

**From the Political Woman to us all:  
A Comparative Study of Policy making in  
Lagos State House of Assembly, Nigeria  
and Kajiado County Assembly, Kenya**



# Introduction



## Nigeria

- Federal Republic with 36 states and Federal Capital Territory- Abuja



## Kenya

- Has a devolved system of governance with 47 County Governments. Capital city-Nairobi

# Introduction



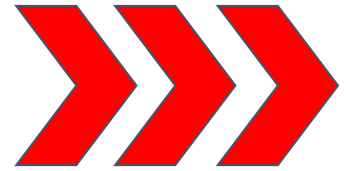
## Lagos

- 40 constituencies, 20 local governments
- 37 Local Council Development Areas
- 40 legislators (39 in APC and 1 Labour Party)



## Kajiado

- 25 wards
- 25 Members of County Assembly (MCAs) elected from UDA, ODM, Jubilee and Wiper Democratic Movement.
- 14 Female MCAs and 2 male MCAs nominated based on proportional representation to represent youth, minorities and persons with disabilities



## **Roles of the Assemblies**

**“ the legislature acts as the eyes, ears and voices of the people under a system of collective decision making”  
(Hansard Report Official Report Seventh Assembly  
Second Session 2012 4<sup>th</sup> June-2<sup>nd</sup> August 2012)**

# Roles of the Assemblies

## Lagos- Articles 90-129

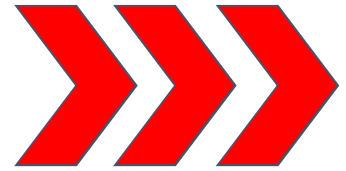
- Lawmaking
- Oversight
- Representation

## Kenya-Article 185 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010

- **Legislative Authority**
- Lawmaking
- Oversight
- Approval of plans and policies



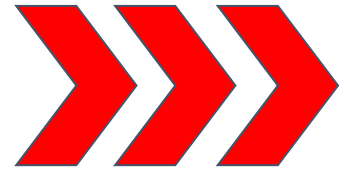
# Objectives of the Study



This study had the following objectives:

1. Examining the perceptions of women legislators by their male counterparts in the two sub-national governments
2. Assessing the peculiarities of women's representation in the two study contexts
3. Exploring on the strategies used by the women legislators in order to get support for their bills and motions
4. Identifying the nature of policies that have been passed by women policy makers in the state and county governments of Nigeria and Kenya respectively
5. Identifying the constraints faced by women in their quest for policy formulation





# Theoretical Framework

- Afro-Feminism
- Tamale (2020) in her book “ Decolonization and Afrofeminism” argues for an alternative to the western epistemologies that takes cognizance of the unique cultural, political-economical and traditional world-views.
- Colonialism worsened patriarchal norms
- Africa’s women unique experiences need to be considered as they negotiate for space in areas that they have been left out.
- Emphasizes bringing “her-story” in “his-story”



# Theoretical Framework: Yoruba Adages on Complementarity

*Àgbájo owó la fin so àyà, owó kan kò gbé erù dé orì (we beat the chest with a clenched fist, one hand cannot lift a heavy load onto the head).*

This is a social relationship principle where individuals or groups are meant to complement each other, in roles and functions.

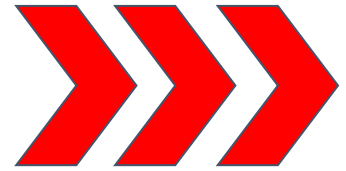




# Theoretical Framework: Yoruba Adages on Complementarity

*Kí á fi òtún we òsì, òsì we òtún ni owó fin mó  
(it is in using the right to wash the left and vice versa the the hands get cleaned).*

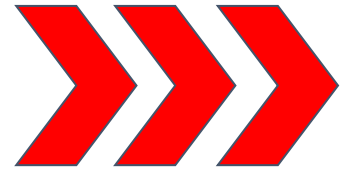




# Methodology

- Research Approach: Qualitative
- Research Design: Comparative
- Research site: Lagos State House of Assembly & Kajiado County Assembly
- Study population: male and female legislators, principal officers and academics
- Research Instruments: In-depth Interviews, Focus Group Discussions
- Observations, archival-Hansard Reports
- Data Analysis: Thematic (Nvivo)





