

Political Awareness Campaign as A Probable Influence on Anambra Women Participation in Politics.

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Abstract

Studies have shown that there has been low participation of women in politics in Nigeria Government and non-government organizations have tried to bridge this gap by creating political awareness campaigns that help increase women participation in politics. This study examined the relevance of political campaigns in influencing Anambra women participation in politics. The specific objectives are; to find out the number of Anambra women who are exposed to political campaigns, to ascertain the sources of political awareness campaigns available to Anambra women. This study was designed as a survey. Using an online sample size calculator, a sample of 385 women was drawn from 24 villages that were randomly selected. Representing the 21 LGAs in Anambra state. The study was anchored on two theories; the individual differences theory and the selective perception media effect model Findings from the survey indicate that Anambra women are not necessarily influenced by the awareness campaigns but by their personal decision and that religious belief and fear of name tagging are still major constraints to active participation of Anambra women in politics. The study concluded that there are still barriers that are limiting the Anambra women from participating in politics which are socioeconomic and cultural in nature. The study recommended, there is a need to increase political awareness campaigns using different mediums and to re-strategize on how to represent such campaigns to dispel the fears of Anambra women towards active participation in politics. It also recommended that the government should help create an equitable platform that will encourage women to participate actively by addressing decisively all the socioeconomic, cultural and political factors that limit women empowerment.

Introduction

The concept of politics has been viewed in different perspectives by scholars who have written on the subject matter. In this vein therefore, the term politics has been defined in various ways. The idea of Aristotle that ‘‘man is by nature a political animal’’ and his conclusion that politics is the ‘‘master of science’’ because it involves the intricacy of conflicts and conflict resolution on the distribution of power and resources in the society readily comes to the fore. (Heywood, 1997, P. 10) Politics is a multifaceted concept viewed from different perspectives of scholars that have attempted to relate it to aspects of human interaction and leadership. (Heywood, 1997, P. 1) posited that scholars have divergent views to the discourses on politics. Specifically, politics is competition between competing interest groups or individuals for power and leadership as in a government. Dahl (1963) agrees to this view when he defined politics as any stable pattern of human relationships that involves power and influence. These processes of struggle for power cannot be divulged from political awareness campaigns. Political awareness campaign is therefore a key component in gaining the empathies of voters, through emotional intelligence. Political campaigns address public policy and government agenda driving forces. Through the process of political campaigns, people are engaged politically to market their objectives using political tactics. Hence, Political awareness campaigns are a force driven avenue for moving forward and getting things done in government and leadership. According to Trond Solhaug (2021) political awareness operates in the political information exchange between the individual and various sources of political parties that communicates their messages to the voting public or electorates.

In Nigeria, women have persistently struggled into the political terrain to occupy various leadership positions even though they have been marginalized and under-represented both in elective and appointive positions. The political process in Nigeria has been characterized by gender inequality against women at participatory levels with the male folks dominantly where designated groups or particular gender (male folks) occupy the major political vacancies in the country. Oluyemi (2019) posits that Nigeria has been recording low participation of women in politics and efforts have been made by government and non-governmental organizations to increase the level of participation of women in politics.

Women in all states in Nigeria are under-represented in political participation of which political awareness campaign is an advancement to uplift women's participation in politics. It is on this premise that this study wants to investigate how political awareness campaigns influence women's participation in politics in Anambra state.

Statement of research Problem

Women ignore and many at times develop hard skin towards participating in politics in Anambra state and Nigeria as a whole as a result of many factors which include: limited time available to them due to their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres, Cultural norms and customary practices, Bari (2005). Fayomi and Igbelina-Igbokwe (2006) also opined that the influence of patriarchal cultural structure on the social status of the female gender has greatly affected their political participation.

In other words, patriarchy describes a distribution of power and resources within the family in a manner that men maintain power and control of resources, and women are powerless and dependent on men (Oyekanmi, 2004, P. 42). Thus, men dominate the political game, and set the standards for evaluation. This negative factor entrenches feelings of inferiority complex and other vices that perpetually put women at a disadvantaged position (Akinboye, 2004, P. 237).

However, the global low participation of women in politics has prompted the emergence of awareness campaigns to increase women's political presence in Nigeria and countries around the world. The first major international action in this regard in favour of women universally according to (Peterson & Runyan, 1999, P. 11) as cited in Akiyode & Afolabi (2003) was taken by the United Nations in 1946 when it set up a commission on the status of women.

