

**Gender Inequality And The Achievement Of Women’S Aspiration To Top Political Leadership Positions: A Study Of Ijebu Ode Local Government, Ogun State, South- West, Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

Nigeria is one of the African countries with fewer numbers of women in political leadership position and governance activities. It is assumed that women make up almost half of the country’s population with 236.636,695 million citizens as at May 2, 2025. (Worldometer, UN Data, 2025) It is rather unfortunate that most top leadership portfolios are male dominated. Gender inequality therefore remains highly pronounced in all major sectors and spheres of the Nigerian society particularly at the top political leadership positions. The study therefore examined the main influence of gender inequality on the achievement of the aspiration of women to top leadership positions in the Nigerian political sphere. The general objective of the study was to determine how gender inequality affect the aspiration of women to top leadership positions, the study also discovered how Nigerian women believes restrict their ability to participate actively in the political spheres and other leadership positions within the country, and explored strategies that can be designed to help Nigerian women effectively participate in the top political leadership sphere. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between gender inequality and the distribution of elective positions to men and women to top leadership positions in Ijebu-Ode Local government. Results also showed that gender inequality, lack of finance and other inhibiting factors such as the place of women syndrome negatively affect the aspiration of women to top political leadership positions in Ijebu-Ode Local government, Ogun State, South-West, Nigeria. It is therefore assumed that when gender inequality is reduced, equality, inclusiveness

and diversity promoted, more women will be able to aspire to leadership positions. The study recommends that government design strategies that will enable women to bring out their potentials in order to be able to fulfill their aspirations.

**Keywords:** Gender Inequality\* Decision-Making \*Women Aspiration\* Leadership Positions\* Achievement.

## **Introduction**

Gender inequality still remains pervasive in Nigeria as is the case with most other highly patriarchal societies in the world. Women make up over about 50percent of the Nigerian population with 236.636,695 million citizens as at May 2, 2025. (Worldometer, UN Data, 2025) Unfortunately, they still remain highly concentrated in the low level of their careers compared to their male counterparts (Ironsi, 2016, Ajede, 2023). Not- withstanding their increasing numbers in the labor force over the last 30 years, the participation of women in Nigeria's workforce is still below that of men (Salami, 2017). Most Nigerian women are employed in low paying jobs and are underrepresented in several important fields, including the sciences, mathematics, and technology. Salami (2017) attributed the marginalization of women in these fields to factors such as disparities in male and female enrollments in education, and to micro- and macro-factors, which include discriminatory labor-market forces and restrictive traditional values.

## **Background to the Study**

Gender inequality has always affects women disproportionately while the entire society pays a price for its negative manifestation (Temesgen, 2018). Although women participate have always actively in Nigeria's political gatherings, campaigns and meetings, it is rather unfortunate that women participation in the political leadership position of Nigeria still falls of short of desired expectations. Nigeria therefore still falls short of the desired result of giving males and females equal opportunities to advance socially, physically, educationally particularly in the political and economic domains.( Aina, 2009, Akinsanya, 2021). In the same vein, Temesgen (2018) argued that women in Nigeria, like their counterparts in other African countries, are not given the same access to education as men; furthermore, women participate in formal activities less than men.

The activities included, but were not limited to their participation in labor force, school enrollment, and maternity leave benefit. Temesgen (2018) claimed that only 47% of women participate in the labor force; most women in Nigeria participate in informal activities like farming and housework. To eradicate these gender inequities, it is imperative that women be empowered to participate more actively in the top political leadership positions of the country in order for them to be able to hold key positions of authority.

Globally, women constitute almost half of the world's population and contribute significantly to societal development. In most societies, women assume some key roles, which are: mother, producer and home-manager as well as community organizer, sociocultural and political activists. Of these many roles mentioned, their role as political mobilizers and activists have not gain desired results particularly in Nigeria where the results of the 2023 National election showed a drastic reduction in the number of women elected into position of authority compared to their number in the 2019 election. Orizu, (2023) noted that the results of the National Assembly pools leaves much to be desired as the number of women that have seats in both houses in the 10<sup>th</sup> National Assembly are far less than those in the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Orizu, (2023) noted further that those who had earlier thought that the results of the 2023 National Assembly will increase women representation in the parliament and other elective positions of authority had their hopes dashed by the results from the pools.

