

2021

## Gender Mainstreaming in Male-Dominated Nigerian Industries

Benedicta Ifeyinwa Oyiana  
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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Benedicta Ifeyinwa Oyiana

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Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Gender Mainstreaming in Male-Dominated Nigerian Industries

by

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MBA, Lagos Business School, 2010

BSc, Delta State University, 2005

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

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## Abstract

The objective of Gender mainstreaming (GM) is to foster equal opportunities by applying a gender perspective to all policies and practices within organizations, thus influencing decisions and traditional structures of organizations. GM strategies redirect focus from increasing participation and representation to ensuring structure in organizational practices that address inequalities. The strain between women's work experience and traditional role expectations contributes to the issues career women experience, especially those in male-dominated industries. Interviews with ten senior executives were conducted over Zoom, data were analyzed using a five-phased approach: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. This study buttresses how in spite of global attainments, GM interventions in male-dominated Nigerian industries continue to emphasize policies relating to childcare and excluding more pressing issues on gender. A dearth of training, poor commitment, no strategy, pay gaps, poor representation, nontechnical career choices were some identified reasons for the industry GM outcomes. An assessment of the leadership perception of GM was instrumental to uncovering the underlying issues within the organization. This study highlights practical steps to crafting a GM strategy customized to the organization for its effective establishment and leading to positive social change. Interventions that address work-life balance constraints, cultural bias, gender discrimination, stereotypes, and glass ceilings were encouraged to support GM.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this degree to God Almighty, the giver and owner of my life.

## Acknowledgments

I owe immense gratitude to my husband, Anthony, who for many days and nights was supportive of my purposeful absence. I thank my children Daniel, Debrah, and David for being the most amazing gifts and for patiently embarking on this journey with me. To my parents, for their unending love and support throughout the process. I appreciate my committee members and my dedicated chair, Dr Rachel Gallardo, for their kindness and diligence in ensuring exceptional outcomes throughout the process.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Gender mainstreaming (GM) is a controversial metaphoric paradox suggesting all things gender-related be made mainstream (Alonso, 2017). The concept collates issues relating to gender not with the intention of identifying the issues in isolation but with the active intention of making targeted interventions where necessary (Staudt, 2018). True (2010) suggested that GM combines gender equality and mainstreaming and is the reorganization, improvement, development, and evaluation of policy processes. This combination of processes ensures that a gender equality perspective with sound assumptions, processes, and results is in all policies (Alonso, 2017). Improvements to policies are usually driven by the decision-makers in organizations who are responsible for policy formulation (Alonso, 2017).

Although GM has been a phenomenon for over 2 decades, research suggests that despite all efforts and attention given to it, it has not been successfully implemented (Meier & Celis, 2011). For example, GM's success in the European Union over the period of targeted interventions was marginal (Meier & Celis, 2011). Resistance to the objectives of GM; failure to address all political, financial, and legislative factors; and the legislative environment have been identified as contributors to the failure (Meier & Celis, 2011). Globally, effective levers for the entrenchment of GM include female representation at executive levels within organizations, gender-sensitive policies such as gender budgeting, gender-sensitive collective agreements, and support networks for women at the junior level (Staudt, 2018). The successes of GM in initiating policy

changes vary with countries, culture, and the level of government participation, which are indicative of enablers of success (Moser & Moser, 2005).

Achieving gender equality requires equally embracing the differences between women's and men's roles in society (Meier & Celis, 2011). Research suggests that stereotypes related to the roles of men and women on the part of employers are known to cause significant gaps in participation (Dahl et al., 2018). Although the primary objective of GM interventions remains to narrow gender gaps, the approach to achieving this must be customized as the opportunities vary with cultural context and attributes (Meier & Celis, 2011).

GM concerns incorporating gender perspectives and policies to previously satisfactory ways of working; the dilemma remains whether organizations benefit from having a more collaborative than competitive work culture (Meier & Celis, 2011). Dahl et al. (2018) alluded to some employers who would rarely hire women into male-dominated fields owing to assumptions of such female interactions having an influence on the motivation and productivity of the examined group. They examined whether interactions between men and women in male-dominated roles can affect these gender stereotypes and analyzed the link between gender stereotypes and occupational discrimination (Dahl et al., 2018). Dahl et al. leveraged contact theory, which highlights how biases of members of a dominant population are influenced by integration with members of a minority population, especially in cases where they connect on a personal level. Findings revealed that men who have integrated with women are 14% likely to

believe in the effectiveness of a mixed gendered team thereby highlighting key considerations in the design of policies that support workplace integration.

Alonso (2017) considered several critical needs for establishing GM an involvement of leadership of regional ministries of research, development, and opinions of the resources involved in gender matters. The study highlighted that before implementing or adopting policies from elsewhere, such policies should be assessed for good practices. In adopting a policy, Alonso suggested an assessment of the leadership commitment and willingness to drive the development of a gendered organization. This recommendation of leadership assessment lends credence to the objectives of this study as very little is known of the GM perception of business leaders within the Nigerian workplace.

Bendl and Schmidt (2013) inquired about the extent to which the heuristic and conceptual value of GM accounts for gender equality. GM can highlight the systems and practices within organizations that give rise to inequalities and serve as a proactive approach to infusing a gender perspective into the work procedures and policies (True, 2010). The underlying assumption of GM is that a transformation of organizations could serve to address gender equality issues. GM demands an organizational transformation where masculine and feminine standards are reevaluated and overcome (True, 2010). In contrast, mainstreaming policies and instituting technical tools have been fraught with a lack of urgency, weak networks, and bureaucracy arising from activists wanting to transform policy outcomes without making changes to existing practices and procedures (True, 2010).



Regarding the implementation of GM, several researchers have highlighted using methods of integrationist (Wallby, 2005), transformative (Cavaghan, 2017), limited transversality, agenda-setting, and fragmented endeavors (Cavaghan, 2013). The ambiguity with the term *GM* suggests making changes to the messages, actions, and processes that are in contradiction with one another. GM is positioned as a paradox, and thus activists plan for better management of tensions and contradictions to adapt to and shape processes that may arise as opposed to just changing structures within the organization (Charlesworth, 2005). A careful understanding of what and where the sources of conflict, deviation, and construction exist in GM is therefore critical for its effective implementation.

### **Background**

Cultural beliefs in Nigeria about the roles of women remain a consideration in the discussion of gender equality (Ejumudo, 2013). The beliefs of women being the primary caregiver hinder the acceptance of women in the workplace (Okonkwo, 2013). Yet, equality between men and women is akin to “smart economics,” which results in a stronger economy and fosters national development (Meier & Celis, 2011). Studies have highlighted how stereotypes and organizational realities affect the participation of women in the workplace leading to higher workplace dropout rates (Ejumudo, 2013). Empirical analysis highlights how gender spillover effects occur with women in leadership positions, meaning the more women in leadership and decision-making roles, the more likely it is for women in lower ranks to be promoted (Kunze & Miller, 2017). According to Kunze and Miller (2017), gender equality is critical for the redistribution of resources

and social value, and it is necessary to position organizations to overcome barriers to gender workplace participation.

The representation of women in both traditional and nontraditional roles has improved over the years; however, women still make up a small proportion of senior management executives (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). Researchers have identified several socioeconomic variables that encompass the challenges women face both within and outside the workplace. Domestic violence is one factor that affects women's workforce participation. Studies suggest factors such as spousal age difference, marital status, number of children, family income, and educational qualifications as responsible for domestic violence against women in Nigeria (Oyediran & Feyisetan, 2017). Other studies have highlighted psychological and physical violence as the most common types of violence experienced by women (Etuk et al., 2012). It is difficult to prevent these personal experiences from interfering with work relations and outcomes, and organizations must take this into consideration. Organizational leaders should also take into account that women hold a stronger dislike for competitive environments than men (Flory et al., 2014).

There have been several interventions (e.g., the National Empowerment and Development Strategy program) with the sole objective of alleviating the hardship experienced by low-income women in the workplace (Ogundele et.al., 2011). Although many such laudable initiatives exist, there are inherent issues with the implementation of policies especially in traditional male-dominated industries such as mining, aviation, construction, and manufacturing (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). In Nigeria, many individuals

believe a woman cannot have a thriving career and a stable/happy home, suggesting the two scenarios are mutually exclusive (Agi, 2014).

Most gender studies highlight sound interventions to achieve some degree of parity or at least advance the cause, but very few provide insights into the organizational architecture that could influence implementation (Warren (2007). Such studies illustrate the gaps in the literature regarding the perception of GM by organizational decision-makers. As Mordi et al. (2011) argued, there is a need for literature on GM in Nigerian organizations. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perception of GM within the Nigerian context. In this exploratory study, I explored whether decision-makers believe in the tenets of GM enough to support its practice within the workplace, how they perceive their roles as process owners, and what they perceive as potential barriers to implementation.

### **Problem Statement**

Little is known regarding the perception of GM by the key decision-makers within male-dominated Nigerian industries (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). GM practices have not been widely adopted in male-dominated Nigerian organizations compared to European countries (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). To ensure appropriate tailoring of the GM approach, it is important to be knowledgeable about the impediments and enablers of success (Ejumudo, 2013). The uniqueness of the Nigerian work context is indicative of the need for careful review of such enablers of GM (Nwagbara & Eneji, 2019). With the primary objective of GM being to develop outcomes that support gender equality, internal structures such as organizational development, executive support, and

organizational learning must align to actualize this objective (Staudt, 2018). One expression of such institutional support is the development of policies and practices that reinforce a gender-enabling culture, as this aligns with the objectives of mainstreaming (Alonso, 2017).

Nigeria, which has a population of 195.8 million (World Development Indicators, 2020), has an urgent need to ensure representation of women in different jobs as well as in decision-making roles (Ejumudo, 2013). The Nigerian government promoted the participation of women in governance by agreeing to allot 35% of strategic or managerial positions to women through affirmative action (Ejumudo, 2013). The few factors identified as reasons for the poor representation of women in the workplace include traditional male-dominated fields, recruitment barriers, inadequate informal networks, family responsibility, discrimination, and harassment, among others (Ejumudo, 2013). A study of GM in male-dominated Nigerian industries may identify other factors responsible for the poor representation of Nigerian women in the workplace.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The focus of this study was on assessing the perception towards GM of leaders of male-dominated Nigerian industries such as construction, manufacturing, and power. The findings of this study could enlighten leaders in such industries on the barriers to implementing a gender-centric organization. The study outcome could also provide direction for further research on effectively establishing GM in Nigeria after having identified the limiting factors. This study also has the potential to provide insights into

other sectors that for some reason may have been neglected with regard to GM (Ejumudo, 2013).

### **Research Questions**

I sought to answer the following research questions (RQs) in this qualitative study:

RQ1. What is the perception of GM among organizational decision-makers in relation to their role in implementing it within male-dominated industries in Nigeria?

RQ2. What is the role of leadership sponsorship in ensuring GM implementation?

RQ3. What factors pose the most challenge to GM implementation in male-dominated industries?

### **Conceptual Framework**

There are multiple considerations regarding a suitable framework for understanding perceptions of GM. Staudt (2018) reiterated that GM can be conceptualized under three major domains within an organization: (a) a political domain consisting of policies, hierarchies, systems, and finance; (b) a technical domain consisting of tools, methods, knowledge, expertise, and data; and (c) a cultural domain consisting of norms, values, attitudes, and relationships. The different domains are interwoven and influenced by multiple external factors such as global discourse, women movements, civil society, geopolitical issues, and development agenda (Cavaghan, 2017). I incorporated these political, technical, and cultural domains identified by Staudt (2018) in

this study's conceptual framework to elicit additional understanding of leaders' perceptions of integrating GM in their organizations.

Specifically, I used an eyewitness approach because the study involved perception analysis, which mandates the collection of individual and/or group opinions (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011). I explored the perceptions of individuals in decision making positions using the political, technical, and cultural domains identified by Staudt (2018). In assessing the current perceptions of GM among leaders of male-dominated industries, I sought to contribute to the urgent need for more research on the experience of African women in leadership positions. The dialogue on gender equality has over decades resulted in the implementation of several innovative solutions with the potential to bridge the gender gaps. For example, Warren (2007) defined gender training as any intervention seeking to enlighten and empower any group of persons with skills required to manage gender-related issues in the workplace. These include skills acquisition training for women, gender awareness training, gender analysis, planning training, and training for policymakers. Still, there is not enough research to highlight how widely these GM interventions have been adopted in Nigerian organizations, and this is likely to have been enabled by stereotypes, deep-seated customs and traditions, mindsets, and unfavorable or obsolete legislation (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2013).

### **Nature of the Study**

Based on a review of the common characteristics of qualitative research (Ritchie, et.al, 2013), this study qualifies as qualitative because it centers on the perceptions of GM among organizational actors. For this study, the phenomenon of interest was the

experience of being a key decision-maker in a male-dominated industry. I focused on perceptions of GM, especially within the manufacturing, construction, and engineering industries. The decision-makers who participated in the study shared their views on the principles of GM, discussed how these perceptions influenced implementation, and explored the potential challenges with making the transition to GM. I interviewed 10 senior decision makers from the sample organizations. The population included private and public sector industry participants. A semistructured interview with open-ended questions served to elicit data from the purposefully sampled participants. I used Moustakas's (1994) methodological model, which supported a holistic summary of the participants' experience, opinion, and attitude towards GM.

Leadership is a critical success factor for the implementation of organizational objectives (Ejere, 2013). It is noteworthy that controls and culture within organizations can influence the achievement of objectives; leaders are predominantly accountable for these variables (Tonkham, 2013). I conducted semistructured interviews with 10 individuals in executive leadership positions within target organizations. Conducting in-depth interviews provided insights into the perspectives of leaders within the respective organizations.

I used the framework proposed by Staudt (2018) for the semistructured interviews. Only individuals who met the selection criteria were included in the purposeful sample. Criteria included being a member of the senior leadership of the organization and having spent a minimum of 3 years within the organization. At least 8%

of participants needed to be female. I deployed a stratified sampling technique, which will be elaborated on in Chapter 3.

