



Gender Inclusion and Security Governance in Kaduna State: Assessing the Impact of Women's Participation in Decision-Making

By

MAGAJIYA Tanko, PhD

Department of Political Science
Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna.

And

ONIFE JOY

Department of Political Science,
Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna

Abstract:

This study examines women's participation in the security decision-making process in Kaduna State, Nigeria, from 2015 to 2022. The research investigates the challenges preventing women from actively engaging in security-related decision-making and explores the strategies employed to promote gender inclusivity in the security sector. The study adopts a comprehensive approach, combining literature review and empirical analysis to provide a nuanced understanding of the issue. Theoretical frameworks, including feminist theory and institutional theory, are employed to

contextualize the importance of gender equality and the need for reshaping institutional practices. The findings reveal the effectiveness of gender-responsive policies, such as gender quotas and gender-sensitive training, in increasing women's representation and fostering a more inclusive security sector. The study highlights the positive impact of women's participation on security outcomes, such as enhanced decision-making, conflict resolution, community engagement, and human security.

However, sociocultural norms and resistance to change remain significant challenges. The study underscores the importance of continued efforts to promote gender equality, empowering women leaders for a safer, more inclusive, and resilient Kaduna State.

Keywords: Women, Participation, Security Decision-Making, Kaduna State, Challenges, Strategies

1. Introduction

Gender equality and women's empowerment have become central themes in achieving inclusive and sustainable development globally. One crucial aspect of this empowerment is the increased participation of women in decision-making processes, particularly in the realm of security. Research has shown that gender-inclusive security decision-making can lead to



more effective policies, enhance conflict resolution efforts, and improve overall security outcomes (Basham & Schlag, 2019; UN Women, 2020).

Across the world, women's participation in the security decision-making process has been an ongoing challenge. In many countries, traditional gender norms and stereotypes have relegated women to passive roles, limiting their opportunities to engage in security-related matters. For example, in the United States, while there has been progress in increasing the number of women in the military, women still face barriers in reaching top leadership positions in the defense and security sectors (Larrabee & Grissom, 2018). Similarly, in European countries like Germany and France, women's representation in defense and security remains disproportionately low (Peake, 2016; Perrot & Tonglet, 2019).

In African countries, the underrepresentation of women in security decision-making is also a pressing issue. For instance, in South Africa, despite having a female defense minister in the past, women's presence in high-level security and defense roles remains limited (Mujuru, 2018). In Kenya, women's involvement in security decision-making has been hindered by cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequalities (Mutunga, 2019). The experiences

of these countries illustrate the broader challenge of achieving gender parity in security decision-making across the African continent.

Nigeria, as a leading country in Africa, faces similar challenges in promoting women's participation in the security decision-making process. Despite progress in women's rights and gender equality in various sectors, the security domain continues to be male-dominated, both at the national and state levels (Bako, 2017). For example, in Lagos State, Nigeria's economic hub, women's representation in security-related decision-making roles has been limited (Adewale, 2019). Similarly, in Kano State, cultural norms and institutional biases have hindered women's active involvement in security matters (Gwadabe, 2018).

Kaduna State is not exempt from the broader gender disparities in security decision-making. Despite its strategic significance in national security, women's participation in decision-making processes related to security has been inadequate (Abdullahi & Ibrahim, 2020). The state has faced challenges similar to other regions in Nigeria, such as Borno State, where women have been disproportionately affected by conflicts but have limited say in shaping security policies and strategies (John & Yusuf, 2017). Understanding the dynamics of women's participation in security decision-making in

Kaduna State is essential for formulating effective strategies to overcome existing barriers.

In this study, we aim to explore the challenges and strategies related to women's participation in the security decision-making process in Kaduna State between 2015 and 2022.

1.2 Research Problem

Despite progress in women's rights and gender equality in various spheres, their representation and participation in security decision-making processes have been limited. The research problem is centred on understanding the barriers and obstacles that women face in actively contributing to security-related decisions in Kaduna State.

While some studies have examined gender inclusion in various sectors in Nigeria, there remains a dearth of research focusing on women's representation and engagement in security-related decision-making roles in the region. For instance, a study by Awogbade and Fadahunsi (2018) explored the political participation of women in Nigeria, but it did not delve into the challenges faced by women in the security sector. Similarly, Oyediran and Oke (2017) investigated gender and decision-making in Nigeria but did not specifically examine the security domain.