In Nigeria, the extant National Gender Policy (NGP) recommended 35 percent affirmative action and sought for a more inclusive representation of women with at least 35% of both elective and political positions respectively, unfortunately, results from elective positions in the last elections show a far cry. Currently there are only Three (3) elected women in the Upper House of Assembly (The Nigerian Senate) representing 2.7% out of a total of 109 Members as against 7 Members in the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly between 2019 to 2023. All female Senators in the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly lost their re-election bid, similarly, in the House of Representatives, only 16 Women were sworn in out of a total of 360 lawmakers, representing 4.4%. There is a slight increase here compared to 13 in the last Assembly but this is a far cry from the 35percent

affirmative action proposed. This further confirms that Nigeria is far from attaining the 35 percent affirmative as prescribed by the NGP. Nigeria has continue to record low participation of women in both elective and appointive positions which has remains a major source of growing concern to many Nigerians. The under representation of women in political leadership positions as is the case with other leadership positions is most often attributed to deeply rooted patriarchal practice inherent in our society, much of which were obvious from pre-colonial era till date. The disparities between the rate of men and women at the zenith of their career not only cut across geographical, social, economic barriers but more pronounced in political leadership positions and governance (Henderson & Jeydeh, 2015, Orizu, 2023) regardless of their significant roles in deciding the world order and their huge contribution to societal s development.

### **Statement of Problem**

The absence of sizeable number of women in the Nigerian political leadership position echoes the persistent problem of gender inequality. There are fewer Nigerian women specifically in key leadership positions and position of authority. Echoing a published report by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA, 2015), Chamley (2019) contended that many African governments, including Nigeria, offer little or no protection for women who wish to pursue careers and participate in government. As a result, women have made little progress when it comes to government and political participation. In spite of the numerous international laws that exist, women are not still accorded adequate recognition in top leadership positions. Similarly, they have not been given the rights and opportunities to participate freely in politics like their male counterparts. Consequently, women participation and progress in government and politics in Africa still lingers behind the men (Nebolisa, 2019). This explained why Nebolisa (2019) attributed some of the reasons for these problems as socioeconomic factors, poverty, religious beliefs, cultural values, and women simply not knowing their rights under the international and local laws. Although there has been an increase in the numbers of women vying for top leadership positions in both executive and legislative bodies, results from the 2023 elections

shows that Nigerian women continue to be under-represented in all structures of power and decision-making portfolio (Chuku, 2019; Nebolisa, 2019, Orizu, 2023).

While women representation in government in other parts of the world is increasing, it is so disheartening to note that opposite is the case in Nigeria where there are only three women in the Nigerian Senate and one of the three women in the Senate was recently wrongly suspended because she voiced out that she was been discriminated against by the Senate president. In the same vein, all the 36 Governors are men with only very few female deputy governors, only 16 women are in the House of Representatives. Patriarchal influences and cultural perception about the place of women still prevail, especially concerning whether they should lead or take part in decision making processes. Moreover, the growing numbers of policies that give women their rights are not fully implemented, hence why women are still underrepresented in the political sector. The restrictive gender roles also affect women's participation in politics (Nebolisa, 2019, Orizu, 2023). Gender equality and parity in the political leadership positions and governance still remain a far cry from reality in Nigeria. The study therefore examines the main influence of gender inequality on women aspiration to top political leadership positions in Nigeria.

## **Study Objectives**

The general objective of the study was to examine the main influence of gender inequality on the achievement of the aspiration of women to top political leadership positions. Specifically, the study:

1. Determined how gender inequality affects the aspiration of women to top leadership positions.

- 2 find out how Nigerian women believe restrict their ability to participate in the political sector and other positions of leadership within the country
3. Discovered strategies that can be designed to help Nigeria women effectively acquire top political leadership positions in government.

### **Research Questions**

- 1 What are the main influences of gender inequality on the aspiration of women to top leadership positions?
2. How does gender inequality restrict the ability of women to participate in political and other leadership positions?
3. What are the obstacles that are likely to affect the aspiration of women to leadership positions in government?
4. What are the main strategies that can be designed to help Nigerian women effectively acquire and achieve their aspirations to top political leadership sphere?