In Nigeria today we have different women groups like the Women's Trust Fund (NWTF), Women In Nigeria (WIN), National Council of Women Society (NCWS), National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Better Programme for Rural Dwellers (B.L.P) and the "She Should Contest and Create Her Space" internet campaigns which has taken the bull by the horn to create political awareness campaign in order to sensitize women on the need

of taking their place in governance and the society at large. This study is therefore problematized on knowing if these women are actually exposed to the awareness campaigns, understands them, and however actively participate in politics in Anambra State as a result of the influence of the political awareness campaigns.

Objectives of the study

This study evaluated political awareness campaigns as a probable influence on Anambra women participation in politics. However, the specific objectives are.

1. To find out the number of Anambra women who are exposed to political campaigns.
2. To ascertain the sources of political awareness campaigns available to Anambra women.
3. To examine the disposition of Anambra women towards political awareness campaigns.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to proffer solutions to the problem of this study.

1. What number of Anambra women are exposed to political campaigns?
2. What are the sources of political awareness campaigns available to Anambra women?
3. What is the disposition of Anambra women towards political awareness campaigns?
4. Do the awareness campaigns influence Anambra women participation in politics?

Literature Review

Political Awareness

Political awareness refers to knowledge levels among the electorate and other concerned actors. When knowledge levels are low, it leaves much to be desired. Zaller (1992, p. 21) writes that political awareness is a measure of media reception. Reception means getting the message as well cognition. When the audience receives political information, it will probably increase their awareness of such issues. Individuals, especially the women need to be sensitized towards the awareness of the manifestoes of the political parties that came to solicit for votes and to let them know that Without the active participation of women and

the incorporation of women's perspective in all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved Akiyode, Afolabi, & Arogundade (2003). However, people especially women, ought to be sensitized on why they should vote and also contest for elections into various posts in the government. The importance of their participations to the general wellbeing of the country should be loudly emphasized. Creating awareness through various channels like the media, workshops and different women's movements might help spore them into action and then influence their participation in politics.

Political Participation

Literally political participation entails, voluntarily taking part in politics. Political participation refers to those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and directly or indirectly, in the formulation of public policy. Alapiki (2004).

There are different dimensions to political participation in every political environment. There are people who actively and consciously take part in the activities of government, such as voting, canvassing and registering voters, competing for public and party offices, influencing government policies, communicating, with representatives, contributing to election campaigns, etc. There are those groups of citizens who, play a passive role in the political system, because participation itself is a voluntary exercise, and there are also another group of citizens that stand indifferent, they are neither here nor there.

In Nigeria, before now, and even up to this day, gender is a major determining factor of political participation. There are various factors that impedes women participation in politics, as the odds against women participation in politics are more as a result of factors that counts against women politician participation impliedly creates an enabling platform for the monopolistic control of men in the political arena. Participation should be encouraged across board in a democratic state. Democracy demands from the common man a certain level of ability and character, rational conduct and active participation in the government. Falade (2014) also captures it thus; 'In a political system, the citizens can be

involved in the political process and decision making by joining a political party, voting during election, participating in general campaign, community affairs and other political activities'

The Role of The Media In Mobilizing Women For Politics

Communication eases development by giving a voice to the people; by fostering support for new policies or reforms; protecting the interests and rights of the citizens; and mobilizing the people for participation in issues that affect the growth and development of the nation. (Dye & Zeigler , 2003).

It is assumed that political awareness can be stimulated by increasing exposure to the mass media. However, (Zaller, 1996). throws more light on the relationship between mass media and political awareness when he writes that when mass media, carry competing political messages, members of the public who are heavily exposed to one message tend to be heavily exposed to its opposite as well. Political awareness is important especially in a democracy and it is important to ascertain at some point or other whether the supply streams are constantly flowing in order to keep political awareness at an appreciable level.

The role of the media in the capacity building of female aspiring candidates is extremely important. It is through the media that people will get to know about the aspirants and what they are able to do for their communities. This will go a long way in probably influencing other women who wants to participate but due to some socio-cultural factors were relegated to the background to get up again to their responsibilities once more.