### **Definitions**

Following are operational definitions of key terms in the study:

*Gender budgeting*: The assessment of budgets to ensure a gender perspective at all levels of the budgeting process (Downes et.al., 2017).

*Gender equality*: The freedom of all humans, regardless of gender, to advance their individual abilities and contribute without limitations established by bias, rigid roles, or stereotypes (UNDP, 2013). The concept focuses on ensuring that the allocation of the rights, privileges, roles, and opportunities of men and women are not determined by their gender.

*Gender knowledge*: An analytical process of assessing and comparing gendered meaning in organizations. It includes the description of differences between the sexes, their interactions, the origin and significance of the relations, and the reasons and evidence surrounding them (Cavaghan, 2017).

*Gender mainstreaming (GM)*: The strategy for incorporating the issues and experiences of men and women into the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs in order to achieve gender equality (UNDP 2013). It is also the (re)organization, improvement, development, and evaluation of policy processes to incorporate gender equality in all policies and at all stages by policy-making actors (Staud, 2018).



*Gender training:* The training targeted at individuals to equip them in mainstreaming gender in their everyday work-life (Lombardo & Margert, 2016).

### **Assumptions**

In this study, I assumed distinct differences with gender representation and equality within male-dominated industries in Nigeria. I further assumed that there are ineffective strategies for initiating gender equality frameworks within such companies. Studies show that women experience diverse hardships in male-dominated organizations such as workplace incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016), inadequate capability advancements (Adekanye, 2014), concerns with work-life balance (Martin & Banard, 2013), and representation (Mordi et al., 2011), among others. The aftermath of such struggles is reflected in low female representation at the senior executive level (Thomas, 2013) and high attrition (Oyediran & Feyisetan, 2017).

A third assumption was that senior leadership have primary responsibility for building a GM culture and being knowledgeable about its implementation strategy. Furthermore, I assumed that use of qualitative phenomenological methodology would provide an array of useful insights into the perception of senior leadership of male-dominated industries about GM. I assumed that all the senior executives in the sample would be based in Lagos. In addition, I assumed the existence of an operating framework (practices and competing policies) outside of documented policies, and I planned to identify any inhibitors to those inherent structures.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study involved detailed semistructured interviews with 10 senior executive members from male-dominated industries. I used purposeful sampling techniques to include executive women and men in both private and public sector male-dominated industries in the population. The use of in-depth interviews facilitated the collection of perceptions from executives regarding GM, individual work experiences, gender training, work-family conflict, gender barriers to entry, gender budgeting, work conflicts, and benefits of a GM culture (Aagaard, 2017).

### **Limitations**

A potential limitation is the use of purposeful sampling technique evident in the choice of decision-makers working in male-dominated Nigerian industries and located in Nigeria. These choices may have excluded potential value-adding responses. The assumption that assessing the leaders in male-dominated industries would provide sound insights into barriers of entrenching GM in organizations provides a rational justification. To further manage the scope, I limited the study to a specific state in Nigeria, the city of Lagos. I acknowledge that the use of leaders and decision makers in male-dominated industries will further restrict the transferability of the study results to other industries. I used member checking and data saturation to authenticate the credibility of the study outcomes (see Kombluh, 2015).

### **Significance of the Study**

The overall significance of this study is that it highlights the perceptions of GM of the senior leadership of organizations in male-dominated industries. There is limited

research highlighting the performance and proliferation of GM in Africa, let alone Lagos, Nigeria. The study could also provide direction for further research on effectively establishing GM in Nigeria after having identified the limiting factors. Considering its focus on the male-dominated industries in Nigeria, this study holds the potential to provide insights into sectors that for some reason may have been neglected with regard to GM (Ejumudo, 2013). These reasons include patriarchy, poor economic opportunities of women, and insufficient training (UNDP, 2013). Thus, this study could have significance for practice, theory, and social change.

### **Significance to Practice**

Organizational leaders' perceptions and beliefs of GM influence whether the tenets of the GM can be successfully established within organizations. Banerjee et.al. (2016) identified impediments to mainstreaming in a study of the challenges encountered in closing the student capability gaps of government-owned schools (a transformational approach). Their process and findings elucidated several parameters such as involvement of teachers in planning and delivery of the interventions, both of which reinforce the value of collaboration in the change management process of GM within organizations. I sought to highlight factors that support the implementation of GM either in the identification of roadblocks or best practices. Organizational leaders looking to make GM a culture may also learn from applying the recommended approaches from this study. The study could equip organizational leaders to better understand their roles in the GM process and appreciate the far-reaching impact of their contributions in entrenching GM. For researchers, the study may help to uncover critical facets of GM that current literature

may not have captured thus enabling possible continued development of GM theory and concepts. Leaders of organizations may be able to understand their roles and the impact of their actions in entrenching GM.

### **Significance to Theory**

The findings from this study could highlight potential discrepancies in the realities of women in male-dominated and non-male-dominated industries thus contributing to the social theory. The potential outcome could lead to isolating barriers and identifying critical success factors in entrenching GM within organizations. The study outcomes could provide insights into cultural and social biases existing within the sample organizations as well as identifying elimination techniques for change and opportunities for future research.

### **Significance to Social Change**

Social change refers to giving action to an idea with the intention to create change or movement (Thomas et al.,2009). Social change is an emotional interest in the implementation of a social phenomenon, and it is almost impossible to create a movement without emotion (Thomas et al., 2009). The perception and beliefs of GM within the target organizations set the context for establishing the tenets of the GM position. This study may elucidate insights that support the implementation of GM in the identification of roadblocks or best practices, especially within male-dominated industries. Such insights may lend credence to leadership efforts at creating a gendered organization.

The findings of this study may contribute to the growth of the economy considering that the knowledge of how best to entrench GM contributes to improving gender parity and gender participation within organizations (Alonso, 2017). Female participation in the workforce can promote women's financial independence leading to a better quality of life, improved educational attainment, access to health care, and fulfillment of individual purpose for themselves and their families (Oyediran & Feyisetan, 2017). GM increases the skill base accessible to the organizations through the creation of jobs to previously unemployed women (Oyediran & Feyisetan, 2017).

### **Summary**

I explored the perception of GM of senior leadership from male-dominated industries in Nigeria. I did so by conducting interviews with 10 senior executives using a semistructured approach. My aim was to identify the daily conflicts associated with the current GM culture and the potential challenges and opportunities in organizations where GM is scarcely known.

In this chapter, I provided background information on the concept of GM and elucidated the scope of the problem; the purpose of the study; and the relevance of the study to theory, practice, and social change. The chapter includes definitions of the terminologies used in the study and a clarification of the assumptions, scope and delimitations, and the potential limitations. In Chapter 2, I will synthesize the literature on the GM concept and approach and the limitations within the Nigerian cultural context. Chapter 3 will include a description of the appropriate research methodology for this study as well as the data collection tools and Chapter 4, an analysis of results. Finally, in

Chapter 5, I will offer recommendations for future research and further discuss the results of the study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

GM offers an opportunity to address the lingering concerns of women's advancement in the workplace. GM ensures an assessment of the impact on both women and men of all initiatives including policies and programs across levels (Walby, 2005). Existing research on GM, however, shows a tilt of organizational focus to documented policy from the processes required to entrench it (Cavaghan, 2017). This change in organizational focus is concerning as more women are entering the workforce with minimal support and enforcement of policies. The roles of women in Nigeria, for instance, have evolved from the traditional view of being primary caregivers to cocontributors in the family (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). Despite these realities, the perception of GM among leaders in male-dominated industries remains unknown in Nigeria (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of the leadership in male-dominated industries regarding GM. This chapter includes a synthesis of the literature on GM in Europe where the concept originated, what organizational structures have been established, whether these have succeeded, and what barriers exist. I provide details on the evolution of GM within the global context, the outcomes, and changes, as well as potential challenges identified with its entrenchment. The chapter includes an examination of the literature on the Nigerian workplace realities as they relate to women in male-dominated industries and whether the global challenges are similar to the Nigerian context.

### Literature Search Strategy

I obtained all literature referenced in this study through a robust online search method. A university librarian assisted me in identifying the most effective search methods and search words. Because recent literature on the phenomenon of interest is in short supply, some older works are included in the review. Of all the consulted journal databases, the ones with the most relevant literature were Elsevier, Wiley, EBSCOhost, Emerald, SAGE, and JSTOR. Including the peer-review filter during the search process aided the identification of peer-reviewed articles resulting in a significant number of peer reviewed items.

In reviewing current literature, I paid attention to relevance to the current study. Articles were drawn from a wide array of journals such as the *Library Philosophy and Practice*; *Progress in Development*; *Journal of African Business*; *Gender Management*; *Gender and Development*; *Gender and Society*; *Politics and Gender*; *Gender, Work and Organization*; *International Journal of Academics*; *Gender and Education*; *Gender, Place and Culture*; *Social Politics*; *Men and Masculinities*; *Feminist Review*; *Journal of Women's Health*; *Gender and Language*; and *Gender and History*. I searched with Google Scholar with the peer-reviewed preference set as a parameter. Authors' reference lists served as a repository of other related literature, thus expanding the pool of applicable literature. The keyword search terms included *gender mainstreaming*, *indigenous*, *workplace interactions and policy*, *traditional roles of women*, *Nigerian women*, *gender*, *diversity*, *gender knowledge*, and *male-dominated organizations*.



## Conceptual Framework

GM provides a means of ensuring that all aspects of inequality in organizations are addressed (Akanle, 2011). Some GM activities include increases in the number of women hired in organizations, gender analysis, policy redesign (to foster gender equality), and employee training on gender-related issues (Akanle, 2011). The literature on gender-related issues serves as a valuable source of information on the limitations of women participation within the workplace. Poverty, employment discriminatory practices, absent/inadequate constitutional provisions, under/overqualification, cultural biases, and inadequate enrollment of girls in educational institutions are some identified reasons for the decline in women's participation in the workplace (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015). Theories of gender oppression such as patriarchy and liberal feminism theories extend the causes of underrepresentation to include marginalization and poor funding, with resultant implications for good governance, leadership, and economic development (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015). Liberal feminism not only suggests that individuals regardless of gender are capable of rational behavior but highlights how the uniqueness of experiences in life encounters from birth impacts individuals' worldviews (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015). Role theory offers relevant direction into the interpretation and shaping of the meaning of GM in daily practice from the perspective of the decision-makers (Scala & Paterson, 2017).

The social feminist theory of Inmyxai and Takahashi (2011) focuses on the pivotal contributions of women to societal and economic advancements. The theorists redefined success from the viewpoint of business performance metrics, with emphasis on

the views of female leaders whose measures of success involve both economic and hierarchical perspectives (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011). The poststructuralist theory highlights the tendency of scholars to use GM to identify gender as opposing extremes without consideration for the dynamism of power and opportunities within organizations (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011).

As a perception analysis, this study involved the use of an eyewitness approach, which entailed the collection of individual/group opinions. Over the years, the debate on gender equality has led to numerous impactful and innovative solutions with the potential to bridge the gender gaps (Alonso, 2017). For instance, gender training emerged as an intervention meant to enlighten and empower persons with skills required to manage gender-related issues in the workplace (Warren, 2007). Other interventions include skills acquisition training for women, gender awareness training, gender analysis, planning training, and training for policy makers (Alonso, 2017).

GM has been conceptualized under three major domains within organizations: (a) a political domain consisting of policies, hierarchies, systems, and finance; (b) a technical domain consisting of tools, methods, knowledge, expertise, and data; and (c) a cultural domain consisting of norms, values, attitudes, and relationships (Staudt, 2018).

Successful implementation of GM initiatives consists of having adequate resources (time and money), regular interdepartmental meetings, gender statistics, proper techniques, consistent monitoring, and specific organizational objectives (Eveline et al, 2009). I explored the perceptions of executive leadership using the domains identified by Staudt (2018) as political, technical, and cultural. In response to the call for updated research on

the experiences of Nigerian women in leadership positions; I limited the scope to current perceptions of GM from male-dominated Nigerian industries. The conceptual framework for this study allowed for an uncovering of how GM is perceived by the population.

I deployed the gender knowledge contestation analysis (GKCA) in analyzing the impact of GM in the European Commission, the overseer of the European Union and a pioneer of gender equality commitments within the body (Cavaghan, 2017). A successful GKCA will require an initial questioning of the organization's understanding and implementation of policies in general with the primary objective of uncovering existing barriers (Cavaghan, 2017). It is carried out by questioning the executors of the policy as opposed to simply reading and evaluating the organizational policies as text. It entails interrogating shop floor staff to reveal the constraints inherent in the system which must be overcome to make progress (Cavaghan, 2017). I sought to highlight the level of understanding of the policies by the shop floor in this analysis. By using GKCA, a researcher can obtain clarity on how the establishment of practices and processes leads to definite actions and the approaches to institutionalizing problem-solving. A blend of the GM domains (Staudt, 2018) and GKCA (Cavaghan, 2017) supported my examination of organizational policies and practices for implicit/explicit assumptions, rationales supporting these assumptions, and the inherent processes that ensure sustainability.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts.**

#### **Evolution of Gender Mainstreaming**

The early design of gender equality policies and approaches began in the 1950s-1960s. These policies promote the welfare approach to raising women to be better

mothers thereby positioning women as passive recipients and participants of advancement (Moser & Moser, 2005). This period emphasized the maternal roles of women and fostered policies relating to birth control and malnutrition, which created a dependent position for women and sidelined pressing issues of gender (Moser & Moser, 2005). This welfare approach also created a view of women as the problem that required fixing and became the most preferred policy approach of the developed nations towards the developing nations because it created little room for the contention of gender issues (Moser & Moser, 2005). Since 1975, inclusions of gender equality in the United Nation's Women in Development have become the new order; the approach serves as an alternative that prioritizes equality, efficiency, and empowerment (Moser & Moser, 2005). GM is a viable solution to pertinent issues relating to inequality, such as gender pay gaps within systems that value the outputs of men over that of women (Eveline & Todd, 2009).

