



Graduate School of Development Studies

**THE GENDER AGENDA:
Bargaining with Political Parties
in Osun State, Nigeria**

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List of Acronyms

AC	Action Congress
AWLP	African Women Leadership Program
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
ERC	Electoral Reform Committee
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
INEC	Independent National Electoral Committee
LGAs	Local Government Areas
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
OSSIEC	Osun state Independent Electoral Committee
PDP	Peoples Democratic Party
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WLP	Women's Learning Partnership for Rights Development and Peace

Abstract

The objectives of the research are twofold: first to understand processes of social, economic and political exclusions of women in Osun state from politics, and the relevance of these processes for engagements of women with different backgrounds in political parties and electoral processes; second to create space for debate, engagement and support of women in political parties who wish to run for local government posts, with local NGOs, women groups and political parties for 2011 election.

The focus of the research is threefold: first on gendered exclusions of women from electoral processes and political parties in Osun state due to male domination; second on the social and economic differences (dominations) among women who engage in these electoral processes and third, on relevance of these differences in creating strategies for supporting women's political participation in electoral party processes. In order to analyze these processes a combination of intersectional gender analysis with feminist conceptualization of empowerment and feminist contribution to Sen's bargaining model, adjusted to the context of political parties were used (rather than household bargaining).

Looking at governance in Osun state women are still far behind, and the state may not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (Goal #3 to promote gender equality and empower women), if proactive action is not taken. 'There are no short cuts to increased gender equality except real influence over party agendas and policy formulation' (Salih and Nordlund 2007: 129). Therefore Women have to bargain their entry into and claim of public space, by using whatever discursive and material opportunities available in the political parties, and by fighting patriarchal institutions and ideologies that restrict their participation.

However addressing under representation of women in party and electoral politics should include not only increasing the number of women in formal political power because this does not in itself translate to greater empowerment for women (Kabeer 1992, 1994). Rather attention should be paid on measures to improve the quality of participation and ways to achieve qualitatively women's empowerment in political parties and electoral systems. This will involve recognition of power relations among women as well as between women and men, by locating the structures and actors of exclusion, identifying areas of interaction and levels of intervention, and taking concrete steps for inclusion to be taken simultaneously at all levels. Thus the under representation of women at local political positions has to be analyzed in the context of intersections of political, social and economic empowerment of women.

Relevance to Development Studies

Politics determines the allocation of all resources in the society and that women's alienation from politics means that their special interest will continue to be neglected (Mba 1982: 304). The power to make political decisions go hand in hand with the power to decide on how public funds are used. Women therefore have the responsibility to challenge their political exclusion leading to their under representation in party and electoral politics. So as to have a say on the policies that affects them. These will in-turn ensure that democracy and governance is inclusive, sustainable and transparent.

Keywords

Gender, bargaining, empowerment, intersectionality, exclusion, electoral process, political parties, women.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The research focus is on the marginalisation and exclusion of women members of political parties in electoral politics in Osun state and how differentials in social and economic background of women impact on their chances to engage in electoral politics. I adopt the view that political exclusion is part of a larger field of social exclusion.

The research uses gender intersectional analysis with Sen (1990) and feminist extension of bargaining model and conceptualisation of empowerment to identify the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of women in the electoral process conducted by political parties. This research is seeking mechanisms and strategies that can be implemented to facilitate women's political participation and their access to positions of power in local politics and governance.

1.2 Background

Women constitute slightly more than half of the world population but they are under represented in legislature governing respective nations, infact women's representation in legislatures around the world is 18 % (Mahmood 2008). Despite the pronounced commitment of the international community to gender equality and to bridging the gender gap in the formal political arena, reinforced by the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform of Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹, there are only twelve countries where women hold 33% or more seats in the parliaments (Mahmood 2008). It should be noted that all these international normative frameworks contain articles about gender equality in political participation and decision making instances. However none of them explicitly address the economic and financial needs of women in order to permit them to enter the political and electoral process on even footing with men.

Nigeria is not an exception to this political under representation of women. Nigeria's total population is 140 million (FRN 2006), composed of over 250 diverse ethnic groups² and roughly half of the population are women. Although women constituted about 50% of the population they have always had less than 10% representation in the national government³.

Colonial period was especially important for women's exclusion from politics. However historical and ethnographic records show that women were able to carry out some forms of resistance (Amadiume 1987). For example in 1946 the Abeokuta women's movement in Yoruba land protested against the unfair taxation imposed by the colonial administration on women and against taking away women's control and organisation of markets place and commercial activities (Toyo 1999). On the political front, the Nigerian Women's party⁴ was formed in 1944 arising from the frustration of the non-integration of women into the only political party at the time (Mba 1982).

Independence from British rule was achieved in October 1960 but continued the legacy of women's political marginalisation and their exclusion from leadership position. From 1966 –

1 Millennium Development Goals, (where Goal #3 is to promote gender equality and empower women).

2 The largest ethnic groups are the Fulani/Hausa in the northern part, the Igbo in the east and the Yoruba are in the south west of Nigeria.

3 Nigerian women political participation at glance- Lower house- 6.4% ; Upper house – 3.7% (WLP ---)

4 The Nigerian Women's party had exclusively female membership. It was not an active political party seeking to obtain representation in government. However it contested the Lagos Town Council elections in 1950 (Mba 1982).

1999, Nigeria was under military regime with only a four year civilian rule between 1979 and 1983. The military regimes were very repressive leaving no opening for women's political development (Akiyode-Afolabi and Arogundade 2003). Civil rule re-emerged after the death of General Sani Abacha in 1998; yet the process of democracy building continue to marginalize women.⁵

1.3 Context of Study

1.3.1 Decentralization, Democratic reform, Gender

It was imperative for nationalist inheritors of post colonial period to carry out reforms of the structure and function of the state. Hence the decentralisation of power became the pronounced goals of military governments.

According to Olowu (2005) decentralisation is the transfer of power, responsibility and resources from central to regional and local governments. It is seen as a way to improve governance by bringing decision- making closer to the people affected by the decision and thus enhancing empowerment, access and accountability.

Decentralisation has meant the creation of more federal states proclaimed by decree. Creation of states started in 1967, when 12 states were created; in 1976 seven more states were created; two states were created in 1987 and in 1991 nine. In 1996 another six states were formed. Today there are 36 states in the Nigerian federation (Okome 2000). Apart from the creation of 36 federal states there was initiation of local government systems through the 1976 local government reforms. Nigerian reforms transferred major responsibilities, including financial and human resources to the local communities. Nigeria has 774 local government councils. The current system of government is modelled after the American presidential system with three tiers of government federal, state and local government (Olowu 2005).

Each community chooses its own local political leadership, constituted as local councils headed by a chairperson and councillors elected by the whole electorate. The problem is that the chair of councils has been dominant in local government system and not subject to control by the councillors (Olowu 2005). This type of power is also replicated in electoral politics where the chairs of political parties have high level of decision making. Notably, the vast majority of the chairs of councils and political parties are men. Decentralisation through creation of states and local councils was supposed to aid inclusion of broad population and the marginalised groups including women into political processes. It was supposed to assist women to gain better access to political system and serve as a stepping stone of political participation. But this clearly did not happen. Like the colonial period, the political process and especially electoral and party politics continue to exclude the overwhelming majority of the poor, the large majority of whom are the women. At present women are highly under-represented at all levels of governance, including the local level.

1.3.2 Osun State Women and Political Parties

Osun state was created in 1991. It is located in the south west of Nigeria and is inhabited by the Yoruba as the main ethnic group. Women constitute about 50% of the population⁶. The state has a governor, one deputy governor, and 30 lawmakers. It consists of three senatorial districts areas and 30 local government areas. Each local government area has a chairperson and councillors⁷.

⁵ This is evident from the election results as in Tables 1a& 1b of appendix I

⁶ Osun state population- 3,423,535; Male – 1,740,619 ; Female- 1,682,916 (FRN 2006)

⁷ The number of councillors vary depending on the number of wards per local government

Since the re-emergence of civil rule in 1999 Election results in 1999, 2003, and 2007 show a consistent pattern of low representation of women from the competing political parties in elected bodies, both at the state and local government levels. Presently the Osun state's House of Assembly has 30 lawmakers, of which only one is a woman (INEC 2007). All the 30 chair persons of the local government areas are men⁸.

The Constitution does not specifically address the gender dimensions of decentralisation and makes no provisions for participation of women in party politics. There is lack of provision for independent candidates (Boateng 1996). Political parties have become virtually the only basis for contesting political power in democratic countries. Political parties within a representative democracy are major agents of representation and channelling in democratic politics (Mainwaring 1999). Selection is a key strategy used by political parties with the aim to contest and win elections. This has served as the grounds for gender and other forms of discrimination. The gendered politics is reflected in the discriminatory distribution of roles and responsibilities between men and women, while other aspects of discrimination (especially along class lines) are evident in the distribution of responsibilities among women within political parties.

1.4 Indication of the Research Problem

The practices of exclusion of women and domination by men in electoral politics and political parties are part and parcel of the Nigerian political landscape including Osun state which is the site of this research. Local government reforms initiated in 1976 were supposed to change this poor record and open up political space for women. However, this did not happen. It is worth noting that gender and intersectional analysis is absent in the academic debates on Nigerian party politics, and Nigerian literature rarely addresses gender issues in a comprehensive manner.

The focus of the research is threefold: first on gendered exclusions of women from electoral processes and political parties in Osun state due to male domination; second on the social and economic differences (dominations) among women who engage in these electoral processes and third, on relevance of these differences in creating strategies for supporting women's political participation in electoral party processes.

1.5 Relevance and Justification

In recognition of the unfair electoral process in Nigeria, the President, Umar Musa Yar Adua, set up an Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) on 23rd August 2007 to critically examine all issues militating against fair electoral process (Aluko 2007). However despite the goodwill of the President, it is sad to note that only three out of 22 member committee are women. Gender disparity every where!

After analyzing the Terms of Reference of ERC, I identified another gap: it had no specific reference to women. It just has a broad approach to accommodate any reform, though the committee acknowledged the existing gap in the constitution and electoral laws in enhancing the participation of women in politics. What a paradoxical situation: women are the ones that have experienced more of the unfair electoral process yet no specific focus on them. This research intends to fill this gap by addressing gender issues in electoral politics in a comprehensive manner.

Nigeria has a representative democracy⁹, therefore political parties are important as they function as the gate keepers for candidates' selection and political power (Mainwaring 1999). The choice of electoral system can greatly contribute to the achievement of gender equality in politics.

⁸ There was no disaggregated data for the councillors. Finding out these data is part of my research. This can be seen in my findings in Chapter Three.

⁹ Representative democracy can be defined as 'the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (Schumpeter 1943: 269).

This refers to electoral systems at various levels, as well as the procedures and systems within parties, such as primary elections. The latter are often ignored, but they certainly have a major impact on the representation of women in political leadership. It invariably means that for women to participate in decision making positions in Osun state a lot needs to be done at the level of the political parties. Agreeably Salih and Nordlund (2007) argue that women's presence in political party leadership positions and their participation in party politics is important for local politics so as to foster political inclusion. 'There are no short cuts to increased gender equality except real influence over party agendas and policy formulation' (Salih and Nordlund 2007: 129). Hence the need for this research that focuses on the political processes. It hopes to contribute to the gender analysis of political process and especially party politics by exploring the gendered dynamics of participation of women, members of political parties in electoral processes of Osun state, Nigeria.

