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Enforcing the Inheritance Rights of Women: A Comparative Paradigm of South East Nigeria and Somalia

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Abstract

The denial of inheritance rights to women, particularly female children and widows, remains a significant challenge in Southeast Nigeria and Somalia, despite legal provisions that protect gender equality. In Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution and the landmark case of *Ukeje v. Ukeje* (2014) prohibit discrimination against women's inheritance rights, yet cultural practices persist in disinherit them. Similarly, in Somalia, despite Islamic law granting women inheritance rights, customary practices often override these provisions, limiting women's access to property. This study uses an ethnographic research design with a qualitative approach and in-depth interviews with traditional rulers, lawyers, and women's rights activists to look at how the *Ukeje v. Ukeje* decision is being put into practice in Southeastern Nigeria and what is getting in the way of Somali women's inheritance rights. Findings reveal that deep-rooted patriarchal customs, lack of awareness among women, and weak enforcement mechanisms contribute to non-compliance with legal provisions. The study recommends legislative action, public sensitivity, and judicial enforcement to ensure women's inheritance rights are upheld in both jurisdictions.

Key words: *Inheritance rights of females, Ukeje v. Ukeje, Gender discrimination, Supreme Court of Nigeria, Somalia.*

1. Introduction

Inheritance rights are essential for property ownership and financial stability; however, women in various societies, including Africa, still encounter systemic discrimination in this regard. For example, Blancino et al. (2023) found that gender-based differences still exist in inheritance laws and customs around the world, notably in patriarchal cultures where customs often take precedence over law. Although international legal frameworks like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) promote gender equality in inheritance, cultural practices often hinder their application. Nations with advanced legal systems, like Sweden and Canada, have implemented equal inheritance rights for both genders, showing that legal changes can greatly influence gender equality (Kabeer, 2021). Nonetheless, in various regions of Africa, traditional laws and patriarchal customs still restrict women's rights to property.

In African cultures, inheritance is strongly ingrained in traditional practices that prefer male successors. The prevalent patrilineal structure specifies that property is passed down via the male line, frequently leaving female offspring and widows without direct inheritance (Hirschon, 2023). The reasoning for this cultural tradition is that women are anticipated to wed and join their husband's family, thus relinquishing rights to their father's inheritance. In numerous communities, especially among the Igbo in southeastern Nigeria and different Somali clans, property inheritance is viewed not only as an economic entitlement but also as a way to preserve lineage continuity and uphold family honor. Although certain African cultures, like the Akan of Ghana, follow matrilineal inheritance (Amoako, 2024), these instances are more the exception than the typical case.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted on 18th December 1979 by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and ratified by 189 member states of the UN. It became operational as an international treaty in 1981. The Convention has a committee that monitors the extent to which the provisions of the Convention are implemented among the state, especially in the areas of violence against women, gender pay gap, stereotypes, girl school drop-out rates, and political participation, among others (Antai et al., 2024). CEDAW propagates that men and women should be treated equally and given equal opportunities in all spheres of

life. No obstacle should impede women's progress towards contributing to this society. Based on the CEDAW treaty, there should not be occupational or trade placement discrimination against the female gender. The dignity of womanhood should be restored devoid of cultural and historical inhibitions, contrary to what is currently being practiced in southeastern Nigeria and Somalia alike (Nwaechefu, 2022).

The concept of men's and women's equality advocates argues for the removal of all forms of inequalities between men and women; by so doing, female individuals can achieve self-actualization, contribute to nation-building, and restore gender dignity in every sphere of life (UNICEF, 2017). According to CEDAW, society can only reach its peak if both genders have equal opportunities to contribute to its advancement. We cannot achieve this in an environment that discriminates against women or treats them as inferior to men. Women's activism has risen worldwide in response to nationalist or class struggles, as well as struggles for democracy, human rights, and peace. Feminism and activism have sprung up in response to women's repression and exploitation, with the primary goal of improving women's social and humanitarian circumstances (Morris, 2024). Women's legal and political rights, violence against women, reproductive rights and abortion, sexual liberty, employment and discrimination eradication, and political involvement and representation appear to be familiar topics in gender equality movements around the world.

