

## **Gender Justice: A Beacon For Technological Innovation And Sustainable Development In Post Covid-19 In Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*Gender injustice has been a recurring decimal in the Nigerian society. Daily, women are violated, marginalized and oppressed, as a result of unhealthy structures like Patriarchy. This has given rise to undesired male dominance and unjust treatments for the female folk. An instance may be drawn from the extreme preference for the male child over his female counterpart, which has led to an unjustifiable quest amongst the women and in extreme, led to deaths, as consequence for poor health management and strife. This is hinged on myths, values, norms, obnoxious customs and traditional practices. Also, the lopsided beliefs and conventions, clothed as religions, which subject the female folk to ridicule and undue subjugation; may be a justification for the impiety or otherwise of the woman. Mindbogglingly, a plethora of laws have been promulgated on the subject matter, which include municipal and international laws, yet, to no avail. Although these laws are extant and regulatory, however, there seems to be a gap in the laws; with no proper implementation. This accounts for the clarion call in this work, for the emancipation of the woman in Nigeria. This will certainly dignify her. To this end, this paper underscores the ordeal of the woman in Nigeria, highlights the legal framework on women's rights here, and thus, draws conclusion on the subject matter. Nevertheless, plausible suggestions on gender justice as the way forward have been proffered, as a legal-Technological innovation, for sustainable development in Post COVID'19 Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** *Gender justice, beacon, technological innovations, sustainable development, post COVID-19 Nigeria.*

## **Introduction**

The beauty of humanity is the ability to co-exist. The tendency to live, eat and enjoy the resources of life together, is what makes life meaningful, thereby enhancing growth and development of man. Indeed, the fact that, people, institutions and different organizations co- exist, explains the notion that, there is an inter-dependence of these institutions in the affairs of life. Thus, the fact that people come together to form a society, again, reiterates the fact that, the totality of a society is evident in the fair play of all persons, whether male or female. Every community is characterized by the presence of men and women, boy or girl. No one society has a solitude of men or women in its existence. From time immemorial, the world is made up of the male and female folks, be it underdeveloped, developing and developed nations, whether African, Asian, Arabian, European or American. There is no gainsaying that, there can never be the lone existence of a particular gender in any real society. Hence, equity and equality for all, ought to be the order for peaceful co-existence and justice. The unwanted marginalization or undue oppression and underserving humiliation of a particular folk in the society, is an indication of inhumanity and an imbalanced socio, political, economic, cultural world.

Unfortunately, this is the fate of the women in the world today, especially here in Nigeria. The African woman is readily isolated, discriminated, violated, oppressed, marginalized, dehumanized and voiceless, just for the sake of femineity. On daily basis, women are degenerated into half humans, objects of ridicule and scorn; as a result of unhealthy marriages, unwanted pregnancies, barbarous cultural and religious practices, insecurity, illegality, starvation, neglect and inequality in the distribution of resources; be it socio-economic, political, legal or otherwise. Indispensably, the COVID-19 pandemic left the female folk in more pains than it ever was. The pandemic increased the vulnerability of women and left them at a higher risk of deaths, starvation, increased rate of poverty, little or no medical attention, discrimination, instability and ineptitude in academic pursuits; all to the peril of the woman as the mother factor in the home. The woman was left with no choice but, to tend for her loved ones and children alone. The alarming rate of widowhood in recent times, is evident of this proposition. This is just a tip of the iceberg. Sadly, the ordeal of the woman in the Nigerian society is heightened by the inefficiency of the legal system, which is poorly mechanized or implemented to eliminate these undesirable and violent practices. Further, the paucity in the law, in respect of the elimination of these practices, may necessarily be the justification for the inability of the legal machineries to curb or rectify these anomalies. To my mind, this has given rise to undevelopment in Nigeria. Gender injustice is a prevalent plague in Nigeria, which must necessarily be cured or eradicated. Indisputably, there is gender injustice, inequity and inequality in the distribution of time and resources, between the men and women here. Until these pains and sufferings of the female folk are prevented, cured and obliterated, there is no justice in Nigeria and the world over. This accounts for this paper on the beacon of legal technology, for the proper placement of women in Nigeria. However, it is imperative to start this work by defining salient terms in this proper. This will boost the elucidation of the facts contained here.

## **Definition of terms**

It is imperative to define salient terms used in this paper. This will serve as an insight for better comprehension of the subject matter.

