MOTIVES AND DIMENSIONS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE APC AND PDP IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

MARGARET APINE (PhD)
Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
Federal University Lokoja, Nigeria
Email: margeretapine@yahoo.co.uk

DOI: https://doi.org/10.64633/wissj.v9i8.31

Keywords

Political violence, Motive , Dimensions, comparative analysis, North Central Nigeria, All Progressives Congress (APC), People's Democratic Party (PDP)

Abstract

This paper responds to three interrelated gaps in the literature: the scarcity of comparative studies that analyse how the PDP and APC respectively perpetrate or enable gendered political violence at the sub-national level; the limited empirical unpacking of motive versus modality in women-targeted political aggression; and the need for regionally specific analysis that links macro-party strategies to micro-level experiences in North-central Nigeria. To address these gaps, the study undertakes a comparative analysis of party-linked incidents from 2019–2024 in North-central states, combining content analysis of media and party statements, interviews with key informants and event-mapping of reported incidents. The study finds that violence against women in politics in North Central Nigeria is systematic, gendered, and strategically deployed, particularly during elections and other critical political moments. This is carried out in order to silence, intimidate, and exclude women from political participation. Allegations in the studied area more frequently implicated the All Progressives Congress (APC) than the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), especially where the APC held ruling-party dominance, with cases such as those involving Salome AchejuhAbuh and Natasha Akpoti illustrating the intersection of gendered violence and incumbency power. Overall, the research concludes that such violence is reinforced by patriarchal norms and weak institutional accountability, requiring both electoral reforms and deeper structural transformation to safeguard women's political rights It recommends that legal enforcement agencies should be strengthened while ensuring independent, impartial prosecution of offenders. Political parties, particularly the All Progressives Congress and the Peoples Democratic Partymust adopt clear internal sanctions against members involved in violence and explicitly prohibit gender-based political intimidation.

Introduction

Political violence that is specifically targeting Nigerian women- ranging from sexual, physical violence, harassment, intimidation, and structural exclusion, has emerged as a distinct and consequential phenomenon in the country. While political violence in Nigeria has long been interrogated through the lenses of ethno-religious conflict, emerging research reveals that women experience both gender-neutral forms of political violence as well asgender-specific tactics such as sexual assault, online harassment, and reputational smearing that function to silence or punish women's political participation (Afolabi, 2022; International Foundation for Electoral Systems [IFES], 2021).).

In the North-central geopolitical zone which includes Kogi, Benue, Plateau, Niger, Nasarawa and the Federal Capital Territory these dynamics are shaped by intense inter-party competition, localized patronage networks, and social norms that constrain women's political agency, producing a political environment where women's participation is both securitized and stigmatized (FIDA Nigeria, 2023) Although the dominant parties in the zone, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) deploy broadly similar competitive tactics during elections, emerging evidence suggests the targeting of women differs slightly. High-profile incidents in North-central Nigeria illustrate this pattern: women candidates and female legislators have reported being verbally degraded, physically threatened, prevented from campaigning, and subject to institutional reprisals that appear designed to silence or discredit them (Guardian, 2025; Business Day, 2025).

Political violence has even taken a critical dimension in Kogi state where On 18 November 2019, around 2:00 p.m, Mrs. Abuh, aged roughly 60, was burned to dead by political mob. (PUNCH, 2019; Business Hallmark, 2019). These accounts echo wider regional findings not just in Nigeria butin West Africa that political violence against women frequently combines physical coercion with symbolic attacks on reputation and morality, a combination that deters candidacy, suppresses mobilizationn, and reconfigures local power relations (OECD, 2022;Kishi, R. (2022); Ugwu, C. S. (2024)).

This article focuses on documenting political violence which stands as a barrier to women's political participation. In doing so, the paper identifies the gendered motives and dimensions of political violence, broadly understood as any violence that impedes the regular unfolding of political processes.Recognizing this as a separate analytical category is essential, as gendered modalities of political violence produce distinct motives, perpetrators, and long-term effects on democratic inclusion that are often absent in broader studies of electoral or insurgent violence (Bardall, 2020; Mezie-Okoye, C. C. (2024)

Conceptual clarification and literature review

This section clarifies concepts and explores recent scholarly discussions on the motives and dimensions of political violence targeting women in Nigerian elections, particularly those in North Central Zone, highlighting critical trends and gaps.

