

**Exploring the impact of Gender Integrationist Policy in the Nigerian
Military**

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Abstract

Gender integration in state militaries is of current focus based on the arguments for the institution of equal gender opportunities in the profession. Yet, debate remains regarding the impact of policies aimed at this in militaries. The existing literature is, however, mainly Western focused with no reflections of the Nigerian context. This research explores the implementation of a gender integration policy in the Nigerian military to show how its particular historical and social context differentiates its experiences and impact from those of other militaries. It examines how the emerging changes with the policy adoption in 2011 are coming to bear on the Nigerian military's gendered culture. The central question is: 'how are the evolving changes in the Nigerian military impacting the institution and shaping its gender culture?' I used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions in generating primary data in addition to the existing literature for exploring this question and four sub-questions. From a feminist sociological institutionalist perspective, I argue that the Nigerian military is a gendered institution with overt sexist norms and practices which are shaped by the particular patriarchal culture of the Nigerian society. Also, that the adoption of the Gender Integration Policy, a liberal policy, by the Nigerian government is an emulation of Western militaries to show conformity with international norms of gender equality and portray a liberal image of the Nigerian state and its military. The policy has, however, encountered internal resistance against its liberal principles and a decoupling has occurred between its principles and the gender culture of the Nigerian military. A closer look, though, I argue, identifies some micro-level structural changes which are impacting the career opportunities and status of servicewomen, which have the potential to instigate further shifts in gender relations pattern in the Nigerian military, and society, in the long run.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Nigerian military, from the time of its creation in 1958 in preparation for independence from British colonialism in 1960 (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992), maintained a position of limited inclusion of women in the profession in terms of both participation and status. Nigerian women were excluded from the military profession during the colonial period and afterwards until 1961 when they began to be accepted specifically to perform nursing duties, and later on catering and administrative roles (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992). Although their presence in the military profession has increased over time, women's roles in the Nigerian Military remained limited to the support services, restricting their status in the profession to one which mirrored their traditional gender status in society which is one of subordination to men in their ascribed leadership role (Azodo and Eke, 2007). They, therefore, remained concentrated in, and limited to, the medical, catering and administrative corps of the Nigerian military (Dayil, 2011). For the first time in its history, in 2011, however, by order of the President Goodluck Jonathan, the Nigerian military initiated a policy shift by launching the acceptance of women into the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), its institution of combat training of officers for its three service arms (the Army, Air Force and Navy). The NDA had always only accepted men for combat training from the time of its creation in 1964 (Academy, 2016) until this time. Presently, therefore, the Nigerian Military has women in combat training and is set to commission its first set of women regular combatant officers.

This move implies a significant shift in the gendered nature of the Nigerian military and calls attention to the sudden changes taking place within the institution and the impact that these are having on its gender culture. This study sets out to explore these changes and how they are shaping the existent gender culture of the Nigerian military, and what the implications of these changes are for the roles and status of women in the Nigerian military profession.

1.1 Background of Problem

Gender issues in the Nigerian military received little or no academic focus until the new policy shift which I refer to as the Gender Integration Policy (GIP), accounting for the existing scanty literature on women and gender in the Nigerian military. Although the literature on women in the military abounds, it cannot be readily applied to the Nigerian military because, not only is the bulk of existing literature mainly focused on women in the militaries of the West, it cannot account for the peculiarities of the Nigerian case. The Nigerian context presents factors which differentiate it from other militaries; factors around patriarchal culture, religion, colonial history, politics, economy and ethnicity, among others. These are factors which shaped African women's experiences and differentiate them from those of Western women (McFadden, 2001, Guy-Sheftall, 2003). This difference in experiences is what, essentially,

problematizes Western narratives of women's struggles and motivated the need for an African feminism which addresses the specific issues of women's struggles and gender through the voices and perspective of African women (Steady, 1987, Oyěwùmí, 1997, McFadden, 2001). These factors, I argue, interact in ways which present a different perspective on the study of women's integration in the military which is not represented in the existing literature. My research aims to fill this gap in knowledge by using a rigorous research methodology which includes the use of the qualitative methods of interviews and focus group discussions, and a feminist sociological institutionalist (FSI) theoretical perspective, to produce an original work on gender issues in the Nigerian military.

Feminist debates on the participation of women in the military traditionally derive from two opposing perspectives: the feminist antimilitarist and the feminist egalitarian militarist views. The feminist antimilitarists argue against the involvement of women in the military and combat or war based on their belief in women's anti-violence and inherent peaceful nature. These attributes are claimed to make women fundamentally different from men, and, therefore, not compatible with the military which is conceived as a patriarchal organisation that promotes the domination of women, and is sustained by violence (Enloe, 2007, Poulos, 2008). The feminist egalitarian militarists criticise this position as essentialist and legitimising of the perception of women as the 'protected', and as such their subordination and limitation in society and international politics. They argue that participation in military service and combat or war is part and parcel of women's civil rights as equal citizens with men and their obligation as citizens of a liberal democratic state. To deny them the same rights and responsibilities as men, therefore, is to subordinate them to a position of second class citizenship (Snyder, 2003, Sjoberg and Via, 2010). The egalitarian militarists, in turn, are criticised as disregarding of and downplaying the biological and physiological differences between the sexes, and how these impact on the capability of the military to perform its primary duty, combat, by their insistence on equality (Maninger, 2008, Simon, 2014).

These two feminist positions are focused on Western militaries and do not account for the realities of women in a developing country such as Nigeria where the poor economic situation and high rate of unemployment (Editorial Board, 2014, Calderwod, 2015)¹, push women to seek employment in the military. It also does not explain the fact that, although Nigeria is a liberal

¹ 62% of the Nigerian population of 170 million people live in extreme poverty; while an unequal distribution of economic growth persists in the country with most of it concentrated in the urban south western part of the country. A large portion of the youth, especially in the northern part of the country, remains unemployed INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATES. 2015. *Nigerian Economy, 2015* [Online]. CIA World Fact Book: www.theodora.com. Available: http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/nigeria/nigeria_economy.html [Accessed 7th August 2015]. THE WORLD BANK. 2015. *Nigeria: Overview* [Online]. United States: The World Bank. Available: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview> [Accessed 07 August 2015].

democratic state, the issue of women's participation in the military and combat, based on their equal civil right as men, has never generated any focus from feminist scholars. Furthermore, unlike the West, the agitations of feminists did not contribute to the inclusion of women in the Nigerian military. Their inclusion has always been by decisions of government, just like the current policy shift that has included women in combat training (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992, Akpan, 2014). These depict substantial differences in the context of Nigerian servicewomen and those represented in these debates about women in Western militaries.

Time has seen the inclusion of women in the military institution of most nation states, and so debates moved from women's participation or non-participation to the impact of their integration into the military organisation and the roles they play. The focus, therefore, has shifted to understand how their presence influences the patriarchal masculine nature of the military.

The presence of women in the military, contrary to the expectation of liberal militarist feminists, is argued not to have changed the hierarchical gender relations pattern in the profession. On the contrary, their presence is believed to lead to a reinforcement of the already existing gender power relations and structures because servicewomen imbibe the masculine ideology of the military, and become masculinised as they seek acceptance by men in the profession (Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz, 2007, Silva, 2008). Although once again most of the literature argue this based on the experiences of Western women soldiers, this has also been demonstrated regarding the gender integration process in the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Baaz and Stern, 2011).

The military forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a similar African military to Nigeria, and Baaz and Stern (2011) also make the argument of the co-optation of the servicewomen by the existing patriarchal system of the military and their consequent masculinisation. The authors, however, identify departures in the feminization discourse in the DRC's military context from the Western context which attests to its peculiarity. These include the absence of the protector/protected theme, the emergence of the 'whore narrative' in the servicemen's perceptions of the women, and how the poor economic situation in the DRC is causing a disregard of traditional gender norms and practices by women's integration in the military. The Nigerian Military, in spite of its similarities with the DRC's armed forces in respect of colonial history and economic situation, differs, however, in respect of DRC's military history of prolonged civil war, and its current Security Sector Reforms (Justaert and Keukeleire, 2010). These differences support the view that militaries are distinct with different experiences and therefore require individual studies as my study aims to do with the Nigerian military.

African militaries which share more similarities with the Nigerian military, such as the Ghanaian Armed Forces (GAF), also show peculiarities which further

support the argument for more particular studies of militaries. Afrim-Narh (2006a) points to the context-specific situation of the GAF which excludes women from leadership and combat roles in peace-keeping, not based on their argued incapability or possible contribution to combat ineffectiveness of the forces (Heineken, 2002, Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002). However, the lack of military technological advancement and modern equipment for training forces the GAF to rely on harsh physical training which women are believed to be unable to cope with, hence their exclusion. According to Afrim-Narh (2006a), women are also excluded as a battle tactic to prevent attacks by the rebel forces in the conflict zones that are more likely to happen to women-led troops which are perceived as weak. Unlike the GAF, however, Nigeria has included women in combat training with the implication of their deployment in the fighting roles.

The participation of women in actual combat roles has also generated major debates in the field based on two opposing views because of their traditional exclusion from combat. One feminist view, derived from the liberal feminists, argue that the continued official exclusion of women from combat despite their exposure to combat situations in modern war theatres is outdated, and an act of sexism aimed at defending what is considered a 'men's domain' (MacKenzie, 2012, Harris, 2014). The opposition, conversely, argues that ignoring the biological and sociological factors against women's inclusion will result in force degradation and lower standards, and consequently, the operational effectiveness of the military (Maninger, 2008 p.9, Maginnis, 2013). However, the constant emphasis on operational efficiency against integrationist policies by the military disregards the impact of this institutional position on troops. It creates a perception of forces as divided into the operationally effective forces which are men, and the operationally ineffective ones, women; resulting in the demoralisation of soldiers (Basham, 2009). Non-traditional soldiers, such as women, therefore, feel institutionally discriminated against, thus, generating the feeling of unacceptance, and, hence, negatively impacting on cohesion among troops (Basham, 2009, Harris, 2014). These debates have only begun to apply to the Nigerian Military with the recent inclusion of women in combat training based on the policy shift. However, in this thesis, I will argue that they are being negotiated differently because of the difference in context from the Western militaries.

1.2 The Purpose of Study

Based on the identified gap in existing knowledge, my research aims to present an in-depth academic study of gender issues in the Nigerian military by exploring how its gender culture is interacting with, and responding to the new policy of gender integration. Drawing on a Feminist Sociological Institutional perspective to contextualise the Gender Integration Policy and explore its impact, I employ a qualitative methodology that includes semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions on examining the level of changes taking place within the Nigerian military. I explore how the peculiarities of the

Nigerian societal context have influenced the nature of the response of the Nigerian military's culture to the changes by the new policy.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the purpose stated above, my study addresses this central question: How are the evolving changes in the Nigerian Military impacting the institution and shaping its gender culture? In answering this question, I explore these four additional questions:

1. In what ways have gender norms and practices shaped the Nigerian Military?
2. How does the international context affect Nigeria's policymaking in this area and what effects does this have on implementation?
3. How is the current inclusion of women in combat training, alongside men in the Nigerian Defence Academy challenging the gender culture of the Nigerian Military?
4. What are the implications of these changes for more sustainable opportunities for upward advancement for servicewomen in the Nigerian Military?

1.4 Arguments

Based on in-depth research into my four sub-questions, I will argue that the Nigerian military maintains a culture which is based on the patriarchal social system of the Nigerian society. As such its culture is a reflection of the gendered norms and practices of the wider Nigerian society which defines gender roles and spaces and subordinates women to men. The military profession is traditionally perceived as a masculine profession and space, and I argue that this perception remains despite the presence of women and has always influenced their deployment into traditional feminine and non-combat sections in the Nigerian military. This gendered position of the Nigerian military has served to limit women's status and opportunities of advancement in the profession. I will further argue that the adoption of the policy shift by the Nigerian government is a political move aimed at showing its conformity with global liberal norms and gaining legitimacy internationally by projecting a liberal democratic image of the nation and its military. However, the inclusion of women in combat training in the Nigerian Defence Academy by the new policy, I will also argue, is more likely to produce structural, rather than cultural changes in the Nigerian military. The structural changes resulting from the Gender Integration Policy, however, present increased opportunities for career advancement for servicewomen in the Nigerian military, although these are likely to be limited.

1.5 Significance of Study

My work presents an original in-depth study of women in the military of a developing African nation, Nigeria, as an addition to literature, which is useful for comparative studies on women in African militaries, and comparative studies of women in Western and African militaries. It presents a rationale for more

studies on women in combat in the Nigerian Military and other non-western perspectives on women's experiences in the profession. It shows a context which is profoundly impacted by the factors of colonial history, patriarchal traditional culture, religion, politics, ethnicity and a developing economy, and how these inform its distinct experience as a military in the process of gender integration. By exploring the debates on integration policies and the impact on other militaries of state, this research presents informed knowledge for decision makers in the Nigerian Defence sector on the issues that other militaries have contended with and the progress that have been made in the area. It also presents an addition to the regional literature on issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Nigerian society, drawing the focus of Nigerian feminists to issues of women's status and rights in the Nigerian Military.

This research also presents an original military study which draws from a feminist sociological institutionalist perspective to depict how international and local norms interact in respect of gender equality policies in developing nations. It shows how local contexts shape the nature of the influence of these international gender equality programmes and their potential for presenting agency for change to women in the military and wider society. The study is, therefore, also an addition to the literature on the theoretical perspective of Feminist Sociological Institutionalism.

1.6 Outline of Chapters

This thesis is made up of 8 chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter gives a detailed literature review on the debates on women's inclusion in the military and gender integration, showing the existing gap in literature which my work aims to fill. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework which I have used for the exploration of my questions and making my arguments; a Feminist Sociological Institutionalism (FSI) perspective which allows me to explore the impact of a global liberal informed policy like the GIP in a non-liberal context such as the Nigerian military. It allows me to make the connection between the international and national levels, and argue about the influence of the international context on the policy implementation. Chapter 4 gives a detailed account of the qualitative methodology I adopted for data gathering and analysis. It explains how I use the methods of semi-structured interview and focus group discussions to generate primary data for exploring my questions. It also addresses in detail the process of carrying out this research in the Nigerian military and the Nigerian Defence Academy as an institution and the ethical issues I was confronted with in the course of the research. In chapter 5, I provide an analysis of specific features of the Nigerian patriarchal societal system and how I argue that it shaped the gendered nature of the Nigerian military. I examine some specific features of the Nigerian patriarchy and the introduction of the GIP to set the background for understanding the Nigerian military context and how its culture interacts with the GIP and its principles. Chapters 6 and 7 are empirical chapters where I use the data from my

interviews and focus group discussions to make my arguments about the kind of effect the policy shift is having on the culture of the Nigerian military. In chapter 6, I examine the impact of the policy on the ideology and norms of the Nigerian military and in chapter 7, I address its practices. I present the significance of the policy in Chapter 8 by exploring the unintended consequences of the implementation of the policy on the Nigerian military and society. In this chapter, I do an analysis of the implications of the adoption of the policy which may not be immediately visible or considered but are nonetheless significant in understanding the impact of the GIP in Nigeria. I do this using primary data from my interviews and focus group discussions. In the concluding chapter, chapter 9, I present my major findings, recommendations for policy and practice, and identified areas for future research.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the topic, background, focus and the aims of this study. It has shown that there is an existing gap in literature which a study on gender issues in the Nigerian military such as mine will fill. It has also outlined the significance of the study for future research and policy makers in the Nigerian Defence sector. The chapter has set the background for what the entire study will do in the subsequent chapters. Based on the brief preliminary background of the study, the next chapter will present a more detailed literature review to situate my work within the existing literature.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

This review explores the debates on the inclusion of women in military service and combat, as well as literature on gender integration in the military as I contextualise my work within the existing literature. I will address the literature in two broad categories based on geography; the Western and non-Western literature on women in military service and war or combat and the impact of gender integration in the military. Section one will start by addressing the western literature and the different feminist perspectives in the debates on the inclusion of women in military service and war. Engaging these discussions is important because they form the basis upon which current views and arguments for gender integration in the military derive. I also use them as a springboard to engage current debates on women in the military. Moving from this, I will then engage the literature on theoretical perceptions of the expanding roles of women in the military and, subsequently, literature on the impact of gender integration processes on the military. The second section will address non-western literature, mainly research on African militaries and their experiences from gender integration policies and the presence of women in non-traditional roles. It bears mentioning here that very few African armies have introduced gender integration programs. Unlike the first section, this section does not address feminist debates because feminist discussions and general research on women and gender in the military focus largely on the armies of the West where feminist activism has existed longer, and women have been in the institution longer.

I use the terms 'war' and 'combat' interchangeably in this chapter as a reference to combat which is the central duty of the military (Kümmel, 2002) and because these debates have referred to both war and combat as one and the same concept. I will conclude with a section that summarises what the chapter has done and my main arguments for this research. This review will show that the bulk of literature on women in the military is Western-focused and this problematises it because it does not reflect the diverse non-western military contexts that exist. I argue that different factors present distinct military backgrounds in various societies and the experiences of individual militaries like Nigeria are peculiar to them, and as such, there is a need for more context-specific studies on women in the military such as mine.

2.2 Western Feminist Perspectives on Women in the Military

Feminist discourse on the participation of women in Western armies is traditionally divided along two lines; the feminist antimilitarist and the feminist egalitarian militarist (Feinman, 2000, Miller, 1998). The feminist antimilitarists argue against the inclusion of women in military service and combat based on their belief in the anti-violence and inherent peaceful nature of women which make them inherently different from men. They argue that the military is a violence sustained patriarchal masculine organisation which promotes the

domination of women and is, therefore, antithetical to women's very nature (Enloe, 1983, Peaches, 1997, Miller, 1998, Feinman, 2000, Goldstein, 2001, Heineken, 2002, Enloe, 2007, Poulos, 2008). Women, as 'moral mother' (Bloch, 1978) and 'beautiful souls' (Elshtain, 1982) are by nature nurturing and therefore, antimilitarist.

The claims of these feminist antimilitarists portray the position of Difference feminism, which is based on the notion of fundamental differences between men and women (Gilligan, 1982, Curtis, 2014). The Difference feminists argue that, although these differences which may be either biological or based on experience are real, femininity and masculinity are equal in value (Goldstein, 2001). The problem in gender relations, in their view, is not these differences, but the 'sexist cultures which devalue feminine qualities instead of appreciating, celebrating and promoting them'(Goldstein, 2001 p.41). They argue that in some contexts, women's feminine attributes enable them to perform better than men, and therefore there's need for a reevaluation of women's feminine qualities, such as empathy, caring, kindness and others, to reflect their worth (Goldstein, 2001, Curtis, 2014). Criticisms against this view describe it as essentialist, reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes and romanticising traditional notions of femininity and masculinity because of its focus on the differences between of men and women which only furthers the sexual dichotomy that fosters female subordination (Scott, 1988, Tandon, 2008, Curtis, 2014). The notion of 'difference', however, does not always translate into 'unequal' as Tandon (2008 p.64) notes; and the focus of this branch of feminism, like all feminism, is the reevaluation of femininity by society, and ultimately, women's empowerment (Curtis, 2014).

Feminist Antimilitarists, however, do not consider the different contexts of women in various societies or the changing nature of gender or sex roles in times of war (King, 2013). An example of different settings is females in places like Eritrea and Israel with national policies of mandatory adult military service which include women in the military compulsorily (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2007, Rimalt, 2007, Kibreab, 2013). Another is women involved in national liberation struggles or resistance against oppressive regimes such as the case of the Nicaraguan Women who enlisted in the Sandinista movement² (Molyneaux in Poulos, 2008 p.14). Other cases are times of civil war and political conflicts which dissolve the distinctions between the private and public sphere and draw women from their roles in the private

² The Sandinista movement was formed to forcefully overthrow the Somoza family dictatorship that had ruled Nicaragua for over four decades. It launched an all-out offensive in May 1979, and called for a popular uprising which drew people from all sectors of the country, including women, peasants, businessmen, students and more to joined forces with the Movement and eventually forcefully ousted the Somoza dynasty on the 17th of July 1979 QUEST, C. 2003. *History, The Sandinista Revolution, 1978-1990* [Online]. Microsoft Corporation. Available: http://www.countriesquest.com/central_america/nicaragua/history/the_sandinista_revolution_1978-1990.htm [Accessed 15th July, 2015 2015].

sphere into the public domain (Poulos, 2008). The current increase in insurgencies and counterinsurgencies, the present asymmetric nature of warfare and the attendant employment of unconventional war tactics like suicide bombings, kidnappings and more, usually targeted at civilians or non-combatants, further makes the argument of the feminist antimilitarists unrealistic (MacKenzie, 2012, McSally, 2007, Paulus, 2009).

Poulos (2008) notes that such times when there is a blurring of divisions, the opportunities for redefining gender roles and identity present themselves (Poulos, 2008 p.14). However, experience has shown contrarily as in the aftermath of the two World Wars. Societies reverted to traditional gender demarcations and roles despite the performances of women in their militaries during the World Wars (Carreiras, 2006, Sherrow, 2007, Van Creveld, 2000a). The exclusion of female members of rebel or militia groups in the reconstruction and reintegration processes in the aftermath of conflicts, as in the DRC, the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, among others, further depict this (Britton, 2005, Aoláin et al., 2011, Baaz and Stern, 2011, Michael Folami, 2016). However, for countries of the West, such as the United States and Britain, the performance of women in these Wars, marked the beginning of their inclusion in the military as it formed part of the basis for the argument for their inclusion (Goldstein, 2001, Stachowitsch, 2013). This inclusion however limited them to roles of nurses and administrative positions of clerks and secretaries (Van Creveld, 2000a); traditional feminine roles that reinforced women's subordination to men within the military (Whelem, 1995).

Additionally, the essentialisation of women as naturally peaceful and men as naturally violent by feminist antimilitarist has been argued to reinforce traditional gender hierarchies and stereotypes which feminism as a movement seeks to deconstruct (Sjoberg and Tickner, 2013, Poulos, 2008). This position also overlooks men and women who may not fit these stereotypes (Cockburn, 2012); men who promote pacifism and negotiation, and women who support and endorse war (Peaches, 1997, Cockburn, 2012). This essentialist perspective, in Cockburn (2012)'s view, upholds the false dichotomies of masculinity and femininity which allow men to continue to control and dominate world politics, excluding women because 'their voices are perceived as inauthentic in matters of foreign policy-making'. Exclusion from politics and foreign policy further restricts the tools available to women's movements and encourages questionings of their capability to serve as political leaders (Sjoberg in Sjoberg and Tickner, 2013 p.179).

Militarism, according to Enloe (1983), should be the focus of the debate over the inclusion of women in the military and war because it is this ideology that perpetuates patriarchy through its impact of subordination of women, both in the military and outside of it. Militarism is conceptualised as the gradual encroachment of the military into the civilian sphere so that there is an overlap

of the two, and a 'blurring or erasure of distinctions between war and peace, military and civilian' (Enloe, 1983 p.9). Also, when a society becomes dependent on military intervention to restore normalcy in all areas, and views this as common sense solutions, then militarisation has taken place (Enloe, 1983 p.9, Peterson and Runyan in Sjoberg and Via, 2010 p.7). The effect of militarisation is what encourages women to seek jobs in the military in their bid for economic empowerment and 'freedom from traditional sex roles', but they fall 'victims of a hoax' as they only exchange one form of domination for another in the military (Enloe, 1983 p.10). The inclusion of women in combat roles, therefore, is not a reflection of genuine liberation for females, only more evidence of militarisation (Feinman, 2000, Enloe, 2007, Enloe, 2013).

Militarisation in some societal context has become standard; societies, such as Nigeria, with long histories of military rule and subsequent politicisation of the military institution, evident in a massive influx of ex-military men in politics (Chukwuemeka et al., 2011 p.13, George et al., 2012). Furthermore, societies like Nigeria where military intervention is relied upon for peace and stability because of the regular occurrence of violent religious, ethnic and civil crises (Abdulkadir, 2011, Nwaomah, 2011, Peterside, 2014), and where the military is the largest employer of labour in a struggling economy (Editorial Board, 2014, Caulderwod, 2015), are not reflected in this argument against militarism.

In the view of King (2013), Enloe (1983) does not prove that women have been subjects of a hoax or that their service in the military can only be defined as experiences of oppression and harassment. Her claims do not account for serving military women who may see and describe their military service as a worthwhile and proud experience (Rimalt, 2007, Silva, 2008). However, the issues of harassment, sexual or otherwise, and the systematic domination of women by men in the forces are factors that servicewomen contend with regularly (Rosen, 1997, Knight, 2013) which cannot be overlooked. Formal institutional rules in the military systematically reinforce male domination over women (Rimalt, 2007, Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz, 2007), and women's experiences of harassment depict men's protest against women's presence in the traditional masculine space of the military and a bid to reinforce their domination over women (Sasson-Levy, 2003).

The issue of harassment of women in the military, particularly sexual harassment, is one which most militaries contend with (Knight, 2013), and one which requires systematic policy attention in respective armies for its resolution. Based on Kanter (1977)'s theory of Tokenism, Rosen (1997), and King (2013), however, argue that this high level of harassment against women is because of their small number compared to men in the military, and as their number and status improve, these harassments would reduce. However, the focus on numerical status as the reason for, and solution of women's harassment in male-dominated organisations, such as the military, disregards other factors

that produce gender discriminations (Zimmer, 1988, Yoder, 1991). Factors such as a sexist societal context and how that shapes the gender relations in the institution, and other forms of expression of gender discrimination against women other than sexual harassment like wage inequalities and limited opportunities for career advancement (Yoder, 1991 p.184, Zimmer, 1988). Focus on tokenism, in Zimmer (1988)'s view, turns attention from the analysis of sexism and its impact on organisations which, I would add, is essential for achieving change in women's status within these male organisations.

Elshtain (1982) adds a different dimension to the antimilitarist's argument by opposing, like Cockburn (2012), the essentialism of the difference between women and men. Through her creation of the Beautiful Soul/Just Warrior paradigm to demonstrate the gendered roles and relations that exist in regards to war, she argues for a move away from the Just war theory. The Just War theory, she argues, is aimed at legitimising war and privileging masculine values over the feminine (Pierson, 1989, Krcek, 2012, King, 2013) and sustaining the image of women as non-combatants and men as fighters (Krcek, 2012).

Elshtain (1982), however, advocates a form of social feminism which embraces the maternal attributes of Ruddick (1982)'s Moral Mother (Elshtain, 1982 p.345, Poulos, 2008). This feminism is based on a politically transformed maternal thinking which can invoke deep patriotic feelings from sons to forge alliances that work together to end violence and militarism. Pierson (1989 p.78) refers to this as the creation of male and female 'guardians of the state' by Elshtain (1982). It would seem that she creates her set of dichotomy; Good Mother/Good soldier which does not particularly portray a departure from the Beautiful Soul/Just Warrior discourse as she advocates (Pierson, 1989). This perspective further suggests unchanging gender roles and identity in war situations (Thornton, 2006, King, 2013). Thornton (2006) rightly argues that gender roles in times of war depend on 'different factors such as race, class, religion, sexual orientation or group dynamics' (2006 p.3), factors which determine distinctiveness of contexts as in the Nigerian case. How will the distinct context of the Nigerian military impact gender roles in combat situations? What will be the experience of the gender integration process in the Nigerian context? The literature does not address this.

The feminist egalitarian militarists, (Miller, 1998, Peaches, 1997, Stachowitsch, 2013), oppose the views of the pacifist antimilitarists. Unlike feminists antimilitarists, they do not believe in any essential difference between men and women and argue for the full inclusion of women in the military and war on two bases: fundamental rights of women to equality and women's civil rights as citizens (Feinman, 2000, Leszkay, 2003). Women's right to equal treatment as men require that they have the same opportunities as men, such as every job in the military, including combat, as well as equal responsibilities to the state. They

claim that by excluding women from military service and combat, they are relegated to a second-class position as citizens while men occupy first class positions (Feinman, 2000, Fenner and DeYoung, 2001, Snyder, 2003, Leszkay, 2003). This perspective derives from the arguments of Liberal feminism that 'women are equal to men, and the gendering of war reflects male discrimination against women'(Goldstein, 2001 p.39). Liberal feminists rightly contend that women have the right to participate in all areas of social, economic and political endeavour in society alongside men, including military service and combat roles, and their inclusion would bring additionally capable individuals into the forces (Goldstein, 2009).

Although I side with this perspective, I would suggest, however, that it is only tenable in a liberal democratic state where participation in military service and combat are linked to citizenship. Examples are contexts like the United States before its shift from the draft to an all-voluntary military force, and Israel with its national policy of adult military service (Goldstein, 2001, Rimalt, 2007, Chapman, 2008, Izraeli, 2009, Burelli, 2013). In a developing democracy like Nigeria where the link of defence of the state to citizenship, though constitutionally present, is not emphasised, and defence is regarded as solely the duty of the military, the situation is different. The civil right of women to serve in the Nigerian Military has never drawn any political attention, neither was it a factor in their inclusion in the military in the first place as it was in the Western armies (Goldstein, 2001, Carreiras, 2006, Stachowitsch, 2013). Additionally, I would argue that the fact that Nigeria has never practised conscription (Simon and Abdel-Moneim, 2011), and never engaged in any major international war which would have increased its demand for personnel, could account for this lack of focus on the obligation of citizens to defend the state and its different context.

The feminists' claim for equal treatment in all areas of endeavour without any discrimination based on sex for women is the basis upon which the policy shift in the Nigerian military was initiated (Panapress, 2011, Ajani, 2013, President Jonathan, 2015). It is also the basis for the arguments for women's integration into all roles including combat, in the Nigerian military, presently (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014). However, the lack of feminists' focus on the Nigerian military as there is on the armies of the West does not allow any real comparisons with the Western situation in this respect. Furthermore, the fact that the initiation of the Gender Integration Policy in the Nigeria military was by the government, and not as a response to feminists' claims or arguments for gender equality, indicates the specificity of the Nigerian context (Ajani, 2013, Nnenna, 2014, ThisDay, 2015, President Jonathan, 2015).

Although the government can be said to have been involved in initiating gender integration policies in Western militaries, this is usually in response to pressures from feminists, women groups and activists, and changes in gender scripts of

society (Van Creveld, 2000a, Carreiras, 2006, Stachowitsch, 2013). The Nigerian case is different because the decision for the policy came as an executive order. This raises questions about the nature of Nigerian politics and governance. Furthermore, considering that this was not a decision taken by the military itself, one wonders how this would impact the successful implementation of the policy and its aim of creating equal gender opportunities in the Nigerian military. In essence how will this policy shift and the changes it is informing impact the Nigerian military's gender culture? Enloe (2007) reasons that it is important to study women in the military to understand if their inclusion and integration is contributing to a 'depatriarchalization' globally or serving to globalise Militarisation (2007 p.69). In other words, is the presence of women causing a change in the patriarchal culture of the military? This is a question that I address regarding the Nigerian Military as I explore how the presence of women in combat training is challenging the gender culture of the Nigerian military.

Although the feminist egalitarian militarists reject the idea that women are any more peaceful than men, like the antimilitarist feminists, they dismiss the use of violence and militarism. Enloe (1983) had cautioned against allowing the efforts to obtain equal rights for women in the military serve as a reinforcement of a patriarchal institution such as the military, and militarism as an ideology. Moreover, the feminist egalitarian militarists note that the goal of feminism in the armed forces is not one of cooperation with patriarchy but to achieve 'a sex-blind military' (Katzenstein in Feinman, 2000 p.33). They oppose the idea of men's monopoly of the use of violence because it presents a view of the society as divided into the protected (women) and the protector (men) (Stiehm, 1982). They, therefore, advocate a society of citizens who are 'equally liable to experience violence and responsible for exercising society's violence' (Stiehm, 1982 p.367). So, although the presence of women may not bring an end to violence, these feminists argue, it could bring changes to the military from within (Stiehm, 1982).

These views are criticised as disregarding of the physical and biological differences between men and women which are important in job deployment in the military (Peaches (1997). Situations where technology fails and physical strength is required for task performance have been cited as times when physical difference between men and women matter. Peaches (1997) attempts to avoid categorisation by qualifying this criticism by referring to 'most women's' ability because there are servicewomen who are physically fit enough to cope with such situations (King, 2013). Arguments have suggested that the emphasis in the military should be more about the physical fitness of personnel and not the measure of their strength (Cohn, 2000, King, 2013). In respect of biological difference and women's family duties interfering with their military duties (Peaches, 1997), liberal feminists note the presence of single career minded servicewomen interested solely in pursuing military careers and not a family.

The argument for equal opportunities is, therefore, aimed to benefit all women in the military regardless of sexual preference (Miller, 1998, Feinman, 2000, Goldstein, 2001).

These two feminist strands of argument on women in military and war have been criticised as having a 'totalizing tendency' of viewing war as either entirely wrong and should exclude women or that women must be involved in all of the men's wars as equal defenders or warriors (Poulos, 2008 p.14). Both can be said to disregard the specificity of national contexts where women may be forced into a war or not allowed into war (Poulos, 2008). I side with this position because not all aspects of this feminist debate apply to the Nigerian context which is the context for my work, and these arguments are all based on the experiences of women in the western societies as Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz (2007) also observe.

Peaches (1997) advocates the elimination of the gender argument that underpins the two traditional feminist perspectives. Doing this, she argued, would ensure a move away from essentialism by the feminist antimilitarists towards drawing on the strength of femininity by both sexes in the search for more peaceful alternatives to conflict resolutions other than war (Peaches, 1997, Sjoberg and Tickner, 2013). It would also make allowance for women to assess the wars they wanted to participate in individually, and for considerations of the significance of individuals' sex in combat assignments as feminist egalitarian militarists' arguments do not allow for (Peaches, 1997). This approach, therefore, while not blind to the adverse impacts of war, recognises that there are situations when conflicts may be inevitable and women's participation unavoidable for gender justice.

This argument for the elimination of the gender argument undergirding feminists perspectives on women in the military, I would argue, however, undermines the very basis of feminism itself, and its aim of defending the rights of women in all spheres of society (Beasley, 1999, Mikolla, 2012). Gender is the primary concept with which feminists analyse power dynamics and gender hierarchies in society and institutions (Locher and Prügl, 2001, Mackay et al., 2009, Mackay et al., 2010), and is, therefore vital in feminist discourses on the military. Gender distinctions continue to be upheld by societies and to disregard it in feminist arguments would be to deny the importance of the power relations or gender hierarchies that exist in society, particularly traditional ones like the Nigerian society. While individual capability is vital in roles assignments (MacKenzie, 2012, King, 2013), arguments based on gender aims to deconstruct the stereotypes that inform restrictions on women's performances in the military.

Besides, the military institution itself sustains a dominant gender ideology; a hegemonic masculinity which dominates other forms of masculinity and femininity in the military (Connell, 1985, Barret, 1996, Connell and

Messerschmidt, 2005, Carreiras, 2006, Woodward and Winter, 2007, Basham, 2009). This hegemonic masculinity values heterosexuality, aggressiveness, risk-taking, discipline, self-control and physical strength (Hinojosa, 2010). It does not imply the eradication or complete domination of the alternatives like femininity, and alternative masculinities like homosexuality, but thrives on its dominant relation to them (Carreiras, 2006 p.27). This ideology underpins the identity of the military, and women's presence and participation in the forces are contained in ways that sustain this masculine identity of the military (Woodward and Winter, 2007). This is evident in their limited recruitment, exclusion from combat roles and consequently leadership in several militaries. The anti-feminine nature of this masculine identity of the military has worked against the total integration of women into the military profession in different societies (Rimalt, 2007, Sasson-Levy, 2003, Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz, 2007, Basham, 2009, Baaz and Stern, 2011). Will this anti-feminine culture also present in the Nigerian Military allow the integration of women into more roles in the face of the new policy change?

I argue in line with the feminist egalitarian militarists that it is the right of every Nigerian servicewoman as citizens to have equal opportunities as men to engage in military service and war if they choose to. They are also entitled to the benefits that such possibilities bring to a soldier's military career and life in society after service (Rimalt, 2007). However, how will the policy change aimed at ensuring this equal gender treatment and opportunities impact the existing gendered culture of the Nigerian military? Can the change in policy activate shifts in the male-dominating culture of the Nigerian military to allow more sustainable opportunities for upward advancement for servicewomen? These are questions that my research aims to explore.

As Stachowitsch (2013) contends, the times when feminists' perspective on gender integration in the military could easily be argued along equality and peace lines are over because women are now present in state militaries across the globe (Miller, 1998). However, she agrees that 'the safest bet for those wishing to make a non-militarist point for gender integration is the rights-based approach' (Stachowitsch, 2013 p.1). This view may not be popular with some people because a rights approach for gender integration implies a right to fight, kill and die; and for some, this means cooperation with a hierarchical and sexist institution (Sasson-Levy, 2003 p.443). However, as Stachowitsch (2013) contends, the focus should be the argument for equal access by men and women to an important state institution. Also, it should be against the continued essentialism and stereotype of servicewomen in their participation in conflict situations where their feminine attributes are exploited for gaining acceptance for peace-keeping operations.

The question at this point is what factors have and are influencing the increased integration of women into militaries of states across the globe as is being

witnessed in the Nigerian military? Why has the Nigerian government adopted a Gender Integration Policy and expanding women's roles in its military? Segal (1995) proposes a 'systematic cross-national theory' in explaining the factors which she argues are responsible for the expansion or contraction of women's military participation (Segal, 1995 p.758). This model presents the interaction of different factors, grouped into military, social structure and cultural variables, which result in changes in the level of participation of women in the militaries of states. The model presents four hypotheses, arguing that women's participation increases:

1. When the changing nature and culture of the military are perceived by policy makers and the populace to be more compatible with women's service;
2. When women are seen to be changing in ways that make them more suited to military life;
3. When the national security situation is so dire as to require the military support of all citizens;
4. In peace times, the more liberal the society, the more women will be included in non-traditional roles in the military (Segal, 1995, Iskra et al., 2002 p.772-773).

Although these hypotheses have held true as Carreiras (2006), Nuciari (2006) Stachowitsch (2013), and others have demonstrated, they have mainly held true in the case of women in Western militaries (Iskra et al., 2002). They do not reflect the non-western contexts like the Nigerian military and neither has the Nigerian military been explored from these theoretical perspectives. The argument that women's role in the military increased in times of conflict because of workforce needs, for example, does not entirely hold true in the Nigerian case. As I have earlier noted, women were not included to fight in the Nigerian civil war, and neither are they included in the current counterinsurgency³ (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992, Odunsi, 2015, Goldman, 2015). The Civil War and the current Counterinsurgency are the major wars that the Nigerian military has engaged in, except for its participation in Peace Support Operations (Saliu, 2000, Suleiman, 2013).

