

Women, Leadership and Glass Ceiling: An Examination of Appointment into Some Leadership Positions in Political and Education Sectors in Nigeria

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Abstract

Women, leadership and glass ceiling have been a point of reference to many appointments into some leadership positions in both political and education sectors in Nigeria. That is why this paper considers issues such as women and the glass ceiling, types of glass ceiling and glass cliff, why men do not want women to reach the top of their career either in politics, academic and other corporate bodies. The paper reveals that women are not usually considered for appointment into positions of leadership in Nigeria. Only 24% of current ministers in Nigeria are women. In Ondo State, only four out of fourteen commissioners are women. Also, men are often considered for appointment into leadership position in the education sector. Out of one hundred and fifty two Provosts of Colleges of Education in Nigeria, only eleven are women. Women in Nigeria still face a lot of barriers in aspiring to top positions in every sector of the society. For Nigeria to come out of its development crisis, it is high time the glass ceiling is removed. The paper recommends that women in top position should be given free hands to operate, while Glass Ceiling Commission should be set up in Nigeria like that of the nation developed world. Also, Women in academics should be encouraged to aspire to topmost position in institutions of higher learning, Employers should give equal opportunities to men and women in all sectors of the

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I. Introduction

Man has been dwelling with woman since the inception of the world, they worked together and married each other as husband and wife and engaged in socio-economic activities. Christians' perspective of creation story reveals that God created woman as a helper to man. According to Afolabi (1995), God made man, (Adam) to be the head of the family. Consequently, there is established asymmetric relationship between man and woman. This is often reflected in man dominating woman in many aspects of life either in the home or outside the home. Many in the society believe that the only office of a woman is the kitchen. Lawrence (2010) observed that, traditionally, women have no role in the society because they are regarded as second-class citizens by their customary practices. It is also assumed that they are unaware of their legal rights and, even if they have, they are unable to claim them. According to Odi (2010) during the colonial period, school curricula emphasized religious instructions and clerical skills for boys and domestic science for girls. Besides, there was the perception that women needed to be educated only to be good housewives. Osalusi and Ajibefun (2017)

observe that women's duties are believed to be limited to giving birth, nurturing, and bringing up of children, who will grow to become adults of tomorrow and hence, the kitchen is the right place for them.

However, modern trends have shown and indicated that women, after all, are not as weak as may be perceived by the community and cultural demands that restrict them to the kitchen and house-keeping. The roles they are expected to perform in these areas are highly demanding and time-consuming that those who find themselves in positions of leadership in the place of work must put in more efforts in enhancing the organisational roles.

Men segregation against women has taken a higher dimension, because of the level of the perspective given to them. Ajibefun and Adu (2019) opine that it is a common belief that behind every successful man, there is a woman. Over the years, there has been raging debates among diverse people over the participation or desire of women in leadership positions. Some argue that women are regarded as weaker sex owing to social values, norms and beliefs, which have placed them in subordinate position in the society and political system. Osalusi and Ajibefun (2017) opine that Nigeria is a strong patriarchal society where male members of the society are seen and believed to be better than female members who are subjugated and treated as subordinates to their male counterparts.

There are inequalities created long time ago during the dark century. However, women who had formal education have freed themselves from the shackles of men, especially when they were in leadership position. Dibia and Michael (2015) explain that education is a process of development of an independent and integrated personality which encompasses training and acquisition of special skills, knowledge, attitude, and values needed by every individual to be responsible and which would eventually enable him or her to contribute his or her own quota to the growth and progress of the society where he or she lives. Osalusi and Ajibefun (2017) define education as an attribute that can help both men and women to be more active in organisations where they work.