Overall, policy makers use GM ensure that policies and practices within organizations deliver results equitably amongst women and men (Benschop & Verloo, 2006). The approach entails an analysis of policies and practices to identify any form of gender discrimination/bias (Alonso, 2017). This suggests that policies must accommodate the different experiences of both men and women thus redirecting focus on the traditional gender equality narrative to an organizational transformation perspective (Alonso, 2017). It also diverts attention from investing in women's advancement within organizations to ensuring that the organization is equipped for balance and equity, thus supporting the

development of structures that the ensure sustainability of GM beyond individual authorities and tenure in the organization (True, 2010).

GM has since become a dominant phrase in the global gender equality parlance and could offer a way to define women and women to policy makers worldwide (Alonso, 2017). GM was conceptualized with the sole objective of furthering gender equality or equal opportunities (Meier & Celis, 2011). The United Nations defined GM as the process of applying a gender perspective to all policies and practices within organizations with strong implications for decision making (Charlesworth, 2005), thus distorting the traditional inherent structures of organizations.

True (2010) succinctly captured how the historical implementation stages of GM were championed by feminist organizations whose primary objective was to ensure equality for women by law. Clearly, an advancement from the transformation phase of GM requires a substantial change in the ownership of policies, followed by independent management of the gender mainstreaming strategy (Alonso, 2017). GM has been discussed from the perspective of institutions/organizations to uncover the approaches to policy adoption and implementation; from the discursive viewpoint, GM can be used to examine how the concepts influence power through new interpretations of women and gender equality (True, 2010). Although GM started out as a public sector instrument, it has been used, as Eveline and Todd (2009) noted, to address issues of gender equality in the workplace and has recently been identified as having the potential to address gender pay gaps especially in most parts of Europe and Australia. Despite the promising outlook and track record of GM, critics cite major concerns with the dependence of the concept

on harmonization of organizational objectives and feminist goals (True, 2010). This position, while qualifying as a deterrent, could support engaging the commitment of policy makers responsible for GM in organizations (Eveline & Todd, 2009).

GM strategies redirect focus from just increasing participation and representation in unfavorable conditions to ensuring changes in organizational structures and practices that eradicate the inequalities (Bedford, 2013). Scholars recognize that at the heart of gender inequalities are relational issues, such that merely increasing the number of women or enforcing their participation will not solve the issues (Alonso, 2017). To circumvent these relational issues, the conversations should extend beyond a focus on women to include dialogues with the men (Bedford, 2013). Seeking out male sponsors in conversations on decision-making, roles and responsibilities, and access/control of resources are viable solutions (Bedford, 2013). Similar to how a focus on global disruptors such as climate issues has evolved from standards, regulations, and protocol to people as users, advocates, and representatives in the policy implementation process, GM must evolve with a focus on people (Charlesworth, 2005).

### **Gender in Developing Countries**

A dearth of operational frameworks poses a major problem in socioeconomic development culminating in the urgent need for gender planning, recognition of the different roles and resultant needs/requirements of men and women in society (Meier, 2006). Women contribute significantly to the development process in developing countries, and to understand gender relations an allocation of roles it is necessary to identify resources and weights assigned to contributions of men and women (Dobele et

al., 2014). This assessment is crucial for identifying the specific needs, opportunities, and challenges facing men and women. The satisfaction of human needs such as security, survival, identity, and self-actualization vary with different cultures. In Africa, women are often allocated a second-class citizen status, and to effect changes to the allocation of resources, such culture will need to evolve (Oyediran & Feyisetan, 2017). Studies in change management show an increase in the use of development models that promote participatory/collaborative approaches (Meier & Celis, 2011) and those that use the cultural values to achieve desired objectives.

With the primary aim of integrating women into mainstream development, gender conversations have evolved over the last 3 decades into focusing on inclusion (Meier, 2006). The evolution occurred through three key approaches: women in development, addressing women in the capacity of beneficiary requiring aid; women and development, viewing women and co-contributors/partners in the development process; and gender and development, a consideration of gender-based power relations within organizations (Charlesworth, 2005).

### **Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming**

Mainstream development is similar to approaches that foster economic growth; thus, the successful implementation of GM requires a strong commitment of governments, international organizations, and institutions (Alonso, 2017). The overall objective of mainstreaming is to translate policy objectives into tangible actions; instituting a culture of GM will demand a commitment to equal rights, equal responsibility, equal opportunities, and equal participation of women and men in the

policy process (Meier & Celis, 2011) Policy makers ideally engage in the institutionalization process to assess the impact of all plans, policies, and initiatives on both women and men GM is a strategy to incorporate all concerns of both women and men into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of relevant programs regardless of societal context or culture. Benschop and Verloo (2006) identified success factors of GM implementation such as having adequate resources (time and money), gender statistics, commitment (political and bureaucratic), standardized techniques, periodic monitoring, and organizational objectives. Other researchers have overcome the classification issues facing gender policies by including data on age, social class, and ethnicity/race (Evaline & Todd, 2009). The strategies for embedding GM usually take on a transformational policy approach, an integrationist approach, and a transformative agenda-setting approach. Effective GM policies are assessed based on their effectiveness in overcoming differences in culture, identity, power, and race through an understanding of the local realities (UNDP, 2013). Some scholars argue that GM has two main objectives: agenda-setting, involving an overhaul of all existing policies, and changes to the gender decision-making process, thus making gender issues a business priority with supporting policy goals (Alonso, 2017).

The review of the literature indicates that there is no set formula for embarking on mainstreaming; rather the strategy must be customized to the subject matter under review (Alonso, 2017). This suggests that all analyses and methods for implementing mainstreaming must be specific to the issues under review. A critical first step in the mainstreaming strategy is the review of how and why inequality is relevant for the



organization before exploring all alternatives in narrowing the inequality gaps (Charlesworth, 2005). Some of the reasons put forward as justification for the importance of GM include, but are not limited to, inequalities in access to decision making and gender representation (political powers), inequalities in the division of labor, inequalities in legal status, gender-based violence, and stereotypes (Alonso, 2017). It is critical at the analysis phase of GM to assess assumptions of family/household, which influences framing policies; assess the differences in experiences, roles, priorities, and preferences of women and men; use sex-disaggregated data; assess individual views about life decisions; identify the women dominated activities/tasks, and challenge assumptions about gender needs.

Belgium, a European country, has practiced GM for over twenty-three years and has gender policies prioritizing the rights of women in political decisions, inclusion in the workforce, and minimizing violence against women (Alonso, 2017). There are similarities in the tools deployed in the implementation which include gender quotas for advisory boards and electoral members, GM awareness drives, communication on the position of women, research and projects that foster equality, and issuing subsidies on women's movement (Alonso, 2017).

GM implementation happens along with the normal policy processes across all parts of the organization and such approaches stand the risk of becoming mere procedural policies owing to their emphasis on the use of specific tools and procedures measuring and assessing policies (Meier & Celis, 2016). The reason for potential procedural processes lies in the focused use of tools, especially with actors with little experience in

gender issues, which places emphasis on due process in arriving at desired outcomes (Meier & Celis, 2016). Hence, to deliver GM beyond fulfillment of minimum requirements demands enough knowledge and expertise in gender. At the policy formulation phase of GM, there is a risk of routine procedures and monitoring arising from managing multiple stakeholder's contributions (True, 2010), which serves as means of control of policy actors responsible for execution. Lombardo and Mergaert (2016) highlighted a risk of rationality from reconciliation between the 'approach' (gender mainstreaming tools) and the 'outcome' (more equity). The absence of a rational link between cause and effect buttresses the point that policies can have unintentional consequences/outcomes (Lombardo & Mergaert, 2016). Studies highlight the explicit ideas of how organizations should conform, as well as implicit norms and realities which can exist as stereotypes ready to counteract (Lombardo & Mergaert, 2016). It behooves any implementation effort therefore, to be aware of both explicit and implicit assumptions in the organization and be equipped to avoid unintentional biases.

The conflicting intentions of stakeholders have been known to inhibit the successful implementation of GM like those between the decision-makers and those responsible for implementing leading to potential delays in execution (Alonso, 2017). For a policy initiative to be substantive it must emphasize the substance, the objective, show an analysis of the overarching problem, and specify the gender equality ambition (Meier & Celis, 2016). The contrasts between a procedural policy which highlights the rules, tools, and processes involved in achieving gender equality must align with the internal social and power relations (True, 2010). Through an analysis of the power

relations, investigators assess the degree to which change can occur within the system; and decipher between conditions that support the adoption of gender awareness and its institutionalization (Alonzo, 2017). Previous studies on GM have assessed the effectiveness of the use of frame analysis while some others have assessed the implementation and causes of dilution often arising from ignorance (Cavaghan, 2018). Evidence of how and what GM entails and assumptions on its relevance are best obtained from documented staff assertions of GM (Cavaghan, 2013) or interviews the understanding of gender policies (Benschop & Verloo, 2006). Understanding how such assertions contribute to the policy processes is important in identifying the obstacles to GM commitment (Benschop & Verloo, 2006).

### **Gender Knowledge Contestation Analysis**

This process of gender analysis emphasizes that policy cannot be evaluated in isolation rather recognizes it will be interpreted through the organization's structures, practices, and counter policies (Cavaghan, 2013). This suggests regardless of the innovation, existing filters within the organization may pose a challenge to implementation. Successful implementation, therefore, entails to identify implementation activities, collective processes of policy interpretation, and the processes through which stakeholders compete for control (Cavaghan, 2017). A gender knowledge analysis of policy begins with an inquiry of how organizational actors interpret policy in order to reveal the challenges encountered and the steps taken in policy implementation (Cavaghan, 2017). The process is then followed by an assessment of inherent shared assumptions established in order to create order and sequencing of tasks culminating into

standards and procedures (Cavaghan, 2017). Cavaghan (2017) stated that gender knowledge contestation analysis aids the identification of the challenges of GM institutionalization by revealing the duration and difficulties local processes and practices undergo to become established.

### **Barriers to Gender Mainstreaming Implementation**

Following analytical assessments by Cavaghan (2017) to highlight the barriers to commitments on GM, there is evidence of the need to breakdown policy documents like mission statements, strategy, standard manuals, and implementation documents into specific processes. The results of GM performance evaluation revealed a continued ignorance of gender concerns, a lack of clarity of the relevance of gender to the organization, and a lack of awareness of GM tools on the part of organizational actors (Cavaghan, 2013). According to Meier and Celis (2011), the usual responses from interviewees revealed a misunderstanding between the GM requirements and its purpose, while some respondents highlighted a lack of understanding of the tools of implementation altogether.

Alonso (2017) identified the expressions of power within the organization to be visible and invisible influences on outcomes of GM. This suggests beneath all relevant influences is the culture supporting it. Organizational culture is the collection of languages, symbols, processes, practices, values, and beliefs which guide the operations of the organization (Alonso, 2017). Assessing each variable could offer insights for driving and institutionalizing a change in this study considering how sustaining gender requires a synergy of all organizational elements. Alonso (2017) highlighted the influence

of time, political, and socio-economic conditions on the forms of cultural elements suggesting the need for targeted institutionalizing strategy. In order to replicate actions/interventions as well, the methodological instrument becomes a critical factor for this study. Joining all the elements in the desired organization will require an interplay of consultation, multi-level negotiation, cooperation, and conflict management (Alonso, 2017).

From the initial experience of the United Nations, there have been extensive debates about roles and responsibilities for institutionalizing gender within organizations. Some scholars argue that institutionalizing gender should be the responsibility of the ministry/department of women while others propose the individual business/functional units should be responsible (True, 2010). This poses a potential challenge given the influence of a dominant organizational culture in addition to the specific techniques used by different members. It is imperative to have a set of non-negotiable shared practices that ensure perspective on institutionalizing gender (Cavaghan, 2017).

### **Gender Realities of the Nigerian Workplace**

The Nigerian workplace terrain is plagued with several challenges like inadequate government policies, surplus labor for scarce/limited jobs, loosely regulated labor practices, and a struggling judicial system (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014). With 70% of Nigerian living under a dollar a day and the political system (fraught with instability, and poor policy and planning regimes) having stronghold of all other systems, meaning families and businesses experience diverse challenges (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014). The unstable and frequent changes experienced by the Nigerian government make

planning and policy formulation a challenge which has implications for career choices of women (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014).

Globalization continues to integrate the world and make information readily available with technological advancements changing how we think and solve problems (Nwagbara & Eneji, 2019). On the adverse effects, as technological advancements reached developing countries, low-skilled women were retrenched due to automation of the mundane jobs previously handled by women (Nwagbara & Eneji, 2019). In 2002, only 15.7% of university lecturers in Nigerian universities were female; with a ratio as low as one female to eight male lecturers in one university (Eboiyehi, Fayomi & Eboiyehi, 2016). Several reasons have been identified as causes for limitations in career progression and advancement experienced in Nigerian institutions. Adebayo and Akanle (2014) alluded to a hostile work environment, lack of mentoring relationships arising from gender stereotypes, a disregard for professionalism, and poor psychosocial functions as identified causes of delayed advancements of women. Studies also suggested a complete disregard for the needs of women judging from the lack of provision of basic infrastructures like changing rooms and dedicated toilets (Martin & Barnard, 2013), water, and teaching aid facilities in addition to the heightened pressure to work harder than men in order to earn their promotions (Adebayo & Akanle, 2014).

Nigerian women are known to be hardworking, active, and resourceful; however, a significant number of them are in low value/administrative/clerical jobs that generate very little value (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014). Nwagbara and Eneji (2019) alluded women do not have similar opportunities in education, business, and employment as men

because they experience different challenges that keep them from higher levels of productivity. In more formal employment, while women may be assigned the least profitable jobs, research suggests men and women are equally competent to take on senior positions (Nwagbara and Eneji, 2019). Structural issues responsible for inequalities include resistance to women in management positions, a preference for masculine job elements, inadequate policies guiding practices within, limited management training and coaching opportunities (Adebayo & Akanle, 2014). School enrollment statistics in Nigeria provide insights into the deep-seated challenges of women at primary and secondary levels with girls accounting for 53% of children out of school in 2012 (Eboiyehi et.al., 2016).