Iskra et al. (2002) expanded the theory to make it more contexts inclusive by adding a set of political variables. These variables address civil-military

³ The Nigerian military has been engaged in a counterinsurgency against the Boko Haram terrorist group since 2009. This group is known for its use of terrorist tactics such as suicide bombings and abductions, usually targeted at civilians. As at 2014, reports show that over 11,000 people had lost their lives to these attacks in Nigeria and more than 500 women and girls have been abducted during the period ALLEN, N. L., PETER M; MATFESS, H 2014. The Boko Haram insurgency, by the numbers. *Monkey Cage*. 6th October, 2014 ed.: The Washington Post, ACAP 2014. Nigeria: Boko Haram Insurgency. *reliefWeb.int*. Online: reliefweb.int.

relations, the political ideology of those in power and the consequent public policies regarding minorities and women, and sources of political change other than arms conflict (2002 p.790). They argued that 'where a stable, well-defined civilian-led government is in power, women's participation in the armed forces will increase than in a state where the military institution exercises substantial influence over the political processes' (Iskra et al., 2002 p.790). Also, 'the more liberal the political ideology of the leadership in the state, the more participation of women in the armed forces' (2002 p.790).

This added dimension makes the model more accommodating of country-specific contexts like Nigeria where politics played a significant role in the recent decision to adopt a gender integration policy. However, Iskra et al. (2002) applied these arguments to analyse the militaries of Australia, Mexico and Zimbabwe; countries which differ from Nigeria in context. Kümmel (2002) further added a global variable to Segal (1995)'s model which argues that women's participation in the military can change based on developments in the military itself with regards to its national and international context (2002 p.626). This addition notes that the impact of globalisation and its attendant global interdependence influences the military (Baylis et al., 2014, WHO, 2015).

The international dimension by Kümmel (2002) therefore, included the political security context, civil-military relations abroad, armed forces in foreign countries and international military cooperation; bringing the global factor into the analysis of the expansion of women's military participation. The national and international context of the Nigerian military and how these impact its policy of gender integration is not represented in literature. The Nigerian government is a liberal democratic state and a member of the international community with diplomatic ties, bilateral trade and military agreements with several liberal democratic nations of the West (Ezirim, 2010, Miller, 2007). It is also a leading military power in the West African sub-region where no military has initiated a gender integration policy or integrated women into all roles. It is also a dominant military force in the African region (Aikens, 2013, Bach, 2007, Bassey and Dokubo, 2011). How does this international context influence the decision for the integration policy and affect its implementation in the Nigerian military? My study employs a feminist sociological institutionalist framework of analysis which allows exploration of the international factor in examining adopted policies and their impact (Mackay et al., 2009, Schofer et al., 2012).

The several reviews of Segal (1995)'s model have attempted to make it more globally applicable and accommodating of different contexts of militaries of nations, and the various factors that account for the specificity of respective armies and their gender integration experiences. Therefore, context-specific studies of militaries, such as mine, are required, to show these diverse experiences, filling the existent gap in the literature.

On the issue of gender integration in the military, the question that comes to mind is; how is the inclusion of women in all sections of the military impacting the contemporary military institution? How are their increased presence and expanding participation influencing the masculine ideology that sustains the military organisation? I will address the debates in this next section in themes with regards to the various arguments that scholars have engaged on the issue of the impact of gender integration in the military.

It has been argued that the increased integration of women in the military leads to a reinforcement of existing hierarchical gender relations within the institution (Rimalt, 2007, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007, Silva, 2008, Baaz and Stern, 2011). Rimalt (2007) argues that the non-accompaniment of formal integrationist policies by corresponding changes in the gender culture and ideology of the military, as is the case in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), creates 'new forms of gender segregation in the military' (2007 p.1099). Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) referred to this as a dual process of degendering and regendering. While a degendering process initiated the formal inclusion of women in all roles in the military, regendering occurs because internally, they remain restricted from specific ones like core infantry roles in many militaries such as the IDF (Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007). In some cases continued strict entry requirements are suggested to be systematic barriers against women's inclusion in some section of combat like the Elite Joint Task Force of the Canadian Forces (Winslow and Dunn, 2002, Cawkill, 2009). Despite integration, women are, therefore, only present in peripheral combat-related functions, which exclude them from strategic positions in the profession and, consequently, they remain subordinated in the profession. This internal dissonance with integration policies results in a regendering (Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007).

Degendering is the 'attack on the structure and process of gender by recognising that the two genders are not homogeneous groups (as other major social statuses intersect them) and by acknowledging gender similarities in behaviour, thinking and emotions' (Lorber in Rimalt, 2007 p.107). The process of degendering, from Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007)'s view, is what has led to the inclusion of women in male-dominated sectors like the military. Regendering for them, therefore, is the reconstruction of gender power relations in other ways that continue to subordinate women because the structural gender changes produced by the degendering process has not produced shifts in the 'cultural code and scripts of the military' (Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007 p.128).

Will the case of the Nigerian military's gender integration process lead to a dual process of degendering and regendering? The Nigerian case presents a different societal and military context from the IDF which is the focus of Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) and Rimalt (2007). The IDF is the only western military with compulsory adult military service, and women have been present in it for much longer than the Nigerian Military. Furthermore, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) and Rimalt (2007) do not employ a theoretical perspective which permits the examination of why schematic cultural changes in society,

resulting in the integration policy in the military, are not producing cultural shifts in the IDF. Also, by not using a perspective that allows the exploration of both macro and micro level impact of the degendering process, it is possible to overlook possible small level changes that could result from gender integration policies. Using FSI, as I do in this study, permits the exploration of these two levels of impact and show how the Nigerian military context presents a different situation and most likely, a different experience from the IDF with its integrationist policy.

The masculinization of women soldiers is also another argued impact of gender integration policies. Women become masculinized because they imbibe the male culture and ideology of the military that real soldiering and masculinity are synonymous (Sasson-Levy, 2003, Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz, 2007, Silva, 2008, Baaz and Stern, 2011). They, therefore, reinforce the existing gender ideology of the Military. Women soldiers are claimed to adopt 'masculine bodily and discursive practices while attempting to conceal their femininity because they accept the perception that femininity is inferior to masculinity in the military, and also to gain acceptance as efficient soldiers (Sasson-Levy, 2003 p.453, Rimalt, 2007). Does this gender-crossing result in the acceptance and assimilation of these women by the men? These women, according to Silva (2008), though recognised as efficient soldiers, do not get assimilated because gender-crossing violates the gender norms of the military and is considered deviant (Rimalt, 2007, Sasson-Levy, 2003). It, therefore, attracts 'symbolic and material penalties' such as systematic exclusion (Rimalt, 2007 p.1110). Rimalt (2007) however, does not clarify if this masculinisation was the case with all the military women.

Silva (2008), on the other hand, notes that male soldiers regarded these servicewomen as no longer feminine. So, while they gained recognition as efficient soldiers, the women remained excluded by the men who still saw them as women bodies who were no longer feminine. The masculine culture of the military perceives femininity as inferior and a threat to the effectiveness of the military (Van Creveld, 2000b, Maginnis, 2013). It could be argued that the gender stereotyping culture of the military acts against the acceptance of women as masculine, and, therefore, equal to men in the profession. Furthermore, the need to maintain the male domination of the profession also required that women continue to be conveniently cast as the 'other' in the profession. These further show the paradoxical effect of gender crossing in the military. However, Silva (2008) identifies some women who do not get integrated into the masculine ideology of the army but attempt to redefine the value of femininity to argue that, as women, they make good soldiers. These women claim that the ability of women to be better communicators, listeners and empathetic make them valuable additions to the military, and just as good soldiers as the men (Mitchell, 2015, Ferry, 2016).

Contrary to this argument that the presence of women is not producing any changes but reinforcing the culture of the military, Duncanson and Woodward (2015) argue that the increase in the number of women in the forces and their increased integration across militaries are changes in themselves. They contend against the existing deterministic position of feminists' critiques of the military and the dismissal of the potential for change which the presence of women could bring to the military. The small changes resulting from women's increased presence in the military, in their view, have the possibility of, subsequently, resulting in significant shifts in the gender culture of the military. They, therefore, propose a feminist perspective that acknowledges and explores the possibility of positive changes arising from the presence of women in the military. Changes such as how increased presence of women translates into processes that include their voices in tackling issues of gender inequalities and transforming the institution, resulting in a regendered military (Duncanson and Woodward, 2015 p.12).

Duncanson and Woodward (2015), therefore, engage the concept of 'regendering' differently from Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007). While Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) conceptualise it as the opposite of degendering, Duncanson and Woodward (2015), use it to refer to transformational changes in the gender relations patterns of the military. Changes where the concept of soldiering is not a masculine identity, the hierarchical thinking and domination of masculinity are questioned, and gender dichotomies are displaced. A context where 'masculine' and 'feminine' traits are equally valued (Duncanson and Woodward, 2015 p.10). Drawing from Lorber (2005) and Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007) and conceptualising the Gender Integration Policy in the Nigeria military as part of a degendering process, will its impact be a regendering from Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz (2007)'s or Duncanson and Woodward (2015)'s perspective?

Doan and Portillo (2015), analysing the recent integration of women into all sections of the United States military (Harris, 2013), also note the potential for change in the impact of gender integrationist policies. They argue that the observable resistance to gender integration in the US military is rooted in traditional gender stereotypes which covertly influence daily routine and interactions of personnel within the institution. Gender stereotypes are generalisations about the attributes that are or ought to be possessed or roles that are or should be played by each sex. Gender stereotyping, on the other hand, is the ascription of specific characteristics and functions to a man or woman based on their sex (Campbell and Storo, 1996, OHCHR, 2013, United Nations, 2016, Brewer, ND). The UN conceptualises stereotyping as a violation of human rights (OHCHR, 2013), and notes that stereotypes are harmful, even when they seem benign. This is because they act as limitations on individual's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers, as

with women in the military, and make choices about their lives (United Nations, 2016).

Doan and Portillo (2015 p.10), refer to the impact of stereotypes on women as 'gender oblivion' because they argue that stereotyping and its limiting impact on women in the US military are unintended. This is a different view of the nature of the masculine/feminine interaction in the military because the stereotyping norm of the Nigerian military which draws from society and limits women in the profession cannot be described as unintended (Ogunleye, 2013). It could be argued that the liberal ideology of the Western societies and its institutionalisation of equal gender rights, which forms the context of the Western militaries and sources of pressure for compliance with gender equality norms, serve to limit any forms of blatant disregard for women's rights. As feminists have noted, the gender relations pattern of institutions are derived from, wider society (Mackay et al., 2009, Carreiras, 2006, Woodward and Winter, 2007, Mackay and Meier, 2003, Mackay et al., 2010, Lovenduski, 2011). The Nigerian society is patriarchal (Akintan, 2013, Ogege, 2011, Makama, 2013), and stereotyping in the Nigerian military is evident and intended as it is in wider society (Ogunleye, 2013), presenting a different context

Doan and Portillo (2015) rightly argue that to eliminate the gender inequality in the military, efforts targeted at ending stereotype are necessary. They recommend deliberate organisational efforts to this end, and mentorship and support for servicewomen to help build their confidence. Although Doan and Portillo (2015) note the potential for change as I do regarding integration policies in the military, the Nigerian perspective is bound to be different from that of the United States'. This is because, it could be reasoned that the western armies, such as those of Britain and the US, have longer histories of women in combat-related roles (Mulrine, 2013, Burelli, 2013, Fallon, 2014). Their current integration programmes, therefore, are aimed at opening up remaining combat roles to women, while Nigeria has only just included women in combat training with the implication of their combat inclusion.

Most of the literature on gender integration in Western militaries note the continued subordination of women personnel despite integrationist policies, and as Duncanson and Woodward (2015) observe, they adopt a deterministic approach in studying the military institution with the belief that the military cannot change. Winslow and Dunn (2002) and Cawkill (2009), for example, note the continued systematic resistance against the presence of women in areas such as the Elite Joint Task Force of the Canadian Forces; a Western military which has integrated women into all spheres of combat for longer than most militaries. Woodward and Winter (2007, p. 40) also note how despite the long presence of women personnel in the British Army and the institutional policy efforts at promoting a 'culture of equality and respect for difference' the existent anti-feminine gender culture continues to limit the full integration of

women within the force. They observe how the construction of the gender discourses in these policies further acts to contain the full inclusion of women. Will this be the same experience with the Nigerian military with its Gender Integration Policy? While Woodward and Winter (2007) analyse gender discourses in policies of integration in the British Army to explain their position, I use primary data from interviews and focus group discussions, in addition to available secondary data, to explore how the policy shift and the changes it is producing are impacting the gender culture of the Nigerian military. I argue that given the different cultural context and existing basic level of women integration in the Nigerian military compared to the West, the impact of the GIP in the Nigerian military is bound to produce a different impact from the Western context. I also note that the very adoption of the policy is a change and this is informing more changes. So, my question is 'how are these changes impacting the Nigerian military and its gender culture?'

The debate on the impact of gender integrationist policies in the military has also drawn argument on the theme of the operational effectiveness of the forces. Feminists argue that the anti-femininity stance of the military (Rimalt, 2007) identifies women's presence as a negative impact on the professionalism, operational effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of the military (Van Creveld, 2000a, Maginnis, 2013, Simon, 2014). This is because the presence of women is argued to militate against the team cohesion of the forces as it brings the disintegrating effects of sexual relations among personnel. Increased cases of sexual harassments and the supposed inferior strength of women which limits the efficiency of units and also provokes the protective tendencies of men towards women are also cited as arguments against women's presence (Stiehm, 1982, Van Creveld, 2000a, Sjoberg, 2006, King, 2013, Simon, 2014).

Some commentators like McSally (2007) and MacKenzie (2012) note this position of the military as outdated and aimed at continued systematic exclusion of women from leadership and strategic positions in the profession. They further argue that the performances of women in recent wars where they have been drawn into combat situations despite their non-combatant status, like the Afghanistan war, show their capability to perform effectively in combat.

On cohesion, academic analysis of the impact of interpersonal dynamics on the performance of small groups like the unit, squad and platoon in the military, have led scholars into distinguishing two types; namely task cohesion and social cohesion (MacCoun, 2006, MacCoun, 2010). Task cohesion refers to 'the shared commitment among members to achieve a goal that requires the collective efforts of the group'; and a high group task cohesion is achieved when members share a common goal and are motivated to coordinate their efforts as a team to achieve that goal (MacCoun, 2010 p.137). Social cohesion, on the other hand, is 'the extent to which group members like each other, prefer to spend their social time together, enjoy each other's company, and feel

emotionally close to one another' (2010 p.137). Based on these distinctions, the nature of cohesion that exists in the military, especially in the small units, is analysed and understood. Unit cohesion in the military is founded on the trust and loyalty among the soldiers. It means being ready to die for your unit members which is horizontal cohesion, and the 'bond of trust that must exist between the commander in chief, subordinate leaders, and the troops they lead' referred to as vertical cohesion (Donnelly, 2010 p.250).

Cawkill (2009) in their study on the effective integration of Women in combat in several militaries concluded that there is no evidence to suggest that the presence of women in combat units affect cohesion. Task cohesion, which is necessary for efficiency and effectiveness of military units, and built through teamwork, has no direct relation with social cohesion. As such, lack of social relations between male and female soldiers in a mixed-gender unit as would assumably exist in a single-gender unit, has no impact on the efficient working of the unit (Cawkill, 2009, MacCoun, 2006, MacCoun, 2010). Teamwork is cultivated among professional forces through training together and through unified commitment to the task at hand (MacCoun, 2010, Basham, 2009, King, 2013, King, 2014, MacKenzie, 2012). 'It is in contexts where these standards have been prioritised over arbitrary social characteristics like race, ethnicity, sexuality, or gender, that women have been able to serve in infantry units among Anglophone forces and to fight on the frontlines' (King, 2014 p.1). The Nigerian Military is, however, yet to have women in close combat and active combat roles as they are currently only included in combat training. Will the new combatant women experience inclusion in actual combat in the face of arguments on their negative impact on cohesion and operational effectiveness? This is a question my study will explore as I address the implication of the policy shift for sustainable opportunities for advancement of the servicewomen in the profession.

On the issue of cohesion, Basham (2009 p.732) notes that social cohesion has the effect of eroding individual and unit cohesion. She claims that the tendency of the military to emphasise operational effectiveness predicated on social cohesion arguments and to see diversity policies as undermining of operational efficiency facilitates divisions among personnel. This reaction by the military also connotes institutional discrimination against women and other non-traditional soldiers like gay men. This argument is because the notion of operational effectiveness is based on 'normative assumptions about the potential impact of specific aspects of social identity; heterosexuality and being a woman, on social cohesion', dividing personnel along the lines of the operationally effective and less effective ones. Female soldiers are, therefore, cast as operationally ineffective, making them feel undervalued and limited in their capacity to prove their commitment to their roles and fellow personnel (2009 p.734). By the emphasis on operational effectiveness based on social

cohesion, the military, therefore, paradoxically perpetuates division, and consequently ineffectiveness among its personnel.

This argument could also apply to the Nigerian Military because the case of operational effectiveness based on social cohesion has been proffered as a reason for an argument against inclusion of the new women cadets in combat roles (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014, Ogbaji, 2015). However, unlike Basham (2009)'s focus, the British Armed Forces, which has had women in combat-related roles for long before its recent announcement of the total integration of women into all roles by 2018 (Farmer, 2016), Nigeria has only had women in non-combat roles until the adoption of the GIP. Will this argument of operational effectiveness and social cohesion result in their total exclusion, inclusion, or partial inclusion in combat upon graduation? My work aims to explore the arguments in reaction to the integration policy, and the potential implication for the deployment of the new women combatants; presenting a different case study of gender integration in the military.

2.3 Gender Integration in African Militaries

In this section, I explore some of the literature and debates on the impact of gender integration in some African armed forces. I show how their experiences differ from those of their Western counterparts. I also argue that even amongst African militaries, a difference of context and experiences exist, justifying the need for studies of individual military experiences such as mine.

Addressing gender integration and its impact on the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Baaz and Stern (2011) present a different perspective from that of the West. They note, interestingly, the absence of the man the protector/woman the protected discourse in the gender integration debate in the Congolese armed forces. Although the stereotyping of women as weak and their presence as detrimental to the performance of the military unit was present, the male soldiers argued that the women did not require, nor deserve protection because of their unreliability as women. Baaz and Stern (2011) note that the women soldiers expressed the same view of not needing protection because they believed that it was not the duty of the male soldiers to protect women in battle, but to protect the nation.

The authors do not attempt to explore this departure in perceptions from the common assumption of gender relations in combat, although they note that the argument of the men regarding the unpreparedness of African society, compared to the West, for female combat inclusion was aimed at legitimising women's exclusion. I argue beyond this, however, that the argument is aimed at sustaining the traditional gender division of labour, and resistance against the disregard of traditional gender boundaries by the presence of women in the military, and their potential inclusion in combat roles. This reaction was apparent in the discouragement of and refusal to allow the militia women to join

the new integrated armed forces of the DRC by the militia commanders after the demobilisation of the rebel forces (Baaz and Stern, 2011). Heineken (2002) agrees with this argument by observing the resistance of the male soldiers against the inclusion of women in combat in the South African National Defence Forces (SANDF). She notes how a larger number of black male soldiers than white held the opinion of women being physically incapable of performing in combat (Heineken, 2002 p.722). She attributed this view of the black men to the subordinate role of women in traditional African cultural gender relations.

In respect of women in the DRC Armed forces having the same view regarding protection by the men, I would argue that this is a reaction against the perception of women's weakness and incapability of combat. The women take this position in defence of their ability to perform efficiently and to prove their readiness to face any outcomes of combat inclusion. Most of these women were involved in the civil wars and had seen combat action as part of the Rebel and Militia forces (Mazurana et al., 2004, Annan et al., 2009), and so were not daunted by the prospect of dangers in combat situations. Heineken (2002) argues in the same vein by noting that larger number of black female soldiers than the white women soldiers in the SANDF were ready to serve in frontline combat roles, and she attributed this to the black women's role in the revolutionary struggle.

An additional theme which emerged from Baaz and Stern (2011)'s study of the DRC military which depicted its peculiarity is the 'whore narrative'. This came up in the male soldiers' comments about the possibility of using women troops in the intelligence section of the military because of their believed 'feminine' trait of duplicity which could be employed to gather information from the enemy. The perception of the women in the DRC forces is therefore not only one of incapability, but also of antagonism and distrust. Baaz and Stern (2011 p.579) attribute this perception to the peculiar economic and social context of the DRC. They explain it as:

A reflection of dire living conditions and feelings of emasculation connected to failures to live up to the provider role. In this way, general feelings of emasculation connected to one's 'private' role as father and husband also spill over into the military sphere, feeding into representations of women within the Army (Baaz and Stern, 2011 p.579).

The bad economic situation that prevails in the DRC, as a result of a prolonged period of war and high level of corruption in government, has left the larger part of the population in poverty (Ndikumana and Emizet, 2003, Beya, 2015) as depicted in the 2015 Economic Freedom index. The dire economic situation has resulted in women leaving their traditional private space and role to seek employment like the men to provide for the family; thereby encroaching on the

traditional function of the man as a provider. This feeling of emasculation, as the authors note, feeds the negative perceptions of the men regarding the women.

The Armed Forces of the DRC, like any military, is sustained by a masculine ideology which is resistant to women inclusion; however, the ways in which 'military identities are produced through the masculinity and femininity discourse, are locally specific' (Baaz and Stern, 2011 p.582). Additionally, although it is like the Nigeria Military in its colonial military history, the Armed Forces of the DRC is different because of its engagement in a long period of civil war, and its process of integration of rebel forces into the national forces. It is a military of global focus presently because of the atrocities committed by the forces on both sides of the war during the period of the conflict. It is currently engaged in a Security Sector Reform (SSR) programme⁴ aimed at a rehabilitation and reorientation of its troops (Baaz and Stern, 2009, Sivakumaran, 2007, Mukengere Mukwege and Nangini, 2009).

In the same vein, the SANDF which is like the DRC military in colonial history and extended periods of conflict also has its peculiarities. For example, while the South African conflict was a national struggle against White minority rule, the DRC was engaged in civil wars. The SANDF also contends with an additional factor of race which generates more diverse opinions in respect of the gender integration process (Heineken, 2002). Unlike the DRC, South Africa already officially includes women in all combat roles, although they have not been deployed in frontline roles (Lt Col Mkhwanazi, 2016). Heineken (2002) identifies race as a factor in the debate on the deployment of women combatants to frontline positions because the white women soldiers in the SANDF would rather have a policy of fully voluntary combat service for females as a significant proportion of them would rather not serve in combat. The black women soldiers, on the other hand, indicate preparedness to engage in the frontlines and do not mind a policy of compulsory drafting in times of necessity (Heineken, 2002). Heineken (2002) attributes this to the different experiences of the two groups of women in respect of involvement and participation in conflict situations. This further supports the argument of the diverse experiences of

⁴ The Security Sector Reforms are processes supported by the United Nations aimed at rebuilding the security sectors of states which have become dysfunctional and unable to provide security for the state and its people effectively according to democratic principles. The reforms promote the establishment and improvement of democratic governance, and are based on the conviction that security, development and democracy are linked so much so that security is impossible without democracy and democracy cannot function without security. EKENGREN, M. & SIMONS, G. 2011. *The politics of security sector reform: challenges and opportunities for the European Union's global role*, Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. UNITED NATIONS. 2015b. *Security Sector Reforms* [Online]. United States: United Nations. Available: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/security.shtml> [Accessed 16th July, 2105 2015]. These reforms in the DRC military are aimed at combating the scourge of sexual and gender based violence in the country which is resultant of the protracted war in conformity with the global security sector reforms agenda BAAZ, M. E. & STERN, M. 2011. Whores, men, and other misfits: Undoing 'feminization' in the armed forces in the DRC. *African Affairs*, 110, 563-585.

nations and their militaries coming to bear on gender integration processes as Carreiras (2006) also noted.

The Kenya Defence Force (KDF), an East African army with a similar history of colonialism as the Nigerian military and the Armed Forces of the DRC, and freedom struggles like the SANDF, also presents a gender integration experience different from the other militaries. The integration policy in the KDF is a result of government's compliance with global institutional expectations of member states of the international community like Nigeria with its Gender Integration Policy. The KDF's decision was specifically in conformity with the United Nations' Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security which mandates nations to increase women's participation in peace operations and military structures (Nduwimana, 2006, Ombati, 2015 p.405, United Nations, 2017). The decision was reinforced by the government's constitutional policy which disallows any public institution from having more than two-thirds of its staff as members of the same sex at any time (Ombati, 2015). This policy officially opened all areas of the KDF to women and presented them with similar opportunities as men. This also resulted in their deployment to the front lines in the war against the Al-Shabaab insurgents in Somalia with which Kenya shares a border (Branch, 2011, Ngirachu, 2011, Ombati, 2015).

Ombati (2015), however, notes that despite the policy, a gendered division of labour based on stereotypes of women and the roles that they perform in the institution persists. They are assigned functions that are linked to feminine attributes of 'nurturing, supporting, empathy and caring' (Ombati, 2015 p.411). However, in times of war such as the offensive against Al-Shabaab in conjunction with the Somali Armed Forces (SAF) (Branch, 2011, Anderson and McKnight, 2015), women soldiers were expected to exhibit masculine traits. According to Ombati (2015 p.114), women are, 'called upon to combine their femininity with the military's combat warrior masculinity', not lose their femininity. This, he argues, is because the unchanged patriarchal ideology of the KDF and the Kenyan society continue to ensure stereotyping of the women, whereas the commitment of the government to compliance with the UNSCR 1325 also informs their inclusion in combat roles for which masculine combat warrior attributes are believed to be required. This depicts a different gender integration policy experience from those of Western militaries where women become masculinized, or like the Armed Forces of the DRC which resists the inclusion of women and the SANDF which has not yet deployed its women in frontline roles despite their official integration in the combat functions.

The paradoxical expectations on the KDF female troops limit their integration in the military. Also, notwithstanding their inclusion in the Al-Shabaab war, the number of women deployed in this war was small, and they did not engage in active combat (Ngirachu, 2011). Some of them were charged with border traffic control (Ngirachu, 2011). The lack of advanced military technology, which is also noted as a limiting factor to the full inclusion of women in the KDF, as in

most African countries (Juma and Makina in Ombati, 2015), further differentiates the KDF from Western militaries with their advanced military technology.

Nigeria has a distinct society with its culture, history and experiences that come to bear on the identity of its armed forces as the Kenyan society and the KDF. Although Ombati (2015) makes the link between the culture of society and that of the military, he does not explore the systematic impact of society's norms and practices on the Army's as I intend to do in my study on the Nigerian military. He also does not address the details of women's integration; he only focuses on the one deployment of KDF servicewomen in frontline roles against Al-Shabaab. Does the KDF plan to continue the inclusion of women in these frontline positions or was this a one-off event? The author does not say. He does not focus on the UNSCR 1325 as I do with the GIP in the Nigerian military. However, this work depicts the distinct nature of African military contexts with the substantial impact of society's patriarchy as opposed to Western militaries liberal societal context which contends against the institutional patriarchal nature of the military institution that has become more covert than overt (Doan and Portillo, 2015). These differences corroborate my argument about distinct military contexts and experiences. My study aims to present an analysis of the Nigerian military's experience which may not be the same as that of other militaries of both the West and Africa because of its specific contextual features.

Afrim-Narh (2006a) presents another perspective of women in an African military, the Ghanaian Armed Forces (GAF), and I engage his work here because of the close similarities which Ghana shares with Nigeria in history, economy and social culture, and regional proximity. Also, Afrim-Narh (2006a) addresses the debate on the impact of women's presence in combat and leadership of military Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) which derive from the discussion of women's integration in the military and war. The experiences of the GAF further support the argument for studies of respective militaries and the diverse perspectives that exist in respect of gender integration which I make as justification for my research on gender integration in the Nigerian Military.

Afrim-Narh (2006a) argues that the exclusion of women from combat and leadership roles by the GAF in PKOs, contrary to traditional assumptions about their negative impact on the operational effectiveness of missions, is based on the low technological advancement of the Ghanaian military in respect of weapons and ammunitions. This technical disadvantage causes it to rely more on physical training of personnel to make them ready for missions and combat; and the presumption that women are unable to cope with the rigorousness of these training results in their exclusion, and consequently, exclusion from combat and leadership duties in PKOs. This is in line with one of Segal (1995)'s hypotheses that the lower the technological advancement of a military, the less the participation of women in the military. Military technological progress has

been argued as a factor that should increase women's military involvement. Improved military technology reduces the emphasis on physical strength and places more focus on intelligence and strategic abilities; abilities which are not related to gender (Higate, 2003a, Detraz, 2012). Deficiency in this area of technological advancement, as in the GAF, impacts on women's integration.

The GAF also excludes women from combat roles and leadership in PKOs as a battle tactic to deter attacks from rebel forces which would attack units with female leaders or a substantial number of women combatants (Afrim-Narh, 2006b). This is believed to be likely based on the traditional notion of women's weaker strength and the impression that a unit with a large number of them or a female leader would be weak. It could be deduced, however, that these perceptions of the GAF which inform the categorical exclusion of women as a group from physical training are based on existing sexist opinions in the military regarding the capability of women, although the author does not explore this connection.

The GAF further excludes women from these roles of leadership and combat in PKOs, according to Afrim-Narh (2006a), as a result of emulation of peer military institutions, particularly those of African countries with which Ghana collaborates closely in PKOs, such as Nigeria. He ascribes this to the tendency of significant others in the same social systems to influence the behaviour of observers (Sternberg 2004, Mazur 1994 in Afrim-Narh, 2006a p.71). This supports the argument of isomorphism by Sociological Institutionalism regarding organisations or states existing within the same institutional environment and their emulation of each other in respect of policies (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Schofer et al., 2012). This isomorphic tendency of nations is an argument which I will explore regarding the Nigerian state and its military institution with the Gender Integration Policy.

Although the Nigerian Military and the GAF share similarities, they also have significant differences which inform differences in their experiences. Unlike Nigeria which is a patriarchal society, Ghana operates a dual system of matriarchy and patriarchy⁵ side by side, although its security structures, including the military, are male dominated. The Akan people who make up the largest ethnic group in Ghana and have a matriarchal based culture, constitute the greater part of Ghana's labour force, particularly the Military. Evidence shows, however, that the GAF is ideologically masculine and sexist in its gender culture, presenting an entirely different dynamic from the Nigerian Military which

⁵ Ghana is made up of a diversity of ethnic groups, of which the Akan are the largest consisting 40% of the Ghanaian population. They are followed by the Ewe, Ga Adangme, Guan and Kyerepong in the south. The Akan have a matriarchal based culture, while the other ethnic groups practice patriarchy WORLD CULTURE ENCYCLOPEDIA. 2015. *Ghana* [Online]. Advameg, Inc. Available: <http://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Ghana.html> [Accessed 18th July 2015].

exists in a solely patriarchal society (Asiyanbola, 2005, Ogege, 2011, Makama, 2013).

As at present, the Ghanaian military has not included women in Combat related roles, although it has sent female cadets for training in the Nigerian Defence Academy. Aning and Sjoberg (2011) also observe that there are no gender policies evident in the GAF just like the Nigerian Military. Afrim-Narh (2006a) does not explore these gender issues, although his work enables me to show the need for study of gender issues in African militaries within their specific contexts as my study aims to do with the Nigerian Military. This is because, despite the similarities in history, economy, and politics, the Nigerian Military still differs from the GAF in respects of culture and policies.

Women in the Nigerian military have been officially deployed in combat support roles in peace missions to conflict zones at various times like the GAF (Ikpe, 2010, Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014), although Ikpe (2010) notes their deployment to traditional feminine roles such as teaching and cooking in these operations. Currently, the adoption of the GIP by the government has opened up combat training with implications of combat deployment to women in the drive for a more equitable Nigerian military (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014, Ogbaji, 2015). Before 2011 when the government gave the order for the implementation of the policy shift, the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) restricted women from combat duties. Onumajuru (2014) and (Akpan, 2014) argue that there is no formal institutional policy formulation to back the GIP, although they do not explore the reasons for this policy inaction to back up this move of integration of women by the Nigerian military. The authors note that the Nigerian Military resists the inclusion of women in the fighting sections like other proponents of the military status quo, based on the familiar arguments of women's inferior physical strength and the negative impact on combat unit (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014, Ogbaji, 2015, Van Creveld, 2000a, Maginnis, 2013, Simon, 2014).

The authors, however, do not explore the factors that influence these arguments against women in combat, or how these arguments reflect the gender relations patterns that exist in the Nigerian society; a connection which I intend to explore in my study. Based on the implementation of the GIP, they recommend the creation of a policy that outlines the deployment of women combatants in limited combat roles based the argument of ensuring the operational effectiveness of the forces. They do not employ a methodology that is academically rigorous through engagement with in-depth researches on gender integration in militaries of other nations which have addressed these same arguments and debate as I do in my work. It could be suggested that their proximity to the military as serving officers impacts their recommendations. My research, unlike theirs, is an academic research based on field work, using a qualitative methodology that involves interviews and focus group discussions in exploring the impact of the Gender Integration Policy on the gender culture of the Nigerian Military. I also engage the works of other researchers on the

military and gender to make informed arguments on the issue of integration of women in combat roles in the Nigerian military.

Moving even further away from the position of 'limited' inclusion in the fighting roles as proposed by Akpan (2014) and Onumajuru (2014), Ogbaji (2015) argues for an exclusion of women combatants from the combat functions, and their continued restriction to support positions in the Nigerian Military. She claims, in line with the Nigerian Military and other supporters of women's exclusion from combat, that the presence of women would negatively affect the operational effectiveness of the military. Although she acknowledges the impact of the patriarchal nature of Nigerian society on gender relations in male-dominated institutions like the Nigerian Military, she advocates hard work for women in surmounting structural discrimination in the organisation. Ogbaji (2015) does not explain how hard work could replace combat experience as a criterion for upward advancement to specific positions of leadership or power. Like Peaches (1997), Ogbaji (2015) argues for the exclusion of gender in considerations of combat assignment for women. Unlike Peaches (1997), who refers to the consideration of the compatibility of individual women's capability to specific combat duties, however, Ogbaji (2015) refers to the compatibility of women's biological makeup and feminine nature to traditional roles which make up the support corps in the Nigerian military. She, therefore, advocates the continued essentialisation and stereotyping of servicewomen, and their subordinate position within the Nigerian military. Her argument does not account for the women in the Nigerian military who would like the opportunity to perform in combat, and discounts the advances which have been made in respect of equal rights for women in the Nigerian society.

I argue, contrary to (Ogbaji, 2015)'s position and in agreement with liberal feminists, that the Nigerian Military, as a modern institution of a democratic state, is obliged to uphold the civil right of women by giving them the opportunity to perform in all areas of the profession, including combat. I further argue that the resistance against this, which is observable in the workings of the Nigerian Military as I will go on to show subsequently, is a reflection of its gendered culture which is derivative of the patriarchal Nigerian societal context. Also, this resistance is in the bid to maintain its masculine identity. However, like Peaches (1997), I do concede that there is a need for consideration of individual capabilities in combat assignments. I posit that the goal is to remove deliberate institutional structures that limit women in areas of endeavour and not a disregard of the importance of the role of the military in defending the state, and the importance of efficiency in carrying out these functions.

2.4 Conclusion

This review has explored the literature on women in Western and African militaries. It engaged the feminist perspectives in the debate on the inclusion and participation of women in the contemporary military, the factors that

influence their inclusion and participation, the impact of gender integration in several militaries and the debate on the inclusion of women in combat in the Nigerian Military. It has shown that the factors that influence the integration of women in an ideologically masculine institution like the military, and the impact of these factors, are diverse and country context specific. In other words, the factors of history, socio-cultural traditions, politics, and economics, differ in respect of countries and interact in different ways which produce different situations for military women in the various armies of the world, as it also does in the Nigerian Military. However, the existing literature does not reflect the context of the Nigerian military, and this makes my research on the recent policy shift, and its impact on the gender culture of the Nigerian Military as an institution, a fitting addition to the literature. In respect of the available literature on women in the Nigerian Military, the few that exist are mainly unpublished works on the debate on the inclusion of the women in combat. My research, on the other hand, goes beyond the debate to explore how the gendered culture of the Nigerian Military interacts with the global liberal culture that informs the principles of the Gender Integration Policy and the changes it is producing. I, therefore, posit that the women combatants are likely to experience a semi-inclusion in combat roles rather than a full inclusion. By semi-inclusion, I mean inclusion in some combat-related functions, rather than full combat. I, therefore, explore how the impact of the policy shift is coming to bear on the roles and status of servicewomen, and the consequence of this for sustainable change and increased opportunities for advancement for women in the profession.

I adopt a Feminist Sociological institutionalism theoretical approach to analyse the policy shift and its impact on the gender culture of the Nigerian military and explore the questions that I ask. The next chapter presents this theoretical perspective, its claims and appropriateness in analysing my questions and making my arguments.

Chapter 3

A Feminist Sociological Institutional Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the theoretical perspective of Feminist Sociological Institutionalism (FSI) which I have chosen to use for the analysis of the questions I ask regarding the changes taking place in the Nigerian military. My central question is; 'how are the evolving changes in the Nigerian military impacting the institution and shaping its gender culture?' In exploring this issue, I address four sub-questions:

1. How have gendered norms and practices shaped the Nigerian military?
2. How does the international context affect Nigeria's policymaking in this area and what effects does this have on implementation?
3. How is the current inclusion of women in combat training, along with men in the Nigerian Defence Academy, challenging the gendered culture of the Nigerian Military?
4. What are the implications of these changes for more sustainable opportunities for upward advancement for servicewomen in the Nigerian Military?

The chapter will show that the FSI theoretical framework is the most useful framework for answering these questions. FSI draws on conceptual tools from two fields: Feminist Political Science to analyse the gendered nature of institutions, and Sociological Institutionalism (SI) to investigate the reasons for the similarity of gender policies among states and the variable impact of these policies on the gender culture of institutions within these countries.

In section one I will introduce SI and its major claims, and the conceptual tools of isomorphism and decoupling which FSI adopts for its analysis. I will explain how these conceptual tools enable me to analyse the international context, its impact on the adoption of the policy by the Nigerian government, and how this influences the policy's impact on the gender culture of the military. I will show how the theory helps me to evaluate to what extent the policy is an emulation of the gender integration policies of Western armies as Nigeria strives to project an international image of itself as a legitimate democracy, and its military as a modern liberal institution committed to gender equality. In section two, I will explain the addition of gender as a concept to the SI framework by feminists to make it more relevant in analysing social relations changes from adopted policies of gender equality, hence the FSI framework. I will explain how this addition helps me to explore the Nigerian military from a gender perspective and also how its gender culture is responding to the changes from the Gender Integration Policy after the implementation. This enables me to explore the ways in which the Nigerian military is a gendered institution with a culture which is shaped by the patriarchal social system of the Nigerian society. The interaction of this gendered military culture and other peculiarities of its context,

such as colonial history, political, economic and religious factors, with the adopted policy produces an impact that is peculiar to the Nigerian military context. The chapter will conclude with a section that lays out the benefits of this theoretical perspective for my research.