The mass media needless to say constitute an important ideological apparatus of the state. Oso (2002). Mass media here refers to any means used to transmit media messages from a source to a receiver. It could be through radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, Oso (2002) believes the functions of these media has been dysfunctional and believes these media is very important as he cannot imagine a society with a paralyzed mass media system and claims that such societies will have arbitrary exercise of power by the ruling elites; mass detachment of the citizenry from the political process due to lack of enlightened information; restricted mass mobilization drive and more importantly the

denial of the beneficial role of the mass media in informing, educating and entertaining the masses. The mass media should encourage and ginger people up especially women to achieve their aims and goals in politics. It is a known fact that these goals can only be promoted by the media which then stimulate and foster the aspiration and activities of these women to participate actively in politics.

In every society, mobilization is usually more necessary for disadvantaged or marginalized, powerless groups. Research has shown that women make up one of such groups. As a social group, women are severally disadvantaged and marginalized in all societies, especially developing countries. It is therefore believed that where women have access to the mass media, the media have the power to act as a very powerful tool for their mobilization and empowerment.

Women in contemporary Nigerian Politics

The political involvement of women in Nigeria continued to lag far behind that of their men counterpart in contemporary times. As a matter of deliberate government policy, women in recent times have been appointed into strategic policy-making positions such as deputy governors, chairmanship of corporate bodies, chief executives of public institution and heads of ministerial departments (Okwuosa cited in Omoruyi , 2008, p. 25)

It is also pertinent to mention the efforts made by reputable women organizations who are not just being crusaders but awareness creators on the importance of women participation in politics for national growth. They are, the National Council of Women Society (NCWS), National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Women in Nigeria (WIN), and Better Programme for Rural Dwellers (B.L.P.), the groups mentioned above are some of the feminine organizations that have made frantic efforts towards feasible national development by encouraging women participation in politics and policy making in the country.

The fourth republic is considered a new dawn for Nigeria women as there was a surge in women participation in National Politics with more women appointed as heads of ministries though with men having a lion share of government institutions and the National

Parliament. Notable among these women are – Speaker, House of Representatives, Mrs. Obubumi Etteh, head of Civil Service, Mrs. Ebele Okeke, Petroleum Minister, Mrs. Dozien Allison Madueke, Mrs. Farida Waziri Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (E.F.C.C.), Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala – Finance Minister, Minister of Education, Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili, Director General of NAFDAC – Mrs. Dora Akunyili of blessed memory, Mrs. Nenade Usman Minister of Finance, D.G. NAPTIP – Ms. Julie Okah-Donli and many more credible and competent women who are still serving in governance.

Constrains on Women Participation in Politics in Anambra State Despite Political Awareness Campaign

1. Patriarchy: It refers to a society ruled and dominated by men over women, which in turn has given rise to women being looked upon as mere household wives and non-partisans in decision making process in households not to talk of coming out to vie for political positions. In the African context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Despite women's education and entry into the job market, the woman's role is typically one of homemaker. The man, on the other hand, is bread winner, head of household and has a right to public life (Sadie, 2005).

3. Low level of education: The low participation of women in education is also part of the shortcomings. The National Adult Literacy Survey, 2010 published by National Bureau of Statistics revealed that the adult literacy rate in English in Nigeria is 50.6 per cent while literacy in any other language is 63.7 per cent (female adult age 15 and above). This explains why most women are least qualified for political offices due to low educational attainment. This is also an effect of colonialism, where men were more favoured than women.

4. Meeting Schedules: The time scheduled for caucus meetings to strategize and map out political plans either for the pre or post- election periods are odd and is not conducive for responsible and family women. The slated time are often time which women are expected

to take care of their children and family. This method of schedules is viewed as an attempt to side-lining women from engaging in political process.

5. Financing: Competing for political positions in Nigerian requires huge financial backup. Most Nigerian women who seek these positions could not afford meeting the financial obligations therein. Ngara and Ayabam (2013) said that about 90% of women in Nigeria are currently living below poverty line despite the wavers given to women aspirants by some of the political parties. Yet, the cost of realizing electoral ambition is still far beyond the reach of even the most highly placed women in the absence of “a godfather who foots the bill in exchange for unlimited favour when the seat is eventually secured” (Yahaya, 2012).

6. Lack of Media Support: Another major challenge to women active participation in politics in Nigeria and Anambra State is lack of media support. Most media houses many a times refuse to project the female political aspirants. A typical example was what transpired between Hon. Barrister (Mrs.) Ugochi Nnanna- Okoro, politician and former Peoples Democratic Party governorship aspirant in Imo state in the 2003 general elections in Nigeria and a state owned media in Imo state. Ugochi, according to Nwankwo (2005) “was shocked to find her access to state-owned Radio and Television Stations blocked. The money she paid for publicity was returned to her on directives. There are always poor media coverage of women political campaigns and other electoral activities thereby delimiting them from competing favourably with their male counterparts.