Ajibefun, Adekanmbi and Ojomo (2020) opine that education has been identified as a variable tool for national development, and as such, no nation could rise above the level of education of her citizenry. Therefore, education is recognized, all over the world, as the cornerstone of any structure for sustainable development of any nation, also as the bedrock of any nation building. It should be noted that education has empowered woman to become more functional in different parts of the world. Woman can perform better in any position if the opportunity is given to her. During the Dark Age, women were not allowed to feature in any aspect of development in the world, because the people involved lack formal education or are not privy to have one. Yusuf (2013) observe that another reason for this development is the patriarchal culture which significantly aids gender discrimination against women at work. The cultural practices of many contemporary societies are biased by subjugating women to men and undermining their self-esteem. The overall impact of gender bias, cultural norms and practices has entrenched a feeling of inferiority in women and place them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their male counterparts in the socio-political scene, even in urban centers. These socially constructed norms and stereotype roles make women overplay their 'femininity' by accepting that they are 'weaker gender' and overemphasizing the dainty nature of their sex and regarding exceptional achievement as masculine.

The quest for girl-child education has been encouraged and prioritized by the Nigerian government and its institutions over the years. The results of girl-child education have been very encouraging. Unlike in the past when the girl-child was treated as a breed for a future husband, today, both men and women get educated in all fields of our national endeavours. The Nigerian state has records of women who have excelled in their various disciplines and national development. It is widely known and accepted that women constitute a powerful force for leadership role in Nigeria (Ugbogu, 2016; Lawrence, 2010).

The traditional beliefs that male members of the society are better than females have made women to be subjugated, seen, and treated as subordinates to their male counterparts. Females are therefore sandwiched and buffeted between the patriarchal control of the males in the community and cultural demands that restrict them to the kitchen.

The rate at which women encountered problem during promotion to the top or appointed to higher positions is alarming in Nigeria. Many women in Nigeria face a lot of inequalities: men do not allow them to reach the top of their career. In politics, women are being used as tools for political mobilization but when time of dividend comes, women would either be rejected for political position or given lesser positions. The problem of glass ceiling is more pronounced in the Nigerian society. Most positions are occupied by men in almost all strata of the society, as presented below.

Conceptual Framework

Glass Ceiling

Glass ceiling is a colloquial term for the social barriers preventing women from being promoted to the top in their career. A glass ceiling" represents a barrier that prohibits women from advancing toward the top of a hierarchical corporation. It is sometimes extended to refer to obstacles hindering the advancement of minority women, as well as minority men. Available Data shows that women are prevented from receiving promotion,

especially to the executive ranks within their corporation. In the last twenty years, many women who have become more involved and prominent in industries and organizations have rarely been in the executive ranks. 'Glass ceiling' has been broadened to include discrimination against minorities. Within the same concepts of the other terms surrounding the workplace, there are similar terms for restrictions and barriers concerning women and their roles within organizations and how they coincide with their maternal duties. These "Invisible Barriers" function as metaphors to describe the extra circumstances that women undergo, usually when trying to advance within areas of their careers and other public engagements.

Glass ceiling is a popular metaphoric expression to explaining the inability of many women to advance beyond level in their qualifications or achievement (Purcell et al,2010). Glass ceiling is one of the compiling metaphors of examining inequalities among men and women in the workplace (cited in Bombuwela and Charmaru 2013). Ryan and Haslam's research showed that once women break through the glass ceiling and take on positions of leadership, they often have experiences that are different from those of their male counterparts. More specifically, women are more likely to occupy positions that are precarious and thus have a higher risk of failure—either because they are appointed to lead organizations (or organizational units) that are in crisis or because they are not given the resources and support needed for success.

This was also popularized in the 80's by Morrison, Randall and Velsor (1980) book publication titled 'Breaking the glass ceiling: can women Reach the top of America's largest Corporation?'. This later serves as a focus for the US government, where Glass Ceiling Commission was founded as a Commission to cater for women and the minorities.

Marilyn Loden coined glass ceiling at a 1978 Women's Exposition, while other scholars term it as a discriminatory barrier that prevent women from rising to position of power of responsibility and advancing to higher position within an organization, simply because they are women (cited in Akinyombo 2019). Many women had suffered silently from this kind of barrier, just because they are women. When a woman performs brilliantly in a position, the glory goes to her alone, but when she fails the blame goes to the other women. There is no fact in women that performed good in a position, because it will be difficult for another woman to reach her position, but when she fails, men will surely want other women to be in her shoe. Glass ceiling has led many women to accept a GLASS CLIFF position.

