ASSESSMENT OF MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN POLITICS IN NIGERIA

SHAIBU, Fatima Omone & GAMBO , Ibrahim Ahmad Ph.D
Department of Mass Communication,
College of Administrative Studies and Social Sciences,
Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna state
Corresponding Email : sfomone@kadunapolytechnic.edu.ng

Abstract
This study examined how Nigerian media portray women in political leadership positions in the country. The study also ascertained whether Nigerian media promote gender stereotypes, which have been found to undermine women capability and experience in leadership positions. The study raised three research questions. A corpus of media and sociological theories were used to buttress the study. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of research design, and content analysis was adopted as instrument of data collection for the study. The study population were all the editions of Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers from November 2018 to March 2019. The study used purposive sampling technique to generate a sample size of 262 editions of the two newspapers that were analyzed. Findings of the study revealed to a large extent that female politicians were portrayed as insignificant because their opinions were never reported on national and international issues. Rather, their social life was given much attention. The study also recommends that journalists should do away with gender bias and familial traits when reporting women in political leadership positions.

Keywords **:** *Gender frames, leadership, political, portrayal, women in politics*

Introduction

In spite of women advocacy for gender equality over the years, which resulted in the 1979 statutory Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, recent studies show that women are still largely underrepresented in top leadership positions in public and private sectors globally (Hamalai et al., 2017; Gberevbie & Oviasogie, 2013; UN Department of Public Information, 2010). Despite the marginal growth from 11.3% to 24.9% of women in parliament globally, women constitute less than 10% of those elected into political offices at national, state and local government levels in Nigeria (Eme & Onuigbo, 2015; Hamalai et al., 2017). The few women who made it to top political positions in Nigeria have all had brief and tumultuous tenure marred with accusations of management and certificate forgery (Adeleye & Fayemi, 2019). Despite the fact that women have made significant gains in their quest for gender equality worldwide, the underrepresentation of

women in top political and economic positions raises the questions of how media portray women in leadership positions, and the impact of media portrayal of women on the underrepresentation of women in political leadership positions in Nigeria. According to some scholars, the volume and nature of attention given to women by the media have greatly affected women chances of attaining political leadership globally (Baxter, 2018; Montiel, 2015; Braden, 1996). Also, stereotypical portrayal of women is often visible in media focus on women femininity rather than their intelligence and capability to lead. This have been found to contribute to gender inequality (Ouahidi, 2018; Ette, 2017; Oyewole & Olisa, 2017; Enwefah, 2016; Carter et al., 2014).In view of the opinion by scholars that women visibility in the media is inadequate and streamlined to certain issues, (Ojebiyi & Chukwunwike, 2018; Lunenborg & Maier, 2015; Skalli, 2011; Braden, 1996) this study is aimed at examining how media portray women in political leadership positions in Nigeria, and to ascertain whether Nigerian media portrayal of women undermine women's capability to hold political leadership positions in the country.