3.2 Sociological Institutionalism

Sociological Institutionalism is one of the three 'New Institutionalisms', alongside Rational Choice Institutionalism, and Historical Institutionalism (Hall and Taylor, 1996, Goodin, 2009, Mackay et al., 2009, Amenta and Ramsey, 2010).⁶ These three institutional theories define institutions similarly, as 'formal or informal procedures, routines, norms, and conventions in the organisational structure of the polity or the political economy' (Amenta and Ramsey, 2010 p. 16). However, Sociological Institutionalism differs from the others by adding 'cognitive templates, moral templates and symbol systems to this definition' (Amenta and Ramsey, 2010 p. 16). Sociological Institutionalists, therefore, define institutions as 'formal and informal collections of interrelated norms, rules, and routines, understandings and frames of meaning that define "appropriate" action and rules of acceptable behaviour for their members. They comprise normative, symbolic cognitive and regulatory aspects which are widely known, accepted and regarded as legitimate' (Mackay et al., 2009 p.255). SI, therefore, conceives of organisations and political actors as existing within institutional contexts which constrain and shape their identity and actions such as in respect of policy decisions (Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005, Mackay et al., 2009, Schofer et al., 2012).

SI argues, therefore, that it is recourse to institutionalised repertoires that explains much of institutional behaviour, rather than calculated action. To understand the actions of political actors, like that of the Nigerian government in initiating the Gender Integration Policy and the impact it is producing in respect of change, therefore, there is a need to study its institutional environment, because institutions and individual actions are mutually constitutive (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Mackay et al., 2009). Policy decisions of organisations or states are considered, therefore, as not mainly a result of 'rational pressures' as rationalists would argue, but of social and cultural pressures to conform to current beliefs (Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005 p.193). As such, organisations or nations adopt 'institutionally favoured' policies and practices because they want to be judged 'legitimate and appropriate' by peer countries or organisations, especially more prominent others within their institutional

⁶ These three schools of thought were developed in reaction to the behavioural approaches to the study of politics which predominated the 1960s and 70s. It was seen as an attack on the previous approach that was considered 'relatively insensitive to the non-political determinants of political behaviour and hence to the non-political basis of governmental institutions' HALL, P. A. & TAYLOR, R. C. 1996. Political science and the three new institutionalisms. *Political studies*, 44, 936-957, GOODIN, R. E. (ed.) 2009. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, United States Oxford University Press. They seek to explain the roles of institutions in the determination of social and political outcomes.

environment, resulting in isomorphism or institutional homogeneity among states or organisations (Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005 p.196). Isomorphism in SI, therefore, points to the process which results in the similarity of formal institutions among organisations or states through their adoption of emergent legitimated practices and features within their wider institutional environment in the bid to show conformity and gain legitimacy.

There are three ways in which states or organisations are believed to adopt similar practices, structures or procedures; mimetic, normative or coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1991 quoted in Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005 p.196). Mimetic isomorphism explains cases where organisations or states copy the institutional policies of more prominent others within their institutional environment which they see as legitimate, to also gain legitimacy. This is like the case of developing democratic nations like Nigeria copying the gender equality policies adopted by prominent liberal democratic countries like Britain, USA, and Canada to project a liberal democratic image of itself. Normative isomorphism, on the other hand, is where organisations agree to abide by accepted standards promoted by professionals like the case of accountants, consultants, and others. Coercive isomorphism, however, is the process by which organisations are obliged to submit to or adopt certain practices through formal or informal pressure from various authorities upon which they are dependent, like the federal government or by cultural expectation of society in which the organisation exists (Dimaggio and Powell, 1983, DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005, Mackay et al., 2009). The case of Nigeria, I would argue, is an example of mimetic isomorphism with the adoption and implementation of the GIP in its military in imitation of armies of the West which have done same.

Mimetic isomorphism explains the institutional similarity among states and organisations in respect of gender equality and wider equality initiatives, like gender mainstreaming, gender quotas, women's policy machinery and so on (Mackay et al., 2009 p.258). These similar initiatives on gender equality are taken by states because they belong in the same institutional environment which upholds what it considers as norms of appropriate behaviour for democratic states, which include the commitment and efforts, regarding policy actions, towards ensuring equal gender opportunities and women empowerment. In this case of the military, the adoption of similar policies of integration of women into all roles, including combat in recent times, although to different extents, by respective militaries of nations like Canada, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, and more recently, the United States, and the United Kingdom (Winslow and Dunn, 2002, Cawkill, 2009, Mulrine, 2013, MacKenzie, 2013, Burelli, 2013, Farmer, 2016), depicts mimetic institutional isomorphism.

Sociological institutionalism, therefore, emphasises the fact that nation states are embedded in a global level cultural context which shapes their identities and behaviour (Finnemore, 1996, Meyer et al., 1997, Schofer et al., 2012, McNeely, 2012). This shaping of nation's identities and behaviour is through the existence of cultural models that define what appropriate nation states look and act like (Schofer et al., 2012, McNeely, 2012). These models conform to the liberal democratic ideals of individual freedoms and human rights provisions expressed in the United Nations Declaration of Human rights (Schofer et al., 2012). SI, therefore, notes the global build-up of international organisations, and structures such as the United Nations, and others, over time which promotes the institutionalisation and diffusion of these cultural models. The presence of these international organisations results in the building and sustenance of a global culture that conforms to the western culture of liberalism (Finnemore, 1996, Meyer et al., 1997).⁷ Nations belonging to the global community, therefore, ascribe to these cultural models in conformity to the international norms and practices of democratic states in their policies; the consequence is a 'global diffusion of ideas and policy models' (Schofer et al., 2012 p.53). Developing liberal democratic nations, like Nigeria, as members of the international community, in the process, emulate the policies of more developed liberal democratic countries of the West which they see as legitimate, in conformity with the global norms, in the bid to gain legitimacy as liberal democratic states within the global system. This compliance gives them access to the benefits that come with global acceptance such as international aids, loans, bilateral trade and military agreements, attracting foreign investments and so on.

International legitimacy, according to Mulligan (2005) is 'the collective judgment of international society about rightful membership of the family of nations' (2005 p.362). It refers to the acceptance of an aspiring nation or the actions of a state by other nation states that form the collective membership of the international community (Mulligan, 2005). This acceptance entails conformity with rules and norms of the community, and these are made apparent in the laws and aims of global institutions like the United Nations (UN). One of these standards to which the United Nations obligates its members is the promotion and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, regardless of race, sex, language or religion (Article 1, Charter of the United Nations). The norm of gender equality derives from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is also one of such standards to which the United Nations obligates its members.

⁷ This global culture argument is also referred to as the World Society perspective which argues about the emergence of a world culture which is based on Western values and norms and integrating the globe. This culture is claimed to be spreading with the Western political and economic expansion. It could, therefore, be said to be expanding with the emergence of globalisation FINNEMORE, M. 1996. Norms, culture, and world politics: insights from sociology's institutionalism. *International organization*, 50, 325-347, MCNEELY, C. L. 2012. World Society Theory. *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

It forms the basis for the gender equality policies expected to be adopted by member nations; policies such as gender mainstreaming (Mehra and Gupta, 2006) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (United Nations, 2015a).

Regarding CEDAW, as at 2015, 189 countries had signed and ratified CEDAW (Nations, 2015). This ratification meant, therefore, that they are obligated to ensure its domestication as part of their national laws, and success in respect of taking steps in the form of programmes to pursue the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The commitment of individual nations to this goal is a different issue considering the various national peculiarities and contexts that exist among states. The result, however, is a similarity of gender policies among nations, and nations emulating policy actions of others to show conformity and gain legitimacy. Research has also demonstrated institutional homogeneity among nations in policies on education standards (Meyer et al., 1997, Hasse and Krücken, 2014), environmental treaties (Schofer and Hironaka, 2005), Human rights laws (Smith, 2004), among others.

The notion of isomorphism allows the contextualisation and conceptualisation of the GIP in the Nigerian military as a global norm informed gender equality tool adopted by the Nigerian government as a democratic state, aimed at bringing about change in the gendered culture of its military (Akpan, 2014, Ogbaji, 2015). Being able to contextualise and conceptualise the policy and its aims, forms the basis for exploring how the changes it is informing is impacting the gender culture of the Nigerian military, and consequently, its structure. In other words, how its global institutional origin influences the kind of impact the policy is generating on the gender culture of the Nigerian military. I set out this contextualisation and conceptualisation of the GIP in chapter five, and in chapters six and seven, I explore how the ideology, norms and practices of the Nigerian military, which are derived from the prevalent patriarchal culture of the wider Nigerian society, are responding to the principles of the policy and, in turn, impacting the structure of the institution. I will draw on the primary data that I have generated through interviews and focus group discussions in exploring these units of analysis, ideology, norms and practices, which I use to depict the gender culture of the Nigerian military.

SI additionally employs the concept of decoupling to refer to a situation where, although an organisation or state has adopted and implemented a global policy on gender equality like other states, its actual practices do not conform to the guidelines and principles of the policy because, internally, the policy and its principles are being resisted (Meyer et al., 1997, Westphal and Zajac, 2001, Tilcsik, 2010, Carlon et al., 2012). A gap, therefore, exists between policy and practice as a result of the resistance. Coupling, on the other hand, refers to the opposite situation of decoupling, one of adoption and internalisation of the guidelines of a policy, evidenced in the institutionalisation of the changes it informs in the norms and practices of the institution (Meyer et al., 1997, Mackay

et al., 2009, Hasse and Krücken, 2014). Decoupling and coupling, therefore, denote weak or strong impact respectively regarding the implementation of these global norms informed policies.

SI notes that 'states, organisations, and even individuals, are loose structures with internal inconsistencies', and this, sometimes, results in different directions of activities at the same time (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Schofer et al., 2012). This explains the situation with states and their subunits like the military. States and their subunits sometimes differ in identity and interests (Schofer et al., 2012), and so, as a state adopts global policies consistent with its status as a liberal democratic state, this may be perceived as unfamiliar by its subunits. As such, while sub-units formally adopt these policies, they keep their internal practices from being impacted by them. This is because these global institutional policies are not context specific and are perceived by sub-units as impositions of unfamiliar norms and values which are resisted, resulting in disjuncture and a decoupling (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005, Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Mackay et al., 2009, Carlon et al., 2012, Schofer et al., 2012).

These global culture informed policies are mainly derived from Western informed norms (McNeely, 2012, Schofer and Hironaka, 2005, Goodman and Jinks, 2008). It is argued that when political figures adopt them in their aim for international legitimacy, they do not consider their contextual difference and how this impacts their distinct societal context (Goodman and Jinks, 2008). According to Schofer et al (2012), this is more the case among developing countries in their pursuit of international acceptance and the benefits of conformity that this brings because they do not consider commitments to compliance. It is further argued that because a symbolic show of conformity is often enough to capture the benefits of legitimacy, and no strict monitoring or enforcement mechanisms for compliance exist, the policies tend to remain symbolic gestures in these non-western contexts (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, Drori et al., 2003, Schofer and Hironaka, 2005, Cortell and Davis, 2005, Boyle and Corl, 2010, Carlon et al., 2012, Goodman and Jinks, 2008). This argument, I would argue, is not necessarily accurate because Western contexts have also been known to produce decoupling as I will illustrate shortly, and it cannot be argued that all instances of adoption of global norms informed policies in the global southern states have always produced a decoupling.

The specific peculiarities of national contexts of most developing democracies, such as Nigeria, distinguishes them from those of the West where these liberal norms and international institutions originate, and so, are likely to produce different forms of impact. The argued cases of more decoupling in the global south, in respect of global equality policies has been attributed to the nature of the social systems in place, and the resilient nature of culture in the face of change as Boyle et al. (2002) depict with the five African case studies in their

study of the traditional practice of FGC and international policies to stop the practice. This specificity of societal context is what I also argue about the Nigerian society (Asiyanbola, 2005, Ogege, 2011, Makama, 2013) and the case of the nature of the impact of the integration policy in the Nigerian military. It is important to note that coupling is not always the case in the global North in respect of the adoption of these global policies of gender equality, or that patriarchy, male dominance or sexism is not a thing of the past in Western societies. On the contrary, decoupling has been found to occur in Western societies as well. Examples are the continued refusal of the US to ratify CEDAW despite its status as a leader in the international community (Organisation, ND, Hongju, 2002, Wotipka and Ramirez, 2008, Mcbain, 2013), and also the persistent disconnect between policies of gender integration and gender stereotyping norms in the IDF (Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007). The continued subtle gender stereotyping, in the US military in spite of the integration policy is also an example (Doan and Portillo, 2015).

The point is that different situations produce varying levels of impact and the level of impact in Western societal contexts differ from those experienced in the global South. Sexism and its attendant norms can be argued to be experienced differently in different societies. Gill (2008), McRobbie (2009) and Taylor (2011) note that gender stereotyping and sexism are still quite present in the West, only in different forms and perpetuated through various avenues from what is evident in the South. For example, whereas Doan and Portillo (2015) state that the stereotyping in the US military, despite the policy of integration of women into all roles, is done covertly, the same cannot be said of Nigeria where sexism is quite overt and intended (Ogunleye, 2013). The recent sexist comment by the present Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, regarding his wife's place being in his bedroom and kitchen while in international company, attests to this overt sexism in the Nigerian society (Baker, 2016).

Decoupling, however, does not mean the total absence of change, (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005, Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Schofer et al., 2012), which is why some have referred to it as loose coupling (Schofer et al., 2012, McNeely, 2012) and identified different types of decoupling (Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005). They range from problematic decoupling, which has also been referred to as radical decoupling, to benign and adaptive decoupling (Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Schofer and Hironaka, 2005), according to the level of changes they permit. Importantly, all forms of decoupling allow 'states to maintain standardised, legitimating, formal structures while their activities vary in response to practical considerations' (Meyer and Rowan in Goodman and Jinks, 2008 p.731). In addition to structural compliance, therefore, scholars argue that the adoption of these global policies and the awareness that they bring about the global norm of appropriate states' behaviour, have the potential to legitimate and reinforce internal pressures on government for change from local social movements or pressure groups and/or

individual behaviour and practices (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005). The presence of formal structures in implementing these policies could, consequently, present opportunities for change in local norms and practices in the long run. Boyle et al. (2002), for example, note how the adoption of anti-feminine genital cutting (FGC) or female circumcision policies based on international human rights laws by the governments of five African states did not lead to compliance in practice by society because of the long-time entrenchment of the culture and people's desire to keep their legitimacy as members of society. However, they note some level of changes in individual attitudes and practices which could potentially lead to larger societal behavioural changes based on awareness that had been created with the exposure to 'modern scripts' of expected behaviour with the policy implementation (Boyle et al., 2002 p.25). Schofer and Hironaka (2005) also observe how, in spite of the decoupling that followed the adoption of environmental protection policies by states, the structural adoption of the policy legitimated local mobilisation and reinforced already existing pressure groups to insist on change from government. Goodman and Jinks (2008) use the example of India to note the possibilities of change in a decoupled context in respect of compliance with human rights laws.

The case of CEDAW in Nigeria presents an excellent example of an adopted global gender policy that supports the claims of isomorphism and decoupling. The nation ratified CEDAW in 1985 along with 189 other nations without any reservations. This was unlike some neighbouring African countries like the Republic of Niger, which indicated its reservations regarding article 2, paragraphs (a) and (f) among others, 'regarding the government taking all appropriate measures to abolish all customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women, particularly in respect of succession' (Nations, 2015). Nigeria further ratified the optional protocol to CEDAW in 2001 alongside 106 other nations (Women's Aid Collective, 2008). However, presently, 30 years afterwards, CEDAW is yet to be domesticated as part of Nigeria's domestic laws because some members of the National Assembly argue that some of its provisions and demands are at total variance with the traditional culture and religious ways of the Nigerian society (Para-Mallam, 2010, Igbinovia, 2013, Beat, 2013, Akor, 2014). Despite this resistance, however, the ratification of CEDAW by the Nigerian government has created a high level of awareness among Nigerian women and legitimated a lot of pressure from women's groups and activists on the domestication of the instrument (Nwankwo, 2009, Stiftung, 2013, Igbinovia, 2013). The presence of the policy has therefore presented legitimacy and agency for Nigerian women to pressure the government for compliance, and consequently, change. This may not have happened yet, Nigerian women activists are confident it will (Nwankwo, 2009, Igbinovia, 2013).

Although decoupling indicates the ineffective nature of global policies in some contexts which uphold norms and practices quite different from the ones that

inform these policies, SI, notes the room for changes on levels which could ultimately impact on the overall behaviour of organisations or states in respect of compliance. However, as Schofer and Hironaka (2005 p.28) state, decoupling focuses narrowly on policy-outcome link, and issues of gender equity are far broader, impacting on culture. In respect of a study focused on institutions and gender relations, therefore, an additional analytical tool is required that allows further exploration to determine the impact of institutionalised policies on social relations. Feminist Sociological Institutionalism (FSI) is, therefore, a product of the attempt by feminist institutionalists to account for the gendered nature of institutions, and how gendered norms and practices interact with formally institutionalised policies to either constrain or facilitate change in gender relations (Mackay et al., 2009, Krook and Mackay, 2011, Mackay et al., 2010). It, therefore, integrates a feminist gender analysis into a sociological institutionalist approach to analyse 'the widespread formal adoption and development of similar gender equality initiatives by diverse institutional and governmental organisations and their varying impact on institutional practices, norms and outcomes' (Mackay et al., 2009 p.254). In other words, it aims to explain why policies designed to attaining gender equality for women are similar across countries or organisations, but their impact on the gender norms and practices of these states or their institutions are varied in that while they are successful in instituting change in some cases, in some they are not. FSI, therefore, adds the concept of gender to isomorphism and de/coupling to produce a framework that adequately addresses the impact of these gender policies on the gender power relations existent in institutions.

3.3 Gender in a Feminist Sociological Institutionalism

Feminists argue that although isomorphism and decoupling in SI present a useful framework for analysing these global policies and the nature of their impact in different institutional contexts, the framework tends to focus on procedure and norms while overlooking the relationship between gender and institutions (Finnemore, 1996, Mackay et al., 2009). They argue that SI does not adequately address the relationship between structure and agency, and so underplay the importance of power relations in institutional analysis (Mackay et al., 2010), specifically, the implications of gender power relations for institutional processes. For feminists, institutions are gendered, and gender is a fundamental part of political and social institutions, and gendering and gender relations are played out in processes and practices which are informed by the organisation's ideologies and norms (Acker in Mackay et al., 2009 p.257). They add that gender relations within institutions are institutionalised, constraining and shaping social interactions (Mackay et al., 2010), which, in the case of the military, serves to sustain the asymmetric relationship between masculinity and femininity (Amancio in Carreiras, 2006). Power struggles around gender, according to Mackay et al. (2009), sometimes, may not appear in institutions, and the tendency of institutionalist perspectives to focus on structures and

institutional norms fails to account for how these gender power relations impact institutional changes. By adopting a gender lens, feminists can focus on and explain, the gendering processes and gendered nature of institutions, and how gendered assumptions and 'dispositions' influence policymaking and their outcomes, and the impact of these outcomes on social gender relations (Mackay, 2010).

Although feminists agree on the importance of gender in analysing social relations, the concept itself is contested among feminists. Some have defined it as a 'constitutive element of social relations based upon perceived socially constructed and cultural variable differences between women and men, and as a primary way of signifying and naturalizing relationships of power and hierarchy (Hawsworth in Mackay et al., 2010 p.580, Locher and Prügl, 2001, Lorber, 1994). Lovenduski (2011 p.vii) explains it further as simply 'a scale of masculinity and femininity along which behaviour and attitudes may be ordered; and this is evidenced by the presence of codes, norms, and behaviour that reflect accepted, but possibly changing, dimensions of masculinity and femininity'. Gender, in this sense, as I use it in this study, therefore, presupposes 'constructed' differences between the sexes, and codes of appropriate and accepted modes of behaviour and areas of endeavour for individuals. This is why some feminists argue that gender is a construct of patriarchal social systems aimed at justifying the subordination of women under men by portraying women as different and weaker in reasoning and capabilities (Lorber, 1994, Tong, 1998).

Gender can, therefore, be said to consist of two elements; social construction and power (Locher and Prügl, 2001). Through the lens of gender we can understand the personal attributes assigned to sexes in different cultures, and how societies structure and organise intimate relationships, divide labour, assign social value and grant privileges (O'Toole et al., 2007 p.xii). A gender perspective, therefore, gives insight into the interactions between masculinity and femininity in different areas of society, and the super- and subordinate relationship that society perpetuates between the two sexes (Locher and Prügl, 2001). Gender, for feminists, is a variable category of analysis which enables the investigation of the gender power dynamics and hierarchies of society and its institutions (Tickner, 2006 p.24, Lovenduski, 2011 p.vii, Sjoberg and Tickner, 2013).

A gendered institution, according to feminists, therefore, is one where 'constructions of masculinity and femininity are intertwined in the daily culture and workings of the institution' (Kenny 1996 in Krook and Mackay, 2011 p.6), and 'the masculine ideal underpins institutional structures, practices, norms and discourses, shaping daily interactions and ways of valuing things within the organisation' (Duersti-Lahti and Kelly 1995 in Krook and Mackay, 2011 p.6). In the same vein, drawing on the works of Connell (1985) and Britton (2000),

Carreiras (2006 p. 13) adds that a gendered institution is one where "characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity or femininity have some degree of 'explanatory power' in terms of the definition of its prevailing 'structure of advancement and exploitation' ". In respect of the military, I argue that this is the hegemonic masculine ideology which shapes its culture and upholds the male domination and masculine identity of the profession (Sasson-Levy, 2003, Carreiras, 2006, Woodward and Winter, 2007, Rimalt, 2007). This gendered nature informs daily interactions and reinforces the perception of the military organisation as a man's space despite women's inclusion over time.

The synthesis of a feminist approach with institutionalism is argued to be beneficial to feminists in analysing institutions because they can illuminate institutional processes and formations, and how these impact on the gendered nature of institutional structures (Mackay et al., 2009, Lovenduski, 2011). The adoption of the conceptual tools from SI, specifically, permits a feminist perspective to focus on formal and informal institutions, and logics of appropriateness which explains the influence of institutionalised norms in shaping the behaviour and practices of organisations or states (Olsen, 2007, Balsiger, 2013). It also can focus on institutional convergence which is the similarity of institutionalised policies among institutions or states (Botcheva and Martin, 2001, Feng and Genna, 2004), and layering which explains endogenous incremental change liable to be produced by adopted institutionalised policies (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009, Van der Heijden, 2011, Lovenduski, 2011, Mackay, 2011, Bick, 2016). A feminist institutional perspective, such as FSI, is also able to focus on the 'systematic identification and tracking of norms, as well as the symbolic and cultural factors that play important roles in gendering institutions and their practices' (Mackay et al., 2009 p.254).

Feminists further note that gender relations patterns in institutions are usually reflections of society's upheld gender culture (Mackay, 2011, Krook and Mackay, 2011, Lovenduski, 2011). In other words, society's social system and ideology feed that of institutions such as the Nigerian military and genders its norms and practices. The adoption of a research strategy that includes the concept of gender in the study of institutions and exploration of their gender relations pattern, as I do in this study through ideology, norms and practices, therefore, helps to illuminate the status of women and instances of change in this respect (Mackay et al., 2010, Lovenduski, 2011). The incorporation of a gender analysis into a Sociological institutional perspective, therefore, allows the exploration and analysis of the gendering and gendered nature of institutions and the impact of adopted global gender equality initiatives or policies, such as the GIP, on this genderedness. FSI, therefore, presents a framework that explores institutional gender policies and their structural and social relations impact in respect of change. It permits me to interrogate the changes which the GIP is bringing to bear on social relations and consequently, the status of women in the Nigerian military. I do this by exploring the gender

relation patterns of the Nigerian military using ideology, norms and practices as units of analysis. By examining the specificity of the Nigerian patriarchy in chapter five, I will show the context of societal gendered norms and practices that shaped the Nigerian military institution from its inception and sustains its gendered culture and organisational structure. This addresses my first question on how gendered norms and practices have shaped the Nigerian military.

I am also able to explore the policy shift and the impact on gender relations patterns in the Nigerian military by analysing how its ideology, norms and practices are changing or remain unchanged in response to the GIP in chapters six and seven. By examining the policy and its implementation in chapter five, I can explore the global institutional context that informed the action of the Nigerian government in adopting the policy. This answers my second question on how the international context is influencing Nigeria's policy making in respect of its military's gendered culture. In exploring the impact of the GIP on the Nigerian military's ideology, norms and practices in chapters six and seven, I address my third question on how the inclusion of women in combat training alongside men in the NDA is challenging the gender culture of the Nigerian military.

FSI also allows me to draw out the structural impact of the policy shift, and how this affects the roles and status of women within the institution. I do this in chapter seven as I examine the structural changes in organisational practices.

I adopt the concepts of ideology, norms and practices as my units of analysis for exploring the culture of the Nigerian military. These three, along with other specific attributes such as language, religion and more, constitute culture and depict the identity of a set of people or organisation (Aycan et al., 2000, Harrison and Huntington, 2000). Ideology refers to the accepted belief system or system of values, ideas and principles that justify the norms or definition of expected behaviour by a society, class or group of people (Knight and Ensminger, 1998, Van Dijk, 2006, Harvey, 2012-16) such as the patriarchal ideology in the Nigerian society (Asiyanbola, 2005, Makama, 2013) and liberal ideology in most Western societies (Turner, 2007, Jost et al., 2008). The military institution is argued to maintain a patriarchal ideology which legalises its male dominating characteristics in respect of norms and practises (Enloe, 1983, Herbert, 1998, Hooper, 2001, Enloe, 2007, Winslow, 2010, Ombati, 2015). Understanding the ideology of the Nigerian military is important in my study because it is the vehicle that drives its norms and practices and the legitimating factor for these two. To understand the norms and practices of the Nigerian military and the way that these interact with the principles of the GIP, therefore, it is essential to comprehend its ideology which, I argue, is derived from that of wider society as FSI notes (Krook and Mackay, 2011, Lovenduski, 2011). I address the ideology of the Nigerian military and how it interacts with the ideology behind the GIP in chapter six.

Norms, on the other hand, are the unwritten but acknowledged rules that structure or define appropriate behaviour in a particular context (Knight and Ensminger, 1998, Facchini and Melki, 2011, Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014). It is the upheld norms of people or a group that informs their practices or actions which are observable in daily interactions. The norms of the Nigerian military, like its ideology, portray the norms of society which are gendered, and it is these gendered norms of the Nigerian military that can be argued to have influenced its policy position of women's exclusion from combat training and roles before 2011 and its long-time practice of women's deployment to only support units. I explore the norms of the Nigerian military through its formal and informal rules and regulation in chapter six, showing how they are being shaped or otherwise, by the GIP and its principles.

Relatedly, therefore, practices are actions taken within the context of these known and accepted norms over time and have become established as the way of doing things. I will map the impact of the policy shift on practices of the Nigerian military in chapter seven. It should be kept in mind that these three concepts are interrelated and influence one another, and are sometimes co-extensive as their definitions show. Norms derive from ideology, and practices are informed by upheld norms. These two are, therefore, the product of ideology, and it is ideology that justifies norms and practices (Van Dijk, 2006, Facchini and Melki, 2011, Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014). Norms and practices also have the potential to reproduce ideology as changes in these two can result in consequent shift in ideology (Van Dijk, 2006, Facchini and Melki, 2011, Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014). Although I address these units of analysis separately in my work, I view them as part and parcel of culture, and in analysing them from a gender perspective, I use them to depict a holistic picture of the gender culture of the Nigerian military and how they serve to gender its organisational structure.

FSI as a framework with its concepts of gender, isomorphism and de/coupling, therefore, allows me to do an analysis of the macro and the micro level impact of the changes being informed by the adoption of the GIP in the Nigerian military and wider society. This is unlike most studies on militaries like Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz (2007), Rimalt (2007), Baaz and Stern (2011) and others, which only depict the decoupling impact of integrationist policies and note absence of change in the cultural and gender scripts of the military.

3.4 Conclusion

Feminist Sociological Institutionalism is an appropriate theoretical choice for my work because an institutional perspective such as this enables me to focus, not just on the individual social actor, which in this case is the Nigerian government, and the policy decision to include women in combat training, but also to the social context and environment in which the actor is embedded. In this case for

Nigeria, this is the international global context and the commitment to the liberal norms of gender equality and consequently, the empowerment of women and also the current international trend of debate on the inclusion of women in full combat; an environment riddled with expectations and pressures. This gives a clearer comprehension of the nature of the interaction between the Nigerian Military and the policy.

Also, FSI's combination of conceptual tools of gender, isomorphism and decoupling are quite useful in exploring the questions that I ask regarding the Gender Integration Policy. The synthesis of these two areas of scholarship, feminist political science and institutionalism, as Mackay et al. (2009) argue, is useful in identifying and exploring how cultural factors play significant roles in gendering institutions and their practices (Mackay and Meier, 2003 p.254). This helps me to determine the cultural factors of society that served to gender the Nigerian military and explore the interplay of the global institutional norms that informed the policy shift and the local patriarchal based norms and practices of the Nigerian military. This provides a rationale for examining the gender culture of the Nigerian Military institution and the shifts that the policy change is bringing to bear within it.

Additionally, FSI uses a mainly social constructionist approach in the analysis of actors and institutions in the broader social context in which they exist (Mackay et al., 2009). It also believes that norms, values and informal rules are important in understanding the dynamics of change and continuity in institutions (Mackay et al., 2009 p.256). FSI, therefore, focuses on norms and practices as units of analysis which I also adopt for exploring the changes in social relations within the Nigerian military as a result of the integration policy.

This chapter has elaborated my chosen theoretical framework of analysis, FSI, its main arguments and conceptual tools of analysis, and I have argued that it allows me to explore my questions and make my arguments regarding this study. In the next chapter, I will address the particular context of the Nigerian military and the changes I am exploring by examining the Nigerian patriarchal system and its peculiarities and how that shaped the Nigerian military's culture and the GIP and its adoption by the Nigerian government.

Chapter 4

Data Gathering and Analysis Methods

4.1 Introduction:

Having elaborated, in the previous chapter, how my choice of theoretical perspective, a Feminist Sociological Institutionalism (FSI), enables me to ask the questions and make the arguments that I do regarding my research, in this chapter I will set out the methods that I adopted for data gathering and analysis. I will explain how I used a qualitative methodology, employing semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, to extract primary data which I used along with the available secondary data to validate my arguments and answer the questions that I posed.

I will start with a section that introduces the qualitative research methodology, explaining its benefits and appropriateness for my study. In the second section, I will discuss the methods of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, and the content analysis method which I chose to analyse the extracted data. Section three will outline the ethical considerations that guided my study, and some of the difficulties I encountered in the field while trying to ensure that I conducted my research according to the ethical guidelines of qualitative research. Section four will set out my research plan and explain in details how I recruited my respondents and focus group participants, why I chose the category of respondents and participants that I did in respect of the kind of data that I expected to draw from them and carried out my research. A final paragraph will conclude the chapter.

4.2 A Qualitative methodology:

I employed a methodology that involved the use of primary and secondary sources of data for my research. The use of primary data was important because of the limited secondary sources in respect of studies on gender issues or women in the Nigerian military as I have earlier mentioned. As such, in addition to the available secondary sources of data, I aimed to generate data of my own. To do this, I adopted a qualitative methodology because of its usefulness in exploring phenomena of which little or nothing is known, such as gender issues in the Nigerian military (Gill et al., 2008). Also, because, not only are the existing military studies predominantly based on quantitative methodologies (Williams et al., 2016 p.5), but a qualitative methodology also offers a range of critically intensive methods that enables a researcher to engage deeper with data from the military in more nuanced ways (Williams et al., 2016 p.5). Methods such as interviews, ethnography, biography, focus group discussions and so on (Williams et al., 2016 p.5). I specifically made use of semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions for extracting data and content analysis for analysing the data that I obtained.

Qualitative research, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998 p.11), is an appropriate method for studying 'persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours,

emotions, and feelings, as well as organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations'. This focus on the subjective about people and organisations made it an apt choice of methodology for my research which explores the lived experiences of my chosen research subjects to draw out meanings that help me make sense of recent unfolding changes in the Nigerian military. These are changes being prompted by the implementation of the Gender Integration Policy (GIP). The emphasis of the subjective rather than the objective by qualitative methodology enables a researcher to focus on behaviour and situation; two important factors in the shaping of experiences (Kohlbacher, 2006 p.1) which are also emphasised by the Sociological institutionalist perspective as important for understanding the actions of political actors. A qualitative methodology therefore thoroughly documents attitudes and behaviour, seeking to understand the meanings, motivations behind people's words, actions, and ideas, and the implications of these for behaviour; and this is what draws out data (Mariampolski, 2001 p.7). With this methodology, I was able to extract rich, detailed data from the contextualised day to day lived experiences, opinions, emotions and perspectives of my research subjects (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005 p.2, Mindruta, 2014, Lomsky-Feder and Sasson-Levy, 2016). These research subjects comprised of the men and women cadets of the Nigerian Defence Academy, military and non-military personnel of the Nigerian military and the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) and civilian parents of cadets, to make sense of the impact of the Gender Integration Policy on the gender culture of the Nigerian Military.

The feature of qualitative research which documents the world from the perspective of the research subjects, rather than that of the researcher, is another factor which makes it a reliable and useful methodology (Hammersley, 1992). This is because research subjects are the active participants in the context that a researcher seeks to explore (Barbour, 1999). For my research, which explores the gender relations patterns in the Nigerian Military, an analysis of the accounts of how my research subjects experience gender interpretations in their daily interactions and performances (Wallace, 2009, Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014) within the Nigerian Military, from their perspective, was most useful. This is because it gave me access to primary first-hand data. As such, to obtain insight into the gender culture of the Nigerian Military and interrogate the changes taking place in answering my research questions, I explored the accounts of the daily experiences of the cadets in the NDA where the training of the women cadets is taking place. I, additionally, explored the experiences and opinions of the service men and women, and non-military personnel of the Nigerian Military. I also analysed the feelings and opinions of the civilian parents of female cadets as they experience the journeys of their daughters in this new context of women combat training. Being able to study and account for these subjective details of emotions, thought-processes and feelings is an ability

which qualitative methodology brings that a quantitative one cannot (Silverman, 2001 p.1, Strauss and Corbin, 1998 p.11).

Although quantitative methods are also employed in researches which involve people like the qualitative methods, they extract data with the use of statistical methods which do not account for the personal expressions of the research subjects. As such the data does not reflect the feelings or emotions that are intricately part of the experiences of individuals. Qualitative research method, on the other hand, interprets and deciphers meanings as it analyses data from the expressed views and perspectives of the research subjects, and not through a quantification of these data. The analysis or interpretation of the data gotten from the exploration of the experiences of my research participants afforded me the insight that I needed into the impact of the policy shift and the changes it is promoting within the Nigerian military institution. This is because the categories of research subjects which I have chosen are the target group for the policy decision.

My need to generate data as a result of the dearth of literature on gender issues on the Nigerian Military required detailed accounts and data from my participants. The more statistical and mathematical approach of the quantitative method, and its use of pre-set categories of responses such as 'yes', 'no', 'strongly agree', or 'strongly disagree', as is used in research surveys, would not provide me with the opportunity to extract the detailed data that I needed. This is because of the restrictions on the responses that this method of research generates, consequently, leaving areas of potential data unexplored (Kohlbacher, 2006, Gill et al., 2008). A quantitative methodology would not allow for 'why' and 'how' questions which are necessary for drawing out details. Using the semi-structured interview method of qualitative research, on the other hand, allowed me to use these types of questions, which, combined with the promise of anonymity, gave my respondents the confidence and opportunity to tell their stories, in their own words, resulting in detailed data as I required for my research. In respect of a gender analysis of the Nigerian military, for instance, the use of a quantitative statistical method would be more likely to enable me to show that women personnel are more in the non-combat sections of the Nigerian military like administration, catering and medical than they are in combat-related ones. It would probably also show that there are none of them in combat roles. However, going beyond that to indicate that this is as a result of their deployment to sections that reflect traditional feminine roles based on the gender stereotyping norms of the military, and also that this is aimed at maintaining the masculine culture and dominance of the military would require understanding the 'why' and 'how' of the situation as it is. The quantitative statistical methods may not allow for this sort of interrogation of data (Williams et al., 2016).

According to Cassel and Symon quoted in Kohlbacher (2006 p.7), only qualitative methods are sensitive enough to allow the detailed analysis of change, while quantitative methods are only able to 'assess that a change has occurred over time but cannot say how (what processes were involved) or why (in terms of circumstances and stakeholders)'. The use of qualitative research methods like the semi-structured in-depth interview and the fluidity and flexibility that comes with the method is quite useful in extracting data that allows such a detailed analysis of change. This is because of the use of open-ended questions which gives room for respondents to talk, and the researcher to also tailor questions on an impromptu basis as necessary (Mack et al., 2005 p.4). It is important to be able to assess change in research as my study aims to do in respect of the Nigerian Military because society is dynamic and fluid, and changes occur all the time. Human experiences are a reflection of society and, as such, an expression of the constant change all around us (Nicholls, 2011). This accounts for the detailed and rich quality of qualitative data which sets it apart from the quantitative methodology. The 'Numerical and statistical research nature of quantitative research analysis will tend to reveal only a part of the issues studied' (Nicholls, 2011 p.2), whereas my interest is in details. These are the details of the changes taking place in the Nigerian Military, and how these changes are shaping its gender culture, and what prospects this has for servicewomen in the profession.

Furthermore, unlike the quantitative method which is concerned with isolating, reducing and controlling for the variables involved in research, thereby perceiving them as static, the qualitative research method gives the researcher the opportunity to focus on factors which could otherwise be overlooked by this tendency of quantitative method. Factors like class, race, sexuality, gender roles and ethnicity, which are part and parcel of what accounts for the individuality of research subjects, and also shape their experiences and perceptions. Using a quantitative approach to research into these areas, on the other hand, does so from the perspective of the researcher, not taking account of the experiences of the research subjects. This would be limited because these are products of the lives of people in the social world and can only be understood and studied in detail from the perspective of the people, within their natural context and as such not quantifiable or reducible to statistical analysis (Hancock et al., 2007 p.6).

