely facilitated by the norm of socialization and the religious belief system in place (Akeke, 2017; Young, 2019).

Research has consistently shown that women are significantly underrepresented in political office worldwide (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). This underrepresentation is partly explained by the dominance of patriarchal norms and biases in political parties and electoral systems in the Northern region of Nigeria where Nasarawa State is a political unit (Krook, 2014). On the other hand, patriarchy results in deep-rooted gender biases that impede women political chances and credibility as political leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Jewker & Lang, 2015). Patriarchy manifests through a range of challenges that women encounter when engaging in politics. Gender-based violence, harassment and intimidation have been observed as common tactics to dissuade women from participating in politics (Tripp, 2016; Walby, 1990). These obstacles arise from the patriarchal assumption that politics is an exclusively male domain, whereby women challenging this norm may be subjected to social, physical, and emotional coercion. Such challenges perpetuate power imbalances and restrict women's political chances. Agreeing with the author, it will be unreasonable to say women have not been running for political offices in Nasarawa State but they are likely a victim of male political domination. Hence, the political impact of patriarchy on women political chances is profound and multifaceted. Economically, patriarchy significantly influences women's political chances, hindering their ability to participate and succeed in politics. These impacts were considered in structural economic disadvantages, the gender pay gap, unpaid care work, and gendered violence. A significant economic impact of patriarchy on women political chances is the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work forced upon them (Elson, 1999; Krook, 2014). Clearly reviewed above, the woman folk is deeply in gender related troubles and such troubles require immediate scientific solutions.

Measures against Women Political Domination

In charting the way forward, the government can first look at women's discrimination in politics at the global level by implementing gender quotas (Krook, 2009). The United Nations came up with a stand that governments can develop and enforce legislation to protect women rights and ensure gender equality in political participation (UN Women, 2011). This can include anti-discrimination laws, equal opportunity policies, and political financing regulations. According to Ahmed and Teshome (2019), nations can introduce various policies such as quotas, affirmative action, and

reserved seats to increase women's political participation. In India, the Women's Reservation Bill, which aims to reserve 33% of parliamentary seats for women has become a strong move in the parliament. According to Lewis and Thomas (2018), Rwanda's government provides significant funding support to women who engage in politics. In this wise, Nasarawa State government can introduce gender-sensitive policies and legislation such as laws to prevent gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. As mentioned by Galston and McGann (2021), the US state of Maryland has increased women's political representation by offering funding and training for women to run for office. Expectedly, the government in Nasarawa State can invest in local community initiatives that support women's political empowerment.

Theoretical Framework: Radical Feminism

This theory propounded by Firestone (1970) basically posits that material conditions extending from household to public spheres of life are patriarchal structured in that they undermine the place of women in terms of those of men. The theory, therefore, looks at patriarchy and male oppression of women as a fundamental to relegating women in society. It further argues that patriarchy and male domination are enforced through different institutions such as politics, economics, and religion. Radical feminism highlights the importance of women's solidarity in advancing their interests and overcoming the injustices that they face. Radical feminists consider women political participation as critical and so it tries to bring different issues affecting women political relevance to the forefront. According to a study by Zhang and Xiao (2020), radical feminist theory explains the structural obstacles that prevent women from fully participating in politics and that is because most political institutions are male-dominated, and women who attempt to participate are met with resistance from the male majority.

In this wise, this theory is useful to the study of patriarchy because it has aided our intellectual view of how women are underrepresented in political positions globally and Nasarawa State in particular. It is also reasonable to say that the character of production activities in the state, including political representation has been in favour of the man than the woman. Moreover, Gidengil et al. (2015) posit that radical feminist theory offers insights into understanding why women politicians face more demeaning challenges than their male peers. Radical feminist theory contends that this type of disparity is a proof of the patriarchy's efforts to deter women's participation in political activities.