The importance of media in contemporary times and especially in politics cannot be underestimated because of its interpretive platforms though different groups of people can engage with one another and with the process that they are involved in without necessarily meeting physically. More so, media is believed to play a pivotal role in influencing public opinions because peoples' perceptions and decisions are often informed by media reportage of issues and events (Funk & Coker, 2016; Bligh *et al.,*2012; Adcock, 2010). Though the extent to which media influence voters' perception of political candidates is still a matter of scholarly debates (Baitinger, 2014; Bligh et al., 2012), media agenda setting ability is believed to be effective in shaping peoples' opinions (Ouahidi, 2018). Consequently, the importance politicians attach to media reportage is such that any mention is worthwhile because it enhances public recognition (Campus, 2013; Braden, 1996). Given the centrality of media to politics, there is much attention on media portrayal of politicians, and how media is used by politicians to enhance their political prospects. This is especially so for women who are believed to be inadequate media coverage and are consistently underrepresented in politics and public decision making (Watson & Hill, 2012; Marvin et al., 2010). One of the earliest studies of media portrayal of women by Tuchman, Daniels & Bennet (1978) described biased media portrayal of women, which is based on sex roles as 'symbolic annihilation' (Humprecht & Esser, 2017). Tuchman *et al* explained that continued objectification and denigration in the media have potential influence on peoples' perception of women in various sectors of the society (Tuchman, 2000). Other studies that analyzed media portrayal of women in politics argue that when female politicians are given media coverage, they are treated differently in comparison to their male counterparts in terms of the disparity in the quantity and the nature or quality of media coverage (Kittilson & Fridkin, 2008; Devitt, 2002; Smith, 1997). Moreover, the issue of gender stereotypes in media coverage of women holding political and economic leadership positions often see women frame in their familial roles as 'dutiful wife; mother, beautiful lady' etc than their capability as intelligent/fearless leaders and achievers. Confirming the existence of gender stereotypes in media reportage, Bystrom et al*.,* (2009) explains that female politicians tend to receive more attention in terms of their sex, marital status, children, personality traits and appearance. The cumulative effects of the persistent sexual objectification of female politicians as against their capabilities to hold leadership positions is believed to have potential negative influence on the public perception of female political candidates and leaders (Funk & Coker, 2015; Devitt, 2002). Campus (2013) explains that laying

undue emphasis on female political leaders' sexuality at the expense of more important issues related to their leadership or ambition is subjecting women to gender double bind.

The gender double bind female political and economic leaders face have resulted in women leaders often being quizzed on their ability to juggle public office/business and home-making without one affecting the other negatively or breaking-down (Lee, 2015; Campus, 2013). Also, the gender double bind women in leadership position are subjected to have seen female leaders vilified or mocked for display of emotions that are typically feminine (Curnalia & Mermer, 2014). There is also the double bind of framing politics in purely "masculine terms", which denote it as an exclusive of the male gender, and not open to females (Meeks, 2013; Gidengil & Everitt, 2003; Adler, 1997). This double bind of politics being a masculine domain has been argued as a means to deny women politicians the access to political leadership, and to cause voters to question the skills and competence of female politicians for leadership (Rich, 2016; Campus, 2013; Jensen, 2008; Gidengil & Everitt, 2003).

While some scholars acknowledged the existence of negative media coverage of women politicians, and argued that the use of gender stereotypes could be a means of granting visibility to female politicians (Lee, 2015; Campus, 2013), others have argued that though gender stereotypes might appear harmless, it is however, inimical to the public perception of women leaders skills and competences (Ramos, et al., 2018; Lee, 2015; Lundell & Ekstrom, 2008; Gidengil & Everitt, 2003).   In a study of print media portrayal of women political aspirants during the 2007 and 2011 general elections in Nigeria by Akinwehinmi and Ojebode (2012), it was revealed that though women were underrepresented in media coverage of the elections, they were however portrayed as competent rather than incompetent. The study further revealed that women were depicted are 'professionals and leaders', rather than 'lay-abouts and followers.' The dissimilarities between Akinwunmi and Ojebode (2012) study findings with findings of several other studies buttress the Ambiguous Mirror Theory, which postulates that media reflect vague and ambiguous images of phenomena which exist in a society (Akinwunmi & Ojebode, 2012; Loevinger, 1969). While the Nigerian media may not portray female politicians as incompetent and unskilled, studies have shown that the patriarchal nature of our cultural heritage and communal way of socializing relegates women to the background, such that least political offices and least media attention are given to women politicians (Ekeh, 2018; Omojola, 2014). Ekeh (2018) analysis of Nigerian media reportage of political scandals involving female politicians in the country revealed that not only were the stories gendered, but they were also sensationalized and their competence as political leaders were trivialized in comparison to their male counterparts (Eshiet, 2015). The preceding corroborates O'Neill & Stewart (2009) assertion that women politicians are usually subjected to more severe criticisms by the media than their male counterparts. In a 2017 study by Ette on media reportage of female politicians during the 2015 general elections, it was revealed that women were given minimal attention by the media, and they were represented as 'political outsiders' who lacked the competence to handle political offices. In another study of media coverage of the 2015 general elections by Ojebuyi & Chukwuwike (2018), it was revealed that media coverage of the campaigns was gender biased in terms of prominence, because the male presidential aspirants stories were on front and back pages of newspapers, while the female presidential aspirant stories were in the inside pages.