Motives for Political Violence Targeting Women

1. Patriarchal Structures and Gender Norms

Patriarchal norms remain a key driver of political violence against women in Nigeria. Women's entry into politics challenges long-standing male dominance in leadership roles. Scholars have identified the role of cultural expectations in framing political spaces as inherently male, reinforcing hostility toward women who seek political office .(Fidelis,

F.2024) Such norms are often weaponized by political actors to delegitimize women's participation. Arum, I. & Oluwaleye, J. M. (2024) reiterated this notion, stating that political violence which are targeted against women, debars them from exercising their political rights and resonates embedded patriarchal values and also erode the integration of women perspectives and experiences in processes of governance. Other scholars opined that Gendered motives appear when perpetrators use violence to preserve hegemonic men's control of the political system. Across the globe, men who belong to their country's structurally dominant cultural, ethnic, or religious group hold most political offices (Hughes, 2011). Actors who use violence to resist devolving political power to those outside the hegemonic male group (meaning women, but also non-dominant men and gay, queer, non-binary, and trans individuals) are committing political violence for gendered reasons. In the case of women, their political activity defies traditional gender roles and norms, and those committing violence in response to this transgression have misogyny as their motivation (Manne, 2017).

Women who visibly contest leadership roles are often punished for transgressing norms about female modesty, obedience, and domesticity. Punishment can be physical, sexualized, or reputational; it serves as a warning to other women. Patriarchal logics here are the proximate motive: they shape both the rationale and the acceptability of violent reprisals. (Makama, 2013; studies of Northern women's political history).

Therefore, the increasing visibility of women in Nigerian politics, and North Central zone, though limited, has led to perceptions of women as threats to entrenched political elites scommonly among those with hegemonic male believes. This dynamic is particularly evident in cases where women advocate for transparency, accountability, or reforms, prompting backlash in the form of violence and intimidation (Umar et al., 2020).

Gendered motives for political violence therefore mean that perpetrators commit violence to preserve the gendered order of political power, because the existing gendered order where hegemonic men hold the vast majority of offices, is seen as natural, just, and inviolate.

2. Political Competition and Electoral Manipulation

Electoral competition in Nigeria is intensely adversarial, often escalating into violence. Female candidates are specifically targeted to discourage their participation, reflecting a deliberate strategy to maintain male-dominated power structures (Afolabi, 2022). Gender-specific violence, such as sexual harassment and intimidation, undermines women's campaigns and reduces their visibility in political discourse. Also, intra-party factionalism and patronage rivalries in party primaries and local competition often produce factional feuds that spill into violence. Where women are aligned with particular factions or are perceived as gatekeepers to resources (contracts, patronage), they may become targets in factional settling of scores. Reports of Kogi's volatile primaries and party clashes indicate factional motives underpin much of the violence. (cleen.org)

3. Perceptions of Threat

The increasing participation of women in Nigerian politics, though limited, has led to perceptions of female politicians as threats to entrenched political class. This dynamic is particularly evident in cases where women advocate for transparency, accountability, or reforms, prompting backlash in the form of violence and intimidation (Umar et al., 2020). Scholars and observers outline several motives explaining why women become targets in party conflict—many of which are evident in Kogi. Vote suppression and control of electoral outcomes, thuggery and intimidation are used

instrumentally to influence turnout and disrupt opponents' mobilization. Therefore, targeting women can be strategic if women are perceived as swing voters, visible mobilizers, or party agents at polling units. For instance, election security assessments of Kogi identify vote-controlling tactics as central to violence patterns in the state (cleen.org)

Dimensions of Political Violence Targeting Women

1.0 Dimensions of Political Violence Targeting Women

Political violence against women takes multiple forms, encompassing physical, psychological, sexual, and economic dimensions.

