

HOW WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP DESCRIBE THEIR RISE TO LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

by

Princess Chinyere Halliday Enyiukwu

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Liberty University

2020

HOW WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP DESCRIBE THEIR RISE TO LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

by

Princess Chinyere Halliday Enyiukwu

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2020

APPROVED BY:

Kurt Michael, Ph.D., Committee Chair

Deanna Keith, Ed.D., Committee Member

ABSTRACT

The significance of female marginalization and inclusion in leadership decision making has been increasingly a topic of deliberation. Women and men share typical characteristics such as knowledge, educational qualification, expertise, socioeconomic status, yet women are continuously marginalized. The bias that women face because of their gender is a lot more pronounced in countries where the traditional roles of the sexes are defined rigidly. Due to these strict gender roles, women find it hard to get to the positions of leadership in organizations. Gender discrimination against women in the workplace is a common issue that women around the world face. Leadership becomes almost impossible for women in countries, especially in the African region, where women become dependent on their partners, and they have to live in any circumstances that are made available to them. Although the number of working women is increasing in these regions, these women still face workplace discrimination almost daily. The purpose of this case study is to understand how women in leadership describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria. The theory guiding this study is Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model. This is the most well-known theory that concentrates on unfairness against women leaders. Qualitative method was used in this research because of its distinctive methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a human socio problem. Participants were Nigerian women in leadership positions. Interviews were carried out with participants; themes were aligned for multiple participants such education, culture, sexuality as well as authentic leadership.

Keywords: leadership, female leaders, public offices, stereotypes, crucibles

Dedication

I want to thank almighty God, without whom this process would not have been made possible. I want to dedicate this dissertation to every person who played a significant role as I embarked on this arduous journey. Thanks to my family. I have redefined family as every person who genuinely and continuously puts a smile on the face of others. Thanks to my mom and Dad. To my husband to be, when you find me, know that you have an extraordinary wife who will love and honor you forever. To my children to be, your mommy is determined and will go any length in integrating the essence of authentic leadership in our world today. I want to encourage every person who strives for the extraordinary. You, too, can do it if you never give up. Education is the power that we can use to change the world.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge everyone who played a role in my academic accomplishments. Thank you all for your unwavering support. I would like to thank my chair Dr. Kurt Michael, and committee member Dr. Deanna Keith who, throughout my research process, provided me with endless support and continuously encouraged me with love and dedicated partnership to my success. They are everything I asked God for.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	3
Dedication.....	4
Acknowledgments	5
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	10
Overview	10
Background.....	11
Historical	11
Social	12
Theoretical	13
Situation to Self	15
Problem Statement.....	16
Purpose Statement	18
Significance of the Study.....	19
Theoretical Significance	19
Empirical Significance	19
Practical Significance	20
Research Questions.....	21
Sub-Questions.....	21
Definitions	21
Summary.....	22
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	24
Overview	24

Statistics.....	25
Theoretical Framework.....	28
Lack of Fit Model.....	28
Gender Oppression Theory.....	32
Related Literature	40
Experiences of Women Who Have Risen to Leadership	40
Leadership Barriers Women Encounter in Nigeria	45
Culture and Religion as a Barrier to Women Political Participation.....	48
Parties and Patronage as a Barrier to Women Leadership.....	49
The Nigerian Media.....	50
Summary.....	50
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS.....	53
Overview	53
Design.....	54
Research Questions.....	55
Central Question.....	55
Sub-Questions.....	55
Setting.....	55
Participants	56
Procedures	57
The Researcher's Role	58
Data Collection.....	59
Interviews	59

Records and Document.....	63
Observation.....	63
Data Analysis.....	64
Interview Analysis.....	64
Document Analysis.....	65
Observation Analysis.....	65
Trustworthiness	65
Credibility.....	66
Dependability and Confirmability	66
Transferability	67
Ethical Considerations.....	67
Summary.....	68
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS.....	69
Overview	69
Participants	69
Results	70
Observation.....	73
Document Analysis.....	75
Themes Development.....	76
Research Question Responses	79
Summary.....	82
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION	83
Overview	83

Summary of Findings	83
Discussion.....	85
Empirical Literature.....	85
Theoretical Framework.....	87
Implications	89
Theoretical Implications	89
Empirical Implications	89
Practical Implications	90
Delimitations and Limitations	90
Recommendations for Future Research.....	91
REFERENCES	93

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Women have made advances toward equality in both the social environment and in the workplace since the 1960s. It was attributed to the rise of feminism movements, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom (Mendes, 2011). The measure of any society is how it treats the women of society. Even though international laws grant women political participation rights, very little is known about the difficulties that women face in their quest to participate in public offices. For a long time, career choices for women were limited, and they have been underrepresented in elite leadership roles. For decades, to think of a leader has mostly meant to “think male” (Schein, 1978). Questions about why powerful men are still perceived as born leaders and powerful women perceived as an anomaly are being researched regularly. Women hardly get appointments for leadership positions (Sojo, Wood, Wood, & Wheeler, 2016). The low representation of women in high-level leadership roles has led to an inference that there may be a hidden prejudice toward women seeking positions of leadership. Cook and Glass (2014) discussed that there is a sexist strategy at work; men are hired for their potential, and women are hired based on their achievements. These discriminations in the workplace are explored in this research. The aim of the study is to share the experiences of Nigerian women in leadership positions and their rise to these positions. Connectedly, the discussion dwells upon understanding the present women leadership in Nigeria, that is, the actual steps that women in Nigeria have made to climb to the top of the leadership ladder regardless of the adverse conditions.

Background

The following section discusses the historical background of positions of leadership, specifically for women. An overview of women in power throughout history is analyzed. Social and theoretical points are also explored about how women have stayed in positions of leadership in the past.

Historical

Throughout history, women have held various leadership positions. The positions range from queens, tsarinas, and tribal chiefs. For example, in ancient Egypt, Queen Hatshepsut Nefertiti (1501-1498 BC) together with Arsinoe II (316-270 BC) were female leaders (Klenke, 2017). Old Rome had female empresses as well as other traditions. From the Renaissance period to now, the world still has women leaders. However, it is indisputable that when compared to the male gender, they are very few women who are seen in leadership positions. The African Americans leaders, for instance, rose through some empowerment.

There have been African American women leaders throughout history. For African Americans, leadership empowerment was via Afrocentric traditional epistemology, whose roots are found in ancient Africa (Meux, 2003). The determination to free from the shackles of slavery was fundamental in inspiring African American women to be leaders. One organizing body of the famous seven ancient African American protestant churches played a vital role in nurturing their leadership (Meux, 2003). African American women faced much hardship, to even be considered as part of the society. Maggie Lena Walker set down the basis for many women when she became the first black woman to be the President of St. Luke Penny Savings bank in 1903. Her struggle is seen as a miracle because she broke the racial and gender barriers to achieve the

position (Schiele, Jackson, & Fairfax, 2005). However, after her, there were not many women that followed that path.

Earlier in history, women, in general, were viewed as incapable of surviving in the hostile business environment that existed then. Leadership was linked to masculinity. More often than not, the male heirs were chosen to overtake the succession of any family or position, even if they were younger than their female siblings (Aldamiz-Echevarría, Idígoras, & Vicente-Molina, 2017). However, globalization, together with competition, has opened the door, which has seen many women prove their capacity in leadership (Basu Roy, 2008). Women have also become a part of the innovation movement, as many have turned towards gaining an education.

Social

There is a rising need to explore how stereotypical views of female behavior affect women who aspire to high-ranking leadership roles in higher education. Gaining new knowledge about women's experiences with gender bias and role stereotyping may benefit future generations of women aspiring to organizational leadership roles. In addition, it gives insight into the challenges involved in the pursuit (Cubillo & Brown, 2003). As a result, many women will have a chance to rise to leadership positions.

Leadership positions for women in the society has always been evaluated as inferior to men (Edgeworth, 1922). The concept has bled into the workplaces of today, as women are not given the same opportunities as their counterparts. Jena, Lerchenmueller, and Sorenson (2019) opined that women are less likely to boast about their work, thence giving their male counterparts a chance to move forward. The socialization of women plays a tremendous part in the discrimination against women in the workplace. Women hold themselves back when it comes to explaining how much they have contributed to any project (Holman, Stuart-Fox, & Hauser,

2018). Women are also likely to work overtime, yet they are not given much consideration for the overtime (Verniers & Vala, 2018).

Countries, especially in Africa, must embrace the advantages of gender balance because much talent is lost in gender bias. Women who are leaders should be focused on uplifting their fellow women. Oparanma (2015) described that the Nigerian Trade Union should be a ladder for other women to show their talent in different leadership positions. Research indicates that seminars are one of the critical determinants of career paths of women as school principals (Karamanidou & Bush, 2017). Thus, more women in leadership positions should initiate such approaches so that others can learn from their examples.

Theoretical

As Creswell and Poth (2018) elucidated, the qualitative analysis framework is emancipatory as it helps unshackle people from the constraints of irrational and unjust structures that limit self-development. To complete this study, I explored the dynamics of how the Nigerian women who are already in leadership describe their rise to leadership. The theory guiding this study was Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model. This is the most well-known theory that concentrates on unfairness against women leaders. Heilman hypothesized that gender stereotype acts as a critical function in the inequity that women leader's experience. Even though individuals suppose that, contrary to men, women are more communal, affectionate, kind, and nurturing, they are seen as less motivated, dominant, or self-governing. Since management responsibilities include action, women are frequently marginalized in such function and are understood as less explicitly matched for these roles; thus, they are less justifiable. Nevertheless, women's intrinsic lack of fit cannot be determined by having them perform in a more dominant manner, as such actions lead them in being recognized as inhuman and unpleasant and therefore,

also often worthless of other managerial payoff (for example being employed, promoted, fair pay, etc.). Heilman centered on sex labels that defined as fixed philosophy marked on a specific group and by which people are incorrectly assessed due to their gender.

Gender classification can result in an overview and frequently does not correctly replicate the person or group. Consequently, society neglects the chance to control 50% of its presented talent. Society has played a vital function earlier in upholding the situation where gender unfairness is concerned. Current research, for instance, shows that the male personality sides more satisfactorily with leadership ranks and supremacy, whereas feminine personality is parallel with status centered on fostering and cooperation. Heilman (1983) discussed that there is a need to set up different policies to eliminate gender association to counterbalance the place of work circumstances. Heilman included two such plans: (a) stressing the feminine characteristics of status and (b) expelling the male-dominated or woman-only view of professions. Expressive gender stereotypes encourage gender prejudice due to the negative presentation prospect that leads from the insight that there is an unfortunate fit among the personality of women and the qualities believed essential for product presentation in masculine, gender-typed status and function.

The relationship between Heilman's (1983) lack of fit theory and my focus of the inquiry is aligned because normative gender stereotypes encourage gender prejudice by making prescriptive rules for conduct that stimulate condemnation and societal consequences when they are openly dishonored or when infringement is incidental because a woman is flourishing. Further research has demonstrated that when the sexual characteristics of an applicant is not a matter, both individuals exhibit equal capability in fields such as social direction, oral skills, and mathematics. As a result, this indicates that both genders succeed when they have an equal

chance for development and success. As Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model illustrates, Nigerian women are lacking a critical role model to push and challenge them to higher leadership positions. Despite the several challenges that the Nigerian women face, they have managed to overcome the shackles that hindered their ability to reach their full potential. The description of their rise in leadership is thus motivational to any reader regardless of gender. Power ought to be equal among men and women. It is essential to learn how those in power have maneuvered the challenges. Taylor (2017) described that this knowledge will help to impact the meaning surrounding the experiences of someone. That is why the transformative framework was selected for the study.

Situation to Self

I am initially from Nigeria, a nation in West Africa referred to as the giant of Africa. My initial research has shown that most women are not accepted to be leaders or bearers of incredible initiatives in Nigeria. The women are expected to have a place in the kitchen and tend to the household only. Most women who make it to the top leadership positions are not self-sufficient in their authority choices. As I perceived how the frameworks were running in Nigeria, I turned out to be exceptionally deliberate, advocating for education, as I knew that consistent education should be my priority if I genuinely want to revolutionize the world. Educating, motivating, and empowering women and men to be educated became a very intrinsic part of my life. My quality has dependably been in accepting training and utilizing the instruction I get to empower others, helping refine the skills they need to lead organizations to success. For over a decade, through the nonprofit I founded known as Empower Africa Initiative, I have assembled and organized designs for teachers and specialists who have a calling for enabling individuals in various limits and different capacities. Together we have journeyed through countries in Africa,

Europe, and the Middle East, teaching leadership. Driven by my love of learning, I regularly make efforts to research new information daily, improving my abilities to understand problems deeper and solve them.

The philosophical assumptions that led to my choice of research were ontological and epistemological. The assumptions are that the cultural chauvinism is pressing the Nigerian women to the corner of leadership phobia. Most of the Nigerian women do not want to push the limits because they see men as intelligent and bright enough to lead compared to them. Also, the male jeopardization that women need to be below men in everything was another assumption of the study. I chose these assumptions because they will help guide my view of reality and how I know the reality. I think that these philosophical assumptions were influential in the research process. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), specific beliefs, together with a philosophical hypothesis, are employed in research. That is what I aspired to do in this study. I have a natural hunger for learning and an unquenchable craving for educating others. I am focused, self-directed, passionate about leadership, and committed. I hold a bachelor's in petroleum engineering, a board-certified qualified mental health license in the state of Virginia, a master's in leadership, and I am completing a PhD in education with a concentration in organizational leadership. Therefore, great concentration was put on the participatory paradigm to show the actual trends of women in the Nigerian leadership.

Problem Statement

Women and men share common characteristics such as knowledge, educational qualification, expertise, and socioeconomic status, yet women are continuously marginalized (Zenger & Folkman, 2019). Women are severely underrepresented in the position of leadership. Studies have shown that only 5.2% of S&P 500 companies' CEOs are women, which is a very

small number (Catalyst, 2020). There are many countries that do not even give women a right to feel equal to their male counterparts. In Saudi Arabia, for example, most women feel marginalized and inferior (Hodges, 2017). My first-hand experience in this system has revealed that culture and religion play a significant role in this phenomenon. Thus, there has been an increasingly low inclusion for women who aspire to be in leadership positions. A study of gender in Nigeria cannot ignore glaring socio-cultural issues that confine women's access to education. Obasi (2000) elucidated that the roles of economic deprivation and gender-based tradition in patriarchal ethnic communities combined to keep females out of schools in a cultural context where females are considered inferior to males (Okoli, 2007, p. 39). Okoli (2007) described that as the traditional heir to the father's lineage and one who preserves the family's name, the male child is accorded all rights including a chance to acquire formal education at the expense of the girl child who may be older or more intelligent, even in situations of economic hardship.

This problem that culture brings to the leadership position needs to be investigated further because leadership parity between men and women would positively affect our culture profoundly. Women in leadership positions attribute their rise to hard work, resilience, and confidence. Most women have surpassed all odds to become leaders in the business world. Chinese women are a perfect example who, despite all odds, have been able to overturn fortune and lead in the category of women leaders (Honnen-Weisdorn, Grigoryan, & Ralph, 2017). Despite an unusual scenario considering the history of China compared to countries like the United States, they have managed to act as role models.

Understanding the complexity of female leadership is a topic that needs to be thoroughly explored. This happens in firms, organizations, or even managerial posts; the number of women in the position of leadership is far less when compared to men (Seo, Huang, & Caleb Han, 2017).

Culture does play a massive part in the success of women as leaders (Peus, Braun, & Knipfer, 2015). Questions regarding these differences, and why there is a lack of female representation in the positions of leadership are continuously raised. Johnson, Hekman, and Chan (2015) contemplated that women are less likely to be selected, even if they are better for the job. In Nigeria, women are not given a chance to explore their full potential when it comes to their professional lives (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015). In this study, how women describe their rise to the positions of leadership in Nigeria was explored.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this multiple-case study was to understand how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria, which will generally be defined as a phenomenon where the number of women at the helm of the affairs of leadership in a system is generally low. The theory that guided this study was Heilmen's (1983) lack of fit model as it explains the relationship between the unfairness against women who aspire to be leaders and how women describe their rise to leadership. In a multiple case study design, the researcher explores a real life, multiple-bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2007).