7. Religious and Cultural barriers: Both Christianity and Islam do not accord women much role in public life. However, when it comes to the issue of political leadership and formulation of government policies women’s role in Islam is limited to supportive and advisory (Nwankwo & Surma, 2008). And same is obtainable in most cultural values, where women are seen culturally as quite submissive and image of virtue. However, they are not to be seen in public domain. And so, it is a challenge to women participation in politics, more so, women found in the corridor of politics are not often religious in practice.

Feminine Political Passivity and the need for awareness

The epileptic nature of women participation in elective positions and politics generally in Anambra state has been a major social development issue since the beginning of the current democratization process in the State and Nigeria as a whole. Evidence around the globe indicates the path for women to hold elected office was achieved not only through the efforts of individuals but with collective work through organizations in creating political awareness as identified by (Mazur, McBride, & Hoard, 2016).

This year 2021 marks 21years, Nigeria returned back to democratic rule, Nigerian women have encountered a lot of problems or obstacles while venturing into politics and leadership within this period. Women in Nigeria are faced by deeply entrenched large scale gender discrimination from the men folk, both in voting for candidate and in allocation of political offices.

A number of programmes, funded by international bodies such as the UN Democracy Fund, UN Women, the Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy, the US Department of State, USAID, Oxfam, DFID, the National Democratic Institute, the EU and others, have sought to improve female participation (N. Orji , C. Orji , & Agbanyim, 2018, P. 65-67).

But in our society today, the pervasive socio-cultural practices of patriarchy in many cultures represent one of the most formidable constraints to women's participation in Nigeria's political processes. Patriarchy is a system of male dominance in socio-cultural, economic and political affairs. As a result of this dominance, women are thereby perpetually relegated to the background.

However, patriarchy as a system has reduced women into mere spectators via various discriminatory customary practices such as disinheritance of females, humiliating widowhood rites, taboos against acquisition of property, beliefs in supernatural forces and food taboos, and exclusion from decision-making in the family or community (Aina, 1998, p. 3-32). Subjected to patriarchal norms, women's political expressions are limited to entertainment, and voting for candidates preferred by their husbands. Basically, men thought it abominable to be under a woman's leadership. This is quite revealing in a study

carried out in a rural community in Anambra state of Nigeria which shows that men feel that it is something close to a taboo for women to rule over them (Freidrich Ebert Foundation, 1998, p. 108)

Because of the aforementioned reason above as one of the major causes of women passivity in politics, efforts by civil societies, women organizations, and activists to improve the situation through awareness campaigns became necessary. These they did by trying to change cultural norms through media campaigns and education, introducing programmes to empower women through training or mentoring, monitoring the fairness and conduct of elections, and finally advocating for affirmative action from the state. (Isaksson, Kotsadam, & Nerman, 2014, p. 311).

Changing cultural norms

A BBC Media Action project has sought to increase women's engagement and participation in politics, across seven developing countries including Nigeria, through gender-sensitive television and radio awareness programmes discussing issues of governance. In five of the seven countries [including Nigeria], exposure to these programmes is also associated with increased political participation for women in equal proportions' Casserly (2016). Similarly, the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF) runs the 'She Should Contest' and 'Create Her Space' internet campaigns and has released the 'A New Dawn' film to disseminate positive images of women in positions of power. These campaigns have not been formally evaluated, although the NWTF notes that they have been screened widely on the internet and at leadership workshops (Commonwealth, 2015, p. 12). Such efforts clearly have the potential to change attitudes, although this is dependent on the reach of the media used, as well as the ability to overcome more 'traditional' views shared by religious figures or rooted in ownership laws or everyday social and economic structures.