Glass Cliff

Cooper (2015) defined glass cliff as phenomenon of women in leadership roles, such as executives in the corporate world and female political election candidates, being likely than men to achieve leadership roles during periods of crisis or downturn, when the risk of failure is highest. Glass Cliff is different from glass ceiling, it is not a barrier but a situation where a position is strategically given to women during the time of crises, since they know (men) that she will surely fail and cannot manage the crisis. The two coined words are for the women: glass ceiling would not allow women to move to the top while glass cliff deals with the situation of women in a position during crisis. Example is during the recession period when Hillary Clinton won the Democratic primary, in 2014, and only if she became the president of the United States, she can fail, that's glass cliff situation.

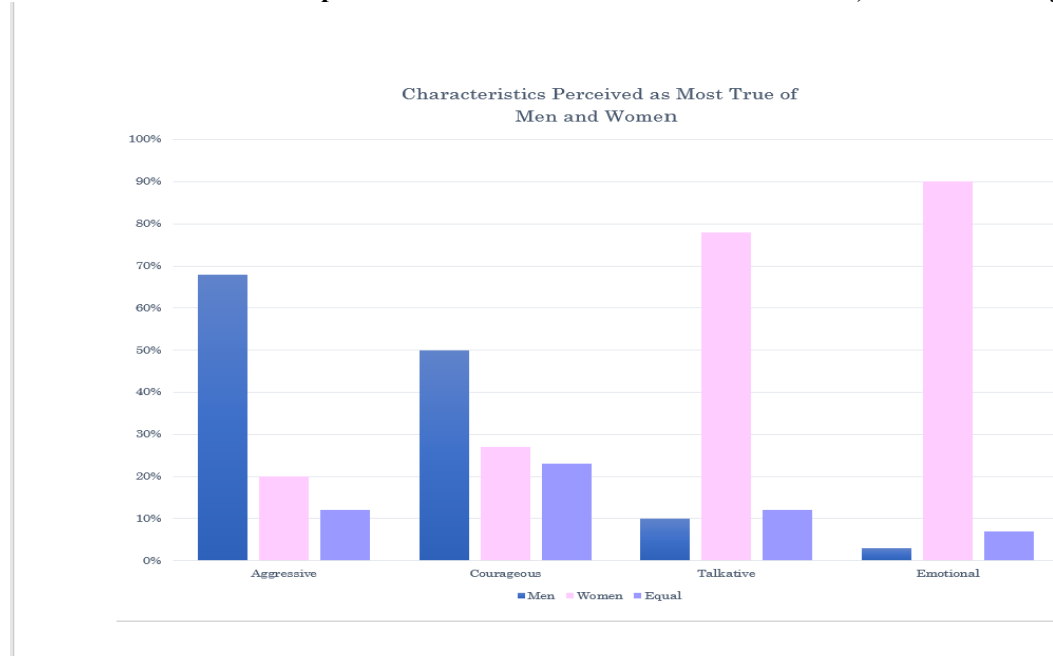
In 1990, two female Premiers were appointed in Australia: Joan Kimer inherited significant deficit in Victoria, while Camen Lawrence headed a party that had previously been accused of corruption. In 1993, the Canadian Progress Conservation Party, facing low approval ratings and almost assured loss in the upcoming general elections, elected Kim Campbell, then Defence Minister, to replace Brian Mulroney as its leader. The election dealt the Progressive Conservatives one of the most devastating defeats in Canadian history, reducing them from 156 seats to 2. Also in Year 2002, then-unprofitable telecommunications company Lucent Technologies appointed Patricia Russo CEO, and then replaced her with Ben Verwaayen. In 2008 after the Icelandic banking crisis, various women were appointed to repair the industry with the rationale that broader perspectives would prevent the same mistakes from occurring. In 2009, Kristina Keneally was appointed Premier of New South Wales amid low polling for her party and their eventual defeat in 2011. In 2010 Dilma Rousseff was appointed candidate for president of Brazil by Partido dos Trabalhadores (Labor Party) when they were being investigated by the Federal Police for allegations of corruption schemes. She won the elections and later, in 2014, the re-election. In 2011, "a horrible time for newspapers", Jill Abramson was appointed editor of The New York Times. In 2012, Marissa Mayer was appointed as the CEO of Yahoo after it lost significant market share to Google. In 2016, Theresa May became leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom shortly after a referendum result to leave the EU caused the pound sterling to drop in value to levels not seen in 30+ years. In 2020, Sophie Wilmès became first women Prime Minister in Belgium, during the coronavirus crisis. Sophie Wilmès Stone is a Belgian politician serving as Minister of Belgium from 2019 to 2020. As a member of reformist movement, she is the first woman to hold the position. In 2021, Alexis George was appointed as the CEO of the troubled Australian financial services company AMP Limited. In 2021, Jen Oneal was appointed the first female Head of Blizzard Entertainment after the California Department for Fair