## **Gender Justice**

Gender here refers to the state of being male or female (with reference to social or cultural differences rather than biological ones).<sup>1</sup>

1 Oxford Dictionary of Current English (Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 4th ed., 2006) pg. 377. Justice is defined as a behaviour or treatment that is right and fair.<sup>2</sup> It is the administration of justice in a fair and reasonable way.<sup>3</sup> It connotes the fair treatment of people.<sup>4</sup> Gender justice is the systemic distribution of power, opportunities, and access for people of all genders through the dismantling of harmful structures including patriarchy, homophobia and transphobia.<sup>5</sup> It signifies an intersectional approach that centers the needs, experiences, and leadership of people most impacted by discrimination and oppression. It is further described as the equality and equity between women-and men in all spheres of life, resulting in women jointly, and on an equal basis with men, defining and shaping the policies, structures and decisions that affect their lives and society as a whole.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, the United Nations define gender justice as ending the inequalities between women and men, that are produced and reproduced in the family, the community, the market and the State.<sup>7</sup> It may be pertinent to note that, to the United Nations, gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationship between women and men, girls and boys. Gender here determines what is expected in a woman or man in a given context.<sup>8</sup>

### Beacon

This depicts a fire lit on the top of a hill as a signal. A signal light for ships or aircraft.<sup>9</sup> It is a lighthouse or other signal for guidance.<sup>10</sup> A Beacon is a person or thing that warns, guides or offers support.<sup>11</sup> To Meriam-Webster, a beacon is a source of light or inspiration. It is a

2 Ibid, Pg. 494

3 Ibid.

4 Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (Oxford University Press Inc. New York 8th ed) pg. 813

5 Gender Justice <<https://www.globalfunforwomen.org>> accessed 20th January, 2022

6 Gender Justice and Women's Rights <<https://www.oxfam.org/issues/gender>> accessed 20th January 2022

7 United Nations definition of Gender Justice <<https://www.un-women.org/publication>> last accessed 20th January 2022

8 What is Gender to the UN? <<https://www.un.org/concepts-and-definition>> accessed 20th January 2022

9 Ibid, n1, pg. 69

10 Webster's definition of a beacon <<https://www.merriam-website.com>>

11 See definition of beacon <<https://www.yourdictionary.com/beacon>>

Person or thing that shines light, and in turn, inspires, guides and brings hope to others. Whenever hope is ensured, allowed and employed, then there is a beacon.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, Gender justice as a beacon here is the path to a peaceful society. It is considered as, the hope of light for a formidable and stable Nigeria. Arguably, Gender Justice remains a means to a sustainable socio, political, economic, and legal end in Nigeria. This will certainly erase the pain, oppression and relegation of the typical Nigerian woman; which has left her less productive. It will be a redemptive machinery, to engender economic growth of the Nigerian nation.

### Technological innovation

An innovation is an idea that has been transformed into practical reality. It connotes creation or application of a new method, idea, product, etc. Where new ideas, modules, modes and mannerisms are employed or initiated, then there is an innovation.<sup>13</sup> It is the introduction of new things, ideas, or ways of doing something.<sup>14</sup> The change of a thing established for something new, is what innovation is.<sup>15</sup>

Hence, it is best described as, creating, developing and implementing a new product, process or service, with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness or competitive advantage. Technological innovation is therefore, a new or improved product or process whose characteristics are significantly different from before.<sup>16</sup> To make something new, one has to:

Generate or realize a new idea (invention and creativity)

Develop this idea into a reality or product (realization)

Implement and market this new idea (implementation)

<sup>12</sup> See also, beacon of change or light <<https://www.beaconsofchange.com>> accessed 21st January, 2022

<sup>13</sup> A definition adopted from Wikipedia

<sup>14</sup> Oxford's definition of innovation <<https://www.ofolearnersdictionaries.com>> accessed 21st January, 2022

<sup>15</sup> See definition of innovation <<https://www.legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com>> accessed 21st Jan. 2022

<sup>16</sup> A definition of Technological Innovation adopted <<https://www.stat.f>teka-innovation-en>> last accessed 21st January 2022

Thus, Gender Justice as a legal-technological innovation, must be generated, invented and created; developed into a reality and of course, implemented or applied in the Nigerian situation, to engender a healthy and sustainable development on all spheres of life, for the common good of all persons, whether male or female.

