FUW-IJMSS
ISSN: 2635-3539 (Print)
2384-6224 (online)
Open Access
Google Scholar

CRITIQUING OF MEN'S LEADERSHIP DOMINANCE IN NIGERIAN ORGANISATIONS: A REVIEW OF SELECTED BANKS IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS BENUE STATE

[1] Elizabeth M. Momoh,

Department of Business Administration

Kwararafa University, Wukari.

[2] Prof. Sunday I. Ukpata

Department of Business Administration

Federal University Wukari, Taraba State.

[1]lizzymomoh4real@gmail.com, [2]ukpata@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study is on the critiquing of men's leadership dominance within the banking sector with specific focus to three selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis. The study's primary objective was to determine the level of men's dominance in leadership positions in the selected banks. The secondary objectives were to identify factors contributing to the men's dominance in the banks selected. It is also to ascertain the reasons for the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and decision making in these banks. Using a survey design, data was collected through questionnaires from 222 employees (137 men and 85 women) cut across various management levels. Key findings show that male dominance is a complex phenomenon having been imbedded in cultural beliefs within these banks which favored male leadership. A gender bias in leadership selection is a primary barrier to women's advancement. Work-life balance was a limiting factor to career progression for women. Besides, no clear policy to tackle gender diversity concerns. Moreover, mentorship and sponsorship programs were more accessible to men which further increased the leadership gap. The study found that underrepresentation of women in leadership negatively impacts organizational outcomes as they are denied access to avenues that will enhance their innovations from a pool of diverse perspectives needed for overall performance and competitiveness in the market place. This study underscores the need for Nigerian banks to adopt gender-inclusive practices and policies so as to advance an equitable gender workplace and world in general. The study recommends an enforced compliance towards the gender-balance debate recommending sanctions for defaulting organizations. It also calls for the

establishment of mentorship, sponsorship, and professional development avenues for upcoming females to grow in their career ladder, thereby narrowing the gender-gap.

Keywords: Men's leadership dominance, banking organizations, decision-making and leadership.

Introduction

Men have occupied and dominated the leadership and decision -making space for decades. This dominance by men has been a long-standing topic of interest in both academic and professional organizations (Tegel, 2022). In Nigeria as in many other counties, leadership positions in key sectors are predominantly held by men, (Pepple, Oseghale, Nmecha & Nwagu, 2024). It is important to understand the implications of this trend, especially as issues bordering on gender disparities becomes a central theme in corporate governance and global development. In the Nigerian banking sector, which plays a crucial role in the economy as a primary supplier of credit making money available for people to conduct businesses, expand operations and facilitating commerce .and ecommerce, the banking sector is also a major employer of labor.

The industry is therefore key to economic growth and development considering its potential to unlock wealth. Besides, banks are involved in several other aspects of the economy such as collection of taxes, rendering foreign exchange services and many more. Leadership structures in this sector tend to reflect the broader gender imbalance seen in other industries and sectors of the economy. Despite efforts to promote inclusion, men continue to dominate top executive and managerial roles in many Nigerian banks. The dominance of men over women in leadership and decision-making covers many spheres of human existence. For instance, in the military, women in- take are very low, in education, academia, politics, board rooms men are in dominance. In a recent survey conducted by (Krivkovich et al., 2025), they maintained that men's dominance is even more pronounced in the boards of directors of large companies. Besides, the survey further avers that women face less career support and fewer opportunities to advance due to declining commitment to women's progress by employers. These findings agree with the (CIBN, 2020) report that achieving gender parity on boards have been slow.

In politics, a masculine institution, a social universe and the field of power, men have remained dominant there and the participation of women in this space is viewed as illegitimate hence not

welcomed. According to Cottais (2021), the obvious language in politics is that a "public man" is a man of power while a "public woman" is a prostitute. Consequently, men continue to dominate the corridors of power exercising it at their whims and caprices. Even in female dominated profession such as teaching and nursing, men appear to lead in leadership roles, (Clerkin, 2024).