A United Nations document titled 'Promoting women, peace and security: Women's participation in political processes' shows that the female presidential aspirant in the nation's 2015

general election had only 1.4% of the total media articles published in the three newspapers analysed, while the male aspirants had 98.6% of media articles shared between them. In view of the preceding, it can be argue that the Nigerian media relegated the female presidential candidate through the systematic application of media frames such as placement of stories, space allocated to stories and format of stories in which female politicians are featured. Not only are women politicians marginally represented in the media, but they are denigrated compared to the men in the same media discourse (Oladapo, 2019). The exclusion of female politicians' voices in media discourse were obvious during the 2019 general elections, because out of the several female political aspirants that vied for different positions, only two were featured in all the political debates on all the different media channels and platforms in the country.

This study is of the assumption that though literature reviewed did not directly establish the relationship between stereotyped media portrayal and the success or failure of women in politics, it however revealed bias, sexism and gender stereotyping in media coverage of male and female politicians is still a challenge. However, the preceding does not disprove the relationship between biased media coverage and underrepresentation of women in politics. In framing this study, a corpus of media and sociological theories were reviewed to explain how media framing and representation affect women in politics. This paper argues that media influence is powerful and stories featured in newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations are considered factual and authentic just by mere reporting through any of the aforementioned channels of communication. This is strongly affirmed in the spheres of agenda setting and framing theories of media

(i). Agenda Setting Theory:- denotes the idea that media coverage of any issue or event positions such issue or event as important and subsequently places such idea or event on the front burner of discussion in the society. The theory implies that media have a strong influence on audience in terms of what to consider newsworthy and important depending on the placement of the story in the newspaper or the attention the broadcast media gives to the story (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Audience conception of news stories that appear in the media is that if a story is not important, it will not be considered for usage in the media.

(ii) Framing Theory :- explains that how media presents a story to the audience influences how people interpret or make meanings out of the story, and this is done by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of the theory is that media focus attention on certain events and place them within a field of meaning (Goffman, 1974). This theory denotes a conscious choice by journalists as gatekeepers in organizing and presenting ideas, people, in such a way that influences how it is interpreted by the audience.

(iii) Media Hegemony Theory :- explains the workings of dominant groups in maintaining their hegemonic ideologies and leadership through consent of the subordinated groups. This presupposes that the media is a site for political and cultural ideological contestations, and as a means for the promotion and perpetuation of ideologies through news and other media contents. (Schram et al., 2016; Gandio, 2012; Marmura, 2010; Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2006 ;Carragee, 1993; Altheide, 1984). It can be argued that media serve as a site for gender identity and gender role contestations considering the prevalence of men in leadership positions, as well as the hegemonic relations in media contents as related to women in political leadership positions in Nigeria (Ibroscheva & Raicheva-Stover, 2014; Tuchman, 2000).

(iv) **Feminist Theory** uses gender as an analytical tool to address how women have been systematically sidelined in the society. It shows the relationship between gender and power, and

fosters the study of the complexities of gender and power imbalances in the society (Kantola & Lambardo, 2017; Scholz, 2012; Segal, 2002). Using feminist theory to examine media portrayal of women in politics in Nigeria is premised on the pivotal role media play in the construction of reality, and this is to foster understanding of gender categories and gender power relations within society, so as to ascertain whether Nigerian media differs in its portrayal of male and female politicians (Lee et al., 2017; Mendes, 2011; Johannessen, 2006).

This study intends to provide a new nuanced perspective to the discourse on media portrayal of women in politics, in addition to its impact on women participation and achievements in politics as well as other sectors in the country.