### **Justification for the Study**

The justification for this study lies in the continued gender inequality negatively affecting women in their aspiration to top leadership positions in almost all sectors of the society in Nigeria. Women face discrimination and inequality in education, the workforce, and politics which are all constituting as obstacles to women aspirations despite enacted laws to address gender discrimination. In Nigeria for example, the erstwhile policy on women was replaced with the National gender policy in November, 2006. The NPC was designed to fill gaps that still existed in spite of the erstwhile policy on women via a commitment to gender mainstreaming approach to development planning and a corporative interaction of all stakeholders including

government, private organizations and civil society organizations as well as traditional and religious leaders. Although, all the aforementioned stakeholders were charged with responsibility of maintaining gender equality, mainstreaming and women empowerment with the mandate that the policy should be domesticated and implemented by all sectors, unfortunately, cases of discrimination, gender biases and gender segregation still persisted in most sectors while progress towards policy targets remain low. Hence despite legal advancements, gender-based wage gaps, occupational segregation, and limited representation of women in leadership roles remain persistent challenges in Nigeria particularly in the top political leadership positions. There is therefore the need to address this challenge, understanding the obstacles, it causes and designing of strategies to combat the challenge in order to improve opportunities for women to top leadership positions.

## **Literature Review**

Gender inequality is so pervasive in Nigeria due mostly due to the highly patriarchal nature of the country. Patriarchy refers to a system where men dominate and remain in control over women. It is a system of relationships, beliefs and values embedded in political, social, and economic systems that structure gender inequality between men and women. In most patriarchal social system, men are in authority and in control. Patriarchy was derived from a Greek word *patrirkches* which literally means “the rule of the father”. This is probably why in most patriarchy society men control disproportionately large share of social, political, economic and religious power as well as inheritance right at the detriment of women. There are four main characteristics of patriarchy which include Male dominance, Male identification, Male centeredness and Male obsession with control.

Unfortunately, Nigeria is a highly patriarchal society with strong preference for males over females in leadership and managerial roles. Other causes of gender inequality in Nigeria include corruption, poor -governance, lack of political will and commitment to address the issues of gender inequality in Nigeria. Corruption in the Nigerian leadership circle involves the

personalization of public resources and discourages equity, fairness and justice and this leads to nepotism and lopsided appointments in both public life and private spheres. Gender inequalities still exist with respect to pay, working conditions, and level of participation. A recent World Bank report on gender and poverty in Nigeria, suggested that legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers may be making women more disadvantaged than men in terms of access to health, education, financial, and agricultural extension services. In the same vein, women do not have the same chances of escaping poverty because of their share of domestic commitments, which do not allow them to go after new opportunities as easily as men (Ajede, 2023, Akande, 2006,). Women also face obstacles that include discrimination in education, training, hiring and access to credit.

### **Women's Participation in the Nigerian Political Process**

Nigeria gained its independence on October 1, 1960 and was declared a republic in 1963 (Aderogba, 2012). After a series of amendments, the present constitution of the country was adopted on May 31, 1999. The country is a federal republic modeled after the United States; the president of the nation exercises executive power whereas legislative power is vested on the government and the two chambers that make up the legislative arms: The House of Representatives and the Senate that both make The National Assembly. The House of Representatives, which is presided over by the Speakers of the House of Representatives, has 360 members and is typically elected for a four year term. The Senate has 109 members elected for four year term and is presided over by the President of the Senate. The 109 members of senate comprise of three members from each of the 36 states of the country and one from Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (Aina, 2012).

The highest judicial power is the Supreme Court of Nigeria and like the USA, Nigeria practices separation of powers on all arms of government. Although, according to (Aina 2012), the National Assembly serves as the check on the executive branch of government. Nigeria has witnessed various changes in its political system over the past few decades. The country has



survived various military coups that destabilized the country. The country is currently in its Fourth Republic, which began in 1999. As in any other democratic country, political parties play a major part in the democratic process.