### **Sustainable development**

This is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals. It is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>17</sup> This is adopted from the definition of the Brundtland Commission.<sup>18</sup> Hence, Gender Justice as a tool for sustainable development, entails generating ideas, policies and structures that will boost the Nigerian economy for today, and for the future generations. Until these policies are put in place or implemented pragmatically, there is no hope for the future generation. Post COVID-19 Nigeria: This connotes a Nigerian nation free from the ordeal of the COVID- 19 pandemic. The novel coronavirus popularly known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus, first discovered in Wuhan, the Hubei region of China. Its symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, the infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. This virus is infectious and may be transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing). Individuals can also be infected from touching surfaces contaminated by the virus and touching their face (such as eyes, nose, mouth).<sup>19</sup> <sup>17</sup> A definition of sustainable development <<https://www.lis.org>> accessed 22nd January, 2022. <sup>18</sup> The Brundtland Report. See Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development (1987) formerly known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). <<https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org>> accessed 22nd January, 2022.

<sup>19</sup> Isaac Omo-Ehiabi Eranga, COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria Palliative Measures and the Politics of Vulnerability.

<<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>> accessed 22nd January, 2022. Also see the report by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNICEF key message and prevention and control in schools, March 2020.

<<https://www.unicef.org>> accessed 22nd January, 2022.

The devastating effect of the COVID-19 cannot be overemphasized.

It gave rise to a high death rate, loss of lives, loss of livelihood, hunger, famine, ill healths, torture as a result of lockdown measures, widowhood practices, divorce and economic deprivation. From the foregoing, a post COVID'19 Nigeria will make for better lives and livelihood, better equipped and enabled parenting. It will also reduce the death toll, alleviate poverty, ensure lives and property and indeed annihilate the impact of the COVID-19, in Nigeria and the society at large.

### **The concept of gender justice**

Gender justice is said to be a human right and is thus fundamental. It is, inalienable and undeniable. Indeed, it is expressed as a women's right, which stems from the fact of humanity. Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development. Moreover, it has been shown that empowering women spurs productivity, continuity and economic growth.<sup>20</sup> To the UN, women's right is paramount, owing to the fact that, its basic goal is "to achieve international cooperation... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion".<sup>21</sup> This is established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the landmark Declaration adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December, 1948, reaffirms the fact that: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights... and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex language, religion,... birth or other status."

<sup>20</sup> Gender Equality to the United Nations <<https://www.un.org>> accessed 22nd January, 2022

<sup>21</sup> See Article 1, UDHR (1948).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Hence, Gender Justice or Gender Equality (as the case may be), is not a new concept, as it has attained international recognition and is a legacy of the United Nations. It is the rationale for the operation of the UN on the rights of women and has thus, spurred women in the world into action, on the need to attain their proper place in the society at large. This is illustrated by the operations of the UN women on human rights.<sup>23</sup> This call is necessitated by the gap between men and women in the home, family, workplace, religions, institutions and cultural diversities. Undoubtedly, there is still a long way to go to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities. The adverse effect of gender injustice is clearly illustrated by the multiple forms of gender violence in education, health, economic resources and participation in political life for women and girls. It also stems from the uneven opportunities in access to employment, positions of leadership and decision-making at all levels. This accounts for the focus of the UN on the recently-developed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>24</sup> Emphatically, Goal 5, clamours on: "To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the pursuit for gender justice is a pre-requisite for sustainable development in Nigeria and the world over.

### **The Nigerian experience: An overview**

From time immemorial, Nigeria has gained an undesirable and undignified recognition of a patriarchal society, where women are relegated to the back, voiceless, with their rights constantly infringed. Women are readily denied their inalienable rights, and thus, subjected to 23.

### **Gender equality**

The unfinished business of our time – United Nations <<https://www.un.org>> accessed 20th January, 2022<sup>24</sup> See UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with many targets specifically recognizing women's equality an empowerment as both the objective and as part of the solution.