Problem of Study

Despite the unarguable feats recorded by women in several sectors of the society and the continued advocacy for gender equality, women are still highly marginalized and underrepresented in top political leadership positions in Nigeria (Oyewole & Olisa, 2017; Enwefah, 2016; Oloyede, 2016; Egwu, 2015). Several reasons have been put forth for the low representation of women in political leadership positions, however, studies show that biased media reportage of women in politics strengthen gender stereotypes and undermine women ability to get to leadership positions and to excel (Lachover, 2017; Egwu, 2015; Walsh, 2015; O'Brien 2014; Ibroscheva & Raicheva-Stover, 2009). In view of the preceding, this study assumes that media are part of the causes for the low representation of women in politics and in leadership positions. This study therefore seeks to examine how Nigerian media construct and present women in politics during two election periods, as well as the role of media in identity construction and perpetuation of gender stereotypes. The period for this study is November 2018 and March 2019, which falls within the fourth republic in Nigeria, when the nation returned to democratic rule in 1999. Twenty years after Nigeria's return to democratic governance, women are still grossly underrepresented in a system of government that is expected to foster increased women participation in governance and leadership (Esomchi & Akoji, 2016; Egwu, 2015).

Objectives of Study

This study evaluates Nigerian media portrayal of women in political leadership positions in the country. The study examined whether Nigerian media use stereotypical frames to depict women in political leadership positions and the extent to which such stereotypical frames are used. The study also seeks to ascertain how media contribute to gender inequality through their coverage and reportage. This study is concerned with adding to feminist discourse on media role in the participation of women in political leadership.

The specific objectives of the study are to:
   (i)   Examine how the Nigerian media construct and represent women in political leadership positions in the country.
   (ii)   Evaluate the role of the Nigerian media in perpetuating gender inequality and hegemonic ideology
   (iii)   Examine the extent to which Nigerian media use stereotypical frames in representation of women in political leadership.

Research Questions

(i)   How do the Nigerian media construct and represent women in political leadership positions in the country?

(ii) What is the role played by the Nigerian media in the perpetuation of gender inequality and hegemonic ideology?

(iii) To what extent do the Nigerian media use stereotypical frames in the representation of women in political leadership positions in the country?

Study Design

This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of research study in order to holistically examine the variables being studied. This is because qualitative methods of gathering and analyzing data have interpretational limits that hamper generalization of their findings because of the small sample sizes used, which often are not representative of the study population (Dominick, 2010; Bryman, 2008). To objectively assess the portrayal of female politicians in Nigerian media, this study adopted content analysis, which is recognized as a research technique for objective and quantitative description of manifest content of communication (Berelson, 1989; Sobowale, 1983).

Population

The population for this study included all the editions of Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers from November 2018 to March 2019. The two newspapers were purposively chosen based on specific characteristics such as ownership pattern, national spread and coverage, location, national distribution network, their wide readership based on their appeal to the masses and the political class, their availability and consistency in the market and easy accessibility to the researcher for this study. The five months periodization of the study between November 2018 and March 2019 was the peak of electioneering campaigns, election and post-election era of the 2019 general elections.

Data Collection

The media articles analyzed for this study include news reports, features, interviews, editorials, opinions, columns, cartoons, photographs and specialized reports. All the editions of both newspapers for the period under investigation were content analyzed, except for Sunday editions. Sunday editions were excluded because there are no political activities on Sundays. Media contents which refer to women politicians were purposively selected and coded using the following units – amount of coverage in terms of frequency; prominence of coverage in terms of placement and size of space allocation; tone of coverage; types of issues reported about female politicians; ascription of familial roles to female politicians in news stories; and the use of gendered frames in description of traits of female politicians. Media contents were coded based on issues of public concern that dominate discourses in the country and in the media, which include issues on economy, foreign affairs, corruption, security, governance, health, reforms, education, women's rights, and development to mention a few.