It appears that the governing institutions in Nigeria are ready for change and are in search of strategies to increase women's political participation and hence address their under representation in electoral politics. I buttress this fact with the statement by the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)¹⁰. The chairman of INEC agreed that the electoral process was largely unfair to women in Nigeria and he said that he is ready to support any initiative that could address the situation (AWLP 2008)¹¹. This research is therefore very relevant and timely. It hopes to contribute to the electoral reforms going on in the country by seeking mechanisms and strategies that can be implemented to facilitate political participation of women from different walks of life and their access to positions of power in local politics and governance.

1.6 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are twofold: first to understand processes of social, economic and political exclusions of women in Osun state from politics, and the relevance of these processes for engagements of women with different backgrounds in political parties and electoral processes; second to create space for debate, engagement and support of women in political parties who wish to run for local government posts, with local NGOs, women groups and political parties for 2011 election.

1.7 Research Questions

The central question of this research is: What are women's experiences of electoral party politics in Osun state and how women's different social, economic and political locations and exclusions become relevant in the process of women's participation in party politics?

My sub-questions are:

1. Who are the women who join political parties and go for elections? What is their background regarding class, ethnicity, religion and political affiliations? To what extent does women's background impact on their success in party politics?
2. What are the formal positions and powers of women in party politics and how do women experience them? To what extent do women feel empowered or disempowered within the party?
3. What are the (redress) mechanisms of women's inclusions and exclusions in the internal party politics and electoral processes?

¹⁰ INEC is the main agent of democracy in Nigeria. INEC is a permanent body created by the constitution to organise federal and state elections in Nigeria.

¹¹ AWLP- African Women Leaders Project

4. Do women use and how the existing (political party, legal, social etc) mechanisms to address and redress their place in the party politics (from creating and organizing electorate to using redress mechanisms to using strategic essentialism).
5. What kind of relationships are there between women politicians and women's and feminist social networks, NGOs or other civic organizations? To what extent women in party politics bring women's issues and feminist agendas?
6. What are the NGOs strategies regarding women in political parties and to what extent they support or subvert women in electoral processes and in party politics? Do NGOs have different strategies for supporting women who come from different social, economic and political background?

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Method of Data Collection and Justification

Qualitative method was used because the narratives of experiences and the voices of women is needed in order to gain an overview of the structures that exist to promote or hinder women's position in the party and electoral politics and to understand the women's perception of these. Qualitative method was used because research is a two way process which explores women's experiences therefore reflexivity is very important and the relationship between researcher and researched is also very critical (Harding and Nordberg 2005). This method, furthermore allows for the interaction in the sharing of views, experiences and stories between participants in the research. Qualitative method was used in collecting and analyzing both primary and secondary data

1.8.2 Primary Data

Interview was the main method of collecting primary data. Osun state comprise 30 Local Government Areas (LGAs) divided into three senatorial districts each made up of ten LGAs. Consequently interviews were done per senatorial district. A triangulation of technique of data collection through interviews, focused group discussion and analysis of documents and statistical data was used to tests the collected evidence and build trustworthiness of the research (Laws et al. 2003).

I conducted interviews with three female politicians who were successful in the 2007 elections; three female political leaders from the three senatorial districts; six female politicians who ran for 2007 election but were not elected. Difference in political success was related to heterogeneity of women's social, economic and political backgrounds, hence the need to interview different categories in order to gain insights into differences in experiences of marginalisation.

I also conducted semi-structured interview with chairmen of two main political parties in Osun state in order to find their views on women's participation in party politics and eventual plans and possibilities for party reforms in favour of women.

Focused group discussion with two faith based women groups (one Christian, one Muslim) and one professional association of women traders allowed me to question relationships between women in party politics and local women in terms of representation of women's interests. Christianity and Islam is not only representative of the main two religions in Osun state, but also have impact on women's participation in electoral politics. The association of women traders was targeted because they form large number of voters and party members.

Additionally, I interviewed two highly educated and successful women from two professional bodies. These interviews were not part of the original design because ordinarily one would have expected more educated and professional women in the political parties. However this was true for the limited number of women who succeeded in politics but was not true for women's general membership in parties or women who attempted to get elected. Majority of

these women seem to come from less educated, economically moderate or poor background, and socially marginalised groups (such as rural women). I decided to interview successful professional women after discovering that they are highly underrepresented among the party hopefuls, and find out why they shy away from party politics.

Interview with Executive Directors of four NGOs working in the field of women's empowerment (including political empowerment) helped me to understand not only their own strategies for supporting women's political participation, but also to gain insights into local situation and differentiations among women, and the obstacles they face in entering political life. They also helped me reflect on support needed for different groups of women to enhance their participation in political parties and electoral politics.

1.8.3 Secondary Data

Several documents from political parties, such as the party Manifestos and program implementation document were found relevant. Also other documents relevant are: Memorandum on Review of the Electoral System by Osun state, official election results from Osun state Independent Electoral Commission (OSSIEC)¹² and official election results from Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).¹³ I have also generated some quantitative material (such as disaggregated data on local councillors) which did not exist previously. Finally I used information from websites, journals and books as indicated in the references.

1.8.4 Limitations

My research was to start on the 14th of July 2008 but did not begin until 18th of July 2008. This was because my research coincided with the challenge of the election result of the incumbent Osun state government by a political opponent. The final ruling at petition Tribunal Court was on July 15th. There was a lot of suspense and uncertainty among the politicians and the whole state. Eventually when the judgement was delivered in favour of the incumbent, the politicians were available for interview.

Furthermore, access to required information from the political parties and Electoral Commission was not easy because politics is seen as sensitive issue and many data are handled as official secret. In both cases I used official and personal links to obtain the access.

1.8.5 Ethical Issues

It was important for me to do no harm to any one taking part in this research. It is important to ensure confidentiality and protect the privacy of people involved (Laws et al. 2003). I did my utmost best to achieve this goal, to explain the purpose of the research and to gain consent from those I interviewed.

1.9 The Structure of the Paper

The paper contains five chapters. The next chapter is a discussion of the concepts and theories which provide the frame work for understanding under-representation of women in electoral politics in the context of political, social and economic exclusion of women. Chapter three highlights women in political parties, experiences, exclusions and intersections. The following chapter discuss women's bargaining with party politics. Chapter five presents conclusions, while recommendations are placed in the Appendix.

12 As a result of decentralisation OSSIEC is the main agent of democracy in Osun State. OSIEC is created by the constitution to organise Local elections in Osun state.

13 INEC is the main agent of democracy in Nigeria. INEC is a permanent body created by the constitution to organise federal and state elections in Nigeria

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this research is on gendered processes of marginalisation and exclusion of women members of political parties in electoral politics in Osun state and how social and economic background and differences among women impact on women's chances to engage in electoral politics. In order to analyze these processes I will combine an intersectional gender analysis with feminist conceptualization of empowerment and feminist contribution to Sen's bargaining model, adjusted to the context of political parties (rather than household bargaining).

2.2 Gender, Gender Analysis and Intersectionality

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of and relations between men and women and to conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life (Miller and Razavi 1998). According to Okin (1989: 6) gender is 'the deeply entrenched institutionalization of sexual difference'. Women all over the globe are disadvantaged in access to resources and power when compared with men. The unfair discrimination usually follows the gender stereotyping held by a society in which women are inferior to or less valuable than men (Brittan and Maynard 1984).

According to Scott (1986), gender is both a social relation of power, and an analytical category. As a relation of power, and an organising principle of social life, Scott sees gender operating on several inter-related levels. Firstly, at the level of subjective identities, gender indicates what it means to be a woman or a man in a specific society, of specific social group, in specific periods of time, and how are specific subjectivities produced through social relations. Gender thus played a great role for the understanding of what it means to a woman politician in Osun state. To be male in Osun state means to be privileged and to be female is to be subordinate to men. 'It is impossible for women to be taken seriously as political agents' (Mukhopadhyay and Meer 2004: 73).

At the level of institutions and organisations gender refers to structural inequalities and exclusions, and to unequal institutional arrangements (Scott 1986). These are not based only along gender lines – thus creating hierarchies between men and women - but are also based on class (poverty, education), rural/urban distinctions, ethnicity, religion, age, etc. These diverse structures of exclusion intersect with each other to disadvantage different groups of women and men differently. In the context of this research, these diverse structural exclusions mean that there is a clear discrimination of women, as compared to men, in the party elections. Patriarchy as a system of male domination shapes women's relationship to politics (Eisenstein 1984). The public/private divide as part of gender ideology sees women's gender roles and responsibilities as lying in the family as mothers and wives, caring and childrearing and as apolitical while men's gender roles are to do with decision-making, economics and the public sphere. Gender ideology as another level on which gender operates helps in understanding the marginalization of women in electoral process and party politics. Scott points to the symbolic meanings of gender, and the role of gendered symbols, values and ideologies in support of institutions and organisations in justifying structures of exclusion and injustice. This has resulted in male domination of politics and political parties due to separation between public and private and the assumption of men having privileged participation in the public sphere (Steady 2002).

At the same time, there is discrimination among women, as those who come from advantaged social and economic back ground have more chances to succeed in politics. Women

who face strong structural and institutional discrimination along the lines of class, or religion, for example, are discriminated against not only by men, but also by women who belong to powerful economic and social groups.

Thus, gender analysis in this research means taking into account all these different levels of social and symbolic relations of power. It means a systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify understand and redress inequities based on gender (Miller and Razavi 1998). Gender analysis highlights gender differences in access to and control over income and resources as well as differences in the incentives and constraints under which men and women work (Miller and Razavi 1998). Gender analysis will also highlight how are women disadvantaged in access to resources and power when compared with men and thus suffer exclusion in the electoral process and political parties. For example, Moser (1989, 1993) points to relevance of analyzing gender roles and emphasizes women's time constraints because of unequal gender division of labor, and women's productive, reproductive and community managing roles. This will be useful for examination of the constraints women in political parties (and those aspiring to engage in politics) face in combining these roles. It also means recognising that men and women often have different needs and priorities, face different constraints, have different aspirations and contribute to society in different ways. Thus, strategies in support of women's equitable participation in party politics must address these differences.

Gender analysis is needed in paying attention to gendered relations of power between men and women; it is also an assumption of this research that women are not a homogenous group. Thus, an analysis of under representation of women in electoral and party politics has to start from a standpoint that gender is mediated through other social relations of power - such as class and religion (as especially significant for this research), and that these relationships structure women's access to social, economic and political resources and opportunities. Thus my analysis is not just gender analysis, but an intersectional gender analysis.

Intersectionality refers to the interaction between gender, class, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age and other axes of power in individual's lives, in social practices, institutional arrangements, cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davis 2008). Intersectionality analyses any configuration of social, cultural, political and economic practice or individual, group experience, or structural arrangement and institutional, policy and process arrangements that tend to exclude specific groups of women, and manifests as inequalities among women (Darling 2002).

Understanding of intersectionality is a vital element to gaining political and social equality and improving the democratic system. Intersectionality alerts us that women experience oppression in varying configurations and in varying degrees of intensity (Ritzer 2007). According to Matsuda cited by Davis (2008), intersectionality helps us to visualize the different types of discrimination. Collins (2000) refers to the various intersections of social inequality in which cultural patterns of oppression are interrelated, bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society such as race, gender, class and ethnicity. According to Knudsen (2005), these different forms of oppressions are shaped by one another, and create multiple forms of discrimination. Thus, in order to fully understand the under representation of women in electoral and party politics, one must investigate and examine not only the ways women are excluded by men, but also the ways in which social and economic differences among women create processes of exclusion of some, and inclusion of other women. This involves understanding of the social, economic and political circumstances of women candidates, such as their economic wealth and access to financial resources; their ethnicity and religion (such as belonging to a dominant ethnic or religious group), their marriage status. These questions will be addressed together with questions of broader social, economic and political gender dynamics in the society: how is political participation of different groups of women talked about by the women themselves, by women in NGOs, by male politicians; what are the political structures,

institutions and mechanisms that allow inclusion of different groups of women; what are symbolic, ideological and cultural constraints that different groups of women face? Thus intersectional analysis will serve to point out both the compounding of the factors of exclusion and conflictual relationships between political, economic and social empowerment.

