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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Balancing Career and Family: The Nigerian Woman's Experience

by

Ngozi Eze

M.Ed., University of Lagos, Nigeria, 1990

B.A Edu/Geography, University of Lagos, Nigeria, 1987

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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August 2017

Abstract

Nigerian women have become more integrated into the workforce, but this integration has led to conflicts between work and family responsibilities. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. Liberal and social feminist theory and gendered leadership theory were used as the conceptual framework of the study. The findings of this study came from data obtained from semistructured interviews with 15 Nigerian women in leadership and management positions regarding their perceptions and lived experiences of balancing work and family responsibilities. The data analysis consisted of using a modified Van Kaam process, which resulted in 7 themes including multiple roles make balance difficult, supportive husband as a key to balance, and the role of God in supporting and guiding the women. The findings of this study could contribute to positive social change by providing necessary information regarding how Nigerian women perceive their roles in management and leadership positions as they grapple with the challenges of pursuing a career and maintaining their families, leading to more informed organizations and policymakers. This study includes findings about how women perform and are evaluated as managers, which could eventually influence hiring practices by highlighting the barriers and strategies to overcome them as experienced by Nigerian women in management positions.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my precious and dearly beloved husband, Chibuzor, for believing in my God given ability to undertake this program and my wonderful children who supported me throughout this long journey. Your commitment and support are well appreciated.

Acknowledgments

It is nice to be able to thank the faculty, family members, and friends who have helped me reach this point in my academic career. Success and completion of this project was made possible by God Almighty who provided His grace, blessing, wisdom and wherewithal. I return all the glory to Him. I wish to acknowledge the great support of my family; my wonderful husband and my children. I appreciate their love and contribution. My thanks go to my committee chair and members, Dr. Janice Spangenburg, Dr. Diane Stottlemyer, and the URR, Dr. Patricia Fusch, for providing the required supervision, guidance, and support.

I receive the completion of this milestone with thanksgiving as I look unto God with great expectation for what He has packaged for the next phase of my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Many Nigerian women are trapped in the dilemma of how to reconcile career advancement in management and leadership positions with family commitments (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012). An increasing number of Nigerian women seek higher education and career development (Davison & Burke, 2011; Kahkha, Kahrazeh, & Armesh, 2014; National Bureau of Statistics, 2011), but the pace of career advancement is still very slow (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012). Gender statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics (2011) show a significant gain of 44% in the enrollment of women in education, while only about 25% are engaged in the labor force and 14% in managerial and executive positions. The majority of the women in the labor force occupy nonexecutive positions (Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2011). In an effort to promote female participation in governance and executive positions, the Nigerian government in 2011 signed a policy of 35% affirmative action for female representation in governance (Ejumudo, 2013). This policy was in line with the Nigerian government's millennium development goals of promoting gender equality and empowerment of women in Nigeria (Ejumudo, 2013; Kolawole, Abubakar, Owonibi, & Adebayo, 2012).

Although increased awareness and support for women's involvement in the economic and societal spheres have led to developments in equality in Nigeria and more women occupying executive positions, the challenge of balancing career and family remains a major impediment to the advancement of Nigerian women (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012; Davison & Burke, 2011; Kahkha et al., 2014). Nigeria has a population of

167 million people (Kale & Doguwa, 2015; National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The country requires the management skills of women, in addition to men, for sustained development for the growth of its population (Kahka et al., 2014).

Background of the Problem

Women can ascend to and excel in leadership roles when in an environment that enables them to do so, as women have the capacity to transform resources into economic power (Burke & Mattis, 2013; Davison & Burke, 2011; Kahkha et al., 2014). Unfortunately, the conflict between career advancement and family roles hinders the career development of most Nigerian women (Kahkha et al., 2014). Women continually face the challenges of being mothers, spouses, role models, and employees (Agi, 2014). Women's multiple roles as mothers, wives, and breadwinners constrain their full involvement in business, creating a need for an enabling environment that encourages their participation in economic development (Kahkha et al., 2014). In Nigeria, cultural beliefs about gender, such as the belief that women have the primary responsibility for domestic roles, preclude women's entrance into and full participation in the workforce, particularly managerial roles (Okonkwo, 2013). Moreover, cultural models of agency and the communal disposition of women are often biased against women because the communal model is perceived as a poor fit with managerial criteria (Braun, Peus, & Frey, 2012).

One problem hindering this development is that women are not well represented in the policy making process, especially in issues of business and manpower development (Kahkha et al., 2014). Despite the amendment to the Nigerian constitution in 1999 that

stipulated that women will have equal rights to participate in office, statistics representing women in politics and government are grim, while conditions of women have been punctuated by poverty and cultural dislocation (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014). In addition, many laws, such as the terms and conditions of service for National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, state that all female officers must be unmarried and remain so for a period no less than 2 years (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014). An unmarried female officer who becomes pregnant may be discharged under this law, which clearly inhibits career advancement and a balance of career success and growing a family (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014). According to Nyewusira and Nweke (2014), the laws that discriminate against women are exhaustive and compound challenges women face in the workplace along with their family responsibilities.

Conversely, the Nigerian federal government established several programs to support women's entrance into the workforce. For example, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) program, enacted in 2004, aimed to reduce poverty and assist women, particularly those with low income (Okoyeuzu, Obiamaka, & Onwumere, 2012). Regarding political representation, the government also passed the National Gender Policy in 2006 and Vision 2020 in 2010 (CITE). Still, with all these measures in place, the difficulty creating gender equality in Nigeria is largely in implementation of equality laws (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012).

Issues in implementation of equality laws exist in several industries in Nigeria, including construction, banking, telecommunication, aviation, oil and gas, manufacturing, and mining (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). Moreover, in other industries, such as health care,

women have difficulties achieving positions of power because of cultural biases (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013; Okonkwo, 2013). Often, men receive educational, political, and economic opportunities even when women are more qualified; these limitations restrict the capabilities of women to improve their monetary and economic standing (Okonkwo, 2013). Even in the field of education, in which the majority of teachers are women, men dominate the administration and managerial jobs (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013).

Women may experience conflict in pursuing their careers based on their home obligations (Agi, 2014; McIntosh, McQuaid, Munro, & Dabir-Alai, 2012). Generally, motherhood tends to reduce a woman's ability to pursue her career because of the need for a flexible schedule and increased demands of childcare; this effect can persist even after a woman no longer has childrearing duties (McIntosh et al., 2012). If a woman does choose a career over her home responsibilities, then her marriage may suffer (Agi, 2014). For example, rising dissolution of marriage rates in Rivers State demonstrated evidence that marriages in Nigeria are suffering from women's dedication to their careers (Agi, 2014). These changes may result from women attempting to split their time and energy between home duties and work (Agi, 2014). In addition, work-family conflicts can result in significant physical and mental health issues (Jawahar, Kisamore, Stone, & Rahn, 2012; Schieman & Glavin, 2011). Nevertheless, the number of women in managerial positions is increasing, because women make effective managers (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013). This momentum of women in positions of power tends to create more opportunities for other women to advance to top levels in the future (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013).

Most studies pertaining to women in management focus on work-life balance and gender inequality (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013; Mordi, Adedoyin, & Ajonbadi, 2011; Ojo, 2011; Olufemi & David, 2011). These studies show there is a gap in literature regarding the experiences of Nigerian women and their changing roles in management careers with family responsibilities. Researchers have observed this dearth of literature and research on the experience of African women in management and have called for the acceleration of studies on the knowledge of the experience of African women in management (Mordi, Mmieh, & Ojo, 2013; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. My exploration included how Nigerian women handle management and leadership positions; whether they succeed in both home and professional spheres; and how they perceive their roles as managers, including potential obstacles to their success.

Problem Statement

The general problem was that there is little knowledge regarding the experiences of management and leadership positions for Nigerian women. Nigeria is experiencing rapid growth in the number of women joining the labor force, as women become more career-oriented (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012) and less restricted in their professional pursuits. There is an increasing call for African women's participation in economic and political development; therefore, there has been a dramatic shift in the traditional role of women in Nigeria from family caretaking to the multiple roles of pursuing career and

family responsibilities (Kahka et al., 2014; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). The percentage of women occupying executive positions in the Nigerian workplace remains low, suggesting that barriers to their entry to higher level positions may exist (Fakeye, George, & Owoyemi, 2012). The specific problem was the lack of research on the lived experiences of women in management positions in Nigeria regarding barriers in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities and strategies to overcome these barriers. There are many challenges that women face in management positions in Nigeria; therefore, other women in the workforce need access to the information they can provide to be similarly successful. It is important to explore how Nigerian women experience management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities to gain information for the women looking to enter the professional sphere in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. In this study, I used purposeful sampling of 15 Nigerian women in executive positions that also had families to understand how they coped with the emotional, social, cultural, and financial aspects of being a provider and having an active role in family life. I collected these perceptions as these women described their lived experiences in semistructured interviews. The results of this study could contribute to social change by providing necessary information that addresses how Nigerian women perceive their roles in management and leadership positions as they grapple with the challenges of pursuing a

career and maintaining their families, thereby informing organizational practices and policymaking. This information can help determine how women perform and are evaluated as managers, which can influence hiring practices and effect positive social change by allowing women to enter the Nigerian workforce more successfully.

Research Question

I developed the following research question to guide this study: What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study consisted of the liberal feminist theory and social feminist theory advanced by Inmyxai and Takahashi (2011). These theories focus on the promotion of the importance of women and their critical role in economic and societal development. Specifically, researchers in this field strive to highlight the inequalities experienced by women (Akujobi, 2011). These theorists defined success from both economic and other societal, family, and biological responsibilities (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011). According to Inmyxai and Takahashi, economic and noneconomic terms should comprise firm performance measures, specifically with respect to female managers or entrepreneurs, who see success in economic and hierarchal terms. However, a longstanding critique of feminist theories is that they underrepresent the experiences of non-Western women (Roberts, 1983).

In addition, research related to gendered leadership expectations provided explanatory significance. Initially, Eagly and Johnson (1990) theorized that some differences between the genders could exist regarding leadership style, including increased motivational leadership and decreased authoritarianism. However, subsequent researchers demonstrated that leadership differences may stem only from cultural expectations of the genders, rather than inborn personality traits (Agezo & Hope, 2011; Bevelander & Page, 2011; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Moreover, these gendered expectations, researchers argued, could potentially contribute to the lack of opportunities provided for women in leadership positions (Bevelander & Page, 2011; McIntosh et al., 2012). Like other organizational researchers, Nkomo and Ngambi (2013) highlighted the scarcity of literature on the experience of the African women in management compared to women in Western countries. Researchers called for an acceleration of research on the experience of African women in management and leadership because of the paucity of literature on this topic (Alhassan & Akudugu, 2012; Fakeye et al., 2012; Kahkha et al., 2014; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013).

Nature of the Study

I designed this qualitative phenomenological study to assess the perceptions and lived experiences of executive Nigerian women with families. Phenomenological researchers remove preconceptions and create research questions to build the body of research (Anfara & Mertz, 2014; Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), the purpose of the phenomenological approach is to attain the essence of the phenomenon under study by exploring the lived experiences of individuals. A quantitative approach

was not appropriate for this study because of the lack of well-established information on this topic for verification and the need for in depth study of the perceptions of individuals (see Anfara & Mertz, 2014).

For this study, the phenomenon of interest was the experience of being both an executive and caretaker for a family, and my focus was on the perceptions of Nigerian women in these dual roles. These women shared their experiences with balancing home and work duties, discussed how these experiences affect their perceptions of gender roles, and explored the hardships and advantages they face in transitioning into a career. Using Moustakas' (1994) methodological model allowed for an increased understanding of how working Nigerian women balance their work and home responsibilities and how others may use these perceptions to facilitate social change.

This study included interviews with 15 Nigerian women. The participants were professionals and executives from both public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy. I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions as a data collection method to elicit information from the purposefully-selected participants and observed and interviewed them in a real life setting as they shared their lived experiences.

Definitions

Balance: The state of stability or equality (Haas, 1953). Balance in work and life means that an individual's work life is separate from an individual's personal life, and neither role takes away from the other (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003).

Career: The progression of a person's employment experience over time (Cappellen & Jannsenns, 2005).

Culture: The internal uniformity in terms of values, beliefs, and ideas that characterize a particular group and the way they behave (Rathje, 2009).

Executive women: This term encompasses women who have taken up different supervisory positions for at least a decade and includes CEOs, presidents, supervisors, business owners, and managers (James, 2010). To this end, executive women are women who have held key supervisory or managerial positions in the work place for a considerable length of time, have attained significant influence in the workplace, and have also achieved financial accomplishment (James, 2010).

Family: A group of individuals linked together by biological or legal relations (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Feminism: An equal approach to rights, which advocates for equal rights for men and women and aims to end all social and cultural inequality between men and women (Midden, 2010). Feminism involves providing equal opportunities for both men and women in education and the workplace (James, 2010).

Glass ceiling: The invisible barrier or barriers that block women from obtaining the most senior positions in the corporate world. The glass ceiling prevents women from moving into the executive levels of corporations worldwide (Thomas, 2013).

Interrole conflict: A similar term to *work-family conflict* as both define the stress of coping with family responsibilities and work duties. When these two roles are at odds or one takes more time than another, often the individual performing both roles may suffer deteriorating health, negative consequences at work, high levels of stress, or difficulties in family life (Diraz, Ortlepp, & Greyling, 2003).

Tradition: A set of ideas, beliefs, culture, and genealogy that are passed down from one generation to the next through either oral or written forms (Green, 1997).

Sense of coherence (SOC): An orientation of confidence toward external stimuli with a permanent cognitive structure that develops from birth to age 30 (Diraz et al., 2003). Those with low SOC tend to feel more distressed and have difficulty coping with challenging circumstances (Diraz et al., 2003).

Work-family conflict: The time constraints in fulfilling both roles in the home and as an employee, which can lead to stress, health consequences, unfavorable employment outcomes, and destabilized family life (Diraz et al., 2003; Schieman & Glavin, 2011).

Assumptions

In this study, I assumed that women in Africa, and particularly women in Nigeria, are facing serious conflict in trying to maintain a satisfying level of equilibrium in their work life and family life. In other words, many believe that when a woman tries to achieve success at work and with family, something is sacrificed (Kahkha et al., 2014). I also assumed that factors that influence success for women include government policy, family and community support, and business support services (Kahkha et al., 2014). A further assumption I made for this study was that because of these challenges and conflicts women experience, there is a scarcity of executive and professional women in the workplace and a glass ceiling stunts the careers of most women in Nigeria (Thomas, 2013).

Several additional assumptions were required. I further assumed that the few women who advanced in their careers and occupy executive positions are also actively

and effectively engaged like men in both the public and private sectors. A further assumption was that the qualitative phenomenological methodology I used would elicit complex information about the experiences of the challenges executive women face while trying to juggle their dual roles.

Scope and Delimitations

For the purpose of the study, I conducted semistructured interviews with 15 Nigerian women in management and leadership roles. I included executive women in the study that occupied managerial positions in the public and private sectors in Nigeria and who were married with a husband and children. Through in-depth interviews, I gathered the perceptions of these women, including their experiences with gender roles, work-family conflict, challenges to entering their positions, and advantages. Therefore, the scope of this study revealed how women in Nigeria try to maintain a balance between their career roles and family commitments. I also identified the strategies and approaches these women have adopted and implemented in trying to maintain a balance between the workplace and the home.

The scope of the study involved several parameters. The purpose of the study was to gauge the perceptions of Nigerian women in management and leadership roles; only women who fulfilled these requirements were included in the purposeful sample. Therefore, I excluded the perceptions of women in other African countries and women in Nigeria who participate in the workforce but had not received promotion to leadership roles or do not have families. Another group I excluded based on the study design was men, who may also experience the effects of work-family conflicts. However, because of

the lack of information regarding the particular population I explored in thisstudy, as well as the need for in-depth information regarding the specific group targeted, these delimitations were necessary.

Limitations

The particular design of the study resulted in some potential limitations, which I endeavored to mitigate whenever possible. The first potential limitation was the use of a purposeful sample. By including specific parameters on participants' selection, including female sex, location in Nigeria, and occupation in a leadership or management role, I may have precluded responses that would have provided explanatory value to the phenomenon. However, under the assumption that women in these roles would have the best insight into these experiences, I nevertheless chose this sampling. Throughout the study, I acknowledged the limitations of the chosen sample and avoided applying these perspectives to other groups. Furthermore, the sample was limited to a particular geographic area in Nigeria. Together, these limitations may reduce the transferability of the study.

An additional limitation of the study was the phenomenological method. My use of the phenomenological method on a limited number of women in a particular sphere of life was subject to some elements of subjectivity and bias and may limit the transferability of the outcome of the study to just executive women in the Nigerian work place. In order to limit potential researcher bias, I employed member checking, bracketing, and data saturation to ensure the credibility of the findings to the best of my ability, in line with researchers' recommendations (Anderson, 2010, Kornbluh, 2015).

Significance of Study

The general significance of the study was that the results provided insight into the perceptions and lived experiences of executive Nigerian women who balance family with career responsibilities. Currently, there is a lack of information regarding women in leadership roles in African contexts (Mordi et al., 2013; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). The findings of this study may have significance for practice, theory, and social change.

Significance to Practice

The results of this study have significance to practice in that the lack of information on the topic currently leads to potential losses in the workforce because of women being unable to participate. The findings of this study provide a framework for both public and private sectors in understanding the need for a sustainable workplace (Shoemaker, Brown, & Barbour, 2011). Through the results of the study, I also provide information for employers and women seeking advancement in the workforce by highlighting laws and policies that hinder women's progress, social and cultural constraints that women must cope with, as well as logistic daily challenges women face in economic and societal development in Nigeria. By gaining insights into the lived experiences of women in leadership positions, upper management may have the opportunity to solicit more women and improve their experiences. In this manner, Nigerian businesses can meet the standards for practice in hiring and promoting women established by the government (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012).

Significance to Theory

The results also provide an extension of the theories that compose the conceptual framework. The fact remains that researchers have failed to fully explore the experience of the Nigerian women in management. To this end, researchers have called for studies on the experience of African women in management to encourage women's career advancement while maintaining a balance between career and family (Alhassan & Akudugu, 2012; Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). My findings may contribute to social and liberal feminist theory by highlighting an area of disparity for women, and therefore, promoting the first steps in positive change for women in Nigeria. For gendered workplace theories, the experiences of the participants may allow for additional explanation of the biases experienced by women as well as the strategies used to overcome these barriers to their success, including work-family conflicts. Partially, my aim was to bridge a gap in the literature about the experience of Nigerian women in balancing career and family and to provide opportunities for further research.

Significance to Social Change

The study findings may also have significance for social change. Alhassan and Akudugu (2012) posited the economic status of women as the key variable to the solution of the poverty crisis in Africa and other poor nations of the world. The need for the active involvement of women in the economic and developmental activities in Nigeria is imperative as many Nigerians are still living in abject poverty; Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke (2003) revealed that 70% of Nigerians lived below the poverty line. Although an increasing number of women have joined the workforce in Nigeria, many laws that work

against women hamper progress, which means the climate in the workforce is not as conducive to promoting progress of women as it is for men (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014).

The results of this study also provide insight and understanding on the strategies selected executive women use in managing family responsibilities without hindering their career advancement. Stakeholders can use this information to encourage other women to make informed decisions about their careers and family responsibilities and to affect change in the structure of the workplace, government policies, community structure, and cultural climate. Policy changes that accommodate and recognize women's dual roles in the home and as employees could help women maintain careers in higher-wage earning jobs and in more prestigious positions. Most importantly, the results of this study can serve as a basis for the social and cultural change of expectations for women in the workplace in Nigeria. This change may emerge by challenging current views that mothers cannot be productive employees, while providing the information employers and other institutions need to fully accommodate Nigerian women in the workforce.

Summary

In this qualitative, phenomenological study, I explored the experience of Nigerian women balancing career and family. I used semistructured interviews of 15 executive women to understand how Nigerian women manage the challenges of balancing career and family commitments. In this study, I explored the conflicts and the challenges women face as they encounter difficulties in a work climate that is still developing to support working women effectively. Even though there is widely published literature

about work-life balance, researchers have not paid sufficient attention to the challenges Nigerian women face in trying to balance career and family.