The discriminatory attitude towards the right of a female child and widows to inheritance and succession among the Igbo people of the southeastern part of Nigeria has become topical, and perhaps notorious among legal analysts. Social commentators, sociologists, lawyers, and religious bodies have expressed varying opinions on the discriminatory attitude towards females in real estate inheritance. In their bid to do justice, judges have made judicial pronouncements on the all-important subject of the rights of females and widows towards matters of inheritance of realty (e.g., Nwaechefu, 2022; Ogede, 2023). Several writers in the past and present, have commented on and criticized the ideology behind this subject matter of female discrimination with respect to inheritance and succession rights generally. They noted that traditional and statutory laws in Nigeria have historically reinforced gender-based exclusions, limiting women's access to inheritance (Nwogugu, 2014). In Nigeria and Somalia, the Federal Parliament has not yet passed laws that give women the right to inherit from their late husband's or father's estate. The only exceptions are the general provision of the Constitution

of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended, which protects human rights, and the recent rulings of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* (2015). Similarly, although the Islamic tenet provides for Somali women, the full realization of their inheritance rights falls short of expectations.

In Igbo land, particularly in Imo State, Nigeria, the scramble for the disposal of the real assets of a dead man causes severe social and cultural problems that lead to endless court litigation (Ezeonwuka, 2023). Due to the slow justice system in Nigeria, such litigations can last several years in court, sometimes extending up to twenty years, as exemplified in the case of *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, which began in 1982 and ended at the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 2014. In other instances, some litigants or their witnesses may die in protracted litigation spanning many years in court. When a man dies intestate or makes a valid will before death, the problem of sharing his estate or deciding who gets what at his demise is minimized. There are still instances of children and wives of a deceased who feel aggrieved or less benefitted in the will and later turn around to challenge the due execution of the will in the relevant court of law. Nevertheless, when a man makes a will, he has the freedom to devise any real property or bequeath any personal property to anybody, including his female children (Ezeilo, 2021). It is advocated that a man should make a will to enable him to give property to his female children and wife to protect them against discrimination that usually occurs when the man dies intestate, leaving his beloved female children and wife at the mercy of the custodians of custom. Before the Supreme Court judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, the customary law of the Igbo people excluded females from inheriting the estate of a man who dies intestate. While Nigeria has made significant legal strides in addressing gender-based discrimination in inheritance, it is important to examine how similar issues are approached in other jurisdictions, such as Somalia.

Somalia perspective

Somalia is a sovereign state, and the sovereignty rests with the people. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia includes provisions for human rights, such as prohibiting gender-based discrimination, ensuring equality before the law, and opposing any form of discriminatory practice based on sex, religion, location, or circumstances of birth. The 2012 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia guarantees equality before the law, explicitly prohibiting discrimination

based on gender. Islamic law, known as Fara'id, establishes precise guidelines for inheritance, guaranteeing women a specific portion of an estate. Despite these legal provisions, customary law continues to dominate inheritance practices, often favoring male heirs and restricting women's access to property.

Somalia has customary law as part of its sources of law, like in most African countries, including the Nigerian climate. Unwritten rules and procedures, orally passed from generation to generation, form the basis of customary laws (Yazew & Kassa, 2023). These include chieftaincy affairs, a system of marriages, divorce, burial rites, property acquisition, and inheritance matters. Customary laws define a relationship between members of the same clan, including matters considered as taboos within clans in Somalia, and this principle also applies to Nigeria. It is important to note that Somali communities have a diverse range of customary law, which incorporates sharia. However, customary law still influences sharia. Research indicates that women, especially in rural areas, struggle to assert their rights due to social stigma and a lack of formal legal support (Mohamed, 2012). Unlike Nigeria, where Supreme Court rulings have reinforced women's inheritance rights, Somalia lacks judicial precedents that affirm and enforce such rights on a national level.

Another major challenge in Somalia is the dual legal system that blends customary and religious laws. While Islamic inheritance law grants women a defined share of an estate, customary practices sometimes limit the practical application of these rights. For example, some communities continue to impose restrictions on widows and require them to remarry within the deceased husband's family to retain access to inherited property (Fatima, 2016). Furthermore, patriarchal interpretations of Islamic law by local religious leaders often reinforce discriminatory practices, making legal enforcement difficult. Women in Somalia also face institutional barriers in seeking justice. Customary courts, which handle the majority of inheritance disputes, are overwhelmingly male-dominated (Nyabera, 2023). Rarely do women participate in these proceedings, and their testimony often receives less weight than that of male relatives. Because of the absence of strong state institutions, these customary courts still have a lot of power and make constitutional and religious protections less effective.