1.1 Physical Violence

Physical attacks remain one of the most visible dimensions of political violence against women. Research documents instances where women candidates, voters, and activists face assaults and even murder during election cycles. These acts are often premeditated, aiming to create a climate of fear that deters female participation (Adeyemi & Okoye, 2021). Kogi State in particular has recorded high-profile incidents where women involved in partisan politics were the targets of extreme physical violence during and after elections. The most cited case is the November 16, 2019 killing of a PDP women's leader, Mrs. Salome (Acheju) Abuh, who was reported to have been set ablaze in her home by suspected political thugs in Ofu LGA during post-election violence. This killing drew national media coverage and protests by women's groups demanding justice. (Premium Times, 2019; ThisDay, 2019; The Guardian, 2021).

2. Psychological violence

Psychological violence is another pervasive dimension, often manifesting as threats, derogatory language, and character assassination. This form of violence is amplified by digital platforms, where women politicians are subjected to cyberbullying and online hate campaigns .The Nation, (2025).(Eniola, 2016, as cited in Arum, Oluwaleye, & Adeleye, 2024).gives an account of violence in northern Nigeria Mrs Najatu Muhammad, the first female Senator in the North was beaten at a conference centre, her clothes were torn and she was left with only her underwear, she was threatened, and narrowly escaped death on many occasions simply because she ventured into politics. In Nigeria's First Republic , women were imprisoned for their involvement in politics. In 1990, Sawaba's political compatriot, the late Malama Ladi Shehu, told the First Nation Magazine about the abuses female political activists faced: Particularly Gambo Sawaba and some other NEPU women, was intense. She noted that very many of them who were imprisoned, had their hair shaven and were beaten up; and some of our members were even killed. While several scholars have advanced our understanding of these and other political violence across the country since independence, Such tactics not only harm women's mental health but also delegitimize their political aspirations.

Recent high-profile cases in national politics can illustrate psychological tactics at work in relation to Kogi women. Coverage of the experience of Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan — a politician associated with Kogi Central — highlights how institutional responses (suspensions, public denigration) and online/offline campaigns can operate to punish and silence women who raise complaints or act visibly, producing reputational harm and deterrence effects on other women. .(The Guardian, 2025)

3. Sexual Violence

Sexual violence, though underreported, is a critical concern. Incidents of harassment and assault are used as tools to humiliate and disempower women in political spaces. The fear of stigmatization often prevents victims

from reporting such cases, further perpetuating the cycle of violence (Eze et al., 2020). Multiple NGO and monitoring reports document rape, gang-rape, sexual abduction and other sexual-gender-based violence in North-Central conflict settings — showing a high prevalence of GBV in the same states where women also face political intimidation. These reports are valuable for showing environmental risk even if they do not always name individual politicians as victims. Fund for Peace. (2018)

4. Economic Violence includes tactics such as withholding resources, excluding women from fundraising networks, and sabotaging their campaigns. Studies reveal that femalecandidates in Nigeria often face financial barriers, compounded by deliberate efforts to limit their access to funding (Afolabi, 2022). Qualitative studies and journalistic testimony (especially from northern and central states) show that party gatekeepers commonly direct scarce campaign resources toward favoured candidates and away from women, effectively starving female campaigns of essential finance and logistical support. Women are being "cheated" of resources, denied endorsements, or publicly shamed—practices that combine economic exclusion with reputational costs and operate as coordinated political marginalisation (Punch, 2016). This intra-party economic discrimination compounds the structural problem of money politics by turning party machinery into an instrument of economic violence. Punch. (2016, August 14).

Impact on Women's Political Participation

The implications of political violence for women's participation are profound. Beyond the immediate physical and psychological harm, such violence reinforces systemic barriers to women's inclusion in governance. According to recent data, women's representation in Nigeria remains one of the lowest globally, with only 7% of parliamentary seats held by women (UN Women, 2023). Political violence discourages women from contesting elections, perpetuating their underrepresentation and limiting the diversity of perspectives in policymaking (Adeyemi & Okoye, 2021).

Timeline of cases (2018-2023)

North-Central Nigeria presents a useful empirical site for a comparative analysis because its combination of ethno-regional cleavages, competitive two-party dynamics, and histories of localized electoral violence create conditions in which party strategies toward women can be contrasted meaningfully. Case evidence from recent electoral cycles suggests variation in how the PDP and APC either protect, instrumentalize, or ignore women. These patterns are often shaped by party organization, candidate selection processes, and the relative strength of state institutions for preventing and prosecuting violence. Amnesty International, (2021). Understanding these intra-regional differences helps move the literature beyond simple claims that "politics is violent" but intimidate on how motives and dimensions of violence differ by actor, tactic, and context.