Research Methodology

The survey design was adopted in this study. This is because survey design enables the collection of data from a large sample usually by asking for the opinions of respondents over an issue (Ndiyo, 2005). The study's sample size was determined using the Yamane formula for sample size determination at 95% confidence level and a margin error of 0.05% that was derivable from the 2016 projected population of Nasarawa State which stands at 2,523,400 (NPC, 2016). Although 400 formed the sample size arrived at from the Yamane schema, 470 questionnaires were administered on participants. The researcher anticipated only 85% of the questionnaires distributed may be correctly filled and returned hence, the number of questionnaires were increased by 15% to compensate the ones that could not be returned. In doing this, the Areoye (2004) formula was further adopted. Thus, a total of 470 people were finally sampled and used for the study. This is because often times, especially in studies where primary data are generated via the use of questionnaire, the possibility of retrieving them all is dicey (Steiner & Brinkmann, 2014). Data collection explored both primary and secondary sources. By this, the study conducted Key Informant Interview with 5 essential participants and blended their responses with the analysis of primary data generated via questionnaire administration. The interviewed participants were purposively contacted in the study location. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the study sample from the adult residents of Nasarawa State who formed the study's population. The study adopted the probabilistic sampling technique to select respondents. In doing this, the researcher randomly selected 7 out of the 13 Local Government Areas of Nasarawa State; five wards from each of the 7 Local Government Areas and three polling units from each of the wards selected. The reason for using random sampling technique was to ensure randomization, thereby reducing certain level of bias that could jeopardize the representativeness of the study sample. Selections at both the Local Government Areas, wards and polling unit levels were done using the fish-bowl method. Nasarawa State was the study location and the data gathered were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical schemes and the verbatim reporting scheme. In this wise, the questionnaires filled and returned were collated, cleaned and coded into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to display frequency, simple percentage, mean, standard deviation and cross tabulations.

Socio-Demographics of Respondents

Out of the 470 questionnaires given out, 437 were dully filled and returned and were retained for the overall analysis of the study.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents, N = 437

| Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Age (years) | | % |
| ≤20yrs | 34 | 7.8 |
| 21 – 30 | 89 | 20.4 |
| 31 – 40 | 128 | 29.3 |
| 41 – 50 | 156 | 35.7 |
| >51yrs | 30 | 6.9 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Single | 98 | 22.4 |
| Married | 193 | 44.2 |
| Divorced | 40 | 9.2 |
| Widowed | 66 | 15.1 |
| Separated | 40 | 9.2 |
| Sex | | |
| Male | 241 | 55.1 |
| Female | 196 | 44.9 |
| Educational Background | | |
| Non-formal | 88 | 20.1 |
| Primary | 104 | 23.8 |
| Secondary | 119 | 27.2 |
| Tertiary | 126 | 28.8 |
| Occupation | | |
| Unemployed | 113 | 25.9 |
| Business/ self employed | 54 | 12.4 |
| Civil servant | 155 | 35.5 |
| Retired | 47 | 10.8 |
| Politician | 28 | 6.4 |
| Others | 40 | 9.2 |
| Religion | | |
| Islam | 179 | 41.0 |
| Christianity | 210 | 48.1 |

Source: Field work, (2023)

Results from table 2 above shows that majority of the respondents (65%) are found within the ages of (31-40 and 41-50years) respectively. This result shows that Nasarawa State has an adult population whose opinions were a reasonable data on the subject of study. The result of sex (55.1%)

shows that more males than women participated in the study, implying the dominance of male sex in the study area. The fact that male dominance is obvious in the study area affirms the reality of patriarchal structure in the State. Most of the respondents (44.2%) are married. This result reveals that the family setting is among the institutions that propels male dominance in Nasarawa State. On education, the result shows that the respondents are not only educated but (28.8%) of the educated participants have acquired tertiary education and so are well informed about the subject of study. The turn out on occupation shows that there are unemployed people (25.9%) in the State but most of the participants (35.5%) are civil servants. Distribution by religion shows that more Christians (48.1%) than Muslims participated in the study.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on Causes of Women Political Domination N = 437