Efforts to address these challenges have been slow. Various women's rights organizations in Somalia, along with international human rights bodies, have advocated for legislative reforms to prioritize statutory law over customary practices (Burke, 2020). However, political instability and

limited governmental enforcement mechanisms hinder progress. Unlike Nigeria, where public awareness campaigns and legal advocacy have contributed to incremental changes, Somalia's complex legal environment requires a more structured approach to bridging the gap between legal rights and customary practices.

In this research work, we are more interested in the inheritance rights of females than the succession rights, despite the fact that some people may confuse the two concepts. While inheritance pertains solely to property, succession refers to the transfer of title to property through the law of descent and distribution (Kodiyo, 2023). In the rural setting, women constitute the bulk of the farming population in food production, children's upbringing, and the organization of cultural events (Balayar & Mazur, 2022), yet this vulnerable gender, as one may choose to call them, appears to be considered mere chattel, which can only be seen and not heard in the scheme of things about the inheritance of real property. The most they could inherit are their deceased mother's clothing and cooking utensils. Such an arrangement is considered unfair, which is why the researcher is embarking on this study. In the case of Somalia, Islamic law recognizes the female right to inheritance, but customary practices seem to limit women. Males dominate the practice and decision-making on customary matters in Somalia, with women rarely participating in these decisions. Women have limited access to credible justice in customary matters in Somalia, particularly regarding inheritance of property, due to their lack of participation in customary procedures and decision-making. Although theoretically, women's rights are protected, this protection is not reflected in practice. Traditionally, men have dominated the justice system. In practice, women must approach men to present their cases when their rights have been denied. The curious issue here is what happens in a situation where the woman has grievances against his brother and needs to bring a case against him. She will not be able to pursue justice in the customary setting since she will not get the support of her male relations; justice is therefore denied to the woman when she has a row and issues with her male relatives.

This work will serve the immediate and future needs for the much-agitated gender equality and the advancement of Nigeria's legal jurisprudence and that of Somalia alike.

2. Statement of the Problem

The Igbo nation treats females as objects of inheritance. Even though the Supreme Court said in *Onyibor Anekwe and Chinweze v. Mrs. Maria Nweke*, and *Ukeje v. Ukeje* that disinheriting women was wrong, the practice has not stopped. Why the Igbo refused to comply with these two laudable Supreme Court judgments remains a mystery. Failure or refusal of the Igbo in Southeast Nigeria to comply with the Supreme Court judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* directing them to stop disinheriting females and the need to know what can be done to ensure compliance with the decision are the focus of this paper.

Similarly, Abubakar (2021) observed that in Somalia, while Islamic law grants women inheritance rights, customary practices rooted in patriarchal traditions significantly limit their ability to claim property. Somali women frequently face barriers in asserting their rights due to male-dominated customary courts, lack of awareness, and societal stigma (Nour, 2021). Unlike in Nigeria, where the Supreme Court has made a definitive ruling against gender-based discrimination in inheritance, Somalia lacks a judicial precedent reinforcing women's inheritance rights, making legal enforcement even more challenging. The specific objectives of this study include:

- i. To examine the relevance of the Supreme Court judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* concerning customary female rights to inheritance of real property in south-eastern Nigeria when a man dies intestate.
- ii. To examine the cultural and religious barriers hindering the enforcement of women's inheritance rights in both Nigeria and Somalia.
- iii. To compare the legal frameworks governing women's inheritance rights in Nigeria and Somalia.
- iv. To recommend strategies for enhancing the protection and enforcement of women's inheritance rights.

Instructively, this study fills the gap in previous studies on how the Igbo of Southeast Nigeria will comply with the laudable Supreme Court judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* and how it can be applied to Somalia.

3. Theoretical framework

This study is anchored within feminist legal theory, which examines how legal systems reinforce gender inequality and how laws can be restructured to promote women's rights. The concept of patriarchy, central to feminist legal theory, explains how male-dominated structures shape legal institutions, customary practices, and other societal norms, often to the detriment of women. Patriarchy serves as a conceptual framework within feminist legal theory, highlighting how inheritance laws, whether statutory, customary, or religious, systematically place women in a disadvantageous position. In both Nigeria and Somalia, patriarchal structures have historically positioned women as secondary heirs, which have reinforced their exclusion from property ownership and economic security. Feminist legal theory critiques these systemic biases and calls for legal and institutional reforms to dismantle discriminatory practices.