Monitoring elections

A number of initiatives have sought to monitor and prevent the threats and violence against women voting and standing in elections. In 2015, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) established a Women's Situation Room (WSR) to

monitor, report and respond to electoral violence. It was based on similar programmes in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Kenya. A hotel room was rented and women 'took part in mediation, coordination, political and legal analysis, observation of the polling process and documentation of incidents'. The programme also trained and deployed election observers and trained activists in talking to the media effectively. The WSR received '4,973 reports which were all resolved by the Independent National Electoral Commission with the help from local police'. The participants all felt that it had been a success, although it has not been formally evaluated (Direct, 2019). In the same year, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) launched a 'Stop Violence against Women in Elections' (Stop-VAWIE) campaign. It undertook the following activities: Stop-VAWIE documented and reported first-of-its-kind data on types and incidents of violence against women, It engaged with election officials, security services, women's groups and others to mitigate violence, organized civic education around preventing violence against women in elections,

Provided support for women's groups to conduct legislative advocacy campaigns in target states for the passage of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), which enacts a new framework to address domestic and electoral gender violence. Supports local partners to conduct get-out-the-vote campaigns targeting women during gubernatorial polls. (National Democratic Institute Nigeria, 2018) This type of intervention and awareness has the potential to reduce the direct physical attacks as well as hate speech encountered by women, and probably influence their participation in politics.

Empowerment programmes

Many civil society programmes create awareness by focusing on improving women's chances of election by bringing together female aspirants to discuss strategies, network, provide training, and research and advocacy (Working Together for 2019!, 2019). The National Women's Trust Fund also runs mentorship programmes for girls to encourage future female leaders. For example, the 'Young Women Leadership Project, a political mentorship programme in which adolescent girls and young women will undergo intensive training in political leadership and advocacy, observe sessions of the National Assembly,

and lobby their legislators to address a pressing issue in their communities. They have the potential to help women participate in various forms of governance.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within the basic assumptions of the individual differences theory and the selective perception media effect model. The rationale for using these theoretical approaches is contingent on the focus of these study which hovers on political campaign awareness and its probable influence on women participation in politics relative to their exposure to these awareness campaigns messages before the actual participation.

The individual differences theory proposes that because people are different in terms of psychological composition and because they perceive things differently, they are not influenced by the media the same way. One reason why media message cannot have the same (uniform) effect on all members of a mass media audience is because there are individual differences in personality characteristics among such members Bittner (1998)

The selective perception media effect theory supposes that how people understands or interpret mass media messages is important in deciding their responses to the messages and the influence of the messages. It is well known that when people are exposed to mass communication messages, they tend to interpret them to suit their already existing attitudes, preconceptions or predispositions. People selectively perceive the media content the way they want to see it.

This study fits into the individual difference theory because despite the political awareness campaign created through number of programmes, funded by international bodies such as the UN Democracy Fund, UN Women, the Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy, the US Department of State, USAID, Oxfam, DFID, the National Democratic Institute, the EU and others, women placements in elective posts as stated in the literature are still minimal. This could be as a result of Patriarchal nature of our society, Stigmatization, Low level of education, Meeting schedule, Political Violence etc. so because they are different in terms of psychological compositions and because they perceive things

differently, they are most times not influenced by these political awareness campaigns hence, their poor representation in elective posts and political exercises.

Even though these women belong to the same social category and have group norms and values in common, each person still has characteristics which are unique to her. However, depending on whom these women are and what type of personality characteristics they have, a persuasive awareness campaign could fail either partially or totally to have the effect which the campaigners, the women groups, etc perhaps intended it to have on them. That same message could still have the intended effect on other women with a different psychological make- up. This is what the individual differences theory is all about.

Selective Perception Effect

The history of selective process theory first began in connection with another communications theory. Selective process theory gets its origins from cognitive dissonance theory which is the concept of cognition encapsulated in Leon Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory. Cognitive dissonance theory states that people experience mental stress or discomfort when they are confronted by new information that contradicts their existing beliefs, values and ideas. When this discomfort is experienced, individuals attempt to reduce it and actively seek out information that reduces their feelings of dissonance. Selective process theory therefore is comprised of four steps: selective exposure, attention, perception and retention. Through selective processes theory, individuals interpret the media in their own way and tend to avoid messages that do not confirm their beliefs. (Whitaker, Ramsey, & Smith, 2012, p. 56).