2.3 Empowerment

Empowerment as a concept is highly political and its meaning contested. Empowerment is used in many different contexts but for this paper it will be used to point to, and analyze the relationships between economic, political and social embeddedness of women, and women's possibilities to generate change for themselves individually, for other women, as well as for the society as a whole. This approach to empowerment is a combination of Scott's (1986) definition of gender and Oxaal and Baden (1997) definition of women's empowerment. Oxaal and Baden (1997) see four levels of power:

- 1) 'Power over': here power involves a mutually exclusive relationship of domination or subordination; it is power that is exerted over someone. It triggers either passive or active resistance; in the context of my research, women's exclusion from party politics by men means that men exercise power over women in party politics.
- 2) 'Power to': a power which includes the ability to make decisions, have authority, and find solutions to problems, and which can be creative and enabling. Women's equal participation in party politics would mean that women gain political authority to make decision and influence solutions, in political processes.
- 3) 'Power with': social or political power which highlights the notion of common purpose or understanding, as well as the ability to get together to negotiate and defend a common goal (individual and collective rights, political ideas such as lobbying, etc.). For this research, this would mean that women politicians of different social, economic and political background would gain ability to act together within political processes for the benefit of all women; it would also mean that women politicians and women from NGOs would work together.
- 4) 'Power within': this notion of power refers to self-awareness, self-esteem, identity and assertiveness. It refers to how individuals, through self-analysis and internal power, can influence their lives and make changes. In this research this would mean that women politicians within the parties and electoral processes gain assertiveness as individuals, especially in comparison to men, and engage in party politics with confidence.

Empowerment is therefore a process of undoing of internalized oppression about changing social and cultural forms of patriarchy that remain the sites of women's domination and oppression (Batliwala 1994) as well as a process of creating solidarity among women, with the ultimate goal for women to be the active agents of change in transforming gender relations and other forms of exclusion and inequalities. Kabeer (1992, 1994) argues that looking at the quantitative aspect of empowerment as measured by the number of women holding political mandates is not enough. The notion of empowerment goes further into questioning the roles of different players, men and women, within electoral and parties politics by looking at the actual domains of authority and influence, and examining symbolic referents and deep social structures. Therefore empowerment means confronting systemic discrimination/domination, as well as working on Conscientization and participation (Parpart 2000). This means that empowerment of women has to happen simultaneously on all the level of gender relations as indicated by Scott (1986): on the level of subjective identities of all women, including women engaged in politics (to gain 'power within' and 'power with'), as well as on structural and symbolic levels (to gain 'power to').

Thus, empowerment is a bottom up process, rather than something that can be formulated as a top down strategy (Rowlands 1995). Empowerment involves enabling women themselves to critically assess their situation and shape a transformation in the society. At the same time, this process needs support. Donor support for NGOs to carry out trainings and workshops close to election date is not a proper support, and can not empower women - as evident in the persistent low representation of women despite the NGOs trainings. Political empowerment of women should be an ongoing process (Wieringa 1994). Whilst empowerment can not be done to women but rather women must empower themselves, appropriate external support can be important to foster and support the process of women's individual and collective empowerment, through solidarity. A facilitation rather than directive role is needed from the donors to support women's collective empowerment by funding women NGOs locally to address the causes of women's differential marginalization in party politics, promoting dialogue between women from different backgrounds, as well as between women and other social and political organisations, and those in positions of power, particularly the political parties (Oxaal and Baden 1997).

2.4 Bargaining model

According to Kabeer (1994) gender analysis takes a dynamic view of gender relations since men and women are in constant process of bargaining and negotiation. The bargaining model is useful for the analyses of gender relations and how gender asymmetries are constructed and contested in the context of political parties and electoral politics. I will start from Sen's (1990) theory of cooperative conflict, and the feminist critique of this theory, and will adjust it to analysis of the patterns of behaviour of political parties in electoral politics.

2.4.1 Sen Theory of Bargaining Model

Sen argues that the intra house hold dynamic is represented as cooperative conflict in which decision making is a bargaining process between members with unequal power. This model recognises more than one decision makers and possibility of conflicts because of differences of objectives and strategies. When there is conflict of interests' decision making depends on who has greater bargaining power. Factors that determine bargaining power are: strength of breakdown/fall back position, perceived interest response, perceived contribution and exit option (Sen 1990: 129-136).

I consider the political parties as sites of cooperative conflict. Members of the political parties are faced with the problems of cooperation where men and women have to ensure party's victory at the polls. Simultaneously there are many levels of conflict. For example, when decisions on nomination of party's candidate are made by the party financiers, who are predominantly rich and powerful men, women are marginalised. I treat cooperative conflict in electoral politics as a black box in which male and female politicians and aspirants to party positions are bargaining for a new agenda. However, women politicians tend to lose due to strength of breakdown/fall back position, perceived interest response, perceived contribution and exit option.

2.4.2 Feminist Bargaining model

Sen argued

Outside earnings can give the woman in question (1) a better breakdown positions (2) possibly a clearer perception of her individuality and well being and (3) a higher perceived contribution to the family's economic position. (Sen 1990: 144).

Applying 'perceived contribution' to political parties' indicates that financial contribution is seen as most important and is most valued. Political parties are partially funded by the state, and the remaining funding come through party financiers. Men often get privileged access to

income earning opportunities. Thus, wealthy former military officers and their civilian business cronies invest huge amounts of money into party politics (Obiorah 2003) Women's contribution - especially their unpaid labour of mobilizing activities (of clapping and dancing during rallies and campaigns) - are undervalued. Thus, idea that the person providing the main financial contribution should make decisions is reinforced in favour of the men who are the party financiers. At the same time, feminists have argued that income may be a necessary condition but not sufficient because there is more complex range of factors that determine bargaining power which Sen does not address fully. These factors include not only economic assets (quantifiable) but also non-economic qualitative factors (communal/external support systems, social, cultural, symbolic elements in fall back and exit option) that determine bargaining position (Agarwal 1997, Folbre 1988, Kabeer 1997, Mizan 1994). Thus, women's 'perceived contribution' to any sphere of social relations, including politics is influenced by patriarchal de-valuation of women's labor. There are some issues that are unquestionable, for instance gender division of labor in the household (Agarwal 1997: 15-19). And, the issue is not always an access to resources but the power embodied in deciding how they are to be used (Kabeer 1999).

For women in political parties marriage is a contradictory institution. Most husbands do not support their wives political engagement. The issue here is about perceived interests; what is a woman's interest if her participation in politics leads to divorce in a society that de-values women who are divorced or single? The gender norms impinge on exit option because of the issue of social acceptability of a divorced woman (Agarwal 1997). Women who are divorced or not married are not considered eligible to be nominated for election; they have limited option except to endure exploitative and abusive marriage. Yet when they are married their husbands' limits their political participation. Thus, in order for women to be actively engaged in politics, they will need empowerment on levels that Scott wrote about.

Chapter 3: Women in political parties: experiences, exclusions and intersections

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a presentation of the results of the interviews and the analysis and interpretation of both primary and secondary data. My focus is on women's experiences of electoral party politics and on how their different social, economic and political locations become relevant in the process of women's participation in party politics.

3.2 Women Experiences in Political parties

Election results in 1999¹⁴, 2003, and 2007 in Osun state show a consistent pattern of low representation of the women from the competing political parties in elected bodies, both at the state and local government levels. As shown in Table 2 (in Appendix I). It could be argued that as a result of inherited colonial and cultural practices, women have been excluded from leadership roles and have not been significant players in formal politics¹⁵ (Toyo 1999). This is reflected in candidates' selection by political parties and election results. It should also be noted that there are currently no separate parties for women (the Women's Party of 1944 does not exist today).

The Osun state Independent Electoral Commission (OSSIEC) did not have gender disaggregated data on the Local government elections. This research was a driving force behind the generation of the first sex-disaggregated data on councillors' elections in 2007, following my guiding questions: How many candidates contested; how many female candidates contested; how many candidates won; what is the number of women that won; how many women lost in the election. The following data were generated: A total of 831 candidates contested elections and only 34 of them were women; 773 got councillors seats, 21 of them were women see Table 2 (in Appendix I).

This kind of marginalisation and systematic discrimination against women also occurred in 2003. According to Ibrahim's observation from the narratives of women who had participated in the political party primaries preceding the 2003 elections

It has become clear that there was a near systematic process of the exclusion of women from and indeed the subordination of women in party political process (Ibrahim 2004: 1).

It is then interesting to ask: who are the few women who succeed at election despite gender discrimination and what factors have contributed to their success? All the groups I interviewed had similar opinion on these questions: that the high social, economic and political locations of women do affect their chances in elections. On the one hand, women *members* of political parties come from diverse background: Christians and Muslims; rich and poor, rural and urban women. On the other hand, women who *succeed* in party elections are from socially and economically privileged background. More than half of them are rich or middle class, very well educated, and with higher social, economic background than those who were marginalised in the process. Even in such a small sample there is a significant pointer (as shown in tables 3&4, in

¹⁴The document from Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for federal and state levels shows that in 1999 of the 11,881 electable positions available, only 631 women were targeted by women. Only 181 of them won a mere 1.62 per cent of the total positions (IDEA 2006: 8).

¹⁵ The evidence as indicated in Tables 1a & 1b in Appendix I is meant to buttress the fact that the practices of exclusion of women and domination by men in electoral and party politics are not peculiar to Osun state alone but rather it is a feature of Nigerian political landscape as shown in the election results at the states and federal levels.

Appendix I) that social and economic backgrounds make a difference in women's access to or success in electoral party politics.

Though the focus of this research is on the two main active political parties AC and PDP, marginalisation of women in party primaries is common to all political parties of Osun state. My inquiry showed that all of the 15 political parties (See table 5 in appendix I) that took part in the 2007 Governorship election had only male candidates. This was also the case for election of local government chairpersons: all the candidates were men.

Findings show that within the party hierarchy women find it difficult to reach the top party positions, where all policy decisions are taken. Most of the women are concentrated at the lower levels of the political party structure and are not in a position to influence any party decision. Decisions regarding the fielding of candidates in the elections rest entirely upon the male political leaders. One of the female political leaders interviewed said:

God fatherism is a serious problem. They have the final says. They are so powerful and determine what happens in the party. The god fathers have preference for male candidates. There is nothing much that we women leaders can do since we do not have final says (A1).

Even the few female leaders in the political parties can not significantly influence the policy matters of the party. The positions women occupy in political parties are often restricted to women's affairs, which are not seen as relevant. Women political leaders claim that most of the ground works during the electioneering are done by the women. However, they are not given the due recognition and appreciation for their efforts by their male colleagues, who are always in the forefront as evident with marginalisation of women in electoral and party politics.

Analysing the documents from political parties I found that there were no policies mandating political parties to have gender balance in their composition at any level. Party Manifestos did not show clearly what the parties would do for women and had no reference to gender balance. There is no legal enforcement of gender quota or seat reservation for women.

It is logical to conclude that political exclusion of women is part of a larger field of social exclusions. Social exclusion involves the processes of persistent disadvantages by which the social and occupational rights of persons are being undermined. It encompasses not only lack of access to goods and services which underlie poverty and satisfaction of basic needs but also among others, lack of security, lack of justice, lack of participation and representation (Bedi and Kurian 2004). Discussing women's political participation and empowerment will therefore need serious consideration of economic and social empowerment of women and political circumstance of their exclusion and inclusion, from a gender perspective.