The persistence of an income gap in Nigeria poses a major concern judging from the comparison of the earnings of Nigerians of similar qualification which reveals women earn less than men. Such inequalities buttress existing stereotypes of the reproductive and primary caregiver roles of women, limited access to resources, and education (Nwagbara & Eneji, 2019). Women also experience limitations in accessing land and properties as this is customary (patrilineal) to most part of Nigeria (Soyinka, Siu, 2018). Marriage serves as a critical determining factor in the allocation of land meaning women's land rights are determined in most parts by their relationships with men (Soyinka & Siu, 2018). This presupposes that, depending on the tribe, women are exposed to loss of the land in the event of a divorce or death of the husband while in some parts of Nigeria, like the Edos (Benin kingdom), a land allocation is given only to the first son if the landowner dies (Soyinka & Siu, 2018). Gender studies identified the global trends to include

economic participation, opportunities, political empowerment, health and wellbeing, and education (Moodley et al., 2016).

In the McKinsey *Women Matter Africa* issue, Moodley et al. (2016) revealed of its 55 responses received across Africa, women accounted for 5% of CEO, 22% of cabinet members, 25% of parliament, 29% of senior managers, 36% of promotions, 44% line manager responsibilities yet, the ‘drop-off’ the corporate ladder rates is still on the rise. Furthermore, the survey revealed women constitute 45% of the workforce and receive only 36% of promotions. Interestingly, the McKinsey (2016) study identified several reasons for the inequalities to include not prioritizing gender conversations at the CEO level. Only 31% of respondents saw it as a critical priority for the CEO. The report identifies how advancements of women have come from a combination of opportunity and zeal as opposed to focusing on diversity and quotas. This further reinforces the need for taking affirmative action beyond having coordinated discussions on gender. Next, the report summarized how the real barriers/challenges facing women in the workplace have been misunderstood because the details of the hindrances have not been provided. Lastly, the report highlighted the development of ineffective gender programs because of misdiagnosis of the pertinent causal issues. Additional causes of inequalities as identified from the study include poor leadership capability of women, choice of a professional degree, and gender quotas not being representative of a level of influence (McKinsey, 2016).

There have been commendable advancements arising from globalization which now pose new challenges judging from most countries inability to keep up with the



changes. Achieving work-life balance persists as a challenge for women as we witness increases in their workforce participation (Dobele et al., 2014). Nigerian women continue to struggle for acceptance especially at senior management positions despite being qualified in most cases (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011) as seen in the relatively skewed gender statistics (Mordi et al., 2011).

The issues facing Nigeria are not unique and several initiatives have been put forward to support women in leadership but there is a need for structure to sustain the momentum (Mordi et al., 2011). The National Empowerment and Development Strategy initiative put forward by the Nigerian government in 2004 sought to entrench economic empowerment for low-income women through the creation of wealth, jobs, poverty alleviation, and value creation (Okuyeuzu et al., 2012). To further institutionalize gender Okuyeuzu et al. (2012) highlighted, the Nigerian government in 2006 drafted a gender policy showing its commitment to women's participation in politics and the economy. This policy was immediately reinforced by initiatives like the Seven-point agenda and Vision 2020 to foster increases in the representation of women in politics and economic matters, yet very little progress has been made to improve the experiences of Nigerian women in the workplace (Mordi et al., 2011).

According to Eze (2017) research suggests prior to the British colonization of Nigeria, women enjoyed active and equal participation in key decision making but this was lost during colonization. Studies identify factors of inequalities in Nigeria including religious, cultural, psychological, and biological elements (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014). The cultural views of women as inferior subjects often result in less educational

investments in women and being assigned domestic responsibilities, while priority is given to men for advancements (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014). In the Mordi et al. (2011) study of the experiences of industry executives, respondents identified a lack of mentoring for women, work-life balance constraints, cultural bias, gender discrimination and prejudice, stereotypes (especially around reproductive matters), family responsibilities, and glass ceiling syndrome as key influencers of women's advancement at work.

### **The Male-Dominated Workplace**

This study focuses on the GM experiences within male-dominated Nigerian industries and professions like the engineering and construction industries. The significant body of literature on obstacles facing women in male-dominated occupations suggests occurrences of under-representation, exclusionary practices, integration issues, training deficit, and work bias of women (Torre, 2014). Interestingly, much scholarly attention has been devoted to describing the lived experiences of women in such industries with an emphasis on structural and cultural constraints ranging from discrimination, limited access to networking, inflexible work hours, high-stress levels leading to poor decisions, and limited career prospects (Powell & Sang, 2015). Powell and Sang (2015) buttressed the inequalities despite the interventions made over recent decades which affect the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women within organizations. With the inequalities arising from everyday gender exclusions and discrimination, Torre (2014) suggested a lingering dearth of investigations into the engineering and construction industry realities. With the significant strides in women's

entry into male-dominated industries, Powell and Sang (2015) highlighted the slow progress in eradicating occupational segregation by gender and increased rates of women exits compared to men. Women who work in male-dominated sectors have unique experiences compared to counterparts in more gender-balanced organizations that affect their advancement and retention (Martin & Barnard, 2013). The challenges faced by women in their attempts to penetrate and advance within male-dominated sectors arise from societal norms and traditional hierarchies (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Studies suggest women respond to the world of work differently from men (Torre, 2014). While men live for power and status, women are motivated by a desire for respectable work that influences organizational effectiveness (Martin & Barnard, 2013). The principal barriers to the advancement of women in male-dominated sectors include marginalization (impacting women's development of technical skills), gender pay gap, career progression, limited access to capital, and inadequate training and mentoring (Torre, 2014). Psychological barriers to the advancement of women in male-dominated industries rely on personal ideologies reflective of own self-efficacy and self-esteem (Martin & Barnard, 2013).

In male-dominated industries, women experience limited funding compared to their male counterparts especially in the construction industry (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Research specifically highlights the lack of funding directed at continued education which could improve the educational status of women in the construction industry (Martin & Barnard, 2013). The career progression models within Male-dominated industries appear tailored to suit males seeing it relates extended work hours to

presenteeism and is rewarded accordingly (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009). Such practice of presenteeism is expected to earn favor with line management (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009) and works against women who, given their primary care responsibilities, may be unable to make such sacrifices (Torre, 2014). Managing work demands and primary caregiver responsibilities simultaneously remains a concern in the literature of women in the workplace considering the correlations with work-life balance issues, burn out, job overload, and time management conflicts (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009). Studies of the lived experiences of women in male-dominated occupations suggest a need to stress the negative social and personal hardships that women encounter (Torre, 2014) while investigating the impact of work-life conflict on the woman's health and her relationship with family (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009).

The strain between women's work experience and traditional primary care responsibilities contributes to the issues career women experience, especially those in male-dominated industries (Torre, 2014). Mordi et al., (2001) argued in more accepting cultures of working women, the dual roles/expectations of women remain unchanged thus signaling the need for interventions that create balance for women. Women contend with issues of skill deficit (Kmec et.al., 2010), work-life balance, acceptance, integration, and recognition (Torre, 2014) arising from minimal investment in technical and leadership development. Lewis-Enright et al. (2009) posited the quality of work is influenced by the individual meaning attached to work, individual beliefs, and interpretation of value (or lack of) of employees. All these factors also influence the work-gender relations and

career opportunities for women within male-dominated sectors (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009).

Studies shed light on women's exclusion from development interventions, instances of promoting perceptions of women as being less competent than their male counterparts (Torre, 2014). Women experience exclusions from mentoring and networking which hinder their ability to increase clientele (a key requirement for advancement) and are relegated to roles that continue to hinder career advancements to senior positions and promote attrition (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Women in architecture experienced task restriction hindering them from expressing a full breadth of technical expertise (Martin & Barnard, 2013). The bias against women's work stems from men and women (who believe the work of men to be superior) (Torre, 2014). In an exploratory study of differences in workplace treatment of women on account of gender, most respondents alluded to be accepting of sexist humor in order to be accepted into the group (Torre, 2014). This reinforces the practice in male-dominated professions of expecting men to try to cope and accept women as colleagues (Martin & Barnard, 2013).

### **Nigerian Women's Experiences in Male-Dominated Industries**

Mordi et al. (2011) believe the coping/management strategies of women usually fail due to many reasons, chief of them is the assumption of women that organizations are gender neutral. Women are often ill-prepared to tackle the inaccessibility of power acquisition often guided by rules of operation acquired through male association and such networks confer certain benefits on its members like promotion (Torre, 2014). Mordi et al., (2011) suggested how women can join such networks by identifying and leveraging

mentors/sponsors within the group. Women in the male-dominated Nigerian organizations contend with a plethora of issues some of which have been identified and discussed:

### ***Representation and Decision-Making***

In male-dominated sectors like the Nigerian Fire Service (which is also the largest employer of labor in Nigeria), women make up 24% of the workforce with only 14% representation at senior management positions (Mordi et al., 2011). Coping mechanisms of women working in male-dominated sectors range from appreciating the feminine advantage, seeking out mentors, and adopting male tendencies; while the motivations for women to stay on include receiving reward and recognition for work, expectations of future possibilities, and challenging work, work engagement (Martin & Barnard, 2013). In some instances, some professions like mining and construction have stringent regulations restricting the type and quality of work available to women (Watts, 2009). Regarding the concerns raised on proving decision making roles for women in organizations, the Nigerian reality describes a recursive narrative. Inferences can be obtained by examining the high number of women in administrative and clerical jobs in the banking sector, or the limited number of women in construction businesses in Nigeria as examples (UNDP, 2013). Both fields are psychologically demanding, require changes to work location, and require extended hours of work which can conflict with the primary care responsibilities of Nigerian women, yet very little is known of the interventions taken by employers.

### ***Work-Life Balance Constraints***

Issues of work-life balance, physical stature, and individual identity are known to significantly influence women's experiences at work (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Male-dominated work cultures influence women's decisions to have children or not to focus on their careers (Watts, 2009). With very limited organizational support, women are left to develop coping strategies which may be ineffective (like being admitted into the 'boys club'- the formal and informal network men create to limit further competition).

### ***Workplace Incivility***

Women in male-dominated fields are known to experience workplace incivility. Women with line roles in male-dominated professions like factory/shift work experience challenges bordering on insubordination coming from gender-based stereotypes typical of most organizational cultures. Cultural and societal expectations of women to play submissive roles make it difficult for women to assume and sustain leadership positions (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Women in male-dominated industries are not excluded from the harsh realities confronting them and have shown great levels of resilience (Watts, 2013). From the organization's perspective, the concerns around inclusivity begin to emerge as co-worker disregard for each other becomes very detrimental to business growth seeing how they occur frequently but often get overlooked as insignificant. A lack of courteousness, or respect, publicly criticizing an employee's job, can force employees to behave in ways that are anti-progressive for organizational growth and productivity such as reduced time on the job, higher turnover, and poor job productivity (Huang, Ford, & Ryan (2017). Huang, Ford, and Ryan (2017) highlighted how a lack of line manager

capability in managing incivility fosters the behaviors. Interestingly, the resultant effects of incivility described above may be long term but are triggered by minor short-term occurrences which are very often overlooked even though they are well embedded in the work environment. This suggests a need for organizational interventions in addressing incivility on a broader scale.

Workplace incivility has been described as a “low-intensity deviant behavior with an ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (Zhou, Yan, Che, & Meier, 2015). Incivility can take various forms such as failure to show gratitude, disrespectful behavior, and daily hassle (Zhou, Yan, Che, & Meier, 2015). Although there has been extensive research on the impact of workplace incivility on mental wellbeing, job performance, and employee engagement, very little research has addressed the effective approaches to managing these workplace interpersonal hassles. Workplace incivility has been known to affect individuals in varying degrees depending on several variables. Extensive research has shown the differentiation in effect among the instigators and the targets (Lim & Lee, 2011). Zhou, Yan, Che, and Meier (2015) further highlighted that targets of incivility may experience increased levels of end-of-work negative affect depending on the several factors including but are not limited to personality, work stress levels, emotional strength, cultural values, race, gender, and context family support or the lack of it, and personal disposition. The outcomes of this study should identify how employees sustain and consistently improve job performance regardless of incivility. Workplace culture may encourage incivility and this study could identify opportunities to address this issue with



the potential to erode organizational standards of respect which impact both individual and business performance (Lim & Lee, 2011). Workplace civility interventions must strive to improve social interactions at work and ensure the sustainability of such interventions over time.

### ***Training and Training Transfer/Actualization***

There is a plethora of initiatives and investments fostering a favorable gendered climate within organizations, but progress appears very slow in most climes (Lewis-Enright, Crafford, & Crous, 2009). Adekanye (2014) observed that for progression in gender equality to be sustained, fundamental transformations must begin such as instituting gender laws and policies promoting opportunities and resources, the exercise of power and influence, self-efficacy, and participation in decision making. Adekanye (2014) recommended formal capability interventions in financial planning, decision making, uses of technology, and business management which is believed to have a socio-economic impact in the lives of women. Interestingly, Mordi et al. (2011) discussed a seeming hesitation on the part of organizations in making developmental investments in women owing to perceived high attrition rates of women. While most literature elaborates on the deficiencies in training opportunities, it is imperative to discuss the impediments to the transfer/actualization of training benefits which is critical for the advancement of women.

Transfer of learning describes the degree to which learning a skill in a situation can influence the performance or response in another given situation (Barnett & Ceci, 2002). Training transfer is possible provided the objective, methodology, and approach

deployed in the learned skill is relevant to the performed task or response (Huang, Ford, Tyan, 2017). In considering factors influencing training transfer, Arthur et al. (2003), in their meta-analysis of training effectiveness, highlighted the training design must be adaptable to the nature of the post-training environment and influence the chances for the employee to practice the newly learned skill and behavior training effectiveness. They proposed an evaluation of the pre- and post-training environment seeing that it is decisive of training actualization. Adekanye (2014) highlighted the role of relapse prevention (RP) and supportive transfer climate as key ingredients to the transfer of training benefits and suggested possible ways to influence them. This suggests a strong influence of the manager and the network/environment on training actualization. Wolf (2017) proposed intrinsic incentives, compliance on pre-training motivation, and training reputation as important pre-training motivators of the transfer. Their study buttresses the fact when employees are forced to attend training, there is very minimal motivation which in turn impacts the willingness to transfer learning to the job. This raises questions about the integrity of the processes of training identification and nominations within organizations.