In the financial sector of our economy with specific reference to the banking industry, the male-male dominance syndrome is not different. Nkrumah (2021), posits that on the banking pyramid, men are at the top while women occupy the base which situation has set the stage for a skewed decision-making. Interestingly, Pepple et al, (20224), posit that decision -making has significant implications on organizations, banking inclusive and by extension the economy when the management teams are diverse in terms of gender.

Men's Leadership Dominance

Men's dominance refers to the societal and cultural structures that emphasis and puts more value on men's authority and power over women often ending up in the subordination of women's roles and their contribution.

In leadership, male dominance can be understood as that idea that men have more power, influence and privilege(s) than women in leadership roles. The power distribution between the genders is tilted towards the men more than the women and is seen through certain behaviors such as, the -think-manager-think male model of leadership. According to Clerkin (2024), this phenomenon is explained as the thinking that men are more competent in leadership than women. Also, there is the thinking that men are more likely to be perceived as leaders than women. Besides, in male-dominated disciplines such as engineering, construction**,** transportation, etc., women are adjudged incompetent no matter their level of contribution and knowledge in those fields.

This study focuses on three selected banks in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State. These banks provide a lens through which to examine leadership dynamics in the Nigerian banking sector and critique the persistent male-male leadership syndrome. Although these banks have achieved significant strides in the industry and maintained strong national and international presence and influence, the gender gap in their leadership remains a notable issue.

This study seeks to ascertain the leadership structures in these banks with the aim to identifying the factors that sustain a male dominance in their leadership. It also explores the consequences of this dominance on the organizations and suggests ways to promote a more gender-inclusive leadership.

By examining these institutions, the research aims to contribute to the ongoing debate about gender equality in Nigerian organizations and demonstrate how greater gender diversity can improve leadership and organizational performance.

Statement of Problem

Despite growing efforts worldwide to promote gender equality and diversity, leadership roles in Nigerian organizations, especially in the banking sector are still largely held by men. This continued dominance limits women's opportunities for representation, career growth and advancement as well as limiting their ability to contribute to their family purses. The younger women are denied access to role models that should push them to aspire. Ironically, women constitute 50% of human resources available to most countries, Nigeria inclusive (Ukpata & Agha, 2019). The domination of men in leadership implies the restriction and underutilization of a whole segment of human resource needed for growth and development of the nation. The big question is, must the trend continue?

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to determine the level of dominance of men's leadership in the selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis. The secondary objectives include to:

(i) Identify key factors contributing to the dominance of men in leadership positions in selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State.

(ii) Ascertain reasons for the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and decision-making positions in the selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis

Research Questions

The study aims to provide answers to the following questions:

i. What is the level of dominance of men in leadership positions and the key factors contributing to their dominance in leadership positions in the selected banks in Makurdi metropolis?
ii. What are the reasons for the under representation of women in leadership roles and decision-making in the selected banks in Makurdi metropolis?

Research Hypothesis.

(Ho1): There is no significant relationship between gender representation in leadership roles and organizational performance among male and female in the selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis.

Significance of Study

The significance of this work on men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations, particularly in selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis lies in its potential to benefit different groups. First, policy makers and organizational leaders will gain insights into gender disparities in leadership enabling them enact appropriate measures and strategies to narrow the gap. Women in the workforce especially those in the banking sector will be able to recognize the barriers they face through this study and rise to advocate for more inclusive leadership opportunities. Furthermore, scholars and researchers in gender studies and organizational behavior will find this critique valuable as it adds to the existing literature on gender dynamics in leadership particularly in the Nigerian context. The broader banking industry may benefit from the recommendations made from this study which could lead to more diverse and effective leadership structures ultimately enhancing organizational performance and fostering a more inclusive work environment. The academic setting could also benefit by ensuring that females are encouraged to vie for leadership positions in the banking sector so as to balance the gender equation there.

Literature Review

Men's Leadership Dominance

Male dominance refers to the unequal power relations between men and women where men as a group hold more power and privileges compared to women. The term male dominance evolved

in the 20th century as a conceptual label to show the unequal power relations between men as a group and women as a group. This grouping is aimed to show the relative exclusion of women from the public space of economy, occupational and political opportunities when compared with their male peers. It is also intended to place value on traits associated with masculinity over those defined as feminine. These qualities include aggressiveness, violence, assertiveness, dominance for men while care giving, home keeping emotional display are associated with women.

