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The Interrelationship between Societal and Organizational Factors and Women's Career Progression in the Nigerian Banking Industry

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Abstract: This study examines the interrelationship between societal and organizational factors and women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry. The study adopted a qualitative research approach based on a narrative literature review and relied exclusively on secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports, conference papers and other credible scholarly materials. The literature was analyzed thematically and guided by Social Closure Theory. The findings indicate that societal factors such as cultural expectations, gender stereotypes, family responsibilities, religious beliefs and traditional gender roles are closely connected with organizational factors such as recruitment practices, promotion opportunities, mentoring, organizational culture and leadership. The study further found that societal expectations can enter the workplace through managerial attitudes and organizational practices, while organizational practices can either reinforce or reduce existing societal inequalities. Transparent recruitment and promotion systems, effective mentoring and supportive workplace policies can therefore improve women's opportunities for career advancement. The study concludes that women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry is influenced not only by individual qualifications and performance but also by the interaction between societal and organizational structures. The study recommends greater attention to equitable organizational practices and supportive policies to create more opportunities for women to advance into senior management, executive and leadership positions.

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Keywords: Societal Factors, Organizational Factors, Women's Career Progression and Nigerian Banking Industry.

1. Introduction

Women's participation in paid employment has increased over the years, and women now occupy important positions in many sectors of the economy. The banking industry is one area where women have made considerable contributions to organizational activities, management and professional services. However, increased participation in employment has not always resulted in equal career progression. Women continue to face difficulties in moving into senior management, executive and leadership positions. This situation suggests that women's career progression cannot be explained only by their qualifications, skills, experience or work performance. The social environment in which women live and the organizational environment in which they work can also influence the opportunities available to them. Women's career progression refers to the movement of women from lower positions to higher positions involving greater responsibility, authority, professional recognition and participation in organizational decision-making [1]. Career progression is therefore broader than simply gaining employment. It involves the ability of employees to obtain promotions, develop professionally, gain leadership

opportunities and achieve higher levels of organizational responsibility. In the Nigerian banking industry, women have increasingly entered the sector and attained managerial positions, but their representation at the highest levels remains a concern. Women's World Banking for example, reported that eight of Nigeria's 24 commercial banks had women as chief executive officers at the time of its report. Although this represents progress, it also indicates that women remain a minority at the highest levels of banking leadership.

The career experiences of women are influenced by factors within and outside the organization. Societal factors include cultural expectations, gender stereotypes, family responsibilities, religious beliefs and social expectations concerning the roles of men and women. In many societies, women are still expected to carry greater responsibility for household activities and family care. These expectations can create additional demands for women who are also pursuing demanding professional careers. Adisa et al. in their study of women in Nigeria, found that cultural perceptions of gender, family and domestic responsibilities, religious beliefs and other forms of male dominance could create significant barriers to women's career advancement. Their findings show that women's career experiences cannot be fully understood without considering the wider social environment in which organizations operate.

The influence of societal factors can also enter the workplace through people's attitudes and expectations. Gender stereotypes may influence how women are perceived in relation to leadership, decision-making and professional commitment. For example, assumptions that women should give priority to family responsibilities may affect perceptions of their suitability for demanding managerial positions. In this way, societal expectations can become connected to organizational decisions and workplace practices. Adisa et al. similarly demonstrated that patriarchal attitudes can shape women's workplace experiences and contribute to gender inequality in Nigerian organizations.

Organizational factors, on the other hand, relate to the policies, structures, practices and conditions within organizations that determine how employees are recruited, developed, evaluated and promoted. Recruitment practices, promotion systems, mentoring opportunities, organizational culture and leadership practices can therefore influence women's career progression. When these processes are transparent and fairly implemented, they can provide women with opportunities to develop and advance [2]. However, when decisions are influenced by informal relationships, gender stereotypes, organizational politics or unequal access to networks, women may experience barriers even when they possess the required qualifications and experience.

Research in the Nigerian banking sector provides evidence that organizational practices can influence women's advancement. Pepple et al. for example, examined the glass ceiling in Nigeria's banking sector using interviews with 43 senior male employees from four banks. The study found that senior male employees recognized challenges faced by women in promotion and highlighted the role of organizational culture and leadership in sustaining poor female career progression. The study also showed that apparently gender-neutral performance and family-friendly policies do not necessarily create a completely equal playing field for women. Similarly, Nwaubeta et al. examined environmental and psychosocial factors affecting female career progression among Nigerian bankers. Using data from 323 female bankers, the study found that both environmental and psychosocial factors had significant relationships with female career progression. This finding reinforces the argument that women's advancement is influenced by conditions surrounding their work and personal experiences rather than by individual ability alone.