As mentioned above, the country has 36 states and that does not include the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The states are divided into Local Government Areas (LGAs). There are 774 LGAs in the country. Since the return of democracy, men have played major and significant roles in the political administration of Nigeria. Most often, men form the political parties and women are invited to join at a much later stage after the party structures have been put in place. Therefore, typically, men are political party executives and this contributes to the marginalization of women especially during the party nomination process. So many factors contribute to the marginalization of women including the system of beliefs, ethnicity, religious, cultural values, women perception and beliefs about themselves and norms. In addition to the above, the socialization process that exists in the country apportions different and disproportionate work roles and duties to men and women including political positions are most often allocated on the basis of sexes and this creates a socially distinct gender division of labor (Enaifoghe, *et al* 2021).

Illiteracy has been identified as one of the major problems facing Nigerian women. It may also be true that the educational needs of women in Nigeria have been addressed vigorously in the last decade, especially in such areas as engineering, accounting, management, sciences, social sciences, environmental studies, humanities, and marketing (Ajede, 2023, Sirleaf, 2020). Unfortunately, the ratio of educated women compared to the male counterparts in Nigeria still remains low. Similarly cultural barriers also work against women's involvement in the public sphere. Iwobi (2008) defined culture as "the integrated sum total of learned behavior patterns which are manifested and shared by the members of a society" and includes the shared beliefs, values, traditions, or outlooks, characteristics of particular social populations. In other words, culture has a major influence on a person's identity and perception of the world, and

consequently is one of the main factors listed as an impediment to gender relations in Nigeria (Chuku, 2009). In recent years, using cultural norms to justify the domination of women has become highly controversial (Iwobi, 2008). According to Iwobi (2008), no group has been deprived of its human rights under the disguise of culture as much as women have been. This is true in all societies, particularly in Nigeria, where the harmful effects of the indigenous culture have been documented in academia (Iwobi, 2008).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study was anchored on the theoretical underpinnings of the Feminist theory. The Feminist theory highlighted the damaging impact of gender inequality and the need for the eradication of all forms of discriminations against women so that women can achieve their aspirations and potentials

### **The Feminist Theory**

The term Feminism was coined by Charles Fourier; Mary Wollstonecraft is widely considered as the founder of feminist thought due to groundbreaking work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792 where she challenged societal norms favoring inequalities against women. Feminism began as an active movement by an Irish activist called Frances Power Cobbe in 1884, who described the movements as ocean tides which blow in obedience to the moving waters up and down the shores (Wrye, 2009). Thus, the first wave of feminism started towards the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries with the widely acclaimed mothers of liberal feminism like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Matilda Joselyn Gage. They are primarily concerned with women's right to vote and they also advocated for divorced women to be provided for by their ex-husbands (Lober, 2005). They argued against women discrimination in voting and mobilized people against the state to abrogate the laws preventing women from voting at general elections. The second wave of the feminist movement started with the formation of different international groups of marginalized women. Unlike the first wave, this movement brought together "coloured women" from the developed and developing countries and focused on

women's cultural and political inequality in order to end discrimination against women (Wrye, 2009). The third wave of feminism movement covers the period of 1990s to date. This movement was inspired by modern thinking and although characterized by controversies and disagreements, it has developed and intensified actions against discrimination against women. While there might not be a very pronounced cultural discrimination against Nigerian women as at today, the same cannot be expressed in terms of women's inclusion in political activities and governance. For instance, most political meetings are slated at odd times that make participation of women unrealistic. The various demands of the political parties for members seeking elective positions are also not gender sensitive in most cases, thereby discouraging women from participating (Puri, 2015). This is what the feminist theorists are fighting and advocating against. The feminists are advocating for inclusion and equal treatment of men and women particularly in political and leadership affairs and the eradication of all forms gender inequality and discrimination against women. Over the years, there have been several strands of the feminist ideology for targeted at ending gender inequality in all spheres of human lives. The feminists suggest removing hindrances to women empowerment and encouraging policies that will bridge the gap between male and female in societies particularly in leadership positions. This is why it is adequate for this study by stressing the disadvantaged positions of women as well as proposing and advocating for the removal of all such barriers against women.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a survey design in order to capture the broad and specific objectives of the study. The quantitative, qualitative techniques as well as published and unpublished journal articles and magazines were also utilized for the study.