Wolf (2017) identified four main limitations to training transfer, chief of them being the operationalization of work climate. An employee's understanding of and involvement in her development needs, its perceived benefits, and learning preferences are pivotal in ensuring transfer (Botke, Jansen, Khapova, & Tims, (2018). Wolf (2017) identified the learner's manager or supervisor as the most critical factor while advocating for the involvement of the learner in the training discussion. An interesting angle to consider is the training outcomes which may vary by individuals determined by

behavioral change, robust training content, and perceived support system (Botke, Jansen, Khapova, & Tims, 2018).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The primary objective of GM is to address equality gaps within organizations (Cavaghan, 2017). The preceding review highlights the cultural and social settings of male-dominated sectors with emphasis on women's experiences as they navigate the obstacles. The male-dominated industries have a certain inherent structural setting which makes integration difficult for women resulting in the early drop-off, limited advancements, lack of engagement, or the development of coping strategies (Mordi et al., 2011). Equality definitions may have evolved through time, but it becomes evident once distinctions in the treatment of men and women cease to exist (Cavaghan, 2017). Such gender equality must be expressed in the rights, privileges, representation, opportunities, and results of both men and women (Mordi et al., 2011).

The distinctions between the experiences of women in male-dominated Nigerian industries and those in non-male-dominated Nigerian industries are yet to be drawn and constitute opportunities for future studies (Mordi et al., 2011). From the literature review, it may seem as though many of the identified challenges facing women originate externally thus posing questions about the direct contributions of women to their lived experiences. There are studies that highlight the coping strategies women have developed and the resultant implications for attrition in those sectors (Adebayo & Akanle, 2014). Just as the causal factors of inequalities are diverse, so are the potential solutions

multifaceted involving interventions such as the creation of regulation and legislation at both corporate and national levels (Adebayo & Akanle, 2014).

The review also highlighted the challenges posed by poor governance and a weak policy climate and clearly highlighted the structural requirements of the gendered organizations. There is a gap in the literature for how the Nigerian male-dominated organization will receive the tenets of GM given its milestones in Europe and some African countries (Adebayo & Akanle, 2014).

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The inflow of women into male-dominated industries is increasing significantly, yet very little progress has been made institutionalizing GM (Cavaghan, 2017). Studies show a difficulty in this beyond strong commitments on GM to effective implementation of policy, citing a lack of understanding of the correlations between policy and organizational practice (Cavaghan, 2017). Researchers argue for the need to gain knowledge of organizational practices and how they are developed instead of taking written policies at face value. The objective of this phenomenological research was to assess the perception of GM among organizational leaders within male-dominated sectors in Nigeria with the aim of identifying any limitations to the furtherance of GM. In this chapter, I outline the methodology of the research and delineate the research procedures. The chapter includes a discussion of threats to validity, the limitations of the study, and the ethical procedures deployed.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

I chose a phenomenological approach for this study because this design can be used to isolate the phenomenon of interest and assess the daily experiences of the participants who interact with the phenomenon (Walby, 2005). Given the plethora of issues identified with GM implementation such as the role of leadership, I explored how decision-makers approach their role and navigate the complexities, rules, and norms within the organization. GM entails integration of a gender perspective into all policies including those relating to workforce planning, performance reviews/assessments, and

individual development (Scala & Paterson, 2017) to detect and eliminate disparities and foster equal opportunities. The ambiguity with GM's definition could create room for misinterpretations depending on the individual. Cavaghan (2017) argued for an evaluation of the individuals assigned to oversee GM within the organization as this "gender contact person" will influence the active GM implementation.

Gender conversations have progressed beyond being a primary responsibility of women to include men, stressing the integration of male efforts to bring about sustainable results in GM, thus offering additional justification for this study. By using a phenomenological research design, I was able to emphasize the meaning that each participant ascribes to their varied experiences without interferences from my personal interpretations (see Moustakas, 1994). For this study, GM described the integration of a gender focus into all stages of the policy process ranging from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation (Alonso, 2017).

### **Role of the Researcher**

In a qualitative study, an effective data collection approach necessitates that the researcher possesses good interviewing techniques and observation skills and be able to engage in active listening skills (Aagaard, 2017). Following data collection in this qualitative study, I conducted data analysis, coding, and development of themes; all geared towards achieving a holistic understanding of the GM phenomenon. The researcher must ensure a keen understanding of the participant's views, biases, ideas, and thoughts as they emerge (Moustakas, 1994). I avoided analytical biases by engaging in bracketing, or epoché, throughout the data gathering and analysis process to ensure

awareness of preconceptions and biases, both mine and the interviewees (see Tufford & Newman, 2012).

## **Methodology**

### **Participant Selection Logic**

The population of interest for this study were decision-makers in male-dominated Nigerian industries in Lagos. Employees in senior leadership with decision-making autonomy who have served at least 3 years in the company were considered. The suitable population must have been a member of the senior leadership of the organization and have spent a minimum of 3 years within the organization. All participants received an email with a brief introduction to the study and a list of definitions of terminologies used in the study to aid their understanding of GM (see Appendices A and B). Researchers recommend several estimations of the ideal sample size, which is usually between 10 and 16 participants for a phenomenological study (Aagaard, 2017). Given the multisector population, there was a need to hedge the risk of participant drop-off and explore emerging themes and relationships (see Moustakas, 1994). 10 participants were interviewed in this study.

### **Instrumentation**

I asked semistructured, open-ended interview questions (see Appendix C) with the aim of obtaining authentic responses from the interviewees (see Aagaard, 2017). The GM strategy is intended to challenge organizational practices and promote gender equality, and it entails transformational alterations to the culture, policies, practices, and the people (Alonso, 2017). Organizational leaders encourage such changes in practices by

assessing the current extent of gender hierarchy, establishing interdepartmental structures, training staff, especially the gender advocates, engaging experts in the GM process, and developing action plans to address gender inequalities (Alonso, 2017). The challenges encountered in the implementation of GM arise when the organizational culture and the change initiative are misaligned and conflicting goals exist, viewing GM as a nonpriority (by action or inaction; Alonso, 2017). For the study's interview instrument, I drew from the views of Staudt (2018) to assess the perceptions of key officers in male-dominated organizations (see Appendix C). The focus was on the rational expression of GM in (a) political domain consisting of policies, hierarchies, systems, and finance; (b) technical domain consisting of tools, methods, knowledge, expertise, and data; and (c) cultural consisting of norms, values, attitudes, and relationships (Staudt, 2018).

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

Following conditional approval (10-30-20-0429925) from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the participant selection method, I began data collection. I primarily used the interview transcripts from recordings heeding strict guidelines such as identification of irregularities and elimination of bias (Aagaard, 2017). The interview questions were subjected to pilot testing to identify potential research barriers such as recruitment constraints (Kim, 2011). I also sought to glean useful feedback on improvement opportunities and ensure the elimination of leading and redundant questions resulting in a set of clear and refined questions devoid of bias (see Aagaard, 2017). The participants for the pilot testing were middle level human resources



managers within the sample organizations. Investigating GM necessitates questioning individual and corporate beliefs, identity, and stereotypes resulting in resistance; to do so, I approached the interviews with patience and respect for the interviewees. A face-to-face interview method enabled the asking of follow-up questions to clarify participant statements during interviews (Aagaard, 2017).

I shared the interview questions with the participants at the start of the interview while highlighting the possibility of additional questions during the interview. With the consent of the participants, I took field notes and audio recorded the 60-minute interviews to mitigate risks of a turned-off recorder or the possibility of missing a nonverbal behavior. The interview time and dates were determined based on each participant's schedule. The setting and location for the interviews was confidential and determined largely by the limited distractions, privacy, and safety of the environment.

The duration for data collection from all participants spanned a total of 30 days. I aggregated participants' perceptions into themes followed by coding to isolate various categories of data (Aagaard, 2017). Individual participant files/folders were created to keep all participant files such as consent forms, notes, draft transcripts, participant preferences, and correspondence (Carless, 2019). Following the interviews, the recordings were transcribed and stored on a dedicated drive (Aagaard, 2017).

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Data analysis steps considered for this study included bracketing; delineating; clustering to elucidate themes; summarizing, validating, and modifying themes; and identifying final themes (Carless, 2019). Initiating bracketing supports the elimination of

the researcher's bias while validating the data ensures that the researcher measures what was initially intended (Moustakas, 1994). Using thematic content analysis, I carefully evaluated each participant's responses for themes and clusters of themes considering the participants were from male-dominated industries. Each participant's responses are listed under each question to identify themes and meaning from all perceptions and values attributed to GM. All generated were transcribed, coded, analyzed using content analysis, resulting in themed outputs (Moustakas, 1994). Ultimately, the objective of data analysis was to isolate all cultural, political, and social perception and norms related to GM from the surface content of participant responses. In addition, the recurring themes are summarized into inferences and conclusions in Chapter 4. The feedback from the gender knowledge analysis afforded me insights into participants' knowledge of the gender metrics of the organization. I reviewed the gender analysis report and the interview responses in tandem to acquire an assessment of the respondent's experiences and about the phenomenon under investigation. I ensured that interpretive meanings contained the original description and were sorted into clusters and themes. A data collection audit was conducted by sharing the reduced themes and statements with the participants to verify the summary (see Aagaard, 2017). I revisited the original files and notes if discrepancies were identified in the conclusions.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

The characteristics of trustworthy data require confirmable, credible, consistent, transferable, and credible data (Aagaard, 2017). To foster the trustworthiness of this study, I sought to minimize research/researcher bias and engaged in member checking

(Aagaard, 2017). To maintain a robust audit trail, I kept records of calendar invitations, observation notes, interview notes, and recordings (both electronic and paper). To ensure credibility, I deployed member checking with the aim of clarifying summary of the themes from the participants' GM perspective and uncover more insights (Carless, 2019). In order to foster validity and transferability, the data collection method, number of interviews, duration of interviews, duration of data collection, number of participants, assumptions, and research context were disclosed to the participants from the beginning (see Kornbluh, 2015).

### **Ethical Procedures**

Prior to the commencement of data collection, I obtained the approval of Walden University's IRB to vet the interview questions and assure that their use would not harm the participants. The recruitment procedure, selection criteria, and implications for social change and for practice were shared with the IRB. Participants were required to sign a consent form validating the approval to participate in the study; I was open to signing a confidentiality clause with requesting participants (see Aagaard, 2017). Upon receiving consent, participants were scheduled for semistructured interviews. Confidentiality in research is critical for the success of the study especially at the commencement of the interview process; each participant's legal name and organization were coded to ensure confidentiality (Kornbluh, 2015). At the start of each session, I provided each participant with an overview of the research process and a rationale for the study (see Aagaard, 2017). The data from this study will be stored for at least 5 years after which all records will be destroyed.

## **Summary**

This chapter included details on the qualitative phenomenological approach that I used to understand the perception of GM among decision-makers in male-dominated industries. I summarized my use of semistructured, face-to-face interviews with 10 leaders of male-dominated industries who have decision-making power regarding gender. The results of the data analysis and a summary of insights and findings are captured in Chapter 4. The significance and implications of the study for practice, theory, and social change are discussed in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this exploratory study was to uncover the perception of GM in male-dominated industries in Nigeria. The primary phenomenon was the meaning executive leadership ascribe to the tenets of GM and how that interpretation affects the outcomes in the organization. There were three primary RQs for this study:

RQ1: What is the perception of GM among organizational decision-makers within male-dominated industries in Nigeria?

RQ2: What is the role of leadership sponsorship in ensuring GM implementation?

RQ3: What factors pose the most challenge to GM implementation in male-dominated industries?

### **Pilot Study**

To authenticate the participant interview guide, I solicited volunteers from two professional groups to participate in a pilot study. Invitations were published on the social media handles of the groups, and participants signed on to complete the survey. The respondents were furnished with the study details in the consent email. After screening and obtaining consent, I interviewed the selected participants using the same interview questions. Upon the conclusion of the interviews, it was determined that the interview questions were clear without the need for modifications.

### **Setting**

I conducted the interviews with senior executives over Zoom. The interviews lasted for approximately 45 minutes to accommodate the schedules of the participants.

The participants were typically positive about the study and freely shared their experiences from their current organization as well as relevant life experiences. The interview questions served as triggers for most participants as most highlighted their intentions to explore the subject further for their personal enlightenment. The questions and style of the interviews were warm and welcoming, in my view.

### **Demographics**

I recruited 10 participants for this study. Etikan and Bala (2017) stated that a sample size of six to 10 participants is ideal for the collection of substantive data and for data saturation. Table 1 provides a summary of the participants.

**Table 1**

*Participant Demographics*

Participant	Job role	Industry	Gender
P1	Chief executive officer	Manufacturing	Male
P2	Chief finance officer	Engineering	Female
P3	Chief finance officer	Manufacturing	Female
P4	Chief executive officer	Conglomerate	Male
P5	Chief HR officer	Conglomerate	Female
P6	Chief HR officer	Oil and Gas	Female
P7	Quality leader	Engineering	Female
P8	Supply chain leader	Manufacturing	Male
P9	Sales leader	Technology	Female
P10	Chief learning officer	Shipping	Male

## **Data Collection**

Following IRB approval, I made a list of companies within the Lagos geography that were in the construction, logistics, energy, oil and gas, engineering, and technology sectors. The consent email was shared to a business school alumni network platform. I also contacted the executives of companies in these sectors directly on LinkedIn. The gender knowledge analysis checklist was shared with participants to enable familiarization with the concept and understand their organizations current circumstances relative to the subject matter. Following the completion of the participant screening and obtaining of consent from participants, interview time slots were scheduled using their preferred timings aligned with my schedule. The interviews occurred over a period of 1 month. Each participant was asked a total of nine interview questions. Table 2 shows how the interview questions address the three main RQs for this study. The original plan was to enlist the help of a partner institute to reach the target population. This plan changed because the partner organization went through a reorganization, and prior commitments to support with reaching participants would no longer be honored. Changes were made to the Form C and resubmitted to the IRB for approval.