In this chapter, I identified the nature and scope of the problem, the purpose and the significance of the study, and the implications for social change. Definitions of key terms, assumptions, and the scope and limitations of the study were also included. In Chapter 2, I will focus on the review of different literature surrounding the study topic. In the literature review, I will provide the background necessary for the scope of the research and also include the traditional roles of Nigerian women juxtaposed with their modern roles. In Chapter 3, I will describe the research methodology and data collection tools. In Chapter 4, I will provide the analysis and results from data collected during interviews. Last, Chapter 5 will include my recommendations for future research on the topic and the conclusions I drew based on the results.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The changing role of women in past decades has meant that women negotiate roles between career and family; more Nigerian women are seeking higher education and career advancement (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012; Davison & Burke, 2011; Kahkha et al., 2014; National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The changing roles of women in Nigeria are observable from traditionally-assigned roles as wives and mothers to providers (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). Nigerian working women do more than supplement family income; instead, these women act as providers, necessitating entrance into the labor market and advancement in the workplace (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). However, the conflict between career and family persists (Kahkha et al., 2014). The challenges of working on the multiple tasks of providing for the family, seeking career development, and attending to family responsibilities has hindered the career advancement of Nigerian women (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). However, few researchers have focused on environmental factors that affect women's participation in business (Kahkha et al., 2014).

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. This chapter will include a synthesis of research on how Nigerian women cope with the pressures of these dual roles, how family duties affect career progress, and whether they succeed in both home and professional spheres. The chapter will also include information on the

changing face of the Nigerian workforce and economy as well as the perceived conflicts in women expanding their influence in the workforce.

Literature Search Strategy

I obtained the literature compiled for this review through comprehensive online library search methods. A librarian assisted me by determining the best search methodology and helped generate ideas regarding keywords to search. Among the journal databases searched, those which generated the most applicable results were SAGE, JSTOR, EBSCO, Wiley, and Elsevier. I searched a multitude of other databases throughout the process as well. Prior to generating the returns, I selected the peer-reviewed feature, ensuring that all of the literature generated would fit this designation; therefore, the literature review consists of 52 articles, of which 46 (88.5%) are peer reviewed.

I reviewed current literature containing empirical research in the relevant areas. Such articles appear in a wide range of publications, such as the *Journal of African Business*, *Gender & Behavior*, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, *International Journal of Academic Research*, *International Labour Review*, *Asia Pacific Management Review*, *African and Asian Studies*, *Progress in Development Studies*, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *Journal of Research in Peace*, *Gender and Development*, *Iranian Journal of Management Studies*, *Library Philosophy and Practice*, *Review of African Political Economy*, *Educational Research and Review*, and *Gender Management*. I identified articles through searches conducted through Google Scholar with a preference for peer-reviewed journals and through Internet search engines,

such as Google and Scirus, with a filter applied for peer-reviewed journals. Additionally, once key authors emerged, I reviewed the corpus of their works for other relevant research, and other works cited by those authors. Keyword search terms included gender equality, culture of equality in Nigeria, women in executive positions, women in Nigerian workforce, glass ceiling in Nigeria, career planning for Nigerian women, Nigerian women, and traditional roles of women in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

Liberal feminism and social feminism served as the conceptual framework for this study and as a foundation that explains the importance of women and their critical role in economic and societal development (see Fischer, Reuber, & Dyke, 1993). Researchers defined liberal feminism as the assumption that both genders are equally capable of rational behavior (Fischer et al., 1993). Liberal feminism explains the differences in the achievements of men and women by noting that women have not fully realized their full capabilities because they did not receive opportunities, such as an education (Fischer et al., 1993). Researchers have described social feminism as the difference in experiences between genders from the earliest moments of life, which result in different ways of seeing the world (Fischer et al., 1993). This consists of defining female experiences as equally valid for developing knowledge and organizing society (Fischer et al., 1993). Also, according to social feminism, female entrepreneurs differ from male entrepreneurs in levels of assertion, with males tending to be more assertive and desiring to lead, while women tend to be more communal and selfless (Eagly & Wood, 1991; Fischer et al., 1993).

A gap between male and female entrepreneurs exists as differences in levels of education and experience, which can lead to differences in professional performance (Inmyxai & Takahasdhi, 2011). Also, according to the same researchers, participation in networks differs by men and women, and this is important because networks can be useful links for entrepreneurs for sales through personal contact, leading to improved performance (Inymxai & Takahasdhi, 2011). Women network differently, and these differences in communication styles according to gender may be why male networks often exclude women (Inmyxai & Takahasdhi, 2011).

According to Inmyxai and Takahasdhi (2011), network styles can contribute differences to in the performance of male and female managers. Women in the formal business sector are often inhibited by patriarchal tendencies and, as a result, this leaves women outside preferred social clubs where businessmen congregate (Spring, 2009). Also according to Spring (2009), despite activism, gender disparities still exist. As women negotiate roles between career and family and seek higher education and career advancement, the social climate and a political system does not adequately promote or support women in the workplace but rather places women in traditional roles, challenging them (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011).

McIntosh et al. (2012) noted that most mothers do not have a strong commitment to a career after having children. This change is most likely because the family was the constructed, enforced, and legitimized gender role (McIntosh et al., 2012). Specifically, when the man is held up as the provider and head of household and the woman provided with the options of mother and nurturer, then a pervasive cultural model emerges that

precludes a woman's participation and pursuance of her career (McIntosh et al., 2012).

Furthermore, McIntosh et al. (2012) proposed that this cultural model could limit a

woman's ambition and perceptions of the opportunities that are available to her, leading

to a cultural stigma against women in the workplace, including lessened expectations and

lessened promotion opportunities.

These traditional roles may also translate to expectations of women's leadership

styles and behaviors in the workplace (Agezo & Hope, 2011). According to a gender-

centered perspective of leadership, individual attributes vary with respect to sex (Agezo

& Hope, 2011). Moreover, researchers who subscribed to gendered expectations of

women's leadership behaviors posited that women develop a style of leadership

characterized by caring, making intuitive decisions, and that women view leadership

from a nonhierarchical perspective, while men adopt a style of leadership that is

dominating and task-oriented (Agezo & Hope, 2011). This type of behavior from women

in leadership roles is characterized by cooperativeness, collaboration, lower control for

the leader, as well as problem-solving based on intuition, empathy, and rationality

(Agezo & Hope, 2011).

In their seminal study, Eagly and Johnson (1990) stated that gender differences

exist in leadership style and that female leaders emphasize both interpersonal relations

and task accomplishments. The researchers contended that women were more

interpersonal and task-oriented and that female managers were more democratic than

male managers were, while the male managers had a tendency to be autocratic (Eagly &

Johnson, 1990). Nevertheless, Stoker, Van der Velde, and Lammers (2012) stated that the traditional stereotype of an effective manager as being masculine persists.

Conversely, Agezo and Hope (2011) noted that women delegate less than men, but no statistical differences existed in their directives. In leadership behavior, men and women leaders differed only in inspirational motivation (Agezo & Hope, 2011). Snaebjornsson and Edvardsson (2012) noted that even though it is conventionally accepted that men and women are similar in managerial roles, women are treated differently than men. Specifically, women have limited access to managerial positions, especially high level leadership roles, are paid less, and are subject to subtle discriminatory practices and cultural sanctions (Snaebjornsson & Edvardsson, 2012). Eagly and Karau (2002) also confirmed that the incongruity between the managerial role and the feminine role expected of women causes the differential treatment of women in leadership roles. Eagly and Karau postulated that prejudice toward female leaders was caused by this incongruity between the communal attributes that are said to characterize women and the agentic qualities that are attributed more strongly to men

Because of misconceptions and potential conflicts with stereotypical definitions of women's abilities, women are underrepresented in leadership roles (Braun et al., 2012). There is a lack of fit between the societal roles demarcated for women and the leadership role, which can hinder women's advancement in organizations (Braun et al., 2012). Others often define women as communal subjects and as having communal attributes; therefore, they tend to be relegated to roles that fit those attributes, whereas males tend to be defined by agentic characteristics (Braun et al., 2012). Having agency

involves focusing on goal achievement and being dominant, aggressive, and independent (Braun et al., 2012). Communal qualities refer to being supportive, sensitive, helpful, and concerned about others (Braun et al., 2012). In addition, there may be negative consequences of attractiveness for women when they apply for leadership positions because attractive women tend to be culturally inscribed and stereotyped as less agentic based on their appearances (Braun et al., 2012).

In their study, Bevelander and Page (2011) revealed that the percentage of women in top management positions is low when compared to their male counterparts. The researchers collected data through surveys of students in two MBA classes and at two points in time. Bevelander and Page first administered the survey 6 weeks into the program around of the first semester and the second 3 months later. The second survey was administered when the students had completed 60% of the curriculum. Researchers used social network analysis as a way to measure relationships between students (Bevelander & Page, 2011). Using the collected data, Bevelander and Page concluded the reasons for the low involvement in management roles were a result of gender bias and traditional roles of women, and particularly networking limitations. The empirical results obtained confirmed the hypotheses posed at the beginning of the study, which showed that women network differently from men as the former base their networking on trust, which ultimately limits their social networking outreach. Thus, Bevelander and Page confirmed Braun et al.'s (2012) assertion that traditional roles and women's different behaviors when in management positions led to decreased opportunities based on prejudices and preconceptions about appropriate leadership behaviors.

The literature regarding Western women suggests that discrimination towards women in leadership positions persists. Some researchers proposed that no actual masculine and feminine styles exist (Agezo & Hope, 2011; Snaebjornsson & Edvardsson, 2012). Conversely, these behaviors may instead reflect societal expectations of gender roles that are inculcated through the socialization processes (Agezo & Hope, 2011). Women may have learned to conform to cultural expectations about their gender and this is the root cause of why men and women may differ in their use of certain leadership practices (Agezo & Hope, 2011). However, stereotypical gender roles and their effect on leadership promotion may be especially persistent when combined with traditional cultures (Taujdeen & Adebayo, 2013). Nkomo and Ngambi (2013) highlighted the scarcity of literature on the experience of the African women in management compared to women in Western countries. Researchers called for acceleration of research on the experience of African women in management and leadership because of the paucity of literature on this topic (Alhassan & Akudugu, 2012; Fakeye et al., 2012; Kahkha et al., 2014; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013).

Cultural Barriers to Women's Participation in Business

Cultural leadership expectations may limit women's ability to participate in the workforce (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013). According to Tajudeen and Adebayo (2013), the number of women holding managerial positions in many fields is increasing and most women have excelled as effective managers. This, in turn, creates more opportunity for women at top levels in the future (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013).

Before women can fully participate in a workforce, they need to feel empowered to do so (Adekanye, 2014). In certain cultures, such as in Nigeria, women may not feel as if they have the appropriate resources and support to engage full time in career advancement (Adekanye, 2014). Adekanye (2014) used a descriptive survey to examine information needs, information utilization, and socio-economic empowerment of the textile market women of southern Nigeria. The participants included 1,600 women and several zones, states, and markets. I used a multistage sampling technique as well as frequency counts, percentages, correlations, and multiple regression analysis to analyze data.

According to Adekanye (2014), women's empowerment consists of five components: a sense of self-worth, the availability of choices, women's right to access opportunities and resources, the right to have power over their own lives in and outside home, and the right to affect social change in terms of social and economic order. This means access to skills training, problems solving techniques, technology and information, and having access to participate in decision making (CITE). According to the same definition, socio-economic empowerment means a woman being financially independent through her engagement in income-generating activities (CITE). These activities include having access to productive facilities; having control over the income that is generated, which may mean investing in personal properties; having a personal savings; and actively participating in household decision-making that affects livelihood (Adekanye, 2014).

Agezo and Hope (2011) concurred with other scholars that traditionally, society did not perceive women as leaders. In their quantitative study, the researchers examined

the gender leadership practices in Ghana. Using quantitative survey, the authors gathered data from 601 teachers selected through purposive sampling. The findings showed that there is no difference between male and female leadership practices in Ghana, contrary to the perceived paradigm that females tend to be more caring, cooperative, and collaborative in their leadership style, while males are more aggressive, controlling and competitive.

In this study, Agezo and Hope (2011) initially thought decision-making was a male prerogative. The researchers also showed that the media was responsible for perpetuating stereotypes by representing males as superior, assertive, unemotional, powerful and controlling, and females were passive, fragile, and emotional. This kind of stereotyping makes it difficult for women to seek leadership roles and permeates all facets of life. Although women have had increased access to leadership positions in primary schools in the past decade, the public has expressed concerns about women's leadership abilities (Agezo & Hope, 2011). A problem that Agezo and Hope also noted was that society expected women to be quiet, supportive, and respectful at all times. A woman in a teaching position was expected to be dignified and moderate in how she spoke and conducted herself. This is because in this context, society culturally expects that a woman should not publicly criticize men, and wives should not act equal to their husbands (Agezo & Hope, 2011).

Braun et al. (2012) confirmed that underrepresentation of women in leadership roles is relevant in current times and is still a problem. The researchers discussed the lack of fit between the female gender role and the leadership role, which can hinder women's

success in organizations. Others often define females as having communal attributes, while males tend to show agentic characteristics. Having agency as a leader means focusing on goal achievement, and being dominant, aggressive, and independent (Braun et al., 2012). In contrast, the same researchers noted that communal qualities mean supporting social relations, being sensitive, helpful, and concerned about others. Based on the agency and communal model, personnel decisions are often biased against women because the communal model is less compatible with the managerial expectations (Braun et al., 2012).

For their study, Braun et al. (2012) used 253 undergraduate students (127 females, 126 males) who were 22 years old from a German university. Leader gender, leader attractiveness, and leadership style varied and the researchers randomly assigned participants to one of the eight experimental conditions. The researchers accounted for participant gender as a quasi-experimental factor. Participant evaluations of trust, loyalty, and leader communion were determined as measures of dependent and mediating variables. Braun et al. also noted the *beauty is beastly* effect, meaning negative consequences of attractiveness for women occur when women apply for leadership positions because evaluations of females are elicited by appearance, resulting in a perception that women do not fit the agentic qualities of a leader role (p. 100).

Nwafor and Akubue (2008) noted that education through communication media, especially mass media, plays a significant role. This includes the radio, television, printing press, mail, telephone, audiocassettes and videotapes, and the Internet. Modern technologies do not restrict time and function at a fast speed of mass production, which

allows for rapid dissemination of information (Nwafor & Akubue, 2008). People can find these forms of communication in offices, homes, farmlands, cars, markets, forest, and even remotest villages; therefore, these communications have been serving the role of nonformal education. Nwafor and Akubue conducted their study using a questionnaire containing structured and unstructured items to 300 women at Nsukka, an urban town in Enugu State, Nigeria. According to the findings, oral media was the most popular among women, regardless of education level and type of occupation. Because of responsibilities, time constraints, and a lack of financial resources, women may not have had the opportunity to attend schools and gain an organized formal education. The media and nonformal education can serve as a way to manage the overwhelming rate of information and help women stay updated with more current information compared to what formal education can offer (Nwafor & Akubue, 2008).

Nwafor and Akubue's (2008) findings also suggested that women in leadership positions were the elites in the hierarchy of educated women and they were the voice of the less privileged women. Those at the lower levels looked up to the more educated women for help. It is therefore a challenge to women in leadership not only to enhance their own nonformal education, but to aid women who live in poverty (Nwafor & Akubue, 2008). The same researchers asserted that one way of addressing these challenges is to constitute a media education campaign group. By doing this, women may not only represent women's interest in programs, but also bring in women and promote awareness and solidarity (Nwafor & Akubue, 2008).

Nigerian Culture and Policy Regarding Workingwomen

In Nigeria, cultural practices have a negative influence on women's rights, which has led to gender discrimination and inequalities (Durojaye, Okeke, & Adebanjo, 2014). Many disparities exist between Nigerian men and women in terms of political, social, educational, and economic spheres (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). The lives of married Nigerian women largely center on child bearing, childcare, attending to their husbands, and maintaining the household (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). However, women's involvement in career development and business management is changing the structure of the traditional Nigerian family (Kahkha et al., 2014). Durojaye et al. (2014) stated various policies and laws that the Nigerian government has adopted to address the issue of gender inequality in Nigeria, but despite these efforts, Nigerian women still experience gender discrimination and inequality. As a result, Durojaye et al. recommended education awareness campaigns, legal reforms, and adoption of the quota system among others to address the discriminatory inhumane practices against women in Nigeria.

The difficulty in finding a balance between work and family that would allow Nigerian women to participate in top management jobs stemmed from the socialization processes in Nigeria, which contributed to conditions that empower men and subjugate women (Okonkwo, 2013). This gender preference extends to families, as in childhood parents grant boys more freedom and respect while girls are often restricted and treated as dependent and fragile only to be given in marriage (Okonkwo, 2013). In addition, Nigerian teachers and parents are likely to encourage boys more to pursue mathematical and computer skills and reward independence (Okonkwo, 2013). In all cultures, males

hold the most prestigious offices and control the basic resources of public life (Okonkwo, 2013). Although women's participation in employment rose quickly in all sectors of the private labor market, women still occupy the lower paid and low skill jobs and are not represented in executive and managerial jobs, especially in large companies (Okonkwo, 2013).

Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe (2014) examined patriarchy as a structure that limits Nigerian women even in their desire to marry. The authors defined patriarchy as a system of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of gender, whereby the father is the head of the family and men have authority over women and children. The authors interviewed 29 women who were never married and childless between the ages of 30–48 in Lagos, Nigeria, in order to investigate the limiting effects of patriarchy on their decisions and opportunities to marry.

The research subjects in Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe's (2014) study were single women from diverse ethnic, educational, and professional backgrounds in Nigeria. From the total of 29 never-married women, 12 were Igbo, nine Yoruba, one Hausa, and seven from other ethnic groups. Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe included more respondents of Igbo origin because the latest population census in Nigeria shows a predominance of single women of Igbo origin. The age of the subjects ranged from 30 to 48 years, with an average of 39 years; 15 of them were within age 30 to 39 years and 14 were within age 40 to 48 years. Five of them had a secondary education, six had obtained a diploma, two were undergraduates, 10 had university degrees or polytechnic certificates, and six had postgraduate degrees (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014).

The findings revealed that employment in the formal sector or possession of economic resources decreased women's likelihood of union formation (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). However, lack of many economic resources owing to unemployment or underemployment reduced chances of marriage, as women's income ability increasingly became a desirable quality in suitable mates for men in Lagos. Owing to the perceived control of men, loss of autonomy, sole responsibility for housework and childcare, some of the women in this study redoubled efforts to achieve independent social and economic status before marriage.

Moreover, in Nigeria, the gap in provision of opportunities reduces women´s productivity and interferes with their well-being and that of their families. It also imposes a high cost on the economy through productivity losses (Okonkwo, 2013). Attitudes toward gender are what transform economic development in a cultural process of human development (Okonkwo, 2013). The glass-ceiling phenomenon in Nigeria is a way of limiting women's progress in the professional sphere, but it also served to continue the cycle of poverty in developing nations, like Nigeria (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013; Okonkwo, 2013; Thomas, 2013).

Nevertheless, there has been progress in publicly integrating women into the public sphere (Ebohon, 2012). In Nigeria during the 2011 elections, nine female politicians were elected to the senate to represent 54 million women, and 33% of cabinet positions were allocated to women, which was quite a change from 10% under the previous government (Ebohon, 2012). Female senators increased from three in 2003 to nine in 2007, and the females in the House of Representatives moved from 13 to 24

during this same period (Ebohon, 2012). However, only 33 women formed 7.6% of the combined total membership of 469 federal legislators (Ebohon, 2012). Also, critical ministerial positions of education, finance, and petroleum comprised mainly women (Ebohon, 2012). This change was in accordance with Nigeria's policy on gender equality according to the National Gender Policy, which dictated the benchmark for women's seats in parliament at 35%, which is 5% higher than the international standard (Ebohon, 2012).

But as promising as these new guidelines are, women have accepted this new top-down leadership opportunity with caution, following a shattering of the growing bottom-up promises of female political autonomy within the patriarchal system (Ebohon, 2012). Women in Nigeria have noticed with dismay that a deterioration of their political and social values exists because of more than three decades of male-dominated rule (Ebohon, 2012). Without appropriate infrastructure and buy in from legislators, policies may not be voted in or appropriately enforced (Ebohon, 2012).