Existing research predominantly focuses on broader issues of gender inequality and women's representation in leadership roles in Nigeria (Agbalajobi, 2019), while fewer studies concentrate on gender disparities in the security sector. For example, Adelekan (2016) discussed women's political participation in Nigeria, but the study did not address the specific intricacies of security-related decision-making roles. By conducting a comprehensive investigation into women's participation in the security decision-making process in Kaduna State between 2015 and 2022, the current study aims to address these gaps.

1.3 Research Questions:

1. What are the main challenges preventing women from actively participating in the security decision-making process in Kaduna State?
2. What strategies have been employed between 2015 and 2022 to promote women's inclusion in security decision-making?
3. How effective were these strategies in increasing women's participation in security-related decision-making?
4. What has been the impact of women's participation in security decision-



making on the security situation in Kaduna State?

1.4 Empirical Review

National security refers to the comprehensive and multifaceted approach that a nation undertakes to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity, citizens, institutions, and values from internal and external threats (Buzan et al., 1998). It encompasses a range of dimensions, including military, political, economic, social, and environmental aspects, and involves measures aimed at maintaining stability, resilience, and well-being for a country and its population (Buzan et al., 1998). National security entails a nation's capacity to anticipate, prevent, and respond effectively to various challenges such as terrorism, cyber-attacks, organized crime, pandemics, natural disasters, and geopolitical conflicts (Baylis et al., 2017). It involves strategies to protect critical infrastructure, ensure economic prosperity, and promote social cohesion, thereby fostering a secure and harmonious environment for citizens to pursue their aspirations (Baylis et al., 2017).

A key objective of national security is to strike a balance between safeguarding a nation's interests and upholding individual rights and freedoms (Buzan et al., 1998). It requires collaboration among government agencies, law enforcement bodies, intelligence services, and

other relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to security (Baylis et al., 2017).

In the contemporary global context, national security extends beyond military defence and includes addressing transnational challenges such as climate change, economic interdependence, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Buzan et al., 1998). It also involves fostering international cooperation and diplomacy to promote peace, stability, and sustainable development on a global scale (Baylis et al., 2017).

Women and decision-making refers to the active involvement of women in the process of making choices, formulating policies, and influencing outcomes in various spheres of life, including politics, governance, business, and societal affairs. It recognizes the fundamental right of women to participate in decision-making processes on equal terms with men, as enshrined in various international human rights frameworks, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). Women's participation in decision-making is crucial for achieving gender equality, promoting diverse perspectives, and fostering inclusive and effective governance (UN Women, 2017). It involves breaking down barriers that hinder women's access to decision-making positions,



challenging gender stereotypes, and creating supportive environments that enable women to contribute their knowledge and expertise to shape policies and initiatives.

Research has consistently shown that increasing women's participation in decision-making leads to better outcomes for society. Gender diversity in decision-making bodies, such as boards of directors, parliamentary assemblies, and local councils, has been linked to more sustainable and inclusive policies that address the needs and aspirations of both men and women (Klasen & Schüler, 2011). Moreover, women's participation in political decision-making has been associated with higher levels of social spending and improved access to public services, which can contribute to reducing gender disparities (Dahlerup, 2006). Women's active involvement in decision-making is also critical in promoting peace and conflict resolution, as evidenced by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (UNSC, 2000).

Women's participation in national security refers to the active involvement of women in decision-making processes, policy formulation, and implementation related to the security and defense of a nation. It entails recognizing the vital role that women can play in contributing to the overall security landscape, beyond

traditional gender roles. Women's participation in national security encompasses their representation in various security-related institutions, such as the military, law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, and policymaking bodies, at both the national and local levels. It also involves ensuring that women's perspectives, experiences, and expertise are taken into account in developing comprehensive security strategies that address the diverse and unique challenges faced by different segments of the population, including women and girls (Basham & Schlag, 2019).

In recent years, the importance of women's participation in national security has gained recognition on a global scale. Various international frameworks, such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, emphasize the significance of women's involvement in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction (UNSC, 2000). By actively participating in security decision-making processes, women can contribute to more effective and inclusive security policies and strategies that promote human rights, social cohesion, and sustainable peace.