25 This is known as the stand-alone gender goal, because it is dedicated for achieving these ends, ridicule, extensive abuse, neglect and violations.<sup>26</sup> To Odiaka, the patriarchal structure in Nigeria is basically the reason for the peril and long suffering of the women. This is attributed to cultural, religious and societal norms, which have entrenched a historical imbalance in power relationship between men and women and thus, tilted the overall perceptions and roles of women in Nigeria.<sup>27</sup>

### **Violations and unfair practices**

Violence: This depicts acts of deprivation, abuse, oppression, discrimination, usurpation, pain, torture, injury, harm, coercion, unlawful exercise of force, apprehension, slavery, servitude intimidation, desecration, false statements, threats, arbitrary use of power, outburst. This occurs in variations which include the following:

#### **Domestic violence**

This is simply those practices or violations that occur at the home fronts, within family circles and between intimate partners or spouse. This is commonly practiced in the guise of marriage, courtship and the likes. This occurs anywhere and to anyone, it cuts across borders and regions. This occurs irrespective of status, whether married or single. This of course, is a violation of the woman's Right to dignity of human person, as provided in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended).<sup>28</sup> Indeed, domestic violence is a deep eater of joy and esteem. It includes incest, which is now a recurring decimal in homes. Battery and Assault are inclusive.

#### **Sexual violence**

This includes rape, sexual assaults, sodomy, bestiality. This is indeed a massive problem here in Nigeria because, on daily basis, women are victims of rape, assault, etc. There are cases of spousal rape, undue advantages over a girl hawking on. 26 N.O., Odiaka, The Concept of Gender Justice on Women's Rights in Nigeria: Addressing the missing link (Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2013), Published by African Journals Online (AJOL), 23 September, 2015. See <https://www.ajol.info> accessed 20th January, 2022. 27 Ibid the street, malls etc.<sup>29</sup> Mindboggling, is the fact that even the disabled are not left out in this business of rape. Blind, deaf, dumb girls are raped on daily basis. Even the insane (mad) or mentally deranged are molested, for selfish reasons, such as greed, rituals, and unhealthy fulfillments.

#### **Cultural violence**

This is the outcome of unfair traditions and customary practices, beliefs, myths. This includes obnoxious customs which are repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience. Examples are discrimination of the girl child in gatherings, meetings, churches, mosques, etc. Also, the inability of women to gain proprietary rights over properties and wealth. Female children are disinherited over properties and its likes. This was of course, the issue in *Mojekwu v Mojekwu*<sup>30</sup>; *Mojekwu & Ors v Ejikeme & Ors*<sup>31</sup>. These were hinged on issues of Equal Rights Trust. Reference may also be made to *Anekwe & anor v Maria Nweke*;<sup>32</sup> *Ukeje v Ukeje*.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Economic violence**

This depicts aggression and control over economic resources. It entails inequitable distribution over wealth and resources. It also includes, denial of work allowances, and unnecessary budget control. It is pertinent to state that some religion specify that male folk must control the woman's resources. This violates the woman's immutable and inalienable rights.<sup>34</sup>

**Physiological/psychological violence**

This touches on the integrity of the woman through coercion or threats. It includes defamation, verbal insults or harassment. It results in trauma and perpetual death of the victim. It is worthy to note that, this is a constant practice in homes and workplaces.

29 Et cetara (meaning 'another similar thing' or 'and so forth')

30 (1997) 7 NWLR (Pt. 572) 283, 304-305

31 (2000) 5 NWLR 402

32 Sc. 129/2013

33 (2014) II NWLR (Pt. 14188) 384, also see Ejiamike v. Ejiamike (1992) 2 ELR, P. 11, Neziyana & Ors. v. Okagbue

& anor (1963) JELR 41066 (SC)

**Social violence**

This is violence from the social perspective. This cuts across all facets of life, such as educational, political, socio-economic etc. It includes denial of education, no access to quality health care, high cost of medication, no treatment for terminal diseases like HIV/AIDS, STDs. It includes political deprivations and social imbalance. This includes corporate prostitutions in Banks, offices, institutions, where women are made to sell their bodies to meet undue targets.

**Female genital mutilation**

In spite of a plethora of laws which condemn this act, this persists here in Nigeria. Often times, women (mothers, grandmothers, aunties) are the perpetrators of this offence. This is indeed a big problem here in Nigeria because, any girl/woman that refuses to be mutilated, is ostracized. This is indeed a killer of the passion and sexual pleasure of the victim. It leads to promiscuity.