At the outset of the presentation, it worthy to note that those incidents that are more lethal are cited first, and as such Kogi is top on the case timeline.

Timeline and Case Evidence of (Political Violence that Women targeted) Kogi , Nasarawa Benue States

Date	Location	Event	Actors (reported)	Immediate Impact	References
18 Nov 2019	Kogi – Ochadamu	PDP women leader Salome AchejuAbuh burnt alive in her home after 2019 election	Alleged APC political thugs (reported)	1 death; national outrage; arrests later reported	(Premium Times, 2019)
25 Nov 2019	Kogi – Ochadamu	Police arrest suspects in Abuh murder; later convictions reported (2021)	Police-reported suspects; alleged party-linked assailants	Arrests; at least one conviction/sentencing reported	(Premium Times, 2019; Premium Times, 2021,The Vanguard , 2019)
Mid–Nov 2019	Kogi – multiple venues	Wider pattern of election-day harassment and attacks targeting women activists and candidates	Alleged APC/PDP party thugs	Heightened fear among women contestants; protests by women's groups	(Premium Times; Daily Post, 2019)
November 2019	INEC headquarters Lokoja	Apoti was pushed to the ground and attacked.	Akpoti described them as political thugs	The Kogi APC publicly accused Akpoti of staging or faking the attack	(Premium Times; November 2019, Daily Trust November 2019)
15 Apr 2025	Kogi – Obeiba (Okehi LGA)	Gunmen attack Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan's	Unknown gunmen (investigation ongoing)	Property damage; police probe; increased security concerns	(Premium Times, 2025; Punch, 2025)

		family residence			
Mar 2025	Nigeria-wide (notably Kogi)	'We are all Natasha' protests and solidarity marches after suspension and sexual harassment claims involving Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan	Women's rights groups, civil society coalitions	Mass protests in several states; national conversation on sexism in politics	(The Guardian, 2025)
Benue State October 2018):	the Ogbadibo constituency	Barr. Aida-Nath Ogwuche PDP aspirant: thugs tied to a rival attacked her campaign team, beat her and tried to strip her in public;	Alleged thugs tied to a rival party.	the story triggered media coverage, social-media debate and local outrage	(Vanguard Nigeria, 2018; Tori.ng, 2018).
Sept 2023	Nasarawa – Statewide	beating and wounding of women who were merely expressing displeasure with a legal/judicial outcome.	Violent disruption of peaceful women protesters allegedly by a military formation,	PDP blamed security forces / military for alleged attacks on their women protesters	(Punch; Nasarawa women coalition reports, 2025)

Table 1

Political violence targeting women in North Central Nigeria is generally perpetrated by party thugs and supporters of various political parties, with studies and reports often linking

the major political parties, such as the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), as well as their predecessors, to such incidents. It is often a tactic used by both ruling and opposition parties to gain power or suppress the opposition.

Table 1. Colum 1 shows one of the most prominent incidents, the brutal murder of Mrs. Salome Achejuh Abuh, the PDP Women Leader for the Wada/Aro Campaign Council. She was burned to death in her home in the Ochadamu area of the state by suspected political thugs following the November 2019 gubernatorial election. Reports from election observers and news outlets linked the perpetrators to the ruling party in the state, the APC. The incident sparked widespread condemnation and calls for justice. It was alleged that APC thugs were responsible for the attack.