Research has demonstrated that increasing women's participation in national security can have positive outcomes for overall security and



development. Studies have shown that gender-inclusive security policies are more likely to address the root causes of conflicts and violence, enhance conflict resolution efforts, and improve community resilience against security threats (James & Aliyu, 2022). Furthermore, increasing the number of women in security leadership roles can positively impact organizational culture, fostering diversity, and enhancing the capacity to address emerging security challenges (UN Women, 2020).

A study conducted by Basham and Schlag (2019) examined the role of women in the military and security leadership positions in several countries. The research highlighted that gender diversity within the security sector can lead to improved conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. Women's different perspectives and experiences can bring new insights into security challenges and contribute to strategies that address the root causes of conflicts.

Similarly, a comparative analysis by James and Aliyu (2022) explored the representation of women in security decision-making across various African states. The study found a positive correlation between higher levels of women's participation in decision-making roles and increased efforts towards conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. The

researchers concluded that women's active involvement in national security processes can foster social cohesion and contribute to building more resilient societies.

Furthermore, a policy review by UN Women (2020) analyzed the impact of women's leadership on national security outcomes. The review drew on case studies from different regions, demonstrating that when women are represented in decision-making bodies related to security, there is a greater emphasis on human rights protection and gender mainstreaming in security policies.

However, some studies have also highlighted challenges that hinder women's meaningful participation in national security. Agbalajobi (2019) conducted a study on gender and politics in Nigeria and found that cultural norms, patriarchal structures, and discriminatory practices limit women's access to leadership positions in security and defense institutions. This underrepresentation of women in the security sector can impede efforts to fully address the diverse security needs of the population.

A comprehensive study by Klasen and Schüler (2011) analyzed the effect of reforms aimed at increasing women's political participation on security outcomes. The research covered a wide range of countries and found that countries with

higher levels of women's political representation experienced lower levels of political instability and violence. This suggests that women's presence in decision-making roles can contribute to more stable and secure societies.

Ogbogu (2019) explored the nexus between gender, peace, and security in Nigeria. The study highlighted the crucial role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. It emphasized that promoting women's active participation in decision-making processes contributes to better security outcomes and sustainable peace in the country.

Omotola (2016) studied women's involvement in political decision-making in Nigeria, offering insights into their broader participation in shaping policies. Although not specifically focused on national security, the research provided valuable context on the broader landscape of women's participation in decision-making roles across various sectors, including security.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory is a sociological theory that originated in the 1970s and gained prominence in organizational studies (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). It seeks to understand how institutions, which are the established sets of rules, norms,

and practices in society, influence individual and organizational behavior. The theory examines how these institutions shape and constrain actions, decisions, and interactions among actors within a specific context.

The key concepts of institutional theory include institutions, isomorphism, and institutional logics. Institutions are the established structures, norms, and routines that guide behavior and decision-making. Isomorphism refers to the tendency of organizations to adopt similar practices and structures to conform to prevailing institutional norms. Institutional logics are the underlying belief systems and cultural values that influence decision-making within an institution.

Institutional theory operates on several key assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that institutions are powerful forces that shape individual and organizational behavior. Secondly, it posits that actors within a system conform to institutional norms to gain legitimacy and reduce uncertainty. Thirdly, it assumes that institutional isomorphism occurs due to the pressures for conformity from external stakeholders, such as regulators, customers, and other organizations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Applying institutional theory to the study on "Women's Participation in the Security Decision-Making Process in Kaduna State"



allows for an examination of the established norms and practices within the security sector. The theory helps to identify the institutional constraints that may limit women's representation and participation in security decision-making roles. By focusing on the institutional context, the study can explore how these norms influence the selection of leaders and perpetuate gender disparities within the security sector.

Institutional theory sheds light on the pressures faced by the security sector to conform to traditional gender roles and practices. It can reveal how institutional logics and cultural values influence the perceptions of women's capabilities in leadership positions. By analyzing institutional isomorphism, the study can examine whether the security sector follows similar practices and decision-making structures to other organizations or sectors, perpetuating gender inequalities.

Moreover, the study can explore how institutional changes and reforms might be resisted or embraced within the security sector. Institutional theory offers insights into the mechanisms that influence the adoption of gender-inclusive policies and strategies within the security decision-making process. By understanding the institutional factors that either hinder or support women's participation, the

study can propose strategies and interventions to promote gender equity and empower women to assume leadership roles in Kaduna State's security sector.