Data presentation and analysis

The data gathered during the field work covered a sample size of 262 editions of both newspapers. Below are the tables of how Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers covered women holding political leadership positions in the country.

Table 1: Guardian newspapers coverage of female politicians in Nigeria

News type	Story placement	Story tone	Gendered frame	Event	Familial traits	Discourse
News – 15.5%	Front page – 2.82%	Positive – 7.1%	Married – 20.9%	National event/matter – 14.89%	Marital status – 27.58%	Security/crime/terrorism – 3.04%
News analysis - 4.23%	Back page – 1.41%	Negative – 23.9%	Divorced – 11.63%	Parliament proceedings – 4.26%	Physical appearance – 12.64%	Foreign policies – 2.82%
Features – 7.04%	Inside front-page – 8.45%	Mixed – 39.4%	Widowed – 6.98%	Political party event – 20.4%	Age – 10.34%	International trade – 0.96%
Political analysis – 4.23%	Inside back page – 12.7%	Neutral- 29.6%	Single – 11.63%	Military/para-military event – 0%	Place of birth – 9.2%	Economy/poverty – 6.86%
Commentary – 1.41%	Center spread – 1.41%		Never married – 13.96%	International event – 8.51%	Place of marriage – 10.34%	Governance/social justice – 15.5%
Interviews – 2.82%	Full page – 5.63%		Single parent – 13.96%	Constituency matter – 13.77%	Widow of – 3.45%	Constitutional reforms – 4.23%
Editorials -0%	Three quarter – 9.86%		Separated – 13.96%	Financial/ economy event – 8.51%	Masculine / feminine – 8.05%	Corruption – 5.63%
Specialized reports – 1.41%	Half page – 11.3%		Childless – 6.98%	Social function – 29.66%	Break from the past – 4.60%	Politics and party affairs – 11.3%
Columns – 0%	Quarter – 25.4%				Wealthy – 5.75%	Gender issues – 23.9%
Opinion articles – 7.04%	Less than a quarter- 21.1%				Newness – 4.60%	Development matters – 7.45%
Photographs – 25.4%					Soft/hard – 3.45%	Environment/agriculture – 5.63%
Entertainment – 29.6%						Education/health – 8.43%
Cartoons – 1.41%						Ethnic clashes/peace building - 4.23%
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2: Daily Trust newspapers coverage of female politicians in Nigeria

News type	Story placement	Story tone	Gendered frame	Event	Familial traits	Discourse
News – 20.59%	Front page – 1.47%	Positive - 5.88%	Married – 21.2%	National event/matter – 16.36%	Marital status – 31.31%	Security/crime/terrorism – 8.82%
News analysis – 5.88%	Back page – 1.47%	Negative – 16.22%	Divorced – 13.5%	Parliament proceedings – 0%	Physical appearance – 12.12%	Foreign policies – 1.47%
Features – 7.35%	Inside front page – 11.7%	Mixed – 48.5%	Widowed – 3.85%	Political party event – 23.63%	Age – 11.12%	International trade – 0%
Political analysis – 1.47%	Inside back page – 10.3%	Neutral – 29.4%	Single – 17.3%	Military/para-military event – 1.82%	Place of birth – 4.040%	Economy/poverty – 8.81%
Commentary – 4.41%	Center spread – 0%		Never married – 17.3%	International events – 9.09%	Place of marriage – 15.15%	Governance/social justice – 10.29%
Interviews – 4.41%	Full page – 2.95%		Single parent -7.63%	Constituency matter – 12.73%	Widow of – 1.01%	Constitutional reforms – 1.47%
Editorials – 0%	Three quarter – 13.2%		Separated – 17.3%	Financial/ economy event – 3.64%	Masculine / feminine – 9.09%	Corruption – 10.29%
Specialized reports – 4.41%	Half page – 8.82%		Childless – 1.92%	Social function – 32.73%	Break from the past - 1.01%	Politics and party affairs – 16.17%
Columns – 1.47%	Quarter – 25.59%				Wealthy – 8.08%	Gender issues – 22.1%
Opinion articles – 5.89%	Less than a quarter – 24.5%				Newness - 1.01%	Development matters – 5.88%
Photographs – 20.59%					Soft/hard – 6.06%	Environment/agriculture – 10.29%
Entertainment – 23.53%						Education/health – 2.94%
Cartoons – 0%						Ethnic clashes/peace building – 1.47%
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Research Question 1: How do the Nigerian media construct and represent women in political leadership positions in the country?