As women take on the role of provider and are evaluated as employees and managers in the workplace, it is essential to incorporate both home and work contexts to fully understand the inherent difficulty in navigating household care and the workplace (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). A lack of women is evident in Nigeria not only in management, but also in some professions traditionally thought to suit men (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). Numbers of women have increased in both traditionally female occupations like teaching, trading, nursing, banking, and pharmaceutical jobs, and in nontraditional occupations, such as building, mechanics, architecture, contracting, and

project managing (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013). Nevertheless, there are still few Nigerian women in top management jobs in industries like construction, banking, telecommunication, aviation, oil and gas, manufacturing, and mining (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013).

There are dual expectations of workers and mothers; therefore, Nigerian women face conflict and strain and are often unable to tolerate such a burden (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). Conflict and tension increase as women advance and progress in their careers and as their families grow larger and demand more time (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). To correct the distortion of women's experience, contribute knowledge about women's challenges, and correct social inequalities, it is essential to explore how Nigerian women cope with management roles (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011).

Nigerian Women's Dual Roles

During the last few decades, profound changes have occurred in the social and economic status of women that have reduced gender inequalities (Minguez, 2012). Many countries have undergone an accelerated process of change because of globalization, and still many countries are resistant to change because of the traditional culture in the structure of their societies (Minguez, 2012). In many cases, this rapid change has led to an exacerbation of role conflicts for women entering the workforce, as is the case in Nigeria (Kahka et al., 2014). Considering the increasing number of women entering the workplace in both developed and developing countries (Adams & Funk, 2012; Davison & Burke, 2011; Dobele, Rundle-Thiele, & Kopanidis, 2014), finding balance between family and work is one of the biggest challenges facing women all over the world today.

Moreover, the stress experienced from these conflicts may result in significant physical and mental health issues (Jawahar et al., 2012; Schieman & Glavin, 2011).

Even in contexts where society is more accepting of women in the workforce, conflicts exist regarding dual roles expected from women (McIntosh et al., 2012). McIntosh et al. (2012) examined the effect motherhood has on women's careers in nursing; the combination of career and motherhood are significant contributory factors to women's relative poor performance. McIntosh et al. described this problem as a penalty of motherhood for women in terms of their career progression. Women often preferred flexible hours or part-time employment so they could balance work and family responsibilities, but this preference was at the cost of their long-term careers (McIntosh et al., 2012). Within this sample, men's careers were not affected in the same manner and did not incur the same disadvantages as women because family obligations and duties did not create career interruptions for them (McIntosh et al., 2012). This disruptive effect might last for an entire career, even after a woman no longer has childcare responsibilities (McIntosh et al, 2012). This disparity might result from career breaks that overshadow productive periods (McIntosh et al., 2012). Huang and Cheng (2012) also determined that men and women had different expectations and needs from a job, including more flexibility for women, which could impede their abilities to vie for top management positions.

Similar to McIntosh et al. (2012), Grönlund and Öun (2010) investigated work-family conflicts in a Western context. Specifically, Grönlund and Öun studied the effects of polices on work-family conflict. Using secondary data from a European Social survey

from 10,950 employees from 15 countries, the authors examined the effect of dual-earner policies on work-family conflict. The role expansion hypothesis assumed that role expansion is a source of stress and conflict, but research showed that higher workload, higher education or position, parenthood, and female gender increases work-family conflict (Grönlund & Öun, 2010). Contrary to expectations, working wives experienced less mental and psychological distress than housewives (Grönlund & Öun, 2010). Strategies varied depending on the country and individual to reduce the effect of work family conflict, but in general dual-earner policies supported individual authority and strengthened women's power within marriage (Grönlund & Öun, 2010). However, the researchers also indicated that when committed to work, women are more prone to work-family conflict than men (Grönlund & Öun, 2010).

These conflicts also translated to non-Western contexts. Using the perceptions of working women, Odunaike (2012) analyzed the dual roles of women as wives and mothers and as formal sector employees. The author tested two hypotheses: (a) women in formal employment may likely increase the economic status of the family; and (b) women's engagement in formal employment is not likely to cause marital instability. The sample included 108 married women employed at Intercontinental Bank in West Africa, surveyed using questionnaires to find out why women engaged in paid employment, the challenges they faced, and the effect it had on their families. The findings of the study showed that men are supportive of women in formal employment because of the extra income but do not support them in the areas of domestic work in the home (Odunaike, 2012). The findings also revealed that women engaging in formal employment is not the

cause of marital instability, and that women also have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts because of their dual roles (Odunaike, 2012).

In addition, commonplace experiences of spousal violence in Nigeria may complicate the dual roles of women (Etuk, Nwagbara, & Archibong, 2012). Etuk et al. (2012) investigated spousal violence among Nigerian women in the formal employment sector because they had identified it as one of the challenges facing working women in the country. Among a population of 501 Nigerian women working in the public sector in Cross River state, Etuk et al. administered surveys to collect data. The research findings demonstrated that women experienced three forms of spousal violence: emotional, economic, and physical. The most commonly experienced form of violence was emotional, with 68% of women reporting being emotionally abused by their partner. The least common form of abuse was physical, with 14.3% of women reporting experiencing it in their household (Etuk et al., 2012). Citing related literature, Etuk et al. posited that to realize the eight millennium development goals of gender equality and women's empowerment, it was important that countries make concerted effort to eliminate social and traditional issues that militate against active participation of women in development (Etuk et al., 2013). Specifically, Etuk et al. identified spousal violence as one of the challenges facing women in Nigeria, even among the working class group.

Therefore, despite women-friendly policies in Nigeria, barriers to their success in management seem to persist (Adekanye, 2014; Odunaike, 2012). These inequalities may stem from the lack of infrastructure to support proper implementation of these policies (Kahka et al., 2014). Implementation of equality laws and empowerment of women

consists of five components: self-worth, having choices, access to opportunities and resources, a right to power over life in and outside home, and social change in terms of social and economic order (Adekanye, 2014). In order to achieve these objectives, Adekanye (2014) noted that women need access to training, problem solving techniques, technology and information, access to productive facilities, control over their income, the ability to acquire or invest in personal property, personal savings, and forming and informing household decisions that influence livelihood. They must also have the opportunity to participate in decision making (Adekanye, 2014). These criteria can lead to truly implemented socio-economic advantages of women becoming financially independent (Adekanye, 2014). These activities should also include having women spend far more time at work and to some degree neglected tasks at home in order to meet demands (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014).

In Nigeria, family responsibilities have played a large role for women in the workplace and often determined whether women accepted jobs (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). Obamiro and Obasan (2013) noted that often, women delayed their careers until they finished rearing children. Contemporary Nigerian women's careers and lives inextricably entwine between work and private lives and this conflict between work and family obligations is more acute for women than for men. Also according to Obamiro and Obasan, the job demands of construction professionals are damaging family and domestic responsibilities for women. Workers are subject to changing work locations; therefore, women with families are not flexible enough to meet the demands and fluctuations of job

requirements. These challenges often delay women's career progression in construction management.

In the banking industry in Nigeria, a surge occurred in the employment of women serving as marketers and front desk customer service providers (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). These professions are engaging, time consuming, and stressful because of longer working hours in the role of relationship marketer in service occupations, in sales, and similar professional jobs (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). Bankole and Adeyeri (2014) conducted a cross-sectional descriptive survey from 220 female participants. The population was located in 16 branches of three bank groups in Lagos. The researchers used quantitative and qualitative data collected through a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The researchers used multistage sampling techniques to obtain the sample of female bankers from groups of banks that could be grouped as old generation banks, new generation banks, and microfinance banks.

Bankole and Adeyeri (2014) found that these women play crucial family roles and are at risk to stress and strain associated with maintaining a balance between work and attending to the traditional role of caring for the family. Compared to women in Western countries who have had a longer history in the workforce, in developing countries this influx of women in the Nigerian labor force is compounded by a sudden shift of women taking on provider roles. With increased costs of living, the desire for a higher standard of living, and career advancement, women strive to produce more and perform at a higher level than ever before (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014).

However, researchers demonstrated that Nigerian women may feel the strain of their dual roles, which is evident in their lack of productivity (Ogbogu, 2009). Ogbogu (2009) found that female academics lag behind in research with low publication rates. Many female PhD candidates experience difficulty balancing teaching responsibilities and research and do not have sufficient time to publish. This is because of heavy teaching and administrative responsibilities and lack of promotion. Organizational and institutional barriers have an effect on women's research output, as well as lack of mentors for women, infrastructural support, and greater isolation. Family responsibilities also affect women's ability to participate in conferences and seminars. These double demands between home and career place a heavy burden on women, which Ogbogu termed dual role syndrome. Marriage and motherhood all add heavy responsibilities, which lead to a decline in research activities of female academics and their participation in conferences. A purposive sampling method aided in gathering information from questionnaires from 381 female academic staff members from 12 universities in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

Ogbogu (2009) found that the research output of females was most affected in the earlier stage of their marriages, owing to family constraints. Women in their fifties, who had more time for themselves, were able to publish at a higher rate. Agi (2014) noted a significant difference because of marital adjustment among women in civil service, public service, and those who were self-employed in Rivers state, Nigeria in a study on the influence of employment on married women. This researcher used a qualitative survey and collected data from 892 married women of various employments status from

Rivers State in Nigeria. The conflicts between work and family responsibilities negatively affected both marital and career advancement of women in Nigeria. The results showed a significant difference among nurses, teachers, bankers, accountants, bursars, and clerks in schools, doctors, pharmacists, ward-maids, and civil servants in marital adjustment (Agi, 2014). A difference existed in marital adjustment between teachers compared to bankers and accountants because teachers had more time to spend at home with their spouses than bankers and accountants, who often worked overtime (Agi, 2014). Time spent at home affected the roles and development of companionship, affectionate intimacy, accommodation, and agreement on basic values among teachers, bankers, and accountants (Agi, 2014). The researcher recommended workshops, seminars, and pre-marital and marital counseling for women for addressing the problem in view of the changing roles of women in Nigeria.

Okonkwo (2013) investigated perception of gender equality and whether a person's level of education influences his or her perception of gender equality. The researcher observed that in spite of the level of socialization and government policies, men regard women as inferior and subject them to family roles and responsibilities. Okonkwo carried out a quantitative survey administering questionnaires to a total of 210 participants comprised of 105 males and 105 female students, graduates, and professionals. The results showed that women had more confidence in themselves and their abilities than men had in them, thus proving that the traditional gender-role socialization still influences how men view the subject of gender equality. Okonkwo noted that patriarchy remains a societal issue in African societies, but education has

significantly influenced the attitudes of women to a reasonable extent. This research shows that Nigeria is still rated low in gender equality in spite the high levels of education (Okonkwo, 2013).

Kolade and Kehinde (2013) also examined the glass ceiling phenomenon regarding women's career advancement in Nigeria. Using questionnaire instruments, the authors gathered data from the sample of 120 men and women selected from 8 construction industries in southwestern Nigeria. The authors observed that barriers and impediments to women's entry into workplace and career progression characterized the prevailing antifemale work culture or environment in the construction industry in Nigeria. These barriers included recruitment discrimination, lack of promotion, and stereotyping and harassment. The authors recommended provisions for a conducive work environment; eradication of gender discrimination; and bias in education, training, recruitment, and promotion in the construction industry in Nigeria.

Nyewusira and Nweke (2014) noted that patriarchy is still a norm in many African societies, and that domestic laws, official policies, and even the Nigerian constitution seem to negate the idea of gender equality. They discussed three major practices, namely: widowhood rites, girl-child genital mutilation, and sex trafficking and affirmed that women usually supervise and enforce these practices. They also pointed out that mothers promote gender inequality by raising their daughter to conform to gender roles. Supporting their study from related literature, the researchers observed that women are in more severe ways perpetrators and promoters of discrimination against fellow women, and also carry out worse acts of gender inequality under the guise of culture and

tradition. They concluded that much more depends on the individual attitudes of women and their cooperation among each other, if they must realize their full potentials.

Statistics representing women in politics and government are grim, while poverty and cultural dislocation have punctuated conditions of women, despite the amendment to the Nigerian constitution passed in 1999 that stipulated that women will have equal rights to participation in office (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014). Also, there are many laws that treat women unequally, such as the terms and conditions of service for National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, which state that all female officers must be unmarried and remain so for a period no less than 2 years (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014). Under this law, an unmarried female officer who becomes pregnant may be discharged, which clearly inhibits career advancement and a balance of career success and growing a family. The laws that discriminate against women are exhaustive and compound challenges women face in the workplace along with responsibilities associated with family (Nyewusira & Nweke, 2014).

McIntosh et al. (2012) noted that mothers, after having dependent children, did not have a strong commitment to paid work or to a career. The researchers also noted that many women chose occupations so they can work around their domestic role, rather than making work a priority. According to the same study, women tended to reject additional hours of employment so they could devote themselves to tasks that center on the family. These researchers conducted a longitudinal analysis using data from a demographically unique national database from 46,565 registered nursing workers in Scotland from 2000–2008. The variables included gender, employment grades, number and length of career

breaks, lengths of service, age, working patterns, and the number and age of dependent children. The researchers found that women who give priority to their role as mothers still treated motherhood as normative behavior compared to women in the workplace as being mainstream. Socio-structural assumptions like these have informed women's relationship to employment. Unfortunately for women, perceptions linked to motherhood frequently result in their devaluation as women and as employees (McIntosh et al., 2012). McIntosh et al. also noted that motherhood can stigmatize women, often used as a way to control and exclude women, which can result in lowered employer commitment toward expectant and new mothers. Society often perceives women with young children to be less competent than women who are not mothers. The researchers noted that women with children earn less than those women who are not mothers in the United States, but no such disparity exists for men.

Minguez (2012) stated that one problem is that cooking, taking care of children, and other domestic activities often occur without compensation. Care is considered both paid work and invisible, unpaid work within the family; an important step is the acknowledgement of this duality that defines care. Minguez conducted an analysis that measured the amount of paid and unpaid work done by women compared to men, based on secondary data from the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on Political and Social economy of Care. Minguez found that care is a service for and within the family household, and gender equality would distribute these tasks between men and women equally. However, care is a feminized social and cultural activity that men often do not or will not participate in, or they feel they are not qualified to perform. This places

care tasks on women and limits women's time and energy to perform in other ways, such as in career development or education. This creates a distressing dilemma that results in women taking on both roles as informal caretakers and employees in the formal workplace. Often this creates an overload of daily activities that limit women's time for participation in other public spheres.

In a patriarchal structure, husbands or fathers monitor women's labor within marriage and household relationships (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). Women are most often responsible for domestic tasks, such as cleaning, cooking, and childcare, but in a patriarchal system these tasks do not qualify as paid work and are defined in terms of production under which the work is performed. This means that wives under marriage relations engage in unpaid labor for their husbands who exploit it. This occurs because the husband has control over the wife's labor power. The key feature of this structure is the limiting of access to paid work for women. This system reduces the value of women's work and often subjugates women to the domestic sphere and other gender-specific jobs (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). According to Chant and Pedwell (2008), the International Labour Organisation confirmed that although more women work in paid employment, labor markets across many parts of the world are still sex-segregated, with women concentrated in lower quality, irregular, and informal employment.

Women in the Nigerian Workplace

In Nigeria, many citizens are still reluctant to accept female leaders, despite the number of qualified women for top management positions (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). The perception tends to be that it is more difficult to work with women

and there seems to be no room at all for women in management positions as well as in the university system. Statistics revealed a high level of disparity in levels of gender diversity in top management positions in Nigeria (Mordi et al., 2011).

The Nigerian government attempted to address inequities through several policies (Okyeuzu et al., 2012). For example, the NEEDS program, enacted in 2004, aimed to reduce poverty and assist women, particularly those with low-income (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). The government designed NEEDS to assist Nigerian women in gaining economic independence through four areas: (a) creation of wealth, (b) job creation, (c) poverty reduction, and (d) value-added direction (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). In 2006, The National Gender Policy was enacted and supported women's participation in political and public life (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). An objective of this policy was to achieve a minimum threshold of representation for women in all areas of political, social, and economic life in Nigeria (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). According to Okoyeuzu et al. (2012), in 2007, the Nigerian Government also enacted a seven-point agenda, and in 2010, it enacted Vision 2020. These initiatives aimed to ensure equitable representation in governance and proportionate representation with no less than 30% representation of women in the workforce and education opportunities for women (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). However, researchers have demonstrated that despite these measures, women in the Nigerian workforce continued to face barriers (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011; Mordi et al., 2011).

To investigate the remaining gender barriers among Nigerian women in management, Longe (2014) examined gender inequality and the career advancement of

women in leadership positions within the socioeconomic environment of Nigeria. Based on historical analysis, Longe determined that prior to being colonized, Nigerian women participated equally in leadership and decision making activities; however, the colonial patriarchal influence led to gender inequality. Based on this introduced ideology, Longe assessed that these integrated ideological beliefs had transferred into the working culture in Nigeria.

Assessing the current state of Nigerian working women in upper management positions, Longe (2014) collected data from 400 top ranking individuals in public and private organizations in Nigeria. The results suggested that a significant gender gap remained in management positions in both public and private organizations, although participants reported that women were capable of demonstrating positive leadership behaviors and traits. Moreover, men were more culturally accepted as leaders, a belief that Longe attributed to the infiltration of Western ideology on Nigerian culture. Longe recommended that the only method of reducing these leadership stereotypes was for organizations to focus on reducing these stereotypical behaviors through encouraging equal partnership between men and women in the workforce and providing additional opportunities for women in leadership positions.

Specifically, Thomas (2013) assessed that the glass ceiling in Nigeria was a barrier to women's success. Using mixed methods, Thomas collected qualitative data from 8 managers and quantitative data from 55 middle and junior officers in the Oceanic Bank, PLC in Nigeria. The purpose of Thomas's study was to determine not only the extent of the barriers experienced to reaching management positions, but also the

strategies that Nigerian women could use to overcome these hurdles. Results suggested

that though women were better represented in junior and middle management, men

primarily occupied higher ranking leadership positions. These findings remained despite

women's equal or superior length of service and quality of experience. Moreover,

Thomas determined that the participants felt that women with family responsibilities

would be less committed to the organization and their job duties. Thomas suggested that

the only method of increasing equality would be through targeting negative assessments

and biases towards women in leadership positions.

   Like Longe (2014) and Thomas (2013), Owoyemi and Olusanya (2014) examined

gender inequality and discrimination against women in paid employment in Nigeria.

Oyowemi and Olusanya categorized factors that promote gender inequality and

discrimination against women, including cultural and social, religious, psychological, and

biological factors. For cultural and social factors, Owoyemi and Olusanya assessed that in

Nigerian culture, men regard women as inferiors and expect them to fulfill domestic

roles. Based on these beliefs, male children have access to education while female

children help in domestic chores and are given to early marriage. Religious factors

reinforced these beliefs, according to Owoyemi and Olusanya; extreme religious beliefs

placed men in superior positions in the family and society, and religious practices

included early marriage and polygamy. Psychologically, Owoyemi and Olusanya

suggested that among men and women, society may perceive highly educated career

women as less valuable in domestic arenas. Last, Owoyemi and Olusanya noted that

childbearing practices in Nigeria may make women unfit for rigorous workloads and

inhibit career advancement. Altogether, Owoyemi and Olusanya determined that significant barriers to Nigerian women's career success exist in the current system.

In a phenomenological qualitative study, Mordi et al. (2011) similarly explored the barriers and challenges facing Nigerian women as they progressed in their careers. The experience of 72 executive and middle managers from the manufacturing, banking, insurance, telecommunications, and civil services sectors showed that cultural bias, gender discrimination, negative stereotyping, family issues, lack of mentoring and training, and the glass ceiling phenomenon were major barriers to women's career advancement. In the Nigerian Federal Civil Service, which is the largest employer in Nigeria, 76% of civil servants are men and 24% are women, and women hold less than 14% of management level positions in the Nigerian public sector (Mordi et al., 2011). In Lagos state, Nigeria's largest commercial economy, the private sector employment of women as directors was 13.87% and top management was 13.84% in 2005 (Mordi et al., 2011). In 2006, 8.14% employment were women, and 13.11% of top managers were women, which showed a decline in involvement from the previous year (Mordi et al., 2011).

Those who make decisions on policies still overwhelmingly consist of men (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). For example, in Nigeria only three women have held the position of university vice-chancellor at privately owned universities (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). According to the same researchers, even positions like heads of units and departments appear dominated by men. In Nigerian higher education, an imbalance exists in the representation of females in terms of staff and as students

(Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). Women make up only 12.4% of the academic staff, but women account for 51% of the population of Nigeria (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). Abiodun-Oyebanji and Olaleye (2011) also asserted a more aggressive policy was necessary to correct this imbalance in staff. Women are underrepresented in managerial positions and are scarce in upper levels of academics. A disparity exists in recruiting, selection and promotion efforts, professional development opportunities, such as mentoring and networking, and evaluations by both students and colleagues (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011).