### **Location of the Study**

The study locations are Ijebu Ode. The capital of Ijebu ode local government in Ogun state South-West, Nigeria. 150 participants were drawn from members of the Ijebu Ode Local Government Legislative Council as well as senior career officials in the Local Government. Total study population was hence 150.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were both utilized to select the participants from the Ijebu Ode Local Government Legislative Council as well as Senior Civil Servants from the Local Government

### **Research Instruments**

The research instrument for data collection for this Study was a self-designed questionnaire as well as an interview guide tagged “the main influence of gender inequality on the achievement of the aspiration of women to top political leadership positions.”

### **Data presentation and Analysis**

The analyses are presented in tables and percentages to show the major findings from the retrieved data from the field work exercise. The demographic characteristics of the respondents were first presented below while the presentation and analysis on the main focus of the study followed.

**Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents.**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66.6%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey (2024).**

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of respondents by their to gender. From the above table, 66.6% Of the respondents are males while 33.3% of the respondents are females respectively.

**Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25-35	25	16.7%
36-45	20	13.3%
46-55yrs	33	22%
56 and above	72	48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey, (2024).**

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of respondents by their Age. From the above table, it was observed that 16.7% of the respondents fell within 25-35years and 13.3% of the respondents fell within 36-45years while 22%of the respondents fell within 46-55years and 48% of the respondent fell between 56 years and above, therefore it could be deduced that high percentage of respondents fell between the age rate of 46 to 56 years and above.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents According to their Marital Status**

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	60	40%
Married	35	23.3%
Divorced	41	27.3%
Widowed	14	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey,(2024).**

The table above showed that majority (40%) of the respondents are single which may be due to the fact that majority of the respondents that have one or two experience on the main influence of

Tertiary institution and female students involvement in prostitution and the hazard of diseases/ ritual killings are not married.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents According to Occupation**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Civil servant</b>	85	<b>57</b>
<b>Political Office Holders</b>	65	43
<b>Total</b>	150	100

**Source: Field Survey,(2024).**

Table 4.4 shows the distribution of respondents according to their Occupation. From the above table, it was observed that 57% of the respondents are Top Civil Servants while 43% of the respondents are political office holders. In the same vein, Educational Qualification of respondents cut across several levels and qualifications. It was revealed that 24% of the respondents are SSCE holders while 25% of the respondents are NCE/OND holders, 30% of the respondents are BSc/HND holders and 14% respondent are MSc/PhDs holders while the least respondents have other kinds of qualification among the participants with just 7%. Therefore it could be deduced that greater percentage of the respondents are highly educated.

### **Data Analysis**

The result emanating from the quantitative component of the study show that gender inequality hinders women from participating in leadership positions. Similarly, it was also confirmed that women perception and believes in themselves also goes a long in shaping their aspirations and interest in vying for leadership positions, coupled with the illiteracy level of women and lack of training opportunities available for women compared to their male counterparts. Participants also identified lack policy implementation and most policies available favoring men as part of

the factors hindering women in their aspirations. Strategies that can be designed include campaigning against regressive norms and practices, raising awareness on issues affecting women, protecting the rights of women as well as improving educational opportunities for women and policy redesign to favor the participation of women in addition to the empowerment of women.

### **Qualitative analysis**

Qualitative data for the study was derived via in-depth interviews and focus group discussion (IDIs and FGDs). Responses and results showed similarities with the results from the quantitative study above. Participants responses and results are provided below:

#### **1. How does gender inequality affect the aspirations of women to top leadership positions**

A male respondent had this to say:

*“ We need to look at our cultural perspectives because women are not allowed to lead. In addition to cultural believes and perception, in some religion, women are not allowed to lead and this orientation has find its way to political and top leadership positions where it is viewed as the prerogative of men to be in top leadership positions”*

In the same vein, a female respondent explained thus:

*Nigeria is a highly patriarchy society where authority and leadership flow from men side and that is why this orientation has been there for a long time and continue to be a major bane and hindrance to the achievement of women aspirations”*

#### **1. Are there equal opportunities for women compered to their male counterparts when vying for top leadership positions?**

A female respondent disclosed that:

*“No, there are no equal opportunities because so many men still have more advantages compare to women especially when vying for political positions because most women don’t have enough time to participate in the meetings, because most meeting are usually arrange at late*

*hours when it's not visible for women to partake in because women need to take care of their homes and take care of their responsibilities. Women also face the issues of finance because Nigeria politics need money and that is why most of the time women don't have the same opportunities compare to men*