As indicated in the tables above, out of the 71 and 68 media contents on female politicians reported in the Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers, 54.9% and 44.1% of the news contents were pictures and stories of social engagements in which female politicians were featured in Guardian and Daily Trust respectively. Out of the 47 and 55 events reported about women politicians in the two newspapers, Guardian and Daily Trust respectively recorded 27.7% and 32.7% on social functions alone. On issues of discourse in the news stories that featured female politicians, 35.2% and 38.2% were on gender issues and political party affairs in Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers respectively. These findings denote that media reportage of female politicians do not empasize their capabilities and intelligence.

Research Question 2: What is the role played by the Nigerian media in the perpetuation of gender inequality and hegemonic ideologies?

A total of 139 media contents on women politicians were coded from 262 editions of Guardian and Daily Trust newspapers, 2.12% of the media contents were featured on the front page; 1.44% were on the back pages of the newspapers, 4.32% were given full page, while 47.5% were allocated quarter and less than quarter spaces in the inside pages of the two newspapers. In spite of the importance of editorial on issues, considering the fact that the study period was during election, and several women were vying for top political positions, both newspapers did not publish any editorial on women in politics. Also, of the 139 media contents in both newspapers, stories that depict the efficiency and capability of women politicians (i.e. positive tone) constituted 6.47%, while negative frame of women inefficiency made up 20.1% and 43.9% recorded a mixed of both positive and negative. Based on the above data analysis, there is an indication that media reportage to a large extent supports gender inequality and hegemonic ideologies because of the negligible and selective attention given to activities by female politicians.

Research Question 3: To what extent does the Nigerian media use stereotyping frames in the representation -of women in political leadership positions in the country?

As indicated in the tables above, out of the 139 media contents in the newspapers analyzed, 95 representing 68.3% utilized gendered frames such as daughter of or wife of, divorcee, single parent, mother of a number of children and so on. Familiar traits such as appearance, too masculine or feminine, marital status, place of marriage, spouse of, soft/hard were also grossly employed in the 139 media contents analyzed with Guardian having 65.5% and Daily Trust 74.7%. The cumulative percentage of media reports on foreign affairs, international trade, constitutional reforms, governance and security that featured female politicians' opinions during the period of study was 11.05% for Guardian newspaper and 11.76% for Daily Trust newspaper. This portends that media framing of women in political leadership positions show gender bias, which negates their capability, intelligence and achievements.

Discussion

The findings of this study will be discussed thematically on the following themes – portrayal, media access and prominence.

Portrayal: Considering the setting theory, media to a large extent influence issues of discussion (Cohen, 1963). In the Guardian publication of February 15, 2015, a female presidential candidate

was described as having the looks of a 'fawn and daring to tread the path of men.' Description like this is part of media portrayal that reinforces the belief that such political leadership positions are the exclusives of men. In the Daily Trust edition of December 8, 2014, a reporter described a female political aspirant as building her political career on the fame of her husband, who is a politician. This kind of portrayal denotes perceived incapability and inexperience of the female political aspirant and this could be one of the reasons why media do not seek the opinions of female politicians on serious national and international issues. All through the administration of the former Vice Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkle, the media described her as 'too masculine and severe in her dressing'. This negative portrayal of the German former leader by the media denotes use of familial traits in media reports and the presupposition idea that the political space is a male/patriarchal domain.