**Widowhood practices**

This is still prevalent in Nigeria in spite of the vast literature, laws and expositions on the subject matter. It is still upheld in families, villages, towns and institutions. It transcends education, affluence, or status. Candidly, it leads to stigmatization and ostracization of the disobedient or disloyal victim. It leads to denial of inheritance and obnoxious customary and religious laws.<sup>35</sup>

**Early marriage/betrothal cases**

This is indisputably prevalent in Northern Nigeria. Till date, girls are betrothed to seen and unseen husbands. In some cases, they are betrothed to deities (fetish practices). Often times, these spouses are unwanted by the victims. There are case: of very old men marrying tender aged girls. This is unfortunate because, even the laws permit this act. Till date, laws are not promulgated to curb or obliterate this act where there are laws, they are ineffective.

**Institutional discrimination**

This includes labour discriminations, as evident in the police, workplaces. This is also encouraged by some offensive laws such as Section 55 Labour Act<sup>36</sup> Section 55 Penal Code<sup>37</sup>, Section 360 Criminal Code<sup>38</sup>, Section 268 Penal Code<sup>39</sup> and Section 226 of the Zamfara State Shariah Penal Code 40,<sup>40</sup> respectively.

**Lack of political representation**

This is indeed an endless issue in Nigeria, where women are not duly represented in decision-making and governance. Notably, even where they, the percentage is infinitesimal. Also, where the privilege of representation is given, it is done in a manner that the woman is 'silent' to ills in the system or voiceless, else, she will be removed from such office by the men.

**Lack of legal protection**

In spite of the laws in Nigeria, women are seldom protected legally. The problem here may be, the legal mechanisms involved in cases of violations.

**Legal framework on women's rights in Nigeria**

Laws regulating women's rights include the following:

**Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) as amended**

This provides for the fundamental rights,<sup>41</sup> and the non-justifiable rights.<sup>42</sup>

**Criminal code 43**

Though this proscribes crimes and prescribes punishments, as applicable in the Southern, Eastern and Western Nigeria; it is somewhat incomplete.

36 S. 55 which relates to women barred from being employee in night work, except as nurses.

37 S. 55(1) PC on the permission of husbands to chastise their wives for wrongdoings, though without injury. Unfortunately, this gives undue advantage to the man over his wife. It is indeed discriminatory.

38 S. 360 CC which makes the offence of indecent Assault a misdemeanor.

39 S. 268 PC which trivializes indecent Assault.

40 S 226 of Zamfara State Sharia Law is indeed discriminatory. It trivializes indecent assault to an unpleasant state

41 The rights as enshrined in Chapter IV, Ss 33-45, CFRN (1999) as amended.

42 See Chapter II, The Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. Although this remains non-justiciable in any court of justice.

**Penal code 44**

This is applicable in the Northern States. It is the equivalent of the CCA. This is grossly inadequate and to an extent, condones or permits certain violations against women.<sup>45</sup>

**Laws of the various States**

These laws to an extent aid in curbing these violations. However, there are state laws which somewhat aid these violations.<sup>46</sup> A point to note here is that, various States have adopted certain Federal Laws, so that it is in consonance with the law being in force.

**Violence against persons (prohibition) Act 47**

This is indeed a tremendous achievement because, this Act is made to eliminate violence in private and public life, prohibit all forms of violence against persons and to provide maximum protection, effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders; and for relate matters. However, the problem here is the machinery and mechanisms of implementing this law. It has specific novel provision such as Anal Rape <sup>48</sup>, Incest<sup>49</sup>, indecent Exposure<sup>50</sup>, unlawful deprivation, personal liberty of a person<sup>51</sup>, unlawful and forceful eviction of a spouse<sup>52</sup>, widowhood practices/harmful cultural practices<sup>53</sup>, abandonment of spouse and dependents<sup>54</sup>.

44 PC (Federal Provision Act) No. 25 of 1960

45 See 55(1) which makes spousal battery, a lawful means of correction. Also, see S. 282 which permits marital rape. Thus, a husband may have undue advantage over his wife, without her consent, anywhere, anytime.

46 Ibid, n40 47 VAPP Act [2015]. It is submitted that this law will indeed boost the welfare of the woman here.

However, it seems to be drafted in a hurry such that certain declarations are not contained therein. More so, there is a gap, because of the jurisdiction of the High Court in Abuja. It may be impossible for victims from all parts of Nigeria to reach the court domiciled in Abuja. Consequently, the Federal High Court may be a better option for extension, owing to its wider coverage in Nigeria.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid, S. 25

50 Ibid, S. 26

51 Ibid, S. 10

52 Ibid, S. 9(1)

53 Ibid, S. 15(1)

### **International laws**

#### **Universal declaration of human rights.55**

#### **Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)56.**

An international treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. It is described as an International Bill of Rights for Women. This includes its optional protocol.