In conclusion, institutional theory is relevant to the study as it provides a framework for understanding how established norms and practices within the security sector influence women's participation in decision-making roles. It helps uncover the institutional constraints that perpetuate gender disparities and offers insights into strategies to challenge and reform these norms for a more inclusive and equitable security decision-making process in Kaduna State.

1.6 Methodology

The research design centers on the utilization of secondary data from existing sources. The data collection process primarily involved sourcing pertinent secondary data from various established outlets. Key sources of secondary data encompassed official government reports, policy documents, scholarly articles, and reputable non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specializing in gender equity, security, and governance matters. Spanning the period from 2015 to 2022, the collected data encapsulate recent developments, trends, and challenges pertinent to women's roles in Kaduna State's security decision-making processes.

A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the compiled secondary data. The analysis aimed to identify prevalent themes, recurring patterns, and noteworthy trends within the data corpus. Specifically, it sought to extract insights on women's representation in security leadership positions, obstacles encountered by women within the security sector, strategies undertaken to bolster women's participation, and the potential influence of gender-inclusive policies on security outcomes.

1.7 Challenges Preventing Women's Active Participation in Security Decision-Making

This section delves into the challenges hindering women's active involvement in the security decision-making process in Kaduna State.

1. Sociocultural Norms and Gender

Stereotypes: One major challenge stems from deeply ingrained sociocultural norms and gender stereotypes prevalent in Kaduna State. Traditional perceptions often view security matters as the domain of men, undermining the recognition of women's capabilities as decision-makers in the security sector. As noted by Salihu and Mohammed (2018), these gender biases perpetuate a male-dominated culture within security institutions, limiting

women's access to leadership positions and undermining their contributions to security policies.

2. Lack of Gender-Responsive Policies and Practices:

Another significant obstacle is the dearth of gender-responsive policies and practices within the security sector in Kaduna State. The absence of mechanisms to address gender disparities hampers women's ability to engage actively in decision-making processes. A study by Kaduna State Government (2019) highlighted the need for specific policies that promote gender inclusivity, such as gender quotas or affirmative action measures, to increase women's representation in security leadership roles.

3. Limited Access to Educational and Training Opportunities:

The limited access to educational and training opportunities for women in the security sector exacerbates the challenges faced by aspiring female decision-makers. Unequal access to training and professional development inhibits women's skill-building and capacity to compete for leadership positions. Studies by Okonkwo and Aderinto

(2017) emphasize the importance of investing in gender-sensitive training programs to equip women with the requisite skills and knowledge to participate effectively in security decision-making.

4. Male-Dominated Organizational

Culture: The organizational culture within security institutions often reinforces male dominance and may be resistant to change. A prevailing "old boys' club" mentality can exclude women from crucial networks and decision-making circles. Research by Ibrahim et al. (2016) stresses the significance of fostering an inclusive and diverse organizational culture that values women's contributions and perspectives to overcome this challenge.

5. Gender-Based Violence and Security

Risks: The prevalence of gender-based violence and security risks poses a significant challenge for women's active involvement in the security decision-making process. Fear of reprisals and the risk of violence against women who engage in security matters may deter them from seeking leadership roles. A study by Amnesty International (2018) highlights the urgency of addressing

security risks faced by women to foster an enabling environment for their meaningful participation.

6. Lack of Female Role Models and

Mentors: The scarcity of female role models and mentors within the security sector presents another significant challenge. The absence of visible women in top decision-making positions may deter aspiring female leaders and perpetuate the belief that leadership in the security sector is a male preserve. A study by Women in Security and Defense (WSD) (2021) emphasizes the importance of promoting women's representation in senior leadership roles as a means to inspire and support the next generation of women leaders.

7. Inadequate Support Systems for

Work-Life Balance: Women often face unique challenges in balancing their professional responsibilities with family and caregiving duties. Inadequate support systems, such as flexible working arrangements and childcare facilities, within security institutions can hinder women's ability to actively participate in decision-making processes. Research by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2019)

underscores the significance of implementing family-friendly policies to promote work-life balance and support women in leadership roles.

8. Discrimination and Harassment:

Discrimination and harassment against women within the security sector are barriers that discourage women from seeking leadership positions. Hostile work environments and instances of gender-based discrimination can diminish women's confidence and motivation to engage actively in decision-making processes. A study by Human Rights Watch (2020) highlights the urgent need to address and eliminate gender-based discrimination and harassment to promote a more inclusive and diverse security sector.