Still, the labor market in Nigeria has made progress toward increased gender equality in recent decades (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). Women have been acquiring occupations and managerial jobs previously reserved for men, and women's access to education is continually improving, which provides the necessary qualifications for jobs in senior management (ILO, 2004). This is evident in Nigeria in the increased number of women in fields, such as teaching, trading, nursing, banking, pharmacy, as well as in construction, mechanics, architecture, contracting, and project management (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). Still, some fields are more difficult than others for women to gain access to, and as scholars have adamantly insisted, Nigerian women constitute a small percentage of top management jobs in industries, such as construction, banking, telecommunication, aviation, oil and gas, manufacturing, and mining (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). According to the same researchers, even in professions, such as teaching, which are largely female dominated, the majority of top administration is male dominated. In the health profession, doctors and hospital heads tend to be men, while

most nurses and support staff are women. Even though women are starting to gain entrance into nontraditional professions, such as construction, project management, and mining, they are underrepresented and do not advance beyond lower levels (Obamiro & Obasan, 2013; Sang & Powell, 2012). Despite government, business, and trade union intervention to overcome attitudinal and institutional discrimination that holds women back from some jobs and hinders their career development, the results often fall short of expectations (ILO, 2004).

According to Obamiro and Obasan (2013), evidence shows that employers are promoting women more systematically and are introducing family-friendly policies to attract and retain women; still, women find it difficult to advance beyond the glass ceiling that limits them in Nigeria. The Nigerian political system, particularly the lack of stable government, influences the configuration of the labor market (Mordi et al., 2011). Nigeria has oscillated between democratic and military forms of government; therefore, frequent change has resulted in the lack of sustained labor policies (Mordi et al., 2011). Mordi et al. (2011) also noted that these policies often changed as military governments were overthrown or changed. These factors have also impeded the career paths and aspirations of Nigerian women (Mordi et al., 2011).

Aderemi, Hassan, Siyanbola, and Taiwo (2009) noted increased female participation in science and technology (S&T) courses at the university and polytechnics than in colleges of education, which confirms findings by Fox (1998), that more women are pursuing higher degrees in the natural sciences and engineering than ever before. Aderemi et al. (2009) collected data of 2,110 heads of S&T firms, employed female

graduates, and heads of departments in tertiary institutions. Furthermore, they selected key firms within each engineering sub-sector, which included chemical, computer, electrical, civil, mechanical, metallurgical, food science, and agricultural engineering as well as financial institutions, such as auditing firms, banks, insurance companies and financial houses to determine the number and performance of female S&T graduates employed in their establishments.

The study revealed that most female S&T graduates employed in tertiary institutions and research institutions were engaged in S&T based occupations (manufacturing, laboratory, research and technical). However, in corporate firms, most of the female S&T graduates worked either in administration, finance, or research and development. In addition, a large proportion took lower paying, non-S&T jobs for domestic reasons and because of a lack of suitable vacancies. According to the authors, this suggests gross under-utilization of human resources. Some S&T organizations did not have any females working in S&T departments. Aderemi et al. (2009) recommended that recruitment and retention be enhanced of women in S&T employment in Nigeria.

Women's Employment and Government Policy

Women have become a powerful force for growth and development and labor market policies and initiatives need to be developed to assist women with the transitions and challenges in the labor market (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). Empowering women involves making contributions to the economy as women are promoted as workers and entrepreneurs (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). However, according to the study by Okoyeuzu et al. (2012), a relatively low level of female labor participation and regional variations in

female labor in Nigeria are in conflict with the equality goals. This study was a historical

account and analysis of past poverty alleviation measures. Okoyeuzu et al. further found

that Nigeria still falls short in terms of gender equality and equal access to opportunities

to advance socially, economically, and politically. Evidence of several forms of gender-

based discrimination in Nigeria includes the gender-based division of labor, disparities in

power and resources between men and women, and gender bias regarding rights and

entitlements.

According to Okoyeuzu et al. (2012), there were programs and projects designed

to assist women, especially those with low-income in their effort to achieve economic

independence in all spheres of their lives and to improve their participation in public roles

and the decision making process. The Nigerian federal government established the

NEEDS in 2004, which was a poverty reduction strategy (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). This

strategy targeted four areas: (a) creation of wealth, (b) job creation, (c) poverty reduction,

and (d) value-added direction (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). In 2006, The National Gender

Policy was enacted, which supported women's participation in political and public life

(Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). One of its objectives was to achieve a minimum threshold of

representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political,

social, and economic life of the country (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). In 2007, the Nigerian

Government enacted a seven-point agenda, followed by Vision 2020 in 2010. According

to the same study, all of these initiatives included efforts to address the gender gap and

women's empowerment. Okoyeuzu et al. further noted that goals included ensuring

equitable representation of women in governance and proportionate representation with

no less than 30% representation of women. The effort also included establishing scholarship schemes at the secondary and tertiary levels to broaden educational opportunities for female students. But, the challenge of gender parity in Nigeria is less in the goals and provisions of the constitution and more in implementation (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012).

Nigeria still falls short of the stated goals of equality between men and women in terms of opportunity and equal access to resources to advance socially, economically, and politically (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). Males have income-yielding opportunities earlier than women do, and they have been monopolizing the political field (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). According to the same study, when women compete with men for access to political power, they compete on terms already established by men that favor male partnerships. It is difficult for women to succeed in politics within a system without displacing or replacing the existing elite (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012). Also, a change in values cannot occur independently in the present socio-economic and political relations, without clear involvement of women in the political process (Okoyeuzu et al., 2012).

Sadasivam (1997) examined the disparate effect of structural adjustment programs on women and the resulting unacceptable feminization of poverty in many countries with economies in transition. The author also argues that the disproportionate cost of adjustment borne by women violates their rights to development guaranteed in national and international conventions, and makes these economic reforms unsustainable in the long run. The author further argues that national governments must bear responsibility for the erosion or suspension of the rights of large sections of the poor, of

whom the majority are women, over an indefinitely extended period. The author also provided a brief background to feminist work on structural adjustment, which has introduced gender as an analytical category ignored in mainstream economics. Such effects of adjustment policies are not sustainable from either the human rights or economic development perspectives. The author highlighted several features of the adjustment process, such as trade liberalization, agricultural reform, and privatization, that have exacerbated social, economic, and gender inequalities. According to the author, the cutbacks in food subsidies and in public expenditures on education and health have also hit women the hardest in adjusting countries that must strive to meet fiscal austerity requirements. The integration of women in the global economy attributed to structural adjustment programs has occurred on unequal terms, worsening the working and living conditions of millions of women and deepening gender oppression and subordination (Sadasivam, 1997).

In addition, according to Sadasivam (1997), awareness created on the differential effect of structural adjustment on women has just started to come to the attention of those who design and implement economic reform programs. This awareness is largely because of the sustained work of feminist economists at both theoretical and empirical levels over the last two decades. As a result, references to gender bias, gender neutrality, and gender responsiveness are now commonplace in bank parlance and government statements on structural adjustment. According to Sadasivam, it is women's collective strength and creativity that remain the basis for transformative politics and development. Through sustained feminist scholarship and unflagging activism, women's advocates have gained

the authority and credibility to influence UN policy, and thereby some national governments and international financial institutions, to reflect gender and poverty concerns in economic policymaking.

Woldie and Adersua (2004) also noted a similar link between poverty of women and economic policy. Using a mixed methods approach, they interviewed and gathered data from 100 women in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria examining the role and the experiences of female entrepreneurs in the economic development of Nigeria. They posited that traditional norms and values in some countries including Nigeria have relegated women to the background and have subordinated them to men. The authors observed that poverty and economic circumstances in developing countries like Nigeria have forced women to engage in income generating activities while carrying out family responsibilities. The family and biological responsibilities as well as traditional roles pose a hindrance to women's careers and entrepreneurial development (Woldie & Adersua, 2004). Citing related literature, the authors maintain that in all economies of the world, women's entrepreneurial activities contribute to development of such economic systems. The authors also identified low education and lack of skills as limiting factors for women's career progression. The authors also observed the challenges of juggling family responsibility and career among women worldwide, which is more pronounced in African countries including Nigeria, where poverty and a lack of basic infrastructure make circumstances more challenging.

There is no law that prohibits women from participating in any profession, supported by the 1979 Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

Against Women. Researchers often describe the convention as an International Bill of Rights for Women. However, research findings show that business women are faced with a barrage of barriers that include gender discrimination, cultural traditions, family responsibilities, lack of career guidance, low education, and a lack of adequate skills and competencies (Etuk et al., 2012; Longe, 2014; Thomas, 2013).

Alese and Hassan (2011) conducted research to investigate how leaders could use creativity and innovations to empower women in the Nigerian informal sector. The study population was 128 women selected by stratified and random sampling techniques. Data collection occurred using questionnaires and focus group discussions. The findings indicate that women's creativity and innovations have the potential to empower women and also help in the growth of the formal sector by creating job opportunities. This could also help in the economic growth and development of the nation. The researchers suggest that the Federal Government needs to actively support women's creativity and innovations by providing necessary infrastructure, education, and an enabling environment. This will go a long way in boosting women's creativity and innovation.

Women have the capacity to be resourceful, but the challenge is in the social climate, political system, work, and community settings to create an environment that promotes women in the workplace over more traditional gender roles (Alhassan & Akudugu, 2012; Kahkha et al., 2014). A role reversal has occurred within traditional Nigerian societies exchanging roles of women and men (Kahka et al., 2014). Women now play the role of provider, operate as heads of households, and are often involved in entrepreneurship and business management in order to provide income for their families

(Alhassan & Akdugu, 2012). Kahkha et al. (2014) agreed with many other studies on Nigerian women that this need for income pushed women into multiple roles as mothers, wives, and providers, which prompted the need to create a conducive and enabling environment to encourage women's development in economic progress (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012; Davison & Burke, 2011; Kahkha et al., 2014; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013).

A gap in literature exists with respect to the experience of Nigerian women and their ways of coping with dual roles of managing a career and family in an environment that has progressed but is still hindering women's progress in Nigeria. Researchers have noted this lack of information and literature on the experience of African women in management and are seeking more knowledge about these experiences (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). After reviewing the literature, I designed the study to help address this gap, as further discussed in Chapter 3.

Summary and Conclusions

As seen in this review of literature, many obstacles still exist to improving women's position in the workplace to limit disparities despite efforts by previous researchers, government officials, and employers. In order to provide support to working women and to change cultural expectations and perceptions of women in the workplace, women's views and coping strategies need to be explored so that information can be passed on to employers, government and educational institutions. During the last few decades, increased costs of living drove women to seek opportunities in education and in career advancement, and because of this, women have entered the workforce and made profound changes in their social and economic statuses (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014;

Minguez, 2012). Despite laws, customs, and a culture that favors men, women continue to progress, but in order to accommodate women's equality in the workforce, their condition of serving dual roles must be explored in more detail.

A gap in literature exists regarding the experiences of Nigerian women as they navigate their way through dual roles of managing a career and family in an environment that has progressed, but is still hindering women's progress in Nigeria. Researchers have noted this lack of information on the perspectives of African women in management and are calling on the scholarly community to fill this gap in knowledge (Mordi et al., 2013; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). A need also exists to correct the distortion of women's experiences, contribute to knowledge about women's challenges, and to correct social inequalities by examining how Nigerian women cope with these roles (Inmyxai & Takahashi, 2011). The next chapter will include the methodology I used to address this gap.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

An ever-increasing number of Nigerian women are making the transition from the traditional role of family caretakers to the workplace (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012). During this time of transition in Nigeria's gender roles, details regarding women's struggle to balance career and family remain largely unexplored (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). This gap in the literature on this transitional experience is one that requires further study and necessitates the collection and interpretation of qualitative data. One strength of qualitative data is its ability to explore hitherto unexplored areas (Moustakas, 1994). The goal of this phenomenological study was to assess the lived experiences of Nigerian women and extract the challenges and strategies of management and leadership positions for Nigerian women. In this chapter, I will outline the design and approach of this study and delineate the data and participant collection procedures. I will close Chapter 3 with a discussion of ethical procedures, threats to validity, and the limitations of the study.

Research Design and Rationale

This qualitative study had a phenomenological research design, such that lived experiences were my focus. In this study, I was guided by the following research question: What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities?

A phenomenological researcher addresses a topic without preconceptions or expectations, and his or her research question expands the understanding of the

phenomenon (Anfara & Mertz, 2006; Moustakas, 1994). According to Ohman (2005), phenomenological research designs are based on the lived experiences of the participants and explore their thoughts and emotions about the phenomenon under study. For this study, the relevant phenomenon I selected for study among the sample of executive Nigerian women was the experience of acting as an employee in a management or leadership position, with special attention paid to the specific perceptions regarding the challenges these women face and the strategies they use. I asked the women in this study to share their own experiences with balancing home and work-life, discussed how these experiences affected their perceptions of gender roles, and explored the experiences they face in transitioning into a career. In this study, I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to explore this phenomenon and gain insight. This may aid in bringing a positive social change to Nigeria by helping to determine how women perform and are evaluated as managers, which could influence hiring practices.

I did not use a quantitative design for this study because it would not have provided understanding of the phenomena from the participants' perspective without predetermined assumptions, as described by Moustakas (1994). According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), a quantitative approach may hinder the discovery of valuable data because of predetermined assumptions. A quantitative design is used when the aims of the research are to examine statistically significant effects of quantifiable (i.e., numerically measurable) concepts (Howell, 2010). A mixed-method design employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. Because my goals with the study did not align with the quantitative method, the mixed-methods approach was not appropriate.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the perspectives of executive Nigerian women, describe the phenomena they experience, and to provide results that address the gap in the research and extend knowledge on the topic. A researcher's perception, which is personal and indisputable, is the primary source of knowledge and lens for interpretation in this form of study (Moustakas, 1994). Crotty (1998) stated that people construct meaning through interaction with the world, and they make sense of what occurs based on their individual social or historical perspectives. Using qualitative methods enables the researcher to create an understanding of the participant's experiences as qualitative research is inductive and the results arise from the participants' perceptions (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Researchers need to consider three aspects when choosing a research approach: the problem studied, the researcher's experiences, and the intended audience of the research (Bansal & Corley, 2011). A gap in the literature regarding the experiences and perceptions of Nigerian women in the dual roles of management and family maintenance existed, thus it was difficult to know what to measure. Using a qualitative methodology to understand the phenomenon may provide further avenues for research, both qualitative and quantitative (Moustakas, 1994). There was a lack of knowledge on the topic; therefore, qualitative research was most appropriate method.

The researcher who chooses qualitative inquiry needs to be comfortable with ambiguity and creativity while conducting their studies (Bansal & Corley, 2011). The flexibility inherent in qualitative inquiries enables new ways of knowing and interpreting the gathered information (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013). Finally, the researcher should

consider whom they want to read the study and act on the information (Marshall & Rossman, 2015).

Moustakas (1994) suggested that the main intention when conducting a phenomenological study should be the description and distillation of lived experiences among a group of individuals, with the end goal of deriving the underlying essence of the topical phenomenon. Through Mousakas' model, which is the foundation for modern day phenomenology, I explored the relevant experiences of working Nigerian women related to gender roles, impediments, and a balance between work-life and home-life. The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to extract meaning from experiences as these experiences are self-reported from a sample, and to reach an understanding of the sample's spirit through this insight (Moustakas, 1994). I used this method to create a narrative and give a voice to this population. Using Moustakas's methodological model afforded me an increased understanding of how working Nigerian women balance their work and home responsibilities and how these strategies may be used by others to facilitate this social change.

There are several different research designs used within the field of qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Tracy (2013) cited several key characteristics of qualitative research. These characteristics include the concept of *gestalt*, wherein the researcher understands the whole is greater than the sum of all parts. The qualitative researcher seeks understanding of the phenomena as it interacts and is part of a system (Tracy, 2013). *Bricolage*, another key characteristic, refers to pieces that represent specifics of a complex situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Tracy also suggested the

concept of research as a funnel, and the use of sensitizing concepts. The researcher is the

creator of the quilt, in that they assemble all the various pieces together and create an

image for others to explore (Tracy, 2013). When research data are gathered and analysis

begins, it is the job of the researcher to begin with a broad or large funnel (Tracy, 2013).

Tracy posited that the picture comes together and the phenomenon of the study becomes

narrowed down as the researcher focuses the data and reports the results. By beginning

broadly, the researcher ensures he or she does not miss valuable information (Denzin &

Lincoln, 2005). This also enables them to display the broad backdrop from where the

information came to highlight the relevant data (Tracy, 2013).

Finally, the term *sensitizing* refers to the theories or interpretive methods the

researcher uses as a lens to organize and format the data (Charmaz, 2008). The most

commonly used designs within the qualitative methodology include ethnography

research, grounded theory research, case study research, and the phenomenological

design. I chose the phenomenological design for this study. In the following paragraphs, I

will provide an outline of each of the designs I listed earlier along with justification for

phenomenology as the most appropriate for this study.

Ethnography is typically the design used when the researcher seeks to increase the

understanding of a particular culture (Sangasubana, 2011). The term, ethnography, when

translated from the ancient Greek, comes from *ethnos* (people, nation) and *graphein* (to

write; Tracy, 2013). Ethnographic researchers gather data through an extensive

investigation within the culture of study, where the researcher immerses him or herself

through inhabitation (Van Maanen, 1990). The focus of an ethnographic study can

include language use, ceremonies and rituals, as well as relationships and even artifacts

(Tracy, 2013). In this form of research, the researcher should take on a background role

and act as an observer-participant, with the goal of gaining insight to the distinctive

qualities of the culture (Lewis & Russell, 2011). This approach requires high amounts of

research in the field and consists of data collection through the precise observation of

individuals who compose the pertinent culture (Moustakas, 1994). Ethnography is only

appropriate when a particular cultural group is the unit of analysis (Sangasubana, 2011).

Case study research is applicable when the researcher intends to comprehensively

examine a subject within a specific setting or understand a specific occurrence based on

observations that are linked through a commonality (Morse & McEvoy, 2014). In case

study research, multiple data collection methods and sources are triangulated to produce a

complete understanding of the case (Yin, 2014). Case study research takes information

from a wide variety of sources materials that can include interviews, documents, artifacts,

and observation (Rowley, 2002). Morse and McEvoy (2014) dictated that the transfer of

findings to the broad population is not the goal of case study research. The case study

design is meant to obtain a deeper understanding of the *how* or the *why* of the topic (Yin,

2014). Case study research is appropriate when the study consists of examination of a

clearly defined case that is held within specific boundaries and the end goal is to

thoroughly understand the case's features (Yin, 2014).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) identify grounded theory as appropriate for use when

the intent is to reveal the features fundamental to the topic under interest and to compose

a theory that is supported directly from the data (Charmaz, 2014). Grounded theory

incorporates multiple stages of data collection and includes the iterative fine-tuning of

categories as they emerge from the data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The resulting theory

from this form of research is based upon (i.e., *grounded* in) the elements of the data and

analysis of the interconnections among those elements (Moustakas, 1994).

In contrast, phenomenology is the examination of a phenomenon of interest, and

the research is conducted through an exploration of the lived experiences among a group

of study participants who have actually encountered the phenomenon (Walsh, 2012).

Within a phenomenological design, the researcher places a great deal of emphasis on

what meaning the participants themselves attribute to their experiences in an effort to

remove the researcher's interpretation from the study (Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenological research results in a description of the essence of a phenomenon and

does not produce an acceptance or rejection of any hypotheses (Moustakas, 1994). The

goal of this study was to explore and finally describe Nigerian women's experiences and

strategies for transitioning into the workplace while balancing home life and to ascertain

their perceptions of the underlying gender roles and limitations to their progress. Based

on these considerations, I determined that the phenomenological approach was the only

suitable form of research for this study.

Role of the Researcher

When conducting qualitative research, the researcher acts as one of the

instruments for gathering data (Tracy, 2013). Becoming the instrument requires the

researcher to hone interview, observation, and active listening skills (Xu & Storr, 2012).