Media Accessibility: To a large extent, media in Nigeria is commodified and the amount of money a politician can spend on media determines the types of news stories, frequency, tone of story, issues of discourse and placement of stories in the media. Political parties and politicians world-wide are known to invest heavily on media campaigns (Shapiro, 2014). For most female politicians, finance has been discovered to affect their access to the media and portrayal by the media. However, the media being the fourth estate of the realm should offer enough access for female politicians to express their views and positions on issues of national and international concerns. A paltry 5 interviews out of 262 editions of two national newspapers between the several women who contested at the national, state and local government levels in the 2015 general elections was a clear expression of denial to media access.

Prominence: Refers to the placement of news stories in the media and the issues of discussion. Out of the 139 media contents on women politicians, only 3 were on front page, there was no editorial in both newspapers on women politicians, and only 6 editions representing 4.32% had full page stories on female politicians. Following the findings of this study, it could be observed that media portrayal of women in political leadership positions were marginalized by inadequate media coverage which portray them as inconsequential.

Conclusion

According to the agenda setting theory, the media greatly influences what people think about, while the framing theory explains that the way media present people, ideas or issues influences how the audience interpret them. This study is a preliminary examination of how media portray women in politics in Nigeria through use of gendered frames, under-reporting, exclusion of women politicians from discourse of national and international issues. This paper argues that the media frame their stories through a patriarchal structure which subjugates women politicians in Nigeria. This social and emotional segregation of women in the political domain will make more women shy away from participating fully in the country's politics and this will invariably affect the overall development of the nation.

Recommendations

The followings are hereby recommended based on the findings of the study:
i. Media practitioners should discard the use of misogynistic terms and gender labels in framing women in politics. Rather, gender neutral terms should be adopted.

ii. Development journalism which promotes social cohesion, cultural development on the basis of equality and awareness of ethos that promote life advancement as well as eliminate retrogressive and inhibiting practices should be promoted among journalists and media organizations.

iii. Awareness campaigns by media organizations, the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) should be carried out to enlighten the populace on the limitations of a patriarchal society in modern times, especially as it inhibits development of women and the society.

iv. The quantity of coverage, prominence and nature of reportage given to women political leaders in the media should be reconsidered so as to mainstream their voices in topical issues in media reportage.

v. Media should reduce the use of gendered frames in reporting issues about women in politics. Rather, emphasis should be on capabilities and experience. Consequently, media should seek women politician views on issues of national and international significance.

vi. Government, media associations, gender advocacy groups and other self-regulatory bodies should engage in political orientation and awareness campaigns for meaningful participation of Nigerian women in politics and other development projects.

vii. Nigerian journalists should be retrained on the need to depict women in political leadership positions outside familial and gender purview.

References

Adeleye-Fayemi, B. (2019). *Speaking for myself: Perspectives on social, political and feminist activism.* Amandla.

Adeniyi-Ogunyankin, G. (2014). *"Spare tires," "second fiddle," and "prostitutes"?* Nokoko

Braden, M. (1996). *Women, politicians and the media*. University Press of Kentucky.

Berelson, B. (1949). What missing the newspaper means In: Lazarsfeld, P.E. and Stanton, E., (eds) *Communication research*. Harper

Campus, D. (2013). *Women political leaders and the media*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Carlin, D. B. & Winfrey, K. L. (2009). Have you come a long way baby? Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin and sexism in 2008 campaign coverage. *Communication studies*, 60(4), 326-343.

Carter, C., & Steiner, L. (2004). Mapping the contested terrain of media and gender research. In Carter, C., & Steiner, L, (eds) *Critical readings: Media and Gender.* Open University Press

Cohen, B. C. (1963). *The press and foreign policy*. Princeton University Press.

Ekeh, D. (2018). Media and gender inequality in Nigerian politics. *International Journal of Gender and Women's Studies*, 6(2),52-64 https://doi.org/10.15640/ijgws.v6n2p6

Fiske, J. (1996). *Media matters: race and gender in US politics*. University of Minneapolis Press

Gberevbie, D. E., & Oviasogie, F. O.(2013). Women in governance and sustainable democracy in Nigeria, 199-2012. *Economics and Sociology*, 6(1), 89-107

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Harper and Row.