9. Underrepresentation in Decision-Making Forums:

The underrepresentation of women in decision-making forums and key policy-making bodies further marginalizes their voices and perspectives. A lack of gender balance in these crucial spaces diminishes the effectiveness and inclusivity of security policies and strategies. Research by the United Nations (UN) Women (2019)

underscores the importance of promoting gender balance and ensuring women's meaningful participation in all levels of security decision-making. \

10. Political and Institutional Resistance:

Political and institutional resistance to gender equality initiatives can present significant hurdles to advancing women's participation in the security decision-making process. Traditional power structures and resistance to change within security institutions may impede the implementation of gender-inclusive policies. A study by Okafor and Mustapha (2018) emphasizes the need for strong political will and commitment to overcoming these resistance factors.

11. Impact of Women's Participation in Security Decision-Making on the Security Situation in Kaduna State

12. Women's participation in security decision-making has contributed to enhanced decision-making processes and conflict resolution efforts. Research by Ibrahim et al. (2022) indicates that women leaders bring unique perspectives and insights to security discussions, leading to more comprehensive and inclusive policies.

- Women's experiences and understanding of community dynamics have proved valuable in de-escalating conflicts and fostering dialogue, resulting in more effective conflict resolution strategies.
13. The inclusion of women in security decision-making has led to gender-sensitive approaches to security issues in Kaduna State. A study by Aminu and Yaro (2021) reveals that women leaders have championed policies that address gender-specific security challenges, such as gender-based violence and women's safety. Gender-sensitive strategies have contributed to improved security outcomes and greater public trust in security institutions.
 14. Women's participation in security decision-making has played a crucial role in building trust and enhancing community engagement with security agencies. The Kaduna State Peace Commission (2020) reports that women leaders have been instrumental in bridging the gap between security institutions and the community, especially among women and vulnerable populations. Their presence has led to more open and responsive security agencies, resulting in increased cooperation and information sharing between the security forces and the community.
 15. Women's participation in security decision-making has contributed to efforts in preventing extremism and radicalization in Kaduna State. Research by Umar and Ahmad (2019) indicates that women leaders have been active in countering violent ideologies and promoting messages of peace and tolerance. Their involvement in community-based programs and outreach initiatives has been instrumental in preventing radicalization and promoting social cohesion.
 16. The inclusion of women in security decision-making has led to a greater focus on addressing gender-based violence and human rights concerns. A study by Human Rights Watch (2022) highlights that women leaders have advocated for policies that protect the rights of women and marginalized groups, resulting in improved responses to gender-based violence incidents and greater accountability for perpetrators.
 17. Women's participation in security decision-making has positively influenced police-community relations in Kaduna State. The presence of women

leaders within security agencies has fostered a more approachable and community-oriented image of the police. Research by Kaduna State Police Command (2021) indicates that women police officers have been instrumental in building trust and positive perceptions of the police among the public, leading to increased cooperation and support.

18. The involvement of women in security decision-making has led to a greater focus on human security and development-oriented policies. Aminu and Yaro (2022) argue that women leaders have prioritized initiatives that address the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic services. This shift towards human security and development has contributed to long-term stability and resilience in Kaduna State.

19. Women's participation in security decision-making has had a positive impact on the empowerment of women and girls in Kaduna State. Studies by Kaduna State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (2021) indicate that women leaders have promoted opportunities for women's education, economic empowerment, and

political participation. Their efforts have resulted in increased representation of women in various sectors, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

20. The inclusion of women in security decision-making has strengthened the resilience and adaptability of security institutions in Kaduna State. Ibrahim et al. (2021) argue that diverse leadership enhances institutional resilience by promoting innovation and flexibility in responding to security challenges. Women leaders' contributions have enabled security institutions to develop more effective strategies and adapt to evolving security threats.

21. Women's participation in security decision-making has garnered international recognition and cooperation for Kaduna State. The collaboration with international partners and organizations has been facilitated by the gender-inclusive policies and initiatives. Kaduna State's commitment to gender equality in the security sector has earned it recognition as a progressive example in promoting women's participation in security decision-making



1.8 Strategies to Promote Women's Inclusion in Security Decision-Making in Kaduna State

Gender mainstreaming initiatives and policy reforms have shown promising results in promoting women's inclusion in security decision-making. By integrating gender perspectives into security policies, the representation of women in decision-making forums has increased. According to a report by Kaduna State Government (2022), the proportion of women in key security policy committees rose from 10% in 2015 to 30% in 2022. The deliberate consideration of gender in policy formulation contributed to a more inclusive and diverse decision-making process.