Creswell (2007) mentioned that qualitative methods are usually selected when the researcher's intent is to describe and understand a complex phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. Qualitative research enables individuals to share their stories and have their voices heard. Creswell (2007) described that qualitative methods are appropriate because of its distinctive methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a socio human problem.

Significance of the Study

Theoretical Significance

Heilmen's (1983) lack of fit model theory concentrates on unfairness against women leaders. Gender stereotype act a key function in the inequity that women leaders experience. Even though individuals suppose that, contrary to men, women are more communal (affectionate, kind, nurturing, etc.), they also trust that they are less motivated, dominant, or self-governing, etc.). Because leadership responsibilities need action, women are frequently marginalized in such functions and are understood as less well-matched specifically for them and thus less justifiable. Heilman (1983) focused on sex labels and defined these labels as fixed philosophy marked by a specific group by which people are incorrectly assessed due to their gender. Gender classification can result to overview and frequently does not correctly replicate the person or group. This study can enable women to broaden their interest in leadership positions. The research could aid in raising the number of women in active leadership positions in Nigeria. Gender diversification enhances an organization to fruition (Jogulu & Wood, 2014). The central aspect of this study focuses on how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria. Several studies have been conducted specifically on the topic of women in leadership throughout the world and equally the best leadership strategies that leaders need to apply to embrace organizational productivity and success.

Empirical Significance

This study may help women to have a better understanding of the best leadership styles that can enhance productivity and future success in different managerial positions in an organization. Transactional leadership, autocratic leadership, authentic leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and transformational leadership are a few of the prevalent leadership styles. The

transformational style focuses on building proper communication channels, the proper motivation of the employees, and thorough goal setting. Recent researchers have shown that the transformative leadership style is mostly employed by women who are in the position of leadership, which makes them effective leaders in most of the cases (Jogulu & Wood, 2014). Researchers have also determined that the literature of the past has not focused on the importance of female leadership, which became a hindrance to the growth of females as leaders (Jogulu & Wood, 2014). This study about how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria can critically help women and society in general to understand that they have the required potential to delve into positions of leadership.

Practical Significance

This study detailing how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria can avail all countries throughout the world a reason to give women the opportunity to lead different organizations including high political positions. The study may similarly help men to recognize women as capable leaders who run different departments to greater prosperity. Women are known for their carefulness in handling different issues, an authentic indication that always embraces success in whichever leadership positions that they lead (Jogulu & Wood, 2014). Holistically, women in Nigeria can come out of their cocoons and vigorously fight for their space in society when it comes to being at the helm of leadership where decisions are made in the country.

Research Questions

The essence of my research central question is to capture the stories of the Nigerian women in leadership so that it will serve as a resource for women who aspire to lead. The central question of the study will be supported by three sub-questions.

Central Question

How do female describe their experiences rising to the positions of leadership in Nigeria?

Sub-Questions

How do female leaders in Nigeria describe the lack of women rising to leadership in Nigeria?

How do female leaders in Nigeria describe their transformational moment?

How do female leaders sustain their rise to leadership?

Definitions

1. *Discrimination* - Discrimination is different treatment applied to individuals in a comparable situation (Marta-Claudia CLIZA, 2018).
2. *Epistemology* - Epistemology goes to the very foundation of how knowing is shaped; in other words, it deals with the pivotal foundation stone of understanding (Forouharfar, Seyed, & Salarzahi, 2018).
3. *Leadership* - Leadership is the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in a given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals (Silva, 2016).
4. *Phenomenology* - Pheomenology describes the phenomenon through the consciousness of the participants (Jackson, Vaughan, & Brown, 2018).

5. *Ontology* - Ontology is formal artifacts that are designed to represent the knowledge related to a specific or generic domain in terms of the relevant concepts, relationships between these concepts, and the instances of these concepts (Zablith et al., 2015).
6. *Stereotypes* - Stereotypes are assumptions made about people; these assumptions are made based on the behavior of the people observed, one's own ignorance, narrow mindedness, or individual past experience with a particular person (Brink & Nel 2015)
7. *Transformational moment* - A transformational moment refers to the extent to which individuals openly explore, resolve, and personally grow from their life experiences so that these experiences become transformative (Whitehead & Bates, 2016).

Summary

Female leadership is a topic that is emerging all around the world. As the call for equality and a better understanding of leadership is sought after, the question could be answered through several different facets. This is because leadership itself is a very complicated topic.

Furthermore, when the aspect of gender is introduced, it becomes so much more complicated.

Looking at the literature, there must be several steps taken to ensure that women have the same opportunities to become leaders as males do. Some hindrances prevent women from taking leadership positions in ways that men do not have to face. Throughout history, males have been in power, so males are the ones who have learned the different opportunities that leadership presents.

In most cases, they are the ones who are preferred to become leaders, just because of their gender. This is the very first hurdle that many females face when it comes to their journey of leadership. Through the various studies that have been explored for this literature review, this is a common theme occurring in these articles. The studies have shown that female working

environments are much more communicative and could be more effective in various settings. Workplaces that have female leaders are less likely to have conflicts, and they could provide a space for the followers to grow. However, there are not many female leaders in the corporate world, which is a massive setback for this gender. Historically, it has been perceived that women are not good leaders and that they should not be put in positions of leadership. Women also tend to misjudge their qualities, which leads them to refrain from seeking out the positions of leadership. With the current advancement in the world, female leadership is emerging at a fast rate, yet women still face much discrimination in their workplace. Therefore, workplaces must introduce a cultivating environment so that their female employees could have the right environment for their growth. This could assist in ensuring that women have the same opportunities to become leaders and cultivate their leadership qualities so that they could have more comfortable lives.

There is a gap in the literature that exists when it comes to how women could become great leaders. Through all the research, it is seen that there was also a lack of research on how the biases against women in the workplace could be reduced. This study also aims to ensure that the biases against women are explored for a better understanding of female leadership. This study was a much-needed addition to the empirical research regarding the ways that women could surpass crucibles in their professional life, and how they can attain leadership positions through the qualities that they possess as they strive to be seen, heard, and respected in their rise to leadership in Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter entails the literature review, which will explore various research concerning how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria. Specifically, it will synthesize other scholars' findings on women leadership in Nigeria and the theoretical framework encompassing both liberal feminism and patriarchy. The literature review will also explore the extant literature on various barriers that women encounter in their rise to leadership, specifically in Nigeria. Carli and Eagly (2016) described that although women no longer lack all or nearly have all access to leadership, full equality is still a somewhat distant goal, and women have the burden of overcoming obstacles that men do not face. This literature review will also explore how education is essential in developing leaders. Smith (2017) posited that education is vital in developing leaders. On a global scale, all issues concerning women being marginalized and scarcely participating in issues to do with politics and making vital decisions in the society have continued to attract much concern from various stakeholders, including scholars. It is undeniable that both men and women have different biological and physiological makeup, but they share all features which can enable women to achieve just like their male counterparts in terms of educational achievements, socio-economic status, and careers. Ademuson (2016) argued that even though women pose equal abilities to accomplish what men can do, they have continued to be marginalized in most spheres of factors concerning public life. In a country such as Nigeria, women live to respect obnoxious social norms. They have, for a long time, been excluded from practicing their political rights and are economically disadvantaged compared to their male counterparts. From a census conducted in 2006, women form 49% of the entire Nigerian population even though the country has continued to experience a significant gender gap when it

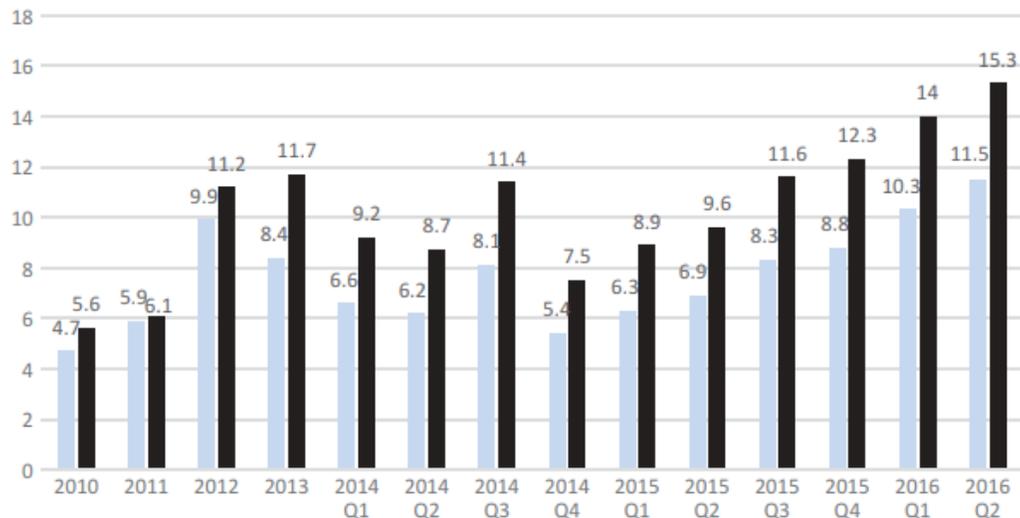
comes to leadership. Women have continued to be poorly represented in politics, economic management, and form majority of socio-economic disparities.

Women in Nigeria have various obstacles that prevent them from attaining leadership positions, commencing from the mind, culture, and psychological self-perspective to external forces. Psychologically, women underrate themselves that they cannot lead any better than men. The majority of Nigerian women are often identified in context to the positions of their husbands, fathers, or families instead of their rights and capacities as individuals. Women who are not educated would often depend on the title of their husbands to accrue power, presence, and voice. Often time, these women lose their voices when their husband is no longer in the position of authority or when the source of power is no longer available. According to Tijani-Adenle (2016), the identification of female leaders and managers concerning their powerful husbands or influential families is also not limited to Nigeria. In Nigeria, women understand that men are the kingpins from households to political life. Thus, in many leadership opportunities that arise in Nigeria, it is mostly men who compete for the seats and only a few women, who at this point, are often seen as perpetrators by their fellow women. Sandberg (2013) suggested that it is not others who hold women back, but it is often women themselves. Connectedly, this study highlights the various obstacles that are engulfing women and preventing them from joining leadership positions in Nigeria.

Statistics

Nigeria, just like other similar African countries, suffers from gender inequality, and this has been a consistent problem ever since the country was created in 1914. Many decades have passed, and many organizations, including the United Nations, have launched campaigns to achieve equality. However, women have continued to be under-represented in the socio-

economic and political sphere. The figure below shows a summary of the unemployment rate among women compared to men in Nigeria from 2010 to 2016. Figure 1 illustrates a steady rise in gender gaps related to unemployment.



From “Women and Political Leadership in Nigeria,” by T. M. Fapohunda, 2012, *Lagos State University Academic Journal*, p. 242. Copyright 2012 by Lagos State University. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 1. Unemployment Rate.

As illustrated in Figure 1, in 2010, women’s unemployment rate was 15.3%, which was much higher than the 11.5% unemployment rate for men, and the trend has continued to worsen in the last six years.

As seen in Table 1, the gender gap in women unemployment scored 0.6391, and Nigeria was ranked 118 out of 142 countries that participated (Orji, 2017).

Table 1

Gender Gap in Women's Unemployment

Country	Score	Rank
Rwanda	0.785	7
Burundi	0.757	17
South Africa	0.753	18
Mozambique	0.737	27
Malawi	0.728	34
Kenya	0.726	37
Lesotho	0.726	38
Namibia	0.723	40
Madagascar	0.721	41
Tanzania	0.718	47
Cape Verde	0.713	50
Botswana	0.713	51
Zimbabwe	0.701	63
Senegal	0.691	77
Uganda	0.682	88
Swaziland	0.677	92
Ghana	0.666	101
Mauritius	0.654	106
Burkina Faso	0.650	110
Liberia	0.646	111
Nigeria	0.639	118
Zambia	0.636	119
Angola	0.631	121
Ethiopia	0.614	127
Guinea	0.601	132
Cote d'Ivoire	0.587	136
Mali	0.578	138
Chad	0.576	140

From “Women Domination and Oppression in Nigerian Society: Implications for Sustainable Development.” by A. Ademuson, *African Journal for the Psychological Studies of Social Issues*, p. 234. Copyright 2016 by African Journal for the Psychological Studies of Social Issues . Reprinted with permission.

These figures indicate that Nigerian women are exposed to inequalities in terms of accessing better health, better education, and economic empowerment, and they barely can access positions in political leadership domains. Throughout Africa, Nigeria was ranked 21 of 28 countries with high gender gaps. Edinburgh (2008) stated that Nigeria only maintained 6.7% of women in senior leadership positions in parliament, which was caused by weak economic empowerment and academic achievements.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model theory and gender oppression theory that encompasses the patriarchy and liberal feminism approach. The current state of low participation of women in leadership owes to several factors such as illiteracy and socio-culture practices. This, as a result, has a severe effect on development, good governance, and leadership of any nation such as Nigeria.

Lack of Fit Model

Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model explains how gender discrimination and self-limiting behaviors of women affect their ability to move up the leadership hierarchy. Heilman used this model to focus on sex stereotypes. Heilman defined sex stereotyping as the preconceived notions set for a specific group by which people are wrongly judged due to their gender. Additionally, sex stereotyping, in most cases, results in over-generalizations and often does not reflect the group or individual capability. Hence, society misses out the chance of harnessing half of the available talent. Heilman further reiterated that sex stereotype incidences often face women as opposed to men. Arguably, it is women who are discriminated against in different spheres of life. Unfortunately, society is responsible in the past for maintaining the status quo, which makes gender to be biased. Heilman depicted in the lack of fit model that masculine qualities align more favorably with power and leadership positions, while feminine traits match well with collaboration and nurturing. Alternatively stated, Heilman argued that men have high chances of being aggressive, ambitious, and competitive, while women are perceived as passive, caring, and lacking ambition.

Slattery and Woehr (2014) elucidated that the proportion of women working across all sectors in the current generation has greatly increased in the last few decades, but women have

continued to be underrepresented in high organizational levels. Women only occupy 3.8% in Fortune 500 CEO seats around the world and 3.2% of heads of boards in most significant companies in the European Union. According to a study conducted by Edinburgh (2008), women's under-representation in most elite leadership positions results from the belief that men are more effective leaders than women, but individuals forget that in the current generation, female type of leadership is highly desired. Slattery and Woehr (2014) argued that recent studies indicate women are better managers and leaders than men because their leadership style is more suited for current organizations, unlike before. This is because women are more likely to adopt collaborative and empowering leadership styles, unlike men who prefer command and control styles of leadership. Ademuson (2016) argued that stereotypical perceptions that women cannot make good leaders and managers stem from the fact that their characteristics do not fully match the roles of leadership. Men are seen as more suitable for leadership positions because of their masculine nature and the masculine roles that are readily available in leadership positions. Fapohunda (2012) posited that leadership is about power, and in most cases, it is associated with men. Ever since time immemorial, men have held on to power, and as a result, they have engrained several stereotypes about their female counterparts. These stereotypes have prevented women from taking up leadership positions in the society and thus, have prevented them from striving to reach their rightful positions as their equal partners. Negative beliefs about women in power are still rampant, even in the current Nigerian society. Even though women constitute about 50% of the entire Nigerian population, they are not sufficiently active in senior leadership and management positions. They have suffered much inequality, especially when it comes to political representation, managing their economies, and becoming authentic leaders.