#### **Declaration on the elimination of discrimination against women (DEDAW)57.**

This is a human rights proclamation issued by the United Nations General Assembly, outlining the body's views on women's rights. Adopted on 7 November, 1967.

#### **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, on the Rights of Women in Africa.58**

This is indeed a treaty to reckon with on the issue of women. It is Africa- centered and addresses lots of issues, which municipal laws may not touch on.

### **The efficacy of the laws or otherwise**

From the foregoing, it is obvious that there are very many laws on women related crimes, both municipal and international laws/treaties, made for the benefit of the Nigerian woman. Disappointingly, this plethora of laws has to an extent made no real impact on the lives of women in Nigeria. Arguably, women are still relegated, battered, assaulted, marginalized and oppressed here in Nigeria. In fact, to the layman in Nigeria, a woman is 'the subject of a man'. She is considered a chattel or a property of the man. Indeed, it may be argued here that, in some parts of Nigeria, it remains an abomination for a woman to be in a gathering of men. or put in another sense, in a village or town hall meeting. Also, the preference for 'male child' is still prevalent and is the consequence of many deaths, broken homes, polygamy and 'hidden

55 1948

56 1979

57 1967

58 2003

Bigamy'. Till date, some women are denied education, just for their brothers or male counterparts to get better education or opportunities. Candidly, it may be infeasible to highlight or underscore all the experiences of women in Nigeria. Thus, this is just a cursory attempt of these violations.

### **Conclusion**

Sequel to the aforementioned status of the Nigerian woman today; her pains and sufferings as a result of patriarchy and related structures; which are inimical to her productivity and development in Nigeria, and by extension to the world over; it may be apt to state that, the typical Nigerian woman is hampered and at her lowest ebb. The woman here is vulnerable and thus, oppressed.

She is readily humiliated and intimidated by the male folk, because of femineity. It is further discovered that, violators of women's rights and offenders of the requisite laws, are not really sanctioned. Often times, the offenders are excused through plea bargaining, discharged and acquitted on free terms. In fact, they are very many times, exculpated, at the peril of the victim. This is seen in cases of rape and sexual assault. Consequently, these offenders are not deterred from their bad behaviours. Kidnappers, abductors of girls, especially in schools today, must be stringently punished. Also, the stigmatization and ostracization of victims of these injustices, is indeed inimical to the growth and development in Nigeria. Thus, victims opt to die in silence, which leaves the society unchanged for the best. Until, the public is properly sensitized or awareness created even at the rural levels, such as Town Hall meetings. Churches, Mosque etc. and; offenders brought to book, injustices will not end. Hence, there is need for door to door education and sensitization for the best awareness. Consequently, there is a need for the dogged and untiring struggle for the emancipation of the Nigerian woman on all spheres of life. The beauty of the woman must be regained and her dignity and life rekindled like fire. Everyone must rise up for this call, especially the government machineries, the police, the Court, institutions and the entire populace. Gender Justice is the way, the means and the beacon for legal technological innovation in Post Covid- 19 Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

The laws on women's rights need not be static. They must be enacted, reviewed and amended to suit the changing needs of the society. The wordings of the law must be carefully construed and properly drafted to suit the contemporary status of the woman and the needs of the society. There has to be an attitudinal change or modification, towards the girl child and the woman. This will be initiated in homes, churches, mosques, institutions etc. There is need for better awareness and sensitivity of the people, even at the rural areas.. Promulgated laws must be properly implemented, with necessary legal mechanisms at work, to achieve the desired goal. Women must be allowed to rule, take up the stages of leadership and acclaimed for their achievements. There must be a better applaud for the dogged women. International treaties and related subject matters on women must be adopted and domesticated, for proper execution of the laws. The sexual offences Bill (2013) and the Gender and Equal Opportunities (GOE) Bill (2016), must be duly enacted and assented to. They must be in operation soonest. Stereotyping and the likes must be abhorred here in Nigeria, to dignify the girl child. Corruption by the police, legal machineries, traditional rulers and community leaders must be stopped, with stringent punishment for offenders.

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