| S/N | Causes of women political domination | Rating (%) | | | Mean | STD |
|-----|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------|-------|
| | | YES | NO | UD | | |
| 1 | Women are politically dominated | 315(72.1) | 87(19.9) | 35(8.0) | 2.64 | 0.626 |
| 2 | Patriarchal structure | 228(52.2) | 111(25.4) | 98(22.4) | 2.30 | 0.812 |
| 3 | Family socialization | 225(51.5) | 113(25.9) | 99(22.7) | 2.29 | 0.812 |
| 4 | Due to tradition | 288(65.9) | 104(23.8) | 45(10.3) | 2.56 | 0.674 |
| 5 | Condonable factor | 36(8.2) | 247(56.5) | 154(35.2) | 1.73 | 0.602 |

Source: Field work, (2023)

Before the analysis on the causal factors, results on table 3 above affirmed the relegation of women in the politics of Nasarawa State ($\bar{x} = 2.64$ SD = 0.626). Here, a low response was observed to have deviated from the means, implying coherence. Thus, although political participation is a constitutional obligation, men are often seen to be ones dominating the space in the study area. When specifically asked to indicate the causes of women relegation in politics, overall opinions considered the traditional perception of women ($\bar{x} = 2.56$) as having the highest causal tendency since responses that varied were indeed insignificant (SD = 0.67). This was followed by patriarchal structure ($\bar{x} = 2.30$) which had participants

differing in position ($SD = 0.81$). The next factor is socialization norm in the family ($\bar{x} = 2.29$ $SD = 0.81$) while condonable culture of such operation in the society was also considered an influential factor ($\bar{x} = 1.73$ $SD = 0.60$). Thus, the causes of male dominance are a bid contextual to the factors enumerated by other works reviewed here. In line with these revelations, qualitative data were generated to verify the quantitative results elicited which are in line with the objectives of the study.

In this our society, the tradition is that men are the norm while women the others. This kind of belief is not tenable for a country that belongs to the global community of nations. Women are now productive partners in the leadership of nations around the world and Nigeria cannot continue to wallow in the past (KII- Director in government Ministry, male, age 55, Lafia).

The results above confirmed that patriarchal tendencies are orchestrated by patriarchal structure, men political domination, tradition, socialization pattern and condonable religious practices but considered the traditional perception of women as the most influential factor in the State. Confirming this finding, Ojeh (2020) opined that the girl child is traditionally trained and prepared only for marriage and she is meant for the kitchen and reserved for male children whether educated or not. The submission of Ojeh is quite convincing to the reality of women plight in the study area and thus, considered as being alignable.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on the Implications of Patriarchy

| S/N | Implications | Rating (%) | | | | | Mean | STD |
|-----|--|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| | | SA | A | UD | D | SD | | |
| 1 | Reduces women chances in dev. activities | 128(29.3) | 105(24.0) | 36(8.2) | 108(24.7) | 60(13.7) | 3.30 | 1.45 |
| 2 | Makes women economically weak | 92(21.1) | 127(29.1) | 65(14.9) | 87(19.9) | 66(15.1) | 3.21 | 1.37 |
| 3 | Widens gender gap | 84(19.2) | 127(29.1) | 36(8.2) | 100(22.9) | 90(20.6) | 3.03 | 1.45 |
| 4 | Women political exclusivity | 169(38.7) | 130(29.7) | 31(7.1) | 64(14.6) | 43(9.8) | 3.73 | 1.36 |

Source: Field work, (2023)

From the distribution above, the means score revealed that women are politically excluded in Nasarawa State and it is the highest of all the implications ($\bar{x} = 3.73$, $SD = 1.36$). Other ratings showed that male dominance reduces women chances in development activities in the State ($\bar{x} = 3.30$, $SD = 1.45$), makes women economically weak and powerless ($\bar{x} = 3.21$, $SD = 1.37$) and it also widens gender gap in the State ($\bar{x} = 3.03$, $SD = 1.45$). All these implications have a way of affecting the scope of women participation in the political affairs of Nasarawa State. During the qualitative session, a participant has this to say.