In the Nigerian context, the Supreme Court ruling in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* represents an attempt to challenge patriarchal legal traditions by affirming women's inheritance rights. However, resistance from customary leaders and male-dominated inheritance structures demonstrates the enduring power of patriarchal norms. Feminist legal theory argues that legal victories alone are insufficient. In other words, broader societal shifts and institutional mechanisms are necessary to ensure compliance with gender-equal laws. Similarly, in Somalia, while Islamic law grants women specific inheritance rights, patriarchal interpretations of religious doctrine and customary practices continue to limit women's ability to claim these rights. Clan-based legal systems, which are overwhelmingly controlled by male elders, prioritize male inheritance and leave women with little recourse in inheritance disputes. This theory helps to explain this phenomenon by showing how legal pluralism—where statutory, religious, and customary laws coexist—creates loopholes that perpetuate patriarchal biases. Through the incorporation of patriarchy within the framework of feminist legal theory, this study provides a comprehensive lens to analyze the systemic challenges facing women's inheritance rights. Again, it underscores the need for legislative reforms and judicial enforcement, as well as cultural shifts, to ensure women can fully exercise their legal entitlements in both Nigeria and Somalia.

4. Research Methodology

Research Design

This article focuses on the judgment of the Supreme Court in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, how it affects the female right to inherit real property in Imo State, southeast Nigeria, and how it can be extrapolated to Somalia.

The research design adopted was an ethnographic and qualitative method of research. We used focus group discussions, structured interviews, and in-depth interviews with informants to interview 2 traditional rulers, 4 village heads, and 10 heads of families to gather from their experiences how female inheritance rights, widow's inheritance rights, succession, and inheritance have been practiced to date. These categories of informants were purposefully selected because they are key custodians of customary practices and play crucial roles in inheritance and succession matters within their communities. Their lived experiences and authority in decision-making processes make them valuable sources for understanding the persistence of gender-based inheritance discrimination. The interview sought out why, despite the Supreme Court's decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* relating to females' and widows' rights to inheritance of real property, it has not been implemented or followed by the people. The researcher consulted Statutes, relevant Law Reports, the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 as the primary source. The secondary sources of data collection used by the researcher for this study were law textbooks, books on customary law practice, and internet materials.

This study depended solely on secondary sources for Somalia because of difficulties in performing fieldwork. A comprehensive examination of literature and official documents was the most dependable method, given the intricate legal environment where customary, religious, and statutory laws converge. Important sources consisted of legal and judicial documents, particularly Somali constitutional articles on gender equality and inheritance rights under Islamic law. Although the Constitution champions non-discrimination, its enforcement is weak because traditional legal frameworks dominated by men frequently take precedence over statutory laws. Moreover, legal precedents and scholarly studies analyzed how traditional and faith-based customs affect women's inheritance rights. Although Islamic law provides women with inheritance rights, patriarchal clan traditions frequently limit their access, particularly in rural regions where clan courts resolve conflicts instead of official legal systems.

5. Discussion of Findings

5(a) Data Presentation and Analysis

We looked into the Igbo people in the Owerri West Local Government Area of Imo State and wanted to find out how well they were following the Supreme Court's decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, which ended discrimination against women under sections 42 (1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended. The researcher enquired about possible ways to ensure compliance with the novel judgment of the Supreme Court.

The findings from the study show that no legislation has been aimed at removing the discrimination against the female gender in the area of inheritance of real property in Imo State, Nigeria. Interviews with two principal state counsels working with the Ministry of Justice in Owerri suggest that the Imo state legislature has not explicitly considered enacting laws to ensure women are included in inheritance sharing. Again, the 2 interviewed traditional rulers stated unequivocally that no statutory legislation supported the discrimination against females' inheritance of real property.

Surprisingly, most participants during the focus group discussion saw the Supreme Court judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* as strange, as an attack on their long-standing customary practice. They felt that the Supreme Court justices could not sit in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, and decide what their custom should be. Few participants held the belief that the Supreme Court's decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* arrived abruptly and required immediate obedience. They felt that compliance with the judgment may start in the distant future and not immediately.