Hancock et al. (2007 p.7) put it aptly when they said 'qualitative research is developing explanations of social phenomena; helping us understand the social world in which we live, and why things are the way they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about: why people behave the way they do; how opinions and attitudes are formed; how people are affected by the events that go on around them; how and why culture and practices have developed in the way they have?' In respect of my study, I believe that the choice of the qualitative methods of semi-structured in-depth

interview and the focus group discussions enabled me to take an in-depth look at the lived experiences, opinions and perspectives of my research subjects. This insight allowed me to explore how the changes taking place as a result of the policy shift are impacting on the gender culture of the Nigerian Military, and consequently, the gender power relations within the system.

The two methods of semi-structured in-depth interviews and Focus groups discussions have been known to be useful when combined in research, although they can also be used as single methods (Litosseliti, 2003 p.17). In this study, however, the semi-structured in-depth interview is slated to be used as a follow-up on the focus group discussions, to access more personal information that some participants may have been reluctant to share in the group discussions. It will also be used for one on one interview with selected high, middle and junior ranking military personnel in the Nigerian Military, senior and junior non-military officials of the Nigerian Defence Academy and civilians. I will now discuss these methods and their benefits.

4.3 Methods

The 'Interview' in an academic context, according to Remenyi (2011 p.1) is a 'formal technique whereby a researcher solicits verbal evidence or data from a knowledgeable informant to obtain insightful data'. Kelly (2010 p.309) also adds that in qualitative interviewing, 'the researcher is explicitly seeking to gain access to the knowledge, experience, and perspective of research subjects as I have earlier explained. A good interview has been likened to a good conversation; a good two-way affair where one person (the respondent) does most of the talking while the other (the interviewer) listens, responds and encourages, establishing a conducive atmosphere for research. They are therefore useful in research when they are aimed at gaining insight into the lives and world of others and, also, when a researcher wishes to gain an understanding of how participants view, experience or conceptualise an aspect of social life (Kelly, 2010, Litosseliti, 2003) as I do. This is because the interview gives the interviewee the opportunity to talk and express their opinions in the context of their world. This is one reason why it was particularly suitable for my study, and as Lomsky-Feder and Sasson-Levy (2016) note it presents a powerful research strategy for investigating the effects of military service on lives.

I chose to use the Semi-structured interviews because they are useful for exploring the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and, sometimes, sensitive issues (Louise Barriball and While, 1994) such gender within the Nigerian Military. The use of Semi-structured interviews provided my respondents with the opportunity to talk openly without constraints so that detailed narratives came through as I required (Whiting, 2008) which would not have been possible with a structured interview.

Furthermore, because the semi-structured interview allows the use of open-ended questions, it gave me the opportunity to prompt and probe the respondent for more information and clarification of interesting and relevant issues raised, and also to follow new leads of information that came up in the course of the interviews (Louise Barriball and While, 1994, Whiting, 2008, Newton, 2010). This opportunity for probing further allows a researcher to clarify inconsistencies in respondents' accounts (Louise Barriball and While, 1994 p.331).

Also, the use of Semi-structured interviews also aided in creating interactive opportunities and, quite importantly, a sense of rapport between my respondents and me (Newton, 2010, Louise Barriball and While, 1994). I found this quite useful during my fieldwork because it produced an engaging atmosphere, and also more openness in the responses of the respondents. I made use of already prepared and written out open-ended questions for my interviews, and where necessary, I came up with new ones on the spot to follow up on new leads of information from my respondents' responses.

I have to add that, although my intention from the start was to interview respondents face to face, I had to adopt e-mail interviewing with some respondents because of the factors of distance and time. Email interviewing has become a viable qualitative research tool in the recent past (Meho, 2006) and is being successfully employed for many types of research as in Kennedy (2000), Karchmer (2001), and Meho and Tibbo (2003), among others. Although using email interviewing I did not have the benefit of social cues like facial expressions, intonation, body language and others which are present in face to face interviews (Opdenakker, 2006, Meho, 2006), the details in the answers of respondents made up for this. This detailed response may not have been possible with face to face interviews because of the pressure of time, particularly with some of the elite respondents. These are some of the benefits of email interviewing; access to very senior officials and detailed information from respondents because of the availability of time to concentrate on the questions (Opdenakker, 2006). However, only 5 of my interviews were by email; the remaining 24 were face to face.

The focus group discussion method, on the other hand, has been described as 'a carefully planned discussion group which draws participants from typically similar social and cultural backgrounds or who have similar experiences or concerns and is aimed at obtaining the perceptions, interpretations and beliefs of the participants in a defined area of interest' (Barbour, 1999 p.4, Krueger in Litosseliti, 2003 p.1, Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005 p.76). These discussions are carried out in a permissive, non-threatening environment, and participants share and respond to comments, ideas and perceptions of one another (Barbour, 1999, Liamputtong, 2005). Focus group discussions, in the same vein as interviews, allowed my participants to articulate their views and feelings, although unlike the interviews, they did this in response to the expressed views

and opinions of others in the group and to the questions I asked. In line with Barbour (1999)'s experiences, I found focus groups particularly useful for the study of attitudes and experiences around specific topics because of the opportunities they gave me as a researcher to understand the ways that my respondents felt from the experiences they have had in respect of gender issues in the Nigerian military. This, consequently, gave me insight into the gender practices of the Nigerian Military institution. The atmosphere of a Focus group discussion draws out attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way which would not be feasible using other methods such as observation, one-to-one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys (Gibbs, 1997). This is because it involves interactions of opinions which help to bring out different perspectives on issues as I discovered during my focus group discussions.

The use of interviews and focus group discussions was therefore quite beneficial for me in generating insightful primary data for my research. In analysing this generated data, I used the Content analysis method with the aid of the Nvivo software. Content analysis is said to be the 'the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes and patterns (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005 p.1278). This method of analysis is useful because of its flexible nature in data analysis, and making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, Krippendorff, 2012, Stemler, 2001). I chose to use the conventional approach to content analysis which is quite suitable for researching into phenomena for which there is limited existent literature (Kondracki et al., 2002, Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) like gender issues in the Nigerian Military. This approach allows a researcher to analyse the collected data based on the emerging themes from the text. I therefore coded and categorised my data based on the themes that emerged from my text instead of pre-setting categories which are more useful for topics with a wide range of literature (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, Krippendorff, 2012, Stemler, 2001).

Coding based on the emerging themes helped me to identify factors that are specific to the Nigerian military context in respect of the impact of the gender integration process, factors such as religion and politics. I grouped the coded data into categories according to how they related to each other and then according to how they addressed my questions. The use of codes and categories aided in compressing the large text from my interviews and focus group discussions into fewer units (Stemler, 2001). The Nvivo software is particularly useful for doing a content analysis through its use of nodes and child nodes for the coding and categorising of data because it allowed the organisation of the large amount of text that I had.

Furthermore, the use of a content analysis approach and its flexibility which allows the use of aspects of quantitative attributes of research such as word

counting makes it, even more, accommodating (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, Schreier, 2014). This however, goes beyond just counting the words to carefully focusing and analysing the language to draw out the meanings embedded in the context to categorise data with similar meanings together (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) as I did in the course of my analysis. Using figures was also helpful when emphasising the importance of a particular concept to the context by indicating how many times a word or phrase featured or how many respondents used a word or referred to a concept.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

In this section, I address the ethical consideration for my research and some of the issues I was confronted with in the field. Undertaking a research that involves human subjects such as mine required a grounded understanding of the moral values and principles which guide and underpin the research process (Litosseliti, 2003 p.51). This is to ensure that the interest of research participants is understood as important and forms an integral part of the research preparation, implementation and analysis, and as such, one of a researcher's top priorities (Mack et al., 2005). This is necessary to avoid the risk of perpetrating abuses or making mistakes of real consequence for the research participants (Mack et al., 2005 p.8). Obtaining ethical approval from the University of Exeter for my research was therefore mandatory before the commencement of my fieldwork, and I was able to obtain this on the 5th of March, 2014 after scrutiny of my research plan by the University's ethics committee.

Considering the context of my research which is a restrictive institution like the Nigerian Military, and a research topic on gender issues which is one that it has not entirely encouraged, it was important for me to ensure the protection of the rights and vulnerability of my participants (Orb et al., 2001, Carpenter, 2011). My research involved interviews and Focus group discussions, methods which involve direct contact with participants and expression of their personal opinions and perceptions about policies and the workings of the Nigerian military as an institution to which they belong. I recognised the risk and made certain that their protection was always priority (Mack et al., 2005, Sanjari et al., 2014) by ensuring that participants were well informed about the details of my research through the use of an information sheet before giving their consent for participation (Corti et al., 2000). I gave this sheet to the participants at the onset when I approached them for recruitment to participate in my research. It briefly outlined the focus of my research and its purpose which is towards a PhD degree. It also included the contact details of my school and supervisor to give participants the opportunity to make any further personal inquiries, if they so wished, for more assurance. The information sheet also clearly indicated my obligation to protect the identity of the participants through the use of

pseudonyms instead of their real names and, additionally, that whatever output emerged from the research regarding audio recordings, would be encrypted and I alone would have access to them. The sheet also informed the participants that they had the right to agree or refuse to participate and withdraw from participating at any time during the research. The participants signed the consent form to indicate their consent to participate (Corti et al., 2000).

This informed consent addressed one of the three identified universally accepted principles of qualitative research ethics: 'autonomy'; the other two being 'beneficence' and 'Justice' (Orb et al., 2001, Mack et al., 2005, Lichtman, 2012). Autonomy implies the respect and recognition of participants' rights. These include the right to freely decide to participate, or not, in research; and the right to withdraw from the research at any time. However, as Lichtman (2012) rightly notes, there are situations in which informed consent may not be possible, as in the case of participants being 'minors, mentally disabled, emotionally fragile, medical patients, very elderly or individuals who are unable to clearly understand written English (2012 p.56, Uwe, 2013 p.72). In such cases, informed consent could be either written or oral. In the case of oral consent, the participant receives all the required information necessary for consent either orally or in writing, and then verbally gives consent to participate in the research. This is described as 'waiving the requirement for documentation of informed consent' (Mack et al., 2005 p.11).

I was confronted with such situations in the course of carrying out my interviews, where participants, particularly middle ranking male and female officers, were willing to participate in the research but unwilling to sign the consent form. This, I later allude to the nature of the topic of my research and context of a military setting as I have earlier explained; and the fear of some participants that the promise of confidentiality could be unintentionally compromised at some point, and information traced back to the respondents. In spite of my reassurances of confidentiality and anonymity, and the effective methods of storage of data at my disposal at the University, the fears of the respondents were not allayed. As such, I had to accept oral consents from some of my respondents.

Another situation that works against the informed consent, which I was also confronted with, is the organisational impact. This a situation where individuals within organisations which are the focus of research may feel pressured by peers or superiors to participate in the research, even when they do not want to (Lichtman, 2012 p.56). In recruiting the undergraduate cadets of the Nigerian Defence Academy for interviews and focus group discussions, because of the military nature of the institution, it was not possible for me to approach them without first applying for permission from the authorities. I, therefore, applied through the Academy Registrar's office to the Commandant of the NDA for permission to carry out my research and to also involve the cadets as

participants. My application was approved by the Registrar and recommended for the Commandants approval and permission. The commandant approved and gave consent for me to conduct my research, and the cadets were informed and advised to cooperate with me. Although I gave my information sheet and consent forms out to the individual cadets, I eventually approached to participate in my focus group discussions and interviews and reiterated the choice they had to either participate in the research project or not, the feeling of not having this option was still present among the cadets.

Even though I could not help the situation in that respect, I, however, took measures to ensure confidentiality for my participants by ensuring that only cadets were present when the focus group discussions were held. I also made certain that no one else had access to the recordings from these discussions but me. So, although, I was unable to ensure total autonomy for the cadets, I endeavoured to ensure confidentiality. Furthermore, although the focus group discussions were made up of several cadets at a time, I believe that confidentiality will be sustained. This is assured, to a large extent, by the very nature of the military institution itself where the military personnel belonging to the same course (counterparts by year of entry) are bound by a closer bond than that which binds them to all other military personnel. The military is well known for the strong bonds of loyalty, mutual confidence, trust and discipline that exist among its personnel. This is what essentially fosters the team cohesion and trust which is vital to the workings of the military (Donnelly, 2010). This aspect of military culture is taught from the time of training, and it is exhibited among cadets in the NDA. It is this culture that ensures that the cadets will keep the confidence of each other from the group discussions.

I also endeavoured to ensure that the principle of 'beneficence', which is also referred to as 'concern for welfare' (Orb et al., 2001, The Canadian Institute of Health Research, 2010), was also addressed in my research. This principle requires that the researcher ensures that all risks associated with the research, whether they are psychological or social risks, are adequately minimised (Mack et al., 2005) through anonymity and confidentiality and where necessary restrict the circulation of the research to protect the identity of participants (Orb et al., 2001). For my study, my information sheet clearly stated that the identity of the participants would be kept confidential and protected through the use of pseudonyms. Also, because the main locations for my research are popular ones, the Nigerian Defence Academy and the Nigerian Military, I stated that the study would refer to the institution to which the participants belong, although their identities would not be revealed.

The Nigerian Military is a big institution, and I recruited my participants from across the three arms of service, the Army, Airforce and Navy, and different unit of the military bases. As such, the identities of my military participants are protected. I interviewed some prominent figures in the military whose anonymity

could be risked if their positions in the military or the Defence Academy were to be mentioned. In this respect, although I have made references to the actual offices of respondents, I did not refer to their specific times of occupying such offices. The practice of constant transfer of military personnel ensures that I can safely do this without any risk to participants. I also only refer to their official positions with the consent of respondents. In respect of the participants in my focus group discussions who were mainly cadets of the academy, I notified them that although mention will be made of their institution which is the Nigerian Defence Academy, their identities will be kept confidential and pseudonyms used to refer to them. I believe this measure should ensure anonymity since the Academy has over 1,200 students at a time. Furthermore, it was only the participating cadets themselves and I who knew which cadets participated in the discussions. There were no official records kept of the cadets that participated in my research by the NDA. The discussions were held in a closed environment with no one else present but the participants and I.

The third ethical principle of justice requires that the researcher treats participants fairly and equitably. It entails the researcher ensuring equitable distribution of benefits and burden of participating in the research in such a way that no particular section of the participating population is 'unduly burdened by the harms of research or denied the benefits of the knowledge generated from it' (TCPS 2010, Mack et al 2005:9). Most importantly, is to avoid the exploitation and abuse of participants (Orb et al 2001:95). Abuse and exploitation are possible where the vulnerability or contributions of participants is not recognised or acknowledged by the researcher. For my research, I ensured that I had an evenly distributed category of respondents. Although the servicewomen could be regarded as the vulnerable group in my research because they form a small percentage of the Nigerian Military, between 3-10% (Dayil, 2011, Onumajuru, 2014), and they also do not contribute to the formulation of policies that inform their positions and place in the Nigerian military, I ensured that they formed a sizeable portion of my participants, and their voices and views are quite evident in my research. However, they did not form the majority of my participants because of the relative absence of women in decision-making positions in the Nigerian Military. I had to interview military personnel in strategic positions to gain information on policy issues, and instructors responsible for the training of cadets, and these are mainly men. I, however, interviewed six female military personnel and had ten female cadets in the focus group, and I also interviewed four female parents of female cadets; accounting for a sizeable number of female participants in my research.

Ethically, I believe that it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the participants do not come to any harm as a result of their involvement in the research. Ensuring that they have the right of choice to either participate or not in the research; that confidentiality is maintained, and their identity is safely protected and not exposed, all amount to justice in research. I, therefore, took

measures within my capability as a researcher to ensure these ethical considerations in my research.

4.5 Research Plan:

I conducted two field trips to Nigeria during this research. The first one was on the 13th of July 2014 after obtaining Ethical approval from the University of Exeter, and the second was on the 30th of November, 2015. I conducted 29 interviews and three focus group discussions during these trips to generate primary data. 22 of these interviews were with military respondents while seven were with non-military respondents. 7 of these military respondents were military generals; 2 Major Generals from the Nigerian Army which included a former Commandant of the NDA who was quite instrumental in the initiation of the women combatant training in the NDA, and a Director of Military Training in the NDA. The other generals included two Rear Admirals in the Nigerian Navy who were one director of Policy and Plans and the Secretary of the Nigerian Navy. The others were a Brigadier General who has occupied the office of Cadet Brigade Commander of the NDA at some time, and 3 Commodores from the Nigerian Navy. Gaining access to these senior military officers was not problematic because of my status as a lecturer at the Nigerian Defence Academy before commencing my PhD. I must emphasise that my position as a former employee of the NDA did not interfere in any way with the outcome of this research. It only served to facilitate access to these elite military respondents; something which would have proved more difficult without my status as a staff of the NDA before my study. Despite this status, I still encountered some difficulties doing my research within the Nigerian military which I will discuss in detail subsequently. The interviews with these very high-ranking officers, however, provided me with the insight necessary into the structural changes being prompted by the policy shift, the institutional position of the military regarding the principles of the policy, and the plans for the integration of the new female combatant officers into the appropriate sections of the Nigerian military. Interviewing these very senior military officers was quite useful because of the absence of formal policy documents regarding the GIP and its principles.

Also, I interviewed six women officers among whom were the first woman military paratrooper in Nigeria and West Africa, and a pioneer female graduate of the Nigerian Military School of Infantry. My military respondents also included eight male officers in the ranks of Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, and Major, and soldiers who worked with the Directorate of Military Training. My interviews with this category of respondents were aimed at gaining information on the training of cadets, how the female cadets are coping with the standard of training, how their integration into the system is progressing and the changes that their presence is prompting in respect of the training pattern in the NDA. My interviews with middle-ranking and Rank and File servicewomen, on the other hand, were aimed at gaining insight into their lived experiences within the military, the gendered norms and practices of the institution and their expectations regarding the impact of this policy shift on their position and careers within the profession. These interviews afforded me insight into the

nature of gender relations pattern in the Nigerian Military, the impact on servicewomen and how this is changing with the policy implementation in 2011.

My non-military respondents included five parents of female cadets and two non-military staff of the Nigerian Military. Interviews with these non-military respondents were useful in exploring the non-military perspectives on this new development in the Nigerian military. The data from these interviews with non-military respondents and family members of female cadets gave me insight into the observed impact of the combat inclusion on the private lives of these women and also the impact of the policy on the non-military sector of society respectively as Enloe (2007) advises on research concerning women in the military. I also had further non-military perspectives from the civilian academic focus group discussions which I also organised.

In respect of focus groups discussions, I arranged three. Two were single-sex cadets' groups made up of 10 cadets each, in addition to the civilian academic group which comprised of 7 participants. I made the cadets' groups single-sex ones to militate against feelings of intimidation by participants which may inhibit the free flow of discussions given the hierarchical nature of the relationship among cadets. These cadets' group discussions gave me access to data on the norms and practices of the NDA and experiences of the women cadets in training in the institution. They also enabled the flow of data on the debate over the integration of the women combatants into combat arms in the three services and their readiness for these roles.

The third focus group was an academic one because it comprised of some senior and middle-ranking academic staff of the Nigerian Defence Academy. These participants consisted of 5 civilian and 2 military academic staff. The larger number of these participants was mainly civilian because most of the one-on-one interviews I had conducted were with military personnel, and I needed to get the non-military perspective of the impact of the policy shift to justify some of the claims I make regarding its impact on the wider Nigerian society. Having two military academic staff as participants in the group brought a valuable perspective of military academic analysis of the gender issues under discussion.

To recruit participants for this focus group, in addition to getting permission from the commandant of the NDA to conduct my research and recruit members of the staff to participate in it, I sent letters of invitation, along with my information sheet/consent form, to the individual participants via email inviting them to participate in a focus group discussion, before commencing my research trip to Nigeria. On receiving their replies indicating consent to participate, I got back in touch with them with the information on the time and venue of the discussion. The questions discussed in this focus group were aimed at gaining insight into the perspectives of the non-military sector of the NDA and society, and also the analysis that academics make of the changes taking place within the Nigerian Military as women are being integrated into combat training, and 'supposedly', subsequently, combat. This was important considering the limited commentary

and debate on the issue. Data gathered from this group discussion was aimed at answering my third question regarding the implications of the changes taking place in the Nigerian Military for upward advancement and more opportunities for the servicewomen. This is in addition to the data I gathered from interviews with senior military personnel. This further aimed to show, just like data from the other two focus groups, the impact of the policy shift on the gender culture of the military.

It is important for me to mention here that gaining access to all my intended respondents was not altogether successful. I was unable to gain access to some of the high-ranking officers whom I had intended to interview. Examples are the second and only serving female general in the Nigerian Military at the time, Admiral Hotonu of the Nigerian Navy, who has only just retired from Service in 2016. She was on annual leave and out of town at the time of my field trip and was not answering emails. The Director of Policy and Plans of the Nigerian Army was also inaccessible because he replied to say he was unable to grant an interview at the time. The present Commandant of the NDA was also out of town during my field trip. However, not being able to access these officers has not had any impact on my analysis because I was able to access other senior officers who were able to give me the same information that I was aiming to get from the senior officers whom I was unable to access. Being able to interview the former commandant of the NDA, for instance, was quite important because he was quite instrumental in the initiation of the policy shift and inclusion of women in combat training. As such, the data I was able to get from interviewing him was quite valuable for my research. On the other hand, the present commandant had only resumed duty in the NDA in September 2015, and may not have been able to give me the same depth of information. Also, being able to access the Director of Military Training of the NDA, who is the most senior officer, next to the Commandant and his deputy, in charge of the cadets' training, gave me access to every information on policy and plans for the cadets which I would have got from the Commandant or the Director of Policy and Plans of the Nigerian Army. This is because all decisions in these respects are directly communicated to him as the director responsible for the implementation of these decisions and the training of cadets.

In addition to the interviews and focus group discussions, during my trip to Nigeria, I also visited the library of the Nigerian military headquarters to access unpublished documents which gave me valuable information on the Nigerian military and its gender structure and culture. These documents were limited in number and information in respect of gender policies. However, these in addition to the available literature on the Nigerian Military formed my secondary sources of data on the Nigerian Military. I also made use of the literature on gender issues and militaries of other nations to gain information on the existing debates on gender and the military institution.

4.6 Conclusion:

In this chapter, I have addressed the qualitative methodology I used for collection and analysis of data for this study and the research plan I adopted. I have explained the appropriateness of this methodology for exploring my topic which focuses on the recent policy shift in the Nigerian Military and the changes that this is inducing within the institution. I have discussed how the methods of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions created the avenues for generating the detailed primary data that I needed to explore the topic within the Nigerian Military context adequately and to make the arguments that I do. I have also addressed the ethical issues that I was confronted with in the field and how I addressed them. Having laid out my research methodology in detail in this chapter, in the subsequent chapter I will examine the patriarchal system of the Nigerian society which forms the context of the Nigerian military, and how this shaped the gender culture of the Nigerian military from the outset, and the adoption of the GIP, a liberal policy, within this context.

Chapter 5

The Nigerian Patriarchal Context and the Introduction of the Gender Integration Policy

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the context of the Nigerian society and the imposition of liberal norms with the adoption of the Gender Integration Policy (GIP). Using a gender perspective, it presents the distinct nature of Nigeria's patriarchy and the existent gendered norms that foster unequal social relations patterns which inform the subordinate status of women in society and its formal institutions like the military. The chapter also explores the decision for the implementation of a liberal norms-informed Gender Integration Policy into this existing patriarchal context, setting up the background for analysing the interaction between these two ideologies of Nigerian patriarchy and Western liberalism in the Nigerian military, and the resulting impact.

I argue from a feminist sociological institutional perspective (FSI) that the Nigerian military as a product of the Nigerian societal context is gendered, and also that the adoption of the GIP by the Nigerian government depicts institutional homogeneity (Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Buhari-Gulmez, 2010, Schofer et al., 2012). The government imitates the adoption of gender integration policies by Western militaries in conformity with the international norms of appropriate behaviour for liberal states. This is in the bid to project an international image of itself as a legitimate liberal democracy committed to the principle of gender equality, and its military as a modern liberal military institution; although this is entirely divergent from the context of the Nigerian military.

The chapter will be divided into two broad sections. In the first section I will address the Nigerian patriarchal social system and its gender culture, and in subsequent four subsections, I will analyse the factors of inheritance and land ownership rights, age seniority, religion and sexuality, and how they shape gender relations in the Nigerian context. In the second section, I will explore the GIP, its principles and the motivation for its adoption.

5.2 The Nigerian Patriarchy

There is a consensus among Nigerian scholars that the Nigerian society, colonial and postcolonial, was and is patriarchal (Aina, 1998, Okome, 2005, Asiyabola, 2005, Abara, 2012, Akintan, 2013, Makama, 2013). A debate, however, persists on the type of social system that existed in pre-colonial Nigerian society. Before engaging the nature of Nigeria's patriarchy, I will first clarify the concept of patriarchy which I use in this chapter because the concept has been defined and recreated by feminist at different points in their quest to analyse and theorise the societal subordination of women (Walby, 1990, Wilson, 2000).

Patriarchy, according to Walby (1990 p.214) is a societal system of structure and practices which foster men's domination, and oppression and exploitation of women. One which perpetuates the discrimination of women, not only culturally, but also, socially, economically, and politically in its control of access to power, management of resources and benefits (Ferriera, 2004 p.395). It is a sexual system of power (Eisenstein, 1979 p.17) that is 'male-identified, male-controlled, and male-centred where masculinity and masculine traits are valued over femininity and feminine traits (Becker, 1999 24). Sultana (2012) adds that this domination of women encompasses both the private and public sphere. Although these perspectives agree that patriarchy sustains societal structures that support the subordination of women by men, I believe that the more elaborate definition by French (1985), which sees patriarchy as 'the manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general', more adequately expresses the concept and its scope (French in Wilson, 2000 p.1494). Drawing from these definitions, I, therefore, conceptualise patriarchy as a social system which institutionalises male domination and control in the private and public spheres of society by valuing masculinity over femininity and privileging men over women in access to power and resources. This, however, does not imply that women are 'utterly powerless or deprived of rights, influences and resources' (Lemer, 1986 p.239, Wilson, 2000 p.1494), but that the system informs a hierarchical structure in which women occupy a subordinate position to men.

This subordination of women in traditional African patriarchy is fostered through traditional sex-based division of labour in the home which ascribes the role of home and family keeping to the woman based on her biological ability of reproduction, and the role of breadwinning to the man based on his assumed superior strength (Azodo and Eke, 2007, Ogege, 2011, Alesina et al., 2013). This gender-based division of labour established a gender space demarcation and stereotyping that restricted women to the private sphere and 'feminine' roles, and men to the public and 'masculine' roles (Cunningham, 2008, Alesina et al., 2013). This space demarcation has seen some blurring to different extents in respective societies (Walby, 1997), including Africa, because of increasing education of women, awareness campaigns for gender equality, the impact of globalisation and economic hardship. This blurring of gender lines has resulted in more women engaging in employment outside the home and contributing to the financial upkeep of the family (Ampofo et al., 2004, Cunningham, 2008, Fuest, 2008, Akanle et al., 2016). However, many have argued that this has only served to increase the inequality that women experience in patriarchal societies (Walby, 1997, Fieldes, 2013). Women still perform the traditional role of home and family care in addition to working formal employment (Haj-Yahia, 2005, Akanle et al., 2016); what has been referred as women's double burden in the 21st century (Roesch, 2004, Ghosh, 2013, Leboutte and Socias, 2015). The impact of the traditional gender roles division

is still felt because women pass on opportunities for advancement where it means the sacrifice of family obligations, and so remain in subordinate positions in formal employment (Mathur-Helm, 2006). Also, gender stereotyping, which has become ingrained in society, works to restrict them to specific roles that are seen as feminine (Mama, 2003, Diego, 2010, Martin and Barnard, 2013). So, women, particularly in Africa, continue to face systematic discrimination in the public sphere despite blurring gender lines (Mama, 2003, Okpara, 2004, Diego, 2010, Olufemi and David, 2011).

The present Nigerian society is, based on a patriarchal system which upholds unequal gender relations patterns that feature an emphasis on gender identity, gender stereotyping, and gender roles and space demarcations (Asiyanbola, 2005, Abara, 2012, Ogege, 2011, Akintan, 2013). Statistics show this because, in 2012, Nigeria ranked 118 of 134, and 118 of 144 countries on the global gender gap index in 2016 (World Economic Forum, 2016). As a traditional patriarchal society, gender identity is important in Nigeria, and ascribed from the moment an individual is born, indicated in the first question usually asked at the birth of a child in the Nigerian society; 'is it a boy or a girl' (Omoriegbe and Ihensehien, 2009 p.1, Abara, 2012)? This interest in the sex of a newborn is derived from the traditional preference for male children over the female owing to the belief that male children will continue the family's lineage and inherit from their father, while females will get married someday and become a part of a different family (Development, 2006, Ogege, 2011, Akintan, 2013, Makama, 2013, Essien and Ukpong, 2013). As such, the socialisation of children into distinct gender identities begins at childhood, and upbringing in the Nigerian family is geared towards reinforcing the gender identities of boys and girls through differential treatments and exposure to norms on appropriate roles and behaviour for the sexes, resulting in the further entrenchment and perpetuation of the unequal gender relations that exist in society (Raday, 2007, Ogege, 2011, Abara, 2012, Akintan, 2013).

The colonial experience has been cited by many scholars as a major contributing factor to the patriarchal social system and its attendant sex and gender roles conflicts existent in most of post-colonial Africa today, including Nigeria, because these are believed to be products of the social structures that arose during the colonial period (Amadiume, 1997, Okome, 2005, Aniekwu, 2006, Agbalajobi, 2010, Ezegbe and Akubue, 2012, Canice and Abdul, 2013, Akanle et al., 2016). The colonial administration is argued to have perpetuated a male-dominated society in Nigeria in several ways, although I would say that the colonial government only served to reinforce an already existing male dominating system because the pre-colonial Nigerian society was patriarchal. A patriarchy which, I would add, was different and evolved during and after colonialism (Okome, 2005, Ogege, 2011).

Politically, the colonial administration is argued to have promoted patriarchy by co-opting men into the government of the society through the concepts of indirect rule⁸ in Northern Nigeria and Warrant Chiefs⁹ in the South, while excluding women, thereby excluding them from politics and governance in the subsequent post-colonial Nigerian political system (Abdu, 2001, Okome, 2005, Aniekwu, 2006, Okome, 2012). This is argued to have been further compounded by the exclusion of women from employment as local staff in the colonial administration (Nwankwo, 2011). These arguments, however, do not acknowledge the patricentric nature of the pre-colonial Nigerian society which fostered male domination (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994, Allan, 1995). This was evident in its practices of a patrilocal system of marriage (Okonjo, 1976, Derrickson, 2002), and governing systems which were mainly male dominated both in the North, where a centralised system of authority existed in Sultans and Emirs (Crowder, 1964, Abdu, 2001, Bergstrom, 2002), and the South with their decentralised system of politics where the oldest males in the family or clan ruled the society through an all-male council of elders (Okome, 2005, Onyeozili and Ebbe, 2012). Furthermore, although the colonial administration emphasised and encouraged male education as opposed to female's, and the few females who had access to the education system were educated based on the Christian religious knowledge aimed at preparing them to be good home keepers and family carers (Aniekwu, 2006, Nwankwo, 2011, Abdulraheem, 2013), these only further emphasised already existing gender practices.

⁸ The policy of indirect rule was a method of governance introduced by Lord Fredrick Lugard, the first colonial governor general of the Nigerian colony from 1913 – 1918. It was a method through which the colonial authorities used the existing and established traditional authorities to rule and govern the colony, 'appropriating their legitimacy' SPEAR, T. 2003. NEO-TRADITIONALISM AND THE LIMITS OF INVENTION IN BRITISH COLONIAL AFRICA. *The Journal of African History*, 44, 3-27. The relationship between the indigenous chiefs and the British political officers was, in general, one of adviser who only would interfere with the native authority under him in very extreme cases CROWDER, M. 1964. Indirect Rule: French and British Style. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 34, 197-205. This system was successful in Northern Nigeria, and regarded as a model, because of the already existing and well established system of governance by the emirs and sultans *ibid*.

⁹ The Warrant Chief system was established as an alternative to centralised executive authorities in South-eastern Nigeria as was present in the North. This system was a direct rule system in Eastern Nigerian societies by the Colonial administration through the appointment of warrant or 'red cap' chiefs as representatives of the colonial authority. The individuals appointed issued warrants as members of the local Native Court or Council, and worked with the colonial officials in administration of the society. They encountered resistance from the society because they were not appointed by the people and represented the colonial oppression to the people; and this culminated in the Aba Women's Riot of 1929 CROWDER, M. 1964. Indirect Rule: French and British Style. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 34, 197-205, AFIGBO, A. E. 1967. THE WARRANT CHIEF SYSTEM IN EASTERN NIGERIA: DIRECT OR INDIRECT RULE? *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 3, 683-700, OKAFOR, S. O. 1973. The Warrant Chiefs: Indirect rule in Southeastern Nigeria, 1891–1929 by A. E. Afigbo London, Longman, 1972. Pp. viii+ 336. £4.00. The Evolution of the Nigerian State: the Southern phase, 1898–1914 by T. N. Tamuno London, Longman, 1972. Pp. xvi + 422. £4.00. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11, 487-489.

The Nigerian society, particularly the Northern region, had always deemphasised female education and engagement in public activities based on the dominant Islamic religious culture and its emphasis on gender demarcations (Darvishpour, 2003, Development, 2006, Tuwor and Sossou, 2008, Wadud, 2009, British Council Nigeria, 2012). This practice is still presently evident in the Northern Nigerian region (UNICEF, 2007, Akunga, 2008), although slowly changing with the efforts of government, and international organisations like UNICEF, UNDP and NGOs (UNICEF, 2007, Nmadu et al., 2010, Abdulkareem, 2015). Statistics show this gendered practice in respect of education. For example, as at 2012, in eight northern states in Nigeria, 80% of the women were illiterate compared to 9.7% in the south-east. In Jigawa state (a state in north-eastern Nigeria) specifically, 94% of the females could not read; and in the southern part of the country where there are more educated females and males than the North, men had, and still have, a higher percentage and level of education than women (British Council, 2012 p.1). According to Para-Mallam (2010), where the Nigerian government sought to encourage female education, the policy formulated conceptualised the purpose of women's education within patriarchal ideology. This statement made by a one-time Nigerian minister of education depicts this, showing how gender stereotyping continues to influence women's place in society:

Women need peculiar skills of womanhood, in addition to those that will enable them to compete in the world of work and the world of men. Nothing can be more tragic than an accomplished Lady Doctor who does not know how to cook. So women need special education. Women look after the men and the children in addition to themselves' (Ityavyar and Obiajunwa in Para-Mallam, 2010 p.462).

This educational deficiency, therefore, acts as a limitation for women's status and social mobility within formal institutions in society like the Nigerian military as they occupy lower cadres compared to men, and progress at slower paces in respect of promotions (Ojo, 2002, Diego, 2010).

Although I argue that colonialism only served to reinforce existing gender relations patterns in Nigeria, I would, however, agree that it encouraged male domination of women economically. It did this through women's exclusion from the cash crop economic system introduced by the government who preferred to deal with male farmers, and thereby forced women into mainly subsistence farming (Rojas, 1990, Derrickson, 2002, Okome, 2005, Akanle et al., 2016). This was worsened by the appointment of men to women's positions in the marketplace administration (Nwankwo, 2011), a sphere which they had always controlled in pre-colonial Nigerian society (Okonjo, 1976, Okome, 2005, Akintan, 2013). I would further argue that, by the employment of only men in administrative positions in the colonial government, the norm of male domination and consequently, the transfer of gendered structures and social

relations patterns into formal institutions, were introduced and established. This explains the unequal gender relations that exist in formal institutions, such as the Nigerian military, today. In the Nigerian colonial military, for example, Nigerian women were excluded from the profession. The women personnel present were British military nurses who served in the few military hospitals, setting up a precedent for the post-colonial Nigerian military which also excluded women initially and only included them afterwards in limited number to perform the same nursing duties as their British female predecessors.

In addition to colonialism, therefore, Nigeria's traditions and culture (norms and practices) inform the unequal gender power relations in society and formal institutions. In the next four subsections, I will address some specific nature of Nigeria's patriarchal culture, which distinguishes it from others and shapes gender power relations in society.

5.2.1 Discriminatory inheritance and land ownership laws

Some of the distinctive gender norms in the Nigerian society which foster male dominance, in addition to limited female education, include discriminatory inheritance laws and land ownership rights (Aluko and Amidu, 2006, British Council, 2012). Although the Nigerian constitution recognises the equal rights of all, the customary and religious (Islamic) laws, and customs in some parts of Nigeria deny women inheritance rights (Para-Mallam, 2010). This applies not only within a woman's biological family with regards to her father's properties but also in marriage. A woman could not inherit her dead husband's properties; they belong to the male children or the male relations of the deceased man (Para-Mallam, 2010, Jaiyeola, 2011), while in some cases the woman could be inherited by her deceased husband's closest male kin (Chika and Nneka, 2014). Relatedly, in areas like the eastern part of Nigeria, the custom denies female children inheritance rights to their parent's properties, while among the Yoruba, although female children can inherit from their parents, the oldest male child is in control of managing the inheritance and all the male children are entitled to larger shares according to their ages (Goitom, 2014, Jaiyeola, 2011, Oni, 2014). Although these inheritance laws differ according to ethnic groups, the one thing they all have in common is the discrimination against the female.

Additionally, in rural areas where most Nigerian women live and work, their rights of access to land are still regarded as secondary to those of men. Ownership of land is mainly through a patrilineal system of inheritance from which existing customs exclude women as aforementioned (Aluko and Amidu, 2006, Para-Mallam, 2010). Women farmers or those requiring land for business, therefore, have to rent land (British Council, 2012). However, reports show that women are less likely to access leased land (FAO, 2011 p.23). Whereas women have the opportunity to own land in the urban areas, the prevailing challenging economic conditions make it difficult for them to mobilise the amount of money needed for such purchases (Para-Mallam, 2010) and access

to credit is also harder for women (World Bank, 2012). These discriminatory laws show the subordinate status of women in the Nigerian society.