In the sections that follow, I will use interview materials to analyze how political, economic and social exclusion and empowerment are related, and what impact their relationships have on women's participation in electoral processes of the parties in Osun state. The focus of my analysis will be in line with the research questions. I will start by looking at the electoral process, and then at the mechanisms of marginalization and exclusion of women from that process.

3.3 Electoral Processes

Electoral processes and political parties are structural components in the democratic development of political processes. They are decisive to the way political appointments are made, electoral seats are voted and won, and political bodies' compositions are shaped (Mainwaring 1999). The choice of electoral system can greatly contribute to the achievement of gender equality in politics. The process of selecting candidates within political parties is important for inclusivity (Molokomme 1999). However the regulatory framework in Nigeria is problematic.

‘Section 229 of the Constitution restricts the definition of a political party to organizations registered by INEC¹⁶. This is a very narrow definition that reduces the essence of political parties to canvassing for votes’ (IDEA 2006: 6).

This role of political parties canvassing for votes allows the opportunity to hijack not just the party structure but to also corrupt the whole electioneering process with money since there is no limitations on the amount which an individual or a corporation can contribute to a political party. This also makes it difficult to create a level playing ground for candidates.

The effect of section 229 of the Constitution on women is that involvement with elections within party politics requires huge amount of money and women typically lack access to and ownership of economic resources. Therefore women are excluded from the process of electioneering.

Though for now political parties waive registration fees for women as a form of encouragement, this is however used by male opponents to campaign against women that they are liabilities. The waiver has no much impact because the electoral process itself is gendered and does not favour women. In most cases internal political party electoral systems are at best gender blind, and at worst not sufficiently transparent and democratic, and contribute to the marginalisation of women candidates within parties (Somolekae 1998).

The nature of funding of political parties has made money to play a vital role in today’s politics. The term ‘political finance’ can be defined as the use of money or the use of other material resources for political activities. It embodies the sources or means through which political activities are sponsored in a given country. The concept of political finance has two broad connotations: money used for electioneering (campaign funds) and money used for political party expenses (party funds) (Pinto-Duschinsky 2001). Election campaigns, political party organizations, and advertising all cost money; therefore the financing of political life is a necessity—and a problem.

The financing of election campaigns and the influence of money in electoral processes affect women’s candidature as found from the interview. Certain amount of funding is needed by the candidate in order to secure party’s nomination. In addition support of the gate keepers and god fathers of the political party is also required. One of the interviewee said: ‘It is unfortunate that to get this support, one requires huge amount of money, which most women lack’. For Nomination Contests a candidate requires to launch a campaign, to have a campaign team, and this requires much money, this creates a major obstacle for women in particular (Ballington and Matland 2004).

However, my findings showed that the spouses, daughters and sisters of very rich men and well known politicians, because of these relationships they have access to capital and connections which they can mobilise for campaigns (IDEA 2003). Women from socially and economically privileged groups are better placed in the electoral process, thus have more chances to succeed in politics than women from poor background. This is a situation of some women excluding other women, not only men exclude women!

Thus, there is a correlation between the manner by which the election process is organized, through which campaign and party funds are raised and administered, and the outcome of the election.

16 Section 229 of the Constitution restricts the definition of a political party to organizations registered by INEC and defines a political party as any association whose activities include canvassing for votes in support of a candidate for election to the office of President, Vice-President, Governor, Deputy Governor or membership of a legislative house or of a local government council.

3.4 Exclusion and Marginalisation of Women in Party Politics

According to Scott (1986) institutions are gendered, they sustain gender ideologies and justify structures of exclusions and injustice. Political parties in Osun state exist within patriarchal social structures, where men are dominant and women are subordinates. Hence political parties reflect dominant practice of the society and reproduce gender relations of male domination and female subordination. "The party system is clearly a reflection of the society from which it has come; in it the politicians reproduce the styles and conduct of society" (IDEA 2003: 108).

The documents of INEC, OSSIEC and the narratives of women who had participated in the political party primaries of the 2007 elections showed the unjust elimination of women from the primaries to ensure the domination of the competitive posts by men. Parties do not practice nor promote gender equality, and this affects women in obtaining elective positions especially. Political parties have now become important site for reproduction of gendered identities and inequalities. Women voices are not considered as their perspective is often ignored (Derbyshire 2000b).

Findings showed that party leaderships are male-dominated, and that women are excluded from the circles of power. The exclusion has many different forms. For example, this research found that there are patriarchal attitudes among men within political parties reflecting the societal perception that men should be heads of the political leadership. But sometimes, social attitudes are taken as an excuse, as evident in the statements of party leaders interviewed:

We do not place women on electoral lists because we do not want to jeopardise our winner ability. This is because of the common perception of sexism by voters during elections which have to do with the social cultural context and religion that do not value women nor believe that woman can head them. (P2)

Loyalty of women is not certain. By nature women are not secretive "*obirin oni gongo*"¹⁷In order to be faithful to her husband, she will offer to tell her husband everything (secrets) discussed in the party (P1).

Thus, as women are not seen as capable of keeping official secrets, they are given mere honorary positions while men are pinned down for elective posts.

But there are other issues too. As noted in the reflections on electoral process, finances play huge role. Understanding women's participation and under-representation in politics thus requires an appreciation of how gender intersects with economic, social and political systems of the society. For example, a few women from socially and economically privileged groups with the backing of major political leaders ('god fathers') managed to get nominated as party's candidates in 2007. But women from poorer and marginalized social and economic strata were marginalised in the electoral process. Collins (2000) refers to this as intersections of social inequality in which cultural patterns of oppression are interrelated, bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Knudsen(2005) argues that these forms of oppression interrelate creating a system of oppression that reflects the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination. Socially marginalized women are faced with multiple forms of discrimination, and are excluded by both men and other women from higher social/economic background in the electoral process.

My findings also showed that even women from powerful background who are educated and succeed in elections still face exclusion from decision making process. Male dominated politics prescribed women roles as followers of male political leaders. Agreeably with Matland and Montgomery (2003), political parties have weak internal organisation, and decisions are made

17 "*obirin oni gongo*" – A woman has no Adam's apple that men have so she can not keep secrets

by a limited number of leaders, typically men, the god fathers, in which promoting the greater representation of women is rarely seen as a party goal.

Political parties within a representative democracy are supposed to function as a link between state institutions and local grassroots organisations. Political parties have an essential role to play in advancement of women and promotion of equality as they function as the gate keepers for candidates' selection and political power. Reflecting on these processes, women interviewed identified a number of mechanisms through which women's exclusion is fostered. I have divided them into internal and external, with understanding that these are inter-related. Internal (to the parties) factors are financing and party clientalism and demands of time investments ('time poverty'). External (i.e. belonging to the larger society and not only the parties) are cultural barriers linked to social perceptions of women's domains, women's education, and (threat of) violence against women.

3.4.1 Internal pressures

Financing and Party Clientalism

There is lack of internal democracy in political parties and 'this anti democratic character of post independence politics in many African countries can be traced at least in part to the colonial legacy of authoritarianism' (Potter 2000: 287). Politics in Nigeria and that of Osun state as well is not an exception. The parties that emerged since 1998 is characterized by undemocratic practices and a decided lack of transparency (IDEA 2006).

As found in the research from the narratives of marginalised women politicians:

There is no neutral playing field for free and fair competitive election, unless you are well connected to party financiers and gate keepers in the society before you can clinch the party ticket (C1,C3,C4).

Most parties are instruments in the hands of 'political entrepreneurs' ('god fathers') comprising largely of wealthy former military officers and their civilian business cronies who invest huge amounts of money into party politics and expect concurrent rewards on such investment (Obiorah 2003). The political parties have a top down organisation, centralised decision making with the absence of an institutionalised party system. This has resulted in to domination and patronage system which is not favourable for women (Ballington and Matland 2004).

The internal pressure is the 'god fathers' who actually impose candidates. From the narratives of one of the female political leaders:

It is very difficult for women to be nominated by the party for election because the god fathers have preference for male candidates (A2).

When political party's candidates for general elections are selected this tends to be hierarchical and dominated by party leaders and god fathers, reinforced by patriarchy and loyalty. According to Marie Goetz cited by Bunchy and Basaznew (2005) organisational culture determines the nature of outcome, gender bias will reflect gender discrimination. Political parties are gender bias and thus have the culture of imposition of male candidates and gender discrimination is the order of the day.

'Political entrepreneurs' expect rewards on huge amount they have invested and do not trust women in deals. They believe that women can not keep secrets especially when threatened by posing danger to their children. There is no election but rather imposition of male candidates that will serve the interest of the god fathers. Therefore primary election in the political parties is undemocratic. Sponsorship of a political party or candidate is effectively a business investment!

Furthermore, women's general unequal access to economic resources restricts their engagement in political activities (Ballington 2003). Poverty and lack of financial resources is one of the major obstacles to women's participation in political and electoral process identified by my respondents. Women do not have equal opportunities in the economic sphere and are faced with

diverse economic and financial challenges. My interviewees have heard many of the female party members not being able to fulfil their financial obligations to the political parties, saying: '*kasi kasi* - I do not have money to contribute'. One of the female political leaders stressed that:

During financial contributions women are seen as liabilities since they are not party financiers so are marginalised in the parties and are not taken seriously nor readily considered for leadership positions (A3).

Subordination and marginalisation of women as reflected in political parties is due to their economic disempowerment, the causes of which can be traced to gender discrimination in access to credit and limited earning opportunities.

However there are differences in political party experiences of marginalisation and exclusion because of varying economic empowerment among women, since they are not homogeneous, as reflected in an interview with a woman who is economically powerful:

I contested the party election for an elective post, but somehow I did not emerge the winner. The party realised that I do fulfil my financial obligations to the party even better than some men, so I was then nominated by the party for another post (B1).

It does appear that financial strength is what determines who is successful in an election and in getting posts. In this regard women's economic empowerment plays a vital role in the electoral process and distribution of party posts.

Time Poverty

Poverty encompasses the notion of inequalities in access to and control over the material and non material benefits of the society. This includes time poverty as well as poverty due to economic factors (Miller and Razavi 1998). Moser (1993) argues that time poverty can be seen as gender dimension of poverty because of the triple role of women in society, which reflects the gender division of labour that women perform – reproductive, productive and community management work.

Women tend to work more than men, generally have longer hours of labour, and are faced with time constraints having far lesser hours for leisure (Imam 1998). Consequently, women find it hard to participate effectively in politics due to limited time, because of their roles as mothers and wives, and competing domestic responsibilities and care work. Women are robbed of the opportunity to contribute and participate at the same rate like men, as much of the time they may have wished to devote to politics is taken up by their maternal challenges and obligations. This is reflected in the research which showed that women were not able to attend most political meetings where vital decisions were made. Women have little or no time to be invested in political career. Since women are not always able to make use of their potentials to the extent men can, there is a need for sensitivity to the different needs of women and men (Derbyshire 2000b), including different time needs.

Political parties are not committed to gender issues, and hold important meetings of the parties at odd timings conflicting with women's domestic responsibilities. My informants note that most of the meetings where important decisions could be reached are in the evenings. Many women dread these meetings because of the negative perception they invoke. Consequently, many husbands are opposed to these night meetings leading to the exclusion of women from political decision making processes. Political parties are not gender sensitive to the plight of the women to understand their time constraints, rather accuses women who miss party meetings of being not serious, unfaithful and disloyal members not fit for positions of leadership. At the same time, cultural barriers within and outside parties perceive the women who do attend party meeting as jeopardizing their domestic duties and having problematic sexual moral.

3.4.2 External pressures

Cultural Barriers and Societal perception

Cultural factors have been identified as a serious barrier to the prominence and representation of women in politics. Cultural values work against the progress and participation of women in any political process (Shvedova 2005). According to George cited by Ajayi (2007: 139)

Culture is the sum total of human societies' accumulation of traditions, values, norms, prescription of behaviour, among other things, over the years of their existence. Accordingly, these legacies are transmitted from generation to generation, and members of a culture determine gender roles, thereby, the universal subordinate status of women in politics is historical, having been determined by culture and society, and which members think of as absolute and unchangeable.

The socio-cultural context of Osun state shows that it is a patriarchal society with the prevailing gender power relation where man is the head of the household and controls everything including decision making. Patriarchy is a system of male domination and shapes women's relationship in politics. It transforms male and females into men and women and construct the hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged (Eisenstein 1984). Osun state is male dominated where women's subordination and men's dominance is so pronounced that their subcultures are literally separated by a world of difference. The larger society and male subculture still see women and their aspirations as subordinate. On this aspect, Mukhopadhyay and Meer (2004: 73) argument is as follows:

Deeply ingrained gender power relations determine what it means to be women and men in all societies. To be male is to be privileged and to be female is to be subordinate to men as people whose voice is unreliable. It is impossible for women to be taken seriously as political agents.

This argument is agreeable with the interview with one of the women politicians who said that 'We are not taken seriously most of the time when we talk or make any contribution, "*Won kan ma fi enu shanta wa pe oro Obirin*"' (The men use their words of mouth to spite us and say women's talk that can not be reliable and can not be counted upon).

Socialisation patterns emphasise politics as a male domain, and many voters view men as better leaders than women. Cultural order puts men above women and cultural attitude often tend to relegate women to the background.

This cultural context influences the perception of how friendly the political environment will be to women contesting for elections and their likelihood of emerging as winners. The perception is that men are more qualified, capable and suitable for leadership. Therefore, voters will usually prefer to vote for men to voting for women contestants. As evident in the research, women are not often nominated by the political parties because of these traditional biases against women in a sexist society.

As also found in this research, in highly patriarchal and traditional societies, women seeking leadership positions are often discriminated against. This was also the case in 1999 where concerted campaigns portraying female aspirants as acting in contravention of their culture were designed to marginalise them (IDEA 2006: 9). The argument is that culture does not accept assertive, public, leadership roles for women. Another societal perception, which also works against women, is the belief that many women are still dictated to by men (husband) on what political decisions to take. According to Matland (1998), the social and cultural pressures that bear on political parties include how they and their candidates will be evaluated by voters. Within this context, the sexism of voters usually serves as a brick-wall for women. This tends to pose external pressure on the political parties for putting women on electoral list.

All these external pressures of the sexist society make the political parties exclude women as party candidates. One can then infer why professional women with whom I had interviewed did not find party career interesting. They preferred the certainty of their professional careers to the uncertainty and volatility of politics. According to Matland and Montgomery (2003), sexism of voters is not much an issue in advanced industrialised democracies where voters elect parties rather than individual candidates. However the findings of this research show something to the contrary.

Education

Education is another significant reason for the exclusion of women by the parties. A political party leader interviewed argued that:

There are only few women who are highly educated as our party members. Female membership is dominated by low level educated women who can not be selected to stand for election as they lack experience and confidence to stand.

Other researchers have also indicated that there is a limited pool of eligible women candidates (Ballington and Matland 2004).

According to Knudsen (2005) there are different forms of oppressions, in this case the oppression faced by women who are highly educated is different from the one faced by women who are less educated.

My research findings showed that for the highly educated woman gender is intersecting with culture and education. Hence before being filed as a candidate of the party it means she has to be better qualified than any of the male contestants which goes with the saying that 'what a man can do a woman should do better'. Huge expectations are placed on the women who are required to go extra mile to challenge the sexism of voters and the inferiority status accorded to them by the society.

For women with low level of education, findings showed that they are usually marginalised in the nomination process, thereby having the position of supporters' club or entertainers.

Women constitute a higher percentage of the illiterate in Nigeria¹⁸ because most of the parents prefer to send their sons to school. The daughters are seen as going to get married and thus get incorporated into another family, thus a larger percentage of the girls remain perpetually uneducated and unexposed. The high illiteracy rate can also be attributed to the existence of intensive domestic work, coupled with conflictual family dynamics, thereby making attainment of literacy for large number of women, and their daughters, a dream, since these daughters have also been assigned domestic roles early in life just like their mothers (Stromquist 1990). The cultural practices often deny the girl child proper and conducive environment through child rearing practices that put her in disadvantaged position. The girl-child is a victim of societal neglect and institutional biases as the society and state give premium to the boy-child education, and when they both grow up, this also means that the participation in political parties and their electoral politics will also be unequal.

Violence against Women in Politics

Violence has been identified as a very serious obstacle to women's political participation. Phillips (1998) and Rai (2000) argue that most of the world democracies are built on the public/private divides. The patriarchal societal structures has made politics to be seen as public sphere and male affairs which are very competitive; therefore any woman who sticks her head into politics should be ready to bear the outcome because they are expected to be in the private spheres. From the narratives of the women politicians I interviewed it showed that:

18 Adult literacy rate of women in Nigeria- 59.4% ; Adult literacy rate of men in Nigeria- 74.4% (WLP ---).

Primary Elections are highly competitive because this is the only source to make it well for the men so no chance for women. Local level is a turbulent zone, politics is the only food at the local level hence no woman can face the rigour of black power, money politics and thug in order to be successful in politics.

Violence against women candidates takes different forms: physical, psychosocial or both and could be at different level. From the narratives of the women politicians interviewed, women interested and engaging in political parties often face violence at domestic level, and are beaten by their spouses and in some cases are divorced because most husbands are not in support of night meetings and out station travels.

Another form of violence is silencing the women through degrading treatment in public or in political meetings. Women politicians are gripped with this fear and told me that many women stepped down as candidates for male opponents because they are aware of threats of violence, and verbal assaults. Few women who are courageous to participate in politics under the violent conditions in addition to attending political meetings at nights are labelled as deviants and irresponsible for leaving their homes at odd times.

Findings showed that politics is unfriendly to women. As such fear of violence has made many women play politics on male terms because any attempt to promote transformative politics seeking gender equality and demand for social change will attract such women to be targeted for violent attack. Thus women are deterred from politics by the 'masculine model' of politics and confrontational environment, and forced to adopt this model in order to survive in politics.

3.5 Seeking Redress in and Beyond Party Politics

From the analysis of the political parties documents there seem to be no clearly defined existing mechanisms to seek redress. There is no law enacted to prohibit electoral violence. If at all there is any redress mechanisms – such as complaining to the Complaint Committee - even when women politicians are exploited and marginalised they are afraid to seek it because the political parties management is dominated by men and they are often the ones that commit the act of injustice. This is a paradoxical situation: can the men pass judgement against themselves?

Fear of violence and degrading and unequal treatment has prevented female politicians from protesting against their marginalisation or for seeking any form of redress against gender discrimination and this has led to their disempowerment. From the narratives of the women politicians interviewed:

Political terrain is not favourable for women. It is characterised by violence, assassination, harassment, intimidation, use of thugs and black magic.

Drawing on James Scott analysis of 'the weapons of the weak', as cited by Kandiyoti (1998) looking at everyday peasant resistance and the reasons why open revolts are rare. So is the case with women politicians: overt form of resistance is not possible except covert type because the god fathers have the upper hands. Any attempt to challenge status quo will boomerang. Protesting against gender discrimination against god fathers and leaders will result into marginalisation and exclusion from electoral processes, or of the woman getting any posts. The women are left with 'an uneasy compromise bargaining with patriarchy' (Kandiyoti 1998: 147), in this case bargaining with political parties as well as with patriarchy.

To seek redress in political parties, as argued by feminists, women politicians can use one of the factors that determine bargaining power which is the external support systems in this case the NGOs and women's groups as platform to seek redress (Agarwal 1997, Mc Elroy 1990). 'Conscious of the need for change many gender activists and civil society organisations in collaboration with funding agencies have organised programs of advocacy, training for women on electoral politics' (IDEA 2006: 9). The narratives of the women politicians confirm this:

NGOs are trying but politics is more than training and workshops that they organise for us. Not much attention is paid to us in the political parties. NGOs need to start to work on the political parties' gender discrimination.

Findings show that NGOs do not manage to get funds from donors for promoting women's political participation until when elections are round the corner. Due to lack of funds their activities are limited; they do not have interaction with the political parties. NGOs tend to work at cross purposes in competition for scarce funding from donors. Their lack of financial and operational resources is forcing them to live from one project to another and thus compromising their values to suit funders (Mawdesley et al. 2002). This has hampered their ability to effect changes to challenge status quo influenced by cultural factors. The activities of NGOs towards political empowerment of women are based on the assumption that electoral politics is not gendered, thus without transformation of gender ideologies. But decision making is driven along gender lines in order to clinch the political parties' ticket.

Seeking redress in and beyond party politics require empowerment. Empowerment can not be defined in terms of specific activities; transformation should be ongoing process (Wieringa 1994). Political empowerment of women should be bottom up process to transform gender power relations (Rowlands 1995). Empowerment can not be brought to women externally, induced or pre defined by donors and NGOs. Rather it requires environment which is supportive, and NGOs and funders are required to facilitate the process (Oxaal and Baden 1997). Therefore donors should support women's individual and collective empowerment by funding women NGOs locally. The main purpose of this is to enhance women's bargaining power at the local level to negotiate with political parties and the local power elite so that women can be taken more seriously as political actors and give them more slots. As well as challenging domination and seeking redress (Parpart 2000).

This research shows that to achieve increased women's representation in politics, NGOs work is very crucial but from the research their strategies are focused on women politicians as a group they seem to be totally blind to the social and economic differences among women. This question is also important because of the issue of legitimacy of women politicians. Findings show that women politicians – whose social, economic and political background is much higher than the ordinary women – do not have legitimacy among women voters

3.6 Issues of Legitimacy and Inclusion

Because the women who are successful in election processes entered politics within patriarchal context, they are unable to radically challenge the sexual politics, but rather largely play political roles on male's terms. They have failed to make family a part of public arena and unable to make private and public sphere a continuum. Thus, the challenge goes beyond ensuring the election of larger numbers of women into the political bodies and legislatures.¹⁹ While it is important to look at the quantitative aspect, this is not enough. The notion of empowerment goes further in questioning the roles of men and women within electoral and party politics, looking at the conflicts and power, and also symbolic referents and deep social structures (Kabeer 1992, 1994).

The relationship of women politicians successful at elections to women groups and NGOs is not strong enough and there are no serious links, thus raising the question of legitimacy. This is evident from the focus group discussion with women groups:

Women politicians seldom interact with our groups. Invariably we women often do not comprise political constituency of women politicians. Once they are elected they are difficult to access so we are not sure they are representing us because there is no forum of deliberations between them and us (W1, W2, W3).

19 Token women may be appointed who in actual fact have little power and lack appropriate skills (Karl 1995).

Most of the women successful at elections came into the electoral scene basically because they are from the elite society with strong connection with party leaders. Therefore the women successful at elections do not see the need of being supported by the general female electorate at the grass-root. Their narrative confirms this: 'NGOs and women groups did not do much to help my election' (B1, B2, B3).

Invariably even when women manage to be 'politically empowered' the question will remain whose interests do they represent? My findings showed that women in political positions are unable or unwilling to represent grassroots women's interests. It can then be said that not only men exclude women, women also excludes women. A woman who comes from economically powerful background is much more concerned with enhancing wealth or power of the group to which she belongs, than with working on empowerment of other women. In such electoral system, women in political parties could not create political space for themselves and push forward agenda in the strategic interests of other women.

Thus, the NGOs working on empowering women in politics have to keep this in mind. According to Matsuda cited by Davis (2008) they need to understand different types of discrimination faced by different groups of women, as such design one kind of strategies to support upper class, well educated women who are already close to politics and probably a very different one for the marginalised, poor women.

In summary, Androcentric political culture and women's subjectivities should be problematize in order not to sideline the structural sources of inequality among women, as well as between women and men. Exclusion of women in electoral politics can be seen as a process which will need multi dimensional strategies of inclusion and changes in many fronts involving different actors. Therefore strategies of inclusion to address the issue of under representation, exclusion and obstacles faced by women in the electoral process, should not only focus on increasing the number of women represented in parliament but also look at ways of increasing the effectiveness of the women who are elected.

Women organisations and NGOs need to understand prevailing gendered politics and electoral process and the societal attitude that has been hostile to women politicians. The women organizations and NGOs can engage political institutions in struggling not only to establish women's right to political office but also women's legitimacy as a constituency and shift societal attitudes through public action (Mukhopadhyay and Meer 2004). This engagement can help to strengthen the bargaining power of women in political parties in seeking redress.

Chapter 4: Bargaining with Party Politics

4.1 Introduction

The political parties have an essential role to play in advancement of women and promotion of equality as they function as the gate keepers for candidates' selection and political power (Mainwaring 1999). Randall (1987) defines politics as an 'articulation, or working out of relationships within an already given power structure'. In the case of Osun state evidence suggest that the post- colonial nature of its socio political system has undermined women's traditional power base and indeed marginalised women. The current cultural order puts men above women and this is also reflected in the structure of political parties.

Political parties constitute multiple actors with varying conflicting interests and different abilities to realise these interests. As evident from the research, there are persistent gender inequalities in the distribution of positions and tasks; this has resulted in male domination of politics and political parties where all the chairpersons of the parties are men. Intra political party dynamics entail complexities of gender interactions within political process and forms of decision making. But these do not exist in isolation. There is a need to examine the external social, economic and legal institutions within which parties are embedded and how these institutions might themselves be subject to change (Agarwal 1997). Thus bargaining approach is used to examine intra-party dynamics and also extended beyond political parties to include the community and the state.

4.2 Women in Party Politics as Cooperative Conflict

Sen (1990) argues that members of household cooperate because cooperation makes each better off than non-cooperation and results of cooperation lead to distribution. However some outcomes are favorable to one party rather than others. Within cooperation there is a seed of conflict. Political parties are characterised by both cooperation and conflict and can be considered as sites of cooperative conflict. Different members cooperate because they are better off when their party emerge the winner. But outcomes of cooperation are different depending who gets what position and how each member is treated (Agarwal 1997).

When there is conflict of interests' decision making depends on who has greater bargaining power. The argument that the person providing the main financial contribution should make decisions (Sen 1990) is reinforced in favour of the men who are the party financiers. The party financiers, who are predominantly rich and powerful men thus have the greater bargaining power, when decisions on nomination of party's candidate are made, women are marginalised.

Feminists have however argued that bargaining is never simply determined by economic (quantifiable) factors but also non-economic qualitative factors. Gender ideologies are constitutive of economic factors. Further impinging on all these factors are the social norms embodying accepted norms and social perceptions about contributions, needs and abilities (Agarwal 1997, Moore 1994). Political system is built on the public-private dichotomy and excludes women (Mukhopadhyay and Meer 2004) which resulted in the exclusion from party politics. In Osun state there persist the cultural constructions of the public/private dichotomy that make men and women accept as 'normal' women's presence in the family and men's presence in the public sphere. However the boundaries between public and private are often blurred in the daily lives of women.

Thus factors that determine bargaining power are: strength of breakdown/fall back position, perceived interest response, perceived contribution and exit option (Sen 1990: 129-136).

4.3 Fallback/break down position

Fallback/break down position is the person's vulnerability or strength in bargaining which is dependent on endowments and exchange entitlement mapping (Sen 1990). Feminists have argued that fall back position also depend on environmental parameters (Mc Elroy 1990). Therefore a woman's power to bargaining within a political party depend on her strength of fall back position outside the political parties such as social and economic locations, NGOs support, legal structure governing electoral process, marriage and divorce. Many of the factors which determine a woman's fall back position also influence her ability to make contributions within the parties.

4.3.1 Women Professionals

The Nigerian constitution section 15²⁰ (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999) has gender gaps and has resulted in the entrenchment of gender disparity with discrimination based on cultural social standing in political parties. The constitution makes no provisions for women's political participation. From the narratives of highly educated professional women these gender gaps have made political parties unattractive to them. They are not ready to leave their steady jobs for politics that it is filled with uncertainties. According to McElroy (1990), the fall back position depends on environmental parameters outside the households and in this case outside the political parties. This confirms the research finding where one of the professional women said:

Gender Quotas in the form of Affirmative action should be entrenched in the constitution; if it would happen today I would join political party and resign to contest (D1).

In this case direct provision of gender sensitive electoral law enshrined in the constitution would be the fallback for women professional because this would improve their bargaining power and alleviate the fear of uncertainties of political parties. Therefore external systems of potential support by the state can add to women intra party bargaining power (Agarwal 1997: 10). It is apparent that in many instances quotas have contributed to an increase in the number of women in parliament.²¹ They ensure women entry to decision-making positions rather than leaving this to the good faith of political parties or the traditional procedures of candidate selection.

4.3.2 Women in Political parties

Findings indicate that few women successful at elections are from high social and economic strata and are usually the spouse, daughter of a wealthy man or party leaders. Their fall back is this relationship. They have access to capital (endowments and exchange entitlement mapping as argued by Sen) and connections which is mobilised for campaigns (IDEA 2003). In short, class cleavage among women has resulted into different access to political power based on the relationship to fathers or husbands (Mukhopadhyay and Meer 2004).

For women who are marginalised at election, findings reveal that they are from low social and economic strata and do not have the ability to make economic contributions which would determine their fallback position. Women from well off class are excluding women from the low class in the electoral process. However feminists have argued that fall back could also be determined by non economic factors. Therefore the fallback to bargain for the marginalised

20 Section 15 of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria provides that no one shall be discriminated against on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, states and ethnic ties (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999). However it is not sufficient to guarantee gender equality.

21 The countries of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal), also African countries just to mention a few (Rwanda, Uganda) have all introduced quotas for women (Tambiah 2003).

women to get the party ticket will be external support of NGOs and women's groups to serve as platform to seek redress. However this external support is absent at the moment. These gender progressive organisations can play a particular important role in directing state policies and laws in favour of women (Agarwal 1997).

4.3.3 Vulnerability of women politicians in bargaining political parties

The fallback/break down position of women politicians is vulnerable because of the negative societal perception of women (social exclusion) which is also carried to the political parties (political exclusion) and this weakens their bargaining power in the political parties.

One negative societal perception is that female politicians are labelled as sexually questionable and depicted as sexual objects. Moral stain destroys women's fall back position both within the party, and in relation to the electorate. This perception could affect the winner ability of the political parties. For these reasons they are not put on electoral lists as party candidates as evident from the research. Another societal perception is that women can not keep secrets ('*Obirin onigongo*'²²) and their loyalty is not certain. It is presumed that in order to be faithful to her husband, woman will offer to tell her husband everything discussed in the party. Woman's loyalty is supposed to be more to her husband than to the party. Thus ensuring stability of marriage is seen as countering party loyalty and this is used as a justification for preference for male candidates. Thus while marriage is a necessary condition for women's political participation, it also creates vulnerability.

Strengthening fallback position of women politicians demands both economical and social empowerment so as to have better bargaining power in the political parties and be recognised as equal and active actors with the men.

4.4 Perceived Contribution

Sen (1990) argues that perceive contribution response is the distinction between actual contribution and how it is seen. The contributions of women during rallies and campaigns as clappers and dancers and 'entertainers' are not valued. The work women do in political party (as administrators, secretaries etc) are undervalued compared to party financing done mainly by men. Women are not perceived as contributors or financiers and the process of decision making is a process of bargaining which is determined by this perception. 'Systematic undervaluation of women's contributions reinforces gender related deprivation' (Agarwal 1997: 11). This perception affects internal party allocation.

Therefore in the decision making process the political 'god fathers' (financiers) play a major role in internal party politics. They also have the means of determining the outcome of party politics (IDEA 2006), especially elections. Women leaders are compelled to follow the dictates of the male leaders, there is no space to forge any common agenda for women's uplift. Neopatrimonialism²³ is institutionalised and is the order of the day in Nigeria where 'The neopatrimonial strong men have in practice made little distinction between public and private revenues' (Potter 2000: 287). They have amassed huge personal fortunes which they have used to corrupt the electioneering process and succeed in excluding women from the process (Obiorah 2003).

Feminists have argued that women bargaining powers is also affected by perceptions due to non-economic factor. Solely on account of gender women are perceived as having lesser ability or commitment (Agarwal 1997). Incorrect perception could get institutionalised as seen in political parties and this reduces women's bargaining power. When the name of any woman as a

22 '*Obirin onigongo*' - women have no Adam's apple like the men so they can not keep secret

23 "Neopatrimonialism: The right to rule in neopatrimonial regimes is ascribed to a person rather than an office, despite the official existence of a written constitution". (Bratton & van de Walle cited Potter 2000:p286)

probable candidate in the election crops up, her 'morals', 'character' and abilities are immediately subjected to scrutiny by the concerned political leaders as well as the electorate at large, while the character of the male politicians are rarely subject to scrutiny. The double standards of 'morality' employed to assess the characters of the women candidates work against them in the electoral process. This culture of double standards couple with invisibility of women's contribution to the party can be regarded as a clear manifestation of the patriarchal ethos that seeks to keep women subordinate.

4.5 Perceived Interest

Sen (1990) argues that perceived interest response is the extent to which members identify their self-interest with personal well-being. Folbre (1988) is of the opinion that family is governed by culturally determined expectations and individual pursuing their self-interest are bound by traditional norms. According to Bourdieu (1977) marriage²⁴ is 'doxa' and in the context of Osun state, marriage is accepted as natural part of the social order. Scott (1986) argues that the gender roles are used as ideological tools by patriarchy to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives and men in the public sphere. Political activity is restricted to public arena and the private sphere of family life is rendered as apolitical. But power relations in marriage influence women's possibility to engage in politics. As evident in the findings many husbands are not in support of their wives political activities, thereby weakening women's bargaining position in political parties. Hence women's political engagements are limited because they want to keep their marriage. Their perceived interest within political parties has to include their interest of keeping their marriage.

4.5.1 Women Professionals

In the social cultural context of Osun state the man is the head of the family and the woman expects orders and gives in return total obedience. Kantor (2003) argues that social and cultural norms influence women's ability to transform resources to empowerment. Often Professional women's education and earnings do not bring an improvement in their bargaining positions in the household, cultural norms supersede because gender division of labour in the household falls under issues that are unquestionable (Agarwal 1997). Responsibilities tend to oscillate, so women's earning will end up for the maintenance of the house. There is unequal division of resources and responsibilities which mean that gender relations involve conflict as well as cooperation (Kabeer 1992: 19).

Women are not altruistic as argued by Sen. Rather; obligation to use their incomes to feed the family is based on power asymmetries because the husband is more powerful and thus shifts these responsibilities to the wife (Miller and Razavi 1998). The perceived interest of women professional is that they do not want to risk jeopardising their marriage and economic security of their households. Thus they are not ready to leave their steady jobs for politics that it is filled with uncertainties. Gender norms affect women professionals' decision in not joining political parties indirectly and thus limit their political participation.

4.5.2 Women in Political parties

From the narratives of women politicians interviewed:

You know in Yoruba land *ti oko lase*²⁵. The husband has the final say so I have no choice. I do not want my husband to send me packing because of politics.