Gender stereotypes. According to Anigwe (2014), women in Nigeria have continued to secure more jobs, and their numbers have significantly increased in recent years at the workplace. More and more women are playing the roles that were once done by men, even though descriptive gender stereotypes continue to thrive in many employment settings. The increasing beliefs about male and female capacities have an adverse effect because they form shortcuts for forming impressions about people. Perceived stereotypes can exert influence, and the perceiver will not even realize it. Patrick and Joshi (2019) described that fixed and traditional mindsets in the educational field result in stunted opportunities for growth. Brevik, Gunnulfsen, and Renzulli (2018) mentioned that it is necessary to differentiate for a diverse set of learners, and their various academic and personal needs to cultivate success and empowerment towards individualized goals. Stereotypes are automatically activated when one meets a member of the stereotyped group even when they are not acted upon. Since they are widely shared and automatically activated, they can create a strong impact on the person being stereotyped. In this case, descriptive gender stereotypes can dominate in the impressions created by both men and women. As a result, men or women can benefit or lose depending on how they have been stereotyped based on their gender group even if it is not accurate. Bryson (2012) argued that women have greatly been affected by gender descriptive stereotypes when it comes to the work environment, and this affects their performance expectations. However, work expectations are not only influenced by the conceptions people have about the gender but the “fit” in terms of attributes and skills that are necessary to complete the job successfully.

Lack of fit in the development of performance expectations. Edgeworth (1922) stated that descriptive stereotypes have continued to create problems for women in their workplaces for a long time. Women have continued to be perceived not to “fit” regarding their attributes and

those required for them to succeed in major occupations that were once dominated by men, including leadership positions in various organizations. The male-gender typed positions, according to Ademuson (2016), include top management and executive positions, which mainly consider the stereotypical conception of men and not women. These kinds of stereotypes are so established that it has become impossible to change. Leadership positions are significantly tied to the perceived characteristics of men who are thought to be aggressive and have emotional toughness compared to what women are stereotyped to be. Women are now stereotyped to have less of the qualities required in leadership positions in organizations. Hatch (2016) described that the perception of “think-manager, think-male” still lives on because many people still believe that women do not have the skills, knowledge, or inherent capabilities to handle leadership positions, and if they are given these positions, they will produce negative expectations. Hodges (2017) stated that the lack of fit perception has a significant effect on the way people process information, and as a result, they prompt cognitive distortions, which have continued to form the basis of gender bias when work is being evaluated.

Stereotyped based expectations and processing of data. Lack of fit expectations profoundly impacts the way people process information about women, and this affects how their job productivity is evaluated. Once the work progress has been presented to the evaluator, the evaluator already has perceptions of self-perpetuating quality, and the information will be handled with bias. The evaluator may already have cognitive distortions about the performance of the female colleague. Zenger and Folkman (2019) argued that as a result of lack of fit perceptions, women lose out on job opportunities because they are already perceived not to have the attributes of the individual and the type of requirements. Okoli (2017) argued that lack of fit does not only affect how others evaluate the work done by women but also how they evaluate

themselves. Women's self-descriptions widely differ from the descriptions of men because, according to research carried out by Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015), women believed that they are more agentic and more communal. Thus, they also experience the same process as men when they assess themselves in terms of male-friendly jobs. Women still also feel that they are not as fit as men to be in leadership positions, just like the rest of the society thinks of them. Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015) revealed that most women confessed that they were not good with numbers and they are not good at being cutthroat or do not have those killer instincts. All these confessions feed into their types of careers; thus, they are unwilling to take opportunities to expand their levels of education, move forward in their career plans, and take risks towards leadership positions. Kiraly and Tyler (2015) argued that women approach "male gender-typed" positions with little confidence and as a result, it affects their level of output. Such negative expectations continue to produce self-directed biases. While women complete the same tasks as men, they still view themselves as incompetent and are always unwilling to acknowledge the credit for success, unlike their male counterparts.

Gender Oppression Theory

Gender oppression is an injustice where one social group seems to submit more to the other gender because the other gender has more privileges than the other. For example, in this case, the female gender has to submit to the male gender because the male gender is more privileged in terms of accessing better education, having skills and knowledge to be in high-level leadership positions and maintaining economic empowerment. This is because after education, they can be employed, unlike women who were denied a chance to a westernized type of education while their roles as housewives and mothers were magnified and stressed after the British imperialists established their rule in Nigeria. Ever since then, this kind of oppression has

been maintained using various mechanisms like social norms, gender stereotypes, and institutional policies.

Social norms that promote gender oppression in Nigeria. Before the colonization of the Yoruba, the traditional Nigerian community was fully involved in policymaking and occupied vital positions in political, social, and economic spheres. Yoruba land was the only region in Africa where there were female Obas (kings). For example, the Ile-Ife, Ilesa, and Faseke kingdoms were once ruled by females while their roles at the palace were indispensable (Badmus, 2006). Therefore, the traditional Yoruba kingdom had equivalent opportunities for women in leadership positions where their voices were heard. They actively participated in making decisions, while some kingdoms were ruled jointly by the king and the queen. The queen ruled the women while the king ruled the men. After the colonial power introduced their rule in Nigeria, things changed because women were rendered invisible while the male was preferred in leadership positions (Edgeworth, 1922). Women were treated as unsuitable for a public life that was considered rigorous, and from then, they were not allowed to vote or vie, and they were not allowed space in parliament or any jobs in the civil service of their country. The men were given opportunities to access a westernized type of education and, after completion, were given job opportunities in the civil service. The colonial system did not take the needs of the local people, especially women, into consideration. The systems established fewer schools for girls than those for boys. Also, the girls' curriculum consisted of painting, singing, dancing, and the activities that could prepare them as housewives and mothers. Even though mission schools were also established, more schools for boys were established than those for girls. Fapohunda (2012) argued that by 1920, the ratio of boys and girls to secondary schools was 35:1, respectively, which indicated only 2.77% of students in secondary schools were girls. By 1930, the ratio of

boys to girls at school was 559:12. Poor education achievements among the girls made it impossible for them to access employment at the civil service, unlike the men, and this had substantial negative implications for the girls. Mens' capacities were built through their academic achievements; they were given more administrative knowledge, and through their jobs, they had a salary that economically empowered them. This early lead in administration, knowledge, and economic empowerment gave men an advantage over their female counterparts and has continued to play a significant role even in the current society, especially in leadership positions and political representations in the politics of the Nigerian state (Anigwe, 2014).

When it comes to privileges, the male children had more opportunities than the female children. This inequality that existed between the male and female children in the Nigerian society was maintained as the oppressed girls did not have access to economic and academic materials that they can use to escape from the grip the society put them in; therefore, they remain under the oppression of their male counterparts (Hodges, 2017). Gender oppression in the Nigerian society is perceived in the gender norms that the Nigerian society has already stated. According to their beliefs, the female and male is an unequal binary pair because the males have continued to dominate available resources while the female continues to be subordinate. Women have been exposed to various types of oppression, and surprisingly, religion continues to back these arrangements. For example, Boko haram uses religious texts to stifle the efforts of a girl child accessing the westernized kind of education (Slattery & Woehr 2014). With women held inferior, they are looked down upon and are encouraged by socially-established stereotypes that continue to affect their social status and thus their opportunities. As will be discussed later, even the media objectifies women and showcases them as sex objects. No one is interested in women's political views, contributions to culture, level of integrity, and intellect. All these kinds

of pressure have brought about feminism movements that continue to challenge gender oppression.

Liberal feminism approach. Liberal feminism is the primary manifestation of gender oppression. Women in all developing countries, including Asia and Africa, have maintained solidarity to fight against patriarchal traditions that held them back from progressing. They empower each other to fight patriarchal oppression because, for a long time, women suffered in silence. They were exposed to violent actions like rape and female genital mutilation. Women had no right to their fathers' inheritance, owned no property, and thus had to depend on their male counterparts, including their brothers and husbands, who, in turn, exposed them to domestic violence and sexual abuse and used them as servants. Women in Nigeria have, over the years, been denied vital opportunities to formal work so that they can be empowered and rise to leadership positions. When allowed to join workforces in different organizations, they are exposed to harsh working conditions like losing their jobs once they got pregnant. In some instances, they also have had to deal with unequal pay at work after carrying out identical roles at the same time limit as their male counterparts. Feminists have continued to fight against patriarchy, and women around the world, not only in Nigeria, have started to react against exploitation and humiliation by challenging male chauvinist activities (Badmus, 2006). Adherents to feminism, therefore, claim that women can entitle equal rights with men on the base of the crucial human capacity for a rational moral agency (Bryson, 2012).

The theory gives alternatives through which gender equality can be achieved in the present society. Notably, Bryson (2012) opined that that equality of gender can be achieved through changing the division of labor by patterning of prominent organizations such as media, education, family, and work. Gender equality was the first element for a liberal feminist

argument. The movement supporters expressed that their main purpose is to expand and parallel the Declaration of Independence and include women. According to the liberal movement, women are like rivers; if the river is dried-up, subsequent generations will not exist (Bryson, 2012). Women are a fundamental force behind the participation of people in societal life. Not only do women occupy a higher number in population but also, they play a substantial part in the community as procreators of posterity. Women can lead with a lot of enthusiasm, integrity, and carefulness, thence always achieving the objectives (Bryson, 2012).

Although women have made great efforts in getting a vote and the right to be elected in political offices, they consist of less than 15% of the members of parliament and less than 5% of the heads of state in the world. Fapohunda (2012) argued that there had been significant steps that have been taken at the national level to acknowledge the role of gender in all aspects of national development in Nigeria. For example, the national government has introduced the Women Affairs Ministry to help increase the number of women in the top administrative posts. The United Nations, on the other hand, encouraged national governments to give women significant roles in the development of the nation. The last few decades have seen significant growth of awareness in the importance of including women in the socio-economic and political awareness that women can play significant roles in national development.

In Nigeria, the traditional view of women being inferior to men still exists since most of the people are upholding the cultural practices that enhance the subordination of women. As a result, men continue dominating women in both political and economic realms (Kiraly & Tyler, 2015). The political roles, achievements, and endeavors of female politicians are hardly acknowledged or recognized. This situation has necessitated the need for carrying out this study and identifying the barriers that face the rise of women in leadership.

Increased Nigerian women in leadership. Nigeria is one of the nations with a strong history because it has strong traditions that are currently being practiced. Kubai (2018) argued that many politicians and governments have started to address the issue of women under-representation in leadership positions. Kubai (2018) continued to argue that even though women have increased their participation in leadership positions, especially in political ones, they have nothing to show because they rally for the success of other male electoral candidates. Access to education is vital to ensure women are no longer marginalized in crucial leadership positions. They need to receive a lot of support from the Independent Electoral Commission, who should purposefully indicate various constituencies belong to only women contestants. There is a need to increase the role of women in leadership positions because doing so ensures democracies are strengthened and all people have access to equal opportunities for growth. In the national policy of women, women were given opportunities to have equal opportunities as men by pushing for 30% of the legislature and executive departments to be given to women. Even though this was passed, it has not been implemented to date. Women do not meaningfully participate in political positions and thus find it challenging to be in leadership positions.

Women leadership obstacles in Nigeria. Despite the international declaration that affirms that there are equal rights between both genders of which Nigeria is a signatory, the literature indicates that women still comprise a small percentage of leadership and political participation. Anigwe (2014) stated that patriarchy is one of the major theories in the current generation that takes different kinds of forms, but its central idea is male domination. Male domination is also referred to as sexism and results from the capitalist mode of production. According to Badmus (2006), patriarchy has caused women's oppression not only in western societies but also in African societies. For a long time, women have been marginalized because

they were not allowed to control their property and thus were economically disadvantaged. They were not allowed to inherit their fathers' properties and thus were propertyless, a situation that led them to depend on their brothers or husbands entirely. As a result, they submitted to the male and were exposed to various types of domestic violence and abuse as they were used as servants.

Toyin, Abdulraheem, and Sulu (2019) elucidated that Nigeria epitomizes a typical patriarchal African society in which a system of social stratification and gender differentiation enables men to dominate women in all spheres of life. Based on the theorists of gender oppression, the situation is centrally on being oppressed and dominated by men. This pattern of gender discrimination is encompassed in the most profound and pervasive ways into society through a necessary arrangement, mostly known as patriarchy. In patriarchy, the society is arranged to give privileges to men in every aspect of political and social life (Solati, 2017). From the theorists of gender discrimination, gender inequality and gender differences are by-products of patriarchy. Nigerian culture is patriarchal, which is a significant element of a traditional society. It is a structure of a lot of social relations with a material base that empowers men to dominate control over women. Women are thus separated upon from, much of the time, acquiring formal training, and they are abused and unceasingly kept as house-help. The regular Nigerian lady is viewed as an available item for prostitution, constrained marriage, and road peddling and is rarely taken seriously and is an individual that can be systematically reduced to her sexuality in conversations. In Nigeria, it is noticed that womanhood is decreased to an unimportant infidel and a second-class citizen. Consequently, there is the shared trait of a comprehensive belief system that the best spot for women is in the kitchen. This pattern has achieved a vast misrepresentation of women at the level of the family down to the circular society.

In Nigeria, the low participation of women in leadership adversely affects their progress in improving the regulatory and legal framework for enhancing gender equality because very few women influence the legislative process. The justification for endorsing participation of women in the political dispensation is based on development, quality, and equity. Due to the nominal high population of women who covers 49% in Nigeria, they are equally right to take part in political decisions on issues affecting them. Historically, patriarchy is not only the first structure of submission and domination but it also continues to be the most enduring and pervasive system of inequality. The patriarchal culture sets the parameters for the disparity in families and markets by approving gender differential terms in legacy rights and legal adulthood by implicitly supporting household and sexual violence and authorizing differential wages for equivalent or practically identical work. Likewise, this culture of patriarchy is a substantial determinant of male predominance over females, and thus men will sit back in the family to keep the family name and heredity that is developing while women will be given out in marriage. Accordingly, men are being prepared for leadership positions while women are bound to domestic roles attributed to them by the culture, which influences them further down the road. In this manner, women lose self-awareness/worth and have low confidence in their profession, politics, and adult life. Traditional culture and religion have dictated men's and women's relationship for a considerable length of time and instilled male dominance into the structure of the society, organization, and foundation at all levels of leadership. By participating in patriarchy, men know how to hold women in contempt and hence see them as non-human and attempt to control them. This theory identifies another factor that hinders women's participation in leadership as inadequate empowerment and participation in decisions, which affects their lives in social and political processes. The demographic composition and development record in Nigeria indicate

that there is a need for women's active involvement in essential decision-making bodies (Bryson, 2012). The participation of women in Nigeria's electrical politics since independence has been limited to offering support to their male counterparts. More importantly, with the new political indulgence in Nigeria, there is a dire need for similar gender participation in exercise and acquisition of political powers.

Related Literature

Experiences of Women Who Have Risen to Leadership

In any country in the world, leadership has always been about power. Men have held leadership and power in society, and ingrained stereotypes regarding women have prevented women from taking their rightful place as equal partners. There is no doubt that men and women have some capabilities and rights to contribute meaningfully to their countries' development all over the world inclusive of Nigeria (Okafor, Fagbemi, & Hassan, 2014). To build a nation, everyone must understand that all hands, irrespective of gender, ought to be on deck. In Nigeria, women constitute approximately half of the total population. Nevertheless, they are inadequately active in leadership positions. Due to this challenge, there is a need to explore the experiences of women who have risen to leadership and, most importantly, evaluate the barriers that face women's journey to leadership.

Nigerian women are often described as intelligent, strong, and highly supportive of their male counterparts (Badmus, 2006). However, it is pertinent to point out that in Nigeria, getting access to leadership positions is not an easy task for millions of Nigerian women. In the country, there is little or no doubt that girls and women have made big steps in terms of leadership positions. Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015) argued that there are numerous inspiring stories of women's experiences in terms of entrepreneurial, academic, and professional achievement.

Researchers elaborated that in 2015 the election of women into the elective offices was dropped, and despite the setback, there was a need to look inward towards enhancing themselves and take advantage of the abilities they have as politicians in a society dominated by males. By critically looking at the level and role of participation of women in leadership in Nigeria, it is evident that at all levels of government in the country, women are underrepresented. This issue has been challenging to handle, though some leaders and government are making necessary efforts to address the situation. Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015) indicated the biggest issue is that women are always actively participating in politics, but they have nothing to show for the participation apart from rallying for success for other candidates who happen to be their male counterparts. The authors did not indicate the reasons behind women's active participation and later ending up with nothing to show; hence, there is a need for this research to close that research gap.

A few leaders have come out to speak out for the women, such as David Mark, who depicted that stakeholders must ensure that women are not politically marginalized and should have a sensible representation in the national assembly (Inglehart & Norris, 2014). The rise of women in leadership in Nigeria is hampered by many issues. It is unimaginable that the right of women is still trampled upon and not protected in this current decade. Women in Nigeria are still seen as inferior, and some women are experiencing sexual harassment and are engaging in commercial sex work. In most countries, women are still underrepresented. In 2013, based on various research, there was an average of 22% of women in the national assemblies. Historically in the pre-colonial times, there existed several women who played essential and seen roles in governance, and their experiences have made them role models due to their outstanding and engagement performances. An iconic woman leader is Madam Ikonna, who, through her compatriots, confronted the warrant chief who tried to force an abhorrent tax law on women,

which intricately led to war. This heroic struggle and act resulted in the unfair tax law to be abolished in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the women representation in Nigeria falls below average in women representation with only 7% of women active in parliament and politics.

There is numerous historical evidence that shows that Nigerian women have long played an essential role in the political life of their countries. In Nigeria, women had access to political participation in the country. However, the political contribution varied from one society to another. In some societies, women shared the same power with the men, while in other societies, the roles were subordinate or complementary. Casserly (2016) argued that in Nigeria, women are no strangers to politics. Based on the 1999 general elections, there were around 27 million women out of the 47 million registered voters but only 1.56% of them won a government position.

Furthermore, most of the female aspirants in Nigeria who, in most cases are not financially buoyant, tend to lose out more in elections in spite of their leadership qualities and competence. Though financial buoyancy does not give women a guarantee of participating in politics, it is still an essential factor in successfully executing political campaigns and eventually being part of the electoral process in Nigeria. Besides, women's leadership in Nigeria is affected by their fear of being subject to violence and political thuggery. The violent nature of politics in Nigeria has kept most of the women away who had an interest in contesting in the elections. Politics in Nigeria is commonly associated with kidnappings, looting, arsons, murders, and assassinations. Nigeria is a society that is a patriarchy, and therefore, women are expected to confine and conform to female subservience and male dominance.

The system of beliefs that includes norms, cultural values, religion and ethnicity are the main contributors to the marginalization experiences of women in the country, specifically in

terms of politics. In Nigeria, women are seen as the weaker sex, and as a result, they are seen to be only suitable in the subordinate positions. This perception seems to neglect the crucial contribution women make in the political system of a country. There is an assumption in Nigeria that there exists no constitution barriers to the participation of women in politics. Nevertheless, the political enfranchisement of women seems to be maintained at the ground level. In 2018, women leaders met in Nigeria to discuss how women will be greatly involved in country politics. In the 2019 Nigerian elections, there were a limited number of women seeking political positions in comparison to their male counterparts.

Also, the constitution of Nigeria reinforces the power imbalance between the two genders through legislation that disfavors women. This legislation includes an increase of incidences of crime against women; women are not allowed to bail people in police custody, sex work is a crime, and abortion is illegal. Due to the patriarchal society, women are pushed to the edge that they are not supposed to sniff for power since men are born leaders.

According to Aldamiz-Echevarría, Idígoras, and Vicente-Molina (2017), in 1999, the constitution guaranteed women to be equal to men and argued all federal governments to be to give them freedom equality and social justice. All citizens of Nigerian should be given equal privileges without favor. Therefore, the government gave the Nigerian women a right before the law to contribute to making vital decisions about the society and participate in board rooms parliaments and other executive councils. However, women have not found it simple in theory or practice. All leadership position structures are still male-centered. Kubai (2018) argued that they all need to be loosened to ensure that women are fully accommodated. There is still a need for the government to form campaigns to encourage the society to break traditional stereotypes and attitudes people have continued to harbor about women and their inequality with the men. They

should be given equal opportunities like government support and loans from financial institutions to either start up their own political parties to rally for seats at the national government or start their own businesses, which they can lead easily. Women must support each other, and according to Ademuson (2016), they should influence public policies that favor Nigerian women to various leadership positions. There is a need for feminists and women activists to do more research to ensure that the curriculum is fully reformed. Funding organizations should also do research to identify the dimensions of women's citizenship in order to have a real ground of equality.

Hodges (2017) argued that women in leadership lacked role models and mentors who are needed to encourage them and thus gain self-confidence and more in-depth insight into leadership positions. The few women leaders need to mentor upcoming girls with potential into leadership positions. Research and training should put more effort into women's development studies. These women, according to Holman et al. (2018), also mentioned that they did not have any government support when they were aspiring to become leaders in governmental positions. Kiraly and Tyler (2015) stated that there were many instances when they lacked vital information about available leadership opportunities while the playing field favored the male aspirants. The government, therefore, needs to develop a national framework that includes various benchmarks and indicators that should monitor such activities. The constitutional reforms have continued to have limited constitutional impacts because gender equality continues to be a distant venture considering that the government does not indulge in structuring society. For example, according to Fapohunda (2012), the government does not encourage financial institutions to make it easy for women to access loans, and therefore, women are still discriminated against, mainly in Nigeria. The government is making little effort to ensure the implementation of anti-

discriminatory practices, and therefore, the vagueness of the federal and national constitution poses another challenge for women to rise to leadership positions.

Leadership Barriers Women Encounter in Nigeria

Education. Equal education opportunities are vital for establishing an egalitarian society. I have been part of what education can do and what the investment in education can do. There is nothing more gratifying than seeing a child who had almost no possibilities succeed, flourish, thrive, perform well, and become a leader. According to Onoyase (2018), the Nigerian government puts a lot of emphasis on the importance of education through the national policy on education, which was established in 2016. This policy mandates that all Nigerian children have equal educational opportunities irrespective of disabilities. However, parents have a contradicting attitude towards the education of their female children that is reflected in girls' enrollment, completion of academics, and attendance. Girls have continued to enroll at a very low rate, and poverty has continued to affect this rate further. These parents choose to invest these limited resources in boys rather than girls. The traditional beliefs that women are lesser than boys and their roles are generally in the private home space have greatly contributed to the poor education access among the girls. These cultural inhibitions, erroneous interpretations, social preference for the male child, traditional roles of women and early lack of fit model integration hinder girls' access to education.

Education as a barrier to women political participation. Bako (2018) argued that one of the major problems that face women in Nigeria is illiteracy. If women are to give a political contribution to the country, then their education needs should be addressed first. In the country, groups exist that threaten education such as Boko Haram, which means that western education is a sin. Boko Haram affects the women education since they are restricted to be at their homes

taking care of the families and not at school where they can learn. School participation is a major challenge in Nigeria, and it is severe in the northern state of this region. There are many challenges to accessing the few available schools, limited family resources, and poor attitudes towards education. Boko Haram purposely targets girls' education, and the group always regulates women's activities to private life that is exclusively doing household work. As a result, female education achievement is persistently low. According to Hatch (2016), 50% of girls between the ages of 15 to 24 years have not experienced formal education. According to Ademuson (2016), in 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls, which testifies the level of risk of the girl child is exposed to in Nigeria while accessing western education. According to Hatch, (2016), the female secondary school attendance in the Northern state of Nigeria is only 29% while the national rate is 53%. Even if girls attend school, they face a high risk of dropping out because they are behind in age. As many as 46% of girls in Nigeria do not attend any formal or informal kind of education and training and therefore cannot be leaders in formal leadership positions.

Hence, to help women thrive in leadership, the government should reinvest in mass literacy programs that will assist in eradicating inequity in employment opportunities. Raising the level of education for both genders will also eradicate the religious beliefs that bind women to their homes and cultural obstacles that restrict the social lives of women. Through the mass literacy programs, women will be empowered and provided with the crucial skills that would enable them to be part of political leadership in the country efficiently.

Contribution of barriers to education. Poverty in a patriarchal society is regarded as the number one barrier to girls accessing better chances of education and rising to leadership positions in Nigeria. According to Jollie and Syed (2018), in 2010, 70% of people in Nigeria

lived on a dollar per day while Hodges (2017) argued that 62% of Nigerians live in extreme poverty even though it is blessed with vast fertile lands. Okoli (2017) contended that Nigeria is a patriarchal society, and boys are much more favored for better opportunities than girls. The cost of schooling, on the other hand, has climbed extremely high which contributes to keeping girls from accessing the dreams of their lives. Females have always been considered inferior to their male counterparts, and the male is always superior because he will inherit all that belongs to his father and be given better opportunities. For example, unlike girls, boys have the opportunity to go to school at the cost of much parental deprivation. In some cases, a girl child could be forced to get married so that the family could get a dowry to help pay for the boys' education. Property such as land is sold to ensure that the boys stay in school. Even now, people in Nigeria still argue that it is a blessing to be born male.

The second barrier for girls to access a better education is the concept of early marriages. Holman et al. (2018) argued that once a girl approaches puberty, they are married off to other families, and therefore not many families invest in their female children because the investment will be lost to the families they marry into. This notion not only affects parents' notions towards girls' education, but also the girls' attitude to work hard and have impressive academic achievements, especially in areas where the marriage takes place at a very tender age. In many states, especially the Islamic ones, women and girls have no say on whom they get married to or at what age they do get married (Raimi 2016).

Jollie and Syed (2018) argued that socio-economic inequalities greatly contribute to women not accessing a proper education or job opportunities to enable them rise to high managerial positions. Holman et al. (2018) agreed with these sentiments and also gave an example of land ownership which is an asset primarily owned by men. They also argued that

women are generally denied loan facilities to further their agri-businesses, which are major sources of income and make up 41% of Nigeria's GDP. They argued that such situations are promoted by religious and cultural norms that have supported gender discrimination in Nigeria. These social institutions argue that women cannot even co-own property even when they both contributed to its acquisition. Even though women produce labor in the farms, they only own 1% of farm assets. They are not allowed to inherit property. As a result, women are exposed to a lack of income; they cannot access better education or credit facilities, and therefore, they cannot compete for leadership positions.

Culture and Religion as a Barrier to Women Political Participation

The unequal treatment and inferior status of women can be said to be retrieved from the cultural beliefs that women are weak physically and psychologically. Bryson (2012) indicated that the association between gender and culture has been problematic. The study elaborated by pointing out Nigerian widows who are deprived of rights and legal status. Hence, it is difficult to provide them with equality and at the same time, safeguard the integrity of cultural traditions. The current modern women who are gambling for their rights mostly see their anticipations struck down in the country by big courts since the nations are biased by cultural beliefs that women should remain subjugated to men. Women in Nigeria are mostly affected negatively by religious laws, norms and values, which have been imposed on them and eventually causes them to be marginalized. Ette (2017) indicated that though all Nigerians are equal under the common and statutory law, this principle is merely followed. Sharia and customary laws are the basic rules in practice that govern most Nigerians. Joining native customs has an effect that influences women at all levels of society. Though the constitution of Nigeria guarantees and gives important human rights and freedom, the numerous religious and customary practices and laws

that adversely impact women weakens their freedom. In this research, Ette failed to indicate why Sharia and customary laws are followed instead of constitutional laws. Therefore, research on how women describe their rise to leadership is necessary to close this research gap.

Parties and Patronage as a Barrier to Women Leadership

Political parties are crucial to give access to get into leadership, but on the other hand, they are one of the biggest barriers to women leadership in Nigeria. Women are normally prevented from being part of the leadership due to the high cost of politics. The nomination forms needed to stand for office in most cases cost around ten thousand pounds, which affects the number of women willing to contest (Edinburgh, 2008). Also, political parties have only made little or no effort to encourage women to apply for office. Almost all the Nigerian political parties have gender empowerment rules in their manifestos though they have limited commitments to improve the representation of women (Anigwe, 2014). By 2015, there were no legal requirements needed for parties to have a specific number of women. In addition, the way parties operate is geared towards patriarchal patronage system, which favors men. At the nomination stage, the rules of engagement are organized and defined around male values and norms. In addition to money, to obtain a nomination always requires the elder's influence, which is difficult to be offered to women due to cultural beliefs.

In most cases, women do not have the experience of winning, organizing, and campaigning for support in an environment dominated by males. Besides, due to the cultural norms and rules that surround indigene relationships and marriages, female candidates find themselves disadvantaged and at times disqualified. In some situations, women have been excluded by parties from standing for office. For instance, a female contestant named Bakori had stood for nomination. However, she was sidelined by the leadership of the party since they

declared that her opponent was standing for office unopposed (Dim & Asomah, 2019). Parties also hinder women participation in leadership by failing to protect them from violence, threats, and hate speech. In spite of the decreased cases, improved transparency measures, and reduced violence during elections, violence towards women remains a substantial threat to the democracy of Nigeria (Orji, 2017).

The Nigerian Media

The marginalization of women in Nigeria can also be spotted in how the Nigerian media portrays them. Zenger and Folkman (2019) argued that in newspapers and TV, women are mostly seen and not heard and as a result, they help churn out female stereotypes that promote limited power for women. In the Nigerian media, women are barely given opportunities to air their opinions in political, economic, technological, and commerce incidents that occur in their country. The Nigerian media mainly promoted men who have continued to dominate it. Women shown on TV programs mainly do domestic duties like keeping house and child nurturing. The media also exhibits women as an object that can be trivialized. The Nigerian media typically ignored the issues of women and when highlighted, the media houses confront them with biases and negativity. They are normally put in supportive roles and have little voice. At times they are humiliated and made vulnerable. Anigwe (2014) argued that this kind of representation occurs because women do not have leadership roles in the board that set up agendas in Nigerian media. In most cases, the media serves the interests of leaders in parliament and large business organizations, who are mostly men.

Summary

Based on the above literature, it is evident that half of Nigeria's population consists of women. They are essential, and their contribution to economic and political life is

unacknowledged. Nevertheless, the culture, constraints, and restrictive practices have not given women a chance to take advantage of their position and number to influence the political decision-making process significantly. Hence, the potential of half of the country's population remains unexplored. The women in Nigeria have been marginalized in the political systems due to the traditional practices and beliefs that inhibit their participation and advancement in public political life. Despite the constitution guaranteeing both genders equal educational access, programs for non-formal and mass adult education, and countrywide campaigns for enrolling school-aged children, political empowerment of women continues to be impeded by traditional obstacles for women education. Female leadership is a topic that is emerging all around the world. Leadership itself is a very complicated topic, and when the aspect of gender is introduced, it becomes so much more complicated. Evaluating the literature, there must be several steps taken to ensure that women have the same opportunities to become leaders as males do. However, there are hindrances in their ways that men do not have to face. Throughout history, males have been in power. In most cases, they are the ones who are preferred to become leaders because of their gender. This is the very first hurdle that many females face when it comes to their journey of leadership. From the above review, it is clear that there is a research gap about what inhibits women's participation despite both genders being granted equal rights by the constitution.

The literature showed that choice made about female education closes many opportunities for women and directs them to traditionally-approved female careers. These traditionally-approved careers like being a housewife and belonging in the kitchen have adverse effects on the role of women in politics since it dictates not only their whereabouts but also the role they will actively engage in. This necessitates the need to carry out this research regarding

the experiences and barriers that face the rise of women's leadership in Nigeria. Tijani-Adenle (2016) discussed that in Nigeria, any woman who intends to work or delve into the business, politics/governance, or leadership must ensure that she can adequately combine her responsibilities as a wife and mother with that of a professional effectively; otherwise, she will have to contend with social disapproval.

One would have thought that since women exceed half of Nigeria's population, they would typically dominate the political scenes. However, most of the Nigerian women are kept in the dark and denied the right to participate actively in politics (Tijani-Adenle, 2016). Women in leadership positions, particularly in developing countries, have the responsibility and the potential to influence their society through leadership, specifically when they are in an enabling environment. Enabled women are empowered to desire for leadership, attain and perform well in leadership positions while still carrying out their roles on the home front. Tijani-Adenle (2016) concluded that education is the solution to every gender injustice ordeal in society. Women are enabled when they are educated, exposed, and economically emancipated. Throughout the ages and in all countries, women in leadership positions can impact a society meaningfully. The history of mankind is satiated with such women. This study helped close this research gap and identified how education is essential in developing leaders and the barriers that women in leadership face in Nigeria, and it sought solutions that will improve their participation in political life.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

Qualitative research emphasizes individual meanings, context, and self-reflexivity. From the information gathered from the participants through open-ended questions, the researcher then analyzes the data, looks for patterns to emerge, and compares these to existing theories (Creswell, 2009). The study aimed to understand how Nigerian women describe their rise to leadership with a purpose to: (a) explore the reasons why women lead, (b) examine the characteristics these women possess, (c) discover ensuing challenges and barriers, and (d) describe successful leadership as defined by the participants.

Chapter Three will first focus on the design of the study, which is multiple case study design. The reasons for the selection of this research design are thoroughly explained. The second focus is to look into the research questions of the study. The settings of the study are described in detail so that the readers can understand the places where the study was conducted. An overview of the participants of the study is then comprehensively described. An explanation for the selection of the participants will be given. The data collection method is explained step-by-step so that the basis of the study could be established. Interviews and document analysis are also ways data was collected. After that, the whole procedure of data analysis is thoroughly explained so that the research could be replicated in the future. The techniques of trustworthiness are also thoroughly explained in this chapter. Ethical considerations of the study are also mentioned so that the research could be published in the future. Finally, an overall summary of the chapter is given to ensure that all the processes are concisely explained.

Design

This study utilized a qualitative design. Qualitative research focuses more on the feelings of individuals and can assist in scrutinizing the feelings of the participants. Through the qualitative method, in-depth knowledge about participants of the study can be gained (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The multiple case study research design used in this study allowed a comprehensive look at the lives of the participants. One of the components of the research methodology is that the phenomenon dictates the method, and the principle helps in determining the actual type of sampling methods to use when choosing participants for the research (Moustakas, 1994). The multiple case study design constituted selecting numerous instrumental bounded cases which were utilized in developing a more in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon than a single incident could provide (Zach, 2006).

The multiple case study research focuses on the selection of several instrumental, bounded cases rather than a single case. The evaluations are explanatory as well as generalizable and emphasizes generalizing the range of applicability of descriptive patterns. Multiple case studies use a designated “target” population of cases. In this study, the design allowed a deep comprehension of how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the multiple case study design explores the involved research topic through the utilization of a replication strategy (Zach, 2006). The replication strategy uses a literal replication stage that involves a selection of multiple cases to obtain a given outcome. In the design, there are no set rules regarding the number of cases to satisfy the replication strategy. Nonetheless, the model allowed for selection of any number of cases as sufficient to offer a compelling outcome for this research.

Research Questions

The essence of my research central question was to capture the stories of the Nigerian women in leadership so that it can serve as a resource for women who aspire to lead. The central question of the study will be supported by three sub-questions.

Central Question

How do female describe their experience rising to the positions of leadership in Nigeria?

Sub-Questions

How do female leaders in Nigeria describe the lack of women rising to leadership in Nigeria?

How do female leaders in Nigeria describe their transformational moment?

How do female leaders sustain their rise to leadership?

Setting

Women that were selected for the study were working in public sectors of the Nigerian system of government. The public sector was chosen because of the convenience and the ease of availability of the individuals. However, most of the organizations selected were in diverse fields. Many of these organizations have an open system. The leaders in these organizations also have well-defined roles. The diverse fields were chosen as a factor for the selection of organizations because these organizations have clear leadership roles, which could be easily studied.

As mentioned earlier, Nigeria is in West Africa. The country is vast, with a population of over 190.9 million people as per census in 2017 (The World Bank, 2020). The people of Nigeria have been drastically increasing, which means that resources are reducing. Nigeria was declared independent in the year 1963 by the British government, and it eventually obtained its constitution in the year 1979. Since its independence, the country models the U.S system of

presidential government, whereby the president oversees every internal and external matter that touches the country in one way or another. Since independence, the country has been led by male presidents, whereby Azikiwe Nnamdi was the first president. In terms of administration, Nigeria has one territory and 36 states. Some of the states include Kano, Benue, Abia, Kaduna, Kebbi, Imo, Edo, Sokoto, Niger, Enugu, Zamfara, Adamawa, Anambra, and Lagos, which is the most famous. In the entire continent of Africa, Nigeria is a hotbed for business; most international companies prefer establishing their businesses in different states in Nigeria, courtesy of the availability of a ready consumer-market. Also, it is worth noting that Nigeria is among the developing countries in the world, with a GDP of 375.8 billion dollars in the year 2017. The president of Nigeria must nominate ministers to different dockets. Out of the 28 slots that are available for ministers, Muhammadu Buhari, the current president of the Republic of Nigeria, has integrated seven women. Statistically, women are represented in 25 percent in the national government positions. Thus, pertaining to this study, it is evident that women in Nigeria tend to wait to be nominated to different governmental positions instead of battling with men in political arenas to convince voters to vote for them directly.

Participants

The participants, all women, were selected from the Nigerian system of government at the time of the study. These women came from different leadership positions within the government as well as from different households as to capture their view concerning work, home, and family roles. Creswell (2007) suggested that the number of participants in a case study should be between five and 25. The small number of participants assists in ensuring that the data that is collected has extensive information regarding the topic (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe, & Young, 2018). For this study, 10 participants were selected due to the time limit of the

study. A purposive sample is derived from a population that contains specific characteristics (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive sampling was the sampling technique used in this study, which involves obtaining the sample depending on characteristics that have been previously described (Ames, Glenton, & Lewin, 2019). The participants were required to be women in leadership roles. The average age of the participants selected for the study was 25-60 years old. The sample included 10 women. The demographic brackets were selected based on the knowledge that these participants already had high engagement in leadership positions. The recruitment procedure for the participants was based on referrals and email addresses that were obtained from contacts who currently were leaders in public offices. Emails were sent to invite participants to be a part of my research study with a description of the nature and purpose of the study (see recruitment email in Appendix A). Participants were guaranteed anonymity throughout the research study.

Procedures

There were several steps taken in the study to ensure that it was a reliable study. The approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was sought for the development of the study. The IRB Approval # was IRB-FY19-20-326. The participants were selected based on the criteria that they had at least one year of experience in the field that they were working. These women came from different leadership positions within the Nigerian government. The sampling technique used in the study were purposive sampling. Before any data was collected, each participant signed an informed consent form. For this study, it was ensured that there were no previous connections of the researcher with the participants of the study. The data was recorded through notetaking and recordings on audio instruments. The data collection methods were interviews, document analysis, and observations. The interview questions were based on the literature. During the interview process and throughout reporting the study's findings, the

interviewees were given pseudonyms to protect their identity. All study data, including interview tapes and transcripts, were kept in a locked location in my home and destroyed upon completion of the study. Interviews were transcribed by a transcriptionist who signed a confidentiality form.

The Researcher's Role

As the researcher, I assumed many responsibilities within the parameters of this study. First, I needed to possess knowledge of the qualitative approach as an advanced methodology. I have taken several classes in qualitative research and have conducted three research projects within the scope of those courses. The skills I acquired through these experiences were: the ability to identify the central phenomenon of the study; the ability to pose research questions that are meaningful and reflective of the phenomenon; the ability to conduct interviews in which the participants are allowed to guide the content to an extent; and the ability to collect and analyze data, including coding text and developing related themes. I also acknowledge that qualitative research is time consuming and may be costly as well; thus, I was prepared to assume these challenges. Ethical issues were addressed during each phase of the study. I completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) on different courses, and I am familiar with the ethical principles associated with research. Permissions for this research study was solicited from appropriate entities. Protocol also dictates that research information be submitted to the Institutional Review Board for approval. The Request for Review Form was filed, providing investigator information, title and project information, description of participants, research methodology, data sources, and a project description. An informed consent letter was developed and will be found in the appendix of this prospectus. The form stated the procedures of the study, stressed that the participant can expect confidentiality, provided the opportunity to ask questions, and ensured the freedom to withdraw at any time. Contact information for the researcher,

adviser, and the Institutional Review Board were included in the letter. There was no previous connection to the participants selected in the study to ensure that there were no biases in the response of the participants. Although the gender of the researcher might have an impact on the implications of the study, steps were taken to ensure that any biased feelings were removed.

Data Collection

The data collection of this study was based on interviews, document analysis, and observations. According to Creswell (2007), when the researcher intends to explain and comprehend a tough scenario from the view of the participants, then the qualitative approach is the preferred approach in such cases. Qualitative research enables individuals to have their voices heard by sharing their stories. These methods were appropriate because of the distinctive methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a human sociological problem.

Interviews

For this qualitative research study, the method of data collection was primarily personal interviews. Therefore, emphasis was placed on open-ended questions and the emergence of themes that were guided by the responses of the participants. Creswell (2009) suggested that qualitative research is interpretative research. Keeping this in mind, I ensured that the questions asked during the interview were not affected by biases or any other ethical issues. An appropriate protocol was used throughout the interview process. Questions and possible probes were generated with the purpose of gaining the maximum amount of information about the participants' leadership journeys. The interview utilized open-ended questions pertaining to the participants' experiences with leadership in terms of career path, education, reasons for leading, perceived traits, challenges, influential individuals, and transformational experiences. Interviews were a very significant part of qualitative research. Qualitative research is focused on acquiring

in-depth knowledge about the conditions of the participants. Semi-structured interviews of the participants were used in this study. Semi-structured interviews are a method of interview whereby the interviewer does not strictly adhere to a formalized list of questions. Mojtahed, Nunes, Martins, and Peng (2014) described that researchers would benefit from the use of an instrument that, in the course of semi-structured interviews, would foster an environment where the ideas and meanings conveyed by informants could be developed, and further discussed to convey a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation

Semi-structured interviews were appropriate because it allows for open ended questions so respondents can open up about sensitive issues. Interviews take place when an experimenter asks participants to elaborate on the questions that are being asked from them (Latham, Saari, Pursell, & Campion, 1980). When participants answered the interview questions, they were transcribed to get a better understanding of the material of the interview. Interviews were appropriate for this research study because the information gained gave insight on several aspects that the study aimed to explore. The following questions were included in the interview questions:

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. Please describe your leadership position in the organization that you are working at.
3. Please describe your preferred leadership style and why you chose this style for yourself?
4. How does education play a role in your leadership?
5. How does education help leaders?
6. How would you explain your journey to the position you are at right now?
7. How would you explain your crucibles on the way to becoming a leader?

8. What is your stand concerning women discrimination in leadership opportunities here in Nigeria?
9. Explain the gender discrimination experiences in your workplace. How was the whole ordeal?
10. Please tell me about the discrimination that you believe you face in your workplace.
11. If you were to select a male employee for your position, what criteria will you judge him on?
12. If you were to select a female employee for your position, what criteria will you judge her on?
13. How is promotion different between women and men in the workplace?
14. The last question is, how different your work life would be if you were of the opposite gender?

Questions One and Two were knowledge questions. The purpose of these questions was to ensure that the participant felt comfortable. These questions developed a rapport between the participant and the researcher (Patton, 2015). Questions Three and Four were reflective questions for the participants. The purpose of a reflective question was to give the participant a chance to explain their experiences thoroughly. Question Three focused on leadership styles, which in today's world can define if a person is successful or not. Studies have shown that transformational leadership is used by females the most, and this style can have a positive impact on the dynamics of teams (Chou, Lin, Chang, & Chuang, 2013). I was also interested in identifying how these women exhibit authentic leadership. Questions Four and Five were included to identify the role education plays in their leadership. Cannonier and Mocan (2018) mentioned that individuals with more education command higher earnings in the labor market.

According to Conger (2013), education holds great promise in enhancing the effectiveness of individuals in their work lives.

Questions Three, Four, and Five were substantial as these questions needed much explanation from the participant. According to various studies, leaders always have to face hurdles in their careers (George, Peter, McLean, & Mayer, 2007). Question Six builds up a setup for Question Seven. Question Seven puts more emphasis on the types of hurdles that the participant has faced. The intention of Question Six was to get an overview of the years leading up to the participant's leadership position. According to some studies, women face these hurdles earlier in their lives as compared to their counterparts (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015).

Question Eight was included to provide insight regarding how the participant perceived the experience of the opposite sex. Studies have suggested that generally, many believe that a person's gender does not have an impact on their work life (Hancock, Darvin, & Walker, 2018). Question Nine follows similar insight; a person might not believe that others were discriminated against because of their gender (Hancock et al., 2018). However, many do believe that they face discrimination because of their gender (Clarkson, Cox, & Thelwell, 2019). Question Nine was provided as an incentive to determine if the participants of the study believed that their gender could be an issue for their leadership positions.

Question 10 aimed to provide insight regarding the participants' work experiences and if they had been targeted negatively because of their gender at the workplace. Toyin et al. (2019) elucidated that Nigeria epitomizes a typical, patriarchal African society in which a system of social stratification and gender differentiation enables men to dominate women in all spheres of life. Through Question 10, the common discriminatory behaviors were identified, which are significant in learning about inequality in the workplace (Hartzell & Dixon, 2019). Question 11

and Question 12 are essentially the same questions but provided different insights into the role of gender. Studies have indicated that women are often judged on their gender for progression in their careers. Some are not chosen for managerial posts due to the misconception that women need to give more time to their homes even if they have not stated this is the case (Barrett, Pike, & Mazerolle, 2018). Questions 11 and 12 assisted in clarifying this phenomenon. Question 13 focused on understanding the changes that have occurred in today's world. Many studies have shown that women were making their way to the top at a much faster pace than before (Hartzell & Dixon, 2019). Question 14 focused on how life in leadership would have been if these women were men.

Records and Document

Document analysis is a method in which various sources of information are systematically evaluated (Bowen, 2014). The purpose of the document analysis was to see the true impact of the participants, and through these documents, the environment of these participants could be judged (Bowen, 2014). The documents included resumes of the participants. A resume is document that list the qualifications for the jobs the person is qualified. The resumes were obtained from each participant. Through the analysis of the professional credentials, the leadership impact of women could be studied as their progress could be seen. As these documents show the progress of the work that the participants of this study have been engaged in, it assisted in understanding how their leadership progressed.

Observation

Observation is the other method that will be used to enhance the active collection of data. I employed naturalistic observation, whereby I observed the actual behavior of research subjects. Thus, through the naturalistic observation method, the attitude and behavior of women in

leadership were observed. Per protocol, I introduced myself to the entire staff of the leadership before I started my observation. I followed (shadowed) three participants through a whole workday as a quiet observer. I kept an observation journal and later found themes and created codes that represented variant behaviors of these women.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, there are various designs and approaches that can be put in place to ensure that a study is effective and embraces quality. According to Creswell (2013) a multiple-case study design explores a real-life, multiple-bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. Data analysis is the primary step that is carefully considered for the study. Three methods of data collection were employed, interviews, documents, and observations. The analysis of each approach is discussed below.

Interview Analysis

The data analysis for interviews was completed in two steps. The first step was to transcribe the data from the interviews. Through transcription, the researcher had access to a more accessible record of the data from the participants (Bailey, 2008). As the research design was qualitative, the best approach for this type of data was coding. The coding guidelines by Charmaz (2006) were followed for this study with four levels of coding. With each level, the complexity of data could be coded, ensuring that the data can be analyzed thoroughly (Charmaz, 2006). The very first level of coding is known as open coding. At this initial stage, the data from participants are analyzed for common themes, and then these themes are categorized. Each collective experience that is found in the data from the participants is given a specific code. To ensure that the raw form of data is still maintained, all these categories were also included further explanations of the participants (Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, & Eyto, 2018). The second level of

coding is called focused coding, which is “more directed, selective, and conceptual” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). The second level is a very significant part of the process because this steps will show the commonalities of experiences that the participants have. The third level is called the axial coding, where the categories are given specific themes and dimensions (Charmaz, 2006). Through axial coding, the concepts will be connected and are usually displayed in the form of flow charts (Tie, Birks, & Francis, 2019). The last step of coding is called theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2006). At this last level, a theoretical structure from the data emerges. The categories were analyzed with the information from the previous levels of coding so that a thorough understanding of the underlying theme of the study could emerge (Tie et al., 2019).

Document Analysis

The data analysis for documents was recorded and analyzed in a systematic way. The participants’ resumes were collected and then patterns and commonalities among the women’s qualifications, education, and job history were examined. Themes that identified their commonalities were also assigned.

Observation Analysis

The data analysis for observations includes an observation protocol. Floyd and Esfandiari (2018) posited that one can learn to perform a behavior by watching an expert perform that behavior. Three women leaders were observed. An observation journal was kept, noting how these women led and the leadership skills they exhibited. After the observations, the observation journal was analyzed using a themes table and coding.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of any study is very significant because it assists in demonstrating the validity and reliability of that study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The trustworthiness of the

study focuses on the credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability factors of the study. Those studies with high levels of trustworthiness are thoroughly developed and aid in establishing facts regarding any given topic (Gunawan, 2015).

Credibility

The credibility of research establishes that the study is reliable and could be used to establish facts about the topic that has been explored in the research (Cutcliffe & Mckenna, 1999). With the establishment of credibility, the findings of the study could be used in further research on the topic (Barbour, 2003). For this study, credibility was established by sharing the findings of the study with the participants, where they provided feedback on the findings. These feedback sessions, which are called member checks assisted in validating the researcher's conclusions. By using the member checks method, the subjectivity of the researcher could be removed (Noble & Smith, 2015). The triangulation of sources established the credibility of the study. By utilizing triangulation of sources, researchers must look at any phenomenon through the point-of-view of different data sources (Heale & Forbes, 2013).

Dependability and Confirmability

The dependability of a study determines how objective research is. In addition, dependability indicates that if any other researcher carried out the study, those researchers would also obtain the same results (Leung, 2015). For this study, the dependability was established through an external audit. The external audit is a process where an external researcher overlooks the various parts of a study. The external auditor can also examine the findings section of the study. By obtaining an objective examination of the study, the dependability of the study was established (Admiraal & Akkerman, 2008).

Confirmability, just like dependability, assists in ensuring that the data collected from the research is valid and reliable; for example, a study with confirmability would ensure similar results if the study were to be carried out again by the researchers (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). Confirmability could also be established through how similar research results are when compared to the previously published studies on the topic (Anney, 2014). The confirmability of this study was conducted through the process of external audits. However, a different researcher was used for the establishment of confirmability so that the results of the study were determined valid.

Transferability

The level of transferability establishes how the findings of any study could be applied in another context or in another time or another place (Elo et al., 2014). The primary purpose of establishing the transferability of any study is to ensure that the results of the study could be generalized to other settings. Thus, the establishment of transferability is very significant in any research study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The transferability of this study was established using the method of the full description. As the study focuses on women in leadership positions, especially in the context of African women, an emphasis on the importance of ethnography was established. Through using the method of thick descriptions, ethnography could be adequately defined, and the transferability of the study could be established (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

First and foremost, consent for participation in this study was taken from each participant. Only after an agreement was signed were participants included in the study. The names of organizations and participants remained anonymous throughout the study to ensure that the data was kept confidential, which was one of the terms for the conduction of the study. The

data for each participant was kept on documents with password protection. The data was not kept on online platforms to ensure that it would not leak. The audio of the participants was also kept on a password-protected computer. Participants were numbered in the order of the data that was collected. I plan to keep the data for three years after the research. To destroy it, I intend to contact the Information and Records Services Unit for assistance.

Summary

The lack of women in leadership is a phenomenon that needs to be thoroughly explored. With case study as the research design, the researcher in this study was able to go in-depth with the questions that have been proposed in the study. Interviews, document analysis, and observations were chosen as the ways of data collection because these methods ensured that the data collected is authentic and valid. Data analysis can be a very challenging part of any research. By establishing the coding system, all three types of data collection were quantified for further analysis. The methods that have been selected to establish trustworthiness helped in setting a high standard for the establishment of validity and reliability. By following the ethical considerations, it was ensured that the information of the participants for the study was kept confidential and that they were willing to be a part of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter Four focused on projecting the information provided by the participants who took part in both the interview and the questionnaire of the study. The participants involved were women only, and some of them participated in the interview and the others in the questionnaire. The chapter then reviews the results obtained from the interview as well as the questionnaire. Summary of the observation is then portrayed and data collected from these analyses. Various themes, including education, sexuality, culture, meritocracy, and authentic leadership, were obtained from the collected data. Furthermore, the collected data outlines the research questions of the analysis.

Participants

The participants in this qualitative research were all women political leaders in the Nigerian system of government. The women ages were around 25 to 60 years old. The women had on average of 15 years of work experience in their government jobs and served in various roles such as commissioner of state level, political leader, government consultant, chief executive officer, and heads of various governmental institutions. Therefore, they shared similarities within the selected fields. Each participant represented personal qualities and experiences, which made their narratives unique within the common union they possessed. Pseudonyms were ascribed to the 10 participants that were interviewed. Mercy, Jane, Toyin, Ada, Agatha, Esther, Mairo, Belinda, Amina, and Halima had been appointed into the position of leadership by the Nigerian government for over a year. Although participants had shown interest in the interview initially, they became skeptical when it was time for the interview itself. Most of the participants respectfully shared that it was a susceptible time in the country, and it could be

unwise to reveal their rise to leadership in its authenticity because the interview could lead to the loss of their power and position. Participants were reassured that pseudonyms would be ascribed to their names, job title, and age, and the years of experience associated with their pseudonyms were not reported due to the sensitivity of their positions. Data was collected via an interview, observations, and documents. Themes and codes were generated and discussed.

Results

Interview

Ten participants were interviewed for this study, and the interviewees were all females serving in the Nigerian government. Five themes emerged from the interview; they were education, sexuality, culture, authentic leadership, and meritocracy. See Table 2 for themes and codes and Table 3 for frequency of codes across interview data.

Table 2

Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes	Participants' Words
Education	Self-awareness	It is necessary for the leaders as it brings awareness. It is the hallmark of a profound leader. It portrays a capacity of a leader to honestly make an evaluation of the leaders' own beliefs as well as the effect on other individuals.
	Confidence	Education helps in boosting confidence by having proper knowledge. Increased confidence enables the leaders to feel positive in leading other individuals and handling daily challenges.
	Broader vision	It broadens the vision by providing basic knowledge. Furthermore, education enables individuals to master the practice of bringing the team together with a single objective. Education assists in making the vision of a leader to be vivid and compelling picture of the plans.
Sexuality	Male dominance	Men govern our society as they are more dominant in each sector. The men occupy major jobs and positions in nation.
	Reduce women to their sexuality in conversations	I think that they do not trust my abilities. They question the capabilities of women more profoundly as compared to their counterpart.
	More preference of men over women	Mostly as for promotion, male is promoted even when they are not capable enough as compared to women. The phenomenon has been a norm for an extended period. When females want a promotion, they are intensively interviewed and doubted.
Culture	Men as leaders	Our culture sees the men as leaders. If there is a man, he will be the leader instead of a woman. Men occupy multiple posts as compared to women who have the same qualifications.
	Women as wife and mother only	They are taught to be a good wife and mother and to run the house. Most cultures perceive that acting like a wife and mother only are the primary roles of women in society. These factors deny most women access to an essential way of life including access to formal education.
	Lack of education for women	Women when decide to study they are often restricted and are not allowed to have further education
Authentic Leadership	Need for Authentic Leaders	We have to lead authentically—the practice assists in developing and creating my legitimacy as a leader.
	Meritocracy	I think I am an authentic leader
Meritocracy	Meritocracy as a requirement for employment	Meritocracy as a requirement for employment
		The criteria will be totally on their education, leadership skills and meritocracy

Table 3

Frequency of Codes across Interview Data

Themes	Codes	Occurrence across data
Education	Self-awareness	17
	Confidence	4
	Broader vision	4
Sexuality	Male dominance	8
	Lack of trust in women	3
	More preference of men over women	3
Culture	Men as leaders	5
	Women as wife and mother only	2
	Lack of education for women	3
Authentic Leadership	Need for authentic leaders	18
Meritocracy	Meritocracy as a requirement for employment	5

Observation

Observations were conducted with three women; Belinda, Halima, and Amina. The observation lasted for 20 minutes. Below is a summary of the observations.

Belinda. Belinda was part of the observation. In my estimation, the act of observing changes things. The participants willingly gave permission to be observed. Observations were conducted through Skype with two cameramen covering the process. Belinda is a government official. During my observation, Belinda happened to be receiving male leaders at her office for a discussion on the way forward for the forthcoming government election. While the meeting was in progress, I noticed that the man, with whom Belinda was having this meeting, did not have any eye contact with her. Belinda appeared comfortable, spoke authentically, and conveyed information in a manner that was clear and concise. She confidently facilitated the meeting until the end. I began to wonder how the male leader tactfully avoided eye contact with Belinda, but then I remembered that Belinda had initially mentioned during our interview that one of her leadership attributes is maintaining eye contact with others as this act intuitively enables her to appear powerful. Belinda seemed to be subversive and not subservient like the women in Nigeria are accustomed to. I observed that not only do women in Nigeria have to acclimate to a discipline that had long been deemed as a masculine pursuit, but they were also further challenged to reconcile the dichotomy of women and leadership in a patriarchal society.

Halima . Halima was also observed. She is also a government official who willingly accepted my request for observation for the fulfilment of this study. Halima was observed while verifying the work conducted by her subordinates. I observed that Halima highlighted the mistakes made by workers step by step, and then she called them into her office, one after the other. Halima told them their errors and discussed the entire process. The subordinates were at

ease while talking to her; there was no tension. Halima conveyed their mistakes in an amiable and respectful manner. The subordinates accepted their mistakes, admitted them, and asked for her advice. Halima exhibited an authentic presence; she gave each staff a chance to learn and improve.

Amina. Amina also participated in the observation. She was observed during her working hours. She had employed the services of some experts from London to deliver organizational development training to her staff. I observed as Amina carefully explain the Nigerian culture to the experts. My understanding was that it was their second meeting. Amina had a basic PowerPoint presentation that indicated the fact that capacity building was a fundamental necessity for her staffs. I observed as the experts watched with delight. Amina was in the process of orchestrating organizational reforms like seminars, sensitization, and global forums to help women in Nigeria to rise to leadership positions. Amina understood that the nature of leadership and management is changing from a heroic leader to team leadership and collaborative work. She said, “We are at a tipping pace. All organizations must maintain development that is equivalent to today’s world, develop rapidly and not fall behind.” Amina is at the forefront, ensuring that she engages citizens at the grassroots level to develop strategic solutions to community problems. After the presentation, Amina invited her guests out to lunch in her home.

Four themes emerged from the observations. After the observations, themes and codes were developed. The themes included supporting quotations. See Table 4 for observations, themes, and codes.

Table 4

Observation Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes	Observation
Confidence	Knowledge of matter	Background knowledge of the matter being discussed
	Presentation with facts	Proper presentation dealing with questions of the members in the meeting depicting full command
Leadership style	Cooperative	Highlighting the mistakes instead of yelling.
	Trust with subordinates	Telling them to do it better by giving specific guidelines, believing they will get it right.
Communication	Effective motivational speech	Boosting morale of workers
	Known use of wordings	Use of careful wordings to avoid any conflict
Authenticity	Openness and genuine concerns for the people	Exhibited an authentic presence

Document Analysis

Documents consisted of reviewing the participants' resumes. The documents projected various aspects that women in Nigeria experience multiple phenomena in the country. Themes emerged from the documents were education, work experience, and strengths. See Table 5 for document themes.

Table 5

Document Themes and Codes

Themes	Notes
Education	All of the participants had first degree in Bachelor of science in various fields such as engineering, accounting, technology and communications. Most had also studied other courses to advance their career skills.
Work Experience	Over 10 years in government. These jobs include commissioners of state level, political leader, government consultant, chief executive officers and heads of various governmental institutions. Most of the participants worked in several government positions before getting their current leadership positions.
Strengths	All of the participants had the necessary skills required for their current job positions. These skills included profound team work skills, communication skills, problem solving skills, decision making and authenticity. The participants had desirable leadership qualities.

Themes Development

Theme One: Education. When the participants were asked questions concerning the role of education in leadership, the answers of the participants varied. All the participants agreed with the fact that education is an essential requirement in every field, including leadership. Mercy stated, “education provides knowledge of things going around the leader involving work and other multiple things.” The notion is backed with all the other women who said that, indeed, education provides basic knowledge. Participants had bachelor’s degrees in science, engineering, social work, and business administration. All of them agreed that education offers a broader vision in every aspect of life. Mercy narrated that,

Being educated has helped me to make better decisions both professionally and personally, and education helps leaders to produce quality and more engaging decisions.

Education provides an experience of lifelong learning. In leadership, education brings about the awareness of the surroundings along with self-awareness.

Mario, Amina, and Halima agreed that education provided them with the confidence to lead organizations. Multiple factors affect the education system in Nigeria. Even though the country has the largest economy in Africa, the country invests less in its education as compared to other African countries (Ugbogbo, Akwemoh, & Omoregie, 2013). The ministry of education manages the education system; however, there is no standardized form of learning in the country. There exists various cornerstone through which societies operate and develop. Profound education would assist in developing effective leadership. According to Ugbogbo et al. (2013), education acts as an effective incubator of obtaining new ideas as well as skills. Education challenges learners to nurture themselves and encourages them to develop practical leadership skills.

Theme Two: Sexuality. The participants conveyed that they had been targeted at different times in their lives and also had been victims of gender discrimination. For example, Toyin believed that women pass through multiple crucibles before reaching top leadership in various work sectors. She stated,

Ahh, I passed through very much crucibles. In Nigeria, the thought of a woman being a leader is a huge challenge. First, they question you, reduce you and attempt to buy you for sex. I constantly must appear powerful and try my best to be different.

The participants were often evaluated based on their gender. Multiple dimensions of sex-based perception as well as sexual inequality in workplaces were based on various factors including problem of accessing formal education, getting promoted to leadership positions, and getting decent work-friendly settings (Akwa, 2016). Women in Nigeria face stereotypes in various fields, including education (Gberevbie, Osibanjo, Adeniji, & Oludayo, 2014).

Theme Three: Culture. Societies and their attitudes can affect the culture of a country and its consequent practices and norms. Nigerian women continuously challenge and transcend cultural expectations while navigating the obstacles of a patriarchal society. In her interview, Jane pointed out that she works hard to challenge these biases. She said,

When I decided to get into politics, everyone opposed the idea because in a country like Nigeria, people are not broad-minded to accept women at a place where they had not seen much inclusion. To prove myself, I studied hard and then gained experience by working extremely hard. I advocated for inclusion and fought for it.

In a culture where the women are only considered to carry out the duties of being a good wife and mother, the girls are not equipped with the essential skills for leadership. Nonetheless, the profound entry of women in the labor force in Nigeria has rendered the notion of the male being the sole breadwinner to be obsolete (Agbalajobi, 2010). Even though the workforce participation rates are improving in education and professional achievement for women in Nigeria, multiple factors still confront women in their workplace, including different cultural practices and attitudes.

Theme Four: Authentic Leadership. The participants described that they would love to lead authentically. According to Okafor, Fagbemi, and Hassan (2011), authentic leadership is a method of administration that emphasizes developing the legitimacy of leaders through honest relations with colleagues that value their inputs. In addition, authentic leadership is developed on various ethical foundations. Mercy emphasized the authentic leadership style by stating, “Authentic and transformational because it involves a wide range of techniques which can facilitate the involvement of other workers.” Women who are leaders in the labor force in Nigeria are often projected as robust, intelligent, and significantly offer support to their male

counterparts through bringing in new ideas, visions, and procedures for doing various phenomena in work (Okafor et al., 2011).

Theme Five: Meritocracy. Meritocracy is a social system where the status and success in an individual's life fundamentally depends on their ability, qualifications, and talents (Okpara, 2006). The participants described that they would evaluate men and women based on meritocracy. Toyin suggested that she would select a person who would fulfill his or her duties as well as responsibilities for the involved post and possess enough qualifications and skills to cope with the involved situation. She said, "A person who has enough qualification and skills to cope with the situation." In a meritocracy, each individual possesses the right to project their opinions and are encouraged to share these opinions (Okpara, 2006). The people are listened to, and decisions are made concerning the opinions believed to be the best.