**Table 2***Relationship Between Research Questions and Interview Questions*

Research question	Interview question
What is the perception of GM among organizational decision-makers within male-dominated industries in Nigeria?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is your perspective of gender equality in decision making? Share examples to illustrate your view?</li> <li>2. What is your perception of Gender pay gaps within organizations? Please provide examples and experience within your organization?</li> <li>3. What is your experience with gender participation at work? Can you describe the gender participation challenges within your organization?</li> </ol>
What is the role of leadership sponsorship in ensuring GM implementation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the role of Leadership in establishing gender equality? Why is this important? Can you share your experience in your current organization?</li> <li>2. What is your experience with Gender training (knowledge sharing, leaflets, website, campaign)?</li> <li>3. Describe your role in the appointment of Gender advocates (individuals accountable for gender).</li> <li>4. Describe your experience with the use of gender statistics in your organization? How relevant are these metrics to your organization?</li> <li>5. Describe your influence in establishing Gender equality targets/initiatives</li> </ol>
What factors pose the most challenge to GM implementation in male-dominated industries?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you describe the limitations that keep you from establishing gender mainstreaming in your organization?</li> </ol>

**Data Analysis**

Following the completion of each interview, I cross-referenced and transcribed the audio recordings using an online paid service called Temi. On average, the interviews lasted 45 minutes. Member checking was done within 2 days following the completion of the transcribing process by sending the transcript to participants to review for accuracy. No participants requested changes to the audio information captured and shared from the



interviews. Once transcription was completed after each interview, the transcripts were individually uploaded into the NVivo software, which was the data analysis tool of choice. The data analysis stage required a five-phased approach: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding (Yin, 2015). I compiled the transcripts and then disassembled the data into unique headings through familiarization with the data. The RQs aided the development of preliminary codes and categories and served as entries for NVivo. NVivo provided the benefit of the word frequency feature thus enabling a word count, enhancing the identification of themes for this study. The identified themes from NVivo were assessed for meaning and relationships, findings were reviewed extensively, and conclusions were drawn while incorporating my personal reflection during the data analysis process. I used Microsoft Excel to prepare tables for the data presentation.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Nowell et al. (2017) highlighted the need to resolve the dependability, credibility, and transferability of qualitative studies to achieve reliability and validity. The recording of the interviews following obtaining participant consent was pivotal to fostering validity and reliability (see Morse, 2015). I ensured credibility through a review of transcripts against the recording. I played back the recording while reading through the transcripts and made appropriate corrections. I used member checking to ensure reliability and confirmability by sharing the transcribed comments from the interviews with the participants. I ensured dependability throughout the data collection process by keeping an audit trail of tasks in addition to the audio recordings and interviewer notes. All

participants were required to share a primary assessment of the gender landscape using the gender knowledge analysis schedule and the study introduction guide to ensure transferability. Data saturation is reached when a researcher is unable to obtain new information during data collection (Braun & Clarke, 2019). During the data collection process, I reached data saturation by the seventh participant but continued until no new theme emerged to improve validity of the data.

## **Results**

Findings from the study are presented following the primary RQs and highlight the emergent themes:

### **Research Question 1**

I explored the leadership perception of GM by asking the following questions:

1. What is your perspective of gender equality in decision making? Share examples to illustrate your view?
2. What is your perception of Gender pay gaps within organizations? Please provide examples and experience within your organization?
3. What is your experience with gender participation at work? Can you describe the gender participation challenges within your organization?

### ***Decision Making***

From the analysis of the data, most participants alluded that decision-making within their organizations was largely male dominated. Some participants claimed equality in decision making along the gender scales while others highlighted that decision making with their organizations was dependent on the role or jobs and not gender. P4

offered that matters are referred upwards (senior roles) stating that “it’s more a function of role and seniority than gender. Gender does not play a role at all in decision making. I think it is a function of the roles that make decisions. When we look at the roles that make decisions, you are able to identify the gender does in it.” P6 alluded that

In senior level positions we are split 50/50, it is more about the number of men versus women in leadership positions. Beyond the director level, I would say that decision-making is well balanced because we have senior women in decision-making positions, as well as on an executive level. In terms of our executive management decision however, the team comprises of four male executive directors and only one female director. The scale is not balanced at the executive management level, but at the general management level, we are equally split.

P2 also stated that “there is a cultural barrier influencing what we experience in the organization. Most women drop off at the executive level. Internally, there just seems to be a glass ceiling for, for women, probably because of internal politics.” When asked about gender participation within their organizations, the participants gave divergent views. P7 said

I think that there is good participation across the board. I would not distinguish the participation across gender lines. I think there were some teams that had more active participation, but it was not split along gender lines. It was maybe a good manager who was able to collaborate more and promote better engagement within his organization, or maybe it was a poor manager that really had a poor

relationship with people making them non-participatory. Irrespective of gender I have seen almost equal participation from men and women.

P2 stated that

In decision-making, the women participate a lot more and they are quite vocal and consistent. They will turn up at every meeting. Their voices will be heard at every meeting. When it comes to decision making, they will bring forward their strong reasons and make their voices heard. No one tries to drown anyone's voice. So overall, I would say both parties participate quite well in their areas of expertise.

P3 offered that

We have people in every function, and I can think over the possible exception of engineering that there are women at middle to senior management levels. Many who have been in the organization for quite some time. I do not recall any examples where there have been appointments where a man has been preferred by virtue of gender over a woman candidate. I think it is more just a question of how many how many are in the pipeline.

In addition, the resonating theme among participants reinforces the need for making deliberate effort in building the talent pipeline. Most participants highlighted that decision-making within their company is determined more by the job/role an individual plays than by the gender of the individual. They alluded to the idea that women are perceived to be trustworthy and loyal; thus, they are easily hired into roles that require high levels of integrity and compliance such as human resources, legal, and finance. P6 alluded to the issues encountered with the number of women within her organization:

I think that a few years ago, we started taking cognizance of how we were placing people in senior positions and it became a deliberate effort to ensure that we had the equal representation at senior grades. We had a few female and male MDs, then we had functional heads who were targeted hires. We have been deliberate in placing people of the same gender.

P8 said, “My organization is more performance and costs conscious than focused on the gender delivering the value. It is just not important.” We do not care about the gender that is delivering the value. It is not important.”

This position undermines the effort required to deliver value and was common especially among male leaders. In addition, such poor evaluation of the cost of creating value on the individual remains a critical concern in the GM journey.

### *Negotiation*

Participants revealed that men earn more and are better at negotiating thus resulting in pay gaps. Although most claimed that their organizations had a structured pay scale, the stronger negotiation skills of men earned them a place at the higher rung of the pay scale. All participants alluded to the existence of a standard compensation structure within their respective organizations; majority of participants stated that men are better negotiators and always tend to get a better deal. P1 stated that

I have seen that men negotiate better and make a case for it. I used to think we were aligned with the pay structure and, and we would put people within that structure and then performance takes over from there in terms of how far people

go. But from more recent happenings, we just went beyond the scale to accommodate a new intake. I would not have thought we did that before.

Individual customization of key people processes is suggestive of weak implementation and integrity of major processes within the company. This position emphasizes that the standardization of processes may not be adequate without enforcement and accountability. P2 highlighted that

My organization does not have pay gaps. There are not many females anyway, and I do not think there is pay gap. In my previous organization, I observed that women generally tend to earn less. And maybe it is down to negotiation. The female will, always be one notch lower. I think that men are better negotiators.

P1 stated that

In my current organization, I do not think there are gaps and there are few females anyway. In my previous organization I noticed that even as managers, women generally tend to earn less. Maybe it is down to negotiation. It is a combination of the fact that men demand more and have an over-bloated perception of their contribution that gave rise to the pay gaps observed.

P6 shared that “gender does not play any part in what we offer. We do not do those types of things.” P10 highlighted a unique reason for observed pay gaps in his organization. He highlighted that “women are not usually open to take on offshore jobs thus limiting their earning power. Offshore jobs usually attract high incentives such as overtime, and over a period deliver higher earning potential to men. Women in these job types earn more”.

This response is suggestive of a potential root cause of the perceived pay gaps between genders in the organization.

### ***Performance and Advancement***

All participants alluded that appointments and advancements within their organizations were largely performance-driven meaning that only the best hands would advance. P6 highlighted that to advance in their organization was dependent on one's ability to articulate their ideas, deliver on targets and responsibilities, and one's visibility. So, everybody is at a level playing field. P4 shared "I don't recall any examples where there have been appointments where a man has been preferred by virtue of gender over a woman candidate. I think it's more a question of who is available in the pipeline".

As seen from the responses, the issue of availability within the pipeline emanates from a plethora of variables both within and outside the organization but the leadership is not adequately enlightened about the root causes of these outcomes. P6 highlighted that while the organization values equal participation, it will only advance employees who display superior capacity and competence. This suggests that individuals will not be promoted based on gender rather on the ability to deliver and exceed expectations.

When asked about the degree of gender participation across the organization, a significant number of female leaders highlighted that women were less likely to challenge and preferred to be seen and not heard while they deliver excellent work. When quizzed about reasons for such outcomes, P2 stated that

“women are not as keen to engage in arguments, they are loyal, and often do not get to the required granular details demanded. They will not speak except they have their facts”.

P4 highlighted that “we put a lot of emphasis on basically capability, capacity, and potential”. P8 stressed that “by nature, women are more loyal and in addition to their strong leadership capabilities and my top two talents handling core supply chain jobs are women. We are a male-dominated organization, and at the middle- senior management there were no restrictions around how to run shifts yet there is still not enough women representation”. P3 highlighted a dearth of female capabilities at senior levels of leadership in her experience. She shared that “women would typically be in governance-type roles like finance, quality assurance, and company secretariat. Aside from these roles, women do not feature in core jobs. I am not saying you can’t find them in these technical jobs, but they would probably be present at the lower – middle management”.

P10 highlighted that “In my experience, the first 3 years on a job is usually very demanding, especially for women. No one accommodates for the contextual off-work responsibilities of women in these industries thus leading to attrition. As a business, we then focused on targets and quotas which prevents attrition and tied this to our individual incentives”.



## **Research Question 2**

*What is the role of leadership sponsorship in ensuring GM implementation?*

Participants were asked the following questions to elicit responses that address the primary research problem:

- Can you describe the role of Leadership in establishing gender equality?  
Why is this important?
- What is your experience with Gender training (knowledge sharing, leaflets, website, campaign)?
- Describe your role in the appointment of Gender advocates (individuals accountable for gender).
- Describe your experience with the use of gender statistics in your organization? How relevant are these metrics to your organization?
- Describe your influence in establishing Gender equality targets/initiatives.

### **Leadership Involvement**

All participants alluded to being aware of the gaps within the organization, most highlighted a lack of structure within their organizations to enable practices of GM. Most participants did not understand the rudiments of GM, and others saw it as a vehicle to promote more women in the organization. P1 confirmed that he did not have gender training or experience but was knowledgeable about diversity and inclusion based on experience. P2 stated that “in my organization, there is no deliberate strategy to achieve gender balance. What we need to do is to make it a company strategy. You cannot force fit people into roles, but you could have a strategy that allows preferences that promote

some sort of balance”. In contrast, P6 alluded to her organization having a targeted approach even though it was focused on the number of women in the organization. She said

We do a quarterly report of key people to executive management”. We mine the data to check how many females are in leadership positions, how many were promoted versus males? In terms of our recruitment efforts, what is the split between genders? We do this primarily to keep it in the forefront, and if we observe it skewing in the wrong way, we can immediately implement some remedial action.

When asked about the targeted interventions by leadership, P7 shared that

We work with the recruitment team to ensure that all shortlists are gender balanced, and irrespective of the function, equal representation is priority. Regarding gender training, to eliminate the knowledge barriers to advancement, we decided to enlighten all employees about what we do i.e. buttering how each department creates value, and how critical it is to the business. You do not have to be an engineer for 20 years for you to work in a certain role. We had many internal opportunities and we realized that people would take the challenge if they were better informed.

An interesting observation was that while the leadership discussed the issues at the board level, the accountability was left entirely to the managers of the people. P1 alluded that “there are barriers faced by women in leadership roles. It is discussed quite a lot, but sadly, it is not on the leadership team’s agenda now. I see and support the need

for having a gender champion. There is also the national culture as a barrier to overcome and it is evident even in the government".

P5 said that

I will tell you what I think it is and it is probably applicable in most organizations. The minute you come from using the label of gender mainstreaming, there is already a limitation on it. The minute you give it a name, you treat it as a limitation. So if I go to my colleagues and say, okay, guys, we want to ensure that we have balance across genders, the conversation would stop and it would not give you what you want. But if you make it part of a broader strategy, it is better accepted.

### **Women Must Prove their Worth**

Most participants stressed that performance was recognized from all employees irrespective of gender.

P6 stated that

There are lots of responsibilities on the women in positions of influence to ensure that they put their best foot forward. Before I speak, I ensure that I know what I'm saying, and if I don't, then I don't open my mouth until I can get all my 'ducks in a row'. This is because every opportunity that is lost by a woman, spreading the wrong information or not being composed enough to get their points across, sets us back.

P8 stressed that "I have seen that at the mid middle – senior management level, women are given strategic roles to handle in supply chain. Women want to

prove that they are equal to the task, so they give their all, and they make a success of most of these roles”. It will serve future researcher to assess whether men share a similar experience regarding the need to exert extra work requirements to be found worthy or acceptable. Also, there is need to investigate the root causes of these work pressures i.e are they cultural expectations or self-induced expectations; and evaluate whether the standards of measurement of performance are fair across genders.

**Gender Advocates are not Important.**

All participants alluded to not having dedicated gender advocates instead, ad hoc women event coordinators were appointed to manage all gender related activities. P2 highlighted the existence of a cultural barrier as a reason for this lack of interest in advocacy. P6 mentioned that two years ago, a lady in the legal department was appointed director for governance and sustainability with responsibility to oversee gender related concerns within the business. P7 said

We call them diversity and inclusive advocates. So, we have diversity and inclusion (D&I) champions, there are 11 of them (seven female and four male) because the focus of our D&I programs is gender diversity.