5.2.2 Age Seniority

Another particular aspect of the Nigerian culture which shapes gender relations is the culture of age seniority. The Nigerian culture values the concept of age seniority and ascribes social and economic privileges based on seniority (Okoli, 2007). Imoh (2012) describe Nigeria as a very high power distance¹⁰ society where status consciousness is high, and values are placed on age and seniority; and protocol, formality and hierarchy are held as important (Lewicki, Barry and Saunders in 2012 p.49). The Society features an elaborate etiquette of age status which shows seniority as a factor of inequality (Van den Berghe, 1973), and this cuts across all Nigerian cultures and societies (Oyěwùmí, 1997, Bakare-Yusuf, 2003, Kwintessential, 2016). Nigerian families are mainly guided by the strict system of chronological age difference, and older members of family, and society for that matter, are never addressed by their first names but as 'daddy, mummy, auntie, uncle, brother or sister' depending on their sex and age in relation to the addresser (Fadipe in Labeodan, 2005 p.9). The practice of junior females kneeling and bowing head or squatting, while males prostrate and turn head sideways or squat to greet older people in several cultures like the Yoruba, also depicts this norm (Van den Berghe, 1973). This norm also influences social relations in formal institutions as Van den Berghe (1973) noted because a position of leadership could be given to a person based on age seniority in relation to other staff, just as leadership positions in cultures such as the Igbos', is the prerogative of the oldest males in society (Okoli, 2007, Onyeozili and Ebbe, 2012). The principle of seniority in Nigeria, as Okoli (2007) notes, reinforces the concept of authority and obedience.

This norm of age seniority impacts more on women in the Nigerian society because they are not only subordinated in respect of gender, but also in respect of age. In some Nigerian societies like the Yoruba society, when women marry into a family, they are subject, in respect of age seniority, to all members of the family-in-law, including the youngest member of the extended family, if they were born before the marriage was contracted (Oyěwùmí, 1997, Bakare-Yusuf, 2003, Labeodan, 2005). For example, she cannot address any member of her family-in-law by name, but as 'auntie' or 'brother' according to sex (Labeodan, 2005). In fact, Oyěwùmí (1997) argues that seniority is the basis of the hierarchical social system in the Yoruba society, not gender. She bases her argument on the fact that the Yoruba language has no marker for gender while

¹⁰ High power distance refers to the level of importance ascribed to status, wealth and power differences in respective societies. A high power distance society acknowledges and encourages large inequalities in power, status and wealth, and high regards is accorded to those in authority, and ranks and titles are revered IMOH, C. 2012. Cultural Competence when Serving Abroad. In: NORMAN-MAJOR, K. A. & GOODEN, S. T. (eds.) *Cultural competency for public administrators*. London and New York: Routledge..

it is replete with markers for age seniority. While Oyěwùmí (1997)'s argument in this respect prompts counter-arguments based on her attempt to generalise this case of 'no gender' in respect of Africa (Bakare-Yusuf, 2003, Akintan, 2013), I would argue that it is on point in terms of the importance of the seniority concept in the Nigerian society.

Although education is eroding this norm in formal organisations as younger people with higher educational qualification occupy leadership positions over older ones (Okoli, 2007), the norm of seniority is still quite alive in the wider society and continues to shape gender relation as women's leadership of older men is not a readily accepted phenomenon.

5.2.3 Religion in the Nigerian society

Gender relations in Nigeria are further formed and reinforced by religion which is a major factor of Nigeria's patriarchy. Nigeria has been consistently ranked amongst the top nations of the world with a highly religious population in 2012, 2014 and 2015 (WIN-Gallup International, 2012, Pew-Templeton Project, 2015, Myers, 2016). It is argued that religion in Nigeria has become entwined with culture and influences every facet of the society (Kukah, 1993, Para-Mallam, 2010, Essien and Ukpong, 2013). It affects individuals' sense of identity, and research indicates that the average Nigerian will first identify his or herself by religion before country (Ham and Publications, 2009, Okpanachi, 2012).

Islam and Christianity, the two largest religions in the country, are so integrated into the indigenous cultures that it has caused a blurring of distinctions of the social, political, and religious lives of the people (Uzoma, 2004, Sampson, 2014). For the Nigerian Muslims, for example, the laws of Islam enunciated in the Holy Qur'an as interpreted in the sharia law¹¹, guide their lives and shape gender norms and practices (Sampson, 2014). According to Darvishpour (2003), the teachings of the Qur'an maintains man's domination and superiority over the woman and gives men the responsibility and duty to protect and keep women under control (2003 p.56), further reinforcing patriarchal gender relations. This Islamic model of patriarchy believes that 'the woman can only, and must always be subject to, inferior to and dependent upon the man' (Wadud, 2009 p.107), emphasising women's subordination to men. The practice of purdah¹² which is advocated by Sharia further isolates women from

¹¹ Sharia is an Arabic word which means 'the path to be followed'. It is used to refer to a number of legal injunctions known as Islamic law which are based on the teachings of the Qur'an MASHHOUR, A. 2005. Islamic law and gender equality: Could there be a common ground?: A study of divorce and polygamy in Sharia Law and contemporary legislation in Tunisia and Egypt. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27, 562-596.

¹² Pudah literarily means 'curtain' or 'veil'. It denotes the shielding of women from the sight of men, except their husbands and men in their immediate family. It could be by attire as with the use of the hijab or burqa which totally covers the woman from head to toe except for provision for seeing through a net-like material around the eyes. It also refers to the practice of seclusion of women inside their homes. In this case, the woman may be unveiled but her movements are restricted to her home BLAKEMORE, C. & JENNETT, S. 2001. purdah. *The Oxford Companion to the Body*. New York: 'Oxford University Press'..

public life and activities (Bergstrom, 2002, Kumar, 2005, Robson, 2005), reinforcing the norm of gender space demarcations in society.

The same situation applies to Christianity and the societies in Southern Nigeria. Christianity supports gender hierarchy by defining women's duty as submission to the man who is her head; in other words, her superior and leader (Newell, 2005, Essien and Ukpong, 2013). Religious norms, therefore, emphasise the leadership position of men in society and dominance over women. In addition to discriminatory traditional gender practices, religion-informed gender perceptions strengthen the Nigerian patriarchal system and its resistance to changes in social relations.

5.2.4 Sexuality

The religious nature of the Nigerian society further impacts its perceptions on sexuality based on its gender stereotyping nature. The role of women according to Nigerian culture and religious perceptions is as mothers, and homemakers (Azodo and Eke, 2007, Ogege, 2011, Akintan, 2013). These roles make up the identity of the Nigerian woman (Smith, 2010) and she is socialised into this heteronormative gender identity from childhood (Smith, 2010, Ogege, 2011, Akintan, 2013). In fact, according to Labeodan (2005), one of the factors of beauty in a woman for a suitor in Nigerian society could be her ability to bear children:

Thus a woman may be beautiful because she is blessed with the sort of hips that glorify a husband through frequent and easy childbirth (Franklin in Labeodan, 2005 p.7).

This comment by a respondent in an interview also shows how societal expectations of gender inform a woman's status in society and how this differs from a western context.

Lt. Col. Liman: In our society now, if a woman is not married at a certain age, she's being looked down at; why? But in the US or the developed countries, you know, it's even optional. (A woman can say) 'I don't feel like getting married'. You get people that say 'I don't believe in children'. You understand? But in our own society, if you are not married at a certain age, if you don't have children, even your own family will start looking down on you.¹³

Whereas, women have the choice to opt for different identities other than that of a housewife or mother in the West to a large extent, in the Nigerian society this identity is thrust on the female and reinforced by gender expectations of family and society as a whole. This is derivative of the presumption of the heterosexuality of women.

¹³This interview was conducted by the author on the 17/07/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

Nigeria as a society and nation, therefore, maintains a stance against any alternative sexuality and does not recognise gay rights (Ireland, 2013, Plummer, 2014). Commentators like Izugbara (2004) and Msibi (2011) link this homophobic position of society to patriarchy and an evidence of Nigeria's sexist nature. Individual sexuality is therefore expected to conform to society's definition of gender and sex roles in Nigeria. In Msibi (2011)'s view, this is an attempt to reinforce men's position in society. Same sex relationships and marriages are outlawed in Nigeria (The Associated Press, 2014), and gay men and women are officially harassed and maltreated (Human Rights Watch, 2016). This anti-gay stance has been ascribed to Nigeria's religious nature and culture, leading to the nation being listed as one of the most homophobic countries in Africa and the world as a whole (Allman et al., 2007, Van der Westhuizen, 2009, Ireland, 2013). Formal institutions, like the Nigerian military, reflect this anti-gay position of the Nigerian society and punish any evidence of alternative sexualities among personnel. The Nigerian military ranks lowest of 103 national militaries on the LGBT index monitor (Pilkington, 2014, The Hague Center for Strategic Studies, 2014).

This form of patriarchy, with deeply gendered norms and practices, is the context of the Nigerian society in which the Nigerian military exists. It derives its ideology, norms and practices from this context as FSI notes about the gendered culture of institutions reflecting that of the wider society, and formal institutions being gendered (Mackay et al., 2009, Carreiras, 2006). The gendered nature of formal institutions is argued to be observable in their ideologies, norms, and practices, and structures on different levels. These areas reflect an organisation's constructions of gender (Krook and Mackay, 2011). This is why I adopt the concepts of ideology, norms and practices or behaviour as my units of analysis for exploring the gender culture of the Nigerian military and understanding women's roles and status in the profession, and how these reflect society's traditional gender stereotypes and hierarchy.

Before 2011, women were recruited in small numbers and officially barred from combat training and combat roles by the three services of the Nigeria military; that is the Army, Airforce and Navy. They were concentrated in the support corps which include the Medical, Catering, and Administration Corps, where they performed functions similar to traditional feminine ones like nursing and catering (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992, Dayil, 2011, Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014, Ogbaji, 2015). For instance, at the onset of the Nigerian civil war in 1967 (Uwechue, 1971) which saw an increase in the number of women recruited since independence, they were only recruited to perform catering and nursing services for the men fighting the war (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992). This restriction to the support corps limited women's progress as a group, and so most of them remained on the lowest and mid-levels of the hierarchical structure of the Nigerian military, while men occupied the leadership positions. This was further worsened by their exclusion from the NDA, the Nigerian military's institution for officer combat training, graduates of which

make up the leadership and highest echelons of the military (Academy, 2016). The Nigerian military therefore only recruited women as rank and file soldiers and as Direct Short Service Commissioned (DSSC)¹⁴ officers.

The traditional gender dichotomy apparent in society was therefore also evident in the Nigerian military and visible from the marginalisation of women personnel from the onset, and the inferior status they have always occupied. However, in 2011, the introduction of the Gender Integration Policy (GIP) by the Nigerian government introduced a different dimension into this context for the Nigerian military. In the next section, I will discuss the GIP and the motivation for its adoption.

5.3 The Gender Integration Policy¹⁵

The order that signalled the adoption of the GIP and a shift from the policy of women's exclusion to inclusion in combat training and combat roles in the Nigerian Military was given by the President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011. Consequently, the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) began the immediate acceptance of women for combat training alongside men (Panapress, 2011, Vanguard, 2011, Yobolisa, 2011). This was a major development in the Nigerian Military because it created a context for other significant changes that were to follow. The minister of information for the President Jonathan's administration expressed the new development and its import for women in these words:

With this directive, history is being made as it has never happened before in the annals of the Nigerian military because though, we have women technicians, medics, paratroopers, tank drivers and commissioned women in various services, the armed forces have never had women as regular combatant officers (Panapress, 2011). The Nigerian Armed Forces has always had openings for female officers, but the chances had been limited to non-combat assignments thereby limiting their career paths despite their proven competence and skill (Yobolisa, 2011).

A newspaper article further described the announcement of the policy shift in the same vein:

¹⁴ This is a route for graduates of different disciplines to apply for a career in the Nigerian military as non-combatant officers. It is a nine month intensive military training, after which the trainees are commissioned as officers of the Nigerian military. NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY. 2012. *Direct Short Service Commission* [Online]. Nigeria: Nigerian Defence Academy. Available: <http://www.nda.edu.ng/content.php?pid=22> [Accessed 14/08 2015].

¹⁵ I adopt this name for the policy for reference purposes because it was not officially named by the Nigerian government, and also because the aim was to expand women's roles by their integration in combat training.

President Goodluck Jonathan yesterday made history when he ordered that henceforth, females interested in becoming combatant officers for the Nigerian Armed Forces should be admitted into the Nigerian Defence Academy (Vanguard, 2011).

The order for the shift in policy is a historical landmark for the Nigerian Military, and indeed the Nigerian society, because it signifies a departure from gender spaces and roles demarcations as the Nigerian society has always emphasised them, and as the Nigerian military has always reflected them. This is because the principles of the GIP are derivative of a global liberal ideology, one which informs different norms and practices from Nigeria's patriarchal informed ones. I argue that the principles of the policy derive from the norms of gender equality, and its adoption was aimed at ensuring equal gender opportunities in the military profession in Nigeria, and the empowerment of women soldiers. The President Goodluck Jonathan clearly stated this as the purpose for its adoption:

I have always been an advocate for women empowerment which is why I am proud of the record of the efforts our administration has made. I also promoted gender equality by ordering the Nigerian Defence Academy to begin accepting female cadets, and I have never regretted that decision (President Jonathan, 2015).

The Minister of Information under the President Goodluck's regime also referred to the provision of equal opportunities for women as the motivation for this policy decision.

The Presidential directive was given in order to provide the female officers the same opportunity of rising to the pinnacle of their profession. The directive is also aimed at providing women with career opportunities that would allow them to compete with their male counterparts for the highest offices in the military (Panapress, 2011).

The principles of equal gender opportunities and women's empowerment derive from the principle of equality between the sexes which is at the very heart of human rights and the values of the United Nations (United Nations Human Rights, 2016). The United Nations noted that where gender inequality exists, it is women who suffer discrimination and disadvantages in the access to resources and opportunities (UNFPA, 2005). It, therefore, emphasises the responsibility of nation states to ensure, promote and protect the human rights of women through policies aimed at their empowerment (UNFPA, 2005, Fredman and Goldblatt, 2015). This expectation of the international community of member nation states, I would argue, is responsible for Nigeria's adoption of international gender equality programs such as CEDAW (Raday, 2007,

Women's Aid Collective, 2008) and gender mainstreaming (Development, 2006), aimed at protecting women's rights and ensuring more equitable gender relations. These are two internationally dominant gender policies which many nations have adopted to show conformity with international expectation as members of the same institutional environment (Buhari-Gulmez, 2010, Schofer et al., 2012).

These principles of equal opportunities for women as men, and women empowerment which inform the GIP were clearly antithetical to the existing gender culture of the Nigerian military, and they implied significant changes to its gender relations patterns. For one, by the inclusion of women in the NDA, the Policy created combat training opportunity for females along with men. This meant the inclusion of women in the prestigious regular combatant corps¹⁶ of the Nigerian Armed Forces which has been solely male from the inception of the Nigerian military. Furthermore, members of this corps, from the time of graduation, occupy leadership positions at different levels among the forces and make up the upper echelons and the leadership of the Nigerian Military. This excerpt from my interview with this military respondent indicates the opportunities available for women as members of the regular combatant corps:

Able Seaman Tajudeen: you know in the Armed Forces, there are some appointments that regular corps hold that other commissions will not hold. You understand? Since they are regulars they can become COs on board a ship to move the ship to sea. Anytime when they have become captain -- they can become captain of a ship. Before, we don't have women on the ship, but now, they are going to every country to go and carry ship. But before, we don't have it. So, that's change. So they are coming up.

Interviewer: So one day we hope to see a woman as a CNS (Chief of Naval Staff)?

Able Seaman Tajudeen: As a CNS, Army Chief, Chief of Air Staff.¹⁷

This integration of women in combat training, therefore, potentially opens the leadership roles in the Nigerian Military to them. The opportunity of being combat trained just as men in the NDA implies the removal of all barriers to women's advancement in the military profession in Nigeria. This signifies a

¹⁶ The regular combatant corps is the corps to which officers trained in combat in the Nigerian Defence Academy belong. This training brings eligibility to occupy leadership positions in the Nigerian military. The combatants trained in the NDA are different from the combatant soldiers who come into the military as rank and file soldiers and train as combatants for six months before commission. The officers train for 5 years in the NDA.

¹⁷ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Navy Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria. (All the names used for respondents and focus group discussant in this study are pseudonyms, and not their real names.)

major shift in the roles and status of women in the profession and significant changes in the gendered organisational structure of the Nigerian Military.

Considering the divergence of the principles and implications of this policy from the context of the Nigerian society, one wonders what prompted its adoption, and why it took the Nigerian government, a liberal democracy since 1960, this long to initiate this shift in policy aimed at promoting equal gender opportunities and women empowerment in its patriarchal military institution?

5.3.1 Motivating Factors for the Policy Shift Decision

From a Feminist sociological institutional (FSI) perspective, I argue that the decision by the Nigerian government to adopt the GIP and integrate women into combat training and roles is an instance of institutional homogeneity. The Nigerian government is emulating the decision of other militaries of states within its institutional environment, particularly the West, which have respectively taken the decision to include women in combat roles at different points (Cawkill, 2009, Winslow and Dunn, 2002, McSally, 2007, Burelli, 2013, Mulrine, 2013, Harris, 2013). Debates on the exclusion of women from combat in recent times have strongly criticised what feminists have termed the 'outdated' policy of the official exclusion of women from active combat in the face of the changing nature of war and the performances of military women in the various war theatres in recent times (McSally, 2007, Paulus, 2009, MacKenzie, 2012, MacKenzie, 2013, King, 2013). These arguments have been articulated mainly within the framework of the rights of women to equal opportunities as men, particularly within democratic states such as Nigeria, in line with the arguments of feminists (Feinman, 2000, Fenner and DeYoung, 2001, Leszkay, 2003, Snyder, 2003, AZ, 2006, Poulos, 2008, MacKenzie, 2012).

The tendency of nations to formally adopt similar emergent gender policies in their efforts to combat gender inequality is a situation of isomorphism from an FSI point of view. Isomorphism as earlier noted is a product of the quest of nations to conform to pressures of expected behaviour to be perceived and accepted as legitimate democracies within the liberal global system (Mackay et al., 2009, Schofer et al., 2012, Miller and Banaszak-Holl, 2005). Nigeria as a democratic state endeavours to conform to the global cultural model of a democratic country which includes a commitment to gender equality. So, it emulates policies of liberal democratic states of the West which have included women in their military academies for combat training, combat and combat related roles. The minister of information alluded to this fact in his speech on the inclusion of women in the NDA:

We will follow international best practices. We want to have a strong armed forces, and we believe that keeping women out of it is not in the best interest of the Nigerian military (Panapress, 2011).

The comments of these two very senior military officers also further support this view of institutional homogeneity:

Maj Gen Ahamafule: Many other countries are considering such deployments, the US, for instance, will by next year make such opportunities available to females. It has placed NDA in the league of academies that train both genders which have become a global practice in most academies.¹⁸

Maj Gen Bankole: The integration of women as combatants is a good thing because we have to move along with the world in advancement.¹⁹

This decision to include women in combat training by the Nigerian government is, therefore, a political move aimed at projecting an image of Nigeria as a democratic nation committed to the international liberal norms and values of the ideals of equality. Equality for all, along with rule by the people and belief in, and protection of human freedoms, make up the fundamental principles of liberal democracy (Riemer et al., 2011). This excerpt from a civilian academic focus group discussion I organised corroborates this argument:

Question: Why do you think it took so long after the creation of the Nigerian Defence Academy to begin to include women in combat training?

Prof Shehu: Do you know the reason why we even started in the first place? It's political reasons.

Mall Ahmed: It's more political.

Prof Shehu: It's the politicians that decided to. Left to the military or other stakeholders, I don't think the female cadets program would have started. They wouldn't have done it.

Ass Prof Ben: they wouldn't have done it.²⁰

The quest by Nigeria for acceptance as a legitimate liberal democratic state by its peer nations, I would argue, is for several reasons. These include maintaining its relationship with its powerful liberal democratic Western allies like the United States of America and the United Kingdom which are major aids donors to Nigeria, and partners in bilateral agreements, including trade, investments, military training and so on (Miller, 2007, Ezirim, 2010). Furthermore, by conforming, Nigeria can access and attract more economic aids, trade partnership, international capital and more; the benefits of

¹⁸ This interview was conducted via email by the author on the 16/08/2014.

¹⁹ This interview was conducted by the author on the 22/07/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

²⁰ This focus group discussion was organised by the author and held on the 03/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria

globalisation (Fund, 2008). I, additionally, argue that internationally, in the West African sub-region, Nigeria, with this policy shift, institutes itself as the first West African military to include women in combat training, and subsequently, combat roles. This further reinforces its position as a dominant military power in the sub-region and a potential regional power (Aikens, 2013, Louw-Vaudran, 2015, Cilliers et al., 2015). This is as FSI argues, that state policy makers are mainly motivated by international prestige when they make these political decisions to emulate policies of peer countries (Schofer et al., 2012). In Nigeria's case, its motivation is the prestige of being accepted internationally as a legitimate democratic state with a modern liberal military like the militaries of Western democracies, and as a pioneer in respect of women inclusion in combat in the West African sub-region.

I argue, also, that this policy decision was also political on the domestic front, in addition to being internationally politically motivated. I argue that it was used as a campaign tactic aimed at gaining legitimacy with, and securing the votes of, the women population of the Nigerian society in the subsequent elections by the incumbent government of President Goodluck Jonathan. This policy of gender integration was one of the actions by the administration by which the president showed himself as the Nigerian 'women's champion' (ThisDay, 2015). The government publically identified women's empowerment as one of its primary foci from the onset and promised 35% of political appointments during the administration to women (International Press Centre, 2011). Although the government was not able to meet the 35% affirmative action promise, women constituted 31% of the executive cabinet (Alqali, 2015); and President Jonathan's administration gained the reputation of being the most gender sensitive government in all of Nigeria's political history (Idike, 2014). This reputation was a major instrument for the campaign by the president's campaign team in 2014 before the elections in 2015. This example in the comment of the First Lady as she urged Nigerian women to vote for President Jonathan depicts this:

Let us take advantage of our numerical strength to vote for the re-election of the President because more Nigerian women had been appointed to political offices by Jonathan's administration than past administrations. Nigerian women should no longer go back to the kitchen. It is not our portion to go back to the kitchen. We have women that are capable. We can contribute our quota to the development of Nigeria (Times, 2014).

The party chairman also indicated, based on these actions aimed at increasing women representation and empowerment, that President Jonathan was sure to secure 70% of the women's votes in the 2015 elections (Times, 2015).

This political motive of the policy shift by the Nigerian government under the President Goodluck Jonathan was, therefore, an emulation of the gender integration policies of western militaries, geared towards projecting a liberal image of the government to gain acceptance both nationally and internationally as FSI argues regarding the proliferation of similar international gender equality policies.

Although this policy decision emulated decisions of Western nations, it differed significantly in its process of implementation. One significant factor in the creation of the GIP is that it came as an order from the executive government with which the Nigerian Military had to comply. In other words, the decision was not made by the Nigerian Military as an institution. It was a top-down process which did not include much input from, and participation of, the Nigerian Military as an organisation, as a bottom-up process would have allowed (Filev, 2008, Sopheon-WM, 2012, Sopheon-WM, ND). This is an important factor to bear in mind because I argue that it, partly, influenced the reaction and impact that the policy has generated within the Nigerian Military. The comments of some, like these two military respondents, show the feeling that the policy shift was imposed on the Nigerian Military:

Comdr. Jatau: The thing was imposed on them. There was no preparation, no framework. No any framework for this thing. For political reason--That's why it's not lasting.

Comdr. Praise: It was imposed.²¹

This belief is further reinforced by the lack of any formal written document or working paper that detailed the points of reference for the policy (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014). There was no official title or name for the policy as earlier mentioned, no laws backed it, and neither was the decision made into law to ensure the sustenance and continuity of the policy. The process of a policy development ideally involves 'research, analysis, consultation and synthesis of information to produce recommendations' (Frag, 2003 p.2), and also the presence of a law that ensures its successful implementation and sustenance (Education and Training Unit, 2016). The authority that backed the Gender Integration Policy, however, was only the fact that it originated from the executive government which, one could say, made it an 'unofficial' law. This respondent's comment refers to this.

Admiral Peters: You may be interested to know also that this came more like a presidential directive from the current President, President Goodluck Jonathan, who gave the directive that women should be involved in all aspect of military activities. That is why

²¹ This interview was conducted by the author on the 18th July, 2014 at the Naval Headquarters, Defence Headquarters, Abuja.

we started the regular combatant training for them. It wasn't there before-- (Rear Admiral Peters, 2014).²²

This origin of the Policy as an order of the Federal government depicts the distinct context of the Nigerian military in respect of integration of women in combat as I have earlier argued in this study because this distinguishes it from the case of other militaries which have integrated women into combat. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) for example, which is one of the two African militaries to have integrated women in combat roles, the other being Eritrea²³, has a clearly defined policy, the White Paper on Defence, drawn and adopted in 1998. The White Paper on Defence acknowledges the right of women to serve in all ranks and positions in the SANDF. This policy position was further reinforced by the creation of a gender sub-directorate within the Equal Opportunities Chief Directorate which is tasked, among other things, with monitoring the advancement of women and their proper representation and equality of opportunities with their male counterparts in all areas of the military (Lt Col Mkhwanazi, 2016). Armies of the West, like that of the United States, for example, announced the gradual integration of women into close combat roles after several reviews and studies were carried out, and based on the continuous demands of feminist and women's rights groups (Burelli, 2013, Stachowitsch, 2013, MacKenzie, 2013, Kamarck, 2015, Dickstein, 2016). This was also the case with Britain which has just announced in 2016, after several studies and reviews, its plan to integrate women into all combat roles by 2018 (Farmer, 2016, Ministry of Defence, 2016). The case of Nigeria did not include any formal studies or societal pressures or agitations by feminists; the decision was solely an executive one, and it did not have the official status of law.

5.4 Conclusion:

This chapter has set out the distinct patriarchal context of the Nigerian society which feeds the gender relations pattern of the military as FSI notes regarding the similarity of gender culture of organisations to that of the wider community. It has argued that the Nigerian military is a gendered institution. It has also explored the policy decision of the Nigerian government in implementing the GIP and thereby introducing liberal norms into this distinct Nigerian patriarchal context. The chapter has argued that this decision was a political one which depicts institutional homogeneity as the Nigerian state conforms to the rules of appropriate behaviour for liberal democracies in the liberal international system which constitutes its institutional environment. The identities and principles of the Nigerian state, a democratic institution and its military, a patriarchal

²² This interview was conducted by the author on the 18th July, 2014 at the Naval Headquarters, Defence Headquarters, Abuja.

²³ Eritrea has a national policy of mandatory military service of 18 months for all adults; and as such has always had women in all sections of its armed forces KIBREAB, G. 2013. The national service/Warsai-Yikealo Development Campaign and forced migration in post-independence Eritrea. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 7, 630-649.

institution, are divergent as Schofer et al. (2012) note regarding the tendency of states to have internal inconsistencies in identity and actions with their subunits like the military. How will these two sets of principles interact and what will be the impact of this interaction in the Nigerian context? FSI notes that the specificity of contexts of states results in different effects despite their adoption of similar gender equality policies like the GIP. This is what the next chapter will analyse as it attempts to answer the question of how the inclusion of women in combat training alongside men in the NDA is challenging the gender culture of the Nigerian military.

Chapter 6

A Decoupling in the Nigerian Military: Analysing Ideology and Norms

6.1 Introduction

Having set out the Nigerian societal context and the introduction of the Gender Integration Policy (GIP) in the previous chapter, this chapter aims to explore the impact that this policy has had on the Nigerian military. As earlier stated, I examine the gender culture of the Nigerian military through its gender ideology, norms and practices. In this chapter, I specifically evaluate how the gender ideology and norms of the Nigerian military are being influenced by the changes evolving with the implementation of the GIP.

I will argue here that a decoupling has ensued in the Nigerian military because the implementation of the policy has encountered a cultural resistance within the institution which is evident in its unchanged ideology and norms. Using an FSI perspective, I argue, that this is because the context specific nature of the Nigerian society reflected in the patriarchal ideology and gender norms of its military has so far resisted the changes implied by the principles of the GIP. As FSI posits, these policies of equality, which are structured in conformity with the global cultural models for liberal democratic states, are not context specific, and may, therefore, be in divergence with the indigenous culture and traditions of some host nations or institutions (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005, Mackay et al., 2009, Carlon et al., 2012). As such, although in principle, this policy has been accepted and implemented by the Nigerian military, internally, the patriarchal ideology in place before 2011 continues to inform the norms that shape the Nigerian military.

It is important to state here that some of the responses by the Nigerian military to the GIP may be similar to what has been observed in some Western militaries' reaction to gender integration policies. This is because military institutions are fundamentally patriarchal (Enloe, 1983, Enloe, 2007, Cockburn and Enloe, 2012), with similar histories of masculine-oriented cultures (Goldstein, 2001, Hooper, 2001). However, I argue that the Nigerian military presents certain distinct features which influence its reaction to the GIP which distinguish it from the Western armies. This distinction, I would argue, is down to the different societal contexts in which the militaries find themselves.

This chapter will be made up of three main sections. In the first section, I will address the reasons why a decoupling has occurred between the principles of the GIP and the gender culture of the Nigerian military. In the second section, I will explore how the gender ideology of the Nigerian military remains unchanged despite the implementation of the GIP. In the third section, I will examine the resistance observable in the gender norms of the Nigerian military by analysing its policies of excluding women from combat, its models of male Leadership, and its accommodation, and recruitment policies. In examining the policy of

combat exclusion, I will draw out specific evidence of decoupling in both the Army and the Navy.

Before going further, it is important to clarify here the positions of the different arms of the Nigerian military and their different experience regarding the presence of women in combat. Although the three arms of the Nigerian military are regarded as a homogenous unit, each service acts unilaterally on policy matters, particularly on the issue of the integration of women in the military profession. The Nigerian armed forces consists of three different arms as noted earlier; the Army, Navy and Airforce. The Army is the oldest of the services (Ogomudia, 2007), and it is the largest arm of the Nigerian military. It began to accept women as personnel before the other arms of the military in 1963 (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992), and so it has the larger proportion of the women personnel in the forces. As noted earlier, these women were specifically recruited to perform nursing, catering and administrative roles. However, as I will show later, it has trained some women personnel in combat before the GIP, but not deployed them in combat roles. Although the Navy and the Airforce also opened up to accept women personnel later on, these women were also restricted to similar traditional feminine roles as in the Army (Dayil, 2011).

To be a combatant and command troops in the Airforce, for example, you need to be a pilot, and the Nigerian Airforce has not had a female military pilot until 2011 (Abiyamo, 2013b). This first Nigerian female military pilot, Blessing Liman, trained as a DSSC commissioned non-combatant pilot in 2010/11, but her commission was converted to a combatant one in 2012 by the Nigerian Airforce in response to the presidential directives regarding the GIP (Abiyamo, 2013b, Omonobi, 2012). This was in spite of the fact that she is not combat trained. The female Airforce cadets currently training in the NDA are yet to graduate and, are also set for further training by the Airforce before being regarded as combatants. The Airforce has not indicated a different position from this so far. However, it has, therefore, not directly had the experience of dealing with the issues or debate of women in combat roles yet, which is why, in discussing the evidence of the decoupling in the different services, I do not address the Airforce.

The Navy, similarly, had not trained any female combatant officers or included them in combat duties on board War ships before 2011 when the GIP was implemented. With the policy shift, however, the Nigerian Navy began to purchase mixed gender ships in 2013 to facilitate inclusion of women on board war ships. I will discuss this further subsequently. However, this background knowledge is important for understanding the actions of the different arms of the Nigerian military in response to the GIP as I analyse the decoupling which I argue has occurred within the institution.

6.2 Decoupling in the Nigerian Military

I argue that a decoupling has ensued in the Nigerian Military between the principles of the GIP and the gender culture of the Nigerian Military, and a gap exists between the guidelines of the policy and actual practices of the organisation. This decoupling has occurred for two primary reasons; divergence between the ideology that informs the policy and that of the Nigerian military and the top-bottom nature of the policy decision.

Firstly, the gender norms of the Nigerian Military derive from the particular patriarchal ideology of the Nigerian society with its patterns of gender inequality, male leadership and dominance, and female protection and domination (Beechey, 1979, Fox, 1988, Walby, 1990, Ferriera, 2004, Asiyanbola, 2005, Ray, 2006, Makama, 2013). However, the GIP derives from a liberal ideology which informs a different set of norms; norms of gender equality and women's empowerment which democratic states like Nigeria are expected conform with (Ware, 1992, Gascoigne, 2001). These ideologies of liberalism and patriarchy inform the identities of Nigeria as a democratic state, and its military as a patriarchal organisation, respectively. The difference between the two results in disjuncture in norms (Schofer and Hironaka, 2005, Mackay et al., 2009) with the implementation of the GIP in the Nigerian military. This respondent's comments capture this difference in ideologies and their norms in the Nigerian and Western contexts and the resistance that the policy has encountered in the Nigerian military:

Comdr. Offiong: The cultural thing transcends from what we were seeing in literatures and other studies. The cultural thing transcends region and whatever thing. I think, quote, unquote, this (the military) is a man's world. It's not only here. Even abroad, in developed countries. So, I think majorly you will notice that the way it (integration of women in combat roles) has been embraced in the first world, or the developed world, is different from the way it is being embraced in the developing world.

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Comdr. Offiong: -- how do I call it, they see the cultural challenge, even in the developed world, but still because of their development they have kind of, sometimes, just wing past that, you know. The other things that are stronger in that society, human rights voices are stronger. The women liberation movement or activists or advocates are stronger. So, and then, the equality of citizens, you know, it is also stronger there; and freedom of expression, freedom for you to aspire to become anything. Then the laws, also, are stronger. You can actually approach the law, the courts, to help you out. As against what is happening in the developing countries that some people just think there is a no go area for now, and they refuse to comment on it,

and then it's a bit actually difficult where the culture and the perception is very strong.²⁴

The respondent's comments note the existing difference in how gender issues and experiences play out in the respective societal contexts. He notes how the liberal nature of Western societies and its norms of freedom of speech and human rights differ from Nigeria as a developing country and a patriarchal society which presents a different context where the gender integration policy can be blatantly resisted, confirming my argument about the decoupling which has occurred based on difference in the ideologies and norms behind the GIP and the Nigerian military. His comments further draws out the difference in societal structures aimed at gender equality and human rights, like the justice system, between the two societies, and the impact of women's movements, and how these would influence the impact of gender integration policies in the two contexts. These liberal societal structures have been long established in Western societies and function effectively to uphold the liberal principles of equality and freedoms upon which democracies are built; and therefore can ensure the effective implementation and sustenance of international gender policies in Western militaries despite internal feelings of resistance. Examples of effectiveness of the justice system are judicial decisions which have upheld LGBT rights, such as the repeal of the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy concerning gays in the United States military (Keck, 2009, Nathaniel, 2010) and the court case filed by Alice Miller against the IDF in 1995 for refusing her application to train as a pilot, causing the opening of more jobs to women in the IDF (Levy, 2011). The Nigerian context, on the other hand, for example, outlawed LGBT rights by national legislation despite international disapproval (Izugbara, 2004, Ireland, 2013); and its military refuses to adopt the gender mainstreaming policy although the government ascribes to it (Development, 2006). This difference in the two ideologies at play, therefore, informs a decoupling in the case of the Nigerian military.

Secondly, I argue, that the top-down nature of the policy decision, which came as an order from the executive government by which the Nigerian Military and its leadership had to comply also contributed to the decoupling in the Nigerian context. The top-down approach in project management, such as the decision for the policy shift by the Nigerian government, is quite popular and was elected by some as the better approach compared to the bottom-up method. This is because of its potential to bring about quick changes and allowing the leadership to control progress (Filev, 2008, Alketbi and Gardiner, 2014, Anderson, 2014). However, while this could be argued to be true in private organisations, a situation that involves an important state institution such as the Nigerian military with its own community, culture and internal hierarchy of

²⁴ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Navy Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

authority, required more involvement and participation of its different levels of authority for a successful implementation and management of the new policy.

This is what a bottom-up method would have ensured and why the method is becoming more popular; the participation of the different groups from the various hierarchical levels of the Nigerian Military, precise detailed policy drafting of the principles and aims of the policy, and consequently, the merging of the vision of the government and the commitment and skills of the Nigerian Military service men and women to ensure the success of the policy in bringing about change (Sopheon-WM, 2012, Needs, 2014, Anderson, 2014). Adopting a bottom-up approach does not imply that the initiation and management of such policies of cultural change are left to the military personnel who may not be enthusiastic about them. It means that the leadership initiates the policy and the process of implementation with the involvement and contributions of the staff from the onset (Anderson, 2014). The exclusion of the larger sections of the Nigerian military leadership from the decision-making process can be argued to be a reason why some male and female military officers alike believe, as I earlier noted, that it was an imposed project, and the Nigerian Military was not ready and did not prepare for it:

Comdr. Jatau: The thing was imposed on them. There was no preparation, no framework. No any framework for this thing. For political reason...That's why it's not lasting.

Comdr. Praise: It was imposed.²⁵

Lieutenant Okoye: But the only thing is that, like they (the opposition to the policy) rightly say, we are not yet ready; we are not yet -- Being ready is like what am telling you now, they (the authorities) have not really taken time to say; okay, let us design this kind of formation for women on board the same ship.²⁶

The second respondent above, a female naval officer, Lieutenant Okoye notes the lack of adequate formal procedures, as evidence of the lack of readiness of the Nigerian Military for the policy. This, as earlier noted, differentiates the Nigerian context from the West, like the US and UK militaries where several studies regarding the integration were carried out with the involvement of the military institutions before decisions were made regarding inclusion of women. This exclusion could be argued to feed resentment against the policy within the Nigerian military and, consequently, a systematic resistance of its principles. It is important to keep in mind that decoupling is a deliberately produced situation as noted in my clarification of the concept, and it can be employed as a reaction

²⁵ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

²⁶ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

against an unpopular policy by an institution. The lack of formal policies by the Nigerian military as an institution or efforts by its different services (Army, Navy and Airforce) to draft clear road maps and official structural arrangements on the integration of the women cadets indicates internal resistance. Furthermore, The lack of deliberate shifts in the internal practices to facilitate the efficient implementation of the GIP could further be argued to be a conscious resistance against the policy. This resistance, I argue, is apparent in the unchanging ideology and norms of the Nigerian Military.

6.3 The Ideology of the Nigerian Military and the Policy Shift

In this section, I explore how the resistance of the Nigerian military is observable in its unchanging gender ideology despite the principles of the GIP. Ideology, as I have elaborated in chapter 3, is the belief system or shared beliefs and principles which legitimate the norms of expected behaviour of a society or group of people (Knight and Ensminger, 1998, Van Dijk, 2006, Harvey, 2012-16); although, as I also noted, this is a two-way process because norms and practices also impact and reproduce ideology in particular cases. Although ideology does not change easily, just as it is not adopted quickly (Van Dijk, 2006), it is created gradually by people and therefore it is changeable; and in pursuing institutional change, a change in ideology is vital (Facchini and Melki, 2011). The Nigerian military, however, did not make any deliberate efforts at addressing its existent gender ideology with the implementation of the GIP, and this, I argue has worked against the GIP's principles as they are contained by the patriarchal gender ideology of the Nigerian military.