Using these skills, the researcher first gathers data, then as the researcher begins to work

with the data, they must analyze, code, group, and place the data into meaningful units or themes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). At all times, they must be aware of the trail of decisions they made so they can explain and defend choices (Xu & Storr, 2012). The job the researcher has in any qualitative inquiry to work with the data and, once analyzed, to create commentary on the data that provides new understanding of the phenomenon under question (Morse, 1994).

The researcher must also spend time understanding their own worldview, as they need to explore their individual biases, goals, ideas, thoughts, and interests with the intention of putting them aside (Moustakas, 1994). This acknowledgement of a personal lens is necessary so the data are analyzed independently and free of any preconceptions (Tufford & Newman, 2012). Moustakas (1994) referred to this process as bracketing, or epoché. Epoché should occur at the beginning of the analysis process and should continue as one gathers and analyzes the data (Tufford & Newman, 2012). To engage in epoché, the researcher must take note of any preconceptions regarding the study outcomes. By maintaining a constant awareness of these preconceptions and biases, the researcher is able to set them aside and allow the data to be analyzed separately (Tufford & Newman, 2012).

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The population of interest in this study included all Nigerian women who have entered the field of higher education, as well as those who seek or have found a career. The population of interest was limited to women of the age 18 or older. Outcomes from

the National Bureau of Statistics (2011) indicated that out of all Nigerian women, 44%

are enrolled in higher education, while about 25% are engaged in the labor force, and

14% are in managerial and executive positions. I explored the lived experiences of the

women who fell within any of these categories.

The inclusion criteria for the study limited the sampling scope to only women

who were at least 18 years old and have engaged in the dual role of career development

and family maintenance. I used purposeful convenience sampling methods to contact a

sample of 15 professional women who meet the inclusion criteria. Through utilization of

purposive convenience sampling, I contacted Nigerian women who are professionals in

their field and personal colleagues of mine. According to Moustakas (1994), participants

should have experience and interest in the phenomenon, as well as a willingness to be

study participants. I initially contacted participants through e-mail, and discussed details

regarding the study interview scheduling using this medium.

I contacted participants and provided them with a brief description of the study as

well as the detailed procedures followed in conducting the interview and handling the

interview data. Saturation was the main consideration for determining an appropriate

sample size in qualitative research (Fusch & Ness, 2015). According to Fusch and Ness

(2015), the data have reached saturation when novel information cannot be gathered from

new participants. Qualitative researchers must consider information that indicates the

existence of novel themes, but also information that exemplifies any relationships

between themes that may exist (Mason, 2010). In addition, qualitative researchers must

explore each and every theme to identify whether the participants sufficiently describe

the phenomenon so that the data may be considered saturated (Mason, 2010). Data saturation is reached when the resulting themes are complex, profound, and diverse enough to fully inform the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 2014).

Several researchers offered suggestions for a realistic estimation of the required sample size for phenomenological research. Francis et al. (2010) recommended that between 10 and 20 participants is appropriate for a phenomenological study. Morse (1994) suggested that researchers use a minimum of six participants. Others, such as Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006), held that 12 participants are typically sufficient to saturate qualitative data for interview-based research. Based on these recommendations, I targeted a sample of 15 participants for this study. This allowed me to be assured of meeting these recommendations even if several participants elected to drop from the study.

Instrumentation

The principal instrument used in this study was me, the researcher (see Rubin & Rubin, 2011). When conducting a qualitative study, all data gathering and collecting is done by the researcher, which makes them an essential component in the study (Doody & Noonan, 2013). A wide range of skills including active listening, careful observation, and solid interview skills form the basis of all data gathering in qualitative research studies (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

I created a semistructured open-ended interview guide for use in this study. The interview questions were based on the research question. The interview questions delved

into the participants' thoughts and emotions about juggling career and family.

Constructing strong interview questions is essential to a quality interview (Doody &

Noonan, 2013). They should be clear, direct, and easy to understand; not leading; and

should directly link to the experience, thoughts, and emotions of the interviewee (Tracy,

2013).

Field Test

Before initiating the research study, a panel of experts reviewed the interview

questions gathered by me for that purpose. The panel reviewed the questions to provide

feedback. By doing this, I could eliminate any questions that were leading or biased. I

chose this method instead of a pilot study because the size of the potential population is

unknown and having a pilot study could reduce the potential participants to the point

where the researcher could not reach saturation of data. Expert validation is the process

by which a panel of experts explores a series of interview questions to determine that

they are clear, concise, and free of bias (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). A list of the

interview questions designed to align with the research question is in Appendix A.

Other instruments used in this study included my field notes. Field notes add data

to the study by noting down observations, questions, and ideas as the study progresses

(Lofland & Lofland, 1999). In addition, I created an informed consent form (see

Appendix B). The informed consent form included the name of the study, my name, title

of the study, and a description. It also contained information about the risks, benefits,

compensation, confidentiality, and the objectives. The participants also received

information regarding their right to withdraw at any time, as well as the fact that I would

audio record the interview. The participants were required to sign the form before any

interviews begin.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The 15 selected participants were my colleagues and friends in the executive

positions in their work place. At the beginning of this study, I already had their e-mail

addresses and telephone numbers in my contact records. I contacted them through e-mails

and telephone to ask if they would like to participate. For any the individuals who wished

to be included in the study, I sent an informed consent form (see Appendix B) through e-

mail, which they signed and returned when meeting for the interview. Interviews did not

commence until I received a signed informed consent form.

The data collection method for the study was face-to-face interviews. I performed

the interviews by following a series of guiding interview questions developed specifically

for this research (see Appendix A). The semistructured interviews were open-ended in

nature. I designed the questions included in the interview to explore participants'

experiences with achieving balance between career and family commitments, to explore

their strategies, and to shed light on the understanding of this experience. Throughout the

interviews, I also probed the participants' views on gender roles and urged them to

illuminate the specific challenges they encounter.

Doody and Noonan (2013) indicated that interviews are flexible and effective

tools when used in qualitative research. Englander (2012) explained that researchers use

interviews in qualitative research for the purpose of building meaning through

collaboration with participants and a reassembly of participants' impressions regarding an

experience. Rubin and Rubin (2011) cited several advantages acquired through face-to-face interviewing. The authors emphasized the ability to take note of nonverbal cues, stressing the fact that these cues can elucidate any otherwise hidden feelings and perceptions that participants may have. To gather data on these nonverbal cues, I took notes on any patterns of behavior I observed during the interview process.

I took also asked the participants probing questions when additional information was needed. I used probes to ask participants to provide more detail before they moved forward with their story, and to ask for clarification or depth if needed. If a participant did not understand a question and provided an irrelevant response, I also used probes to gently guide them back to the response that is necessary to inform the research question.

After receiving consent to do so, I tape-recorded each interview so that data could be analyzed and reflected upon continually. After transcribing the interviews, I allowed participants to review their transcripts for accuracy. I e-mailed participants a copy of their transcript to ask if they would like to review them, and asked that they provide feedback regarding their accuracy in a reply e-mail. To further contribute to the trustworthiness, I allowed participants to view the themes that result from their interviews. At this time, I asked participants to engage in member checking by assessing the themes to determine whether they were an accurate depiction of their lived experiences and that I had captured the meaning of what was said. Harper and Cole (2012) referred to the process of providing preliminary results to participants as member checking. The researchers stressed the importance of this procedure in ensuring that results are valid and reflect the meaning. Based on this recommendation, I used this process after analyzing data.

Data Analysis Plan

In this study, I used the modified Van Kaam method of analysis, as described by

Moustakas (1994), to analyze the study data. Following data collection and transcription,

I read the transcripts to begin understanding the principal messages expressed during the

interviews. I used the qualitative analysis software program NVivo 10 in the analysis of

the data. NVivo assists in organizing the data according to identified commonalities or

themes among participant responses (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The use of NVivo also

facilitates the organization of supportive excerpts for identified themes (Bazeley &

Jackson, 2013). I sorted and coded the study data based on the themes that resulted from

the interview responses. Throughout the process, I continually interpreted any deeper

meaning that was evident from participants' words. I conducted the data analysis with the

goal of answering the following research question: What are the lived experiences of

executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and

leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities?

The aim of the study was to formulate a textural and structural description of the

experiences cited among study participants. This information is useful to further inform

feminist and gendered leadership theories by recounting the lived experience of Nigerian

women in leadership. I based this study on analysis of data, and use the modified Van

Kaam method of analysis, which Moustakas (1994) explained in his discussion of

analytical methods. Moustakas described a 7-step data analysis procedure for use in

phenomenological research. I followed the first four of these steps, and used a modified

approach for the remaining steps of the analyses. The subsequent section lists the first

four steps prescribed by Moustakas, which were a part of the analysis. The fifth step is

where this modified approach begins, and explains the specific procedures used for this

study.

Horizontalization is the first step in this form of data analysis. During this step of

the process, I annotated every statement relevant to the participants' experience. This

process requires that the researcher review the interview data and recognize important

statements that clarify and describe how each participant experienced the phenomenon

(Moustakas, 1994). The second step of the Van Kaam analysis is reduction and

elimination. During the second step, I assessed each expression and identified whether its

inclusion is necessary in describing the topical phenomenon. The aim of this step is to

eliminate redundant or vague expressions, and reduce the data to only that which adds

informative value (Moustakas, 1994). The third step in this process is the clustering of

core themes of the experience. The purpose of this step is to arrange the data into themes

that represent the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). I used NVivo at this stage

of the analysis to assist with the organization and grouping of the data.

The fourth step of the process involves validation of the core themes of the

experience. Through this process, I confirmed the accuracy of the themes and their

representativeness of the participants' experiences as noted by Moustakas (1994). During

the last step of analysis, a composite description is created (Moustakas, 1994). In this

step, I generated an overall description of the experience to form a combined presentation

of the *essence* common to the phenomenon. I used NVivo to facilitate the organization

and classification of data during this process. I highlighted the responses commonly cited

among participants' reported experiences. Highlighting common responses is intended to provide a descriptive summary and explanation of the phenomenon. This explanation should enable a reader to better comprehend and identify what it is like to experience the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

According to Anderson (2010), qualitative research is highly reliable and valid when performed correctly. As Thomas and Magilvy (2011) explained, validity in qualitative research is referred to by a variety of nomenclature, including the term credibility. Credibility, in qualitative research, is the extent to which results reproduce a true and accurate description of the participants' experiences (Kornbluh, 2015). A study is credible if the results are so accurately described that an individual with the same experiences would readily recognize the phenomenon under study (Kornbluh, 2015). There are several methods that can be used to improve the credibility of a study. In this study, I encouraged participants to provide honest and candid information throughout their interview. I also prompted participants to give additional elaboration for any responses that warranted explanation.

To further promote the study's credibility, I recorded each interview using an audio recording device, and later sent them to a qualified third-party for professional transcription. I used transcript review to confirm that the recordings were accurate, in line with Harper and Cole's (2012) recommendations. Participants in the study each received a copy of their transcript taken from the recording. I encouraged participants to review

their transcript to verify whether it presented an accurate depiction of the meanings they intended to convey. In addition, I asked participants to engage in member checking upon thematization of the transcripts. In this phase of validation, participants reviewed the thematized findings and provided input regarding the accuracy of the themes and that I had captured the meaning of what was said. Participants who disagreed with the thematic findings provided guidance to a better representation of their actual lived experiences. For cases such as this, participant responses guided the revision to a theme, and participants received these revised themes once more for final review. If the participant responded that the theme was better representative of their experiences and perceptions, I compounded it with the final results. If the participant did not feel that the revised theme was better indicative of their perceptions or experiences, I continued the process until they feel that their views are accurately portrayed.

By attaining saturation, the study's findings are credible through the assurance that the final themes conform to and fully represent the data as discussed by Fusch and Ness (2015). To ensure that data reached saturation, I assessed each theme as I added data from subsequent participants. When additional data ceased to add new themes, and instead further supported the existing themes, I considered the data saturated, as Fusch and Ness proposed. I also identified discrepant or contradictory findings during data analysis. I discussed these findings among the other identified results to ensure that the entire breadth of participant perspectives was been represented. The concept of epoché, or bracketing, helped to moderate personal biases to the highest degree possible (Moustakas, 1994).

Transferability

Transferability is the ability of the findings to transfer to other contexts (Kornbluh, 2015). Previous researchers have agreed that the assurance of generalizability is not cause for concern in qualitative research. This is based on the purpose of qualitative studies, in which the aim is to describe a unique phenomenon or experience rather than a broad generalization that describes the overall population (Hatch, 2010). Instead of the researcher, it is the reader who determines the degree of transferability for a qualitative study (Kornbluh, 2015). In providing thick and detailed description, readers can make judgments about the study's findings and their ability to transfer or apply to different settings (Hatch, 2010).

Dependability

Dependability is the capacity to demonstrate that a researcher would discover similar results if replicating the study using the same context, methods, and participants (Shenton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that credibility and dependability are fundamentally related concepts. They argued that, if a study is replicable, the validity of the study is inherently increased. To establish dependability, I used an audit trail in the study method, whereby I documented all procedures and processes in the collection of data both electronically and in the research paper itself. I noted the dates and time of events and activities in the audit trail.

Confirmability

Confirmability is equivalent to the concept of objectivity, as it exists in quantitative studies. According to Thomas and Magilvy (2011), conformability results

from the establishment of credibility, transferability, and dependability in a study. To achieve confirmability, the results of the study must be a direct representation of the participants' voices, and biases must be strictly controlled. Participant responses should exemplify the specific themes and subthemes that emerge during data analysis so that biases do not reflect on the findings. Reflexivity is an extremely important concept when considering the confirmability of the study. It was necessary to set aside any preconceptions or biases and focus on the specific experiences described by participants during interviewing. To bolster the study's confirmability, I followed the conversations with participants rather than leading conversation during the interview process. My sole role during interviewing was to prompt as much detail as possible from the interviewee, and to ask for clarification when necessary as discussed by Thomas and Magilvy.

Ethical Procedures

The protection of participants is a major responsibility of the researcher when human subjects are recruited for data collection (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In this study, I designed all procedures to abide by the prescriptions set by the Walden Institution Review Board, as well as all relevant federal regulations. I informed participants of any known risks they may face in the study prior to their participation. Participants received a consent form with all the study details pertinent to their involvement in the study, which they signed before they were allowed to participate (see Appendix B). Participants received this form via e-mail prior to the interview, and I asked that they sign the form before the interview began. If participants had any questions about the consent form, I allowed them as much time to ask questions as necessary upon

meeting face-to-face. When participants felt that their questions were answered sufficiently, I asked that they sign the form and return it to me. I also provided them with a copy of this form. I informed all participants that their participation in the study was voluntary, and ensured that they understand their right to withdraw at their discretion and with no penalty. All data collected during the course of the study will remain confidential so that I protect the identities of participants. I also assigned pseudonyms to all participants, such as Participant 1. I will maintain interview materials, including audio recordings and interview transcripts, within a locked filing cabinet in my home office. Digital material will remain on my personal password-protected computer. I have limited access to the raw data to myself, the transcriptionist, and the research committee. I will store the data for a period of 5 years. At the end of this time period, I will destroy the study data by shredding all physical copies of data and erasing electronic data.

I conducted this study within my current field of employment. Because of my employment within the study setting, there was a working relationship with some of the participants in the study. I had no supervisory relationship with the study participants. For this reason, I have no reason to believe that power differentials influenced the participants in any way. I also guaranteed participants that I would not include any identifying information in the presentation of findings. I informed all participants that participation in the study was voluntary. Participants did not receive incentives for their participation, and I assured them that the choice not to participate would not result in any adverse effect.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I presented a detailed explanation of the methodological procedures that I used in this study. I also presented the data collection and analytical procedures for the study. My intention with this study was to explore the challenges and strategies of management and leadership positions for Nigerian women, as gathered from an analysis of their lived experiences. Through this inquiry, I aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning how Nigerian women overcome challenges as they carry out the dual role of career and family. In Chapter 4, I will present the findings and results from the modified Van Kaam analysis. I will also present the thematic analysis of the obtained data, along with the comprehensive findings of the research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. There is a conflict between career advancement and family because of the multiple roles Nigerian women fulfill (Agi, 2014; Kahkha et al., 2014). In this research study, I examined the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. Because a lack of literature pertains to a Nigerian women's multiple role experience, I had the goal of assessing the lived experiences of Nigerian women in leadership and management positions in this study. This was done in order to outline the challenges Nigerian women faced and the strategies they employed to overcome these challenges while balancing their multiple roles (see Agi, 2014; Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012). I used a modified Van Kaam analysis and a thematic analysis to analyze the collected data. The one central research question that guided the research study was, What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities?

In this chapter, I will explain the research setting prior to discussing the participants' demographics. Following that, I will provide an outline of the data collection procedures along with the steps of data analysis. In Chapter 4, I will also

present the evidence of trustworthiness followed by a thorough examination of the research study's findings.

Research Setting

The participants selected both the locations and venues, as they were convenient for the participants and me. All interviews took place in private rooms of restaurants selected by the participants and agreed on by me. I conducted the interviews between December 2016 and January 2017, and all were audio recorded. Each interview session lasted between 45 to 65 minutes.

Before the interviews, I conducted preinterview screening for the eligibility and suitability of participants. After determining the eligibility, I sent a formal consent letter to all participants by e-mail to secure their consent before the interview. Each participant signed the consent form before the commencement of his or her interview. I assured the participants of the confidentiality of their identities and information to create confidence, trust, and a relaxing environment. The semistructured interview approach with open-ended questions helped the participants to discuss and describe their experiences as they pursued the dual role of career and family responsibilities. After each interview, I played back the audio recording, transcribed them into Microsoft Word, and saved them to a password-protected computer.

Participant Demographics

I selected participants based on the eligibility criteria outlined on the informed consent form. The eligibility criteria included, (a) must be 18 years of age or older, (b) must be a Nigerian woman, and (c) must have engaged in the dual role of career

development and family maintenance. Table 1 outlines each participant, their job title, the

date the interview occurred, and how long the interview lasted.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant number	Job title	Interview date	Length of interview
Participant 1	Lecturer and professor	December 6th 2016	50 mins
Participant 2	Senior lecturer and math professor	December 8th 2016	55 mins
Participant 3	Senior lecturer and English professor	December 11th 2016	60 mins
Participant 4	Deputy police commissioner	December 13th 2016	55 mins
Participant 5	Doctor and manager	December 16th 2016	57 mins
Participant 6	Nurse and executive manager	December 18th 2016	55 mins
Participant 7	Head nurse	December 20th 2016	45 mins
Participant 8	Marketing manager	December 23rd 2016	60 mins
Participant 9	Lawyer	December 28th 2016	54 mins
Participant 10	Hospital administrator	December 30th 2016	55 mins
Participant 11	Banker	January 3rd 2017	58 mins
Participant 12	Manager	January 5th 2017	50 mins
Participant 13	Auditor	January 8th 2017	65 mins
Participant 14	Manager	January 9th 2017	55 mins
Participant 15	Estate surveyor	January 10th 2017	54 mins

Participant 1

Participant 1 was a lecturer and university professor. As a university professor, she was required to publish articles both locally and internationally to maintain her high academic standing. She felt people within academics did not care about gender and did not feel as if disparities existed between genders in academics. Despite that, she did acknowledge academia did not recognize "that women are battling with two big issues: family and career."

Participant 2

Participant 2 was a senior lecturer and a math professor at a university. Similar to Participant 1, she was also required to conduct research and publish her work for her job. Participant 2 felt she had to work harder than her male counterparts did to "fit in properly into my career." She reported she worked hard "to avoid my gender being a hindrance to my success" and felt that there were times "this gender issues sparks me to work harder."

Participant 3

Participant 3 was a senior lecturer and English professor at a university. She also had to conduct research and publish articles to maintain her position at the university level and even spoke about attending "seminars, conferences, [and] workshops" in addition to her publications. She did not perceive any gender differences and did not feel as if disparities existed between the genders in academia. She did mention "social issues," which she defined as "specific issues not direct to any gender." She stated, "this is seen when some people will just want to frustrate your work."

Participant 4

Participant 4 was a deputy police commissioner. She encountered two role transitions from the beginning of her career to her current positions. First, she was a working woman and when she got married she became a working wife. Once she became a mother, she became a working mother. When asked if any differences occurred in her job based on gender, she reported she was "able to play all the roles my male counterparts could play and at the same time managing my family." She even stated she used to challenge the men in her field, "that anything a man can do, a woman can do it better."