Yes, male dominance does not give room for women to express themselves and in some cases, they are completely barred from useful economic activities. This kind of relegation does not equate by degree the damage already done to their dreams and aspirations in life. (KII- An academic, male, age 52, Lafia).

Indeed, these results showed that patriarchy has implications on the place of women in the political structure of the State in the area of women political exclusion, stunted development activities, economic powerlessness and gender gap. In the multiple regression analysis test carried out, results showed that women political participation is significantly low as a result of the influence of traditional belief, cultural practices, women economic weakness and religious belief. All these implications have a way of affecting the scope of women participation in the political affairs of Nasarawa State as confirmed in the findings of (Elson, 1999; Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Krook, 2014; & Tripp, 2015) in their studies. Radical feminist theory contends that this type of suppression is a proof of patriarchal impact on women participation in political activities.

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on Measures against Patriarchy
N = 437**

| S/N | Measures against patriarchy | Rating (%) | | | | | Mean | STD |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| | | SA | A | UD | D | SD | | |
| 1 | Promote gender equality | 164(37.5) | 78(17.8) | 36(8.2) | 81(18.5) | 78(17.8) | 3.39 | 1.56 |
| 2 | Quota system for women | 99(22.7) | 111(25.4) | 65(14.9) | 96(22.0) | 66(15.1) | 3.19 | 1.29 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 3 | Women educational training | 161(36.8) | 83 (19.0) | 36(8.2) | 86(19.7) | 71(16.2) | 3.41 | 1.53 |
| 4 | Women inclusivity campaign | 166(38.0) | 65(14.9) | 66(15.1) | 81(18.5) | 59(13.5) | 3.45 | 1.48 |

Source: Field work (2023)

In table 5 above, respondents saw awareness campaign on women inclusivity in politics ($\bar{x} = 3.45$, $SD = 1.48$) as the most suggested strategy in the State. Thus, awareness campaign on women inclusivity will get idle women off their political stagnation and increase their income level. This was followed by women educational training ($\bar{x} = 3.41$, $SD = 1.53$), the promotion of gender equality ($\bar{x} = 3.39$, $SD = 1.56$) and the implementation of quota system for women in the State ($\bar{x} = 3.19$, $SD = 1.53$). The implementation of these suggestions in the opinions of the participants will address the challenge of women political domination, poor patriarchal structure, and male ordered socialization norm unveiled as causes of male dominance in this work.

From these results, awareness campaign on women inclusivity surfaced as the most suggested strategy in the State. Thus, awareness campaign on the need to fairly include women in key political positions is considered sacrosanct. These outcomes received the confirmation of other studies which revealed that governments can develop and enforce legislation to protect women's rights and ensure gender equality, quota system, affirmative action and reserved seats to increase women's political participation in all levels of government in the State (UN Women, 2011; Thomas, 2018; Teshome, 2019 & Galston & McGann, 2021).

Hypotheses Validation

Hypotheses test and results have been presented and explained in tables 6 and 7 below.

Hypothesis 1:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between patriarchy and women political domination in Nasarawa State.

This hypothesis was tested using chi-square based measurement. It seeks to know if these two variables, patriarchy and women political domination are existing independently or are causally linked.