Men dominance in leadership positions is so obvious that it has been taken for granted, (Collinson et al, 2023). Historically, management theories evolved with a masculine mindset leading to the development of organizational leadership structures that gave superiority to men in leadership roles. This trend has continued and fostered a culture of bias, discrimination and under mining of women as well as viewing their leadership as abnormal or misfit. The great man's theory of leadership, considered a male model has equally encouraged this male-male syndrome in our leadership space further increasing the gender gap. The central theme of this theory is that great men are born leaders thereby excluding women from the leadership equation. It also asserts that the history of societies is thrust on the shoulders of men. So, where are the women?

In Nigeria, the social system encourages male dominance while the patriarchal nature of the society reinforces it. This dominance is rooted in deep-seated cultural norms and societal beliefs that prioritize male authority, both in the home and workplace. Traditional Nigerian society often view men as natural leaders with women expected to focus on domestic responsibilities or support roles in the workplace (Perdue, 2016). These cultural biases extend to organizational structures, influencing hiring practices, promotion opportunities and distribution of leadership responsibilities. One key way this dominance is perpetuated is through the 'glass ceiling" effect where women encounter discriminatory and invisible barriers that prevent them from rising to senior positions, regardless of their qualifications or capabilities, (Pepple et al., 2024). Gender stereotypes play a significant role in reinforcing this barrier, with women often considered less assertive or incapable of handling the pressures of leadership. These perceptions limit their upward mobility in organizations, even in cases where they have same or better qualifications than their male counter parts (Bridges et al, 2020).

Men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations is deeply rooted in the country's patriarchal culture where men have traditionally held power in both families and societal

structure (Adamma, 2017). This cultural mindset has permeated corporate environments, particularly in industries such as banking, oil and gas and government, where leadership is predominantly male. These industries reflect the broader societal perceptions that men are naturally suited for leadership roles reinforcing gender imbalances within organizational hierarchies (Perdue, 2016). Compounding this issue is the lack of gender-sensitive policies in many Nigerian organizations. Maternity leave, flexible working hours, mentorships and sponsorship programs for women are often inadequate or completely unavailable (Light, 2024). This makes it harder for women to balance career advancement with family responsibilities, further limiting their ability to rise to leadership positions.

Moreover, male leaders often benefit from influential social and professional networks such as old boys' associations and political connections that are less accessible to women (Yates & Hughes, 2017). This exclusion from key networks significantly limits women's opportunities to advance in their careers. Historically, men in Nigeria had better access to education and professional training particularly in fields that lead to leadership roles. Although there have been improvements in recent years, this legacy continues to influence the workforce, with men still dominating in sectors that are considered pathways to executive roles. Furthermore, leadership traits such as decisiveness, aggression, and dominance are often associated with men, reinforcing the belief that they are better suited for leadership. Women who exhibit similar traits may be perceived negatively, which only serves to deepen the gender divide in leadership roles (Yates et al, 2017). In essence, men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations is a complex issue, influenced by cultural norms, organizational practices, historical antecedents and societal perceptions of leadership. Overcoming this imbalance will require a concerted effort to evolve gender-inclusive policies, challenge existing stereotypes and actively promote women into leadership positions. Without these changes, the cycle of male dominance in leadership roles will likely persist (Akanji et al, 2020).

Banks Workforce and Gender Issues in Nigeria.

The banking industry in Nigeria has evolved over the years beginning from the colonial era to date. The industry is very critical to the economic development of the nation and is one of the major contributors to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Nigeria.

Globally and in Nigeria, the banking and finance industry is dominated by men. According to Nkrumah (2021), the industry has evolved from a simplistic barter system to a modern, complex, technology-driven and internet -based, e-banking model but remains gender unbalanced, stamping the label that "the financial sector is a man's world". The research findings by (ILM,2009), confirm this position as they assert that few women are promoted to senior management positions in banking across UK banking sector also that women continue to be under-represented at senior levels in this sector.