While no official statement was made linking the killing to the APC, the confession by one culprit was recorded. However to validate or nullify the assertion, interviews were conducted with some key informants and 70% , that is 10 out of the fifteen people interviewed stated that the murderers were APC thugs. K3 in particular stated that " APC members in the state could not withstand opposition, and coming from a woman was another ball game altogether. She noted that even the so-called political empowerment of women , attributed to Yahaya Bello's influence on party leaders to allocate all deputy local government chairperson's positions to women , was more of a window dressing issue." Field work (2025)

Colum 2 of the above table indicates that arrests were made, at least one person was convicted (Ocholi Edicha), and another (Kabir Bala) was later killed by police. According to the Vanguard, one culprit, Ocholi Edicha stated that he was an APC member when paraded by the police. The Vanguard,(2019)

Colum 3 on the table above shows that during the 2019 Kogi State governorship election, women activists and party officials were specifically targeted as part of a broader pattern of election-day harassment and violent intimidation. Violent incidents ranged from threats and harassment to lethal attacks on women engaged in party organizing and campaign work, culminating in the widely reported burning to death of a prominent PDP women's leader, Salome (Acheju) Abuh, in her home—an event that became emblematic of how gendered violence intersected with electoral conflict in the state (Premium Times, 2019).

Colum 4. Captured the 2019 campaign period where Akpoti reported multiple hostile incidents. At a stakeholders/INEC event in Lokoja in November 2019 she and her campaign team were accosted by men Akpoti described as political thugs; she posted that she had been pushed to the ground and attacked. However, the Kogi APC publicly accused Akpoti of staging or faking the attack and questioned aspects of her account; local government/party actors and a government aide also issued rebuttals that downplayed or disputed the attack narrative. However, data from our interview in Kogi state supports Natasha, s account. K1,K3, K7, 8,and K9, respective stated that Akpoti was attacked by party tugs. Although K9 did not witness it three out of the five respondents from the state supported the narrative, witnessed the attack.

Colum 5 shows how on the night of 15 April 2025, gunmen attacked the family of SenetorAkpoti at their residence in Obeiba-Ihima, Okehi LGA of Kogi State. They vandalized windows and attempted forced entry before being repelled by civic defenses and locals. No immediate arrests were reported. The Guardian. (2025, June 19). Later, gunmen attack Sen Natasha's family home again, one suspect was caught, others flee. While no official statement was made about the culprit, but an interviewee from

Ohima LGA , that is K3 "stated that we all know that it was carried out by the former governor of the state , who is an APC member." This view was supported by K1 from Lokoja who added that" rival party members are envious of the development projects that senator Natasha sited in her constituency"; suggesting that the APC was involved in the attack.

Colum six: On 5 March 2025, Senator Natasha Apoti from Kogi Central senatorial district formally submitted a petition to the Senate alleging sexual harassment, abuse of office, and obstruction of her legislative duties. The next day, on 6 March, the committee responsible — Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions — dismissed the petition as "dead on arrival." They cited two main reasons: that it was signed by Natasha herself (against Senate rules), and that the allegations were already before a court. She was also suspended from the senate for six months, for breaking senate rules. Consequent to that, Women's rights groups thus condemned her suspension, and hundreds of women and girls marched in the states of Lagos, Enugu, Edo and Kaduna on Wednesday during a "We are all Natasha" protest convened by the civil society coalition 'Womanifesto'.

Some opposition senators who are not members of the APC visited Akpoti-Uduaghan to show support. Akpoti -Udaughan reported that she received supportive emails from women across Nigeria, including some who were afraid to speak up about their own experiences. "In Nigeria, most women who are sexually harassed in workplaces don't even tell their husbands because they are afraid of being judged," she said. The above indicates that an APC member was directly involved in an alleged sexual harassment of a PDP member from Kogi Central.

Colum seven shows the case of Barr. Aida-Nath Ogwuche, a PDP House of Assembly aspirant in Benue. In the accounts she gave after the party primaries (reported October 2018) she said thugs tied to a rival attacked her campaign team, beat her and tried to strip her in public; the incident took place around the Ogbadibo constituency primaries in Benue State. While no political party was mentioned data from the interviews in the state linked the attack to members of the APC as the major culprits, K9 state specifically that the tugs were APC members.

The last Colum is the incident in Nasarawa state which shows that state or security-actor violence against female protesters in Nasarawa is not isolated — rather, there is a pattern of using force to suppress women's political dissent. Following the 2023 election Supreme Court verdict, a coalition of women's groups known as "Nasarawa 30" who protested the outcome reported being assaulted, beaten, and shot at by security agents at the instance of those they were protesting against (impliedly, the victorious party/politicians).PDP blamed security forces / military for alleged attacks on their women protesters; these were framed as state repression rather than APC party action.

Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate that violence against women in politics in North Central Nigeria is deliberate, gendered, and strategically deployed to suppress women's political participation. Across the cases examined, women were targeted at moments of heightened political relevance—during elections, party primaries, campaign activities, and post-election protests—suggesting that violence was motivated by the desire to silence opposition voices and deter women from occupying influential political roles.

Evidence from the findings further shows a disproportionate attribution of responsibility to the All Progressives Congress (APC) compared to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). In the most prominent case, the murder of Salome Achejuh Abuh following the 2019 Kogi governorship election, 70% of interview

respondents identified APC-affiliated thugs as the perpetrators. This perception is reinforced by police records and media reports indicating that one convicted individual publicly identified himself as an APC member. Although no official party statement linked the APC to the killing, the convergence of interview data, media reporting, and judicial outcomes points to ruling-party actors as the primary beneficiaries of the violence.

Similar patterns appear in other cases. Several interviewees attributed the physical assault and harassment of Senator Natasha Akpoti during the 2019 campaign period to APC-linked thugs, with four out of five respondents from Kogi State supporting this narrative. Later attacks on her family home were again widely perceived by interviewees as politically motivated and linked to APC powerholders, reflecting how violence extended beyond campaign spaces into private domains. These incidents occurred in a context where the APC controlled state institutions, reinforcing perceptions of ruling-party dominance over coercive actors.

The forms of violence documented were distinctly gendered. Women experienced lethal attacks, beatings, attempted forced entry into homes, and sexualized humiliation, such as the attempted public stripping of Barr. Aida-Nath Ogwuche during party primaries in Benue State. Although no party affiliation was officially stated in her case, interview data again linked the attackers primarily to APC actors rather than the PDP. These forms of violence served not only to physically harm women but also to shame, intimidate, and socially discredit them, thereby raising the cost of women's political participation.

Institutional and state-mediated violence further reinforced this pattern. The dismissal of Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan's sexual harassment petition and her subsequent suspension from the Senate illustrate how formal political institutions—dominated by APC leadership at the national level—can be used to delegitimize women's claims and protect powerful male actors. Likewise, the violent suppression of women-led protests in Nasarawa by security agents following the 2023 Supreme Court verdict was widely framed by opposition actors as state repression rather than intra-party conflict, again implicating ruling-party control over security institutions.

While the findings do not suggest that the PDP is entirely free from violent practices, the evidence consistently shows that the APC—particularly where it functions as the ruling party—features more prominently in allegations of violence against women. This reflects the broader structural advantage of incumbency, including access to state resources, security forces, and informal coercive networks. Overall, the findings suggest that gendered political violence in North Central Nigeria is most intense where ruling-party power intersects with patriarchal norms, enabling the systematic targeting of women who challenge political dominance.

Conclusion

Political violence against women in North Central Nigeria is deliberate, gendered, and strategically deployed to suppress female political participation. Evidence from Kogi, Benue, and Nasarawa shows that women leaders and activists face lethal attacks, sexualized harassment, intimidation, and institutional marginalization, with the APC as the ruling partyemerging as the main perpetrator in most documented cases. These includes the murder of Salome Abuh and attacks on Senator Natasha Akpoti. Such violence occurs at key political moments, including elections, party primaries, and protests, signaling a systematic effort to maintain male-dominated power structures. These patterns highlight the urgent need for legal accountability, institutional reforms, and civil society advocacy to protect women's political rights and challenge the entrenched

impunity that allows ruling-party actors to weaponize violence against female politicians.

Recommendations

Addressing gendered political violence in North Central Nigeria requires strengthening legal enforcement and ensuring independent, impartial prosecution of offenders. Political parties—particularly the All Progressives Congress and the Peoples Democratic Party—must adopt clear internal sanctions against members involved in violence and explicitly prohibit gender-based political intimidation.

Electoral security systems should be reformed to reduce partisan influence, incorporate gender-sensitive training, and improve monitoring during high-risk periods such as primaries and campaigns. Institutional protection mechanisms, including independent grievance committees, should safeguard women who report harassment.Long-term solutions require transforming patriarchal norms through community advocacy, strengthening women's political support networks, and establishing a centralized database to document and track violence against women in politics for evidence-based policymaking.