A participant from the Ministry of Justice in Owerri said most women were unaware of the judgment in question. The researchers' findings, through in-depth interviews with the traditional rulers, are that the traditional rulers felt that compliance would be a gradual process and that with time the acceptance of the people to the Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* would become a reality. One of the traditional rulers said that many people have not heard of the judgment, let alone read the published report. The royal father also said non-compliance with the Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* was mainly because of ignorance about the existence of the judgment.

During the interview with the respondents, the focus group discussants were unable to propose a solution for how the law could

ensure compliance with the judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, thereby making the decision a reality for the people of Imo State. However, a few key informants in other separate interviews suggested how the law would ensure compliance with the judgment in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*. A participant suggested that the Imo State House of Assembly should pass the Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* into law so that many people will become aware of it; hence compliance will become relatively easy. Another participant, in his wisdom, suggested that both the Imo State House of Assembly and National Assembly should pass a law and act, respectively, to harmonize the decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* into functional legislation and, by so doing, create more awareness about the decision.

5(b) Findings on Somalia's inheritance practice

Somalia has a mixture of inheritance practices. This is governed by Islamic law, wherein the women get half of what the men get. The mother of a deceased son gets one-third of the son's estate if the son or the daughter did not have children before his demise. Islamic scholars such as Al-Jazil and Abdul-Rahman have also made useful contributions in this regard as to inheritance, which also supports that women have inheritance rights (Al-Jazil, 2010).

Male folks dominate the practice and decision-making on customary matters in Somalia, and women are rarely involved in decisions reached in customary adjudication (Osman, 2010). That is why women in Somalia cannot get fair justice in customary matters like inheritance because they are not involved in customary processes and decisions, even though women's rights are supposed to be protected. Because men have traditionally controlled the justice system, they dominate it. In practice, women must approach men to present their cases when their rights have been denied.

Another significant challenge is the lack of legal enforcement mechanisms. While Nigeria has a Supreme Court ruling reinforcing women's inheritance rights, Somalia lacks a judicial precedent affirming such rights. Customary courts, which continue to be the primary means of resolving inheritance disputes, frequently dismiss or ignore women's legal claims. It is also not favorable that the Supreme Court of Somalia has not yet ruled on the female right to inheritance, just like the Nigerian Supreme Court did in *Ukeje's* case. It is pertinent to note that it becomes more binding even in the absence of a legislative instrument that supports the position of females on inheritance when the Supreme Court

of Somalia makes a pronouncement affirming women's right to inherit real property.

5(c) Comparative analysis of Nigeria and Somalia

Nigeria and Somalia share common challenges in enforcing women's inheritance rights, despite having legal frameworks that recognize them. In both countries, cultural and customary practices significantly undermine legal provisions, preventing women from fully exercising their inheritance entitlements. The persistence of patriarchal structures ensures that male relatives retain control over inheritance matters, which often leaves women without recourse. Additionally, in both societies, women who attempt to assert their inheritance rights face social stigma and familial resistance. This discourages them from pursuing legal action.

However, there are also distinct differences between the two legal systems and their approaches to inheritance. In Nigeria, the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *Ukeje v. Ukeje* explicitly affirms women's right to inherit property. This aligns with constitutional guarantees against gender-based discrimination. This judicial precedent offers Nigerian women a strong legal foundation to challenge customary practices that deny them inheritance. In contrast, Somalia lacks a comparable judicial ruling reinforcing women's inheritance rights, making legal enforcement more challenging. While Islamic law provides clear inheritance entitlements for women, these rights are frequently overshadowed by clan-based customary law that favors male heirs. Another key difference lies in the judicial and legislative frameworks governing inheritance. Nigeria's legal system, despite its enforcement challenges, allows for multiple levels of appeal, providing women with avenues to contest discriminatory inheritance decisions. In Somalia, legal disputes over inheritance are predominantly handled by customary courts, which are male-dominated and often dismiss women's claims. This reliance on traditional arbitration further entrenches gender inequality because these courts prioritize clan interests over individual rights.

Despite these differences, both Nigeria and Somalia require directed interventions to bridge the gap between legal provisions and cultural realities. It is necessary to strengthen legal awareness and increase women's participation in legal decision-making. Such measures will ensure that women can exercise their inheritance rights without fear of discrimination or retribution. By looking at the similarities and differences between these two situations, this study shows how

important it is to change the law and society to make inheritance practices more equal for men and women.