Participant 5

Participant 5 was a medical doctor and a general manager. She grew into her position as a general manager from being a doctor and assuming more leadership positions prior to becoming the general manager. She was an assistant medical director and then the chief medical director prior to her current position. She did not feel as if any gender differences existed within the medical profession but did feel that some subtle gender issues occurred as she began her ascendency to higher leadership positions. She reported that as time went on she "gained the respect from my male colleagues."

Participant 6

Participant 6 was a nurse and executive manager. She advanced her career through education and experienced some gender issues. She stated, "the men in the school where I did occupational health nursing believe that a woman cannot do better [then they could]. But surprising to them, at the end of the program I was the best

graduating student." Because of her success, she stated the men "thought I probably bribed my way through" because they could not believe a woman could perform at a higher level.

Participant 7

Participant 7 was a head nurse. She began her career as a teacher to aspiring nurse and eventually moved into another sector. She moved her way up to her current position as head nurse and said she was "promoted to this highest level in nursing unit." When asked about gender differences, she stated, "nursing as a career has appreciable number of females." Despite that, she acknowledged "males being males would still want to dominate all the top managerial posts." As a result, she "was eager to pursue academics not minding the stress involved" because of ability to continue moving up the managerial ladder.

Participant 8

Participant 8 was a marketing Manager. She worked her way up into her current position through additional education and certificate programs. She mentioned "there is this notion that women are weaker sex and their education ends in the kitchen." Participant 8 acknowledged, "my experiences being a woman can't be smooth because they say 'we are in a man's world.'" Despite that, she thought "the Almighty God has wired women in a special way by making them multi-tasking."

Participant 9

Participant 9 was a lawyer. She began her career within the private sector but found she wanted more court involvement and moved into the public sector. She did not

believe that gender differences existed within her career and stated, "as a female lawyer, we do the same thing men do." She acknowledged although she never experienced gender issues, she knew her colleagues within the private sector did complain about such issues. Participant 9 did not expand on or provide any further detail.

Participant 10

Participant 10 was a hospital administrator. She worked at several hospitals and helped with organizing the day-to-day functions of the hospital. When asked about gender differences within the workplace, she shared that she had not faced any gender issues. She worked with several other women who looked to her as a role model, and she provided advice to them about developing themselves in the workplace.

Participant 11

Participant 11 was a banker in the private sector. She reported that gender within banking was "neither here nor there. Gender can help you to rise or lead to your failure in the banking sector." This was especially true for individuals who worked as marketers in the bank because they "do all sorts to attract rich customers." As a result, she stated, "some of the male counterparts can be very jealous" of the women.

Participant 12

Participant 12 was a manager at a medical laboratory. She stated, "I don't see myself as a woman, I believe so much in myself. I believe I can do things myself so I don't consider gender an issue." She did not see her gender creating barriers to her ascension as a manager. She even spoke about her boss and said, "I have a boss who respect and believe so much in women."

Participant 13

Participant 13 was an auditor. She previously worked within the banking sector but felt as if she did not have time for her family and herself. As a result, she moved into her current position to better manage her time. She felt as if "gender has no place here" in the workplace because she is expected to perform just as her male counterparts are expected to perform. However, she did acknowledge that there were times when she wished "I were a man because of stress" balancing both family and career.

Participant 14

Participant 14 was a manager of a cosmetics firm. She previously worked within the insurance industry but did not enjoy the work or the small paycheck. Because of this, she moved into a receptionist position that provided opportunities for upward mobility and she found the work more rewarding. She faced envy and gossip from her coworkers when she began moving up into leadership positions but remained focused on her own goal. She did not feel as if her gender was the reason she faced this envy and jealousy, but rather that this treatment was because she was focused and moving up in the company.

Participant 15

Participant 15 was an estate surveyor for the public sector. She reported the field she worked in was a male-dominated profession. Despite that being the case, she "was able to rise in my career." She did face an issue when she went into labor for her second child, in which her boss issued a query for her because she was taken to the hospital. It

took her coworkers, a letter from the hospital, and her husband to have the query
rescinded.

Data Collection Procedures

I recruited 15 women who were in executive positions in their work place at the
time of the study. The potential participants were contacted through e-mail and telephone
and asked if they would like to participate in the study. For those who agreed to be part of
the study, I used the screening questions to ensure they met the criteria for the study.
Thereafter, participants received informational invitations to inform the purpose of the
research study, the inclusion criteria, the expected procedures, and the benefits and risks
associated with this research study. The informational invitation was conveyed through e-
mail by the informed consent form to enable participants to review the information prior
to the interview.

I met each participant for the interview at the location and on the date and time
scheduled by the participant. I did not commence the interview until I received a signed
informed consent form. Before the beginning of the semistructured interview, I answered
questions or concerns that participants had and collected the signed informed consent
form. I obtained permission to audio record the interview from each participant. I also
took notes on any pattern of behavior observed during the interview process to gather
data on nonverbal cues. At the end of each interview, I thanked the participant for
participating and informed them that they would receive e-mails for transcript review and
member checking. I transcribed the audio-recorded interviews and e-mailed the
participants a copy of their transcript for them to review for accuracy.

Data Analysis

I performed two data analysis techniques: the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis and the thematic analysis. I used these two data analysis plans to complement the data gathered and used in a linear fashion. First, the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis was used, followed by a thematic analysis to name, define, and explain the themes that resulted from the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis. Following the details of the data analysis procedures is a detailed account of the results for each data analysis plan in the same order as they were presented in this data analysis.

Modified Van Kaam Phenomenological Analysis

After generating the interview transcripts, I read the transcripts to become familiar with the principal messages expressed during the interviews. I then uploaded the transcripts into NVivo 10 to begin the data analysis. Per the Chapter 3 outline of the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis, I adopted the first four steps as outlined by Moustakas (1994) prior to the modified remaining steps. I employed the first step of the modified Van Kaam analysis, which dictated that the researcher annotates each description of the participant's experience. As I reread the interview transcripts, I identified important statements that revealed how each participant experienced the phenomenon. I coded these statements within the NVivo 10 software. I coded each interview by first reading through each interview transcript and identifying the meaningful units within the narrative. I then labeled these meaningful units with a phrase or term that reduced the meaningful unit to the underlying meaning. This process

continued for each participant and these phrases or terms were compiled into a list for

each participant. I used NVivo to create and compile these codes. Table 2 demonstrates

how I completed this process.

Table 2

Raw Data and Applicable Codes

Raw data	Applicable code
"An average person expects a woman to work hard and even harder than her male counterparts because of her double role."	Double role
"The main solution to this conflict resolution is careful planning and good time management."	Importance of planning and time management
"I mean you cannot do it alone you need the cooperation of your spouse if you want to succeed."	Supportive husband is crucial
"Career development is usually stressful when the kids are young but becomes less difficulty as they become independent and do things on their own."	Kids' independence makes career development easier
"It was very stressful for me but I had no choice but to balance my roles."	Balancing my roles

After coding, I began the second step of the modified Van Kaam

phenomenological analysis—reduction and elimination. I assessed each expression and

statement to determine whether its inclusion was necessary to describe the phenomenon

or not. I also eliminated redundant or vague expressions and statements that did not add

depth to the phenomenon. By parsing down the data to only that which added important

information, I ensured that the remaining information was pertinent and substantive to the

phenomenon and experience. I closely examined each participant's list and reduced or

eliminated redundant codes. Codes similar to one another were combined and labeled

under an inclusive title. I then examined the codes to identify any relationships that

existed between the codes and clustered them into themes. I used NVivo to facilitate this

process and outlined this process in Table 3.

Table 3

Themes and Their Respective Codes

Theme	Codes
Multiple roles make balance difficult	1. Double role, 2. Balancing my roles, 3. Lack of time, 4. Child rearing is difficult to balance, 5. My roles at school, work, and home, and 6. Exhaustion
Supportive husband is key to balance	1. Supportive husband is crucial, 2. Balance made easier because of husband, and 3. Having unsupportive husband makes balance difficult
God supports and guides me	1. Faith gives me strength, 2. I seek God's guidance, 3. God supports me, and 4. I accomplish all things with God's help
Planning and time management	1. Importance of planning and time management, 2. Good planning mitigates conflicts, 3. Kids' independence makes career development easier, and 4. Not enough time
Importance of education	1. Education is necessary for career development, 2. Difficulty of child rearing and pursuing education, and 3. Stress is worth it
Be focused and work hard	1. Hard work will pay off, 2. Focus on goals, and 3. Do not pay attention to gossip
Have good house help	1. house help does household chores, 2. children need someone to watch them after school, 3. having good house help makes balance easier, and 4. I can better plan and manage time with good house help

Once I completed the second step, I began the third step of the modified Van

Kaam phenomenological analysis. In this third step, I clustered the fundamental themes

relevant to the whole experience. Then, I was left with themes that were representative of

the experience's essence (Moustakas, 1994). I used NVivo to organize and manage the

resulting themes from the data. Once I compiled a list of the codes, I began the fourth

step of the Van Kaam phenomenological analysis. This step included the validation of

themes that represented the experience's essence. By reading through the whole dataset

with the list of themes in mind, I confirmed the existence of the themes.

After this step, I created a composite description of the experiences. This

composite description of the experience presented the common essences of the

phenomenon by highlighting the themes that emerged from participants' responses. With

the help of NVivo, I selected key words and phrases common to the themes and used

them to substantiate the composite description. Highlighting these common responses

provided a descriptive summary and explanation of the phenomenon. Next was the

procedure of thematic analysis to further name, define, and explain the themes in detail.

Thematic Analysis

After the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis, I began to accumulate

the key words and phrases identified with each theme. After naming each theme, I began

defining each theme within the context of the surrounding phenomenon. I created

descriptions for each theme and explained the potential connections between the themes

as described by participants. I used the themes generated from the Van Kaam

phenomenological analysis to form the basis of the thematic analysis. I explored the

discrepancies and differences that existed among participant responses during this phase

of the analysis. The purpose of using these analysis approaches was to allow the reader to

better understand and identify what it is like to experience the phenomenon.

<div align="center">**Evidence of Trustworthiness**</div>

Credibility

Throughout the data collection process, I encouraged participants to provide

honest and candid information about their experiences. When participants provided vague

or discrete information, I prompted participants to provide additional information and

elaborate on their responses. I audio-recorded each interview and sent them to a neutral,

professional, third-party transcriptionist after conducting the interviews. After receipt of

the transcripts, I provided the transcripts to participants to check for alignment and

corrections. Once participants returned the transcripts with their corrections, I corrected

the transcripts electronically.

After thematization of the transcripts, I reached out to participants to enlist their

help member-checking the results. I encouraged participants to provide their input

regarding the accuracy of the themes and to ensure that the overall experience was

accurately reflected. I also used data saturation as a technique to establish the

trustworthiness in the research study's findings. During the data collection, additional

interviews ceased to add new themes after 13 interviews and instead supported existing

themes. After this occurred, I identified the data as saturated. I also used bracketing to

moderate potential biases to the highest degree possible.

Transferability

I used the technique of thick description to establish the transferability of the research study's findings. In doing so, readers can make judgements about the study's findings and their ability to transfer or apply to different settings, contexts, and circumstances. According to Kornbluh (2015), it is the reader who determines the degree of transferability for qualitative research.

Dependability

I used the technique of audit trail to establish the dependability of the research study's findings. I documented all procedures and processes in the collection of data for this dissertation. I compiled a table outlining the steps taken during data collection and data analysis.

Table 4

Data Collection and Procedures

Step	Action	Date/Time	Location	Communication format
Step 1	I invited potential participants to participate in the study attaching consent forms	November 17–19, 2016	My home	E-mail and phone
Step 2	I received completed consent forms	November 20–25, 2016	My home	E-mail
Step 3	I conducted participants' recruitment screening exercise	November 26–30, 2016	My home	E-mail
Step 4	Participants and I agreed on interview schedule, time and location	December 1–5, 2016	Location selected by the participant	E-mail and phone
Step 5	Prior to beginning of interview, I met with participant, answered any questions of concerns and collected signed consent form	30 minutes	Location selected by the participant	In person (face-to-face)
Step 6	Semistructured interview took place after I obtained permission to audio record the interview	Between 60–70 minutes December 6, 2016–January 10, 2017	Location and time selected by the participant	In person (face-to-face)
Step 6	I thanked participants and informed that interview transcripts will be sent to them by e-mail to review/member checking	5 minutes	Interview location	In person (face-to-face)
Step 7	I transcribed interview audio recording into Microsoft Word	December 10, 2016–January 14, 2017	My home	In person (face-to-face)

(table continues)_

Step	Action	Date/Time	Location	Communication format
Step 8	I sent interview transcripts to participants to review for accuracy	December 20, 2016– January 21, 2017	My home	E-mail
Step 9	Participants reviewed transcripts and sent back me	December 27, 2016– January 25, 2017	Participant's home or work	E-mail
Step 10	I received transcripts from participants and addressed all feedback	January 5– 31, 2017	My home	E-mail
Step 11	Research thematized interview data and sent to participants	February 2– 6, 2017	My home	E-mail
Step 12	Participants reviewed/ member checked and sent back to me	February 6– 10, 2017	My home	E-mail
Step 13	I received thematized results, addressed participants' feedback/comments	February 10–15, 2017	My home	E-mail

Table 4 shows the entire interview period, from recruitment to member-checking of the final results. This process is detailed to ensure the research study's findings are dependable.

Confirmability

I used reflexivity to establish the research study's findings as confirmable. I set aside preconceptions and biases during the data collection and data analysis steps of the research process. I did this so that I could focus on the specific experiences described by participants during the interview.

Thematic and Composite

Because I employed two data analysis plans for this research study, I chose to present the results in two sections. These sections correlate with the data analysis procedures and mimic the same layout of the data analysis section in this chapter. The first section details the composite description of the experience, as outlined in the modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis. The second section details the thematic results, as highlighted in the thematic analysis. Each section provides depth and breadth to answering the central research question for this study: What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities?

Composite Description

Seven important themes emerged from participants' experiences and responses: (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, (c) God supports and guides me, (d) planning and time management, (e) importance of education, (f) be focused and work hard, and (g) have good house help. I describe these themes in a narrative fashion with participant excerpts placed throughout. These themes appear in a different order from how they are listed in the table because of the interwoven nature of the composite description.

Nearly all participants reported balancing career and family was a difficult adjustment. Participant 1 stated, "the academic system does not recognize that women are battling with two big issues; family and career." Many participants did not feel as if their employers recognized the multiple roles that they played inside and outside of work. The

participants faced challenges of not having enough time to get things done around the house and of rearing children, if they had young children when pursuing their careers. Participant 15 had a unique experience when she went into labor with her second child after she started working. She said:

> I had an interesting experience when I had our second child. I was taken to the hospital by my neighbor when I was in labor. I gave birth on getting to the hospital. At the office, a query was issued by my boss within that 24 hours of my admission. My boss did not bother to call to inquire the reason for my absence before issuing the query. Apparently, it was because I did not take permission from my office considering the complex nature of labor. It took the intervention of my colleagues and a medical report from the hospital to counter the query notwithstanding that my husband had gone to report to my office a day before.

A few participants had to face queries from their bosses when they were late or could not come in because of outstanding medical issues. Participant 15 described a strict work environment where the outside roles that she had to contend with were not taken into consideration. She felt as if her employer was not concerned with what may have prevented her to come into work, but that the employer was only concerned that she did not come into work.

Participant 3 was in the middle of pursuing her master's degree and shared her experiences of having children. She said:

> My kids were always sick. I will from school rush straight to hospital, sleep there and at the same time doing my assignments. In the morning, I bathe them and

zoom off for my lectures or test. In school, I will be on the phone inquiring about

their health progress.

Even though she was pursuing her degree, she was still responsible of taking care of and

tending to her children. She did acknowledge that "it became fun at my PhD level"

because her kids were more independent (Participant 3).

Most participants recognized the importance of education for the advancement of

their careers. Although each woman faced challenges when pursuing her education,

several participants acknowledged that the stress would be worth it in the end because of

the opportunities for advancement and higher pay. Participant 7 shared how she "was

eager to pursue academics, not minding the stress involved" because of the eventual

payoff. Participant 8 was similarly minded and stated that "I knew quite well that if I can

get the certificate, I will improve in my career which means increase in salary and better

standard of living for us. I therefore did not relent."

A few participants transitioned into different careers after trying to balance career

and family in their first career. After finding the first careers difficult and stressful, they

discussed the transition so that they could have more time to balance their roles more

easily. Participant 7 was one such person, and said:

I was initially in the academics specialty of nursing when I and my husband

considered the need to change career to one that will suit us. . . . I was able to

handle my family as well as pursue my career without grudges. The love for my

job increased. The love for my family increased. I became successful.

Participant 13 had a similar story because she transitioned from a stressful job to a more flexible for her. She felt that her previous job made it "difficult to strike a balance between my family and my career" (Participant 13).

Many participants spoke about the additional responsibilities women had to attend to that men did not have. Most women had the responsibility of doing their grocery shopping during their limited free time, whether after a long day of work or on the weekends. Participant 15 recognized a "huge workload of house chores: cooking, laundry, taking care of the kids." As a result, several women spoke about the importance of having house help to prepare meals and do the chores around the house while they were out of the house working.

This was the case for Participant 1, who shared, "Sometimes I stayed back in my office to tidy up my job before going home especially when I know that people in the house can handle part of family role. . . [and] to assist with some house chores." It was a common experience of executive Nigerian women to enlist the help of others around the house because they reportedly came home late into the evening and did not want to worry about preparing a meal for their family. It was also beneficial to have house help to watch the children, because typically school would let out hours before either parent was home from work. One participant mentioned it was important for her to "show love to my house helps . . . I had good house helps because I showed love to them. They reciprocated by treating my children with best care" (Participant 7).

Despite the service the house help provided, participants unanimously agreed the most important aspect of maintaining and balancing both career and family was having a

supportive husband. Several participants noted when their spouse was not supportive, it was a challenge to balance their career and family. One participant in particular stated, "Lack of support from partner is the main problem that makes balancing a home and career development difficult" (Participant 6). A supportive husband and partner meant that each parent could rely and lean on the other to help take care of the household when the other was kept at work late or could not pick the children up.

In many cases, participants spoke about their husbands' support for their careers and educational pursuits, even when faced with opposition from their families. Participant 6 acknowledged that her husband's family was against her going back to school to pursue a career. She said "they complain[ed] to my husband that why would he allow me to go back to school considering the tender (young) children. My husband did not listen to them for I had his support" (Participant 6). One participant shared, "I was thirty years when my husband reminded me that he had promised my late dad to train me to the highest academic level" (Participant 3). Although his family did not understand why he would want her to get an education and a career, he remained steadfast in keeping the promise he made to her father.

Several participants spoke about the importance of good planning and time management, saying it was vital for their success. Two of participants spoke about the importance of good family planning for their lives because it made their ability to balance career and family easier. A couple of other participants mentioned the timing of having children and pursuing a career was also important for their ability to balance career and family. Participant 2 reported,

> The role of my husband support and consent to my career advancement was key. In my own part, it was smooth because I had his support and backing. I also had the support of my kids. It was also smooth because my kids had become independents during my career pursuit. All my children were grown up by the time I started building active career and they were interested in my progress. This interest of theirs ignites me to power on.

Participant 6 was such a person and reported, "I had my kids at a very tender age before going for nursing. Therefore, during my career development, I had no challenges in that area." This occurred because children were going to school and were old enough to be able to take care of themselves for the few hours before their parents came home from work, with the assistance of the house help. One participant highlighted her experience with this: "Career development is usually stressful when the kids are young but becomes less difficult as they become independent and do things on their own" (Participant 13).

> However, several participants spoke about having young children while pursuing their career. The participants felt the timing of career pursuit and child bearing made career pursuit more difficult. Participant 15 mentioned when she began her career it "was hectic because I had to combine my career with children bearing and family maintenance. I had to contend with my child been *(sic)* sick and taken to the hospital." Another participant reported,

> My experience was stressful. This is because I was a young reproductive mother catering for young kids and at the same time pursuing my career. I did not relent. I had to further my academics so as to get promotions. (Participant 7)

Many participants spoke about their faith and belief in God during their interviews. They

felt as if He supported and guided them in their pursuit of balancing career and family.