The banking industry in Nigeria has particularly been fraught with a myriad of challenges especially as it relates to female bankers;

- Female sexual harassment, (Pina & Gannon, 2010).
- Work-family conflict (Fawole et al, 2017) cited in Shaji et al, (2021).
- Fear of workplace bullying by management or coworkers (Hussaini et al,2015) cited in Shaji et al,(2021)
- Job insecurity (Kunle et al, 2013) cited in Shaji et al, (2021).
- Pursuing unattainable financial targets with stipulated time frame (Ogechukwu, 2013) cited in Shaji et al, (2021).

Other issues that have plagued the industry and of interest to this study includes, gender imbalance on boards and in senior management positions, gender discrimination, gender cultures, occupational segregation. Besides, (Akindele, 2011), asserts that banks prefer to employ young ladies to married women. Most often, these ladies are casual staff whom they lay off easily when they fail to meet targets. The (ILO,2015 cited in CIBN, 2020), posit that, underrepresentation of women on boards, family responsibilities, gender stereotypes, masculine cultures all stand against women in the workplace and in banking specifically.

Organizational cultures such as long hours of work, absence of a flexible work schedule, the culture of presenteeism is prevalent in the banking industry.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for analyzing men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations with specific reference to the selected banks in Makurdi Metropolis is based on the Patriarchy theory.

The proponents of this theory are Simone de Beauvoir (1972) and Gerda Lerner (1986), cited in (Johri, 2023). Both scholars have significantly contributed to sharpening the theory of patriarchy, especially the work of Lerner (1986) -the "creation of Patriarchy". She argues that, "male dominance "was not always a feature of human society and that women played a crucial role in maintaining community and social power. The role of women in society was however, woefully dismissed which is why women as a majority are treated as a minority. The theory posits that male dominance over women is not "natural" or biological but the product of historical developments which can be ended via historical processes.

Patriarchy theory offers a fundamental lens for understanding men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations, with particular reference to the banking sector. This theory highlights the system of male dominance that permeates both societal and organizational structures. The concept of patriarchy is seen as similar to that concept by Karl Marx of class and class struggle. Typically, in a patriarchal system, men are traditionally placed in positions of authority while women are confined to subordinate roles, (Adisa et al, 2019). In the Nigerian societal context, this dominance is deeply embedded, reflecting cultural norms that over rate male leadership both in family and public lives. Consequently, corporate structures such as those in the selected banks are tailored along such beliefs and societal patterns thereby giving advantage to men and consistently so, creating gender disparities. The patriarchal expectations of male authority help sustain this gender gap making it difficult for women to ascend to leadership positions in these institutions, (Carbajal, 2018). Because patriarchy is a social construction, it can be overcome by revealing and critically analyzing its manifestations.

Empirical Review

Under this section, a detailed review of some scholars who did similar works have been looked at. A total of six empirical works has been considered out of which four of them are local (Nigerians) while two are foreign.

In 2023, Eke researched Women's Occupational Mobility in the Nigerian Service Sector through a Radical Feminist Perspective, focusing on gender inequality and systemic barriers faced by women in finance, technology and education. The study aimed to analyze how institutionalized practices influenced women's leadership experiences and proposed policies to promote gender

inclusivity. Using focus groups and semi-structured interviews with 31 women across different professional levels, Eke identified significant cultural and structural barriers that hindered women's advancement in leadership roles. The findings revealed persistent institutional bias that upheld male dominance in leadership highlighting the need for organizations to dismantle cultural stereotypes through monitoring and evaluation.

This research aligned closely with the current study on men's leadership dominance in Nigerian organizations. While Eke examined the broader service sector, the current study focused on leadership dynamics in selected banks in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State. Both studies aimed to critique male-male structures and emphasize the need for gender balanced policies. However, Eke's work used a radical feminist perspective across various sectors, while the current study concentrated specifically on banking, Eke employed a qualitative case study approach, whereas the current study focused exclusively on leadership within specific banks. Eke's research spanned multiple regions, the current study examined cultural and institutional barriers in selected banks in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State. Ultimately, Eke's findings provided evidence that institutional barriers inhibit women's leadership advancement, supporting the current study's call for reform and a deeper analysis of male dominance in Makurdi's banking sector.