# Findings

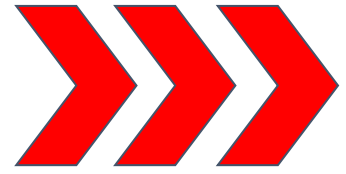
## Lagos

- 17 participants in total (5 women, 12 men)
- 15 legislators
- 2 Academics
- 3 Principal Officers

## Kajiado

- 27 participants
- 23 legislators (10 women, 13 men)
- 1 Legislative arm
- 2 principal officers
- 1 Chief Officer (Gender, Culture and Social Services)





# Findings: Bio Data

- Education:
- Lagos : 1 –7
- Kajiado: 1<sup>st</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup>
- Number of terms served in the Assembly
- Lagos: 1-4 terms
- Kajiado: 1-3 terms



# Objective 1: Perceptions of women legislators by their male counter parts

1

On mode of entry into the Assembly)



2

Performance in the Assembly



3

Descriptive representation-Elite women.

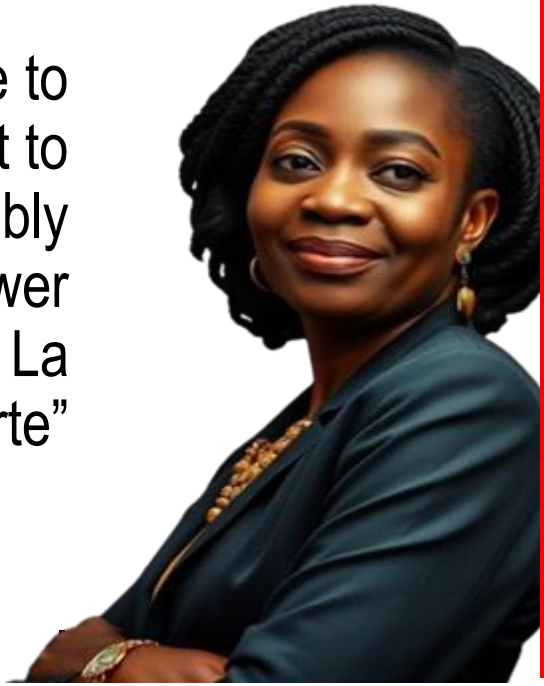


# Objective 1: Perceptions of women legislators by their male counterparts

## 1 Mode of Entry into the Assembly

### Lagos

They too have to struggle to get to the Assembly because “Power is not served a La Carte”



### Kajiado

“Power has been handed down to them on a silver platter”  
“Kajiado is a partriachal House and we are not about to make it a martriachal one



# Objective 1: Perceptions of women legislators by their male counter parts

## 2 Performance in the Assembly

### Lagos

“And the women amongst us, after six months, they become men”

“And we don't assume we have women on the floor of the House, we assume all of us are men”

“The female legislators here, they've been performing, just like the men. Their numbers may not be that much, but they're delivering on their mandate”

“The women in the house of assembly in Lagos State, they are fighters. They are fighters. Even if you see them contributing on the floor of the house, you'll know that they have been well trained”

“When they have motions, it's always attacked with sentiments. But law must not be made with sentiments”

### Kajiado

They are “wardless”.  
Who are they representing?

# Objective 1: Perceptions of women legislators by their male counterparts

## 3 Descriptive Representation

### Lagos

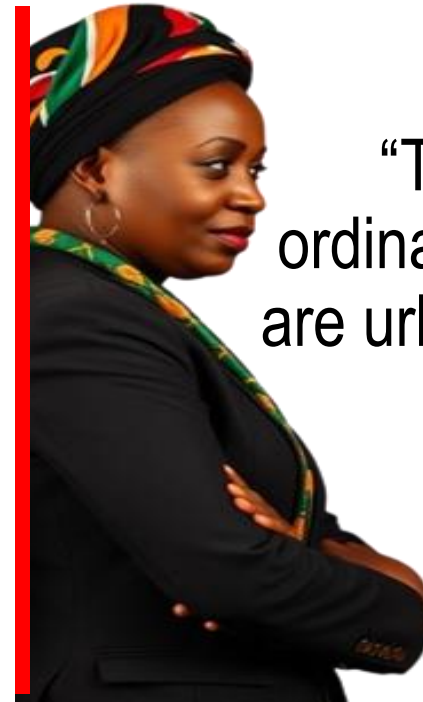
“there is the belief that women that are truly in active politics are there as a result of their pedigree, their lineage that they are coming from a privileged position that no woman has truly come out from the grassroot”

“she has been empowered, she's politically exposed, she has a lot of connections...