### **1. What are the constrains that women contend with in their aspirations to top leadership positions**

A male respondent has this to say:

*“We can call it unequal playing ground for competition, most women can- not favorably with their male counterparts and is because most cases they contest for one sit with more men and this always makes difficult for women to win. Men are always more than women, the place of women syndrome, cultural preferences as well as lack of enough capital for women also constitute as hindrances to women aspirations.”*

Another female respondent explained that:

*The number one constrains is finance because in politics you need a lot of money and most women are not as vibrant when it comes to finance as men and this affect them negatively and we have so many women who are interested in politics but don't have the finance to partake”.*

She explained further that:

*The number 2 Constraint facing women is the illiteracy rate of women compared to their male counterparts, we still find so many women who are not well educated and this also serve as constrains and lack of mentorship for women due to the patriarchy nature of the society, family responsibilities, and marital demands on women are all constraints serving as hindrances to women aspiration.*



## **2. What are the strategies that can be designed to help Nigeria women effectively participate in political leadership**

A male respondent disclosed that:

*It is going to take a long time because we have not developed politically; we still look at women as a second feeder, until we changed our orientation to do the right things in Nigeria.*

Another female respondent disclosed that:

*One major strategy is empowerment, when we empower women through vocational training, livelihood opportunities, when they are empowered they will have more voice. Provision of education facilities, training opportunities for women on leadership qualities, the implementation of national gender policy in every sector, abiding strictly by 35%affirmation actions, inclusiveness i.e. including women in decision making process, in traditional systems.*

### **Discussion of Results**

The key contribution of this study lies in its providing a platform for female politicians to narrate and share their lived experiences particularly with regards to their aspirations to top leadership positions in the Nigeria political space. The study also reinforces from previous studies by highlighting persistent barriers such as lack of internal democracy in political parties, the influence of political godfathers, bullying and transparency within political parties, financial constraints and gendered insults. These intersecting challenges discourage female politicians from pursuing leadership roles and position of authority, which further contributes to their under representation in elective and appointive positions. Participants unanimously identified political party structure dominated by undemocratic gatekeepers and opaque candidates selection processes as a major obstacle to women's political participation and aspirations to top leadership positions.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of the finding from this study, it can be conclude that women face some unique challenges simply because their gender. Furthermore, women's minimal presence in the political space in Nigeria is also an outcome of the interplay of several economic and socio-cultural factors and the patriarchal nature of the political system. Most Nigerian cultural and social practices legitimize male dominance and female subordination, thus casting women's subservience as a celebrated virtue. The country's two dominant religions (Christianity and Islam) also favor the submission of women to their husband authority and direction. Women are therefore socialized into passive political roles, and this militates against their engagement in politics. Consequently, the relative absence of women in major decision-making roles entrenches hegemonic patriarchy that reinforces the country's masculine political culture and electoral system. Despite these obstacles, women are exercising their right and potentials by using different pathways to negotiate access and relevance in the political space; some by deferring to male authority, others by challenging it. While the prospect of a shift in favor of increased participation by women is relatively bleak, individual women continue to aim for the removal and breaking of political glass ceiling'. For this reason, the election of Kamala Harris as the US first female vice president is positive move that is likely to motivate other women in other parts of the world to aspire more for leadership position of authority particularly in African countries.

## **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) Gender inequality is still endemic in many countries around the world. There is the need to reduce if not totally eliminate it in order to achieve desired inclusive and sustainable development for Nigeria and by extension the whole world.
- (ii) Political parties should create a support network for prospective female aspirants by pairing them with established women politicians who will be playing will mentor as well as provide capacity building for them in order to enhance and prepare them adequately for future elections. In addition to the above, political parties should also

create enabling environment for women to aspire and participate in decision making process

- (iii) There is also the need to build strong women coalition through the creation and support of women groups, advancing advocacy through NGOs and Grassroots women associations to coordinate and support and fellow women politicians in their aspirants.
- (iv) Establishment of legal funds to assist women politicians to challenge electoral malpractices of any form at all levels of political processes.
- (v) Legislation and measures should be applied across board, including implementing affirmative action policies towards women so that more women are promoted into leadership and policy making organisations.

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