Acknowledgements: I sincerely appreciate Tetfund for the sponsorship of this research and publication.

References

Adeyemi, T., & Okoye, U. (2021). Gendered political violence and women's participation in electoral processes in Nigeria. Journal of African Elections, 20(2), 45–63.

Afolabi, C. Y. (2022). Women and Insecurity in Nigeria: The Way Forward. Frontiers in Sociology, 7, Article 734190. https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2022.734190

Amnesty International. (2021). Nigeria: Joint statement on ending political violence and human rights abuses ahead of elections (AI Index: AFR 44/002/2007). Amnesty International.

Arum, I. &Oluwaleye, J. M. (2024). Women and political participation in Nigeria: Is patriarchal nature of Nigeria a factor? Journal of Gender, Politics & Development Studies, (Maiden Edition).

Cohen, D. K. (2016). Rape during civil war. Cornell University Press.

Davies, S. E., & True, J. (Eds.). (2019). The Oxford handbook of women, peace, and security. Oxford University Press.

Egbejule, E. (2025, March 16). 'We are all Natasha': senator's sexual harassment claims roil Nigeria. The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/16/senator-sexual-harassment-claims-nigeria-natasha-akpoti-uduaghan

Eze, S., & Okonkwo, O. (2024). Gender-based violence and the political exclusion of women in Nigeria. Journal of Political Violence, 11(3), 131–145.

Fidelis, F. (2024). Challenges to women's active political participation in Northern Nigeria: The interplay of education, religious-cultural norms, and financial barriers. Religion and Policy Journal.

Fund for Peace. (2018). Violence affecting women and girls in select Nigerian states: Quarterly report (Aug–Oct 2018). The Fund for Peace. Retrieved from https://fundforpeace.org/.../VAWG-Quarterly-Report-Aug-Oct.pdf

Hadzic, D., &Tavits, M. (2019). The gendered effects of violence on political engagement. The Journal of Politics, 81(2), 676–680. https://doi.org/10.1086/701764

International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Nigeria. (2023). FIDA midyear

report: Final correction (FIDA-Midyear-Report-Final-Correction.pdf). FIDA Nigeria.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) (2016) – global report on women legislators' experiences:

Kishi, R. (2022). Political Violence Targeting Women in West Africa. West African Papers, No. 34. OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/0b214920-en

Krook, M. L. (2017). Violence against women in politics. Journal of Democracy, 28(1), 74–88.

Krook, M. L., & Restrepo Sanín, J. (2019). Global feminist collaborations and the concept of violence against women in politics. Journal of International Affairs, 72(2), 77–94.

Manne, K. (2017). Down girl: The logic of misogyny. Oxford University Press.

Mezie-Okoye, C. C. (2024). Political violence and women's participation in Nigerian politics. Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies, 6(4), 91–101.

Omirin, O. (2025, March 9). IWD: Declare femicide a national emergency, Coalition, others tell Tinubu. BusinessDay. https://businessday.ng/news/article/iwd-declare-femicide-a-national-emergency-coalition-others-tell-tinubu/

ParlAmericas. (n.d.). Violence against women in politics. ParlAmericas.

Punch Nigeria. (2016, August 14). Northern female politicians share heartrending tales: We get beaten, cheated, threatened, called prostitutes. Punch. https://punchng.com/northern-female-politicians-share-heartrending-tales-get-beaten-cheated-threatened-called-prostitutes/

Tripp, A. M. (2015). Women and politics in post-conflict Africa. Cambridge University Press.

The Nation, (2025) ActionAid Nigeria says 45% of women have experienced cyberstalking.The Nation Newspaper December , 2025

Ugwu, C. Scholastica. (2024). Political Violence and Women's Participation. International Journal of Scientific Research in Humanities, Legal Studies and International Relations, Vol. 8 No. 1. International Policy Brief. https://internationalpolicybrief.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/ARTICLE-12.pdf

Umar, S., Mohammed, R., & Yakubu, L. (2020). Gender norms, elite resistance, and women's political participation in Northern Nigeria. Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD).