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Women's participation and representation in Nigeria's politics in the last decade (1999-2009)

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2010-08-12
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DECLARATION

I, Diane Olatunde, declare that this research report is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

…… ……..

Diane Olatunde Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated with love to my family

And

To the loving memory of my father.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all my gratitude and thanks goes to the Almighty God for HIS blessings in my life, for his immense love, provisions and protection and most of all for is sustenance through out the period of my studies.

To my supervisor Dr Stephen Louw, thank you for all your help, your guidance and suggestions.

My special thanks go to the two most important people in my life today, the love of my life, my sweetheart, my husband Makay, I love you babes, thanks for your love, your support and your sweet words of encouragement, I couldn't have done it without you; you are simply the best! And of course to my angel, mummy's little princess, my daughter Wura, you are truly a star; thanks for being so wonderful even when mummy didn't have time to play with you, mummy loves you pumpkin, more than the whole wide world.

To the Dibiah and Olatunde crew, my sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, in-laws, I just want to say thank you all, couldn't have asked for a better family, where would I be without you guys, love you all. Special appreciation goes to my mother and oma, thanks for your prayers and also for coming over at various times to help me out. Thank you!

Finally, I would also like to say thanks to all the participants in this project including those that helped in one way or another in gathering data for this research. Thanks for letting me into your lives, your offices, for sparing time to take part in my study, I am very grateful.

ABSTRACT

The world of politics has for a long time been regarded as a place reserved for men. However today, there is a growing agitation for doors to open for women in politics. And as can be expected various countries are working towards women participation and representation in politics, even their inclusion in areas of decision making in governance. This study examines one aspect of the state of gender equality in the Nigerian political setting namely the level of female participation and representation in the country's politics from 1999-2009.

This work is inspired by the changes in Nigerian politics within the stated time frame, with the return of uninterrupted civil rule after many years of military interventions. This achievement has brought with hope for an inclusive government, a government that recognizes all irrespective of gender, class or tribe. Today democracy is the order of the day, and this research reveals how women have fared so far, it reveals the extent to which democratic values have been applied as regards women and politics or gender equality in the area of Nigerian politics.

In other to establish this, this study amongst other things focuses on the hypothesis that political parties contribute a lot to the low level of participation and representation of women in a representative democracy. It looks closely at the role of political parties in determining women's level of access, presence and influence in the Nigerian political arena, by using the three major political parties in Nigeria as case studies. Furthermore, the study reveals how various measures aimed at enhances women's participation and representation in politics established in the last decade have been implemented especially within the parties and the influence they have had.

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