Adamma (2017) studied "Gender Inequality and Leadership Appointments in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, focusing on the persistent gender imbalance in academic leadership roles in Nigeria. The research highlighted the global importance of women's roles in nation-building and examined the composition of female academic staff in leadership positions across ten institutions, noting significant male dominance. The study aimed to assess gender representation in academic leadership and identify barriers to women' equitable representation in management. Using an ex-post facto design with data from the National University Commission, it quantitatively analyzed gender composition in leadership roles, revealing a pronounced gender gap and suggesting that structural and cultural biases limited women's mobility in academia. Adamma recommended strategies to promote gender equity and encourage women to pursue leadership roles, emphasizing the need for institutional support for gender diversity. The study also identified research gaps, particularly regarding cultural influences and institutional policies affecting female academic participation. This study shared similarities with the current research

on male-dominated organizational structures, critiquing male leadership dominance and advocating for gender-inclusive policies. However, while Adamma focused on the academic sector nationally, the current study examined the banking sector in Makurdi, Benue State. Methodically, Adamma used quantitative analysis whereas the current employed qualitative critiquing, providing complementary insights into male dominance across different sectors in Nigeria.

Otutu (2023) studied the differential career progression of women in Nigeria's banking industry, focusing on the challenges they faced in reaching senior positions. The research applied social exclusion and equality feminism theories, revealing that while improvements in education and socio-economic factors increased women's participation in the workforce, patriarchal practices and organizational cultures still limited their advancement. The study found that Nigerian women benefited external systems, which helped them balance work and family responsibilities thereby reducing discrimination related to part-time work.

A significant gap in the study was its primary focus on individual and collective exclusion without exploring intersectional factors such as race and class further compounded the challenges faced by women in leadership. A similarity with the current study was that both studies examined the barriers women encountered in advancing their careers within male-dominated sectors in Nigeria. In contrast, the current study differed from Otutu's research by employing a quantitative case study approach to assess broader trends in gender representation in leadership roles in the banking sector.

Pepple et al (2024) studied 'The Glass Ceiling in the Nigerian Banking Sector: Evidence from senior male and female employees". The aim of this study was to identify factors that affect women advancement into senior managerial positions in the banking industry. Ascertain navigational strategies women employ in order to progress in their careers regardless of the glass ceiling challenges in the industry. It also aimed at ascertaining men's opinion on the glass ceilings and gender bias faced by their female colleagues. The study employed a qualitative research approach in exploring both senior male and female employees from four banks views on the glass ceilings in the banking industry so as to comparatively look at both genders opinions about the glass ceilings.

The research findings reveal culturally set role expectations difference for men and women, influence of society on organizational leadership styles such that the society expects the men to be breadwinners of families thus signifying that the glass ceiling is culturally embedded. Equally the study findings indicate a natural perception of men "rightly" being in top leadership positions in organizations other than women whose occupation of such positions is viewed as a threat to men because of the fear of their refusal to submit to the men. Patriarchal organizational cultures that promote stereotypes such as refusal to promote women who go on maternity leave, preference for women who have passed child-bearing age brackets. Absence of level playing ground for women as the men agreed that although women representation percentage in high position was low, their numbers was:" enough". The women revealed that despite the glass ceilings, they work harder than the expectations placed on them.

The study is similar to the current one as it has made significant contribution in evidence that the glass ceiling in the banking industry is culturally embedded and that societal pressure shape the organizational leadership styles. Theoretically the study uses the role congruity theory while the current study used gender stratification theory, patriarchy, Institutional and the glass ceiling theories.

Another study reviewed was that by Shaji & Joseph (2020) on the topic: Existence of glass ceiling- evidence from the Indian banking sector. This was a qualitative study with the aim to examine the presence of women employees in the Indian banking sector. To investigate whether they are able to break the glass ceiling phenomenon over the years. The pace of movement of women employees in India from entry level position to higher levels. Secondary data from the Central Bank of India website was used for the study. Journals and other financial records were supported in sourcing data. The study findings indicate that even though a few women were able to reach top positions in the banking sector, at lower levels management, participation was small. Also, women employees in the banking sector face challenges in their career during entry level and also while advancing into higher levels. These findings collaborate with our study areas of interest as we see a similar trend of underrepresentation of women at top level while at lower levels, they still face difficulties rising in their careers.