24 Marriage is very important and expected to last a life time. Women especially want to keep the marriage going because customarily in Yoruba land children belong to the father (Fadipe 1970).

25 *ti oko lase* husband is the commander, lord and master

The socio-cultural dependence of women is one of the key detrimental factors to their political participation in public political domain. Norms set limits on bargaining. They define which issues can legitimately be bargained over and which fall in the arena of the uncontestable. The norms impinge the exit option because of the societal perception of a divorced woman is negative (Agarwal 1997). They are referred to as *'dalemosi'*²⁶. The issue here is about perceived interest's response. What is woman's interest in politics if it leads to divorce in a society that de-values women who are divorced or single? Many women politicians end up being divorced by their husbands because they go for night meetings and outstation trip. Yet when this happens the political party could not bail them out. They say marriage is a private matter. Marriage is an obstacle to many women politicians as it limits their political engagements. In order to be able to meet up to party commitment such as night meetings, outstation trip, and woman is required to be 'free'. This freedom has painted most women politicians as *'ile iwe ti ko ni ilekun loti we'*²⁷. This is what it takes for some women to be actively engage in politics.

Here lies a paradoxical situation for women politicians. Women who are not married are considered not eligible to be nominated for election. Yet when they are married their husbands do not support them to be in politics and society looks at them negatively. Marriage is a contradictory institution for women politicians.

From the research the only group of women who managed to escape from this challenge are the widows and grandmothers in the political parties²⁸. 'Gender relation fluctuates throughout the life cycle and present varied and changing possibilities for power and autonomy' (Kandiyoti 1998: 143). Widows and grand mothers are better placed to bargain in the political parties against the perception of lesser commitment or lesser morals because they could meet up to party commitment of meetings and travel.

Therefore for married women's bargaining position to be strengthened in political parties, they need the support of their husbands which include redistribution of gender division of labour at home. Women will then have more time to devote to political meetings, be better placed to bargain and no longer seen as unserious, unfaithful members not fit for leadership positions.

4.6 Exit Position

Sen (1990) argues that if cooperation fails women will use the exit option, assuming that better outside options could lead to an improvement and the person will be well off. There are no other exit options for women in politics outside political parties despite marginalisation (non cooperation) because political parties have become virtually the only basis for contesting political power in Osun state. The only alternative is to be out of politics entirely. Vulnerability of bargaining is even enhanced by the lack of provision for independent candidates (Boateng 1996).

The only option is for the recognition of social legitimacy of women's claims of gender equality in the political parties so as to be placed in the arena of bargaining. Legitimacy can be strengthened if women from different walks of life have equal footings in electoral and party politics because the women from low social and economic locations are marginalised while women from privileged background successful at election do not represent the interest of local women as evident in the research. 'Nature of norms suggests that contestation would be necessary to enlarge the range of issues which can be bargained over and also to admit women as

26 'Dalemosu' – A woman who has been divorced by the husband and now resides in her father's house. In the context of Osun state it is stigmatizing and such women are discriminated against thereby resulting in low esteem.

27 'ile iwe ti ko ni ilekun loti we'– she is bathing in a bathroom without door- anybody can see her therefore she is open to every men

28 In the case of widows domination/power relation at home is absent and the grandmothers are no longer bearing children (55yrs and above) domination is minimal because their husbands are old and do not pull problems.

legitimate contestants' (Agarwal 1997: 16). Therefore women will need to be empowered to bargain with political parties.

4.7 Power, Gender and Political Parties

According to Parpart (2000) women's empowerment involves conscientization and participation and the need to understand gender inequalities. Women's empowerment has to be bottom up and start from the house with 'power within' where individual woman will see her position of subordination as imposed by system of discrimination. Conscientization will help them see that the gender division of labour, access and control of resources is not natural (Miller and Razavi 1998). With conscientization, women who have been held hostage and limited in their political party engagement could challenge unfair distribution of power and domination by men, once they recognize men's 'power over'. Individually empowered women can then network and take collective action the 'power with' argued by Kabeer (1994). These women can better exercise their agency their 'power to' and bargain to seek redress on the gender discrimination and injustice in the political parties. The strength of their bargaining will be far greater as a group; as a group they can withstand pressure but alone they are nothing (Hunt 1983).

One of the factors determining their bargaining power is the outside support system, (Mc Elroy 1990), such as the community and the state. Strengthening of women's bargaining power will necessitate political contestation, which is an interlinked contestation with the community, to establish social legitimacy for women's claims in the political arena; and contestation with the state to make electoral laws gender progressive.

In conclusion power is at the heart of politics and remains central to understanding gender. According to Barry as quoted in Omotola (2007) power is the ability to get people to do what one want them to do or to refrain from doing things that they are not required to do. Many men and a few women have enjoyed this hegemony of power. Therefore men who are usually the holder(s) of power in the political parties will not voluntarily relinquish it for whatever reason. It is power seekers- the women who have responsibility to struggle to acquire it.

Women must come to the realisation that politics determines the allocation of all resources in the society and that their alienation from politics means that their special interest will continue to be neglected (Mba 1982: 304). The power to make political decisions go hand in hand with the power to decide on how public funds are used. Women therefore have the responsibility to challenge their political exclusion leading to their under representation in party and electoral politics. 'There are no short cuts to increased gender equality except real influence over party agendas and policy formulation' (Salih and Nordlund 2007: 129). Therefore Women have to bargain their entry into and claim of public space, by using whatever discursive and material opportunities available in the political parties, and by fighting patriarchal institutions and ideologies that restrict their participation. It is very important for women to create political space for themselves and push forward agenda in their strategic interest.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter draws some conclusions emerging from the findings on the research problem and questions of study. Emerging findings showed gendered processes of marginalisation and exclusion of women members of political parties in electoral politics in Osun state and how social and economic background and differences among women impact on women's chances to engage in electoral politics. To analyse and interpret these findings a combination of intersectional gender analysis with feminist conceptualization of empowerment and feminist contribution to Sen's bargaining model, adjusted to the context of political parties (rather than household bargaining) were used. Some recommendations²⁹ are also made and the implications of findings for political parties, women politicians, communities, NGOs and women organizations, policy makers and donor agencies are outlined (refer to appendix II).

5.1 Marginalisation and Exclusion of Women in Political Parties

The exclusion and under representation of women in electoral politics is because of the many obstacles women face due to their social disadvantages as a result of interlocking layer of gender inequalities rooted in the power structures at all levels of society. Such obstacles identified in the research includes the general lack of political will by the leaders and the inadequacies of the Nigeria's Constitution with no specific provisions to ensure gender equality with only vague reference to non discrimination on the basis of sex. Other reasons were linked to organization of political parties and electoral system as gender blind with undemocratic form of organisation thereby marginalising and excluding female candidates and women party members. Obstacles identified relates to socio-economic such as poverty, joblessness, lack of education. Other obstacles were ideological like cultural factors, public/private divide and societal perception which all limit political engagement of women.

It is apparent that the type of electoral system, the influence of culture, party organisation and rules, the pool of women candidates, and election campaigning all work against women securing a political party nomination.

5.2 Political Parties and Electoral Process

Despite women's struggles to gain political equity in electoral contests, unless work is done directly with the political parties and electoral processes, gender equity will be difficult to reach. Political parties have important role of getting people into elected and appointive positions. The important role of internal political party electoral systems and procedures, especially for primary elections, is emphasised because the process of selecting candidates within political parties is important for anyone who seeks political office in order to stand as the party's candidate (Molokomme 1999). As found in the research political parties are undemocratic thereby making the primary elections susceptible to manipulation especially by wealthy and influential members of the party 'god fathers'. This system is not conducive to the election of marginalised group such as women in general and women from the low socio economic background particularly.

Women have political, social and economic differences therefore the gender gap in politics cannot be redressed simply by bringing more women in the system within the context of gender disparities. Without active and continuous participation of women from different walks of life in the party structure, equality in true sense will continue to remain deceptive.

²⁹ Recommendations- there are concrete recommendations, which are direct outcome of the research; they are however placed in the appendix because of limitation of words.

From the findings Political parties did not have gender culture and value and this requires a fundamental transformation of their structures, rules and institutional cultures to become more welcoming to women candidates. Therefore female political leaders should be enabled to effectively participate in the mainstream activities of the party without fear of intimidation including seeking redress. It is important that the selection process within parties and intra party democracy be inclusive, sustainable transparent and democratic.

5.3 Bargaining with Party Politics

Intra political party dynamics have various process and forms of decision making in the political parties which involve a form of bargaining. But such dynamics does not exist in isolation. Political parties are influenced by the socio- economic and legal institutions within which they are embedded and how these institutions might themselves be subject to change (Agarwal 1997). Thus bargaining approach is extended beyond political parties to include the community and the state. The responsibility to create supportive environment for gender equality and advancement of women is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders. Structural forces must be challenged and transformed by linking them with the rights of people. Without changing socio-cultural, political and economic structural barriers at all levels, the goal of gender equality or women's equal participation in political parties will remain impossible to attain.

Feminists have argued that fall back position depends not only on economic factors but also on environmental parameters (Agarwal 1997, Mc Elroy 1990). Therefore power to bargaining with Political party depends on the strength of fall back position outside the political parties such as the legal structure governing electoral process. The on-going Electoral Reforms therefore need to be strengthened with gender sensitive legislation to alter the prevailing sexist attitudes and marginalisation of women and guarantee women's political participation (particularly in the coming 2011 elections).

Bargaining for the party ticket also requires external support of NGOs and women's groups to serve as platform to seek redress. Networking and a strong women's movement is essential condition of enabling environment that can influence the direction of politics in favour of women. The women need a new political culture of embracing and helping each other in competitive politics and reconstructing their psychological disposition. Women should be individually and collectively empowered. There should be women's consciousness of their political rights as well as joint interests which are both critical elements for women's individual and collective agency. Political consciousness through building transformative communities is the sustainable way to transform politics. Politics will be transformational and power will be used as instruments of liberation and equality (Pitangroy 1995), where women are not only the followers or mere objects in the male dominated party and electoral politics but rather are equal partners.

Triple roles of women in productive, reproductive and community management spheres must inform the efforts for creating supportive environment for women's political participation. Where husbands will support their wives political engagement through redistribution of gender division and thereby position them better to bargain in the political parties.

Addressing under representation of women in party and electoral politics should include not only increasing the number of women in formal political power because this does not in itself translate to greater empowerment for women (Kabeer 1992, 1994). Rather attention should be paid on measures to improve the quality of participation and ways to achieve qualitatively women's empowerment in political parties and electoral systems. This will involve recognition of power relations among women as well as between women and men, by locating the structures and actors of exclusion, identifying areas of interaction and levels of intervention, and taking concrete steps for inclusion to be taken simultaneously at all levels.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Tables

Table 1a Number of women elected in federal and state levels in the 1999³⁰ and 2003 elections

Office	Total No. Available	No. in 1999	No. in 2003	% (2003)
President	1	0	0	0
Vice president	1	0	0	0
Senate	109	3	3	2.8
House of Representative	360	12	21	5.8
Governors	36	0	0	0
Deputy Governors	36	1	2	5.6
State House of Assembly Speakers	36	1	2	5.6
State House of Assembly members	990	12	23	2.3

Source: Overview of Political Participation of Women in Nigeria: Challenges, Triumphs, and the Way Forward. Paper for IRI, 30 March 2004, p. 12 (Lawal 2004).

Table 1b Number of women elected in federal and state levels in the 2007 election

Office	Total No. Available	No. in 2007
President	1	0
Vice president	1	0
Senate	109	9
House of Representative	360	27
Governors	36	0
Deputy Governors	36	6
State House of Assembly members	990	52

Source: www.awlproject.org/about/countries

³⁰ In 1999 of the 11,881 electable positions available, only 631 women were targeted by women. Only 181 of them won a mere 1.62 per cent of the total positions (IDEA 2006:8).