Table 6: X² test of the Relationship between Patriarchy and Women Political Domination N = 437

| Patriarchy | There is | Not sure | There'nt | Total | X² | Df: | P: |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Women Political domination | | | | | 247.17 | 4 | .000 |
| Yes | 54(79.4) | 6(8.8) | 8(11.8) | 68(100) | | | |
| Not sure | 14(5.3) | 37(14.1) | 212(80.6) | 263(100) | | | |
| Not | 38(35.8) | 47(44.3) | 21(19.9) | 106(100) | | | |
| Total | 106(100) | 90(100) | 241(100) | 437(100) | | | |

Source: Field work (2023)

The result of Chi-square test on table 3 above ($X^2 = 247.17$, $p < .05$) shows that a significant relationship exist between patriarchy and women political domination in the State. In this light, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that the two variables (patriarchy and women political domination) exist dependently and not independently. In this instance, women political domination is dependent on male dominance. That is to say respondents see women political domination as owing to male dominance in Nasarawwa State. The qualitative data generated supported this finding thus:

I will say women are seriously relegated politically because women are not seen occupying more political positions in the State not because they cannot perform but because they are not given the needed chance by their male counterparts. It is really worrisome and a big problem I must say. (SI- Mechanic client, female, age 39, Lafia)

Flowing from above, the X² test of the relationship between patriarchy and women political domination affirms that a causal link exists between the two variables and that the latter's occurrence was actually as a result of the former's prevailing reality in the study site. The direction of this result succinctly blends the position of Agunbiade (2021) when he explains the plight of one Hajiya Gambo Sawaba, a Northern female political activist who was publicly flogged, had her hair shaved off with a broken bottle and imprisoned 16 times for venturing into politics which is solely considered a male affairs particularly in the Northern region of Nigeria. The plight of Hajiya Gambo Sawaba is not in doubt because for radical feminist theory, patriarchy and male oppression of women are fundamental to relegating women in society. It further argues that patriarchy and male domination are enforced through different institutions such as family politics, economics, and religion which this study empirically confirmed.

Hypothesis 2:

Ho: Patriarchy has no significant impact on women political participation in Nasarawa State.

This hypothesis was tested using the least square multiple regression analysis. This statistical test was poised at finding out whether the practice of patriarchy has any influence on women political participation in the study location. The result is presented in table 7 below.

Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis on Impact of Women Political Participation

| Model | R | R ² | Adjusted R | Std. Error | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | .964 ^a | .929 | .929 | .167 | | |
| 2 | Sources of variance | Sum of square | Df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
| | Regression | 158.548 | 4 | 39.637 | 1421.391 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 12.047 | 432 | .028 | | |
| | Total | 170.595 | 436 | | | |
| Independent Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | t | Sig. |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -.213 | .047 | | -4.564 | .000 |
| 2 | Traditional belief | .309 | .025 | .333 | 12.352 | .000 |
| 3 | Cultural practices | .028 | .013 | .029 | 2.156 | .032 |
| 4 | Women economic weakness | .098 | .021 | .095 | 4.788 | .000 |
| 5 | Religious belief | .645 | .031 | .576 | 21.135 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Women political participation

From the table above, the F-value 1421.391, which is significant at .5% level, suggests that the independent variable (male dominance) has significant influence on the dependent variable (women political participation) in the State. Given this result, the null hypothesis is therefore, rejected. Thus, it is safe to conclude that there is a statistically significant influence of traditional belief, cultural practices, women economic weakness and religious belief on the poor participation of women in politics. Consequently, the standardized and unstandardized coefficients

were subjected to further analysis and results showed that the independent variables all exerted significant influences on the dependent variable but religious belief exerts the most of influence on women political participation ($\beta = .576$, $t = 21.135$, $p < .05$). In this light, a unit increase in religious belief will attract a corresponding .645 increase in how women political participation is affected when other variables remain constant. The remaining variables such as traditional belief ($\beta = .309$, $t = 12.352$, $p < .05$), women economic weakness ($\beta = .098$, $t = 4.788$, $p < .05$) and cultural practices ($\beta = .028$, $t = 2.156$, $p < .05$) all impacted significantly on the dependent variable. As such, a unit increase in traditional belief, women economic weakness and cultural practices will consequently lead to .309, .098, and .028 increases in how women are politically relegated in the State respectively, if all other variables in the equation remain constant. This result was validated by a participant during the KII session thus:

Male dominance is seriously interrupting the place of women in politics because the culture of marriage in the area placed women completely under the decision of their husbands or male parents who are at all-time seen interfering with their decisions. Men are the religion, the tradition, the police, the lawyers, the executive arm of everything and this does not speak well of a society that belongs to the global community and under a constitutional jurisdiction (KII- A woman activist, female, age 45, Lafia).