Halliday et al (2022) conducted their studies on the theme: Retaining Women in Male-Dominated Occupations across Cultures: The role of supervisor support and psychological

safety. The aim of the study was to determine female talent shortage and ascertain high turnover in jobs. The sample for this study was made up of 5,578 research development employees across 24 countries from different organizations cut across industries. Data was taken cross-section ally. The Mplus V8 software was used to analyze data. Research findings had both theoretical and practical implications. On the theoretical side; psychological safety of employees determines their turnover intentions and employees' reactions to supervisor's support is not gender-determined. On the practical side, leaders can aim to reduce turnover and knowledge spillover in competitors by extending support to their employees. The implications for us are that leaders should embrace organization tenets that foster fairness, justice, equity avoiding all forms of discrimination whether or not gender related.

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design and a descriptive survey approach. Data for the study was collected via a structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 499. With the aid of Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination, a sample size of 222 participants was drawn comprising 137 male employees and 85 female employees of the selected banks. Data was processed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) .Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions. The T-test was used to test the null hypothesis. A cut-off mark of 2.5 and above was considered acceptable while 2.49 and below were rejected.

Summary of Results and Findings.

Table 1: Analysis of Questionnaire Distribution.

	No. Distributed	No. Returned	Percentage %
Male	137	137	61.71
Female	85	85	38.28
Missing	0	0	
Total	**222**	**222**	**99.99**

Source: Field Survey 2024

A total number of 222 questionnaires were administered in the field. Out of this, 137 were administered on men while women had 85. Totaling 222 numbers representing 100 % response rate.

Test of Hypothesis.

Table 2: t-Test Results of Respondents on the factors contributing to the dominance of men in leadership positions in selected banks in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State (N=137, 85).

Variables	N	Mean	Std	Df	Sig	Alpha Value	Remark
Males	137	3.205	0.810	220	.000	0.05	S
Females	85	3.485	0.735				

Source: Field Survey, 2024 SPSS version 22.

From table 2, the p- value (sig) is .000 which is less than the alpha value 0.05 at (220) degree of freedom meaning that the test is statistically significant therefore, there is a significant relationship in the mean ratings of respondents of males and females on the factors contributing to the dominance of men in leadership positions in the sampled banks. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

A significant relationship in the mean ratings of respondents of males and females on the factors contributing to the dominance of men in leadership positions in the banks under study is observed from the data. From the result of findings, we deduce that , cultural beliefs in the sampled organization favor men over women in leadership roles as well as gender bias in leadership selection is a significant barrier to women's career advancement in these banks. This position is supported by Adamma (2017) when he said that cultural beliefs that women are expected to take care of the home has mostly affected their ability to assess leadership roles in the banks. Akanji (2020) is of the view that the banking sector is a tasking organization and as such women desiring a career there may not make good home keepers hence some men tend to resist not wanting to sacrifice their family life for. Besides, women in this sector face greater work-life balance challenges thereby limiting their chances of advancing into leadership roles. In addition, these banks have no clear policy targeted at promoting gender diverse work

environment (Briggs, 2023). In a study conducted by Pepple et al (2024), they found out women had devised navigational strategies in coping with the tough operational terrain of the banking industry and also in order to cope with the subtle biases against them. One of such ways was to work harder than their male colleagues and exceed expectations. Alagbe (2021), concur with this assertion when she said, "we work harder than male colleagues to prove competence". This was said in battling workplace gender bias.

The study findings also showed lack of women in leadership positions negatively impacts diversity of perspectives in decision-making in these banks and having more women in leadership roles would improve the overall performance and productivity of these banks. This position is in harmony with (Gordini & Rancati, 2017) cited in CIBN (2020), when they posited that increase in gender diversity will lead to increase in productivity and potential productive economy. Besides, greater female participation enhances economic gains. They further assert that tapping into the underutilized pool of qualified, driven and competent women, the banking industry can bring diversity of thought to the industry thereby strengthening their competitive advantage.