Research Question Responses

Sub-Question 1: How do female leaders in Nigeria describe the lack of women rising to leadership in Nigeria? The participants described that, in Nigeria, there is a lack of women rising to leadership in multiple ways. The participants depicted the phenomenon as an unfair practice. The participants perceived that women are part of the key stakeholders in developing the society, including occupying various leadership positions; thus, they should not be subjected to marginalization. The issue of marginalization and low participation of women across multiple leadership levels as well as in decision making has attracted the attention of numerous individuals including women in leadership positions in Nigeria. Even though women can portray similar features, including educational qualifications, various occupation, and socioeconomic status, they are still marginalized in multiple spheres of life, including obtaining leadership roles.

Also, the participants projected the gross gender gap that exists between them and the men in society.

Nonetheless, the participants believed some of the significant factors that contribute to the lack of rising in leadership include odious social and cultural norms, exclusion from political activities, educational barriers, and economic lopsidedness that controls the presence of women in the public realm. Furthermore, the rise of women leadership is impacted by the state and other stakeholders including governance and politics.

Sub-Question 2: How do female leaders in Nigeria describe their transformational moment? The participants portrayed their transformational moment as a problematic practice, but with determination and hard work, rise in leadership is possible even for women in the male-dominated society. Some of the significant barriers that make the transformation difficult constitute prejudice against women, discrimination, and underappreciation. In the study, Esther stated that male leaders are more appreciated than their female counterparts. Nonetheless, today women have managed to defy some of the barriers and a profound number of them have obtained leadership positions in both state jobs as well as private sectors. According to the Nigerian census, women constitute about 50% of the total population in the region, hence significant transformation to a leadership position is necessary.

Furthermore, hard work and education are some of the major factors that accelerate the transformation of women leadership in the Nigerian society. A significant percentage of the participants pointed out that education and hard work realizes the transformation of women leadership in the Nigerian society. Maria stated that “Being educated has helped me to make better decisions both professionally and personally.”

Sub-Question 3: How do female leaders sustain their rise to leadership?. Female leaders sustain their rise to leadership through practicing authentic leadership behaviors, hard work, and delivering the best to their abilities. Based on the projected theme and in my definition, authentic leadership is an approach to leadership that accentuates building a leader's legitimacy through honesty, loyalty, and vulnerability to relationship with followers based on ethical foundation. Authentic leaders are not trapped in the myth of a complete leader; they put the mission of their nation ahead of their own interest. Furthermore, women sustain their rise to leadership by fighting gender bias. The women in leadership would give promotion based on meritocracy rather than bias. Gender bias is significantly embedded in Nigerian culture, economy, and social structure as well as political realms. Women experience unacceptable levels of discrimination; therefore, they are at the forefront in fighting to eliminate the practice. Gender bias plays a significant role in preventing the woman from rising to leadership and making decisions. Nonetheless, for women to sustain their leadership in society, they have to fight for it to be earned. Women in leadership often create environments that provide equal opportunity for both males and females in community. The utilization of meritocracy assists in eliminating gender bias.

Central Question: How do female describe their experience rising to the positions of leadership in Nigeria?. The participants described their experience in rising to the leadership position based on multiple factors including education, culture, authenticity, sexuality, as well as a meritocracy. Education constitutes one of the significant factors that realized the rise in a women leadership position in Nigeria. Furthermore, education provides necessary knowledge, profound decision making as well as a lifelong learning experience that is essential in leadership.

Also, the participants conveyed that they have been targeted at different times in their lives and have been victims of gender discrimination in their rise to a leadership position in the country. These women have reported multiple cases of gender discrimination projected towards them. The inequalities are as a result of various cultural beliefs. Nonetheless, in their rise to leadership, the participants challenged and transcended cultural expectations while navigating the obstacles of a patriarchal society. Furthermore, the participants practiced authenticity as well as meritocracy to realize success in their rise to leadership. These behaviors are essential in creating a conducive environment for them to rise in leadership and eliminate practices of social inequality in the society. Authentic leadership was portrayed by the participants, indicating that leadership by women in the society is critical in increasing the pace of societal transformation both at workplaces and at home.

Summary

In this section, different themes and codes were generated from the interviews. Education, Sexuality, Culture, Authentic Leadership, and Meritocracy were the major themes in this research. It is interesting to note that these women were always fighting to be seen, heard, and taken seriously. In Nigerian terms, a woman was almost always defined as someone's daughter, wife, mother, or widow. The patriarchal system in Nigeria gives little or no room for women who aspire to do something great with their life. Nigerian women strive daily to be educated so that they can achieve equal participation and representation and be valuable contributors to national development.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

This research focused on how women describe their rise to leadership in Nigeria, a country in which the number of women at the helm of leadership affairs is significantly low. Chapter Five will provide a summary of the findings of the research concerning the research questions. Additionally, the chapter will discuss the various outcomes of the research concerning the theoretical and empirical literature. The discussion section will explain how the research did to the result of previous studies. It will also show how the study extends on previous research conducted and the value it brings to the research field. The chapter will also entail the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of the study. It will, therefore, address the various recommendations to all stakeholders involved in addressing the issue of women leadership in Nigeria. Additionally, the chapter will address the delimitations and limitations of the research. The limitations and delimitations of the research are useful in informing the boundaries, scope, or limit of the study upon which decisions are made. They also help to highlight some of the weaknesses of the study, which could not be controlled. The chapter also provides some of the future research recommendations as well as the summary of the critical information provided by the research.

Summary of Findings

The results of the research are based on the research questions, which focused on revealing the experiences of women who rise into leadership positions in Nigeria. The findings were obtained from the various methods of data collection deployed in the research, that is, interview, observation, and documentation processes. Ten participants participated in the interview process, all of whom were females. From the interview, five themes emerged:

education, sexuality, culture, authentic leadership, and meritocracy. The participants stated that education played a crucial role in their leadership experience by creating self-awareness, broader vision, and confidence. They acknowledged that education majorly brings self-awareness, which is essential to leadership, and education helped them broaden insight and confidence through basic knowledge. In the sexuality theme, it was revealed that male dominance is more prevalent in leadership positions in Nigeria, just like other sectors of a male-dominated society.

Additionally, participants were also reduced to their sexuality in most conversations, and people do not trust their leadership abilities. Furthermore, from the interviews, male employees were preferred during promotions as compared to their female counterparts who sometimes have more exceptional capabilities.

Additionally, society views males as leaders and therefore prefer them for leadership positions. Also, according to the participants, women are given the roles of mothers and wives and are consequently not considered leaders. Women are also not allowed to further their education to get someone ready them with the necessary knowledge required for leadership roles. From the interview, it was evident that the participants preferred authentic leadership. The participants also viewed meritocracy as an essential criterion for employment opportunities.

Observation was deployed as a method of data collection for three of the female participants. The observations revealed four themes: confidence, leadership style, communication, and authenticity. It was observed that determination resulted in a proper presentation of facts and adequate knowledge of background information of the matter under discussion. Additionally, the participants preferred a cooperative style of leadership. It involves highlighting the mistakes to the subordinates instead of yelling at them. Women leaders also trust their subordinates and, in some cases, tell the employees to undertake a task instead of providing

the guidelines. It was also observed that the women leaders preferred effective motivational speech to communicate with their employees, which thereby instills morale in the workers. They also use careful wordings to avoid unnecessary conflict with their employees. Additionally, women leaders believe in authenticity as they are open and express genuine concern to their subordinates.

Discussion

Empirical Literature

From the research, it was discovered that women are discriminated against in workplaces and leadership roles. Nigeria, like other African countries, continues to face serious gender inequality challenges where women are victimized. Despite the numerous gender equality campaigns in the country, the community still discriminates against women as they are not accorded the opportunities given to men. As a patriarchal society, culture continues to play a massive role in the gender disparity in the country. From the research, it was discovered that due to the patriarchal nature of the community, there are specific roles reserved for women, which are being wives and mothers. As a result, they are not expected to lead and find it difficult, therefore, to ascend to leadership positions. The journey of the participants to leadership positions has all been marred with numerous challenges due to the cultural perspective towards women in Nigeria. From the observations, it was discovered that men also do not like working under women's leadership due to the cultural view of women. According to society, they expect women to be inferior to men, and women, therefore, cannot lead men in making important decisions.

Additionally, women are discriminated against in job promotions in Nigeria. All the participants in the research confirmed that male employees were preferred in promotions

compared to their female counterparts. The masculine gender preference during promotions has resulted in considerable disparities in gender gaps related to unemployment. From data collected between 2010 and 2016, it was discovered that the gender gaps related to unemployment escalated significantly. The gender disparities in unemployment were due to the preference for male employees compared to female employees. It is as a result of the belief in the patriarchal society that generally men are better than women. Therefore, employment in Nigeria is on gender preference and not on the individual capabilities of those seeking employment opportunities. Also, culture plays a massive role in the gender gaps in unemployment. Women in Nigeria are discriminated against in education compared to men due to the belief that women should not be educated as men in society. They, therefore, lack the education qualifications and knowledge to gain any job opportunities compared to men. As a result, most women in Nigeria remain unemployed, resulting in the gender gaps in unemployment.

The psychological perspective of women concerning their role in leadership has changed significantly in Nigeria. Previously, women underrated themselves and felt that they could not offer better leadership compared to men. Therefore, women did not venture into leadership roles due to their psychological self-perspective. Moreover, women who ventured into leadership were viewed as perpetrators by fellow women who believed that women should not venture into leadership positions. However, from the research conducted, women have changed their psychological self-perspective. All the women who participated in the study recognized that there are difficulties for women who ascend into leadership. However, the women take on these challenges and climb to their current leadership positions due to their change in psychological self-perspective.

Theoretical Framework

Heilmen's (1983) lack of fit model explains gender discrimination and other self-limiting behavior of women, which affects their ability to ascend the leadership hierarchy. The theory focused on sex stereotypes in which a specific group of people are generalized and wrongly judged due to their gender. Society, therefore, is prone to fail to harness the available talent in women due to such sex stereotypes. The participants of the research confirmed the statement and said that in job promotions, male employees are given the upper hand compared to their female counterparts. Therefore, this means that the job promotions in Nigeria are gender-based and not on the particular capabilities and talents of individual employees. Thus, women with higher skills and talents may fail to get job promotions due to sex stereotypes. This explains the gender gaps in unemployment in Nigeria, which have significantly increased over the past six years.

According to the theory, society plays a huge role in reinforcing sex stereotypes, which mostly affect women of Nigeria like in any other African country. The Nigerian community believes that women should be inferior to men, and women are, therefore, raised with the perception that they are inferior to men. Women in Nigeria are brought up to be good wives and mothers with the belief that leadership roles are preserved for the male gender. From the research, some participants confirmed that they had faced sex stereotypes, and most discussions concerning their leadership were reduced to their sexuality. Some of their subordinates even questioned their leadership as they felt that they were not effective leaders who could cope with the pressures that come with leadership. The theory confirms the results of the research by arguing that masculine qualities align more favorably with power and leadership positions. At the same time, feminine traits match well with collaboration and nurturing (Heilmen, 1983).

However, Heilman (1983) argued through the model theory that men have high chances of being aggressive, ambitious, and competitive, while women are perceived as lacking ambition, passive, and caring. Heilman, therefore, stated that men are more likely to have leadership qualities as compared to women. The research conducted proved that women also have leadership qualities similar to their male counterparts. The problem is that most of the women are not allowed to express their leadership qualities. From the research, women believe in authentic leadership in which the subordinates are not dictated on what to do. Authentic leadership is an effective form of leadership that has proven to achieve the required outcomes from the employees. The research indicated that women should not be viewed as a gender with no leadership qualities but as a gender that can lead. Women who aspire to ascend into leadership positions should, therefore, be allowed to showcase their leadership qualities, and their sex stereotypes against them should be limited.

According to studies done by Nolte (2008), women's underrepresentation in most elite leadership positions results from the belief that men are more effective leaders than women. Still, they forget that in the current generation, the female type of leadership, is highly desired. The research proves that the current generation prefers the feminine kind of leadership. The research participants revealed that they prefer authentic leadership and did not dictate their subordinates in their workplaces. They trusted in their subordinates and did not give strict guidelines to be followed in the completion of tasks. Such kind of leadership is preferred by assistants, and it gives them the satisfaction and motivation to work to the best of their capabilities. The research, therefore, contradicted the theory by reinforcing the fact that women leadership is gaining popularity, and therefore women also have practical leadership qualities.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The research has various theoretical implications to the lack of fit model used to explain the self-limiting behaviors and gender discrimination against women, which negatively impacts their rise to leadership positions. The research reinforces the model's focus on sex stereotypes as one of the key factors that result in gender discrimination against women who aspire for leadership positions. The research found that women were discriminated against in workplaces in Nigeria due to the society's perspective on the female gender. However, the study contradicts the model on the perception that masculine qualities align more favorably with power and leadership positions while feminine traits match well with collaboration and nurturing (Heilmen, 1983). The research shows that women also have similar leadership qualities as men and are capable of providing effective leadership when given the opportunity. Future theories should gender-sensitize leadership qualities since both genders have same capabilities.

Empirical Implications

The research findings also have empirical implications for the issue of women rising to leadership positions. The research adequately projects gender disparity in unemployment due to the wrongful perception of women in society. From the study, women were overlooked during job promotions as a result of sex stereotypes against them. It confirmed that job promotion in Nigeria is primarily based on gender affiliation and not the necessarily skill requirements. The research findings also projected that women are capable of leadership and should, therefore, be accorded the opportunity to lead. The research, therefore, aimed change the view of the patriarchal society also to accept women as leaders and not to limit them based on sex stereotypes.

Practical Implications

The research findings also have practical implications, especially on how the issue of gender disparity in leadership positions is handled in Nigeria. Currently, the view of society is that women are not capable of leading and should, therefore, not seek leadership positions. However, the research findings, through the participants, illustrated that women are as capable of leading as men, and sex stereotypes should not be used against them. The women who were interviewed displayed explicit knowledge and skills of what leadership entails and are part of the people who are seeking reforms to enable women leadership. The research, therefore, aimed to change the perspective of the society towards women and champion for gender equality. The aim was to lessen the barriers that inhibit women from rising into leadership positions in Nigeria and other African countries.

Delimitations and Limitations

The research only included female participants who held different leadership positions within Nigeria. The researcher investigated the rise in leadership positions for women in Nigeria. Therefore, for accurate results to be achieved, the research needed to collect first-hand information from women who had risen to leadership positions within Nigeria. As a result, a total of 10 female participants were selected and agreed to take part in the research process. The rise of women to leadership positions in Nigeria is influenced by culture as Nigeria is a patriarchal society that does not believe in women's leadership. Consequently, the researcher sought to develop scientific explanations of the cultural phenomenon that affects the rise of women to leadership positions.

The research study also had some limitations which could not be controlled. The research focused on the rise of women into leadership positions, and as a result, only women participants

were the sample for interviews and observations. Men were not included, and this may have resulted in bias, possibly due to the feminist approach from women who participated in the interview. Additionally, the participants were majorly from women who worked in the federal government. Women's rise into leadership positions in other sectors was, therefore, not examined during the research. The situation may be different in other sectors, and thus the results may not entirely display the case in other sectors.

Recommendations for Future Research

Various recommendations can be made for future research from the study findings, delimitations, and limitations. From the study findings, future research should focus on removing the barriers that exist which prevent women from rising into leadership positions. Therefore, future research should focus on providing solutions to the challenges faced in women leadership. The study conducted revealed the problems that prevent women from rising into leadership positions in Nigeria. Some of the challenges faced include culture, psychological self-perspective, and sex stereotypes against women. Future research should, therefore, focus on addressing these challenges to ensure women who aspire to rise in leadership positions do not face such problems.

Additionally, the research focused on only female participants for the study. The women were interviewed regarding their rise into leadership positions and gave their views on how gender inequality exists in workplaces in Nigeria. Future research should also include men who could describe how they view the rise of women into leadership positions in Nigeria. It would provide a generalized perception of the increase of women into leadership positions in Nigeria.