Participant 1 aptly stated, "It takes the grace of God, sorry I am also a pastor and as such

I must stress God's help, to manage these two roles. That is, God has to play a role in

balancing family and career." By staying focused and working hard, they entrusted their

feelings of stress onto Him and felt as if they were able to succeed because they relied on

God. One participant stated that she prayed "to God to give me the grace and strength not

to relent but to work harder" (Participant 5). Participant 4 described,

> It is by the special grace of God that I reach the top of my career. He gave me the
>
> grace to juggle my career well.... I believe so much in God and as such placed all
>
> my problems on Him and to my amazement I was soaring high in my career and
>
> family. As soon as I placed my trust in God, every other thing fell in place. He
>
> gave me wonderful wisdom and understanding.

For several participants, God was their ultimate provider and felt that their belief was the

cornerstone for their achievement and success. Participant 5 further explained she

succeeded "because I committed everything to God." This was especially true for those

participants who faced challenges with regard to balancing their education, career, and

family. Participant 1 reported the strategy: "I adopted for balance was praying to God for

direction and adopting good time management." One participant felt that she did not have

much conflict because "I am blessed. God is always helping me" (Participant 3). This

was because the participants felt that God would not give them something they could not

deal with and believed resources and techniques were available to them to manage their

responsibilities. Participant 8 illustrated this point succinctly when she said, "I always believe in this saying that it is not by my might or power, but the special grace of God."

Thematic Results

Seven themes emerged from participants' experiences and responses to the interview questions. These interview questions were designed to gather sufficient information to answer the central research question: What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities? The thematic results outlined and detailed the emergent themes in sequential order. These themes presented in the thematic results were (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, (c) God supports and guides me, (d) planning and time management, (e) importance of education, (f) be focused and work hard, and (g) have good house help.

Emergent Theme 1: Multiple roles make balance difficult. Participants spoke about the multiple roles they had inside and outside of the home. They spoke about the challenges and difficulties they had when entering their careers and trying to juggle the multiple roles they had. Participant 7 reported that this balancing act "was stressful. This is because I was a young reproductive mother catering for young kids and at the same time pursuing my career. I did not relent." Although many women did not face the same challenges or difficulties that other women did, uniform feelings and thoughts occurred. The participants felt stressed when trying to balance those roles and found it difficult to find enough time to give each role its appropriate time. The participants had to fit the

roles of mothers, wives, caretakers, students, and career women to their children, husband, extended family, and siblings. Participant 4 faced three distinct stages of developing her career:

> During the process of developing my career it was stage wise. I will start by saying that I had a role as; working woman, then as a working wife and finally as a working mother. The most important thing is that I managed these three stages with keen interest. As a working woman, I gave my job all it takes. I had all the time in the world to focus on my job. This is also applicable when I became a working wife where I set the priorities right. Finally, as a working mother, the role becomes more complex. In this stage I applied complex techniques to manage it.

Participant 4 spoke about how focusing on only one role could be detrimental because "for you to be successful, you must make a balance" between career and family. Those participants who worked within academics acknowledged that, "academics is one of the most challenging profession. It involves a lot of sacrifice to get to the top" (Participant 3). A lot of sacrifice was involved because the nature of academics requires not only lecturing and teaching, but also research. Their research is often expensive and time consuming, but is necessary for them to keep their positions. Attending "seminars, conferences, [and] workshops" (Participant 3) were also time consuming and expensive ventures they had to do on top of their publishing endeavors.

This theme connected with the themes (a) supportive husband is key to balance, (b) planning and time management, and (c) have good house help. Many participants

spoke about how critical it was to have a supportive husband because it made the household run more smoothly. Cooperation between a husband and wife was noted as an important strategy learned to balance career and family. This occurred was because wives and husbands worked out schedules, such as picking up children from school, dropping children off, or attending school events and activities.

This finding complimented the theme have good house help, because several participants spoke about how valuable their house help was for them. For many of those participants, it was a relief to know someone was at the house who was taking care of the children and doing household chores while they were at work. In fact, it allowed one participant to spend extra time at the end of the day to tidy up her office before heading home. She knew someone was at the house who was taking care of some household chores. This connects to the theme planning and time management because participants had to be aware of their responsibilities at work and at home. When participants were faced with complex role transitions, such as becoming a working mother, they had to learn techniques that allowed them to manage their roles. Participants had to have good planning and time management techniques to keep everything in order, inside and outside of the home.

Emergent Theme 2: Supportive husband is key to balance. Every participant spoke about the importance of having a supportive husband to balance career and family. Participants spoke about how their husbands would help either take the children to school or pick them up from school, and how they would share the responsibilities of the household with them. The participant talked about the support they received from their

husbands and guidance they received, especially when they were concerned about having enough time to get everything accomplished. Participant 1 felt that, "without the support of one's husband, it is usually a challenge to balance the two roles." The participants spoke about the ways their husbands believed in them and helped them reach the heights they wanted to in their careers. Participant 2 stated how her "husband was very supportive from the very first day" of pursuing her career. In fact, she felt that her "husband's support and consent to my career advancement was key" (Participant 2). Although a couple of women shared how their husbands complained about their dedication to their jobs, they were able to resolve those concerns by being diplomatic. Participant 4 explained how her husband "initially complained that my job is taking most of my time. I tried to make him see reason that it's a matter of time, things will normalize. He listened." In return for the support, belief, help, and guidance they received from their husbands nearly all participants made it a point to mention that it was vital to give the husband the top priority and to tend to his needs.

This theme was explained to connect to the multiple roles made to balance difficult themes previously; however, this theme connected to the themes (a) importance of education and (b) have good house help. Many participants spoke about how their husbands were supportive of their pursuits to seek higher education. One participant in particular spoke about this at length stating, "My husband was very supportive during this formative stage [of schooling]. He supported me financially morally, emotionally and otherwise. He wanted me to be what I dream and have passion for" (Participant 3). Participant 3 was quite different from other participants because her husband made a

promise to her late father about training her to the highest academic level, a promise he kept even when his family was not supportive of her going back to school. Other participants were equally supported by their spouses while they were seeking their degrees or continuing their education through certification programs. Each participant's husband was supportive and understanding about enlisting the help of others around the house. For several participants, getting good house help was pivotal in managing their time appropriately. Those participants did not have to worry, for the most part, about their children or worry about going to pick them up and bring them to their place of employment. Because they did not have to worry or leave work, the participants could spend valuable time getting ahead at work and not fret about household chores.

Emergent Theme 3: God supports and guides me. When participants faced challenges that extended beyond their control, they sought advice and guidance from God. Their faith and belief in God helped sustain them during periods where they were stressed out and finding it difficult to balance career and family. One participant mentioned that during those moments, she would "pray to God to give me the grace and strength not to relent, but to work harder" (Participant 5). For a couple of participants, praying to God for guidance and support was the most important strategy they had to balance career and family. Participant 1 mentioned,

> it takes the grace of God, sorry I am also a pastor and as such I must stress God's help, to manage these two roles. . . . There were many challenges maintaining the two roles but my main solution was prayers.

Participant 4 shared how when she put all of her concerns, stress, and worries on God's

shoulders, she began achieving heights in her career and family life. She said, "as soon as

I placed my trust in God, every other thing fell in place. He gave me wonderful wisdom

and understanding" to achieve success. Another participant shared an important saying

that she found motivational and meaningful, "It is not by my might or power, but by the

special grace of God" (Participant 8). The theme God supports and guides me connected

to the theme be focused and work hard in that both of these themes speak to strategies

that participants adopted for themselves to succeed in balancing career and family. These

two themes share little direct connection to other themes.

> **Emergent Theme 4: Planning and time management.** The majority of

participants spoke about the strategies of good planning and time management as crucial

to balancing career and family. These were important skills that nearly every participant

shared as being a key for their ability to successfully balance career and family. One

participant even shared, "There are more things that could make balancing family

maintenance and career development difficult but it could all be summarized to lack of

planning" (Participant 5). Participant 10 stated,

> There were conflicts initially [with maintaining the two roles of career and
>
> family] but. . . I [sat] down and plan my affairs and that has really helped me. The
>
> main solution to this conflict resolution is careful planning and good time
>
> management.

Participant 1 likewise stated that when she faced challenges between the two roles, she

adopted "good time management" to balance those. When asked about advice they would

give to upcoming female career seekers who want to advance their careers while also maintaining a family, all participants noted either time management or planning as a part of their advice.

Included in the theme of planning and time management was a topic covered in the composite description, the timing and planning of children during career pursuit. Several participants spoke about the additional challenges they faced because they had young children while either in school or pursuing a career. Few participants experienced the additional challenges early in their education or career pursuit and also experienced a drastic change when they were pursuing postgraduate degrees or career advancement when their children were older. Some participants began pursuing either education or career advancement after their children were at an independent age and commented on the increased ease that brought to them. Those who waited to pursue careers until after their children were independent found career advancement or educational pursuit to be much easier. Participant 9 spoke about how important "good family planning" was for her because "bearing two children made it easy for me" to be there for them.

Many participants spoke about how beneficial it was for them to have good house help because it gave them an opportunity to stay behind at work and prepare for the next day without any worry. Participants could plan for the house help to perform certain tasks that needed done while they were at work. Participant 15 stated, "not having a good help at home" was a challenge she faced when balancing career and family, and recommended that a person "should use house help options that is convenient for them." Participant 7

said it was important for her to have "good hands at home to help with the house chore" because her "husband was very busy then" with his own career.

Emergent Theme 5: Importance of education. Getting an education was important to many participants' ability to achieve higher leadership positions. As a result, the participants recognized the necessity of continuing their education, whether through degrees or certifications. Oftentimes, participants would use the early morning and late evening to get their schoolwork done if they were still working. The participants had to make sacrifices, such as losing sleep, to balance their responsibilities to their family, to their professors, to their bosses, and to themselves. Participant 8 shared her experience with pursuing a career and a university program while also keeping her responsibilities to her husband and children. She stated,

> I was not sleeping well. I used to put my legs in water to be awake. Sometimes I take coffee. I stayed awake studying and doing my assignments. I needed to pass the examination [so that I could become a manager].

Participant 8 used tactics to try to keep herself awake after working and taking care of her family. Participant 1 ran into an issue with the "lack of electricity" and noted how her "husband made sure there was enough fuel for the generator for me to do my academic work at night." Participant 8 spoke about her dedication to her education when she stated,

> The difference is that I love my family and at the same time passionate about my job. This made me to stay awake to burn the midnight candle as I read for my graduate courses. This is because I knew quite well that if I can get the certificate,

I will improve in my career which means increase in salary and better standard of

living for us. I therefore did not relent.

She knew that by improving her education, she would be able to provide more for her

family. As a result, she "did not relent" (Participant 8) in her pursuit. Although

participants did speak about their own educational pursuits, some participants spoke

about their children's education as well. Participant 1 stated that her concern was "of

supervising the children's homework and their academic progress" because she would

work long hours and get home late. Participant 3 mentioned,

I had six (6) teenagers three (3) of whom had gotten admission into the same

university I was doing my PhD. We come and leave school together. At home, we

had a big library. Once we are done with food everyone faces her books in the

library. By the time I was through with my PhD, they had also graduated.

For Participant 3 "it was easier" when she became a PhD student to balance career and

family because her children could tend to themselves while she was in school if they

were not going to the same university that she was going to.

This theme connects to the theme supportive husband is key to balance. This

theme also connected to the theme multiple roles make balance difficult. The additional

role of being a student made it difficult to balance career and family, even though it was a

temporary role. Nonetheless, participants who sought additional education faced more

challenges to maintaining their roles to their family and to their bosses.

Emergent Theme 6: Be focused and work hard. Participants offered up the

advice to upcoming career women regarding how to advance their career while

maintaining their family to be focused and work hard. Nearly every participant

mentioned those two words of advice to those women and several participants spoke

about how important being focused was for them to advance their careers. This was

especially true for women who had to compete for leadership positions and faced

jealousy or envy when promoted. Participant 14 experienced this first hand:

> When I started the job, I was focused because I believe in myself and knew where
>
> I was going. When promotion started coming, my colleagues where amazed and
>
> some started gossiping. I was not shaken by their side talks, I stayed focused and
>
> maintained my integrity. . . . I endured all the insults I received from work.

For her, it was important to not let the comments affect her in the slightest. Participant 2

shared, "I also work hard to avoid my gender being a hindrance to my success.

Sometimes unconsciously, this gender issues sparks me to work harder." She

acknowledged a possibility of her gender acting as a barrier or hindrance to her career

advancement existed and worked hard to make sure that it would not prevent her from

achieving her goals. Participant 3 shared her experience as an undergraduate who knew

that she wanted to be a lecturer. She said, "When I started developing my career as an

undergraduate, my friends discouraged me. They advised that I start business which is

more lucrative and money yielding but I refused because I was focused." Participant 4

believed her dedication and hard work allowed her to reach "the climax of my career"

within the Police Department. Participant 5 knew that her passion for her job in the

medical field "helped in keeping me focus[ed]" and "work[ing] harder." This theme was

explained to connect to the theme God supports and guides me, because these two themes

were strategies participants adopted to help them succeed in balancing and maintaining career and family.

Emergent Theme 7: Have good house help. Several participants spoke about the support they received from having good house help within the home. This was a viable option for several participants because their work responsibilities took a large portion of their time during the work week. Despite that, participants knew responsibilities and chores still needed to get done at home. While they could not be at two places at once, participants could enlist the help of others while they were at work to perform needed household function and complete household chores. This proved to be advantageous for participants because they could take the extra time after work to tidy up their offices and organize their next day without worrying about their children or husband. The house help could cover the necessary functions, such as cooking, laundry, cleaning, and taking care of the children while both parents were at work. A couple of participants spoke about showing their house help love so they would "reciprocate [and take] good care of my children" (Participant 14). Participant 7 felt the same way about "show[ing] maximum love to your house help so they can reciprocate to your kids." This theme was shown to connect to the themes (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, and (c) planning and time management.

Summary

Seven important themes emerged from participants' responses to the interview questions. The themes were (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, (c) God supports and guides me, (d) planning and time

management, (e) importance of education, (f) be focused and work hard, and (g) have good house help. These seven themes provided a comprehensive answer to the research question: What are the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions with relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities? Nearly all of the emergent themes connected with one another and helped establish an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of executive Nigerian women regarding the challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions as they related to their domestic lives and responsibilities.

I outlined the research setting and provided a detailed description of each participant. Following this was a step-by-step outline of the enacted data collection procedures followed by a discussion of the data analysis methods. I used two data analysis plans, a modified Van Kaam phenomenological analysis and a thematic analysis. Following the data analysis was a description of how I established trustworthiness in the research study's findings. This was followed by an exhaustive review of the research study's findings, separated into two sections. These two sections were the composite description and the thematic results. I will discuss the research study's findings in conjunction with extent literature in Chapter 5. In Chapter 5, I will also discuss the limitations and implications of the research study's findings.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

An increasing number of Nigerian women play the role of family provider, operate as breadwinners, and engage in careers and entrepreneurship to provide income for their families (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014; Minguez, 2012), but they also must maintain their traditional family responsibilities (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012; Davison & Burke, 2011). Previous researchers suggested working Nigerian women often experience a conflict between career advancement and family roles (Kahkha et al., 2014), but a gap in the literature relates to the experiences of Nigerian women as they navigate their way through dual roles of managing a career and family. The challenges of working on the multiple tasks of providing for the family, seeking career development, and attending to family responsibilities hindered the career advancement of Nigerian women, necessitating an examination of Nigerian women who had surpassed these barriers to work in management (Mordi et al., 2013; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013).

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. Qualitative interviews with 15 participants revealed the following themes, (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, (c) God supports and guides me, (d) planning and time management, (e) importance of education, (f) be focused and work hard, and (g) have good house help. This chapter will include my interpretation of the findings of the study, limitations, recommendations, and the implications of the study.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, I will present my interpretation of the findings. It will also include an evaluation of the findings within the context of the literature review. I organized the interpretation of findings around the seven themes revealed through the modified Van Kaam phenomenological data analysis.

Fundamentally, this study revealed a lack of fit between the traditional societal roles demarcated for Nigerian women and modern women's pursuit of careers, especially leadership roles, which can hinder women's career advancement. According to Bankole and Adeyeri (2014) and Minguez (2012), women's entry into the Nigerian workforce was an economic necessity in the past decade. The results revealed that the change was complicated by Nigerian cultural norms, which required that women maintain their households nearly singlehandedly, despite the additional time they needed to dedicate to their careers.

The experiences of the participants revealed that the rapid shift from the Nigerian traditional cultural practices to a modernized Western practice has led to an exacerbation of role conflict for women entering the workforce. This finding is similar to results of previous studies; Bankole and Adeyeri (2014) and Kahkha et al. (2014) also noted a conflict between career advancement and family roles that hinder Nigerian women's career development. In previous studies, including Guendouzi (2006) and Oates (2007), role conflict has been shown to increase absenteeism, create turnover in the workplace, and negatively affect the family; however, the sample in this study included only women

who had been successful in learning how to navigate the cultural expectations with the demands of work.

The challenge the participants noted was that working mothers have difficulty separating their roles. The participants think about work while at home, and think about home while at work. Because of this conflict, the results of the study were in accordance with McIntosh et al. (2012), who found that some mothers do not have a strong commitment to a career after having children. This was especially true as the traditional, expected lives of married Nigerian women largely centered on bearing and caring for children, attending to their husbands, and maintaining the household (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014). These roles constitute a full-time commitment, and when combined with full-time duties in a career, participants felt they may have to sacrifice the integrity of one sphere or another.

The difficulty maintaining a career and household mentioned by these women was consistent with Ogbogu (2009), who found female PhD candidates with families had low publication rates, difficulty balancing teaching responsibilities and research, less than sufficient time for publication, heavy teaching and administrative responsibilities, and lack of promotion. However, the women in the sample in this study did not often cite their career as a sacrifice that they had made; this may be because the women selected for this study were in leadership positions, and therefore, had found a method to succeed despite their family conflict.

The sacrifices required to maintain the challenging balance between family and career took an emotional toll on the participants. The experience of managing dual roles

as mothers in executive positions generated feelings of satisfaction when women did

well. At the same time, the women experienced feelings of being overwhelmed,

frustrated, and worn out. Thus, the dual roles generate a wide range of competing

feelings, as women are faced with incompatible needs and responsibilities. The stress

experienced from these conflicts may result in significant physical, psychological, and

mental health issues (Jawahar et al., 2012; Schieman & Glavin, 2011). This is contrary to

Grönlund and Öun's (2010) suggestion that working wives experienced less mental and

psychological distress than housewives.

One noteworthy aspect that emerged through the interviews was that the

participants used the concept of respect to balance their roles. For example, Participant 8

noted that although her husband initially did not support her work, she respected him.

When asked to advise future women attempting to enter the workforce, Participant 7

noted that women should maintain similar respect for everyone in the workplace. This

use of respect was consistent with Agezo and Hope's (2011) findings that society

expected women to be quiet, respectful, and cautious when speaking and conducting

themselves. The successful women in this sample may have used adherence to this norm

as a method of ingratiating themselves to a potentially hostile workforce.

Another strategy the participants used to manage a career and family was to

compensate being away during the time they were at home through additional emotional

support for their family. The women, in their interviews, suggested that they needed to be

vigilant to maintain the same levels of care for their families as if they were dedicating all

their time to household duties. This kind of emotional support for their children,

husbands, and even the hired help in their homes was a method women used to maintain the cultural expectations of a good home for their families. Adekanye (2014) noted this balancing is considered a precondition for women's success.

The findings of this study suggest traditional cultural expectations may limit women's abilities to participate in the workforce, as reflected by the responses in the second theme regarding the need for a husband's support. In a patriarchal structure, husbands or fathers monitor women's labor within marriage and household relationships (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). Because patriarchal culture is pronounced in Nigeria (Bankole & Adeyeri, 2014), an essential support for a successful career was from the participants' husbands. This study's findings supported Adekanye (2014), who noted some Nigerian women may not feel empowered until they have the appropriate resources and support to engage full-time in career advancement.

Some women noted that their husbands were not supportive, while others attributed their success to their husband's support. Women without support from their husbands often noted men resented the time women had to spend to develop their careers, listing specific complaints. On the other hand, women with support from their husbands heaped praise on the men who supported them. The intense praise from supportive husbands may be a result of such support contradicting the cultural norms in Nigeria (Adekanye, 2014). Okonkwo (2013) noted Nigerian men are encouraged in their career ambitions early on, while the women are taught to expect to rear children and care for a home. For a man to support the career pursuits of his wife, including sometimes taking on household duties, is therefore a fairly revolutionary act against the patriarchal culture.