Employment and Housing versus Activision Blizzard lawsuit which alleged the company had a culture of sexual misconduct.

Gender Stereotype: Global Perspective

Gender stereotype is a global phenomenon. Gender stereotype influences how leaders are chosen by employers and how workers of different sex are treated. Another stereotypes towards women in workplaces is the "gender status belief" which claims that men are more competent and intelligent than women, which would explain why they have higher positions in the career hierarchy. Ultimately, this factor leads to perception of gender-based jobs on the labor market, so men are expected to have more work-related qualifications and hired for top positions.

Chart 1: Americans Perception of Women as Emotional and Affectionate, men As More Aggressive



Source: Newport, Frank (February 21, 2001).

Globally, women started having impact in the society, from 1893 when they were given right to vote, starting with New Zealand. According to the United Nation statistics (2006) New Zealand as one of the developed countries with the Human development index of 0.93 and life expectancy of 0.83, extended the right to vote of all adult women. Australia followed a year later and was the first country to grant women the right to run for public offices. Finland was the first European country to grant voting rights to women in 1904 and in 1907 and it became the first country in the world to have democratically elected female members of parliament.

Today women hold political offices in some richest and most powerful nations of the world. For instance, Margret Thatcher was the Prime Minister of Britain from 1979 to 1990, Angela Merkel became Chancellor of Germany in 2005, Madeline Albright became the first female Secretary of State of United States in 1997 and was followed by Condoleezza Rice in 2005 and Hillary Clinton became the first female precedential aspirant of the Democratic Party in the United State of America. Equally, the year 2020 has brought a lot of first for women: Kamala Harris, became the first woman Vice President of the United States of America, and many women appointees followed. Avril Haines and Janet Yellen are the first women to lead National Intelligence and Treasury of U.S. while Kim Ng was named the General Manager of the Miami Marlo's baseball team. She became the first female General Manager of a major league Baseball team and the highest-ranking woman in baseball history. In Africa Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Joyce Banda of Malawi became the continent first and second democratically elected female president in 2005 and 2012 respectively. Globally, the female gender is still not well represented in democratic elections. Only 33% of the members of Germany lower house of parliament are women while in UK's House of Common only 22 % of members of parliament. In United States, only 17% of members of the Congress are women while in Zimbabwe only 15% are women. In Sri Lanka which started the trend in Asia, only 6% in the parliament are women. In Nigeria our country home, only 7% are female in both the House of Senate and House of Representatives.

In Nigeria, the first female Minister was Chief Adenike Egun Oyagbola, who was appointed the Minister for National Planning nineteen years after independence. In academic, Prof Allele Williams became the first woman Vice Chancellor of University of Benin in 1984.