The research mostly examined women in leadership positions in the federal government, and other women leaders from different sectors did not participate. Future research conducted to

investigate the rise of women in leadership positions in Nigeria should also include other areas. It would accurately depict the challenges faced by women who aspire to lead in various organizations. As a result, other problems affecting the rise of women into leadership should also be obtained.

REFERENCES

- Ademuson, A. (2016). Women domination and oppression in Nigerian society: Implications for sustainable development. *African Journal For The Psychological Studies of Social Issues*, 21(6), 234-256.
- Admiraal, W., & Akkerman, S. (2008). Quality control in Qualitative research: Audit for determining the trustworthiness of educational research. *Quality & Quantity*, 42, 257-274. doi:10.1007/s11135-006-9044-4
- Agbalajobi, D. T. (2010). Women's participation and the political process in Nigeria: Problems and prospects. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(2), 75-82.
- Akwa, E. M. (2016). Issues and Prospects of Gender in Entrepreneurship Practice in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Benchmark (IJEb)*, 3(1), 117-121.
- Aldamiz-Echevarría, C., Idígoras, I., & Vicente-Molina, M. (2017). Gender issues related to choosing the successor in the family business. *European Journal of Family Business* 7(1), 54-64.
- Ames, H., Glenton, C., & Lewin, S. (2019). Purposive sampling in a qualitative evidence synthesis: A worked example from a synthesis on parental perceptions of vaccination communication. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 19(26).
- Anigwe, A. (2014). *Perceptions of women in political leadership positions in Nigeria*. Walden University.
- Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 5(2), 272-281.

- Badmus, I. A. (2006). Political parties and women's political leadership in Nigeria: The case of the PDFD, the ANPP, and the AD. *A Journal of African Studies*, 32.
- Bailey, J. V. (2008). First steps in qualitative data analysis: Transcribing. *Family Practice*, 25(2). doi:10.1093/fampra/cmn003
- Barbour, R. S. (2003). The newfound credibility of qualitative research? Tales of scientific essentialism and co-option. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13(7), 1019-1027. doi:10.1177/1049732303253331
- Barrett, J., Pike, A., & Mazerolle, S. (2018). A phenomenological approach: Understanding the experiences of female athletic trainers providing medical care to male sports teams. *International Journal of Athletic Therapy & Training*, 23(3), 113-121.
- Basu Roy, S. (2008). Women in leadership: a discussion. *HRM Review*, May.
- Bowen, G. A. (2014). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 27-40.
- Brevik, L. M., Gunnulfsen, A. E., & Renzulli, J. S. (2018). Student teachers' practice and experience with differentiated instruction for students with higher learning potential. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 71, 34-45. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.003
- Brink, L., & Nel, J. A. (2015). Exploring the meaning and origin of stereotypes amongst south African employees. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 41(1), 1-13. doi:0002045161;
- Bryson, V. (2012). *Feminist political theory: An introduction*. New York: Paragon House.
- Cannonier, C., & Mocan, N. (2018). The impact of education on women's preferences for gender equality: Evidence from sierra leone. *Journal of Demographic Economics*, 84(1), 3-40.
- Carli, L. L., & Eagly, A. H. (2016). Women face a labyrinth: An examination of metaphors for women leaders. *Gender in Management*, 31(8), 514-527. doi: 10.1108/GM-02-2015-0007

- Catalyst. (2020). *Pyramid: Women in S&P 500 Companies*.
<https://www.catalyst.org/research/women-in-sp-500-companies/>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Chou, H.-W., Lin, Y.-H., Chang, H.-H., & Chuang, W.-W. (2013). Transformational leadership and team performance: The mediating roles of cognitive trust and collective efficacy. *SAGE Open*. doi:10.1177/2158244013497027
- Clarkson, B., Cox, E., & Thelwell, R. (2019). Negotiating gender in the English football workplace: Composite vignettes of women head coaches' experiences. *Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal*, 27(2), 73-85.
- Conger, J. (2013). Mind the gaps: What limits the impact of leadership education. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 6(4).
- Cook, A., & Glass, C. (2014). Women and top leadership positions: Towards an institutional analysis. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 21(1), 91-103. doi:10.1111/gwao.12018
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among approaches*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cubillo, L., & Brown, M. (2003). Women into educational leadership and management: international differences? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 41(3), 278-291.
- Cutcliffe, J., & Mckenna, H. P. (1999). Establishing the credibility of qualitative research findings: The plot thickens. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 30(2), 374-380.

- Dim, E. E., & Asomah, J. Y. (2019). Socio-demographic predictors of political participation among women in Nigeria: Insights from Afrobarometer 2015 data. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 20(2), 91-105.
- Edgeworth, F. Y. (1922). Equal pay to men and women for equal work. *The Economic Journal*, 32(128), 431-457.
- Ette, M. (2017). Where are the women? Evaluating visibility of Nigerian female politicians in news media space. *Gender Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 24(1), 1-18.
- Nolte, I. (2008). 'Without women, Nothing can succeed': Yoruba Women in the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Nigeria. *Perspectives on Vigilantism in Nigeria*, 78(1), 84-106.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). *Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness*. SAGE Open.
doi:10.1177/2158244014522633
- Fapohunda, T.M. (2012). Women and political leadership in Nigeria. *Lagos State University Academic Journal*, 242-249.
- Floyd, M. W., & Esfandiari, B. (2018). Supplemental observation acquisition for learning by observation agents. *Applied Intelligence*, 48(11), 4338-4354.
- Forouharfar, A., Seyed, A. R., & Salarzahi, H. (2018). An epistemological critique of social entrepreneurship definitions. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 8(1), 1-40.
- Gberevbie, D. E., Osibanjo, A. O., Adeniji, A. A., & Oludayo, O. O. (2014). An empirical study of gender discrimination and employee performance among academic staff of government universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social, Human Science and Engineering*, 8(1), 101-108.

- George, B., Peter, S., McLean, A., & Mayer, D. (2007). Discovering your authentic leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(2), 129-138.
- Gunawan, J. (2015). Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Belitung Nursing Journal*, 10-16.
- Hancock, M., Darvin, L., & Walker, N. (2018). Beyond the glass ceiling: Sport management students' perceptions of the leadership labyrinth. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2), 100-110.
- Hartzell, A., & Dixon, M. (2019). A holistic perspective on women's career pathways in athletics administration. *Journal of Sport Management*, 33(2), 79-93.
- Hatch, R. (2016, June 21). *Education Policy and Data Center*.
- Heale, R., & Forbes, D. (2013). Understanding triangulation in research. *Evidence-based Nursing*, 16(4). doi:10.1136/eb-2013-101494
- Heilman, M. (1983). Sex bias in work settings: The 'lack of fit model'. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 5, 269-298.
- Hodges, J. (2017). Cracking the walls of leadership: women in Saudi Arabia. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 32(1), 34-46.
- Holman, L., Stuart-Fox, D., & Hauser, C.E. (2018). The gender gap in science: How long until women are equally represented? *PLOS Biology*, 16(4).
- Honnen-Weisdorn, G., Grigoryan, L., & Ralph, D. (2017). If the world were ruled by women...: exploring the rise of self-made Chinese women capitalizing on the transformational leadership style that has so far eluded their American counterparts. *Journal of International Management Studies*, 17(3).

- Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2014). *Cultural barriers to women's leadership: A worldwide comparison*. Institute for Social Research.
- Jackson, C., Vaughan, D. R., & Brown, L. (2018). Discovering lived experiences through descriptive phenomenology. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(11), 3309-3325. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-2017-0707
- Jena, A. B., Lerchenmueller, M., & Sorenson, O. (2019, Dec 17). Men call their own research 'excellent.' Women do so much less often. And it's not because their work isn't as good. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/17/opinion/gender-science-study.html>
- Jogulu, U., & Wood, G. (2014). The role of leadership theory in raising the profile of women in management. *Equal Opportunities International*, 25(25), 236-250. doi:10.1108/02610150610706230
- Johnson, S. K., Hekman, D. R., Chan, E. T. (2016, April 26). If there's only one woman in your candidate pool, there's statistically no chance she'll be hired. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/04/if-theres-only-one-woman-in-your-candidate-pool-theres-statistically-no-chance-shell-be-hired>
- Jollie, M., & Syed, J. (2018). Women's marginalization in Nigeria and the way Forward. *Human Resource Development International Journal*, 21(5), 1-18.
- Karamanidou, M., & Bush, T. (2017). Women primary school principals in Cyprus: Barriers and facilitators to progression. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 45(1), 70-86.
- Kiraly, M., & Tyler, M. (2015). *Fallacy freedom: The limits of liberal feminism*. Ballarat, Victoria: Connor Court.

- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 120-124. doi:10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092
- Kubai, E. (2018, December 14). *Increasing women leadership in Nigeria*.
- Latham, G., Saari, L., Pursell, E., & Champion, M. (1980). The situational interview. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 65*(4), 422-427. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.65.4.422
- Leung, L. (2015). Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, 4*(3), 324-327. doi:10.4103/2249-4863.161306
- Maher, C., Hadfield, M., Hutchings, M., & Eyto, A. (2018). Ensuring rigor in qualitative data analysis: A design research approach to coding combining NVivo with traditional material methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 17*(1). doi:10.1177/1609406918786362
- Marta-Claudia, C. (2018). What means discrimination in a normal society with clear rules? *Lex Et Scientia, 25*(1), 89-99.
- Mendes, K. (2011). *Feminism in the news: Representations of the women's movement since the 1960s*. Springer.
- Meux, C. S. (2003). African American women leadership in the context of its social and cultural background: A multiple case study. Fielding Graduate Institute, ProQuest Digital Dissertations. UMI No. 3046357.
- Mojtahed, R., Nunes, M. B., Martins, J. T., & Peng, A. (2014). Equipping the constructivist researcher: The combined use of semi-structured interviews and decision-making maps. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 12*(2), 87-95.

- Moon, K., Brewer, T., Januchowski-Hartley, S., Adams, V., & Blackman, D. (2016). A guideline to improve qualitative social science publishing in ecology and conservation journals. *Ecology and Society, 21*(3). doi:10.5751/ES-08663-210317
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology, and applications* (1st ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *BMJ Journals, 18*(2). doi:10.1136/eb-2015-102054
- Nzegwu, N. (2012). *Family matters: Feminist concepts in African philosophy of culture*. SUNY Press.
- Obasi, E. (2000). The impact of economic recession on UPE in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Development, 20*(3), 189-207.
- Okafor, E. E., & Akokuwebe, M. E. (2015). Women and leadership in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Developing Country Studies, 5*(4).
- Okafor, E., Ayodele O., & Adedoyin, R. (2014). Barriers to women leadership and managerial aspirations in Lagos, Nigeria: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Business Management, 5*(16), 6717-6726.
- Okafor, E. E., Fagbemi, A. O., & Hassan, A. R. (2011). Barriers to women leadership and managerial aspirations in Lagos, Nigeria: An empirical analysis. *African Journal of Business Management, 5*(16), 6717.
- Okoli, E. (2007). *Gender disparity in Nigeria education: Women's experience of barriers to equal educational opportunity* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University (UMI No. 3293182).

- Okoli, E. (2017). Gender disparity in Nigerian education. *Western Michigan University Academic Journals*, 1-152.
- Okpara, J. O. (2006). Gender and the relationship between perceived fairness in pay, promotion, and job satisfaction in a sub-Saharan African economy. *Women in Management Review*.
- Onoyase, A. (2018). Attitude of parents toward female-child secondary education in Sokoto State, Nigeria: Implications for counselling. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 8(2), 21-27. doi:10.2478/jesr-2018-0012
- Oparanma, A. O. (2015). Organizational culture: Creating the influence needed for strategic success in health care organizations in Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies*, 5(17), 15-19.
- Orji, B. (2017). Beijing conference protocols on women: awakening women political consciousness in Nigeria (a case of Ebonyi State) 1999-2015. *Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa*, 6(1/2), 117-134. doi:10.31920/2050-4284/2017/v6n1_2a6
- Palinkas, L., Horwitz, S., Green, C., Wisdom, J., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 45(2), 533-544. doi:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y
- Patrick, S. K., & Joshi, E. (2019). "Set in stone" or "Willing to grow"? Teacher sense-making during a growth mindset initiative. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 83, 156-167. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2019.04.009
- Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Sage Publications.

- Peus, C., Braun, S., & Knipfer, K. (2015). On becoming a leader in Asia and America: Empirical evidence from women managers. *Leadership Quarterly*, 26(1), 55-67. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.08.004
- Raimi, L. (2016). Women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in some selected companies in Nigeria. *University of Lagos Academic Journals*, 2-14.
- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Schein, V. E. (1978). Sex-role stereotyping, ability, and performance: Prior research and new directions. *Personnel Psychology*, 31(2), 259-268. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1978.tb00445.x
- Schiele, J. H., Jackson, M. S., & Fairfax, C. N. (2005). Maggie Lena Walker and African American community development. *Affilia*, 20(1), 21-38. doi:10.1177/0886109904272012
- Seo, G., Huang, W., & Han, S.-H. C. (2017). Conceptual review of underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions from a perspective of gendered social status in the workplace. *Human Resource Development Review*, 16(1), 35-59. doi:10.1177/1534484317690063
- Silva, A. (2016). What is leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 1-5.
- Slattery, L., & Woehr, D. (2014). Gender and Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness: A Meta-Analysis of Contextual Moderators. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(6), 1129-1145.
- Sojo, V. E., Wood, R. E., Wood, S. A., & Wheeler, M. A. (2016). Reporting requirements, targets, and quotas for women in leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 519-536.
- Solati, F. (2017). Conclusion. *In women, work, and patriarchy in the Middle East and North Africa*, pp. 103-108. Palgrave Macmillian. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-51577-9_5

- Stamarski, C., & Son, Hing, L. (2015). Gender inequalities in the workplace: The effects of organizational structures, processes, practices, and decision-makers' sexism. *Frontiers in Psychology*. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01400
- Sutton, J., & Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management. *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy*, 68(3), 226-231. doi:10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456
- Taylor, E. W. (2017). Transformative learning theory. In Laros, A., Fuhr, T., & Taylor, E. W. (eds.) *Transformative Learning Meets Bildung*, pp. 17-29. Rotterdam: SensePublishers. doi:10.1007/978-94-6300-797-9_2
- Tie, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE Open Medicine*, 7. doi:10.1177/2050312118822927
- Tijani-Adenle, G. (2016). She's homely, beautiful and then, hardworking! *Gender in Management*, 31(5), 396-410. doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1108/GM-06-2015-0053>
- Toyin, A. A., Abdulraheem, I., & Sulu, B. I. (2019). Patriarchal hegemony. *Gender in Management*, 34(1), 19-33.
- Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2017). Linda Tuhiwai Smith: Transforming education. *The Best of e-Tangata*. doi:10.7810/9780947518455_2
- Ugbogbo, H. E., Akwemoh, M. O., & Omoregie, C. B. (2013). The role and challenges of education in national development (The Nigeria Experience). *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(10), 25.
- Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Thorpe, S., & Young, T. (2018). Characterising and justifying sample size sufficiency in interview-based studies: Systematic analysis of qualitative health

research over a 15-year period. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 18.

doi:10.1186/s12874-018-0594-7

Verniers, C., & Vala, J. (2018). Correction: Justifying gender discrimination in the workplace:

The mediating role of motherhood myths. *PLOS ONE*, 13(7), e0201150. doi:

10.1371/journal.pone.0201150

Whitehead, R., & Bates, G. (2016). The transformational processing of peak and nadir experiences and their relationship to eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 17(4), 1577-1598.

The World Bank. *Population – Nigeria*. Retrieved from

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=NG>

Zablith, F., Antoniou, G., d'Aquin, M., Flouris, G., Kondylakis, H., Motta, E., . . . Sabou, M. (2015). Ontology evolution: A process-centric survey. *The Knowledge Engineering Review*, 30(1), 45-75.

Zach, L. (2006). Using a multiple-case studies design to investigate the information-seeking behavior of arts administrators. *Library trends*, 55(1), 4-21.

Zenger, J., & Joseph F. (2019). Research: Women score higher than men in most leadership skills. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2019/06/research-women-score-higher-than-men-in-most-leadership-skills>