P5 said that her organization did not have gender advocates and did not see the need to have. When asked about gender advocacy and gender training, the predominant consensus was gender advocacy is not a necessity and whatever training existed on gender involved a network committed to training women to improve themselves. P8 said:

We have a women network, and it is not an official role, rather it is a forum where we coach ladies, mentor them, and support them to grow in their career. We identify the most senior female in the organization to run this and make sure that women get to feel included.

P3 stressed that “support groups within the organization are not about all things gender, rather it is specifically targeted at the development of females. Periodically during the year, there are gatherings where we basically encourage younger, early career and senior females to equip them with coping skills and strategies to lead a balanced life proudly female”. P5 stated that “we do not have gender advocacy in our organization. This is because we do not have a need for it since we have done two things: first, we are trying to create an environment that is conducive for all genders. Secondly, we have a formal mentoring system. Also from an HR viewpoints, at the three, six, nine, one year anniversary of new hires, we try to connect to ensure that we are pairing people with executives who can help them quickly integrate into the business”

### **Gender Statistics is not Required.**

Majority of leaders alluded to not making use of gender statistics in their decision-making process. Where statistics are used, it is primarily a human resources leader’s responsibility to project the numbers and share insight. P2 alluded to using only statistics to track headcount and ensure an alignment in compensation within their function. She also highlighted that

The problem emanates from education. I remember we once sponsored, people for degrees in pipeline engineering in the UK and only males applied. I think, for

the specialized jobs, females tend to avoid those courses resulting in more men.

You probably find two females and one of them will switch course along the way.

I think it is more about interest and at the early career stage, it could be physically tasking as well. Maybe there just is no concerted and deliberate effort to achieving gender balance.

P5 stressed that “it is not something that we actively look out for. If we are going to look at gender statistics, it is usually towards something or a cause. It is reviewed and used on a need basis”.

P8 stated, “If you are asking if we review gender statistics to make decisions, the answer is no, I am not heavy on it”. Specifically, P3 alluded that the practice of using gender statistics was alien and not in their organizational practice and policy. P4 highlighted that “we have a payroll schedule with basically personal data of everybody on it. And I can rank it according to a dozen criteria. And it records clearly male or female in one of the columns that is the gender column, but it is not sorted on that basis. So, I must actively sort the data if I want to look at it. If I ask for it to be run off the system, it does not come sorted by gender it comes sorted by function”. These responses buttress the poor accountability and ownership within most organizations resulting in poor visibility and use of the people data.

### **Research Question 3**

What factors pose the most challenge to GM implementation in male-dominated industries? The participants identified the following as limitations to GM in organizations:

- Lack of GM strategy within organizations, and GM is not on the leadership agenda.
- Existence of cultural barriers and expectations from women to not be ambitious or career driven.
- Existence of organizational political barriers otherwise known as “the glass ceiling.”
- Existence of influential skeptics, resulting in limited GM sponsorship of GM. Most people still think in terms of zero-sum games i.e. *whatever a woman gains, a man loses.*
- Influence of *work-cultural dilution* such that employees leave behind the organizational values and embrace societal norms after work as a culture.
- Intense work-life demands influencing the career choices of women.
- Gender training initiatives are targeted at upskilling and empowering women, without inclusion of the men.
- The demanding nature of the work makes it unattractive to women.

Gender mainstreaming is conceptualized under three major domains within an organization: (a) a political domain consisting of policies, hierarchies, systems, and finance; (b) a technical domain consisting of tools, methods, knowledge, expertise, and data; and (c) a cultural domain consisting of norms, values, attitudes, and relationships (Staud, 1998). The assessment of GM within the population using this framework is summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3***Organizational Assessment of the Gender Mainstreaming Framework*

GM domain	Domain subcategory	Assessment
Political	Policies	Not applicable; only recruitment targets are set in some organizations.
	Hierarchies	Decision-making is done by job seniority.
	Systems	Not applicable.
	Finance	Limited; predominantly for funding women events.
Technical	Tools	Not applicable; despite pay structure, its application is fluid and subjective.
	Methods	Not applicable.
	Knowledge	Not applicable.
	Expertise	Not applicable.
	Data	Not applicable; gender statistics are often used for recruitment drives.
Cultural	Norms, values, relationships	GM is not on the leadership agenda.

*Note.* GM = gender mainstreaming.

P1 alluded that “this is the major challenge. I do not believe that diversity and inclusion is a nice to have. I think individuals bring different things to the table and we must ensure it. Unfortunately, we don't have that perspective, and that is what we miss”.

### Summary

Three RQs were critical to this perception study. The first question was: What is the perception of GM among organizational decision-makers within male-dominated industries in Nigeria? Findings revealed that although the business leaders were knowledgeable about the basic expressions of gender studies, very little was known about the features and applications of GM. In addition, very minimal initiatives were taken to foster



organization-wide enlightenment about GM. The second RQ was, what is the role of leadership sponsorship in ensuring GM implementation? Findings revealed that although the leadership was conversant with the overall issues, concerted efforts towards closing the gaps were sparse. This was encouraged by GM not being a priority, hence a lack of a defined strategy, and minimal ownership of proffering and delivering practical interventions. The third RQ highlighted leadership opinion of the reasons why GM was lacking in their organization. Most participants highlighted inadequate GM training, minimal representation of women in their organizations, and societal norms among other factors. Chapter 5 summarizes a discussion of the interpretations of the findings, implications of the findings, identify the limitations of the study, and offer final recommendations.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

Equality requires a gender perspective that encourages improvements in women's conditions by making changes to the roles and responsibilities of men and women (Mordi et al., 2011). In the literature review, I discussed several challenges facing women in organizations, such as integration, retention, and advancement within the organization (see Mordi et.al., 2011). The intention of this study was to understand how leaders of male-dominated industries in Nigeria perceived GM to glean insights into more productive ways to establish the concept. I wanted to identify the unique challenges facing the implementation of GM from the perspective of business leaders. Chapter 4 includes the findings regarding these leadership perceptions. In this chapter, I further discuss the findings and conclusions, explore the significance of these findings to leadership, and offer recommendations for future research.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

GM provides an opportunity to close the gaps in the advancement of women in the workplace by managing the impact of all gender initiatives (Walby, 2005). GM activities include the hiring of more women, policy redesign, gender analysis, and gender training (Tiessen, 2004). Cavaghan (2017) suggested that organizations are more inclined towards policy than to the day-to-day processes required for GM. There is abundant literature highlighting the challenges that impede women's participation in the workplace to include: cultural biases, absent/inadequate policies, employment discrimination

practices, poverty, under/over qualification, and inadequate enrolment of women in educational institutions (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015).

### **Career Choices**

The literature on work-life balance reveals that male-dominated cultures continue to influence the choices of women with regards to work. Studies reveal that the high representation of women in administrative jobs relative to those in mainstream technical jobs continue to decline (UNDP, 2013). Findings from this study support this position as most respondents confirm that the preferences of women continue to shift towards desk type admin roles at junior levels, and in regulatory or control, and at senior levels.

Findings revealed a negligible number of respondents alluding to gender practices that were institutionalized and incorporated into daily operations. All participants described their approaches to the recruitment of women into the organization as their predominant GM recruitment strategy. They further highlighted that the poor representation of women in the organization contributes to the seeming lack of focus on gender, suggesting that if there were more women in the organization then there would be a focus on women.

Increasing gender representation and participation within unfavorable conditions may not prove a most effective strategy; rather, the focus should be on establishing structures and practices that support an enabling culture for GM.

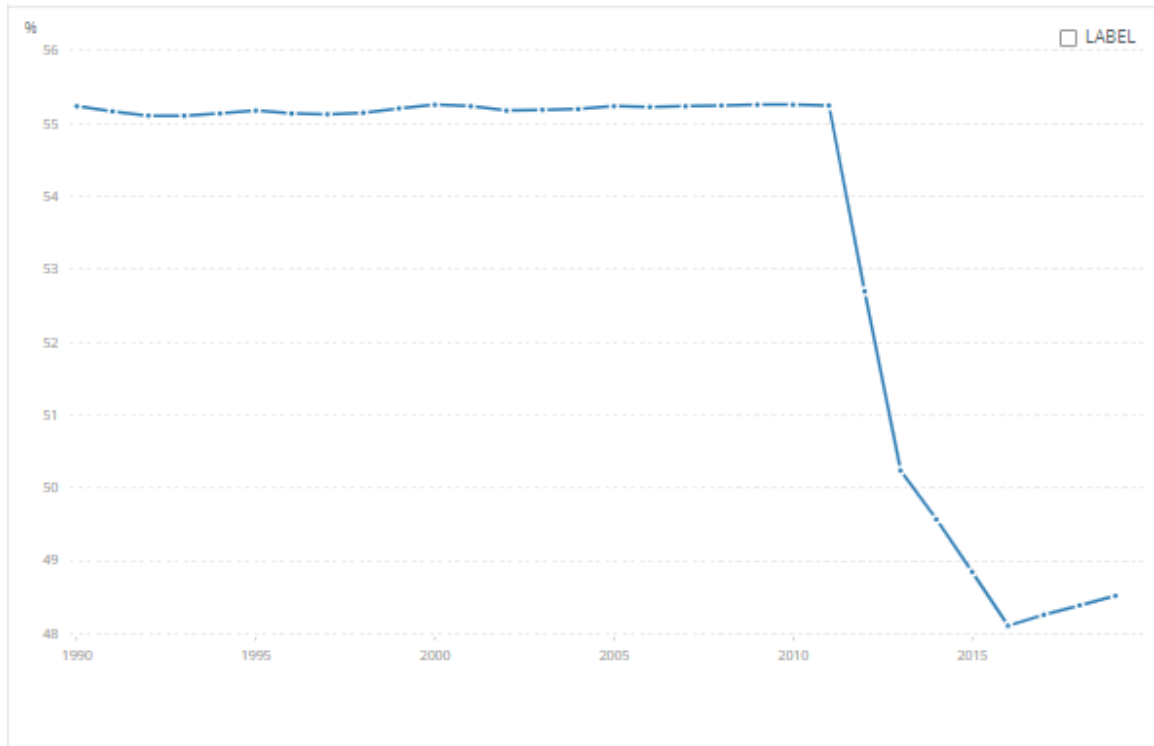
### **Availability Determines Participation**

Ejere (2013) gave credence to the idea that resistance to gender initiatives is engrained in the culture of the organization. When asked about gender participation within their organizations, most participants highlighted that there was no issue with

women participation; however, the observed limited numbers of women were responsible for the poor representation. Leaders in this study stated that their approach to fostering participation is not gender dependent. Participation is determined more by representation than by gender. With the high drop-off rates of women observed in these industries, it can be assumed that same outcomes on representation will be sustained. To effectively ascertain the effect of the highlighted cultural biases experienced by women in male-dominated industries, there is need to evaluate the effect of high-performance work cultures on GM through the lived experiences of women in such industries. This realization often restricts women to only limited opportunities or roles at the executive level of management. Women appear more constrained in the effective allocation of their time to tasks both at work and at home compared to their male counterparts. Most participants blamed the women representation gaps in middle-senior management cadres on the increasing drop-off rates of women in the workplace. Although they confirmed the poor representation of women only a handful articulated possible reasons for the unfavorable outcomes. There is limited knowledge of the reasons for the drop-off of women experienced at middle and senior management grades, thus presenting opportunities for further study.

Participants who alluded to male dominance in decision-making attributed the outcome to the large population of men in their organizations. When quizzed on the reasons for the larger number of men relative to females in the organization, participants offered several reasons. Nigerian labor law on night shift work poses a major challenge to the number of women in the organization. Section 55 states that “no woman shall be

employed on night work in a public or private industrial undertaking” (Nigerian Labor Law, 2018). Although the prevailing Nigerian legislative restrictions prohibits women in nonmanagement jobs from working night shift, these women are not prohibited from working in both morning and afternoon shifts in core technical jobs. The implication of this restriction is that these organizations are unable to build the pipeline of women from the bottom up given that at the lower rung of the grade ladder, there are more jobs at these lower grades which presents an opportunity to bring in more women. Under this law, women cannot be recruited into night work (10pm-5am) in all jobs except nursing and those in management positions. This reality further culminates into a dearth of talent in the pipeline of women at both middle and senior management. Figure 1 depicts the drop-off trajectory of women in Nigeria from 1990 to 2018.

**Figure 1***Female Labor Force Participation*

*Note.* Adapted from *World Development Indicators*, in Population Dynamics 2018 (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?end=2019&locations=NG&start=1990&view=chart>). Copyright 2021 by The World Bank Group

Mordi et al. (2011) highlighted that the coping and management strategies of women usually fail due to the assumption of women that organizations are gender neutral. This position is buttressed by position of the majority of the participants that gender is never a factor in making critical employee decisions. Women remain ill-prepared to tackle the inaccessibility of power acquisition often guided by rules of operation acquired through male association (Torre, 2014). Participants revealed that female representation in male-dominated industries continues to decline because women

are choosing less tedious jobs while making important life choices. Participants identified factors that contribute to a stressful work experience to include long commute times owing to the remote location of work facilities and extended working hours, among other issues. Most participants stated that more women continue to make conscious career choices on whether to remain or join the male-dominated industry. As a means of coping within such organizations, participants highlighted that women would assert themselves only when they were confident of the facts, thus increasing performance pressure and leaving little room for creativity. Organizations must continually create opportunities that improve the working conditions for women in such industries and reduce attrition.

### **Pay Gaps**

Martin and Barnard (2013) highlighted that men live for power and status, while women are motivated by a desire for respectable work that influences organizational effectiveness. Findings from this study reveal that men are perceived to be better negotiators, having an overestimated assessment of their competencies and can sell this position better. Factors such as equal compensation present critical considerations in decision process for women. In this study, leaders alluded to making pay exceptions to the pay scale when they found candidates they really wanted to hire. This practice suggests that the standard or established pay scales are in fact very fluid depending on negotiation and the candidate's ability to sell. This subjective practice of offering candidates salaries outside of the agreed pay scale opposes the leadership's claims of having a structured performance approach to candidate selection. The persistence of such fluid pay practices will sustain pay inequities within the organization. In addition, as

leaders continue to downplay the importance of gender statistics, inequity will continue to fester especially at the lower to midlevel cadres of the organization. The implication of poor representation influences the availability of women to take up overtime-earning roles and adversely impacts the pay gaps experienced in the industry.