Although in Nigeria, politics is still overwhelmingly a man's world, many women have been given political positions in the past, including Dr. Sarah Alade (Deputy Governor of Central Bank), Mrs. Omobola Johnson (Minister of Communication Technology); late Prof. Dora Akunyili (Director General, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control); Allison Maduekwe (Minister of Petroleum Resources); Evelyn Oputu (Managing Director of Nigerian Bank of Industry); Prof. Mrs. Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufai (Minister of Education) and Dr Okonjo Iweala (Minister of Finance) among others. The last two Nigerian governments followed the national gender policy, which was adopted by the Nigerian government in 2006, however, gender main streaming remains a distant dream in Nigeria. The Beijing platform for action seeks 30 percent share of decision- making positions for women in Africa including Nigeria. Such roles as administration and disposal of property, leadership in societal affairs, including religion and governance are exclusively meant for their male counterparts. Even the right of choice in respect to entry into marital relationship is denied to women.

Nigerian women are excluded and not allowed to participate in public matters such as trade unionism. There is a strong belief among the people that women cannot lead but to be led and that it is an abomination for women to lead men. The 1999 Nigerian constitution provided for all citizens the right to participate in trade unionism or other associations of their choice for the protection of their interests. It is observed that participation of women, especially in terms of vying for leadership positions have been minimal.

Male and Female Representation in Some Political Appointments in Nigeria

There is no equal representation of men and women in political appointments in Nigeria. Currently in the Federal cabinet, there are only 7 women out of 29 Federal Ministers, representing only 24%.

Table 1: Percentage of Male and Female Representation of Current Ministers in Nigeria

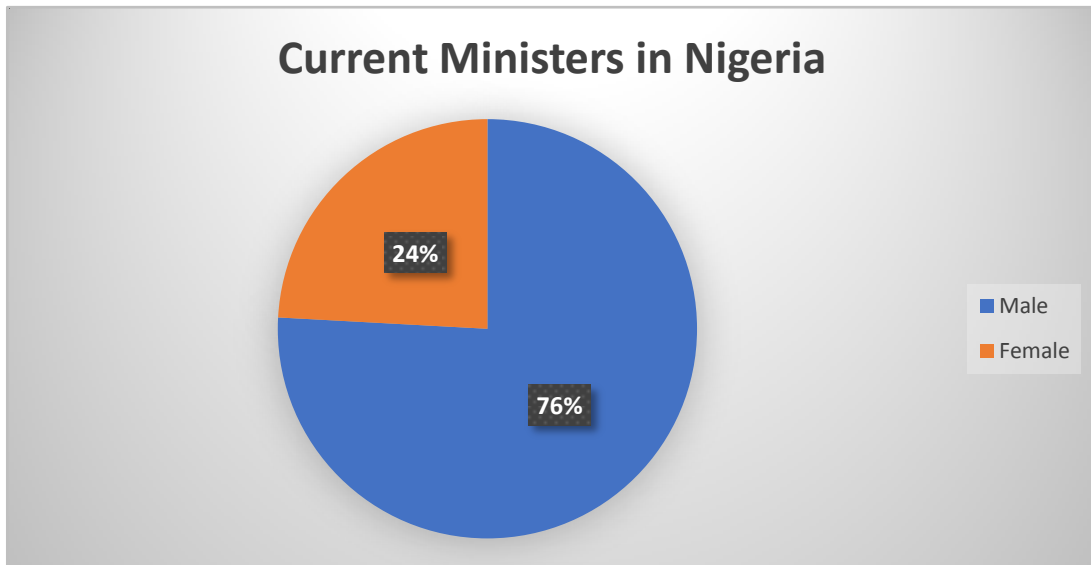
Current Ministers in Nigeria		Total	% Of Female
Male	Female		
22	7	29	24%

Source: Authors Compilation (2022)

List and Names of Current Females Ministers in Nigeria are:

1. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning
2. Sadiya Umar Farouq, Honourable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development
3. Pauline Tallen, Honourable Minister of Women Affairs
4. Mariam Yalwaji Katagum, Honourable Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment
5. Sharon Ikeazor, Honourable Minister of State for Environment
6. Gbemisola Saraki, Honourable Minister of State for Transportation
7. Ramatu Tijjani Aliyu, Honourable Minister of State for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

Chart 2: Chart Showing Male and Female Representation of Current Ministers in Nigeria



Male and Female Representation of Appointed Commissioners in Ondo State

In Ondo State only 4 out of the eighteen commissioners are female

Name of Currents Female Commissioners in Ondo State are:

1. Mrs Bamidele Ademola Olateju: Ministry of Regional Integration and Diaspora relations
2. Dr. Julianah Oshadahun: Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
3. Mrs Yetunde Adeyanju: Ministry of Water and Sanitation
4. Hon. Lola Fagbemi: Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperation

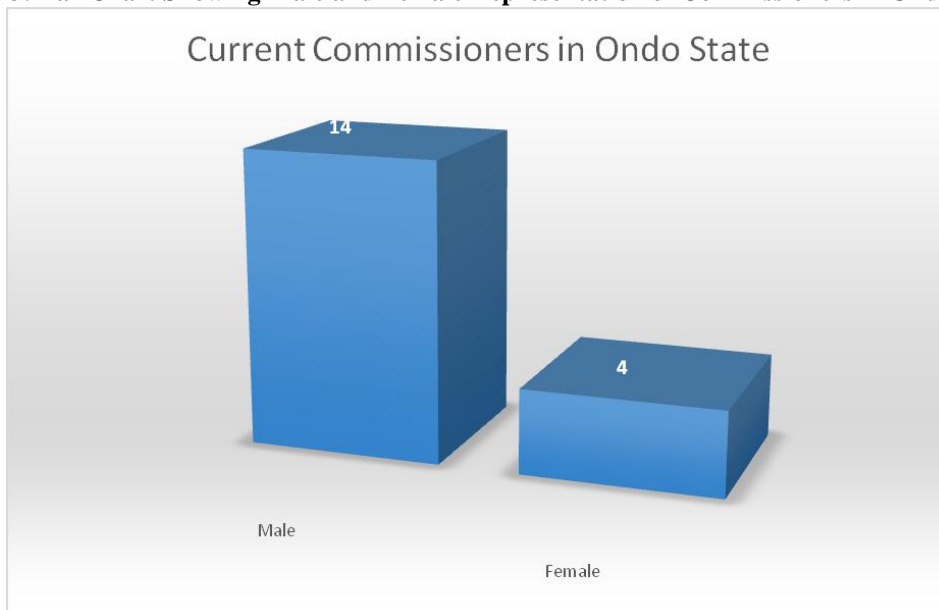
Table 2: Current Commissioners in Ondo State

Current Commissioners in Ondo State

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
14	4	18

Source: Authors Compilation (2022)

Chart 3: Bar Chart Showing Male and Female Representation of Commissioners in Ondo State



Appointment into Leadership Position in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

Colleges of Education are teacher-training institutions in Nigeria. They are essential educational institutions responsible for the training of teachers that function at different levels of Nigeria education sector. There are 152 Colleges of Education in Nigeria, consisting of 27 federal, 54 state and 82 private colleges of education. In Nigeria, colleges of education (COEs) are headed by provosts. Currently there are twenty-seven federal colleges of education that are approved by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). Only three of these colleges have female provosts and they are in Southern Nigeria. Interestingly, the three women are holders of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). They are:

Dr. (Mrs.) Tessy Obumneme Okoli who is the incumbent provost of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Anambra State.

Dr Okoli who was appointed provost in 2018 is the first woman to become a provost. Under her watch, NCCE accredited six additional programs in the institution. She was also responsible for the approval of a Computer Based Test centre in the institution.

Dr. (Mrs.) Pauline Ngozi Ikwuegbu is the incumbent provost of the Federal College of Education Eha-Amufu, Nigeria. This woman made history in 2018 when she became the first female provost of the Institution Eha-Amufu (Enugu State). Interestingly, she is the first provost of the college that is not an indigene of Enugu State.