The Nigerian military's ideology derives from its patriarchal societal context, and, so, it is one which is based on the believed fundamental difference between men and women which makes men and masculinity superior to women and femininity (Enloe, 2007, Cockburn, 2004). This ideology attributes the qualities of 'leadership, authority, aggressiveness and responsibility to men and masculinity; while nurture, compliance, passivity and dependence are the part of women and femininity' (Cockburn, 2004, Dogo, 2014 p.263). This ideology is reinforced by the military's traditional exclusive male identity (Goldstein, 2001, Hooper, 2001, Kronsell, 2005). This patriarchal ideology in the military privileges a hegemonic masculine ideal which not only subordinates femininity but every other form of masculinity in the military (Barret, 1996, Woodward, 2003, Higate, 2003b, Basham, 2009, Carreiras, 2006). This masculine ideal is characterised as heterosexual, tough, aggressive, forceful, invulnerable, morally oriented, emotionally controlled and self-disciplined; an ideal against which all other masculinities and femininity are measured (Hinojosa, 2010, Duncanson, 2015, Kachtan, 2016). It projects the military as a masculine space, and military service and combat as male affairs, casting women in the profession as the 'other' because femininity, is perceived as not only different but inadequate when compared with masculinity in this space (Kronsell, 2005, Schippers, 2007,

Spence and Helmreich, 2014, MacKenzie, 2015). These comments by some military respondents show this:

Comdr. Praise: I think the truth, whether we like it or not, is there is a biological difference between men and women; and there is a limit to what men can endure, physical stamina, and what women can endure as per physical stamina. You understand? So, what you will put a 22, or 21, or a 19 year old male cadet through, you can't put a 19 year old female cadet through. So,--you have to degrade standard.

Able Seaman Amina: ...whether we like it or not, the way men are formed is different from the way women are formed. In the military, me, I see it as, if not because, to me, no jobs; people enter this military job because no jobs; especially women. The military is mostly for men. Even in the time past, when they talk of soldiers, people going to war, you can't see women there.

Able Seaman Amina: But it's our generation now, because of, may be civilisation--and the way woman is formed, what a man can do, like brutal strength, a woman doesn't have it. I look at man, man can lift a bag of rice, but how many women can lift a bag of rice? If it comes to the nitty gritty, the nitty gritty, not intellectual, brutal force, carry man and woman, man go defeat woman.²⁷

It is important to note that Able Seaman Amina is a female and her view upholds the argument about the difference of women from men and the opinion that military service is a masculine profession, validating the masculine ideal and identity of the military. Just like Able Seaman Amina, most of the female respondents and focus group participants readily acknowledged the perception of women in the Nigerian society as the 'weaker sex'. Of the six servicewomen whom I interviewed, four made clear reference to the accepted position of women as the weaker sex. I should add that this did not stop their argument for a reconstruction of gender roles in the Nigerian Military given their current inclusion in combat training, although for different reasons respectively. This acceptance of the lower value of femininity compared to masculinity in the army may be argued to be similar to arguments by some Western women against women's inclusion in combat roles based on their weaker strength compared to men (Simon, 2014, Sayle, 2014). However, the societal acceptance of this inferior status and the link of this to religion by Nigerian military women could be

²⁷ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Navy Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

argued as peculiar to the Nigerian context compared to the West where the liberal ideology and gender equality discourse originated.

These comments by female military respondents depict this acknowledged difference and low status of femininity and the link of gender identity to religion's role prescription, and the opinion of some that women soldiers should shun their femininity and imbibe masculinity:

Lieutenant Okoye: you know men with their suppression; they are still seeing women as second class. Although, well, we accept that, because that's the way God made it.²⁸

Able Seaman Adamu: We are women; we have to procreate; that's what God created us for. So, when you are now pregnant, they will now look at you as you are useless. Everything has its time; everybody has their time, but that's the way they treat women.²⁹

Warrant Officer Chukwu: when you are a woman, don't allow that woman to be part of your decision making. You think like a man; you should be very smart, you should not behave feminine; because I notice some women they are very feminine. And you will remember something na, the men are very nice. When you work with them, if they see you are the type that is ready to work, they will assist you. They will give you their hundred percent support.³⁰

The comments of the first two respondents make reference to women's subordinate status in the military and depict their acceptance of this based on their God-given identity as women; linking their subordinate status on the gender hierarchy of the Nigerian military with religion. Their comments show the impact of religion on gender constructions and relations in the institution, reflecting the religious influence on gender norms in the Nigerian society as I earlier discussed. For the last respondent, masculinity is synonymous with good soldering, and to be accepted as a good soldier by the men and progress in the military, she advocates women's rejection of their femininity and assimilation of masculinity. Her perception indicates the acceptance of masculinity as the yardstick of validation in the military. She also expresses the need for the support and approval of the men by women to perform efficiently. Her reference

²⁸ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Navy Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

²⁹ This interview was conducted by the author on the 18/07/2014 at the respondent's residence in Maraba, Abuja, Nigeria.

³⁰ This interview was conducted by the author on the 30/11/2015 at the Nigerian Navy Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

to the niceness of the male soldiers further shows the recognition of the military as men's space and the position of women as the 'other' within this space. This attitude of women personnel further serves to reinforce the military's existing hegemonic masculine ideology as Sasson-Levy (2003), Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz (2007) and Silva (2008) noted.

I argue that the implementation of the GIP which is geared towards deconstructing this gender differentiating ideology, and fostering one which supports equality between the sexes among personnel, has not impacted the Nigerian military. This is because from the onset, in spite of the clearly stated intentions of attaining gender equality, no concrete steps were taken towards deliberately addressing the gender ideology of the Nigerian military. Rather, in announcing the implementation of the policy, the minister noted that no changes would be made to the ways of the NDA, and the women cadets would be treated the same as the men:

There will be no discrimination with regard to training. The same standard will be applied to both male and female intakes. There will be no gender issues involved as it will be strictly in compliance with NDA statutes (Vanguard, 2011).

There will be no special treatment for the female cadets. There will be no distinctions. The only distinction will be that they will live in different hostels. They will be exposed to the same academic and physical training (Panapress, 2011).

This meant that the female cadets were brought into the institution with its masculine ideology intact. The NDA, where the training of the new female combatants is being done, has maintained a masculine ideology and identity since its creation in 1964 (Academy, 2016), and its norms correspond with this. By the insistence on treating the new female cadets based on the existing military norms and practices, the GIP was being fitted into an ideological situation that differed from the one that informed its creation. Therefore, although the idea of treating the females same as the men sounded like gender equality, it meant that the male dominance of the NDA was being sustained and masculinity remained the standard for valuation (Connell, 1985, Barret, 1996, Carreiras, 2006). This comment by a military instructor in the NDA depicts this point:

Warrant Officer Bakki: all what the system is trying to do is to make gender equality, and that is just what we are trying to do here. And in terms of their strength, you are talking, maybe they can meet up with the pressure, whatever; it's the same; we don't have females when it comes to training in that parade; because the square there is sacred, so we believe everybody that is there

is equal. And they (female cadets) try as much as possible to meet up with the demand³¹

The equality being aimed for, as the respondent notes, can be argued to be within the framework of the masculine ideal, and the demand or requirement being referred to by the respondent as based on existing standards which were set based on this masculine ideal for male cadets in the NDA. There was no effort made to review the rules and apply gender considerations in preparation for the inclusion of the women. For a military institution that has no gender policies unlike Western armies, as I will elaborate subsequently, this meant that the only step taken to implement the GIP was the inclusion of the women in combat training. This, I argue, contributed to the perception of the GIP and its principles of gender equality as a feminization of the Nigerian Military. In other words, the policy is seen as a threat to its effectiveness and efficiency as a military force, which is the perception of femininity in the masculine context of the military (Rimalt, 2007, Baaz and Stern, 2011, Ombati, 2015). It is arguable that this is why most of the male soldiers who oppose the policy shift argue that the presence of the women in the NDA is 'spoiling' the institution as shown in this excerpt from one of my group discussions:

Interviewer: But why do you think women cannot do the things that men are doing?

Able Seaman Tajudeen: There are some things that I can do that I know women cannot do. In NDA now, they've made it compulsory that everybody in NDA must jump as airborne. Can women jump?

Seaman Okon: During obstacle crossing sef, you will see the difference.

Able Seaman Tajudeen: They just want to spoil the NDA.

Warrant Officer Chukwu: Them no spoil am; una men, una no wan give us room.

Seaman Okon: Them spoil am.³²

Although this argument of the feminization of the military and its impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the forces is similar to what has been argued in the West (Rimalt, 2007, Maginnis, 2013), the argument in the Nigerian context depicts its nature of accepted blatant sexism. The comments of these senior military respondents show this as they react to the idea of integration of women into all roles in the military with the GIP:

³¹ This interview was conducted by the author on the 15/07/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

³² This discussion took place on the 30th November, 2015, at the Nigerian Navy headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria. It was not initially planned, but these personnel sat close as I prepared to interview one of them, so I asked if they would like to join in the discussion and if I could record it for my work and they consented.

Rear Admiral Peters: --but do not forget that women have their issues; pregnancy, it's a natural occurrence. These days, I don't want to go there, am not in the medical, I do know that the challenges are more than there were before. Most births are by CS (caesarean) now, for whatever reasons, I don't know. These are down times for this military, and the military, the enemy is not going to be waiting for you. When they say gender mainstreaming, or involving them, then we don't also expect the females, when they come in to start giving excuses. -- Because of some natural fall outs that a woman must be involved with.³³

Comdr. Praise: When you are marooned at sea, your ship has been torpedoed, and your ship has sank, and all of you get into a life boat, just one lifeboat; six, seven of you survived from the ship, and you are waiting for days to be rescued. I will just ask you: what happens if a woman develops her monthly time (period) in that small dinghy with all of you? You know what blood does in the middle of the ocean, how it attracts sharks? And all of you are in one small dinghy? One of the women now starts her monthly time. Now, there shouldn't be a drop of blood in the water; you will see the fins of sharks around. Complexities like that. Biological; basic biological differences; I just used that as an example for you now; ...She's a female, and she has started her period, and you people are in the middle of the ocean; what do you do? (The speaker laughs) And any form of blood can attract sharks.

Comdr. Jatau: And you know say na contaminated blood; no be ordinary one wey you can leave am. Disease na, you go fit get disease.

These comments depict the nature of the sexism that underpins the gender ideology of the Nigerian military and how it frames similar arguments differently in the Nigerian context. The biological attributes of women, particularly menstruation, is articulated in a manner that is derogatory and 'othering' as a resistance against the implied inclusion of women on combat ships. The first respondent refers to a believed deterioration in women's childbearing ability which he feels is evident of women's weak strength that would negatively affect the effectiveness of the military. This unconcealed sexism informs the kind of resistance in the Nigerian military which disregards a formal gender equality policy like the GIP, and undermines its principles.

The first respondent also refers to the whole concept of women inclusion as gender mainstreaming and insists that the Navy would not do this at the cost of

³³ This interview was conducted by the author on the 29/07/2014 at the Defence Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.

its effectiveness, and implies that the women would have to put aside their femininity to be considered for inclusion in combat roles. The respondents' comments show the discriminating perception of femininity in the Nigerian military and the existing gender ideology; one that 'silently' privileges masculinity over femininity in the face of the policy of women integration, (Kronsell, 2005, Enloe, 2007) as female biological attributes are constructed as incompatible with military efficiency. Femininity, and, effectively, the presence of women, in the respondents' views, would weigh down the military, 'spoiling' it. This argument of protection of the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution, which FSI argues as the cause of institutional decoupling, is what is responsible for the gap in the adoption of the GIP and its intended impact in respect of institutionalisation of a liberal ideology which would foster a gender equality perspective in the Nigerian military (Westphal and Zajac, 2001, Tilcsik, 2010).

6.4 Unchanging Gender Norms in the Nigerian Military

In this section, I address the gender norms of the Nigerian military in the face of the implementation of the GIP, and I argue that, like its ideology, the Nigerian military's norms continue to reflect the patriarchal nature of the institution. Norms are the unwritten rules which shape social interactions and derive from ideology as earlier noted (Knight and Ensminger, 1998, Facchini and Melki, 2011). In this case, the norms of the Nigerian military which foster male domination, gender stereotyping and consequently gender demarcation and role distinction, which have been shaped by the Nigerian societal context, have not reflected any changes with the adoption the GIP. I explore some of the formal and informal rules and regulations or policies of the Nigerian military which reflect these norms and show the resistance against the principles of the GIP.

The Harmonised Terms and Conditions of Service (HTACOS) (2012) is the document that details the rules and regulations, in other words, the policies of the Nigerian military regarding personnel. This document presents clearly gendered policies based on norms that privilege masculinity over femininity, and thereby sustain unequal status of staff based on sex. With the passing of the GIP in 2011, no changes were effected in these policies, although the HTACOS was revised and updated in 2012. It is noteworthy to mention that the HTACOS does not feature any gender policies, gender sensitive code of conduct or functional gender structures; these are non-existent within the Nigerian armed forces (Dayil, 2011). Dayil (2011) quotes a military personnel respondent as stating that '[t]he armed forces do not tend to teach gender equality so as not to be seen as teaching women's rights in the forces' (2011, p.193). She further reports another interviewee as saying:

no, we do not have any special unit/policy to handle women issues but women are everywhere as you can see in the armed forces; the only thing is that we try to avoid posting them to sensitive departments' (2011, p.195).

One would wonder what 'sensitive departments' mean? Dayil (2011) does not elaborate on this. These comments indicate the lack of understanding in the Nigerian military of what a gender policy is because the respondents perceive it as aimed at addressing just women issues which is evident of the lack of gender training or awareness in the institution. Although it could be argued that this low level of understanding of gender among personnel may also be present in Western militaries, the presence of gender policies in their militaries ensures precise guidelines on gender issues and institutional behaviour. This is a significant difference between the two contexts and a reason why the kinds of impact of gender integration policies in both cases would be different.

The policies and rules and regulations of the Nigerian military is silent on the concept of gender, and I argue in line with Kronsell (2005) that this depicts the acknowledgement of the masculine as the norm. The comments by respondents in Dayil (2011) quoted above indicate that the Nigerian Military has not formally adopted the gender mainstreaming policy as directed by the Nigerian government with its creation of the National Gender Policy (Development, 2006). The government clearly stated that one of the primary goals of the National Gender Policy was the integration of gender mainstreaming policy (Development, 2006, Kura and Yero, 2013). The gender mainstreaming policy is aimed at addressing issues of equality, equity and fairness, and ensuring that gender analysis is integral to all policy formulations in formal institutions (Debyshire, 2002, Mehra and Gupta, 2006). This policy, the government stated, was aimed at deconstructing the prevalent norms of gender inequality in Nigerian formal institutions as the GIP is aimed at doing in the Nigerian military (Development, 2006).

As shown in the comment of Admiral Peters in the previous section, the Nigerian military equates the GIP with gender mainstreaming as also noted by Akpan (2014). Akpan (2014 p.4) notes the argument of the Nigerian military institution against the policy of gender mainstreaming and the GIP's principle of inclusion of women in combat which it described as impracticable based on women's 'inferior' physical strength, and its negative impact on the military's efficiency. It could be argued, therefore, that the Nigerian military perceives the adoption of the gender mainstreaming policy as an official feminization of its masculine space and identity, and resists this through its non-adoption. So, although it adopts the GIP in principle because it had to, and shows this in the inclusion of women in the NDA, it refuses the adoption of the gender mainstreaming framework which could be useful in the successful implementation of the GIP.

The comments of the respondents further show that the Nigerian military does not acknowledge the existing unequal gender status of personnel as problematic. The military is portrayed as different from other sectors where

gender policies are adopted; a recognised and accepted masculine institution. This identity, in the respondents' perception, as can be deduced from their comments, legitimises the existing unequal gender relations and normalises male dominance of the institution. The gendered norms of the Nigerian military can be observed through an analysis of some of its policies which I do in the next sub-sections.

6.4.1 Policy of Women's Exclusion from Combat

The Nigerian military's continued policy of exclusion of servicewomen from deployment to combat roles in spite of the GIP depicts the decoupling of its norms from the principles of the GIP. The HTACOS does not give reasons for this exclusion of women from combat. The perception that women are weak and inferior to men physically based on their sex, informed the restriction of women to support roles from the beginning of their inclusion in the profession and continues to work against the impact of the GIP because, despite the integration of women in combat training in the NDA, no formal changes have been made to the official policy of their exclusion from combat in the HTACOS (Akpan, 2014). This is also a significant difference between the Nigerian context and the West which it emulates where gender integration policies have apparently resulted in definite change in the formal policy of women's exclusion from actual combat roles as in the Canadian military (Winslow and Dunn, 2002, Gouliquer, 2011) and the US military (Kamarck, 2015). This excerpt from one of the focus group discussions I organised alluded to the influence of society's gender stereotyping as responsible for women's exclusion from combat roles in the Nigerian Military:

Col. Emeka: One, it has a lot of cultural background, you understand? You've mentioned one before. At our homes, in our various societies, do you even allow women to come out when there is little fight outside? Or when 2 boys are fighting outside, you see them fighting, women will only be shouting. It is the men that will come and separate them. ...men are naturally built to fight, but women are embedded with psychological and morality burden. Are you listening to me? They are structured with a lot of morality and psychological burden. So much so that even if you give them this weapon to fight, they will think twice to fire. So women are not naturally built to fight. They are structured to bring out-- (Speaker demonstrates with his hand).

Mall Ahmed: babies from them?

Col. Emeka: You took it out of my mouth³⁴

³⁴ This is an excerpt from the academic focus group discussion organised by the author and held on the 3/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

The view of the biological and psychological difference of women from men expressed by the participants in the above discussion is further corroborated by the comments of these participants in the same Focus group discussion. They further link this difference and exclusion from conflict and combat to women's weaker strength as society understands it (Essien and Ukpong, 2013, Makama, 2013):

Col Bola: Women are--supposed to be traditionally weak.

Dr Habiba: A little bit a weaker sex.

Col Bola: Soft, to be handled with--tenderly in a way. At least in Africa too you know that they are to be at the background to play supportive roles to the men who are expected to be in the field.³⁵

Women are viewed as naturally weaker than men and unable to handle violence physically or psychologically, and this stereotyping casts them as a group needing protection while men are perceived as strong and naturally able to handle violence; corroborating the 'protector' and 'protected' discourse (Elshtain, 1982, Poulos, 2008, Sjoberg and Via, 2010, Alade, 2012). Women's believed primary role of childbirth and physical 'weakness', compared to men, are understood to make them incapable of effectively engaging combat roles. The expression of the participant of women being naturally built for only bearing babies indicates the very apparent sexism in the Nigerian society, one which differentiates it from a Western context where such barefaced sexism would not be tolerated.

However, the issue of the women's physical make up and weaker strength impacting on the quality of training and, consequently, the combat efficiency of military troops, has been one of the primary reasons cited over time for the exclusion of women from combat roles in several militaries (Peaches, 1997, Feinman, 2000, Leszkay, 2003, Poulos, 2008, Maninger, 2008, Maginnis, 2013, Simon, 2014), and has been argued by scholars as an excuse for the continued discrimination of women in the military profession (Carreiras and Kümmel, 2008, MacKenzie, 2012, King, 2013). It has been further argued that these training demands are, most often, not tailored towards the need of the specific jobs but are usually unnecessarily more demanding, and have been used as an artificial barrier to discourage women from the military profession (Peaches, 1997, Kamarck, 2015).

Western armies of state like those of Britain, Canada, Australia and the USA have, however, adopted methods of physical tests and trainings based on research on the difference in the physiological make-up of women and men for

³⁵ Comments from the Academic Focus group discussion organised by the author and held on the 3/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

their militaries and the requirement of specific jobs and roles within the military while maintaining standard (Woodward and Winter, 2004, Cohn, 2000, Sasson-Levy and Amram-katz, 2007, Carreiras and Kümmel, 2008). They continue to review and modify these methods periodically (Reilley, 2010). Although the UK, for example, emphasises that the physical standard for ground combat roles being opened to women will not be changed, research is underway to modify them to fit the physical employment standards (PES) in the near future. These PES standards are aimed at matching the individual physical ability to their employment (Government of the United Kingdom, 2016). This is designed to make military training not 'gender free' but 'gender fair', and to give equal opportunities to women in the profession while maintaining standard for combat effectiveness (Woodward and Winter, 2007 p.46). Some have argued that these differentiated tests have reinforced perceptions of women's unsuitability for soldering, and resentment from male soldiers who believe that this downgrades standards and evidences discrimination in women's favour (Cohn, 2000, Boldry and Wood, 2001), exacerbating resentment against gender integration policies (Schaefer et al., 2015). Nevertheless, it facilitates women's integration while prioritising effectiveness, which is the focus.

The Nigerian military, however, did not officially emulate this gender differentiated tests and training, and has no plans in place to do so. This corroborates FSI's argument about the partial emulation of dominant policies by some states; just enough to capture the benefits of conformity in their global institutional environment but producing a decoupling within their institutions (Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Schofer et al., 2012). This is a significant difference in the two contexts. As such, any difference in the existing training or test patterns for women cadets in the NDA is regarded as lowering of standard as evident in this extract from one of the focus group discussions:

Col. Emeka: Women will be clamouring for equality, but equality is measured in terms of what? If you come here (NDA), every evening we go round and see what is happening here. There are gender issues here as well. Here in the Academy. Do you know that this forward-rolling they do here, women don't do it here? The 'langa', the hanging they do here, the women don't do it. They run together. But even running together the men will be faster. They create a separate kilo for them (women). It's just, as oga said, it's pampering. So the equality they are clamouring, it should be in what sense na?

Prof Shehu: I see them running together oh. Almost always, most of the ladies, not all, always you see one or two at the front, but most of them will be left at the back; behind.

The unofficial creation of a separate running distance for the women cadets and their exclusion from some of the informal drills of junior cadets by the seniors by the training officers is regarded as a lowering of standards for them as can be deduced from the comments of the first participant. This lack of official address of training patterns leaves room for the continued stereotyping of Nigerian military women as incapable and the unchanged position of their non-inclusion in direct combat roles by the Nigerian military services; specifically the Army and Navy³⁶. The actions of the Army and Navy in reaction to the implication of women inclusion in combat by the GIP, evidence the decoupling in the Nigerian military.

The Nigerian Army, on its part, showed its resistance to the GIP by withdrawal from the entire program of women combatant training in 2014. It also took a stance against the combat deployment of the women already in training upon graduation, citing their incapability to perform effectively in fighting situations as the reason for this, and indicating the intention to deploy them in combat support services (CSS). These comments by senior military officers confirm this:

Col. Emeka: Recently, DMT raised the issue with cadets; during that Complex Military Operation. He said based on what is happening in the field that the Army headquarters had decided the present crop of female cadets, when they pass out will not be deployed to combat roles. And I think he also said something about the number of entries. This year, NDA did not take any female cadets for the Army, but they took Air Force and Navy.³⁷

Col Musa: At present, there is a passive policy on the non-deployment of women in active combat role in the field. In fact, recent experience has shown that for the Army, the line of thought is to utilise them in mainly CSS (combat support service) role³⁸.

I was able to corroborate this development with information from the authorities of the NDA. This move by the Nigerian army immediately resulted in a reduction in the number of female applicants to the NDA as I will show with data later on. The number of women being accepted as combatant cadets also went down by approximately 50% with only 16 female cadets accepted by the NDA for the

³⁶ I do not address the Air force here because its context is different with respect to women in combat roles. For any of the female air force cadets in the NDA, for example, to be regarded as combatants and command troops, they have to be pilots. The female combatant cadets are therefore set to undergo further training by the air force upon graduation before they are regarded as combatants. So far, the air force has not indicated a contrary position from this. Also, the air force has not included women in combat training outside the NDA like the other services have.

³⁷ Comment made by participant during the academic focus group discussion organised by the author and held on the 3/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

³⁸ This interview was conducted via email by the author on the 22/04/2016.

academic year 2015/2016 (NDA, 2015). This withdrawal of the Army is indicative of the resistance against changes being influenced by the GIP and its principles. It depicts the divergence that occurs when external norms of gender equality which are different from existing gender norms of a patriarchal society such as Nigeria are being imposed by a symbolic gender policy like the GIP, because of the unfamiliarity of the changes they introduce (Schofer et al., 2012, Goodman and Jinks, 2008).

This position of the Nigerian army regarding the women cadets is not new because I discovered in the course of my research that the army has trained women soldiers in combat previously but has deployed them in non-combat roles.

Captain Acha: But we have had women soldiers train as combatant soldiers but end up being relegated to the background. They are not allowed to perform in the field. I can see the same thing happening with these female cadets. They are training as combatant right now but may end up being relegated to the background because they are women. The men don't feel comfortable with women performing in these areas because they feel that women are not supposed to be there. I am the second woman to train in the Nigerian Army school of Infantry. The men just did not want me there because they did not understand why a woman would be in the infantry. I have faced a lot of opposition and obstacles in this career just because am a woman.³⁹

This servicewoman does not hold out any hopes for the women combatants officers being trained in the NDA based on her experiences in the Army.

The Navy, in the same vein, began to allow women on board combat ships for the first time in 2013 in response to the implementation of the GIP; however, it has refused their inclusion in the fighting roles on board these ships.

Rear Admiral Peters: We are having female personnel serving on board the ship; that's the warship, as I speak with you now. But they may not be said to be involved in the combat duties, or combat aspects of that ship.

With this inclusion of women on board ships, the Navy also created a new code of conduct; a document that sets out the rules and regulations guiding the

³⁹ Interview with the first female paratrooper in the Nigerian Military and the whole of West Africa and second pioneer infantry trained female soldier of the Nigerian Military. This interview was conducted by the author on the 17/07/2014, at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

conduct of personnel on board mixed-gender ships. This naval commodore talked about the content and purpose of this document:

Comdr. Offiong: I don't know if you also know that the Navy has done an NNO, that is an order giving behaviours on board mixed-gender ships. Yes, code of conduct, you know, about issues, about how they (women) are supposed to dress outside, and visitations from males to their living area.

They felt they should put the female on board; they had to now, it was a big ship so you could designate living accommodation including rest-rooms for them, you know. So they now had to come out with a code of conduct to be able to regulate the living on board. So, that's where the code of conduct came from. They (Women) are not supposed to leave their living area in night-gowns.

From the expressions of the naval officer, the 'othering' of the women personnel in respect of this code of conduct comes through. The 'othering' of women according to De Beauvoir (2010) is constitutive of their unequal status compared to men because their identity is defined and differentiated with reference to that of men. Women are therefore regarded as the 'other' to men, signifying a relationship of power (Zevallos, 2011, Brons, 2015). In this case of the Nigerian Military, the behaviour expected of women personnel on board ships is defined in the context of its effect on the male soldiers. The respondent's reference to the particular stipulation on how women are expected to dress outside their quarters but not how men are supposed to dress portrays this, showing the unequal status of men and women in the Nigerian Military which are evidence of its male dominating culture. This further depicts the unconcealed sexism evident in the Nigerian military as well as society, which inform policy positions of the institution that counter the principles of the GIP, producing a decoupling.

The decoupling evident in the Nigerian Army's withdrawal from the program and incomplete combat inclusion of women by the Navy confirms my earlier argument regarding the negative impact of the lack of formalised policies or constitutional laws backing the policy shift. This also depicts a major difference in the two contexts of the Nigerian military and the Western militaries where such an action may not likely happen because of existing democratic structures, such as the justice system, overseeing the implementation of such policies. Nigeria, on the other hand, though a democracy, is one which has arguably struggled with maintaining efficient state structures and accountability by those in power (Abdullahi et al., 2012, Odo, 2015), as such a disregard for policies such as the GIP by the Army may not be considered as out of place. Furthermore, I would argue that the fact that the present administration which is

different from the one which created the policy, is headed by an ex-military man who has made his traditional views on gender obvious (Baker, 2016), also gives the Army the confidence to withdraw from the program.

With the exclusion of women from combat roles in the Army which is the largest service of the Nigerian Military, the GIP faces stiff resistance to the changes that it is aimed at promoting. This resistance is also evident in its leadership policy.

6.4.2 Policy of Male Leadership

The Nigerian military upholds an unwritten policy of male leadership, including leadership of parades, battalions and all combat related sections. This position is connected with its policy of women's exclusion from combat roles because combat experience is a prerequisite for advancing to the leadership level of the military (Perlin et al., 2005, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, 2007, Ogbaji, 2015). The continued exclusion of women, as feminists have argued, relegates them to second place within the profession (Peaches, 1997, Leszkay, 2003, Poulos, 2008, MacKenzie, 2012, Summers, 2013). The fact that the 3 female generals produced by the Nigerian military from the time of its inception, have all been from the support corps; the first and third from the Army medical corps and the second from the Naval administration corps (Abiyamo, 2013a, Abiyamo, 2013c, Nigerian Army, 2015) depicts this gendered leadership norm. These women may have been or be Generals, but they did not occupy any strategic leadership positions because of their non-combatant status. I argue that the inclusion of women in combat training which has introduced the concept of women leadership of parades and battalions in the NDA, and by implication, parades and battalions in the Nigerian Military, has encountered a resistance because of the unfamiliar idea of women leadership in Nigerian military and society.

Military parades are performed regularly, and involve the formation of soldiers who move to drills and marching commands being given by a parade commander (Thoroor, 2009), and are part and parcel of the military training culture aimed at instilling discipline and pride in soldiers (Crabtree, 2004, Powers, 2011, Military.com, 2016). Participating in parades is part of the training in the NDA and life in the Nigerian military, and these were always commanded by male cadets in the NDA and officers in the Nigerian Military. With women cadets now training in the NDA, they have become included in command of parades and leadership of cadets' battalions, and are expected to do same in the military after graduation. This has generated resistance from the male cadets and officers in the Nigerian Military because it goes contrary to the norm of male leadership. This female cadet and male officer make reference to this in their comments:

Cadet Florence: ...if they tell a female cadet to come outside and command a squad; by the time you start giving your orders, no matter how sharp your orders are you'll see there are some male

cadets that will just take it lousily. It has happened when we were first termers (first year cadets) and they told one of my course mates come out and command a parade. Immediately she came out and started giving command, a male fourth-termer (fourth year), I think he was a third termer by then or thereabout, he stepped out of the parade that; why will he take order from a female; and walked out of that parade⁴.

Comdr. Ofiong: when you are a platoon commander, for instance, and you are a lady, and you want to give marching orders to soldiers, how are they going to take it? For the officers' corps, give or take, it may be understandable; but when you are dealing with the soldiers, some of whom may be sometimes, especially the senior NCO's, older than the girl. Now, coming from different religious backgrounds and culture, then you are now telling them what to do, and so on, so it becomes a problem.⁴⁰

The resistance against the idea of women as commanders of parade and platoons is evident from these comments and is based on the gender relations pattern in the Nigerian military and society. This is also evident in the limited inclusion of the female cadets in battalion leadership in the NDA. Few female cadets are assigned positions of Junior Under-officers (JUO) along with some male cadets, while all Battalion Senior Under Officers (BSUO) are male, even though the NDA now has senior female cadets who are eligible for the position; upholding the NDA's long time tradition of male leadership of battalions. Despite this limited inclusion of women in battalion leadership in the NDA, the idea of their leadership of parades and battalions in the military upon graduation has met with stiff resistance, and the continued exclusion from combat roles reinforces this. The second respondent quoted above makes reference to religion and age as factors that inform this resistance as discussed earlier. The leadership of parades and battalions are part of the duties of combatant officers and to exclude trained women combatants upon graduation from them is a refusal of acknowledgement of their combatant status, and this would also amount to their exclusion from leadership roles in the Nigerian Military. It also depicts an apparent case of gender discrimination because the women officers would be treated differently from their male counterparts despite similar training in the NDA. This further displays the decoupling with the principles of the GIP which would be different from Western militaries where combat trained female officers have been acknowledged as combatants (Spivack, 2015) and set to be deployed in active combat.

⁴⁰ This comment was made in the female cadets' focus group discussion organised by the author and held on the 2/08/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

6.4.3 A Gendered Policy of Accommodation

Similarly, the Nigerian military's policy regarding the accommodation of personnel further depicts its gendered norms notwithstanding the principles of the GIP. The HTACOS states that women soldiers are eligible for housing like their male counterparts, commensurate with their ranks. It, however, further states that women personnel who are married to non-military personnel do not qualify for official accommodation. They are expected to reside outside the base and claim accommodation allowance from the military (HTACOS, 2012 p. 47). This rule does not extend to male members of the armed forces who have non-military spouses. Although internally this rule is sometimes undermined, it is the official position of the Nigerian military. This is another clear difference of the Nigerian context from the Western armies in internal policies which depict societal context. This policy, I would argue, is based on the patrilocal marriage culture of the Nigerian society which requires a married couple to reside in the man's home; and so women spouses move in with their husbands after marriage and not the other way around (Okonjo, 1976, Derrickson, 2002, Ogbaa, 2003, Ogege, 2011). This belief as Ogbaa (2003) states, is derivative of the patriarchal gender relations within Nigerian society which views the social status of a woman as an extension of that of the man, where women are expected to be subjected to the will of their husbands (Ogege, 2011). This discussion from one of the focus groups indicate this perception of women being subject to their husbands' wills in respect of their careers as soldiers:

Interviewer: Sir, what kind of family pressures do you mean?

Col. Emeka: Aaah! Sometimes they will marry, and their husband will ask them, 'leave this job', and they will leave.

Prof Shehu: You are a woman na.

Col. Emeka: We have seen that among the females--female officers that are already in the system. Once they marry, their husband will tell them; 'I can't be travelling, you will be in Maiduguri; I can't be travelling you will be in Port Harcourt. I have three four children. Resign'.

Prof Shehu: Resign⁴¹

A female military respondent also commented in the same vein:

Able Seaman Adamu: Your husband, maybe you marry, and your husband does not really like the way the job is. Sometimes you will be posted out from where your family is; trauma and all those things. Some men will say let the women leave the job.

In the above excerpt from a focus group discussion, the subordinate perception of women compared to their husbands comes through. The expression of the

⁴¹ Excerpt from the academic focus group discussion.

participant, Prof Shehu, in the excerpt was directed to me, because he felt that, as a woman, I should relate to this idea, and did not need to ask the question which was based on an earlier comment about family pressures impacting on women in the military. With this gendered accommodation policy, the Nigerian military further depicts its reflection of the distinctly gendered norms of the Nigerian society and the blatant nature of its sexism, features which distinguish it from the Western military context and inform resistance against the principles of gender equality of the GIP.

6.4.4 Gendered Recruitment Policies

The recruitment policies of the Nigerian military, such as the policy of limited inclusion of women in respect of number into the ranks of the Nigerian military forces, could be argued to reinforce the norm of male dominance in the Nigerian military. This could also be argued as aimed at maintaining the masculine identity of the profession despite the principle of gender equality of the GIP. This gendered recruitment norm was evident from the onset in colonial times and after independence; and according to Dayil (2011), the Nigerian military has an undisclosed cap on the number of women recruited at all times, and data shows that the policy shift has not impacted this. The following figures from Onumajuru (2014) demonstrate the number of women accepted into the Nigerian Military in recent times and the male, female ratio in the Nigerian Military as at 2013:

Table 1: Figures for women recruitment in the Nigerian Armed Forces 2012-2013

I	Year	Army			Navy			Air Force		
		Men	women	% of Female	Men	women	% of Female	Men	women	% of women
1	2012	7357	207	2.7%	1260	240	16%	900	100	10%
2	2013	11207	487	4.1%	1215	285	19%	890	110	11%

Source: (Onumajuru, 2014)

Table 2: Ratio of women to men personnel in the Nigerian Armed Forces as at 2013

	gender	Nigerian Army		Nigerian Navy		Nigerian Air Force		Total	
		Strength	%	%	%	Strength	%	Figure	%
1	Men	94570	96.5%	15610	89%	8800	88%	118980	94.7%
2	Women	3430	3.5%	1925	11%	1200	12%	6555	5.2%
3	Total	98000	100%	17535	100%	10000	100%	125535	100%

Source: (Onumajuru, 2014)

Table 1 shows the figures of men and women recruited for the years 2012 and 2013 by the Nigerian Armed forces, while Table 2 presents the figures of men and women in the various services, comparing their percentages to the total number of personnel. The figures show the existing wide gap in the numerical strength of men and women personnel of the Nigerian Military, with women making 5.2% of the total military force in 2013.

Also, the number of females accepted each year shows this deliberate limitation of women in numerical strength despite the opening of the formally all-male NDA to women by the GIP. Table 3 below indicates an average of 28 women, compared to 282 of men, accepted every year into the NDA. The figures further

show that from 2012 to 2014, no change was recorded in the number of women cadets recruited as their number remained fixed at 31. From data gathered during the interviews I conducted, it can be argued that this limitation in the number of women accepted into the military, and NDA specifically, is unlikely to change soon. This senior officer's comment on the number of the women cadets during our interview gave an indication of this:

Brigadier General Hamid: the military is not seeking equity, but female representation.⁴²

Table 3: Figures for women regular combatant cadets accepted into the NDA for 2011-2013

Year and Regular Course	Total No. of cadets	Men	Women	Percentage of men	Percentage of women
2011/2012 63RC	152	132	20	86.8	13.2
2012/2013 64RC	353	322	31	91.2	8.8
2013/2014 65RC	363	332	31	91.5	8.5
2014/2015 66RC	371	340	30	91.6	8.4

Source: Nigerian Defence Academy, 2016

Data from the NDA indicate an increase in the number of female applicants from 1,993 in 2012 to 2,256 in 2013 as shown in Table 4 below. There was a slight drop to 1,206 in 2014 as a result of rumours of the withdrawal the Army from the program. There has been no increase in female intakes between 2012 and 2015, although the number of male intakes, as indicated on the table, increased yearly. The number of women intakes dropped further in 2015/2016 to 15 because of the exit of the Army from the programme (NDA, 2016). This is not represented on the table because I was unable to get the other corresponding data for the year, such as the figures for the applicants according to sex for the year.

Table 4: Male and female candidates and intakes for 2012 - 2014

Year & Regular Course	Male applicants	Female applicants	Male intakes	Female intakes
2012/13 64RC	29,097	1,993	322	31
2013/14 65RC	33,592	2,256	332	31
2014/15 66RC	20,089	1,202	340	30

Source: Nigerian Defence Academy, 2016

In light of these consistent and deliberate small number of women intakes, it can be suggested that the Nigerian military deliberately seeks to maintain the male domination of the Nigerian military, numerically and consequently, its masculine identity. This is not in agreement with the principle of gender equality which underpins the policy, which though may not imply immediate equality in number of male and female intakes, but, one would expect, a gradual increase in the number of women accepted as has been the tradition with the intake of male cadets. The decoupling evidenced by continued deliberate limited

⁴² This interview was conducted by the author on the 18/07/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, old site, Kaduna, Nigeria.

inclusion of women in number and continued norm of male dominance in the Nigerian military may seem similar to what obtains in the Western militaries; however, it is evident that the factors of society that inform it and the negotiation of the arguments around it are different in both contexts as the effect on the other norms show.