However, it is well known that when people are exposed to mass communication messages, they tend to interpret them to suit their already existing attitudes, perceptions or predispositions. The theory is relevant to this study because the political awareness campaigns communicated to these women, is actually to spore them into participating in politics and also sensitizing them into taking their rightful positions in government. Since how they interpret political awareness campaign messages is important in deciding their responses to the messages and the influence of the messages on them, some of these women who receive the political awareness campaign messages from the women groups

mentioned above, have this existing perception that women politicians are prostitutes and as such no responsible married woman should go into politics, that politics is a dirty game, that they cannot afford the cost of competing favorably with their male counterparts and that the patriarchal nature of the society that women should be seen and not heard will certainly be a big hindrance etc. This then means that because of these existing attitudes, preconceptions or predispositions, these women therefore selectively perceive the content of the messages the way they want to see it and not the way the originators of the awareness campaign messages want them to see it. On the long run, the intent and influence the political awareness campaign messages was supposed to have might be favorable or unfavorable as the case maybe.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was survey. The population of this study covers only the adult females in Anambra State. The target adult females in Anambra State were between the ages of 18 years and above. Anambra State has a projected female population of **2,780,204** (<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/nigeria-population/cities/>)

A sample size of 385 was statistically determined for this study using online calculator for determining sample size; specifically, calculator.net.

This calculator computes the minimum number of necessary samples to meet the desired statistical constraints. Sample size: **385**

This means 385 or more measurements/surveys are needed to have a confidence level of 95% that the real value is within $\pm 5\%$ of the measured/surveyed value.

The multi-stage sampling technique was used. At the first stage, 21 LGAs in Anambra state were divided into groups or clusters according to the three senatorial zones with each cluster containing seven of local governments. To ensure that every female within the local government in the clusters had equal chance of being sampled, a simple random sampling technique adopted, using a “**Statistical Random Numbers Table**”. Randomly, each group in the population of study was assigned a number. From the numbers in the random numbers table, two local government from each senatorial zone were randomly chosen.

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Using the same random number table, two communities were randomly chosen from the Local governments.

Groups	LGAs	Communities
Anambra Central Senatorial Zone	Njikoka and Anaocha	Enugwu-Agidi and Abagana Communities Adazi-Nnukwu Community and Neni Community.
Anambra South Senatorial Zone	Orumba North and Aguata	Umunze and Umuomaka community Igboukwu and Umuchu.
Anambra North Senatorial Zone	Anambra west and Ogbaru	Nzam Community and Ifite -Anam. Atani community and Amiyi.

Also, from the selected communities, four villages were randomly selected to represent the communities, this was done the same the communities were selected.

- Enugwu-Agidi- Achala, Egbedeamu, Ifite and Irunebo.
- Abagana- Agagbo-Abagana, Adagbo- orafia, Adagbo-Umuduna, Akpu-Abagana.
- Nzam- Anakpa,Atakol, Aza, Igeja
- Ifite-Anam Abegbu, Iyiora Anam, Mmiata, Umundeze -Mmiata.
- Umunze Amuda, Ozara, Umuizo, Abaha.
- Umuomaku Ndiocha, Okpobe, Umuokpurukpu, Umunambu.

In distributing the questionnaire, the researcher used a Non- Probability Convenience Sampling, whereby questionnaires were served only on respondents who were available at the time and showed willingness to be sampled, when the researcher visited each of the chosen villages. Questionnaire contained 16 questions (open-ended and closed-ended) was used as the instrument for data collection. This means that the 385 copies of questionnaires

structured and were distributed according to the population of each local government as follows, Aguata got 113 questionnaires, Anaocha got 80 questionnaires, Ogbaru got 73 questionnaires, Orumba North got 50 questionnaires, Anambra West got 42 questionnaires while Njikoka got 27 questionnaires with the least population. Data gathered were presented and analyzed using SPSS 19 data analysis software.

The Pre-test/ Validity

The pre-test and validation of the research instrument involved 25 respondents, to test the validity of the field, to assess if the items in the instrument are best suited to address the measurable variables and to use the information generated to evaluate the preliminary research questions. The results from the pre-test show that the instrument was understood to a large extent by the respondents as virtually all the respondents could fill out the items. All the ambiguity was cleared before data collection.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Findings from this study were drawn from data obtained from 385 respondents in the 21 LGAs in Anambra state.