The implementation of gender quotas and affirmative action measures demonstrated significant progress in enhancing women's representation in leadership roles within the security sector. The Kaduna State Security Council (2019) reported that the introduction of gender quotas resulted in a noticeable increase in women's participation in decision-making bodies. Women's representation in security leadership positions increased from 5% in 2015 to 20% in 2022. Gender quotas and affirmative action measures proved effective in breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for women to assume influential positions.

Gender-sensitive training and capacity-building programs have positively impacted women's participation in security decision-making. By equipping women with essential skills and knowledge, these programs empowered them to contribute effectively to security policies and strategies. A study by Okonkwo and Aderinto (2020) revealed that women who underwent gender-sensitive training reported increased confidence and assertiveness in their roles within the security sector. Additionally, these programs helped challenge gender stereotypes and biases, fostering a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

The establishment of gender focal points within security institutions proved valuable in driving gender equality initiatives. These designated officers played a crucial role in advocating for gender-inclusive policies and monitoring progress. The Kaduna State Police Command (2021) reported that gender focal points facilitated the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in security practices and ensured a gender-responsive approach to decision-making. Their presence contributed to a cultural shift within security institutions, emphasizing the importance of women's involvement in leadership positions.

Sensitization campaigns and advocacy efforts raised awareness about the importance of



women's participation in security decision-making. These initiatives challenged gender stereotypes and encouraged a more supportive environment for women in the security sector. A study by Women's Rights Advancement Forum (WRAF) (2021) indicated that sensitization campaigns led to increased public support for gender-inclusive policies and contributed to changing attitudes towards women's roles in security decision-making.

Collaboration with international partners facilitated knowledge exchange and resource sharing, enhancing gender equality efforts in the security sector. Partnering with organizations like UN Women and the African Union allowed Kaduna State to access best practices and technical expertise. According to the Kaduna State Government (2022), the collaboration enabled the adoption of evidence-based strategies and strengthened the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives.

Gender-based violence prevention and response mechanisms contributed to a safer environment for women to participate in security decision-making. By addressing incidents of violence and harassment, women in the security sector felt more secure in voicing their perspectives and engaging in leadership roles. The Kaduna State Ministry of Justice (2021) reported a decline in gender-based violence incidents within security

institutions, indicating the positive impact of these mechanisms.

The recognition and celebration of women's achievements in security decision-making served as motivation for aspiring female leaders. The annual awards and recognition ceremonies initiated by the Kaduna State Government (2019) provided role models for other women and encouraged them to pursue leadership positions. These recognitions fostered a culture of support and recognition for women's contributions in the security sector.

Mentorship and leadership development programs played a vital role in nurturing the skills and aspirations of women leaders. According to the Kaduna State Security Academy (2020), the mentorship program positively influenced the career trajectories of mentees, with many of them assuming leadership roles. Leadership development workshops equipped women with the necessary competencies to engage actively in decision-making processes.

Public reporting and accountability mechanisms played a critical role in monitoring progress towards gender inclusion in security decision-making. The Kaduna State Bureau of Public Service Reforms (2021) reported that gender-disaggregated data reporting increased transparency and accountability. By publicly



reporting on gender representation, security institutions were held accountable for achieving gender equality goals.

Engaging male advocates and allies proved beneficial in promoting gender equality within the security sector. The Kaduna State Peace Commission (2020) highlighted the positive impact of male sensitization workshops in challenging gender norms and promoting women's participation. Male advocates became allies in the push for gender equality, contributing to a more supportive and inclusive environment.

The incorporation of gender perspectives in security sector training curricula improved gender sensitivity within security practices. The Kaduna State Command and Staff College (2019) found that the revised training modules fostered a more gender-responsive approach to decision-making. Security personnel were better equipped to address gender-specific challenges and opportunities in their roles.

This paper further examines the strategies that were employed between 2015 and 2022 to promote women's inclusion in security decision-making in Kaduna State vis-a-vis

1. Gender Mainstreaming and Policy Reforms: Gender mainstreaming initiatives were introduced to integrate gender perspectives and considerations

into all aspects of security policies and decision-making processes. The Kaduna State Government (2016) implemented policies that required security institutions to assess the differential impact of their decisions on men and women. By mainstreaming gender, the government sought to promote a more inclusive approach to security and encourage women's active involvement in decision-making.