The third woman on the list is Dr. (Mrs.) Josephine Emebiziogo Anene-Akeakwa. Dr Anene-Akeakwa officially became the provost of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba (in Delta State) in 2019. She is the first woman ever to head the institution. She was the person that was responsible for the establishment of the Department of Home Economics in the College in 1990.

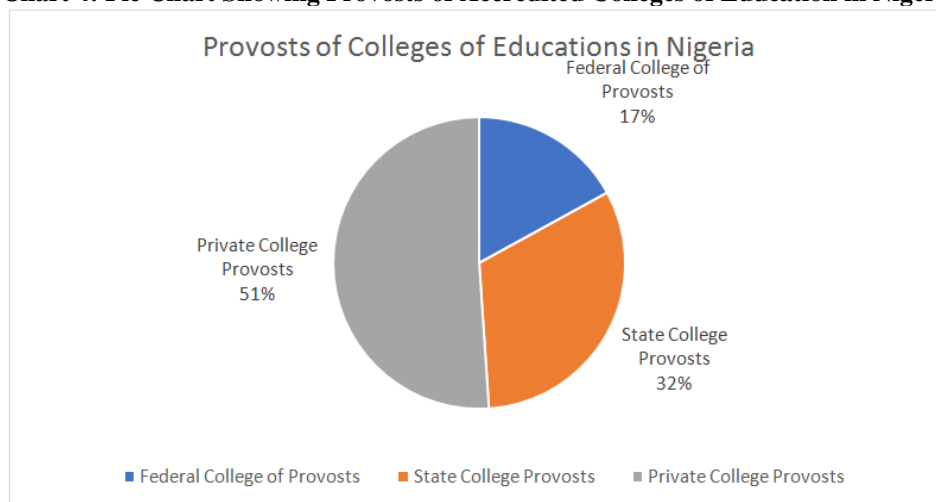
Table 3: List of Provosts of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

S/N	Provosts of Colleges of Education in Nigeria				
1	Federal	College	Male	Female	Total
	Provosts		24	3	27
2.	State College Provosts		Male	Female	Total
			45	5	50
3	Private	College	Male	Female	Total
	Provosts		72	3	75
	Grand Total		141	11	152

Source: Authors Compilation (2022)

At the Federal level, out of twenty-seven (27) Federal Colleges of Education, there are only 3 female provosts. At the State level, out of fifty 50 Colleges of Educations, there are only 5 female provosts. At the Private level, out of seventy-five (75) Private Colleges of Educations, there are only 3 female provosts.

Chart 4: Pie Chart Showing Provosts of Accredited Colleges of Education in Nigeria



From the above pie chart, it shows that the total number of provost in the colleges of education in Nigeria is 152 and out of this, the total percentage of federal colleges provost is 27 with 17% and that of private colleges provost of education is 50 in total with 51% and that of state colleges of education provosts are 75 in number with 32%. Which shows that the private colleges of education has more provost than the other rest of colleges of education in Nigeria.

II. Conclusion

Globally, a lot of barriers are in place to stop women from rising to the peak of their careers or from being appointed into positions of responsibilities, like their male counterparts. The situation has now improved significantly in favour of women, particularly in the last three decades, with many women occupying the highest position in a country like president. Women in Nigeria still face a lot of barriers in aspiring to top positions in every sector of the society. For Nigeria to come out of its development crisis, it is high time the glass ceiling is removed

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Glass Ceiling Commission should be set up in Nigeria to cater for the right of women and the minorities.
- Women should be given free hands to operate in other to reach the peak of their career.
- Women should be encouraged to participate actively in politics in Nigeria.
- Women in academics should be encouraged to aspire to topmost position in institutions of higher learning.
- Employers should give same opportunities given men to women in all strata of the universities as this will further boost the interests of women's participation in administrative leadership positions.

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