Moreover, another recruitment regulation which further depicts the norm of gender demarcations and less value for femininity, and persists despite the GIP, is the official policy of recruiting only single women into the Nigerian military. Married women are not accepted, but married men are. No reasons are given for this gendered recruitment policy; however, it can be argued to be based on the notion that family responsibilities could be a distraction for married women, and the traditional concept that a women's priority should be her family and marriage, and military service would disrupt this. This respondent's view shows this:

Cadet Timothy: most of them, after a while as an African woman, you have to fight to keep your marriage. You have to, you can't really keep your marriage by living your life in the army, because with the posting, and some of them will be forced to retire at a particular rank.⁴³

As I had noted earlier on, women's identity as mothers and wives are expected to supersede any other identity (Labeodan, 2005, Smith, 2010). This is why some of the respondents noted that marriage would be sure to make some of the women combatant cadets drop out of the job, as the cadet above opines. This is also why married servicewomen or nursing mothers are often rejected from some units to which they are transferred because they are seen as ineffective based on their identity as women.

Able Seaman Amina: Do you know that some officers, when they post you somewhere, they will say they don't want women; that woman cannot do the job? There was a time they posted me to a naval unit; they said they don't want nursing mothers; say they should RTU us (Return to Unit).

These policies show the divergence of the existent gendered norms in the Nigerian military from the principles of the GIP and how the changes which it seeks to influence are being resisted.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the resistance to the GIP by the Nigerian military in its ideology and norms, and the resultant decoupling that has resulted. I have

⁴³ This comment was made in the male cadets' focus group discussion organised by the author and held on the 2/08/2014 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

addressed the reasons for this decoupling and argued that the different contexts which inform the gender culture of the Nigerian military and the liberal principles of the GIP, has resulted in the perception of the GIP as an imposition of foreign values on the Nigerian military. Furthermore, although the Nigerian government emulates the West in adoption of the Gender integration policy, it produces a different kind of impact from the West because of the difference in the two societal contexts corroborating FSI's argument that the various settings of states result in different levels and kinds of impact from the adoption of similar gender policies (Mackay et al., 2009, Schofer et al., 2012). I showed how the gender ideology of the Nigerian military remains unchanged and how it continues to inform gendered norms which are obvious in its policies despite the GIP, resulting in a gap between the implementation and impact of the policy shift. In the next chapter, I will examine the impact of the GIP on the behaviour or practices of the Nigerian military.

Chapter 7

Decoupling and Practices in the Nigerian Military

7.1 Introduction

I examined the decoupling between the patriarchal ideology and norms of the Nigerian military and the principles of the GIP in the previous chapter. Here, I explore how this decoupling is played out in the practices of the Nigerian military, and I argue that, like its ideology and norms, the resistance of the Nigerian military culture to the GIP is also observable in its gendered practices. These gendered practices reinforce the unequal gender relations and hierarchy in the institution despite the gender equality principles of the GIP. However, as FSI notes about decoupling not entirely excluding change (Schofer and Hironaka, 2005, Goodman and Jinks, 2008), I will add that, with a closer look, the decoupled situation in the Nigerian military does present some little changes in certain gendered practices of the institution. However, I will show that this is mainly in its organisational structure and not its gender culture as I have argued from the start. I will note that these structural changes impact servicewomen's status, providing opportunities, though limited, for their career progress. It is, therefore, possible that, in the midst of a decoupling, adopted global gender policies may inform small changes in some areas or levels of an organisation without impacting its entire structure (Mackay et al., 2009, Schofer et al., 2012).

This chapter will consist of two sections. I will explore the unchanging gender practices of the Nigerian military in the first section and further show how the Nigerian context differs from the context of Western militaries which it emulates. In the second section, I will address the small changes in the structural behaviour of the Nigerian military and argue that this also shows its difference from the Western armies in respect of the response to gender integration policies. It is important to bear in mind the related nature of my units of analysis; that is ideology, norms and practices; how they draw upon each other and produce changes in each other in certain cases.

7.2 Unchanging gendered practices

Practices, as I have noted earlier on in this work, are the actions informed by the existing norms of a society or organisation, which over time have become accepted and established as the way of doing things (Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014, Van Dijk, 2006). The gender practices of the Nigerian military depict its patriarchal norms, and I argue that these practices have not changed with the implementation of the GIP and its liberal principles. The gendered practices of the Nigerian military in the assignment of duties and roles show this.

In spite of their status as trained soldiers, Nigerian servicewomen are, first and foremost, regarded as women in the traditional sense of the word within the institution, and they are assigned roles that are reflective of their gender and not of their professional identity or capability. As earlier noted, women were recruited into the Nigerian military, initially, specifically to perform traditional

feminine roles of nursing and catering (Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992). Although the recent implementation of the GIP seeks to open up all positions in the Nigerian military to women by its principle of equal gender opportunities, the practice of sexist assignment of roles has persisted. These military respondents make reference to the institution's practice of using servicewomen as 'Tea girls' and 'computer hands':

Able Seaman Adamu: Most women are just being used, not for your profession; they are just being used, sometimes as tea girls; or maybe computer hands, or other writer jobs. But other things like combatant, where you show your skills in terms of security, all these things, they don't allow women to go; they say women don't have the strength, they don't have the power; but we went through training with the same men. When we were in training, they didn't separate women and say, okay, men should do this, women should do that. We all did the same training; did the same hard puttee. But when it comes to doing the job, they'll say women cannot do it; men can do it.

Able Seaman Shehu:--In the Navy today, is it not of recent we started having Seamen, as per women in the Navy? And these ones, are they making good use of them? No. Tomorrow, somebody will take them as a tea girl. Then, what is the need of them? No need.

Interviewer: So you don't think they have anything to add to the military?

Able Seaman Shehu: They don't have any addition. The only thing they are good at is serving oga.

These servicewomen, as the first respondent notes, have been trained just like the men, but are used for these roles which, though may not usually be termed as menial, within the context of the Nigerian military and from the expressions of the respondents, could be characterised as subordinating. This is because the roles are feminised and, therefore, of less value within the military. The role of tea making, for instance, does not require feminine attributes. It is a function that can be performed by males and females alike. The fact that it is women soldiers who are mainly assigned to this duty, despite their similar training and qualification as the men for the same jobs in the profession, draws attention to the underlying implications of the practice.

The second respondent, Able Seaman Shehu's expression of the use of servicewomen for jobs of waiting on the senior male officers of the military buttresses this. The term 'Oga' is used to refer to men in the Nigerian society, and connotes seniority and leadership in formal organisations (Naija Lingo, ND). In the military, it denotes a senior male officer. The respondent does not refer to

servicewomen waiting on senior female officers, but on 'ogas', further depicting the existent gender power relations in the Nigerian military.

Despite the GIP, the preference for deployment of women soldiers in the Nigerian military remains the catering corps regardless of their qualification as this female military respondent explains. This exploitation of women's ascribed gender identity is further obvious in their official use for organising social events regardless of their department within the institution.

Able Seaman Amina: Most women, when you are taken into the military, they have already carved a space where they will put you. You can't be given an appointment where you will now man; you will now be head of men going to do the military job. You will only be taken to the catering. Even if you came in with qualification that is not catering, when they want to do any big occasion, they give it to you, saying 'you, organise food, organise this'. That's what they do.

Women make up the majority of the catering corps. In fact, before the inclusion of women in combat training in 2011, all women personnel in the Nigerian military belonged to either the catering or medical corps (Dayil, 2011). As the respondent observes, women personnel do not have to be qualified caterers; they are automatically assigned catering roles because they are female, and based on their gender they are believed to be good at performing these jobs. The use of servicewomen for organising social functions in the Nigerian military, as the respondent observes, further depicts the gendered nature of roles assignment. I argue that this practice portrays the traditional view of women as support for men who are believed to have the responsibility of carrying out the primary duties of the military. This is the same mindset that influenced the increase in the number of women accepted into the military during the Nigerian Civil War in 1967, to care for the men fighting in the war, not to engage in it in any form (Uwechue, 1971, Nigerian Army Education Corps, 1992). This mentality, I further argue, is fed by the traditional gender roles division in the Nigerian society, particularly the gender-based division of labour in the family space which ascribes the responsible for keeping and caring for the family to women (Asiyanbola, 2005, Akintan, 2013). I argue that this perception continues to shape the military's practice of gendered roles assignment which reinforces the gender hierarchy in the Nigerian military and the subordinate position of women despite the GIP.

The sexist practice of openly using women for minor roles in the military despite their qualification is a factor that can be said to distinguish the Nigerian military from its Western counterparts which exist in a liberal context that discourages discriminations based on sex and brings pressure to bear on the military. This is not to imply that sexism does not exist today in Western societies or armies, but

that it is more subtle and experienced differently than it is in the Nigerian context. Wright and Rogers (2010), for example, note the continued gender pay gap in the American society due to the less value placed on jobs associated with women compared to those associated with men. Doan and Portillo (2015) also observe the continued subtle and 'unintended' stereotyping in the US military despite the gender integration policy. Regarding the British Army, Woodward and Winter (2004) note how despite policies aimed at expanding women's participation, the unequal value of masculinity and femininity persisted. The Liberal context of the West implies the presence of effective institutions to address such discriminations, and this accounts for a significant difference. The Nigerian military, however, does not have any institutional gender policies or internal gender structures as I have previously noted (Dayil, 2011). As such there are no avenues for Nigerian servicewomen to challenge gender-based discriminations officially.

There are also no policies regarding sexual harassments, although, according to Dayil (2011), the Nigerian military maintains a position of non-tolerance for physical assault. The issue of sexual abuse is, therefore, subsumed under the concept of physical assault, further indicating the lack of focus on gender issues. Reported cases of gender-based violence or sexual harassment are adjudicated through Court Martials which are presided over by senior officers, with only the defendant and the accused in attendance (Dayil, 2011 P.194). The obscuring of these cases and the lack of data to show evidence, procedure and decisions regarding such situations, show the deliberate efforts of the institution to discourage focus on issues of gender, and sexual abuse and this, as Ilim and Amali (ND) note, legitimises the abuse of women's rights. This disregard of sex-based discrimination is also rife in the wider society where gender-based violence in relationships, for example, is not considered a violation of a woman's right or an abuse (Ilim and Amali, ND). This comment by a senior male officer, as he attempts to explain the reasons behind the sexual assault of female military war prisoners as he voiced disapproval of the integration of women in combat, depicts the open nature of sexism that informs the perceptions around sexual harassment in the Nigerian context:

Comdr. Praise: the temptation is so much there on the male captor. It is natural. You are a male, you have captured; the temptation is there to exploit a woman who has no resistance. You know, the instinct to be a predator in a man comes out upon them because they (women) are weaker.

The respondent views men's attitude in committing these kinds of crime as natural and almost excusable. The weaker physical strength of women is argued to be the cause of the abuse, and so women are responsible for being sexually assaulted. This overt sexism at play in the Nigerian military can be claimed to represent the deeply entrenched patriarchal culture of the society,

which has presented the stiff resistance against changes by the GIP, producing a decoupling.

The gendered practices of the Nigerian military are also evident in the assignment of women to roles on Peace Keeping missions based on their sex. Officially, women have been deployed as part of peacekeeping troops by the Nigerian military at different times (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014). However, reports show that these women are used principally for traditional feminine jobs such as teaching, cooking, supply clerks, nurses, and also as police officers and refugee workers (Carvajal, 2010). Carvajal (2010) reports a commander of Nigerian peacekeeping battalions in Liberia as saying that the deployment of women to these roles is based on their more disciplined nature which makes them more suitable for such functions. Another senior male officer noted that the 'motherly' impact of women's presence improves the behaviours of male troops. This is an argument which is similar to those regarding the argued impact of female troops, such as the female engagement teams (FET) of Western militaries in peace missions (Coll, 2012, Rohwerder, 2015). These FETs are argued to contribute to the effectiveness of peace missions by gaining the trust of the women and men in the host communities, and consequently, the acceptance for the peace missions (Simić, 2010, Dharmapuri, 2013, Rohwerder, 2015).

However, unlike the Nigerian female troops, these FETs are specially trained before deployment to perform this role of integrating and engaging with the communities (Coll, 2012, Rohwerder, 2015). Also, although the presence of these females is argued to have a civilising impact on male troops, feminists have criticised this as an essentialization and exploitation of women (Simić, 2010). Furthermore, this believed effect of female troops' presence is not constructed as 'motherly' in the Western militaries' contexts, and neither are these Western female soldiers used as teachers or cooks in conflict zones. Studies have shown how Western female peacekeeping forces have performed efficiently in combat-related roles like combat service support (Vogt and Street, 2014) in the conflict areas and suffered similar casualties to male combatants (MacKenzie, 2012, MacKenzie, 2015). This further shows the difference in the contexts of Nigerian and Western militaries.

The Nigerian military, however, does not consider the impact of this practice of gendered role assignment on women's status in the power hierarchy of the institution. This senior male military respondent's comment depicts the deliberate circumventing of the issue of gender discrimination in roles assignment:

Admiral Peters: in the military, we don't really discriminate to that extent because it's like a team work. If you don't give food to the person who is bearing the gun, he will not be able to fire

accurately. I'm just putting it in a very mild way so that you can appreciate. Everybody in the ship is appreciated for the role that they play. There is really no discrimination per se. You don't come out and say you are the one that fires the gun. What if the cook doesn't cook, how will you fare? Maybe you are sick, and the medical man is not there to support you medically? You won't function well. So, it's a team work. That's why even our motto in the Nigerian Navy is 'Onward together'. For us in the Navy, the defining factor for us would be; 'are you allowed to serve on board?' So, now, if a female is serving on board a warship, to that extent she is already engaged in combat. It's just that she is not manning the console. As we speak now, they are not involved in manning the console that fights the ship; that is the only difference.

The respondent attempts to justify the gender discrimination in roles assignment on Nigerian Navy ships with the recent inclusion of women on board ships. He tries to present a picture of equal importance between catering roles such as cooking, and combatant roles on board ships. He implies that the roles that women play are as important as all other roles on board ships, which is inaccurate regarding the opportunities that these roles present to personnel, and the roles' impact on their power status in the institution. This gendered deployment of functions in the Nigerian military places women in jobs that limit them to the lower and lowest levels of the hierarchical structure of the organisation. This works against the aim of women empowerment of the GIP. The respondent notes that the defining factor for the Navy would be the fact that women are allowed on board ships and not the category of job they performed. Equality in role deployment of personnel, opportunities and career advancement, changes which the principles of the GIP imply, are therefore not the focus. The perception that undergirds the comment of the respondent does not acknowledge the need for restructuring the gender relations pattern in the Nigerian military, and this attitude contributes to the decoupling that has happened between the practices of the Nigerian military and the principles of the GIP.

Women are, therefore, encouraged to accept the status quo through this construction of equal importance of all jobs in the military. The women peacekeeping troops, for example, are praised as disciplined and impacting the missions positively. I would argue that this is because they do not challenge the status quo as Carvajal (2010) reports. Women are criticised as attempting to rise above their station when they try to show capabilities beyond the perceptions of women in the military. They are expected to accept the 'natural' leadership of men.

Able Seaman Adamu: They don't allow you to show your skill. If you want to even show your skill, they will look at you and say; 'look at this one; sabi sabi⁴⁴, you want to show that you know more than men'. Sometime you (female) will be a higher ranking officer or a senior rate (rank and file of the Navy), man will be your junior, but when it comes to..., they will expect the man to take charge, to be the one in control, give order.

These gendered practices of the Nigerian military are also visible in the NDA's practice of using the female combatant cadets to perform roles that depict their secondary status compared to the male cadets despite their similar rank as cadets. These comments by the parent of a female cadet address this:

Mrs A: You know the girls have their lines (residences)? They have the female lines, but they still go to the male lines..., you know their number, they are few; am just buttressing the issue of this gender problems. For example they have their lines; the boys have their lines. When it comes to cleaning, the girls should clean their lines, and the boys should go to clean their lines. But when they are doing what they call 'Jicama' that's the (general) cleaning, the girls come and join in cleaning the male lines.

Interviewer: Really? Are they forced to?

Mrs A.: It's a rule na.

Interviewer: It's a rule? The girls have to join the boys to clean theirs? Do the boys join the girls to clean theirs? Oh, I know they are not allowed to enter the girls' residences.

Mrs A.: So do you understand? ⁴⁵

The practice of using the female cadets to clean the male cadets' quarters further portrays the subordination of women and the unequal gender relations pattern in the NDA and the Nigerian military. The fact that this is a formal rule shows the institutional resistance against the changes being informed by the GIP which has included women in the NDA, a formally all-male institution, and in combat training. This shows a deliberate institutional action that contributes to the gap between the principles of the GIP and the gender practices of the military. The deep and overt sexist nature of the Nigerian military which feeds from the wider societal culture underpins the institutional resistance against the GIP, and this is played out in its gendered practices. It was therefore not much surprise when the Army, the largest arm of the Nigerian Armed forces, withdrew from the program of female combatant training as I earlier indicated, creating

⁴⁴ This is Nigerian pidgin expression which critically depicts someone who tries to prove knowledge above their status NAIJA LINGO ND. The Nigerian Pidgin English Dictionary. *The Nigerian Pidgin English Dictionary*. Online: Naija Lingo.

⁴⁵ This interview was conducted by the author on the 11/12/2015 at the respondent's house in Mando, Kaduna, Nigeria.

uncertainty about the entire program as can be detected from these comments by participants from the focus group discussions:

Mall Ahmed: the major arm of what makes up the Nigerian Military is the Army, and they have reversed it. They have refused to admit anybody (women) under their service, and the Army is more than one-third of the whole of the Nigerian military.

Able Seaman Amina: This year Army did not allow women cadets. And if Army refuses, the next time now, you will see Navy and Airforce go follow. Me, when they started it-- I did not see the need. Women in DSSC is enough.

The gendered practices of the Nigerian military clearly depict the unchanging asymmetrical gender relations patterns that persist in the institution despite the changes that the GIP was aimed to influence. Women continue to face discriminatory practices in respect of the roles they perform, and these systematically keep them in a subordinate position to men because they cannot access the same opportunities as their male counterparts. The Nigerian military, therefore, has not assimilated the principles of equal gender opportunities and women empowerment that the GIP represents because traditional gender divisions continue to play an essential role in women's deployment, attesting to the decoupling between the GIP and the gendered culture of the Nigerian military institution.

7.3 Small Changes in the Nigerian Military's Organisational Structure

From an FSI perspective, however, a decoupling between a gender policy and the gender culture of an organisation does not mean a total absence of change (Schofer et al., 2012). In this section, I examine some small changes which are observable in the behaviour of the Nigerian military as a result of the implementation of the GIP. FSI argues that decoupling allows for some level of change which may not impact an entire institution (Schofer et al., 2012). I argue that these are small shifts in the Nigerian military because they change its organisational structure and not its gender culture which was the aim of the policy decision to adopt the GIP. By structure here, I refer to the more tangible aspect of an organisation which can be more readily impacted by environmental developments and deliberately shaped to correspond with new policies (Millmore et al., 2007). It encompasses aspects such as roles distribution, the organisation's hierarchy and chain of command and so on (Jacobides, 2007). Culture, on the other hand, impacts identity which is an important aspect of an organisation because of its enduring nature and influence of organisational policies and practices (Loseke, 2007, Millmore et al., 2007, Carlon et al., 2012). An example is evident in the Nigerian military's patriarchal gender culture's influence on its policy positions and internal practices.

The first and foremost structural change is the fact that the GIP itself exists, which theoretically indicates the shift from a policy of exclusion of women from combat training and roles to one of inclusion. Even though internally, it is being resisted and its impact on internal gender practices being contained, it formally remains, presenting an image of the Nigerian military as a contemporary liberal military institution like its Western peers. Despite the withdrawal of the Army, the Navy and Airforce continue to accept women for combat training in the NDA. The argument for this has been that women are more able to perform in these two services because they can perform combat-related roles, where they do not have to engage directly in active combat as would be necessary for sections like the infantry in the army (Leszkay, 2003, McSally, 2007). These comments by the senior military respondents who advocate the continuation of the GIP indicate this:

Maj. Gen. Ahamafule: Females can fly combat aircraft, can command and serve on combat naval platforms, can be deployed as intelligence operatives and numerous other combat roles. They could be pilots of aircraft that will drop bombs on enemy targets, fly troops and combat supplies in the theatre of operations, be deployed as intelligence or military police personnel and many other roles where their male colleagues who may not be in the front lines are deployed or in direct combat roles. -- This is also considered as part of being in combat without necessarily engaging the adversary face to face.⁴⁶

Air Comdr. Ojo: --However, women could be deployed to any corps less the infantry. For the Navy and Airforce, they can function well.⁴⁷

The infantry is the section that has been closed to women the longest in most militaries which have integrated women into combat (Leszkay, 2003). The difference is that, whereas these militaries made it clear from the onset that these areas were closed to women despite the opening of combat-related roles, the Nigerian military did not do this. Nevertheless, though the comments of the respondents indicate support for the limited inclusion of women in combat functions for which they are being trained alongside men in the NDA, they advocate the continuation of the gender integration program with the women being deployed to perform in the Navy and Airforce. Therefore, while, culturally, the principles of the GIP have not been assimilated by the Nigerian military, structurally, women combatant training continues as part of the institution.

⁴⁶ This interview was conducted via email by the author on 13/08/2014

⁴⁷ This interview was conducted by email on the 22/04/2016.

Furthermore, the ongoing inclusion of women in combat training in the NDA implies that the all-male structure of the regular combatant corps of the Nigerian military has changed. The Nigerian Armed Forces officer corps is made up of two categories; the prestigious regular combatant officers and the Direct Short Service Commissioned (DSSC) officers (Nigerian Defence Academy, 2012). Before 2011, Women officers were all DSSC officers because they were only allowed into the armed forces through general recruitment as rank and file soldiers and Direct Short Service Commission as non-combatant professional military officers (Dayil, 2011, Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014). With access to combat training in the NDA due to the implementation of the GIP, the Nigerian military is now set to have female regular combatant officers, as well as DSSC officers. Structurally, this means an additional avenue of entrance into the military has been opened up to women, and also, an increase in the number of female officers in the profession. The statistic shows that as at 2011, women made up 1 percent of the senior ranking officers of the Nigerian military (Dayil, 2011). This statistic is set to change because, although the number of women accepted through this additional avenue of the NDA is kept deliberately small as I have argued earlier, nonetheless, it has increased the ratio of female officers to male officers in the Nigerian military.

Moreover, the presence of female regular combatant officers is a new development in the Nigerian military. I noted earlier how a few female soldiers had been trained as combatants in the Nigerian military but not deployed to combat roles. It is important to distinguish between regular combatant officer training and combatant soldier training. The former is carried out in the NDA for the three services (army, navy and air force), and the cadets graduate with an academic degree and a commissioning as Second Lieutenants in the Nigerian military. The latter, however, is done as a follow-up to the general military training for rank and file soldiers. It is carried out by the Army for some of its soldiers at the Nigerian Army School of Infantry. The regular combatant officer corps constitutes the leadership of the Nigerian Armed Forces and occupies positions such as Chiefs of the three services (Army, Navy and Airforce), Chief of Defence Staff, Commandants of military parastatals like the NDA, General Officer Commanding of the different military battalions and so on. They form the highest echelons of power in the Nigerian military institution, and the presence of women among this corps potentially opens up leadership roles to them. However, as I have noted, the continued formal policy of exclusion of women from active combat and the internal resistance against their inclusion in the leadership of combatant sections works against this possibility of women's access to these leadership positions for now. Notwithstanding, women's presence in the corps is a structural change that has occurred due to the implementation of the GIP.

By this combat training in the NDA, these women can access the other military training courses which prepare regular combatant officers for promotions in the

profession. These include the Junior Division military training course which officers of the rank of Lieutenant attend before qualifying for promotion to the rank of captain and the Senior Division Course for officers of the rank of Major (Ministry of Defence, 2014). The Strategic Defence military training for officers of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (College, 2012) is also one of these courses. Attendance of these training courses ensures timely career progress for regular combatant officers, and this, potentially, means quicker career advancement for women as a group in the Nigerian military particularly in the Navy and Airforce which have continued the program of female combat training. The presence of female regular combatant officers in these trainings will be happening for the first time and represents a change in the organisational structure of the Nigerian military as a whole.

Also, the decision of the Nigerian Army to deploy the army female combatant cadets who were already in training before its withdrawal from the program in combat service support (CSS) roles upon their graduation is a further development in the Nigerian military which can be credited to the implementation of the GIP. Nigerian servicewomen have not performed roles of proximity to combat situations such as this before, unlike Western militaries where women have played these roles long before now. Similarly, the Nigerian Navy's inclusion of women on board ships for the first time as a result of the GIP also indicates a structural change despite their restriction from combat related duties. The creation of an NNO to guide the behaviour of personnel on board these ships because of the new development of women's presence is a further evidence of the structural change. However, I argue that the construction of this document and its focus on women rather than all personnel shows the unconcealed sexism evident in the Nigerian military which undergirds the resistance against the principles of the GIP and their impact on gender relations within the institution.

Comdr. Offiong: I don't know if you also know that the Navy has done an NNO, which is an order giving behaviours on board mixed-gender ships. Yes, code of conduct, you know, about issues, about how they (women) are supposed to dress outside, and visitations from males to their living area. They (Women) are not supposed to leave their living area in night-gowns.

While these structural features may be said to be already existent in the militaries of the West; these are new developments for the Nigerian military. This is why, although gender integration policies could also be argued to produce forms of decoupling in the Western militaries (Orna Sasson-Levy and Sarit Amram-Katz, 2007, Rimalt, 2007, Doan and Portillo, 2015), the Nigerian case is different because the small changes which have resulted are potentially more significant than they would be in the Western context. This could be suggested to be because the Nigerian military is not at the same point in the

issue of gender integration with the Western forces, and the Western armies' focus for change do not include the kind of structures evolving in the Nigerian military because these are already present within their institutions. However, for the Nigerian military, these are new, and they are emerging due to the implementation of the GIP. The decoupling in the Nigerian military, therefore, presents some structural changes, though not major, yet, important because they offer increased opportunities for career advancement for servicewomen which are also impacting their status in the profession.

These identified changes occurring as a result of the policy shift, however, do not presently impact the Nigerian military's culture which remains gendered; and so the Nigerian patriarchal ideology and norms continue to shape the Nigerian military and sustain unequal gender relations practices despite the liberal principles of the GIP. FSI notes however, that the adoption of these international gender equality policies allows the presence of legitimating structures despite decoupling (Boyle et al., 2002, Drori et al., 2003, Goodman and Jinks, 2008, Buhari-Gulmez, 2010), and that these structures have the potential to inform more changes in the long run (Boyle et al., 2002, Schofer et al., 2012). This, however, is left to be seen in respect of the Nigerian case.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined how the practices of the Nigerian military depict the decoupling between the GIP's principles and the Nigerian military's gendered culture. I showed how the perceptions of traditional gender role divisions and hierarchy which are drawn from the wider society influence the deployment of servicewomen. Using the FSI perspective, I drew out some of the small changes that are observable despite the decoupling, and I argued that these are structural changes and not cultural ones. This supports my argument from the beginning that the impact of the GIP would be mainly on the organisational structure of the Nigerian military and not its gender culture. What, then, is the overall significance of the GIP for Nigerian military and the Nigerian society? This is what the next chapter will explore.

Chapter 8

Unintended Consequences and the Potential for Regendering the Nigerian Military

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the unexpected implications of the GIP on the Nigerian military. I do this by assessing the overall significance of the GIP for the gender relations pattern of the Nigerian Military and, consequently, the gender culture of the wider Nigerian society despite the decoupling. I argue, from an FSI perspective, that although the patriarchal gender culture of the Nigerian Military contains the policy and limits its impact, it is opening up possibilities for changes that could have ripple effects which may feed back into the transformation of the gender culture of the Nigerian Military and society. FSI, as I earlier stated, notes that the structural presence of these global liberal policies grants the possibility for further changes in practices despite decoupling (Boyle et al., 2002, Drori et al., 2003, Schofer and Hironaka, 2005, Buhari-Gulmez, 2010, Schofer et al., 2012). It, therefore, draws attention to the concept of layering (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009, Van der Heijden, 2011), which refers to the possibilities of incremental change in institutions due to endogenous factors arising from the introduction of new policies which may have, initially, resulted in a decoupling.

I, therefore, further argue that the limited structural impact of the GIP indicates the beginnings of a potential regendering process within the Nigerian Military. As I noted about ideology, norms and practices, these aspects of culture have the ability to influence and produce changes in one another (Van Dijk, 2006, Facchini and Melki, 2011, Bicchieri and Mercier, 2014). As such, the limited variations in some of the core practices of the Nigerian military due to the GIP have the potential to generate changes in its gendered norms and, consequently, a shift in ideology. Bicchieri and Mercier (2014) explain how deliberate changes in practices can lead to a collective agreement to gradual changes in norms and vice versa. Whereas, although change in ideology is not easily achieved, as noted earlier, it is possible over time (Van Dijk, 2006); and changes in norms and practices can be said to have the potential to instigate a subsequent reshaping of ideology.

As I have earlier clarified, I draw on the conceptualisation of regendering by Duncanson and Woodward (2015) which argues that the evolution of small-scale incremental changes in the military, as a result of the presence of women, can lead to the restructuring of gender spaces within the institution in the long run. I also make this argument regarding the Nigerian society because, in the course of my research, I discovered that the policy shift in the Nigerian Military is causing a questioning of, and consequently changes in, views of gender roles and demarcations in society.

I will start the chapter with a section that defines the concepts of regendering and the regendered military based on the conceptualisations of Duncanson and

Woodward (2015). In the second and third sections, respectively, I will explore and draw out what I argue are evidence of the beginning of this process of regendering in the Nigerian military and society respectively. The last section concludes the chapter.

8.2 Regendering and the Regendered Military

Regendering, according to Duncanson and Woodward (2015 p.9), drawing on the works of Cockburn (1989) and Cockburn and Hubic (2002), is a gradual process where small, seemingly superficial, changes in gender relations patterns provide the foundation for more fundamental transformations. This standpoint disabuses the dismissal of minor shifts in institutions because, though limited, they can cause an institutional reconsideration of its purpose and nature. These little changes, in essence, can result in what has been termed 'radical incrementalism' where 'multiple small changes can, at unanticipated times, develop into significant developments which may lead to massive shifts in underlying logics of domination and what is considered possible' (Duncanson and Woodward, 2015 p.9).

Applying this to a military context, Duncanson and Woodward (2015) note that, contrary to the arguments of anti-militarist feminists who do not see the possibility of change in the military (Enloe, 2007, Eisenstein, 2007, Runyan and Peterson, 2013), militaries have the capacity for change. They note the increasing integration of women into more sections of the armed forces as evidence of this, which, I would argue, the recent developments in the Nigerian Military with the GIP, the opening of all combat roles to women in the United States Military (Rosenberg and Dave, 2015) and the British Army (Farmer, 2016) testify to. The authors note two characteristics of a regendered military: first is the presence of gender mainstreaming which would inform the displacement of existing gender dichotomies and promote the same valuation of masculinity and femininity, and secondly, increased number of women soldiers, whose presence and inclusion in previously male roles would disrupt the dominant norms. In essence, there would be no exclusively male or female roles as male and female personnel engage in all functions equally (Duncanson and Woodward, 2015 p.10).

The Nigerian military, currently, has not adopted the gender mainstreaming policy. Although, I would argue that the presence of the GIP which is ensuring, a small but, consistent increase in the number of servicewomen and their inclusion in roles which they have not performed before, like the CSS functions, could be seen as progress towards that. Duncanson and Woodward (2015) rightly state that although the concept of a regendered military is possible, it is not an easy goal, and it is a possibility projected for the future. The idea of a regendered Nigerian Military is, therefore, a possible projection for the future based on some of the apparently unplanned influence the policy shift is bringing to bear on a micro level in the Nigerian military and society.

While I argue that a regendering process has started in the Nigerian Military and significant changes in gender culture, in the long run, are possible, I do agree with Doan and Portillo (2016) that policy alone is not sufficient to turn the tides of inequality. Institutional training on awareness is needed to boost the policy decision, particularly in a deeply patriarchal society such as Nigeria. However, the presence of these small changes, as Duncanson and Woodward (2015) note, are the beginning, and the increased presence of servicewomen is a crucial catalyst for significant changes to the gender dichotomy that exists in the Nigerian Military.

8.3 Evidence of beginnings of a Potential Regendering in the Nigerian Military

In this section, I examine some of the ways by which, I argue, the policy shift is influencing the beginnings of a process of regendering in the Nigerian military. I contend that the implementation of the GIP provides a legitimating presence for challenges to the unequal gender relations in the Nigerian military. For the first time in its history, the Nigerian Military is the focus of increased academic interest in its gender culture, both within the institution (Akpan, 2014, Onumajuru, 2014) and without (Ogbaji, 2015). This increased focus, I would argue, is because of the implementation of the GIP which has included women in erstwhile male spaces within the institution. As aforementioned, there was no focus by feminists, women's rights activists or scholars on gender issues in the Nigerian Military because of the traditional perception of the military profession as a masculine space (Ogege, 2011), and the preoccupations of gender scholars with women and political representation. Additionally, it could be argued that the nature of the existent civil-military relations in the Nigerian society before the return to democratic rule also discouraged public or academic focus on the gender culture of the military institution. Fear and suspicion characterised the civil-military relations because of the politicisation of the Nigerian military, and several years of authoritarian military rule with its attendant human rights abuse (Fayemi, 2012, Alaga and Akum, 2013). The Nigerian military was, therefore, a closed system, and although women were present in the profession, there was no motivation to question their limited inclusion or the restrictions on their career progress based on the gendered nature of the institution. Hence the dearth of literature on gender issues in the Nigerian Military.

However, internally, the implementation of the GIP has created an opportunity and motivation for the voices of women to be heard in the Nigerian military institution for the first time as servicewomen express their dissatisfaction with the gender culture and stereotyping of women by the institution, and the limitations these put on their profession. The hierarchical nature of the Military which promotes full subordination to the authority (Osiel, 1998, Jahansoozi et al., 2012), and punishes every hint of insubordination can be said to have

always discouraged any forms of questioning of its culture by personnel. However, based on the presence of the GIP and the decoupling which has contained its impact on gender relations, women now question the unequal gender treatment as this respondent's comment regarding the Navy indicates:

Lieutenant Okoye: Let me talk about the Navy. The Navy, we deal with sea, with ships. It is unfortunate that no female officer will beat her chest and say she can go to sea, she can move the ship. Not that they cannot do it because they are female, but because the opportunity has not been given. And we are striving that these opportunities should be given, and if there is somebody that cannot meet up, that person can move back; because at the point of entry, we all entered together. The seamen, they entered together, both female and male, in all the branches. You don't tell us at that point that--you are limited to some roles that you can perform. But they look at the feminine; they bring in some kind of sentiments into it.

Lieutenant Okoye: There was a conference we went to, we finished on Friday, and this particular issue came up because they said they wanted to withdraw women and stop women from going to NDA. And then opinions, even some men were saying, why? Let them go ahead. If there's anybody that cannot; because they were saying that they were lowering standard. If there's anybody that is lowering standard, you pull them like you do the men, even at the day of passing out. So, that's what we are talking about. They should give them equal opportunity; give us equal opportunity in the military.

These comments indicate the current focus on the gender culture of the Nigerian military from within as a result of the policy shift, and how this focus has given servicewomen the avenue to voice their discontent with the asymmetry in gender relations within the institution. This female military respondent makes reference to the resistance against the presence of women in the NDA and arguments against this. The unequal gender treatment of personnel has always existed in the Nigerian Military and accepted as the military way, which was why, as I earlier explained, servicewomen saw the masculine ideology as the measure for valuation and femininity as inferior in the military context. Servicewomen are now questioning this accepted norm. The new women cadets, like some servicewomen, also contend against the status quo by drawing on the law to insist on their rights to equal treatment with the men in the profession:

Cadet Florence: Under the law and section of the Armed Forces Act, that's the Armed Forces Act of Nigeria, we have equal rights to that position and rank that they (male cadets) can attain.

In addition to this, servicewomen also use the opportunity to argue for a redefinition of the value of femininity and insist on their capability to perform effectively and efficiently in the profession, and be potentially good leaders for the military. This position contends against the stereotypical argument that women are incapable of performing adequately in combat and leadership roles. These expressions by women cadets and servicewomen indicate this:

Cadet Gloria: And being a female, a combatant female in the military, there is this thing attached to women. Naturally, they have a way of leading people; they have a way of keeping people together. So, you having that mindset, you need to make up your mind and know what you are in for. There is no limitation, irrespective of the situation or wherever it is you are going to. Today the case is Sambisa;⁴⁸ tomorrow it may be something even more serious. So, the moment you just have that mindset that you can do anything, and you are ready to lead your people; and as a woman, there's this natural way that God has blessed you with that, you can just organise people like the way you organise your family, and just take them to North East⁴⁹ irrespective of your gender. A woman is one person who when she puts her mind to something she always goes after it; like she does everything within her and around her to achieve it. So, apparently I just think that our gender has given us an upper hand, but then some people still say our gender has a weakness.

Lieutenant Okoye: You know when women are in managerial positions, or when they chart the course, the difference is always very clear?

Contrary to the acceptance of the perception of male superiority by older servicewomen, the new women combatant cadets argue that their femininity makes them possibly better leaders than men. They reject the undervaluation of femininity which informs the limitation of women in the military. The undervaluation of femininity by society has always reflected in the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions because of the perception that they would make less effective leaders than men (Walker et al., 2014). Data has, therefore, always shown male domination of leadership positions (Schein, 2010, Walker et al., 2014). This male domination of leadership is even more so in Africa according to data by the International

⁴⁸ Sambisa forest is the stronghold of Boko Haram, the insurgents with whom Nigeria is currently engaged in a war in Borno State, in North Eastern Nigeria.

⁴⁹ North-eastern Nigeria is where the insurgents are based and where the war is most serious.

Labour Organisation (International Labour Organisation, 2015).⁵⁰ The agency which the presence of the GIP presents for Nigerian servicewomen to voice their discontent with the gender relations pattern in the Nigerian military is therefore quite significant. This civilian parent in her response to my question on why she believes the women cadets can perform efficiently in the military also shows this new development of Nigerian women extolling the strengths of femininity:

Mrs Anyawu: Because they are women. Women, naturally, if we set our minds in doing things, no matter, a woman will always get there. A man, once he starts seeing things that he doesn't expect, he drops along the way. A woman, naturally, when it comes to endurance, we are the best. And that's what Academy needs. It's not your strength oh. It gets to a stage when strength fails. It will be dropping. It will be gradually dropping. At that time that it is dropping, all you need now is your inner endurance that 'I must get there'. And that's the spirit of a woman. That is why a woman can tolerate labour without saying a word. The pain a woman can endure, by the time a man, one bit of it touches a man, he will shout.