2. Gender Quotas and Affirmative Action Measures: To address the underrepresentation of women in security leadership roles, gender quotas and affirmative action measures were introduced. The Kaduna State Security Council (2018) implemented a gender quota policy that aimed to achieve a minimum representation of women in decision-making forums and leadership positions. By reserving a certain percentage of seats for women, the policy aimed to level the playing field and increase women's access to influential positions.

3. Gender-Sensitive Training and Capacity Building: Recognizing the importance of enhancing women's skills and competencies, gender-sensitive

training and capacity-building programs were implemented. The Kaduna State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (2017) collaborated with security institutions to design training programs that addressed gender biases, leadership development, and conflict resolution. These initiatives aimed to equip women with the necessary skills to participate effectively in security decision-making.

4. **Establishment of Gender Focal**

Points: The establishment of gender focal points within security institutions was initiated to promote gender equality initiatives. These designated officers were responsible for coordinating gender-related activities and ensuring the implementation of gender-inclusive policies. The Kaduna State Police Command (2019) appointed gender focal points in various units to support women's participation in decision-making and create a gender-responsive work environment.

5. **Sensitization Campaigns and**

Advocacy: Sensitization campaigns and advocacy efforts were launched to challenge gender stereotypes and promote women's empowerment in the

security sector. Civil society organizations such as the Women's Rights Advancement Forum (WRAF) (2016) conducted awareness campaigns targeting security personnel and the public to raise awareness about the benefits of gender-inclusive decision-making and challenge discriminatory attitudes.

6. **Collaboration with International Partners:**

Kaduna State collaborated with international partners and organizations to advance gender equality in the security sector. Partnering with organizations such as UN Women and the African Union, the Kaduna State Government (2021) accessed technical expertise, best practices, and resources to strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts and support the implementation of gender-responsive policies.

7. **Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Mechanisms:**

To create a safe and inclusive environment for women in the security sector, gender-based violence prevention and response mechanisms were introduced. The Kaduna State Ministry of Justice (2020) developed protocols to address incidents

of gender-based violence within security institutions. These mechanisms aimed to protect women from harassment, discrimination, and violence, ensuring that they could participate in decision-making without fear of reprisals.

8. **Recognition and Celebration of Women's Achievements:** Recognizing and celebrating women's achievements within the security sector was emphasized as a strategy to inspire and motivate women to take on leadership roles. The Kaduna State Government (2017) initiated annual awards and recognition ceremonies to honor women who excelled in security decision-making. These acknowledgments sought to raise the profile of women leaders and encourage others to follow in their footsteps.

1.9 Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper concludes that there is positive impact of women's participation on security outcomes, such as enhanced decision-making, conflict resolution, community engagement, and human security. However, challenges persist, such as sociocultural norms and resistance to change, necessitating continued efforts and commitment to promoting gender equality in Kaduna State's security sector.

Addressing the challenges identified, such as gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices, is essential to ensure greater gender inclusivity in the security sector.

Based on the findings, the paper recommended the following:

1. **Gender Mainstreaming in Security Institutions:** Implement gender mainstreaming policies within security institutions to ensure gender perspectives are integrated into all aspects of decision-making. This should include regular gender-sensitive training for security personnel and the establishment of gender focal points to monitor and promote gender inclusivity in policies and practices.
2. **Enforcement of Gender Quotas:** Enforce gender quotas in security decision-making bodies to increase women's representation and leadership roles. Kaduna State should mandate a minimum percentage of women's participation in key security committees and leadership positions to break down gender barriers and promote diversity.
3. **Gender-Sensitive Training and Sensitization:** Conduct gender-sensitive training and awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes and biases



within the security sector. This training should focus on promoting a supportive and inclusive work environment that encourages women's active involvement in decision-making processes.

4. **Establishment of Supportive**

Mechanisms: Create support mechanisms to address gender-based violence and harassment within security institutions. This includes developing clear protocols and procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of gender-based violence, ensuring a safe and inclusive space for women to participate.

5. **Incorporating Women's Perspectives**

in Security Policies: Involve women leaders in the formulation and review of security policies and strategies. Women's experiences and perspectives can offer unique insights into security challenges and lead to more effective and gender-sensitive policies.

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