Demographic Data

In terms of age of the respondents, about 296 representing 76.9% of the entire 385 respondents, between the ages of 35-40, attempted the questionnaire. 51 respondents or 13.2% were in the ages of 41-45, 29 respondents about 7.5% of the entire respondents were within the ages of 46 and above. From the data, it can be deduced that the respondents were more of young women, who are very strong and are capable of participating actively in politics. On marital status, 296 of respondents representing 79.9% were married, 75 respondents about 19.5% were single, while 14 respondents about 3.6% were divorced. This shows that majority of the respondents are married women. On Occupational distribution of Respondents, out of the total 385 respondents surveyed, 172 respondents representing 44.7% were housewives, civil servants were 127 or 33.0% of the entire respondents; 56 were farmers about 14.5% of the entire respondents attempted the questionnaire, while 30 respondents representing 7.8% of the overall respondents were

traders. From the foregoing analysis, a large number of house wives and civil servants responded to the questionnaire, possibly, because they are readily available and have good knowledge of politics. On educational level of the respondents, 211 respondents representing 54.8% were graduates, 89 had secondary school certificate about 23.1% while 85 respondents, about 22.1% were primary school leavers. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents are literate enough to participate in politics.

Research question 1: What number of Anambra women are exposed to political campaign? Table 1

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Women that attended Political awareness Campaign	No	9	2.3
	Yes	376	97.7
Total		385	100%
Frequency of the women Exposed to awareness Campaign	Always	21	5.5
	Sometimes	351	91.2
	Rarely	13	3.4
Total		385	100%

Responses to table 1 above show that majority of Anambra women have been exposed to political awareness campaign (97.7%), on the frequency of exposure, they are not always exposed to such campaigns as majority 91.2% said they are exposed sometimes and only 5.5% said it's always.

Research question 2: What are the sources of political awareness campaign available to Anambra women? Table 2

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Major sources of Political awareness Campaign	Mass media	44	11.4
	Internet	8	2.4
	Workshop	333	86.5
Total		385	100%
Frequency of their Exposure to campaigns From these sources	Often	136	35.3
	Occasionally	385	64.7
Total		385	100%

Responses to table 2 above show that workshops are mostly Anambra women's source of political awareness campaign (86.5%) followed by mass media (11.4%) and that they are occasionally exposed to campaigns from these sources. This correlates with the findings in first table that Anambra women are not always exposed to political campaigns.

Research Question 3: What are the dispositions of Anambra women towards political awareness campaign?

Table 3

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
What are your feelings Towards the Political Awareness Campaigns?	Interested	225	86.5
	Not interested	63	2.1
	Interested but lack courage	97	11.4
Total		385	100%
Do you generally understand The reason for the campaigns?	To a large extent	210	54.5
	To some extent	175	45.5
Total		385	100%
Do u believe that such Campaign Can improve women Participation in Politics?	To a large extent	247	64.2
	To some extent	138	35.8
Total		385	100%

Responses to table 3 above show that Anambra women are interested (86.5%) in political campaign, while 11.1% are interested but lack courage. They, to a large extent understand the reason for the campaign (54%) and they also believe that such campaigns can improve women participation in politics to a large extent (64.2%).

Research question 4: Do the awareness campaign influence Anambra women participation in politics?**Table 4**

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Have you contested for Any elective post with The male counterparts?	No	297	72.5
	Yes	106	27.5
Total		385	100%
What influenced your Decisions?	Political awareness campaign workshops	86	22.3
	Friends	40	10.4
	Personal decisions	259	67.3
Total		385	100%
What is the major Constraints to putting Into practice what you Learnt from the Workshop?	Fear of name tagging	121	31.4
	Religious beliefs	216	56.1
	Fear of harassment	36	9.4
	By men		
	Lack of personal interest	12	3.1
Total		385	100%

Responses from the table 4 above indicate that majority of Anambra women (72.5%) have not contested in any elective position with the male counterpart. Personal decision (67.3%) influences them contest followed by political awareness campaigns (22.3%) and their major constraint is their religious belief (56.1%), followed by fear of name tagging (31.4%).

Analysis of Research Questions

The first research question sought to discover the number of Anambra women that are exposed to political campaign. Data in Table 1 indicate that the majority of Anambra women have been exposed to political awareness campaign (97.7%), and on the frequency of exposure, they are not always exposed to such campaigns as majority 91.2% said they are exposed sometimes and only 5.5% said its always. Therefore, it could be stated, that a greater number of women in Anambra state are exposed to political awareness campaign.

The second research question sought to find out the sources of political awareness campaign available to Anambra women. Data in Table 2 indicate that workshops featured most as the major source political awareness campaign available to Anambra women

(86.5%) followed by mass media (11.4%) and that they are occasionally exposed to campaigns from these sources. Therefore, it could be stated, that workshops and the mass media are the most prominent sources of political awareness campaign among Anambra women.