Thus, it can be seen that male dominance constitutes a challenge to women and has significantly relegated them in the political affairs of the State. This result aligns with the finding of Walby (1990) which considers patriarchy as an indispensable factor in understanding the dominance of men in political offices, with female political representation historically being low.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study have revealed several issues on the subject of male dominance in Nasarawa State. Among them is the influence of patriarchy on women political chances which has led to gender bias and imbalance in political leadership positions. This imbalance means that women voices and perspectives are underrepresented in policy-making decisions of the State. In view of the above, the study concludes that patriarchy which is otherwise known as male dominance indicates the domination of women in the political engagements of Nasarawa State. The study concludes that women are economically weak to actively participate and create impact in politics and campaign financing. That way, female candidates tend to receive fewer financial contributions due to limited

economic networks and resources. The study also concludes that addressing the factors of women domination in politics is crucial to creating a more inclusive and gender-equal political environment which can necessitate holistic interventions that could mark a turning point for women political participation in Nasarawa State. How the challenge of male dominance counteracts women chances politically was confirmed going by some of the analyses made and the conclusions drawn in the study. To correct these anomalies in practical terms, the study recommends that the government in Nasarawa State should pay deeper attention to social, economic, cultural and political issues orchestrating women political domination by formulating and enforcing gender balancing policies across all levels of government in the State. The government in Nasarawa State should also invest in women politics by deliberately providing funds and support for women's political empowerment. The US State of Maryland has increased women's political representation by offering funding and training for women to run for office. Rwanda and India are already towing that same line to make a difference.

Nasarawa State Government should establish Gender Equality Commission in the State. This Commission will be responsible for advancing advocacies on development and implementation of gender-responsive policies and laws that address women's political discrimination and promote their representation in decision-making positions. Government should evolve networking platforms and mentorship programs that connect women aspiring to enter politics with established female leaders in Nasarawa State. Providing mentorship and support can help build confidence, skills, and networks necessary for women to navigate the political arena effectively.

Flowing from the above, the government should embark on targeted campaigns and programs that aim to educate women about their political rights and opportunities that should be enhanced. This can include awareness campaigns, workshops, training sessions and outreach activities to enhance their political knowledge and participation.

References

- Agbalajobi, D.T. (2010). Women's participation and the political process in Nigeria: Problems and prospects. *A publication of African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(2), 075-082.
- Ahmed, G., & Teshome, M. (2019). Affirmative action, quotas, and reserved seats: Understanding the strategies used to increase women's political representation in sub-Saharan Africa. *Politics & Policy*, 47(4), 721-750.