6. Recommendations

- i. It is recommended that the Imo State House of Assembly in Nigeria and the National Parliament should pass a law and an act, respectively, in line with the Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*. This measure will make the decision popular and more acceptable to the large Igbo communities in Southeast Nigeria. In a similar event, we recommend that the Somalia federal parliament pass a law specifically empowering females with the right to inherit real property, which law should take priority over any other law on women's right to inheritance.
- ii. In the Nigerian situation, there should be an executive restatement of the Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*. Such an announcement could come in the form of publication in the various state official gazettes, where people could read about the case law and get acquainted with equal gender status, which the judgment has now blessed women with. In the Somalia situation, the little entitlement that Islam accorded women should be made popular through restating in the federal gazettes, in addition to radio enlightenment broadcasts, so that women in the rural areas will know of the Islamic inheritance privileges accorded women at the demise of their husbands.
- iii. The government of Southeast Nigeria and, similarly, the parliament of Somalia should create and launch a women's assets redress register by way of an executive order in each local government secretariat. There should also be a mandated reporting policy so that every female will be sure that her case will receive government attention. A female Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and a well-experienced female advocate from Somalia should lead an agency of the government, respectively. The agency should undertake free legal representation for the women whose rights are infringed upon by the males in their families in any capacity beyond the issues of denying property inheritance.

- iv. The Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) should defend women's rights free of charge. Upon receiving complaints, FIDA should accompany the women to their homes and extend an invitation to the male family members for a discussion. Where the men prove difficult, FIDA should follow up with litigation to obtain justice for the women. The association of Somali women lawyers should undertake similar actions just like their Nigerian counterparts.
- v. The association of Somali women lawyers should visit mosques, print handbills, and use the medium to enlighten women about their right to inheritance under the constitution. The officials of the South East Nigeria Ministries of Justice and the officers of the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) should visit worship centers and print handbills to educate the natives on the rights of women's inheritance under the new dispensation, in line with the Supreme Court's decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, bearing in mind that many of the rural women who are victims of discrimination are illiterate. The officials of the Imo State Ministry of Justice and the officers of the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) should visit town unions and women's organizations and bring to their knowledge the decision of the Supreme Court in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*, which has now abolished discrimination against women pursuant to Sections 42 (1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- vi. The traditional rulers in both Somalia and Nigeria should be carried along in the campaign against women's discrimination, bringing to their knowledge their right to inheritance. The traditional rulers would, in turn, call their cabinet meetings with town union chairmen and the executive members of the town union in attendance and inform them that a new law had emerged and had abolished the custom of denying females the right to inherit real property. For grassroots dissemination, cabinets will inform their clans of women's unique position. After this enlightenment has gone around the communities, any individuals who discriminate against females in real estate inheritance should be reported to the traditional rulers, who will, in turn, hand the culprits to the police for prosecution.

- vii. The Somalia Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development of the Federal Government should undertake a radical women's enlightenment campaign and protection of women in pursuance of its gender parity mission in Somalia. The South East Nigeria Ministries of Information and Ministry of Women Affairs should use the media—radio, television, and newspapers—to restate the decision of the Supreme Court in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*'s case so that Igbo radio and Igbo television mediums will be used to spread out the property rights of the women in Imo State, particularly in the Owerri West Local Government Area of the state.

7. Conclusion

There is a cultural and human rights revolution taking place in Somalia, as well as in southeast Nigeria. Both countries' constitutions recognize gender equality. When women are given the same opportunities as men by removing discrimination, we can eliminate or drastically reduce gender-based poverty among women. In that case, women will generally have more access to education, leadership, and advancement. The global South will be on the right track to eliminating or reducing poverty, mystery, and ignorance because women will contribute their quota to the realization of prosperity for the global South. The Supreme Court decision in *Ukeje v. Ukeje*'s case has come to stay with the Nigerian people unless the Supreme Court overrules itself in future cases. Despite its slow progress due to widespread ignorance, the judgment will eventually reach full compliance as more females assert their rights in the legal system. Sections 42(1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, cannot exist in vain. In the same vein, Chapter 2, Articles 44–51 of Somalia's Constitution (2012) emphasize the need to fully realize gender equality, freeing women from all forms of limitations and enabling them to fully contribute to the development of Somalia within the international community.

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