Hamalai, L., Egwu, J., & Omotola, S. (2017). *Nigeria's 2015 General Elections: continuity and change in electoral democracy.* Palgrave Macmillian Cham.

Harmer, E. (2015). Public to private and back again: the role of politicians' wives in British election campaign coverage. *Feminists media studies*, 1-17.

Johannessen, C. (2006). *State and woman power.* Scandinavian university press.

Kantola, J., & Lombardo, E. (2017). *Gender and the economic crisis in Europe. Politics, institutions and intersectionality*. Palgrave macmillian

Kittilson, M. & Fridkin, K. (2008). Gender, candidate portrayals and election campaigns: A comparative perspective. *Politics and gender*, 4(3), 371-392.

Lee, F. L. F., Felder, J.N, Wessel, L., Burn, S.M., Aboud, R., & Zucker, A.N. (2017). The relationship between gender, social identity and support for feminism. *Sex roles*, 42(11-12), 1081-1089. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:10.

Lee, F. L. F. (2015). Constructing perfect women: the portrayal of female officials in Hong Kong newspapers. Media, *Culture and Society*, 26(2), 207-225

Lunenborg, M., & Maier, T. (2015). Power politician or fighting bureaucrat: Gender and power in German political coverage. *Media, Culture and Society*, 37(2), 180-196.

Mendes, K. (2011). *Feminism in the news*. Palgrave macmillian.

McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda setting function of the mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36. 176-187

Ojebuyi, B. R., & Chukwuwike, A. C. (2018). Gender bias in media representation of political actors: Examples from Nigeria's 2015 presidential election. *Legon Journal of Humanities*, 29 (1), 195

Omojola, O. (2014). *Women's political visibility and media access: the case of Nigeria*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

O'Neill, D., Savigny, H. & Cann, V. (2016). Women politicians in the UK press: not seen and not heard? *Feminist media studies*,16(2), 293-307.

Ouahidi, M. (2018). Gender imbalances in Moroccan broadcast news. Kultura ir Visuomene,9(1), 99-124   http://eltapykla.vdu.It:8080/bitstream/handle/1/35870/ISSN2335-8777_2018_N_9_1.PG_99-113.pdf

Oyewole, J. A. & Olisa, D. S. (2017). Media, politics and gender marginalization in Nigeria: Is there till a way out? *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communication*, 3, (1), 20-26

Ross, K. (2017). *Gender, politics, news: a game of three sides*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Ross, K. (2003). *Women politicians and malestream media: a game of two sides.* Centre for advancement of women in politics.

Scholz, S. J. (2012). *Feminism: a beginner's guide*. Oneworld publications.

Segal, L. (2002). *Why feminism? Cambridge*: Polity press

Shapiro, J. S. (2014, August 13th). US public relations, consulting firms find political gold in Nigeria, *Washington Post*. https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/aug/13/us-public-relations-consulting-firms-find-politica/

Tuchman, G. (1978). The symbolic annihilation of women by the mass media. In: Gaye, T., Daniels, A.K., Benet, J. (eds) *Hearth and Home: Images of women in the mass media* (pp33-38). Oxford University Press

Cite this article as

Shaibu, F. O., & Gambo, I. A. (2021). Assessment of media portrayal of women in politics In Nigeria. *THE COLLOQUIUM*, 9(1), 14 – 26

United Nations. (2019). *Promoting women, peace and security Women's participation in political Processes*, New York.

Washburn, P. C., & Washburn, M. H. (2011). Media coverage of women in politics: The curious case of Sarah Palin. *Media, culture and society*,33(7),1027-1041.

Cite this article as

Shaibu, F. O., & Gambo, I. A. (2021). Assessment of media portrayal of women in politics In Nigeria. *THE COLLOQUIUM*, 9(1), 14 – 26