This speaker uses the context of the pains of childbirth to define the endurance ability of women, which she believes is an attribute that makes them capable of military combat training and service. There is, therefore, an apparent reevaluation of femininity by women to justify their capabilities. The women cadets, therefore, draw on what they believe are the strengths of their feminine

⁵⁰ Recent studies have however shown that women actually make better leaders than men EAGLY, A. H. & CARLI, L. L. 2003. The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 807-834, SMITH, C. 2009. No Doubt, Women are Better Managers. In: BRYANT, A. (ed.). The New York Times Company, FERRY, K. 2016. *New Research Shows Women Are Better at Using Soft Skills Crucial for Effective Leadership and Superior Business Performance, Finds Korn Ferry Hay Group* [Online]. Available: <http://www.kornferry.com/press/new-research-shows-women-are-better-at-using-soft-skills-crucial-for-effective-leadership/> [Accessed 25/07/2016 2016]., although it has been argued, and rightly so, that it is important to consider the contexts of each leadership roles in such conclusions or this argument would fall to the same error of stereotyping as the argument of men making better leaders VECCHIO, R. P. 2002. Leadership and gender advantage. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13, 643-671, VECCHIO, R. P. 2003. In search of gender advantage. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 835-850. This factor of context consideration notwithstanding, however, feminine attributes have been recognised through research as contributing to effective leadership by women POWELL, G. N. 2011. *Women and Men in Management*, California, USA, SAGE, GALLUP 2015. The State of the American Manager: Analytics and Advice for Leaders USA: Gallup Inc.. Therefore, contrary to earlier situation when it was argued that men were more likely than women to self-evaluate themselves as competent leaders FERRY, K. 2016. *New Research Shows Women Are Better at Using Soft Skills Crucial for Effective Leadership and Superior Business Performance, Finds Korn Ferry Hay Group* [Online]. Available: <http://www.kornferry.com/press/new-research-shows-women-are-better-at-using-soft-skills-crucial-for-effective-leadership/> [Accessed 25/07/2016 2016]. as shown in the reaction of the women combatants and officers, women now argue and insist on their ability to be effective leaders.

attributes to argue for their ability to cope and perform efficiently as combatant soldiers and leaders. Servicewomen and non-military women alike further reiterate these views. They challenge the gendered status quo, not only in the Nigerian Military, one of the most masculine of professions but also the wider society. They challenge the assumptions that women, by nature, cannot handle violence which is a combat requirement for filling leadership positions in the military (Bem, 1993, Tong, 1998, Schippers, 2007, Sjoberg and Tickner, 2013). By challenging this perception, servicewomen insist on the removal of barriers which have relegated women to second place in the profession until now, barriers based on biological make-up and cultural reasoning.

Women's presence in the prestigious regular corps and the new development of their intended inclusion in combat-related roles also reinforces this opportunity for changes to gender relation patterns in the Nigerian military because it places them close to the leadership and decision making levels of the institution despite the resistance against their inclusion in leadership positions. Their combatant training implies this as these respondents comments indicate:

Able Seaman Tajudeen: you know in the Armed Forces, there are some appointments that Regular Corps (members) hold that other commissions will not hold. You understand? Since they are Regulars, they can become COs on board a ship to move the ship to sea.

Cadet Amedu: Let say, maybe they will end up passing out from the academy, and they will send them to other combat support arms which should be short service, to be COs.⁵¹

These positions of Commanding Officer (CO) in the different military services (Army, Navy, and Airforce) are administrative leadership positions at an intermediate level in the Nigerian military which are subordinate to higher leadership positions which have always been occupied by men. Notwithstanding, women will be in these posts for the first time. This proximity to decision making positions is significant because as this female army major notes, it presents the potential for women's inclusion in strategic areas in the long run; areas where their voices can represent the women section of the profession and influence decisions that affect women.

Major Olayemi: The inclusion of women in combatant training is a plus for the women in the military because with time women will be part of the strategic thinkers and will be able to bring the views of women to bear on the decisions taken at that level.

⁵¹ Comment from the male cadets' focus group discussion organised by the author on the 3/08/2015 and held the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

As Duncanson and Woodward (2015 p.12) note about the potential of women's bodies to disrupt dominant norms, the presence of women in these positions imply subtle changes in the pattern of masculine leadership practices of the Nigerian military which could result in bigger shifts in the male-dominated hierarchical structure of the institution in the long run.

This presence of the gender Integration Policy has, therefore, presented an opportunity for change in respect of the value of femininity, not only in the Nigerian Military but society as well. This revaluation implies a modification of the existing gender relations pattern and the perceptions of femininity as inferior to masculinity, resulting in the displacement of existing gender hierarchy as Duncanson and Woodward (2015) explain. This revaluation may not have happened yet, but a beginning is identifiable in the voicing by women, both within and outside the Nigerian military. This is one of the factors of a regendered military as Duncanson and Woodward (2015) and Cockburn and Hubic (2002) note; a gender perception that does not see femininity as subordinate and does not regard any particular attribute as solely male or female. This is why I argue that the policy shift has triggered off the beginnings of a regendering in the Nigerian Military. This same change in gender perceptions, as I have argued, is being reflected in the Nigerian society as well, and it is important to understand how this is happening as I will attempt to explain in the next section.

8.4 Evidence of the beginnings of a regendering in the Nigerian society

Interestingly, my research shows that the integration of women in the NDA and the implications of this development for females in the military profession have caused the questioning of traditional gender boundaries within society more generally, and I argue that this has the potential to lead to major shifts in gender relations patterns given time.

The policy change, for one, has presented an avenue for questioning the traditional belief of military service as a male space. Some of the respondents argue that the efficient performance of the women cadets indicate their capability to perform effectively in the military, and as such a change in the views of women's abilities as a group:

Prof Dallah Thompson: you see, the impact (that) the coming of the girls has had, particularly in the academics, is very tremendous--because it has changed our view and our conception about the fact that the military is an exclusive preserve of the male folk; it has changed our perception. The military is for all as long as you are interested and you have the physical prowess to engage in it. So the issue of Sex is not a barrier. So, it

has helped to transform and even change our perception on who is the military fitted for.⁵²

For this respondent, the presence of the women cadets in the NDA has shown that the military does not have to be a male preserve as it was traditionally perceived to be. Although he does not make reference to the performance of the women in the physical aspect of training, only to their academic performance, their very presence in combat training is what impacts his views, and I would argue, those of society as well. In further reply to my question on how the Nigerian society's cultural stereotyping may impact on the place of the women in combat roles, he was clear on the fact that it was time for culture to change because times have changed; and he links this to the effects of globalisation:

Prof Dallah Thompson: You see, the thing is that, whether we like it or not, we are now living in a globalised society; whether you like it or not, opinion must change. Whether you like it or not, perception must change. Today, the average woman you describe today as average could not receive the same type of description yesterday. She has changed. Thinking has changed. Physical development has changed. Knowledge of the world has changed. I recall when we used to have crisis here and there, communal crisis and all the rest of them; of course at the beginning, women would be at the rear; but when the fighting becomes more serious, they joined the men. -- Would you want, because you're a woman to be killed in your house simply because you are dodging while your men are being killed over there? It is better you join them and be killed together. You will die honourably than remaining at the rear and for the enemy to come and kill you like chicken. It is not an African tendency.

The respondent notes how globalisation is influencing general perceptions of issues, particularly that of gender in respect of women's discourse and he opines that it was time to change traditional Nigerian views of women and their capabilities along with the trend. He further notes how the changing nature of internal security issues in Nigeria had already caused changes in women's societal roles because necessity had required their involvement in conflict situations at various times. These experiences showed that under the right circumstances women could efficiently perform any masculine function, including combat. The lack of consideration of the performances of women in these conflicts is akin to the cases during the World Wars when women were deployed in the fighting roles alongside men by various militaries like Russia

⁵² This interview conducted by the author on the 04/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

during World War II (Vajskop, 2008) but were dismissed after the war, and society reverted to the previous gender roles and demarcations (Carreiras, 2006, Sherrow, 2007). The performance of women during these wars is a point that has been used as an argument against the exclusion of women from combat in contemporary militaries (Goldstein, 2001). The respondent, therefore, uses this inclusion of women in conflict situations as an argument to question the restriction of women from supposedly male spaces in the Nigerian society, and also note the ability of women to engage in traditionally male roles.

This excerpt from one of the focus group discussions further supports this change to Nigerian society's perception of women's capability. In discussing the argument on the non-inclusion of women in combat despite the GIP, the participants draw on examples of ancient African women warriors and argue for the need to deconstruct the understanding of women's weaker abilities compared to men. They contend that these gender demarcations are products of colonialism's impact on Nigeria's social system:

Ass Prof Ben: Is it not cultural thinking that is the problem? And we are stupidly importing the Western culture because the Western culture never regarded the woman. ..Then what about Queen Candace of Ethiopia? What of Amina of Zazzau? What of Moremi? What about the Queens that were Pharaohs that were leading military? Because the Northern Cradle, according to Cheikh Anta Diop, is patriarchy, the Southern cradle is matriarchy; that is, we were civilised before the white man. And then, they are imposing their patriarchal system over us.

Mall Ahmed: Immediately they came, they changed our ways and social formations to patriarchal and not matriarchal. Who said that if all of us (men) should run away that women will not pick guns to fight? I think that mentality has not sunk in in the military. During this Kaduna crisis, it was women that were fighting the battle.⁵³

These respondents link the present patriarchal gender relations patterns of the Nigerian society to colonialism as I have earlier addressed. They argue that the pre-colonial African society was matriarchal, and the Nigerian patriarchy which reflects the position of women in the military, is a product of colonialism. This colonial history contributes to the specificity of the Nigerian society and its gender relations patterns. However, more importantly, is the perception that women's performance in internal crisis in Nigeria in recent times shows the need to reconsider the value of their capabilities and change in believed gender spaces.

⁵³ These are comments from the Academic focus group discussions.

The presence of northern Nigerian women in the NDA further shows how the GIP is instigating questioning of gender relations patterns in the Nigerian society. This respondent notes this:

Mall Ibrahim: This era is not the era of our fore--parents where you will see some parents don't even want to train their female children, that is, to sponsor them, send them to school. Even the Muslims, the Hausa people that don't really encourage their daughters going to school, you will discover that they are doing it. The female cadets here, we have those from Kaduna, Jigawa.⁵⁴

This speaker further alludes to the changing times and the consequent need for changes in the Nigerian society. He makes reference to society's gendered practice of education of children, particularly in northern Nigeria as I earlier discussed, and how the presence of women cadets from this Muslim north with its very strict gender space demarcations indicates the changes which are happening. This gender boundary transgression by northern women is ascribed to the poor economic situation and high-level unemployment in Nigeria by another respondent:

Lt. Col Liman: If me, lance corporal Abubakar Shehu, a Hausa man from Kaduna, have a daughter at home, and I don't have money to send her to school; and am working at NDA, and can get my daughter admission into NDA and get employment after that; and I can work her posting to where she will not go to war; you think I will not take it?

The respondent uses the example of a likely Hausa man, based on the very religious and traditional gender views of northerners (Bergstrom, 2002, Darvishpour, 2003, Mashhour, 2005, Para-Mallam, 2010), to emphasise his point. The poor economic situation and unemployment in the country (Akande, 2014, Asaju et al., 2014), in his view, makes even the Hausa man disregard societal perspectives on gender roles and take advantage of the opportunity that the shift in policy brings for his female child. Although it is the current desperate economic situation which is encouraging this gender line crossing in society, the presence of northern Nigerian women cadets in the NDA is a strong indication of the beginnings of changes to society's gender practices, and this is due to the implementation of the GIP.

Relatedly, this increased employment opportunity for women presented by the GIP can be argued to be an additional avenue for their economic empowerment which has the potential to contribute to the reconstruction of economic gender

⁵⁴ This interview was conducted by the author on the 17/07/2017 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

relations in the wider society. The comment by this senior military officer expresses this opportunity presented to females in the military:

Comdr Offiong: The larger public welcomes the idea because as you know, the armed forces happen to be among the few people that are providing employment. So if you want to look at it from that angle, the female child, too, can now aspire to take up that full combatant status in the armed forces. So, it has brought some excitement for the parents and some of the girls who actually have that inclination or that thought they could do it, but they were not given the opportunity.¹⁵

This parent of a woman cadet also agrees with this view:

Mr Salihu: She's not going to be looking for a job by the time she graduates. You know these days you try to train your child in the university; after that, you will start struggling for her to get a job again.⁵⁵

The GIP, therefore, represents an opportunity for education at degree level and employment as an officer in the Nigerian Armed Forces for women. The number of women gaining entrance into the program may be small, but this is a matter of incremental change. As such, this gradual increase in the number of women accessing degree level education and employment as military officers, I would argue, contributes to the number of economically empowered women, and, thus, a gradual shift in economic gender relations. Given the disadvantaged economic and educational position of women compared to men in the Nigerian society as I showed earlier in this study, this is a significant development.

I also argue that the opportunity presented by the GIP is impacting the social status of women in society. This account by a respondent who is the parent of a female cadet gives a clear picture and understanding of how the inclusion of women in the NDA is impacting their status in society:

Salihu: We were travelling for Christmas 2 years back, she was just wearing her first bar; and you know there were checkpoints all over. The soldier who was at the checkpoint saw her, she greeted, and he was now asking her 'are you a cadet?' She said 'yes, an officer cadet'. Then he said 'can I see your ID card?' She brought out the ID card and showed him. When he now saw it, she now said 'now that you have seen my ID card, what are you supposed to do?' So, me I got scared. Anh ah? She said, 'won't you pay me compliment (salute)?' Me I was looking at this big

⁵⁵ This interview was conducted on the 05/12/2015 at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.

soldier, giant; I said, 'Oh this girl don put me for trouble today'. So, I was pinching her. She said, 'no daddy'. 'You, you have seen my ID card, and you now know am not a fake cadet. What are you supposed to do?' The soldier was still looking. She said 'move three step backwards and give me my compliment.' Unfortunately for me, the guy obeyed, he moved three steps, and he... (Speaker breaks into laughter).

Interviewer: He gave her the compliment?

Salihu: And she collected it! After we left that place, the soldier said 'anything for your boys?' She now said, 'Daddy, give me 500 naira there'; and she gave to him. So, that's to tell you that already as cadets, they are already taking their place. So, when they graduate, nobody can take them for a ride.

This scenario of a young female officer in training demanding a salute from a male soldier and the soldier complying is a rare one because, although there were women DSSC officers in society, regular female combatants are a 'new breed'. The attitude of the female cadet in insisting on a salute in the face of the soldier's initial resistance depicts the confidence that the inclusion in the regular combat training has given the women. The scenario also shows the deference accorded regular combatant officers in the Nigerian society. Furthermore, the request by the soldier in asking 'anything for your boys?' which is an expression used in demanding for a tip in the Nigerian society shows a recognition of a superior-subordinate relationship. He views the young female cadet as a superior, economically. This reinforces my argument about the changing social status of women in society and, also, how the GIP and its inclusion of women in the NDA have afforded women the confidence to challenge the status quo. As this focus group participant noted, the policy shift is impacting the self-awareness and confidence of women in society; and consequently their status:

Col. Bola: I think it will have a positive impact because military profession is a special one and a hard one, so to say in quotes. So, once you see women there, in the larger society it will generally raise the ego of the women; awareness; psychological satisfaction that they are now there, in the elite corps.

This parent of a female cadet also explains how the training has impacted her daughter's confidence and boldness:

Mrs Anyawu: The truth is that she used to be an introvert, but she came back the other way. When you see these girls now, you see the maturity in them, the boldness. She talks maturely, sensibly--ahh! I told her during their last break; I said 'Momo, you are now so mature'. She said 'yes, that is standard.

Mummy, do you know what is ahead of me?' 'Not only am I going to take care of my men, am going to take care of their family. My men's family problem is my problem. So why won't I be mature?' The truth is, I feel that the more the girls are exposed to this training, the better they are becoming.

These comments show the confidence and readiness of the women cadets to take their place within the profession and society. Their inclusion and training in the NDA by the GIP shape their attitude, increasing their confidence as they view themselves as leaders of soldiers. These positions of leadership may not be in combat sections, but this is a new scenario in the Nigerian military and society, and it is influencing the views of women and their social status. As the comments of the participant, Col. Bola, indicates, women are gaining more confidence in society by being members of the highly envied and respected regular combatant corps. It has earned them more respect, improving their social status. They have the confidence to insist on a different treatment in the wider society based on this identity as regular combatant officers just as their voices are also being heard within the military. I argue that this indicates the beginning of a potential shift in gender relations.

It is important to mention here that all of the respondents quoted above in respect of the possible change in societal gender perceptions and roles are male, except for the last one, Mrs Anyawu. This statistic further indicates the impact of the policy shift because it shows that it is not only women who believe that it is time for the feminine subordinating culture of the Nigerian society to change. This policy shift, therefore, provides an agency of change for females, an opportunity for a reassessment of their place and roles in society.

The status of the military in the Nigerian society, I would argue, contributes to this impact. Although, as I mentioned earlier, the civil-military relations has been one of fear and distrust because of the history of the military's incursion in the nation's politics, it is a profession that has always engendered respect from the society as the respondent quoted above, Col. Bola, stated. This is even more so with its currently increasing professionalism since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999 (Inamete, 2001, Dummar, 2002). The presence of women in its most envied corps is, therefore, a positive boost to women's confidence and status in society, and consequently, an impact on gender relations patterns.

8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the overall significance of the GIP to the gender culture of both the Nigerian military and society by examining what I believe are the unintended consequences of the policy. I have argued that the small structural changes which the policy has instigated within the Nigerian military has the potential to cause bigger shifts in gender relations, both in the institution and society in the long run. This is because the presence of the policy has presented an agency for questioning the existing gender relations patterns

(Boyle et al., 2002, Schofer et al., 2012) by both women and men alike. I therefore argued that they depict the beginnings of a potential regendering in the Nigerian military and Nigerian society.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Having explored the unintended implications of the GIP for the Nigerian military and society in the previous chapter, here, I conclude my research by bringing my arguments together and setting out my findings. I will start with a section that revisits my central and subsidiary questions and arguments and states how my research has answered these questions and justified my claims. The second section will present recommendations for policy and practice and the third, possibilities for future studies.

9.1 Revisiting Questions and Claims of the study

I set out in this study to interrogate how the current changes in the Nigerian military are impacting on its gender culture. I noted from the onset that it is important to explore and understand the experiences of the Nigerian military based on its distinct context because, although several Western armies have also undergone the process of gender integration, their circumstances differ from the Nigerian case. The experiences of servicewomen from these two contexts, therefore, vary because the societal struggles of gender inequality are experienced differently as African feminists have always argued (Steady, 1987, Oyěwùmí, 1997, Ahikira, 2014).

While all women, Western or African, white or black, Latino or Caribbean, experience gender discrimination, the experiences of slavery, colonialism, racism, neocolonialism and more, for instance, shape the experiences of black women (Steady, 1987, Hooks, 2015), hence the difference in the discourses of gender and women's experiences. McFadden (2001 p.34) notes the examples of sexist land and inheritance laws and blatantly patriarchal and partial legal systems, as is evident in Nigeria, as particular African cultural practices with which African women struggle. I, therefore, attempted to draw out some of these contextual differences throughout my analysis as I addressed the questions for the study. While I made comparisons between the Nigerian military and Western ones, I noted that this was not to imply that sexism or patriarchy is in the past in the West. The aim was to show how the Nigerian patriarchal society features different dynamics from the liberal context of the West, and how these contexts informed various types of experiences and impacts of gender integration policies in the respective militaries.

My central question was aimed at understanding how the evolving changes in the Nigerian Military are impacting the institution and shaping its gender culture. In examining this issue, I addressed four questions:

1. In what ways have gender norms and practices, shaped the Nigerian Military?
2. How does the international context affect Nigeria's policymaking in this area and what effects does this have on implementation?

3. How is the current inclusion of women in combat training, along with men in the Nigerian Defence Academy, challenging the gendered culture of the Nigerian Military?
4. What are the implications of these changes for more sustainable opportunities for upward advancement for servicewomen in the Nigerian Military?

Using a Feminist Sociological Institutional perspective as I explored these questions, I argued, concerning the first question, that the Nigerian Military is a traditionally gendered military which has a culture that reflects the gender dichotomies existent in the wider Nigerian society. The gendered norms and practices of the Nigerian military, therefore, subordinated women in the profession from the outset. I further argued that the Gender Integration Policy initiated by the government is a product of Nigeria's emulation of Western militaries in conformity with the international norms for liberal democratic states in its bid for international acceptance as a legitimate democracy. The policy is, therefore, a politically symbolic move by the Nigerian government aimed at deconstructing the existent asymmetric gender relations in the Nigerian military and creating a more equitable gender environment within the profession.

Given my third question, I claimed that the inclusion of women in regular combat training in the NDA by the policy had generated internal resistance against its principles within the Nigerian military institution. There is, therefore, a decoupling between the patriarchal gender culture (ideology, norms and practices) of the Nigerian military and the liberal informed principles of the GIP as the military resists the implied changes being produced by the GIP. Despite the decoupling, small shifts are, however, identifiable in the organisational practices of the institution. In respect of my fourth question and the implications of the policy on the career advancement opportunities for servicewomen, my research showed that the small shifts in its organisational structure have potentially presented opportunities for upward advancement for servicewomen into positions and roles which they did not have before 2011, even though this is limited. I have also noted that although the Gender Integration Policy has encountered cultural resistance, producing a decoupling, the limited changes which it has generated in the organisational structure of the Nigerian Military have the potential to cause major gender cultural shifts in the future.

In addition to my arguments, I discovered some developments in the course of the research which I had not expected. I found out that, although the Nigerian Military has always held the position of female non-deployment in combat, it had female combat-trained soldiers in the profession before the policy adoption in 2011 whom it did not deploy in combat roles despite their training. Based on research, I argued that we may be set to have female combatant officers in the same situation. However, because of their regular combat training, they are

more likely to experience deployment to combat-related roles, although not actual combat. The Nigerian military is not likely to entirely exclude these NDA trained women from combat-related deployments like the women soldier. Hence my argument of their semi-inclusion regarding integration into combat roles.

Furthermore, I discovered that the inclusion of the women in combat training by the GIP had created an opportunity for the questioning of gender demarcations in society, and a call for a reassessment of gender values as parents set aside traditional gender stereotyping to allow their female children pursue supposedly masculine careers as combatant officers. The Nigerian Military in this respect can be perceived as an agent of social change as its action, although not initiated from within, is causing shifts in societal gender perception and roles. This is an area that could benefit from further research.

In using a Feminist Sociological Institutional perspective for this study, I discovered that it is possible for the argument of decoupling in SI to be taken further. One could argue that, in some contexts, a decoupling could be an intermediate situation which could translate into a coupled position with time as the recorded changes feedback into the system to influence deeper shifts in the status quo. As I will show in the next section on my recommendations for policy and practice, decisive policy actions by the Nigerian military, based on the evident small changes, aimed at generating shifts in its upheld norms and practices would have the potential of instigating behavioural changes among personnel that could impact wider gender relations. As Boyle et al. (2002 p.6) rightly note, the effectiveness of national policies based on international norms ultimately depend on changes in individual behaviour and attitude. Behavioural changes among personnel could be argued to have the potential ability to subsequently ensure acceptance of the principles of the GIP, leading to a coupling of these principles with the norms and practices within the Nigerian military institution. This may take time and require deliberate structural measures within the institution, however, it is a feasible reality when one considers the potential impact of small incremental changes as I have argued.

This could be said to indicate the intermediate nature of a decoupling, and how small changes in a decoupled situation could ultimately lead to a coupling. An argument such as this requires a more positive perception of the military institution and its potential to submit to the evolution of social relations as Duncanson and Woodward (2015) argue. Potentially, this evolution in social relations in the military could also feed into more changes in the wider society. The argument would also need to consider the specific wider context of the military institution. A developing African nation such as Nigeria which seeks international legitimacy and the benefits that these bring to its economy as FSI argues, would be more likely inclined to seek further ways of pushing for more institutional change in compliance with the policy shift. This fluid nature of the conceptual tools of analysis of FSI, in other words, decoupling and coupling,

and the possible intermediate nature of a decoupling, present an avenue for more research on the theory of Sociological Institutionalism.

9.2 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

One of the major limitations I identified regarding the GIP was the lack of clear formal policy outlines which map out its principles and demands, in addition to its lack of formal legal backing by law. This leaves the policy vulnerable to undermining and non-compliance with its principles within the Nigerian military. It would be beneficial for the Nigerian government to pass the policy into law to ensure the sustainability of the policy shift and its achievements. This action by the government would ensure that the inclusion of women in combat training in the Nigeria military becomes a law which is unbreachable. This would potentially forestall actions like that of the Nigerian Army in withdrawing from the entire exercise of female combat training. Backing the policy by law would also be advantageous in the event of the inception of a different and less gender-sensitive government.

The formal mapping of respective policy directives by the Nigerian Navy and Airforce, the two services presently involved in female combat training, indicating the roles open to the women combatants and outlining the process of their integration into specific functions upon graduation, I would argue, would further strengthen the policy. Having these directives indicated in the HTACOS would also provide a point of reference for the integration of the women combatants and ensure compliance. The present administration is a different one from the one which initiated this policy action in the Nigerian Military, and, so far, there has not been any indication of a different position by the government on the policy shift. Taking advantage of this positive position of the present government regarding the GIP to ensure the further entrenchment of the policy by adopting the measures suggested above would be beneficial for its sustainability.

Also, adopting a bottom-up approach in the implementation of the policy, I would suggest, would go a long way to further ensure the firm institution of the GIP and its principles of gender equality in the Nigerian military. As Anderson (2014) noted, the involvement and integration of personnel and their contributions in the workings of policy would generate the sense of commitment necessary to ensure the success of the policy. As I have argued, the resistance against the principles of the GIP is partly because of the exclusion of the larger part of the different levels of leadership in the Nigerian military from the decision for the change in policy. Using a bottom-up approach would ensure the feeling of inclusion for personnel which, I would argue, is necessary for the elimination of the perception of the GIP as an imposition of foreign norms and practices, and in time, the present decoupling. Hence my suggestion of the possible intermediate nature of decoupling.

Furthermore, it would seem that the situation that has been generated by the female combat training requires the creation of more awareness of gender issues within the Nigerian Military. The goal of the Nigerian government is to project a modern international democratic image, and displaying and ensuring commitment to gender equality is an important aspect of this. Creating a gender unit within the Nigerian military institution to address gender awareness through programmes with this aim at the institutional and sub-institutional levels, such as the NDA, would also contribute to the success of the policy shift. Taking a leaf from the book of the SANDF in the creation of a directorate charged with the responsibility of ensuring effective gender integration in the Nigerian military would go a long way in reinforcing the impact of the GIP within the institution. This gender unit could act as machinery for oversight regarding the successful implementation of the GIP and the formal institution of gender policies within the rules and regulations of the Nigerian Armed Forces defined in the HTACOS (Nigerian Military Defence Headquarters, 2012). These changes in the rules and regulations would initiate changes in the norms of the Nigerian military which, in addition to the small structural changes that have resulted from the policy shift, could feedback into behavioural changes among personnel as I earlier noted.

This gender unit could also, therefore, be tasked with the creation of programmes for deliberately addressing the gender ideology of the Nigerian military, and emphasising the need for a mindset that would facilitate the changes being aimed for within the institution through the GIP. In line with the argument of Van Dijk (2006), although ideology does not change easily, it is changeable; and change in ideology is vital for institutional change. This is because change in ideology would also trigger changes in norms and practices since ideology is the legitimising factor for norms and practices (Van Dijk, 2006, Facchini and Melki, 2011). As I have noted throughout my analysis, these aspects of culture are interrelated, and they feed back into one another. Deliberate efforts targeted at instigating change in the existing gender ideology in the Nigerian military, therefore, as Doan and Portillo (2015) suggest and I would argue, might be just what is needed to facilitate the necessary changes in its norms and practices. Additionally, a formal implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy by the Nigerian military as an institution would be a good place to start in increasing knowledge of gender issues among personnel.

The Nigerian Defence Academy is a military university which confers academic degrees on cadets upon graduation. Having opened up to women combat training, it would further enhance its international reputation as a mixed gender military training institution if it included a Women and Gender studies module in its curriculum. This could be integrated into the Political Science and Defence Studies department or General studies unit. This would ensure the inculcation of gender awareness and awareness of the international gender instruments in cadets before graduating as officers. Military officials would also be more aware

of the international expectations of the Nigerian military as the military of a democratic state in respect of gender equality. Nigerian military personnel deployed on Peace Keeping Operations usually have to go through training on gender equality at the training camp based on the requirement by the UN that all troop-contributing countries to Peacekeeping Operations ensured this (United Nations, 2010). This requirement is to raise troops' awareness and knowledge of international instruments and mandates for the promotion of gender equality (Lyytikäinen et al., 2007, Lamptey, 2012 p.10). This additional structural change of creation of a gender studies module in the NDA curriculum would give young combatant officers, and all personnel for that matter, a grounding knowledge of gender issues which would only be built upon at training camp if they are drafted for peacekeeping operations.

The Nigerian Military could also further pursue its goal of internationalisation through the commission of studies of the gender integration programs and the process of women's integration in combat roles by other militaries like the SANDF which is the only other African Military to have done this. Studies of some Western militaries which have had women in all roles over an extended period, such as Canada, the United States and Britain which have had women in close combat-related positions before their recent decisions to open up all roles to women, can also be carried out. The Nigerian Military is at the beginning of a journey which other militaries have undertaken; the integration of women into all sections of the military, including combat, and establishing a more gender-balanced institutional environment. Learning from the experiences of other militaries will be useful for it to achieve the status of a contemporary democratic military.

With a more bottom-up approach in the implementation of the GIP, coupled with increased knowledge and awareness of gender issues, it is possible that the resistance against the principles of the GIP, which resulted in a decoupling between these principles and the norms and practices of the Nigerian military institution, could be addressed. Decisive efforts from the government and the committed efforts of the services, combined with the small structural changes which have resulted from the policy shift, would result in a gradual bridging of the gap between the principles of the GIP and the norms and practices of the Nigerian military, hence a gradual coupling. This gradual change towards a more gender equitable Nigerian military is also a gradual move towards a regendered Nigerian military; one where there are no gender lines or roles demarcation, and no specific attributes are valued above others or seen as characteristic of a particular sex.

The question has always been if the military institution can ever be truly democratic with equal gender opportunities and representation? This is an area that continues and will continue to generate opinions and research. Will the Nigerian Military attain a gender discrimination-free environment with this

policy? Will the shifts being recorded in its gendered organisational structure, as a result of the policy, lead to deeper changes in its gender culture, and bring about a regendering?

9.3 Possibilities for further research

I will summarise, here, the possible areas for further research identified from my study. As I have mentioned, the first set of combat trained women officers is yet to graduate from the NDA. This study, therefore, opens up opportunities to explore the impact of the policy shift after the graduation of these women. An ethnographic study that explores the integration of the new calibre of female officers into different roles in the Nigerian Military will be an important addition to knowledge, exploring how the presence of the new female combatants in various positions in the armed forces influences the gender power relations in the Nigerian Military. Another area of possible research is the GIP itself. What is the future of the policy without legal backing of the law in the face of the cultural resistance it has encountered in the Nigerian Military? Exploring the future of the societal interrogation of gender perceptions and boundaries instigated by the Gender Integration Policy in the Nigerian Military is another avenue for further research.

In respect of the theory of feminist Sociological Institutionalism, an area of possible research is the concept of decoupling. It would be interesting for research to explore the possible intermediate nature of decoupling in some decoupled context. Furthermore is a regendered military a factual or idealistic possibility?

This study has generated more questions which through research would create more studies on gender issues in the Nigerian Military and other areas that would be useful additions to the wider literature on gender issues in the contemporary military.

Appendices

Names of Interviewees:

Military Personnel:

1. Major General Ahamafule, Sanusi
2. Rear Admiral Olabunmi, John
3. Rear Admiral Etim, Peters
4. Major General Bankole, Adeyemi
5. Brigadier General Hamid
6. Brigadier General Rufai, Hassan
7. Navy Commodore Offiong, David
8. Navy Commodore Wali, Abdullahi
9. Group Captain Ojo, Raphael
10. Navy Commodore Praise
11. Navy Commodore Jatau
12. Colonel Musa, Dennis
13. Lieutenant Colonel Liman
14. Warrant Officer Bakki, Sule
15. Able Seaman Shehu Musa
16. Able Seaman Adamu Harriet
17. Captain Acha Mariam
18. Major Oladunni, Olayemi
19. Able Seaman Tajudeen
20. Warrant Officer Chukwu, Evelyn
21. Able Seaman Amina
22. Lieutenant Okoye, Caroline

Non-Military Respondents:

23. Professor Dallah Thompson
24. Mrs LDM
25. Mrs Anyawu
26. Mrs Tabitha
27. Mr Salihu
28. Mrs Annette
29. Paramilitary instructor –Mallam Ibrahim

Focus Group Participants:

Academic Focus group Participants:

1. Colonel Bola
2. Colonel Emeka
3. Associate Professor Ben
4. Professor Shehu

5. Dr Habiba
6. Mallam Ahmed
7. Mr Abubakar

Female cadets' Focus group participants:

1. Cadet Florence
2. Cadet Gloria
3. Cadet Ladidi
4. Cadet Brigitte
5. Cadet Chioma
6. Cadet Bunmi
7. Cadet Marion
8. Cadet Titilayo
9. Cadet Omolara
10. Cadet Funmilayo

Male Cadets' Focus group participants:

1. Cadet Akinloye
2. Cadet Amedu
3. Cadet Timothy
4. Cadet Fredrick
5. Cadet Chukwu
6. Cadet Ali
7. Cadet Majekodunmi
8. Cadet Ogenetega
9. Cadet Alhamdu
10. Cadet Philip

Ethics Certificate:

 UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER

**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**
Amory Building
Rennes Drive
Exeter UK EX4 4RJ
www.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Academic Unit: Politics

Title of Project: Issues and Challenges of Gender Equity in the Contemporary
Militaries: A Focus on the Nigerian Military.

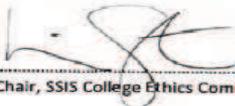
Research Team Member(s): Sefinatu Omeneke Aliyu Dago

Project Contact Point: saou203@exeter.ac.uk

This project has been approved for the period

From:	05.03.14
To:	28.09.17

Ethics Committee approval reference: 201314-022

Signature  Date 12/3-14
(Lise Storm, Chair, SSIS College Ethics Committee)

INFORMATION SHEET/CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:

Issues and Challenges of Gender Equity in the Contemporary Military: a Focus of the Nigerian Military.

Details of Project:

This project is a study of the Nigerian military as a twenty first century institution and its efforts to attain gender parity; exploring the issues that arise and the challenges that the contemporary Nigerian military faces as it advances in its inclusion of females in its Regular Combat corps. I am PhD student at the University of Exeter and this research project is towards the final dissertation for my study, and the data collected will be used solely for this purpose. It is not intended nor will it be used for any commercial purposes; neither will it be shared with any other party.

Contact Details:

For further details about the research or your interview data, please contact:
Sefinatu Omeneke Aliyu Dogo, Department of Politics, University of Exeter, Devon UK.
00 44 7424830444 soad203@exeter.ac.uk

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact:
Dr Victoria M. Basham V.M.Basham@exeter.ac.uk

Confidentiality:

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below). Your data will be held in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act for five years and then destroyed.

Anonymity:

Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name. Your identity will be protected with the use of pseudonyms and codes which only the researcher has knowledge of; but we will refer to the Nigerian Defence Academy/Nigerian Military as the institution of which you are a member.

Consent

I voluntarily agree to participate and to the use of my data for the purposes specified above. I can withdraw consent at any time by contacting the interviewers.

TICK HERE: •

DATE.....

Note: Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data

Name of interviewee: ..

Request for approval to conduct research in the Nigerian Defence Academy:



OFFICE OF THE ACADEMY REGISTRAR
NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY

P.M.B 2109
Kaduna
Nigeria

NDA/AR/5/G

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Jul 14

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH WORK
WITH SOME CADETS IN THE NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY
MRS SEFINATU A DOGO – LECTURER I – DEPT OF GNS**

References:

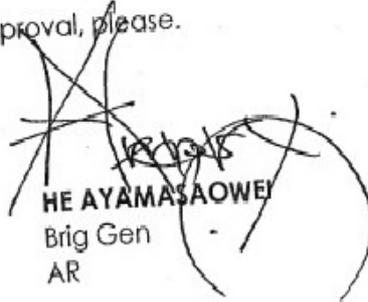
- A. NDA/GNS/4/G dated 15 Jul 14.
- B. NDA/FASS/076 dated 15 Jul 14.

1. References A and B forwarded an application by Mrs Sefinatu A Dogo, a Lecturer 1 in the Dept of GNS, who is currently studying for her PhD programme at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. She is requesting for permission to work with the cadets of the Academy in focus group discussion as part of her research. The research work is title "**The Issues and Challenges of Gender Equity in the Contemporary Military: A Focus on the Nigerian Military**". The research work will be beneficial to the Armed Forces and does not have adverse implication on the Academy. Mrs Dogo has a limited time to stay in Nigeria before returning to the UK. The HOD GNS and Dean FASS have both recommended that the staff be granted the permission to undertake the research work.

2. In view of the above, the Comdt is please requested to grant permission to Mrs Sefinatu A Dogo to interact with female cadets of 63, 64 and 65 Regular Courses in furtherance of the above stated research work.

RESTRICTED

3. Submitted for the Comdt's kind approval, please.


HE AYAMASAOWEI
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AR

Distribution:
Action:

HQ NDA

Information:

Office of the AP
HQ CB
FASS
Dept of GNS
Personal File

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Approval for conduction of research in the Nigerian Defence Academy:

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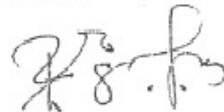
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**APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH WORK WITH SOME
CADETS IN THE NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY
MRS SEFINATU A DOGO - LECTURER I - DEPT OF GNS**

Reference:

A. NDA/AR/5/G dated 24 Jul 14.

I am directed to convey the Comdt's approval for Mrs Sefinatu A. Dogo to interact with female cadets for above mentioned research work, as requested vide Reference A. Please treat.



EU EFFIONG
Lt Col
for Comdt

20 Jul 14

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Information:

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