### **No Consolidated Gender Mainstreaming Strategy**

Ejere (2013) gave credence to the fact that resistance to gender initiatives is engrained in the culture of the organization. Findings suggest that with no concrete GM strategy in place, leaders design the GM training strategies within these organizations to achieve three major objectives: inclusion, empowerment, and development (upskilling). These objectives have remained inefficient in establishing GM for many reasons. The primary reason is because the interventions are women-centric suggesting that men are completely excluded. In addition, promoting conversations on managing unconscious biases could prove beneficial to the workforce to create a balanced and inclusive work culture. Although most leaders in this study stated that advancement decisions in their respective organization are based on individual performance and not on gender, it remains unclear the extent of such demands on the well-being and attrition rates of women.

### **No Gender Mainstreaming Training**

GM diverts focus from pursuing traditional investments in women to structuring the entire organization to be balanced and equitable thus enabling an improved structure and sustainability. Gender training consists of interventions that enlighten and empower any group of persons with skills required to manage gender related issues in the



workplace (Warren, 2007). To deliver GM beyond a fulfillment of minimum requirements, it is necessary that men and women in organizations demand sufficient knowledge and expertise in gender. Findings reveal that in Nigerian male-dominated industries, gender training is only targeted at bringing women up to speed on how to develop themselves. This should not be the primary goals of gender training. This approach suggests that organizations are lacking in the awareness of what effective GM training entails (gender awareness training, gender analysis and planning training, and training for policy makers). Participants alluded to having little or no knowledge of gender training. Advancement from the traditional gender approach will demand a substantial change in ownership of policies, followed by an independent management of the GM strategy (Tiessen, 2004). Equipping women to navigate effectively without considerable improvements to the culture they operate in will prove counterproductive. Most of the leaders in this study alluded to not being averse to gender training but indicated they needed help to craft the strategy behind the GM approach.

### **No Ownership of Gender Mainstreaming**

Findings from this study reveal that the GM strategy was not on the leadership's agenda and that the leaders did not fully understand their role in entrenching GM. These findings confirm early predictions that the success of GM will be dependent on a harmonization of the organization's goals and feminist goals. Only a handful of the participants alluded to taking personal action within their respective functions towards fostering GM. Knowledge of the link between cause and effect is critical for the successful implementation of GM (Lombardo & Mergaert, 2016), yet this knowledge was

lacking within the leadership cadre. True (2010) highlighted the need to understand the inherent unintended biases within the organization, but findings revealed that very little has been done by leadership to identify the root causes of the issues. This gives credence to the predictions by Mark and Bernard (2013) of the development of ineffective programs owing to misdiagnosis of the causal issues.

Adebayo and Akanle (2014) identified several factors responsible for the inequalities experienced by women to include resistance to women in management positions, preference for masculine job elements, limited management training and coaching opportunities, and inadequate policies guiding practices within. Mordi et al. (2011) highlighted barriers to GM to include a lack of mentoring for women, work-life balance constraints, cultural bias, gender discrimination and prejudice, stereotypes, family responsibilities, and glass ceiling. Of these barriers, only mentoring for women was highlighted as an intervention being deployed in this study. This gap presents considerations for GM improvement within organizations. Findings also reveal little or no intervention into resolution of cultural biases, discrimination, stereotypes, and the glass ceiling; the reason for this could be traced to a lack of understanding of the underlying issues. This study reveals additional factors that contribute to the challenges facing women in the workplace (see Chapter 4), thus confirming the position of Powell and Sang (2015) that very slow progress has been achieved in eradicating organizational segregation by gender and the increases in drop-off rates of women from the organization.

## **Grey Areas**

Pearson and Porath (2005) identified a lack of line manager capability in managing incivility as a factor that fosters the behavior. Leaders in this study reported that they were not involved in gender initiatives beyond an occasional address at a women's event and an occasional/need-based assessment of gender statistics. Contrary to the findings of Owoyemi and Olusanya (2014), women were not seen as inferior subjects to be assigned domestic jobs; rather, findings portray that women are entrusted with responsibilities that require high levels of integrity and trust such as compliance, audit, and policy-type roles. Most of the female respondents in this study stated that they have put in an extra effort to advance in the organization. I sought to identify the ways that organizations address issues of incivility, but with little or no gender training happening, this was an impossible metric to identify. There was no mention of an in-person leadership engagement that could help parties unearth some personal and psychological issues. There was also no evidence of a grievance management system, or a feedback system, hence the persistence of anti-GM behaviors. A knowledge of the perspective and experiences of the workforce on gender mainstreaming presents opportunities for future research.

Participants also highlighted the gaps in the pipeline caused by the poor enrollment of women in courses tailored to technical jobs and industries. They highlighted that in cases where women enroll in the core technical course, upon graduation they gravitate toward consultancy or desk-type jobs. Most participants highlighted that apart from human resources and finance jobs, increasingly women tend

to gravitate towards consultancy or office-based type jobs. Some participants reported more women were enrolled in core technical courses in universities; however, upon graduation, women make choices based on new interests and life considerations such as getting married and having children. The largely remote location of most manufacturing companies, political organizations, stressful and traffic-laden commute to work, and the need for ample family time were highlighted as reasons influencing women's choices of nontechnical and desk-type jobs.

Measures of successful implementation of GM initiatives also consist of having adequate resources (time and money), regular interdepartmental meetings, gender statistics, technique, consistent monitoring, and specific organizational objectives (Eveline, Bacchi, & Binns, 2009). Some leaders alluded to engaging in talent management practices like building a pipeline of young talent, and deliberate headhunting.

### **Limitations of the Study**

In addition to the limitations cited in Chapter 1, a few limitations were observed in this study. In this qualitative study, participants gave much depth and breadth to the conversation, but there were limitations to drawing correlations between variables. The researcher is unable to isolate the major causes of drop-off of women in such male-dominated industries. Also, while past research highlights various challenges, these findings may not be generalized to all parts of Nigeria especially due to cultural influences. Another limitation of the study is study did not adjust for cultural influences which could lead to varied experiences for women across the organization. With this

focus on organizations in a particular state, this study lacks the experiences of leaders from other geo-political zones in Nigeria. The researcher experienced certain limitations of being female and listening to the perceptions of both men and women on GM. Maintaining a journal was helpful in taking instructive notes and drafting restriction notes to keep the researcher from being personally invested and maintain objectivity throughout the process.

### **Recommendations**

The findings of this study give rise to several recommendations for practice. Regarding the observation of a misalignment between the organizational goals and GM agenda, the observation of the persistence of this issue suggests that there is continued need for targeted practical interventions tailor-made to each organizational culture. Leaders must take concerted efforts to keep the GM conversations on the forefront for it to attract the required level of advocacy.

The poor leadership commitment to the GM cause can be addressed by ensuring an inclusion of GM targets in the individual leadership objectives. Leaders must take accountability for the planning, development, training, and the outcomes of GM as against outsourcing the responsibility entirely to members of the organization. Finding revealed limited demonstration of knowledge of the underlying issues within the organization. Dipstick surveys are highly recommended to ensure the required depth of feedback reaches the leadership team. Informal feedback structures like individual/group engagement can also support with this knowledge gathering.

Interventions that address work-life balance constraints, cultural bias, gender discrimination, stereotypes, and glass ceilings should be encouraged. GM must be viewed as a long-term strategy. A practical strategy customized to the organization is required for its effective establishment. This will require an intricate alignment of company objectives, detailed result-oriented gender charter, and action owners. There was no mention of technical capability gaps with women thus suggestive of the need to move desist from the women training approach which is predominantly used. While it may be ambitious to influence the prevailing labor laws, leaders must make concerted efforts to build a gender balanced talent pipeline and address the observed representation gaps in these industries. The poor representation of women in overtime earning roles will continue to increase the gender pay gaps observed in these industries.

While leaders promote the institutionalization of policies, they must pay attention to its execution. The execution of policies must be objective and void of bias to promote equity. The culture of the organization must be deliberately curated with consideration to the rigid socio-cultural realities in this clime. Organizations must embrace the development of gender-friendly policies that support a culture of GM.

### **Implications**

This perception study portrays the inherent beliefs of the leadership of the organization and sets the context for the establishment of GM. The insights generated from this study elucidate barriers within and outside of the organization, and provide direction to leaders on the implementation of GM. Leaders must take ownership of the intention and strategy of GM for it to advance favorably within the organization.

Achieving gender parity and gender participation will influence social change and economic growth by improving earning power and financial independence leading to better quality of life, improving educational attainment, accessing health care, and fulfilling individual objectives. Leaders must appreciate the implications of a high-performance culture and seek to establish policies that set the tone for equality and fairness in the organization. This study outcome highlights a lack of concerted efforts towards diagnosing root causes, and in the management of attrition observed in women thus limiting the realization of anticipated social change objectives which is indicative of an opportunity for future research. There is some work required to assist leaders to understand their roles in the GM agenda, and to appreciate the overall benefit of GM to their organization.

This study sought to identify the factors that support the successful implementation of GM within organizations because the perceptions and beliefs of GM set the context for its successful implementation. The critical success factors for implementation have been successfully itemized with pertinent implications for practice in male-dominated organization in Nigeria. Leaders will require extensive training on the dictates of GM to bring them into a full understanding of their pivotal responsibilities. Opportunities for future research include identifying the degree of correlation and interdependencies between identified limitations to GM to proffer targeted interventions. Research questions for future research could include: Are women technically knowledgeable to work in such industries? What is the impact of high-performance

cultures on GM? What factors influence the career choices of women post University education?

### **Conclusion**

Leaders of male-dominated industries in Nigeria are required to operate by a deliberate set of rules if GM is to become a reality. There is extensive literature highlighting the many social and economic benefits of GM on an individual, corporate, and national level. GM must be given the attention it requires because GM will succeed based on a harmonization of the organization's goals and gender goals. Male-dominated work cultures influence women's decisions to have children or not to focus on their careers (Watts, 2009). Workers may experience increased levels of end-of-work negative affect depending on personality, work stress levels, emotional strength, cultural values, race, gender, and family support or the lack of it, and personal disposition but there must be organizational support to help women develop coping strategies. There is still a need to address the structural challenges posed by poor governance, and a weak policy climate within the male-dominated industries. Leaders interested in GM implementation must be involved and knowledgeable about all forms of organizational incivility at all levels of the organization.

This study is critical to the field of work because leadership perspective of GM will influence its successful implementation. Mainstreaming means aligning attitudes and activities to become the norm or culture. From the results of this study, achieving such standards will require a redefinition of the GM strategy specific to the organization. It must mean more than trying to hire more women or develop the skills of women. It will



require the establishment and implementation of the policies and practices that foster an inclusive gendered organization, and it must involve an approach that educates of all members of the organization regardless of status, culture, hierarchy, or gender. The strategy will demand evaluations, analytics, collaboration, and continuous engagements from organizational players. It will require the promotion of equality of the rights and opportunities for all organizational members. Leaders must also be conversant with the variables involved in establishing a GM culture and allocate resources to achieve same.

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## Appendix A: Gender Knowledge Analysis

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your indication to participate. Kindly forward by email your responses to the following five days prior to the interview.

1. In your organization, what is the percentage (%) of men and women in relation to the following:
  - a) Average salary distribution
  - b) Gender distribution
  - c) In senior management position
  - d) Involvement in decision-making
2. To what extent do the following policies and practices in your organization reflect gender: *Responses should vary from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest)*
  - a. Candidate selection
  - b. Performance appraisal,
  - c. Promotion
  - d. Stereotypes against women

## Appendix B: Study Introduction Email

Dear Participant,

I am grateful for your indication of interest to participate in this study. Your valuable input along with those of ten to fifteen (10-15) other senior leaders in organizations will aid the identification of opportunities for fostering gender mainstreaming in male-dominated industries in Lagos, Nigeria. There is zero risk associated with your participation in this study as your identity and perspective will be treated with the highest level of privacy. The results from the study will be used solely for research purposes and the identity of organizations and participants will not be referenced in the study.

The interview will last for about 60 minutes and you are free to decline or discontinue your participation in this study. Below is a list of definitions frequently to aid your familiarization with this study scope. Kindly fill out the short information sheet for gender statistics/practices in your organization (see Appendix A). Prior to the interview day, kindly reach me with enquiries through this forwarding email.

### **Definitions**

*Gender budgeting.* The assessment of budgets to ensure a gender perspective at all levels of the budgeting process.

*Gender equality.* The state of all humans (male and female) being free to advance their individual abilities and contribute without limitations established by bias, rigid roles, or stereotypes. The concept focuses on ensuring that allocation of the rights,

privileges, roles, and opportunities of men and women are not determined by their gender.

*Gender knowledge.* An analytical process of assessing and comparing gendered meaning in organizations. The description of differences between the sexes, their interactions, the origin and significance of the relations, and the reasons and evidence surrounding them.

*Gender mainstreaming.* The strategy of incorporating the issues and experiences of both men and women into the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs to achieve gender equality. It is also the (re)organization, improvement, development, and evaluation of policy processes to incorporate gender equality in all policies and at all stages by policy-making actors.

*Gender training.* The training targeted at individuals to equip them in mainstreaming gender in their everyday work-life.

### Appendix C: Interview Guide

Gender mainstreaming can be assessed under the following framework, kindly describe in much personal details as possible the following:

1. What is your perspective of gender equality in decision making? Can you give an example to illustrate your view?
2. What is your perception of Gender pay gaps within organizations? Please provide examples to illustrate your view. What has been your experience within your organization?
3. What is your experience with gender participation at work? Can you describe the gender participation challenges within your organization?
4. Can you describe the role of Leadership in establishing gender equality? Why is this important? Can you share your experience in your current organization?
5. What is your experience with Gender training (knowledge sharing, leaflets, website, campaign)?
6. Describe your role in the appointment of Gender advocates (individuals accountable for gender).
7. Describe your experience with the use of gender statistics in your organization? How relevant are these metrics to your organization?
8. Describe your influence in establishing Gender equality targets/initiatives.
9. Can you describe the limitations that keep you from establishing gender mainstreaming in your organization?