With more women in top jobs, businesses including the banks benefit from the creativity of a wider range of talented leaders enabling them to recruit and retain a more talented and diverse workforce, (AAUN, 2017). Simpson et al, 2010 cited in CBIN (2020), counsel that the world, including the banks can no longer overlook or disregard the female talent as women are now perceived to have unique characteristics that increase performance. Further, women tend to positively change group dynamics, personal interactions and decision making thereby enhancing creativity and overall output, (Mclnerney et al. ,2008) cited in CIBN (2020).

The absence of women in leadership positions limits the ability of these banks in addressing gender-specific issues effectively which in turn have effect on their performance. (Chukwusa, 2018) posit that performance of the banks would improve with more women in decision-making roles thereby avoiding a situation of one-sided, homogenous decisions that overlooks diverse customer needs.

It is worth noting that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in their wisdom had issued a mandatory 30% females' inclusion on the boards of Nigerian commercial banks. The Securities

and Exchange Commission (SEC) also has a code stipulating that listed companies should consider gender when selecting board members. However, Daily trust online of 21.07.2021 had reported that several years after these policies, Banks especially were yet to meet the CBN's threshold on female board. The numbers of females in the board and management positions in the banking industry is still lower than the threshold the report concludes. There is however, beginning to have some ray of hope as Adeosun (2024) in a recent paper says there is a gradual shift towards women in the banking sector through some deliberate initiatives aimed at re positioning women in the workplace. These initiatives include; mentorship programs, leadership by example, supporting empowerment and building a robust pipeline that encourages women to become their best in life and careers. This is a welcome development but must go beyond the Nigerian rhetoric.

Contribution to Knowledge

1) The study was able to identify those barriers that limit women advancement in the banking sector.
2) The study also discovered that women under representation in leadership positions in the banking industry is a cultural issue that manifests via biases, glass ceilings, stereotypes etc. but that the contribution of the women has far reaching effect beginning with the bank to the entire economy.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore concluded that cultural beliefs in an organization/banks favor men over women in leadership roles, lack of women in leadership positions can negatively impact the diverse perspective they bring to the table including decision making. Besides, their near absence denies the younger women access to role models that can inspire their confidence to pursuing careers along these lines. The gender gap in the banking sector and other organizations must be intentionally addressed.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby put forth.

1. That in the light of growing contemporary leadership, emphasis on diversity and inclusivity have become the new normal therefore, appropriate sanctions should apply for deviant organizations henceforth.
2. Mentorship, sponsorship, professional development windows should now be strategically and intentionally created, nurtured and sustained in order to narrow the gender- gap. We have a culture of enacting good programs and policies but poor implementation often stalls them. Let this be an exception.

REFERENCES

Adamma, A. C. (2017). Gender inequality and appointment to leadership positions in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *Gender and Behavior, 15*(1), 8341–8352.

Adeosun, O. (2024). *Breaking barriers: How the top Nigerian banks are engendering the financial sector*. Gender Publications. Lagos Business School.

Adisa, T. A., Abdulraheem, I., & Isiaka, S. B. (2019). Patriarchal hegemony: Investigating the impact of patriarchy on women's work-life balance. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 34*(1), 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2018-0095

Akanji, B., Mordi, C., Ituma, A., Adisa, T. A., & Ajonbadi, H. (2020). The influence of organisational culture on leadership style in higher education institutions. *Personnel Review, 49*(3), 709–732. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-01-2019-0029

Akindele, R. (2011). Gender and racial differentials in the Nigerian banking industry. *International Journal of Business and Management, 6*(9), 228–239. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n9p228

Alagbe, J. (2021, April 4). Female engineers battling workplace gender bias. *Punch Online*. https://punchng.com/female-engineers-battling-workplace-gender-bias

American Association of University Women. (2024). *Barriers & bias: The status of women in leadership*. https://aauw.org/resources/research/barriers-and-bias

Bridges, D., Wulff, E., Bamberry, L., Krivokapic-Skoko, B., & Jenkins, S. (2020). Negotiating gender in the male-dominated skilled trades: A systematic literature review. *Construction Management and Economics, 38*(10), 894–916. https://doi.org/10.1080/01446193.2020.1740463

Carbajal, J. (2018). Patriarchal culture's influence on women's leadership ascendancy. *The Journal of Faith, Education and Community, 2*(1), 1–10.