Table 2: Women elected in 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections in Osun state

Office	Total No. available	Women elected 1999	Women elected 2003	Women elected 2007	Average % elected
Governor	1	0	0	0	0
Law makers	30	0	1	1	3.33
Local Government Chairpersons	30	1	0	0	3.33
Councillors	773	No data	No data	21	2.72

Source- OSSIEC /INEC and self Adaptation

Table 3: women successful at election

Name	Background
A1	Rich and powerful background, Christian
A2	Married to a rich man, has tertiary education from a powerful background, Muslim
A3	Belong to middle class ,has secondary education, Christian
B1	Married to a rich man, she is a business woman, daughter of a big time politician , has tertiary education, Christian
B2	Daughter of a millionaire, has a tertiary education, Muslim
B3	Niece of a millionaire, has tertiary education, Muslim

Source In-depth interview

Table 4: Women marginalised at election

Name	Background
C1	From middle class has tertiary education, Christian
C2	From low class has secondary education, Christian,
C3	From low class has secondary education, Christian
C4	From middle class has secondary education, Muslim
C5	From low class has primary education, Christian
C6	From low class has secondary education, Muslim

Source In-depth interview

Table 5: Governorship candidates for 2007 election in Osun state

Party	Female Contestant
PPA	0
PDP	0
DPP	0
ANPP	0
AC	0
APGA	0
LP	0
ADC	0
AD	0
UNPP	0
AA	0
RPN	0
APS	0
DPA	0
NDP	0

Source INEC and Self Adaptation

Appendix II: Recommendations

Political exclusion is a process and changes will be gradual, so challenging status quo and increasing qualitative and quantitative representation of women in politics will be a slow process too. In light of the challenges that women face in party politics, special measures that can compensate for these are divided in measures directly related to the context of political parties and electoral politics, and to the broader social contexts of gender hierarchies and inequalities, and organizational and financial support. They are all necessary to undertake:

1. Interventions into Political/Electoral Processes

1.1 Political Parties

Re-formulation of political parties is one of the positive action strategies. It consist of developing incentives to attract women to the party (Ballington and Matland 2004).The professional women interviewed said for political parties to be attractive to them ‘Political parties should be reformed and it should be mandatory for women to occupy key positions in the political parties’. Hence the need for review of the constitutions of political parties to entrench internal party democracy and clear cut party programs. There should be a policy mandating political parties to have gender balance in their composition at all levels also ensuring that women candidates can benefit from an equitable internal distribution of resources. Political parties are gender blind so there is the need for gender training for leaders of political parties, as well as the members.

1.2 Women within parties

Highlighting the economic value of unpaid work that women devote in political campaigns and rallies would contribute to the evidence that gender campaign finance reform is necessary. Partnering with women’s organizations can provide support and help identify key issues that women face in electoral process.

1.3 INEC and OSSIEC- public bodies that control electoral processes

Electoral act should include auditing of political parties as well as gender auditing. Monitoring of Elections and Presentation of gender disaggregated statistics as the primary tool to influence and change the mainstream agenda to push for steady progress for women.

1.4 Government

Legislation should be drafted so that funding by the state can be regulated to create incentive for parties to include more women- the more women candidates, the higher the fund from the state so as to reduce the influence of god fathers and create a level playing ground for all candidates where the electoral process will be free and fair. Limits should be placed on candidates’ expenditures, rather than parties’ expenditures. There should be law enforcement in which act of violence should be prohibitive.

1.5 Electoral reforms and Amendment of Constitution

This is the right time when golden opportunities exist because Nigeria is undergoing the process of electoral reforms and this will facilitate introduction of quota and affirmative action. Affirmative action is a desire to redress the effects of past and current discrimination. It serves to encourage public institutions to be more representative of the population (Kellough 2006). There are different types of quotas; the best option in Nigeria is the quota which is officially mandating because from the findings there are patriarchal attitudes in political parties and the men are not ready to share power with the women. Rai (2005) argues that despite that quotas are important in

addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere it is not quota in isolation, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy. Gender quota should operate within the frame work of diversity so as to avoid the domination of women from socially and economically privileged groups in political structures. The constitution should be amended to prohibit laws, cultures or traditions that are against the dignity, welfare or interests of women or which undermine their status.

2. Interventions into Social Processes

2.1 Government Ministries

The Ministry of Education should introduce gender as part of the subjects to be taught in the schools so that youth can have proper orientation and right perception of women in the society. The Ministry of Women Affairs at all the levels of Governance should embark on Gender training for husbands and wives so that women/men are not kicked out of their matrimonial homes because of politics.

2.2 Public Campaign Enlightenment

There is the need for gender awareness campaign and sensitization on change in the negative perception of women politicians. National Orientation Agency of Nigeria³¹ should collaborate with the religious leaders and traditional rulers (custodian of culture) through mass media campaign to the general populace

2.3 Division of Labour within Household

Public policy intervention in support of increasing male role in domestic work is lacking in Nigeria. The unequal work burden and poverty of time arising from triple role by women are major obstacles to political participation. Policy reform in line with the universal care giver vision such as flexitime for work for both men and women, paternity leave for men to rear children will help in greater sharing of power and responsibilities within the household (Fraser 1997). This greater sharing of power within the household in turn will contribute to greater sharing of power and responsibilities in the public domain. Women will have more time to be politically active and simultaneously bargain not to be excluded in the political parties.

3. Organizational, ideological and financial support

3.1 Women's organizations and networks

NGOs and women's groups should increase networking and cooperation. They should campaign for increasing Pool of Women Candidates through lobbying of political parties to include women's concerns in party platforms and influence the political sphere so as to change the political agenda. Continuing to support elected women to make gender-informed decisions and advance gender campaign finance reform.

They should engage in Monitoring of parties' accountability mechanisms for campaign expenditure and internal budgets. Developing score cards can be an effective tool, making visible gender differences and identifying politicians that represent gender equity interests.

The NGOs should also work towards Promotion and Visibility of Role Models of Female Politicians through the media (funds from donors) to help female politicians to have better public image thereby addressing voters' sexism.

31 National Orientation Agency of Nigeria- Agency saddled with the responsibility to educate all Nigerian public and educate stakeholders working closely with the media by embarking on enlightenment programs.

3.2 International donors/organizations

Campaign finance should be incorporated into the gender equality agenda and International aid should be designated for women's empowerment to increase political participation.

Appendix III: Categorisation of Interviewees

In view of the sensitivity of this research the interviewees' anonymity is of great importance. They fall into these following categories and acronyms were used for them:

1. Semi structured interview with chairmen of two main political parties- P1, P2
2. In-depth interview with Women politicians having different experiences of politics since women are heterogeneous groups with varying backgrounds because they are placed differently within social, economic, and political structures, and thus have very different degree and experiences of marginalisation.
 - a. In-depth interview with three female political leaders- A1, A2, A3
 - b. In-depth interview with three female politicians that are successful in election- B1, B2, B3
 - c. In-depth interview with six female politicians that have directly experienced political party's exclusion/marginalisation in electoral process - C1,C2, ,C3, C4,C5, ,C6,
3. In -depth interview with two women professional - D1, D2
4. Focus groups discussions with three women groups-W1, W2, W3
5. In-depth interview with Executive Directors of four NGOs-ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4

Appendix IV: Interview Guide

Questions for Political Parties Leaders

1. How many women are there in political party
2. Where do they come from (back ground)
3. What are their political functions and positions
4. Women are not very successful in obtaining positions in local government- what is your opinion, why is it so
5. Is there awareness within the political party of the need to strengthen women's position in your political party
6. Does the political party have strategy to empower women
7. What do you think are the obstacles for women to be more gainfully engaged in political party
8. Do you know a concrete case in which a woman got on the list and was not elected, why things happen that way
9. Chairpersons are men what do you say about this

Questions for Female Political Leaders

1. What is their economic, ethnic, religious, social and political background?
2. With your position of leadership – what is your experiences in political parties management and women's under representation in electoral politics
3. What is your place in your own party politics
4. What is the place of women in party politics
5. Have you used and how the existing (political party, legal, social etc) mechanisms lately while involved in the party election; why; in what occasion; what was the result
6. Are you treated differently as a woman in your party, compared to men
7. Do you see differences in treatment of women in your party or in party's electoral politics
8. Do you think that your ethnic, political, social background has helped you in your political career
9. Describe your work/function; what do you do(committees, working groups); what are your interests/women's interest
10. Do you feel that you represent anybody? Whom do you feel you represent(women/gender)
11. As a woman do you feel a need to address women's issues in your political work
12. Are there any constraints for your political engagement – for example; family; other duties; ideas people have about women politicians
13. Do you see concrete steps that can be made in your party to help women's political and electoral success/engagement
14. Do you see concrete steps that can be made in the society to help women's political and electoral success/engagement
15. What is the place of committee that women belong in the party/local government
16. What is the place of committee that women belong in relation to availability of budget the party/local government
17. why are women not put on lists
18. why are women not elected even if on the lists

Questions for Women Politicians/Women in Political Party (Both Successful and Marginalised)

1. Who are women who join political parties (What is their economic, ethnic, religious, social and political background?)
2. What is your experiences in political parties
3. How do you get involved in politics
4. What are the incentives for you to be involved in politics in general and in this particular party
5. Were you involved in campaign rallies
6. Who are the other involved in campaign rallies
7. What is your experiences in political parties management and women's under representation in electoral politics
8. What is your place in your own party politics
9. What is the place of women in party politics
10. Have you used and how the existing (political party, legal, social etc) mechanisms lately while involved in the party election; why; in what occasion; what was the result
11. Are you treated differently as a woman in your party , compared to men
12. Do you see differences in treatment of women in your party or in party's electoral politics
13. Do you think that your ethnic, political, social background has helped you in your political career
14. As a woman do you feel a need to address women's issues in your political work
15. Are there any constraints for your political engagement – for example; family; other duties; ideas people have about women politicians
16. Do you see concrete steps that can be made in your party to help women's political and electoral success/engagement
17. Do you see concrete steps that can be made in the society to help women's political and electoral success/engagement
18. why are women not put on lists
19. why are women not elected even if on the lists

Questions for Professional Women

1. How do the different social, economic and political locations affect the chances of elections for local offices of women members of political parties in Osun state, Nigeria?
2. Who are women who join political parties and go for elections? What is their class, background, ethnic, religious, political etc belonging and background?
3. What is the place and experiences of women in party politics?
4. What are the mechanisms of inclusions and exclusions in the party politics and especially electoral process (party tickets; financial and org support; the actual role they play when they have party tickets)?
5. Do women use and how the existing (political party, legal, social etc) mechanisms to address and redress their place in the party politics (from creating and organizing electorate to using redress mechanisms to using strategic essentialism).
6. What kind of relationships is there between women politicians and women's feminist social networks, NGOs or other civic organizations?
7. What are the NGOs strategies regarding women in political parties and to what extent they support or subvert women in electoral processes and in party politics?
8. Women are not very successful in obtaining positions in local government- what it is your opinion, why is it so
9. What do you think are the obstacles for women to be more gainfully engaged in political party?

10. What kind of support is needed for entry of professional women into electoral process?

Questions for NGOs and Women Groups

1. What kind of relationships do you have with women politicians and other women's feminist social networks, NGOs or other civic organisations
2. What are your strategies regarding women in political parties and to what extent you support women in electoral processes and in party politics
3. What should women's NGOs and feminists groups do to support entry of women into electoral process and creating gender sensitive political agenda
4. What can you do and what should be the strategies that could help women from marginalised groups to enter elections and remain in political parties?