This change supports Kahka et al.'s (2014) findings that Nigerian culture was undergoing rapid change in response to women's entry into the workforce.

The results related to this theme supported that women felt religion was an essential factor in their success. As a result, the women noted they had to maintain a godly existence, including being "prayerful" (Participant 3). This religious humility, ascribing their success to a higher power, may be a method for maintaining cultural expectations of women in Nigeria, namely that they be cautious and humble (Agezo & Hope, 2011). The participants also discussed how when they felt overwhelmed, asking God for help got them through their struggle with balancing work and home duties. In addition, the women in this study did not pray to God to lessen their work duties. Instead, they prayed that they would be able to work harder to meet these demands.

Another strategy the participants noted that helped them to address their dual roles was the use of extensive planning and time management skills. All the participants mentioned planning and time management as necessary advice for women looking to balance career and work. A few participants highlighted these were the most important skills to be successful.

Most participants mentioned the need to be an effective planner of day-to-day duties, with the acknowledgment that they might need to sacrifice personal care duties to manage time effectively. Despite working full-time, the women were most often responsible for domestic tasks, such as cleaning, cooking, and child care. Some of the women had outside help in the home, but it remained the women's responsibilities to manage and maintain these employees. The women who participated in this study

accommodated their multiple roles by sacrificing their personal activities, such as sleep, exercise, family activities, and hobbies, in an attempt to manage their multiple roles.

This theme also included women having an overarching plan, specifically family planning. Women cited the need to delay having a career until after they had children so they could dedicate themselves to the pursuit of the career and not have to take a break. This delay was consistent with Obamiro and Obasan (2013), who found women delayed their careers until after children were more independent. In support of McIntosh et al. (2012), many participants admitted men's careers were not affected in the same manner as women's because family obligations and duties did not create career interruptions for them. This study revealed that the participants understood the significance of prioritizing the needs of their children and setting professional boundaries to integrate work and family duties, which may heighten the level of emotional conflict experienced by working mothers.

The results showed education was important to many participants' abilities to achieve higher leadership positions. The participants recognized the necessity of continuing their education whether through acquiring degrees or certifications. The ready availability of education for women mentioned by the participants was consistent with the idea that women's access to education is continually improving in Nigeria (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011; Mordi et al., 2011; Obamiro & Obasan, 2013).

Some of the participants viewed education as a method of securing their positions, which they felt other men were constantly trying to take. For example, Participant 7 referred to education as a method through which she broke the barriers that she

experienced in her ascent into leadership positions. This was consistent with Adekanye's (2014) suggestion that women became empowered in the Nigerian culture by gaining a sense of self-worth, in the case of this study, through education. The participants acknowledged that higher education added additional stress to their workload, but that it was nevertheless a valuable time investment for securing their and their families' futures. This reported relationship was consistent with researchers who noted increased access to education led to women acquiring occupations and managerial positions previously reserved for men (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011; Mordi et al., 2011; Obamiro & Obasan, 2013).

The results supported the proposition in feminist theory that women have not fully realized their capabilities because many were not given opportunities (Fischer et al., 1993). Many of the participants agreed when given opportunities like education, females tended to do well in leadership roles. The participants noted that obtaining additional education may augment their current stress, but that the time investment would pay off in work security and future promotions.

One essential finding participants noted as a means of being successful was maintaining focus and drive. Participants in this study emphasized that they were not asking for special treatment in their promotion, or for less work. This finding suggested the Nigerian women in this study were dissimilar from Huang and Cheng's (2012) Western sample, as the female participants in their study expected more flexibility in their schedule than did the men so that they could balance work and home lives. This finding might suggest that one strategy for successful Nigerian women was to accept that

they should not expect that their organizations would bend to their requirements. Instead, the women had to work hard and make sacrifices elsewhere, as discussed in the planning and time management theme. This was also consistent with Odunaike's (2012) findings that African women had to work twice as hard as their male counterparts because of their dual responsibilities.

A potential interpretation of this finding is that women in leadership positions in Nigeria are responding to the belief that men may see them as less legitimate, as only being promoted to meet government standards, or as a result of deceit. This interpretation was consistent with Bevelander and Page (2011) and Braun et al. (2012) who attributed the low percentage of women in top management positions to misconceptions and potential conflicts with stereotypical definitions of women's abilities. The results may also help to explain Kolade and Kehinde's (2013) and Thomas's (2013) assessment that the glass ceiling in Nigeria was an essential barrier to women's success. Thomas suggested although women were better represented in junior and middle management, men primarily occupied higher ranking leadership positions, despite women's equal or superior length of service and quality of experience. Kolade and Kehinde also noted negative stereotypes existed in the Nigerian workforce that could hinder women's success.

The women in this study combatted negative cultural expectations and assumptions about their success by asserting that they are equal to the task, or even in some cases, compensating, as Participant 7 did, by saying that women are better than men in their career fields. The findings related to this theme were inconsistent with Eagly and

Wood (1991) and Fischer et al. (1993), who suggested female entrepreneurs differed

from male entrepreneurs in levels of assertion, with males tending to be more assertive

and desiring to lead, and women tending to be more communal and selfless. Most

participants in the study believed that given the same opportunity, women would do their

best to compete effectively with their male colleagues. This included, consistent with

Agezo and Hope's (2011) findings regarding women leaders in Ghana, replicating the

leadership behaviors that men in leadership positions displayed. Rather than ascribing to

traditional gendered norms, the women seemed to either shun their gender or to ascribe to

an aggressively driven and hyper-focused career mentality.

Conversely, a few participants admitted their workplaces had some robust policies

in place that were women-friendly. The participants acknowledged having programs and

projects designed to assist women, especially those with low-incomes, in their effort to

achieve economic independence. These reports supported that the workplace situation for

women in Nigeria may be improving.

The women who participated in this study worked hard at lifting up other women

in less privileged positions in their workplaces. In general, participants reported wanting

to influence change regarding gender issues, women's engagement, the glass ceiling, and

workplace improvement policy, among others. Some participants felt they could not

wield wide-scale change, but that they could make small changes in their roles. For

example, participants noted they could change the communication media, introduce

women and child-friendly policies in their workplaces, provide emotional and career

support for their female coworkers and students, and campaign for nondiscrimination and

women's rights. The feeling that they must work to support other women was consistent with Nwafor and Akubue's (2008) findings that women in leadership positions were the elites in the hierarchy of educated women and they were the voice of the less privileged women. In addition, it was consistent with Adekanye's (2014) proposition that women in careers gained empowerment by feeling that they could affect social change.

The finding was inconsistent with Ogbogu (2009), who noted a lack of mentors for women and a lack of infrastructural support as issues for women in the workplace. Instead, the findings revealed that once women ascended to powerful positions, they used these positions as leverage for increasing the status of other women in their organizations. This finding may explain why researchers have noted the Nigerian workforce has made significant strides toward gender equality in recent years (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011; Mordi et al., 2011; Obamiro & Obasan, 2013). The additional labor required for lobbying for women's rights and mentoring is another task that the working women in this sample had to balance with their work and home duties.

A strategy that the participants used to overcome the dual roles of home and career was the use of hired help within the home. The staff assisted with planning and time management, and helped the women stay late or prepare for their work days if necessary while at home. The participants noted that not having effective help significantly affected their abilities to balance home and work duties. Conversely, knowing their children and household were well-cared for enabled the women to maintain their focus and to get ahead in their careers. House help assisted women in managing the cultural expectation that they would have a well-kept home.

Participant 7 noted maintaining house help also required an emotional investment from the women so that they would maintain the same level of care that the career women would give to their own household. This additional emotional work on the part of career women is something that might be an additional task that women must take on to maintain the ideal of successfully balancing household duties and careers. This type of additional emotional labor, in the workplace and at home, is something that future researchers may choose to focus on in their work.

Limitations of the Study

I observed several limitations of the study. First, the sample of Nigerian women with families in leadership positions came from two cities in Nigeria: Lagos and Abuja. The cities are located in southwestern and central Nigeria, respectively. This limitation resulted from financial and time restraints. However, Nigeria has 25 major cities, so additional participants from other cities may have different experiences than those in this study.

Another limitation was that the sample comprised of married women in executive positions in Nigeria. This purposive sampling provided a focused viewpoint of women who had been successful in navigating their careers and families, despite the struggles they noted. Examining women who had entered the workforce and quit because of not being able to balance career and family duties, or women who had sacrificed family for their career, might provide a different, valuable viewpoint on this topic.

The final limitation of this study was an issue with recruitment and interviews. The potential participants for the study were reluctant to share their lived experiences

regarding this topic. Many of the women were apprehensive and skeptical about participating in this research, despite having anonymity. Moreover, many participants arrived late to their interviews or missed their appointments. It may be that the participants who did provide interviews were especially motivated to do so, either because of having an extremely positive or an extremely negative experience. The participants also may over-represent some of the feminist activism, such as implementing woman-friendly policies at work or mentoring other women in their careers, because they possessed motivation that other women in similar positions did not have.

Recommendations

Future researchers interested in similar projects may consider addressing some of the limitations of this study. For example, researcher may choose to gain participants from other Nigerian cities. The researchers may also want to consider how they can address skepticism and apprehension from the potential participants to gain a more representative sample. Potential methods of doing so might be offering some compensation for the participants' time and describing the implications for social change more effectively to potential participants in recruitment materials.

The sample for this study was drawn from Nigerian women in leadership positions. As such, the researcher revealed strategies for women who had been successful within the Nigerian workforce. Future researchers should consider shifting the scope of their studies to those women who were unsuccessful at navigating the challenges of Nigerian women's dual roles. This could include qualitative examination of women who had left the workforce as a result of their inability to meet the demands, or those who had

suffered negative family consequences, such as divorce, as a result of their career pursuits. Isolating these different samples could help to identify different themes depending on the situations of Nigerian women, which in turn could inform later quantitative studies of larger populations of women.

Future researchers should also investigate some of the novel findings uncovered in the responses to this study. The lived experiences of the women in this study included several additional roles and tasks required of successful career women, such as maintaining a relationship with hired help, remaining consistent with gender expectations for their husband and coworkers, and engaging in gendered conversations about success and work. Future researchers might explore these additional responsibilities more thoroughly in specific studies. Qualitative analysis of conversations only about these topics might further uncover feelings about these additional roles and actions that Nigerian women engaged in, which were not available in this study, as they were not the focus.

Implications

Implications for Researchers

This study contributes to the existing knowledge base surrounding conflict between career advancement and family roles. Researchers called for acceleration of research regarding the experience of African women in management and leadership because of the paucity of literature on this topic (Alhassan & Akudugu, 2012; Fakeye et al., 2012; Kahkha et al., 2014; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). The potential exists that the government and nongovernmental organizations could partner with Nigerian research

institutions to further unveil the experiences of Nigerian women in the workplace, particularly regarding their handling of their family and career responsibilities. Researchers should consider providing further contributions to this field.

This study, based on its restricted sample of only women in executive positions in Nigeria, afforded an in-depth, specific view of a certain sample of Nigerian career women. I suggest future researchers continue to conduct similar research among specific subsets of Nigerian women. These might include women who attempted to enter the workforce but were unsuccessful, women who sacrificed families for career, and family women who looking to enter the workforce. Through a series of studies, or one large scale qualitative study of each individual group's experiences, researchers will continue to gain clarity regarding the exact experiences of these women that may not be gathered if researchers were to group all Nigerian women together.

Implications for Practice

I found that mothers who are committed to raising their children and maintaining their family are also equally as committed to providing quality leadership by developing their careers. The results were significant in that I addressed some of the gaps in the existing literature by highlighting experiences of Nigerian mothers in executive positions and the intricacies of their dual roles. The information about their experiences may help employers to understand and show empathy toward working mothers and the stress that results from dual role overload and work-family conflict.

The results from this study also revealed women experienced significant negativity within the workplace based on their being female. The participants in this

study resultantly noted they should be respectful and work harder to demonstrate that women are capable and successful workers. The submissive behaviors showed another duality that women leaders in Nigeria had to navigate was the difference between traditionally masculine leadership behaviors and traditionally female responses to primarily male coworkers. Organizations operating in Nigeria should also work to introduce programs designed to lessen the burden of these experiences for Nigerian women in the workplace. The women in this study whose organizations implemented equality and women-friendly policies noted they experienced significantly less gender discrimination.

Some implications for government practice also exist. According to Okoyeuzu et al. (2012), empowering women involves making contributions to the economy and the labor market policies. Initiatives and programs need to be developed to assist women with the transitions and challenges in the labor market. Based on this study, the government should design, formulate, implement, and enforce policies pertaining to women's work engagement in both the private and public sectors. These policies should capture and highlight roles of working mothers and the intricacies of the conflicts between career advancement and family maintenance, as discovered in this and previous research. Potential government-sponsored programs include workshops, seminars, and pre-marital and marital counseling for women for addressing the problem in view of the changing roles of women in Nigeria. The government should also add women's leadership preparation programs in school curricula to inculcate early the issue of women's dual roles, with a specific focus on coping strategies in work and family.

Implications for Social Change

The research results offer implications for social change, as well. The results of this study may be of value to women in Nigeria, especially those seeking to pursue careers successfully while maintaining families. If women's participation in the workforce can help to break the cycle of poverty in developing nations like Nigeria (Kolade & Kehinde, 2013; Okonkwo, 2013; Thomas, 2013), then it is important to understand their lived experiences, including barriers to participation and strategies for success. Through this study, I call attention to the need for consideration of the unique dynamics of career women and their dual roles on many levels. The results provide information to various groups of Nigerian women regarding the unique experiences of Nigerian women with families who have reached a leadership level within their organizations.

This study offers important information to women considering entering the executive level while raising children. The results of this study may help women see the possibility of pursuing a demanding career and still having a meaningful marriage and family life, thereby living a fulfilled life. This study also highlighted potential barriers, such as maintaining childcare, addressing a disapproving husband, and experiencing sexism within the workplace, as well as strategies to overcome such barriers. Given that this information came from women in executive positions, it may provide a workable solution for family women looking to advance their careers in the Nigerian workplace.

For Nigerian women who are currently in executive positions, this study provides insights and offers the opportunity to make informed decisions with regard to combining

career and family maintenance. By sharing the results of this study, I aimed to encourage women in leadership roles within their organizations to continue to serve as mentors for women entering the profession, opening opportunities for increased support and dialogue among working mothers who are career seekers. The information may also prompt these women to continue to advocate for women's rights within their organizations, thereby increasing equality. This participation could further affect social change by improving the working conditions for women in Nigeria, while providing empowerment for the women who engage in these social projects (Adekanye, 2014).

This research could aid Nigerian policymakers in developing policies and practices tailored to the lived experiences of women playing leadership roles in both private and public sectors. The government may benefit from larger investments in the development of more flexible practices, including mentoring and support programs aimed at increasing and maintaining the well-being of career women. The participants in the study noted they are lobbying for better workplaces for women and mentoring upcoming women unofficially. The government encouraging these behaviors by offering recognition or small stipends for female mentors, could continue to increase women's participation in the workforce, thereby addressing the economic downturn in Nigeria. This would result in increased quality of life for all Nigerian citizens.

The results from this study highlight the importance for employers to demonstrate empathy toward working mothers and the stress that results from conflict between career advancement and family roles. This research may help develop family-friendly work policies, such as flexible work schedules, childcare assistance, and flexible leave policies,

which may benefit working mothers and enhance their satisfaction and productivity. This study provides discussion and debate for further researchers regarding women's career advancement and family maintenance.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Nigerian women regarding challenges and strategies in management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. A gap in literature existed regarding the experiences of Nigerian women as they navigate their way through dual roles of managing a career and family in an environment that has progressed, but is still hindering women's progress. As a wife, mother, manager, and researcher, I was challenged when my literature search uncovered that insufficient information existed on the perspectives of African women in management and that the call for the scholarly community to fill this gap in knowledge went unanswered (Mordi et al., 2013; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2013). Prior researchers in the literature suggested the multiple roles expected from women constrain their ability to fully engage in the workplace because of their responsibilities as wives and mothers (McIntosh et al., 2012).

This study revealed seven important themes that emerged from participants' experiences and responses. These themes included, (a) multiple roles make balance difficult, (b) supportive husband is key to balance, (c) God supports and guides me, (d) planning and time management, (e) importance of education, (f) be focused and work hard, and (g) have good house help. The findings of this study suggested mothers in executive positions are motivated by their strong commitment to their personal and

professional roles. Participants revealed they executed their dual roles with integrity and effectiveness and the level of conflict experienced because of competing work and family demands.

The results provided a picture of the lived experiences of Nigerian women. As Nigerian women negotiate roles between career and family, seek higher education, and strive for career advancement, they must navigate a social climate and a political system that does not adequately promote or support women in the workplace, but rather places women in traditional roles. The conflict between work and family obligations is more acute for women than for men, and women are charged with various additional maintenance roles to ensure that their homes run just as well as if they were at home. These roles included maintaining a relationship with hired help and navigating their husbands' potential disapproval as well as tending to chores and childcare.

Feminist theorists explain the differences in the achievements of men and women by noting that women have not fully realized their full capabilities because they do not receive the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Moreover, the Nigerian patriarchal cultural model could limit a woman's ambition and perceptions of the opportunities available to her, leading to a cultural stigma in the workplace, including lessened expectations and lessened promotion opportunities. The results of this study reinforced this assumption, suggesting that the female Nigerian executives who participated in this study demonstrated deference to their husbands and coworkers through respect and humility despite their success. The participants also noted working hard and developing strategies to overcome barriers that resulted from the need to

maintain a well-functioning home while simultaneously investing significant resources in career success. These dual roles were not similarly expected of men, and thus constituted a burden for women that might hinder their career successes.

When coupled with additional work tasks that women had to complete to compete and thrive in a sexist system, such as obtaining higher education and lobbying for women's rights, it was clear that the Nigerian women had significant additional tasks beyond the full-time jobs of career and household maintenance that also constituted a barrier for their career success. Strategies for overcoming this additional workload included planning and time management, prayer, and hard work. It was noteworthy that women did not mention strategies or resources available to them outside of their own personal investment, such as help from their organization, community, or government.

This study provides personal and professional implications for women navigating the roles of management and leadership positions in relation to their domestic lives and responsibilities. The results revealed mothers in executive positions respond to the demands of their roles by employing coping strategies to counteract the stress of the demands on their time and energy. Nevertheless, the women noted that some degree of personal sacrifice was required to maintain both a household and a career.

The results from the study show gender equality and equal access to opportunities for women to advance socially, economically, and politically remain an issue in Nigeria. Some of the participants noted the need for income pushed Nigerian women into multiple roles as mothers, wives, and providers, which prompted the need to create a conducive and enabling environment to encourage women's development in economic progress.

The participants recommended mentors, workshops, seminars, and premarital and marital counseling among others for women to address the problem in view of the changing roles of women in Nigeria. Finally, further study regarding the experiences of Nigerian women in executive positions will help to identify more complex factors that cause the conflict between career advancement and family roles that hinder Nigerian women's career development. Future researchers should also identify more sustainable dual professional roles solutions for future women who are interested in pursuing a career while maintaining a family.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

Interview Guiding Questions

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding your lived experience being a professional in your field, while also balancing the responsibilities of family maintenance.

I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about your experiences in the working role of a professional in the field.

What kinds of experiences have you encountered in developing your career?
 -How, if at all, have you perceived gender roles to fit into this experience?

How would you describe your experience in family maintenance while developing your career?
 -What are some of the challenges you face with this?
 -Is there anything that you feel makes balancing family maintenance and career development difficult?

Additional probes should be used as necessary:
 -I noticed that you mentioned ___; could you tell me more about that?
 -Thank you for that response; could you tell me a little more about…

Did you consider the challenges of maintaining career and family before choosing your career?
 -How have those decisions helped you in balancing career & family?
 -What strategies did you adopt to ensure good balance between family and career?
 -Did you seek for advice/support? And are they?

 Did you experience conflict in maintaining the two roles: career and family, and how did you resolve it?

Did you make sacrifices to get to this level in your career? And what were they?

What gender issues did you encounter while pursuing your career?
 -How did you overcome them or are they still there?

From your experience what are the challenges or factors that hinder women career advancement?
 -How did you handle those challenges to get to this executive level?