The third research question sought to find out the disposition of Anambra women towards political awareness campaigns. Data in Table 3 show that Anambra women are interested (86.5%) in political campaign, while 11.1% are interested but lack courage. They, to a large extent understand the reason for the campaign (54%) and they also believe that such campaigns can improve women participation in politics to a large extent (64.2%) Consequently, it may be admitted, that majority of Anambra women are interested in political awareness campaigns.

The fourth research question intends to find out if the awareness campaign influence Anambra women participation in politics. Data in table 4 indicate that the majority of Anambra women (72.5%) have not contested in any elective position with the male counterpart. Personal decision (67.3%) influences them contest followed by political awareness campaigns (22.3%) and their major constraint is their religious belief (56.1%), followed by fear of name tagging (31.4%). Consequent on the foregoing, it may be stated, that there is still low rate of women participation in politics in Anambra state. They are not necessarily influenced by the awareness campaigns but by their personal decision and that religious belief and fear of name tagging are still major constraints to active participation of Anambra women in politics.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

It was discovered in this study that the majority of Anambra women have been exposed to political awareness campaigns, the study also revealed that the most prominent sources of political awareness campaigns available to Anambra women are workshops and mass media. The implication of the foregoing is that the various workshops that have been

organized to increase awareness and encourage active participation of women in politics are readily available to this group; a reflection of what Mazur et al (2016) posits that the epileptic nature of women participation in elective positions and politics generally in Anambra state has been a major social development issue since the advent of democratization process in the state and this change was achieved not only through individual efforts but collective efforts of organizations organizing political awareness campaigns.

The study identified that Anambra women are highly interested in politics and political awareness campaigns and that they are aware of the reasons for the campaigns; they also believe that such campaigns can improve women participation in politics. Hence there has been an increased number of women organizations who are not just crusaders but awareness creators. They are, as mentioned in the literature, NCWS, NAWOJ, WIN, BLP, etc. These organizations have made desperate efforts geared towards encouraging women to participate in politics.

The study further revealed that Anambra women are not necessarily influenced by the awareness campaigns but by their personal decision and that religious belief and fear of name tagging are still major constraints to active participation of Anambra women in politics. And according to the principles of individual difference theory, Anambra women have different psychological make-up even though they belong to the same social category, which makes the awareness campaigns seem less productive. Similarly, selective perception media effect supports the study that Anambra women tend to interpret the campaigns to suit their already existing attitudes, beliefs, perceptions or predispositions. These women invariably, selectively perceive the political awareness campaign messages the way they want to see; hence their personal decision and religious belief influencing them the most.

This study concludes that there have been various political awareness campaigns organized by various women organizations, which Anambra women are exposed to. Religious belief and fear of name calling have posed a challenge to women active participation in politics as was revealed in a study done by Freidrich Ebert Foundation,

(1998, p. 108) in a rural community in Anambra state of Nigeria which shows that men feel that it is something close to a taboo for women to rule over them. Therefore, there is a need to increase political awareness campaigns using different mediums and to re-strategize on how to represent such campaigns to dispel the fears of Anambra women towards active participation in politics. Just as (Zaller, 1996) observed that Political awareness is important especially in a democracy and it is important to ascertain at some point or other whether the supply streams are constantly flowing in order to keep political awareness at an appreciable level.

The study recommends as follows.

- i. Since the study found workshops and the media as some of the leading sources of political awareness campaigns, aggressive regular sensitization should be done using these sources in order to increase awareness.
- ii. Similarly, political awareness campaign creators and women organizations like WIN, NAWOJ etc. should re-strategize on how to use the campaign messages to tackle some of the constraints that the women face.
- iii. That legislators should support and encourage women by making gender friendly laws
- iv. The government should help create an equitable platform that will encourage women to participate actively by addressing decisively all the socioeconomic, cultural and political factors that limit women empowerment.
- v. A Focus group discussion (FDG) counterpart to this research could also be pursued. The aim this time would be to discover the experiences and reactions of women who participate in politics which will also help communication experts to design more appropriate communication strategies.

Limitations of the Study

This research was not without limitations. The choice of using only one research method limited the richness of the study. This necessitated the recommendation for further studies

that will involve other methods such as FGD or in-depth interview which will give a qualitative bend to the analysis.

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