### Kajiado

“These are not the ordinary women. They are urban and not from the grassroots”.





## Objective 2: Peculiarities of women's representation

**These are based on the following:**

1. Age
2. Political experiences and exposure
3. Committees served



# Objective 2: Peculiarities of women's representation

## 1. Age

### **Lagos & Kajiado**

**Does the age of the women legislators influence their contribution in any way?**

# Objective 2: Peculiarities of women's representation

## 2. Political Experiences

### Lagos

These are women who have not only served in the political parties but also in the Local Government Areas. Some have served several terms with only one first timer.

### Kajiado

The women have mainly served at the political party level.

# Findings: Peculiarities of women's representation

## Lagos

Committees served: They Chair  
Women Affairs, Poverty  
Alleviation & Job creation;  
Education and Wealth  
Creation and Employment  
Political experiences  
are different



## Kajiado

They Chair Gender, Youth and  
Social Services and Disability  
Committee and are Vice chair  
in other committees ie Lands,  
Agriculture, Water,  
Implementation, Trade, Legal,  
Education, Disability

# Findings: Strategies used by the women legislators in order to get support for their bills and motions

## 1 Lobbying for support from the “He” for “she”

“Nigerian women are not talking about equality again, they are just begging the male folks, “please believe in us as women, give us support and let us be heard.” Anybody that believes in that principle, they will call the person, “He-for-she.”



# Findings: Strategies used by the women legislators in order to get support for their bills and motions

## 2 From social to legislative relationships

“And you know, lobbying could be in diverse ways. It goes beyond mere talking. It could be your character, your personality. You can even extend greetings in relation to their family. You're not giving money. You build friendships and support from there.”



# Findings: Strategies used by the women legislators in order to get support for their bills and motions

**3** Working in collaboration with women in the Executive and Federal Government

**4** Bringing on Board other NGO organizations and the Civil society to help drum support for certain gender sensitive bills.

“We have the Civil Society organizations because they occasionally could be here to expose a motion that we could work on. I think from the civil society organization, they are partners in progress. It's been very encouraging from them”



# Findings: Strategies used by the women legislators in order to get support for their bills and motions

## 5 Collaborations

Motion: on creation of an enabling business environment for the growth of industrialization (2008)

“We all work together, especially for budget, we look for figures together, we exchange ideas”





# Nature of Policies



*“You know, while we appreciate the men and respect the fact that we're all human beings, you know women have always had the short end of the stick for a very long time and I needed to start thinking about laws to make life easier for women and children”*

# Nature of Policies



## Lagos State House of Assembly

- Protection Against Domestic Violence (2007)
- Child Rights Law (2007)
- Right and Entitlement of Victims & Protection of Witnesses Law (2022)
- Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency in the Establishment of Sex Offenders Register.
- The Domestic Staff Service Providers Law 2019

# Nature of Policies



## Kajiado County Assembly

- Kajiado County Disability Mainstreaming Bill, 2023
- Kajiado County Women Economic Empowerment Fund Act, 2021
- Kajiado County Women Economic Empowerment Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2022
- Corporate Social Responsibility Bill, 2024

# Motions

## Two Types of Motions

1. Substantive
2. Matter of Urgent Public Importance



# Contributions



## Lagos

Concerns raised on the Appropriation Bill, 2022 in relation to money set aside to deal with cervical cancer.

Motion on the need to curb indecent public exposures and noise pollution by lounges and Night club operators in Lagos State.

Motion: that the Commissioner for Works and Transport should look into the possibility of converting the Kabukabu operators to a legalized Mini cab team.

# Contributions: Motions



- Motion by Woman on enforcement of compulsory education for children in Lagos State (2008)
- Motion on an increase in the kidnapping of children and calling on school authorities and police force to be vigilant (2008)
- Motion: Appalling state of Public toilets in Lagos State.