- Akeke, R. (2017). The impact of socialization on women's political participation in Nigeria. *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research*, 2(1), 1-8.
- Aroeye, M. (2004). *Research methodology with statistics for health and social science*. Ilorin: Nathadex Publishers.
- Berdahl, J. L., & Cooper, M. L. (2016). *Work and family demands: A role congruity perspective on gender inequality*. In *Advances in Group Processes* (Vol. 33, pp. 47-75). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Caul, M., & Mujtaba, T. (2019). Gender and political fundraising: Do women MPs raise less money than men? *Political Behavior*, 41(4), 875-899. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-018-9465-8>.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities*. California: Polity Press.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.
- Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573-598.
- Elson, D. (1999). *Engendering government budgets in countries in transition*. Commonwealth Secretariat. UK
- Easton, D. (1957). An approach to the analysis of political systems. *World Politics*, 9(3), 383-400. doi: 10.2307/2009184
- Firestone, S. (1972). *The dialectics of sex*, in Haralambos, M. and Holton, M (ed) *Themes and perspectives*, London: HarperCollins Publishers Limited
- Ford Foundation (2018). *Women's political representation in Nigeria: Why progress is slow and what can be done to fast-track it*. Available online at: www.placng.org
- Galston, W. A., & McGann, A. J. (2021). *Women's political representation in Maryland*. *Brookings*. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/policy2020/big-ideas/womens-political-representation-in-maryland/>.
- Gidengil, E., Blais, A., Nadeau, R., & Nevitte, N. (2015). *Women, politics, and democracy in Canada*. Ontario: UBC Press.
- Heywood, A. (2013). *Politics*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ifejika, V., & Ogoemeka, M. B. (2020). A historical analysis of women participation in Nigerian politics. *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*, 9(1), 16-30.
- Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2003). *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world*. Cambridge University Press.
- Jewker Flood, M., & Lang, J. (2015). Beyond 'patriarchy': A critical examination of gender and power in the UNFCCC negotiations. *Global Environmental Change*, 35, 454-464.

- Kabeer, N. (2015). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third Millennium Development Goal. *Gender & Development*, 23(2), 201-216.
- Kandiyoti, D. (1988). Bargaining with patriarchy. *Gender & Society*, 2(3), 274-290.
- Krook, M. L. (2014). Violence against women in politics. *American Political Science Association*, 51(3), 539-553.
- Krook, M. L. (2009). *Quotas for women in politics: Gender and candidate selection reform worldwide*. Oxford University Press.
- Laryea, P., & Fakorode, O. (2019). Women's political participation and democratization in Ghana and Nigeria. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 20(8), 138-149.
- Laswell, H. (1936). *Politics: Who gets what, when, how?* New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lewis, T., & Thomas, L. (2018). Women's political participation in Rwanda: Opportunities and challenges. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 56(4), 456-473.
- Lewis, T., & Thomas, L. (2018). Women's political participation in Rwanda: Opportunities and challenges. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 56(4), 456-473.
- Makama, G.A. (2013) *Patriarchy and gender inequality in Nigeria: The way forward*. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(9), 115-145.
- Marx, K. (1852). *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Retrieved from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/>.
- National Population Commission (2016). *Nasarawa state 2016 projected population* Available at: https://www.citypopulation.de/php/nigeria_admin.php?adm1id=NGA026. Accessed 23/10/2018
- Ndiyo, N. A. (2005). *Foundationos statistics and computer applications*. Calabar: Wusen Publishers.
- Nwoye, H. P. (2019). Patriarchy and women's political participation in Nigeria: A case study of Nasarawa State. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management, Architecture, Technology and Engineering*, 1(3), 21-32.
- Ojieh, P. N. (2020). Women political empowerment and development in Nigeria: An assessment of the national gender policy on women's participation in politics. *Journal of Political Science and International Relations Research*, 2(1), 1-8.
- Okolo, J. O., & Igbozuruike, O. C. (2013). The role of small-scale industries in the economic development of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(12), 20-28.

- Olurode, L. and Soyombo , O. (2001). *Sociology for beginners*, Lagos: Irede Printers Limited
- Otite, O and Ogionwo (2004). *Introduction to Sociological studies* , Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Nig. Plc.
- Steiner, K. & Brinkmann, S. (2014). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Age: Thousand Oaks Publishers.
- Tripp, A. M. (2016). *Women and power in post-conflict Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- UN Women. (2021). *Women in parliament: 2021*. Available online at: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2021/women-in-politics-2021-map-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5141>.
- Walby, S. (1990). Theorizing patriarchy. *Sociology*, 24(2), 213-234.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis*. New York: Harper and Row
- Young, C. (2019). Religion, women, and political participation: *A literature review of Muslim and Christian women in Nigeria*. *Religions*, 10(7), 1-19.