Clerkin, C. (2024). More women work in non-profit organizations: So why do men end up leading? *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org

Collinson, D. L., Aavik, K., Hearn, J., & Thym, A. (2023). Men, masculinities, and leadership: Emerging issues. In *A research agenda for gender and leadership* (pp. 87–106). ResearchGate.

Cottais, C. (2021). Hegemonic masculinity in politics and the exercise of a patriarchal leadership: Examples of Donald Trump & Emmanuel Macron. Generation for Rights Over the World.

Chukwusa, J. (2018). Autocratic leadership style: Obstacle to success in academic libraries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.

Daily Trust. (2021, July 21). CBN directive: Women occupy only 22% of board seats in 21 banks. *Daily Trust Online*. https://dailytrust.com

Eke, P. (2023). *Women's occupational mobility in the Nigerian service sector through a radical feminist perspective*. University of Wolverhampton.

Halliday, C. S., Stride, C. B., Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., & Haiyan, Z. (2022). Retaining women in male-dominated occupations across cultures: The role of supervisor support and psychological safety. *Human Performance, 35*(3–4), 156–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/08959285.2022.2090720

Light, B. K. (2024). *The underrepresentation of women in executive leadership positions within the aerospace industry* (Doctoral dissertation, National University).

Nkrumah, P. A. (2021). Closing the gender gap in the banking sector. *Stanbic Bank Ghana*. https://www.stanbicbank.com.gh

Institute of Leadership and Management. (2009). *Women in banking: Equality and human rights commission, employment and earnings in the finance sector – A gender analysis*.

International Labour Organization. (2017, August). *Breaking barriers: Unconscious gender bias in the workplace* (ACT/EMP Research note).

Johri, M.(2023). Feminist perspective on patriarchy: Its impact on the construction of Feminity and masculinity. New Literaria- An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities. Vol.4,No.2, July-August, 2023, pp01-09 ISSN:2582/7375 DOI:http://dx.doi.org/10.48189/nl.2023.v0412.001 www.newliteraria.com

Krivkovich, A.,Goldstein, D.,& McConnell, M.(2025). Women in the workplace 2025. McKinsey & Company. December 9,2025 Report. Mckinsey.com/capabilities/

Otutu, E. (2023). *An explanation for differential career progression for women in Nigerian banking industry* (Doctoral dissertation).

Pepple, D., Oseghale, R., Nmecha, E., & Nwagu, J. (2024). Glass ceiling in the Nigerian banking sector: Evidence from senior male and female employees. *Contemporary Economics*.

Perdue, A. (2016). Man up or go home: Exploring perceptions of women in leadership. *Marquette Law Review, 100*, 1233–1270.

Pina, A., & Gannon, T. A. (2010). An overview of the literature on antecedents, perceptions and behavioural consequences of sexual harassment. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13552618

Shaji, J., & Joseph, J. (2020). Existence of glass ceiling: Evidence from the Indian banking sector. *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net

Shaji, J., & Joseph, J. (2021). Looking through the glass ceiling: A retrospective analysis of Indian women's representation in the banking sector. *ResearchGate*.

Taiye, A. D. (2008). Gender disparity and the challenges of governance in Nigeria (1999–2007). *Gender and Behavior, 6*(1).

Tegel, L. (2022). *Organizational perspectives on male dominance of working life: Why men have all the power?* (Master's thesis, Aalto University).

The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria. (2020, August 23). *Female representation on the boards of directors in the Nigerian banking industry and gender policy effectiveness*. CIBN Centre for Financial Studies.

Ukpata, S. I., & Agha, N. (2020). A critiquing of masculinity syndrome in African organizations: A lens from kitchen to the palace in modern organizations. *Global Journal Kaleidoscope*.

Wikipedia. (2024, October 17). Patriarchy. In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriarchy

Yates, E. A., & Hughes, M. M. (2017). Cultural explanations for men's dominance of national leadership worldwide. In *Women presidents and prime ministers in post-transition democracies* (pp. 101–122).