# Contributions: Motions

## Kajiado

- Establishment of equipped lactation stations (2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly)
- Control of noise pollution from bars and nightclubs (2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly)
- Amendment of standing order No 62 of the Kajiado County Assembly (2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly)
- Statements
- Request for statement on Mbuzi Moja Afya Bora Initiative
- Request for statement on status and preparedness for El-Nino rains
- Request for statement on unlicensed liquor kiosks



# Contestations



## Lagos

1. Female Genital Mutilation
2. Debates on Section 26 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on registration of citizens. This clause does not include men who have married Nigerian women as its considered a taboo for a man to settle where the wife comes from.



# Contestations: Quotes



“My second point has to do with “Marital Rape.” You will agree with me that our the customs and religion stands. Our religion does not support what we have here because it looks foreign to say that, I would not have control over the wife I married after paying her bride price and I have also performed all the conjugal rites expected of me. We need to look at this”

# Other Contributions



1. In votes and proceedings in the plenary session
2. At the committee level: e.g in the case of the appropriation bill and all other bills related to that committee. There are no Hansard reports to show their contribution at this level.

# Challenges



## Lagos

- Lack of a critical mass to pass certain laws
- Timing: Bills take too long to be passed especially when not in tandem with the cultural-religious set up e.g the Law on protection against Domestic Violence.

*“Oh, definitely, especially when there are gender issues. You know I remember with the domestic violence law, it took me four years to pass it into law”*

# Challenges

## Lagos

- Lobbying: Internal and External

## Kajiado

- “Wardleness”: you cannot organize for anything in any ward.
- 2. No funding for women through the Kajiado County Assembly kitty



# Recommendations

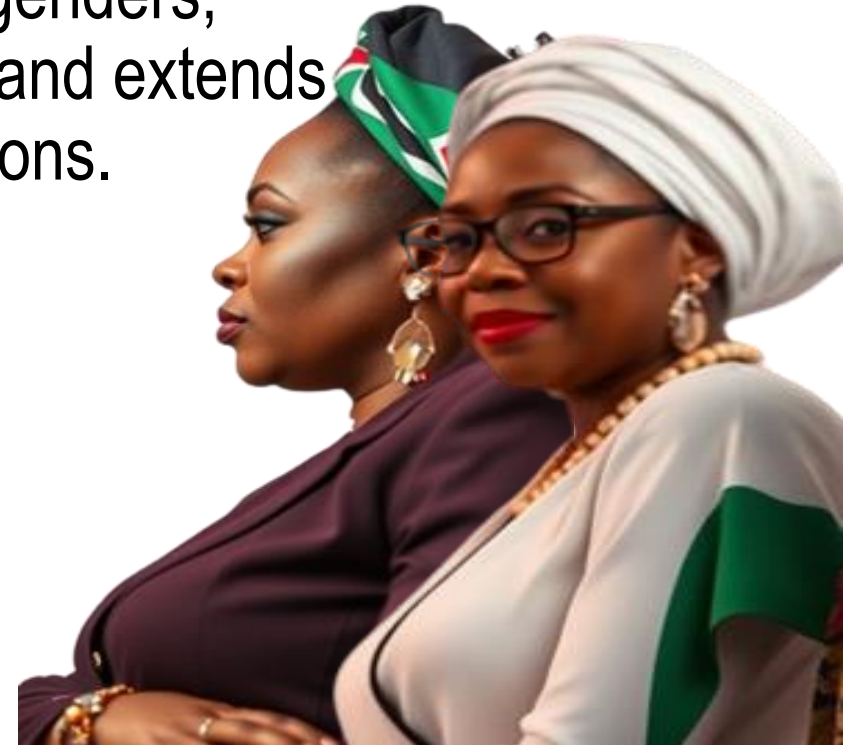
1. 35 percent affirmative action for Nigeria
2. Sensitization and awareness right from the grassroots on the need to have women representation in the Assemblies.
3. Adopt indigenous mechanisms



# Conclusion



The study concludes that women's contribution in the policy formulation exercise is largely a collaborative task that cuts across the different genders, coopts different stakeholders and extends beyond passing bills and motions.



*Thank you*

*Eshe (Thank you in Yoruba)*

*Ashe (Thank you in Maa)*