The relationship between societal and organizational factors is particularly important. Societal expectations do not remain outside the workplace; they can influence organizational cultures, managerial attitudes and employment decisions. At the same time, organizational practices can either reinforce or reduce the effects of societal

inequalities. For instance, a society that places greater responsibility for childcare and household duties on women may create challenges for women's availability for demanding work roles. If an organization responds to these social expectations by assuming that women are less committed to their careers, such assumptions can influence recruitment, promotion and leadership decisions. Conversely, transparent promotion systems, inclusive mentoring and supportive workplace policies may reduce the extent to which social expectations restrict women's career opportunities. This interaction is consistent with the argument of Ibáñez and García-Mingo who show that gendered barriers can operate at different levels, including the wider social, occupational and organizational levels. Their study suggests that these mechanisms can accumulate rather than operate independently. This perspective is useful for understanding women's career progression in Nigeria because barriers experienced by women may arise from the interaction between social expectations and organizational practices rather than from one factor alone [3]. Furthermore, Ajede and Onyeonoru in their study of selected banks in Ogun and Lagos States, examined the implementation of gender policy and its relationship with women's career progression. Their study involved 322 employees and 22 in-depth interviews. The researchers found that although many employees were aware of gender policy, awareness of its implementation was relatively low, while some respondents reported that implementation had a positive effect on women's career opportunities. This suggests that organizational policies can influence career outcomes, but their actual implementation is important.

Despite existing research on women's career experiences, gender inequality and organizational barriers in Nigeria, there remains a need to understand how societal and organizational factors are interconnected in shaping women's career progression in the banking industry. Previous studies have examined societal and cultural barriers, including patriarchal norms, gender stereotypes, religious beliefs, family responsibilities and traditional expectations. Other studies have focused on organizational factors such as promotion and employment practices, gender policies, organizational culture, work-family policies and career advancement. Examining the two dimensions separately may not fully explain women's experiences because societal expectations can influence organizational practices, while organizational arrangements can either reinforce or challenge societal expectations. Therefore, this study examines the interrelationship between societal and organizational factors and women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry. The study is based on the view that women's career advancement is shaped by both the wider social environment and the organizational conditions within which they work. Understanding this interrelationship can provide a more complete explanation of why women may experience different career outcomes from men and can help organizations develop more effective approaches to improving women's access to career advancement and leadership opportunities.

The Nigerian banking industry has provided increasing employment and career opportunities for women, with women occupying positions across different levels of banking organizations. Despite this progress, women continue to be less represented in senior management, executive and leadership positions. The existence of women in the banking workforce therefore does not necessarily mean that they have equal opportunities to progress to the highest levels of the organizational hierarchy. This situation raises concerns about the factors that shape women's career progression and the conditions that may prevent qualified and experienced women from attaining senior positions [4].

One important concern is the influence of societal factors on women's career progression. Women's career experiences do not occur independently of the society in which they live. Cultural expectations, gender stereotypes, family responsibilities, religious beliefs and traditional views about the roles of men and women can influence how women participate in professional employment. At the same time, organizational factors can either support or restrict women's career advancement. Recruitment practices,

promotion procedures, mentoring opportunities, organizational culture and leadership practices determine how employees gain access to employment, professional development and higher positions. Where these processes are transparent and fairly implemented, they can create opportunities for women to progress. However, informal networks, subjective decision-making, gender stereotypes and organizational politics may create unequal opportunities. The problem becomes more complex because societal and organizational factors may not operate independently. Societal expectations about women's roles can enter the workplace through managerial attitudes, organizational culture and decisions concerning recruitment, promotion and leadership opportunities. For example, expectations that women should give greater attention to family responsibilities may influence perceptions about their commitment to demanding positions. Similarly, gender stereotypes that exist within society may be reproduced through organizational practices and affect how women are assessed for promotion or leadership positions. In contrast, organizations with transparent career systems, supportive policies, mentoring opportunities and equitable promotion practices may reduce some of the disadvantages created by wider societal expectations. The study therefore seeks to examine how societal influences and organizational practices are connected in shaping women's opportunities for career advancement, with particular attention to the conditions that may facilitate or constrain their progression into senior and leadership positions [5].

Objectives of the Study

1. Examine the relationship between societal factors and organizational factors affecting women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry.
2. Determine how the interaction between societal and organizational factors influences women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry.

Societal factors are the beliefs, values, norms and expectations that exist within a society and influence how people behave and make decisions. In relation to women's employment, societal factors include cultural expectations about the roles of men and women, family responsibilities, gender stereotypes, religious beliefs and expectations about marriage and motherhood. These factors can influence the type of work women choose, the amount of time they can devote to their careers and the extent to which they are encouraged to seek leadership positions.

In Nigeria, expectations about the roles of men and women can influence women's experiences at work. Women may be expected to give greater attention to marriage, childcare and household responsibilities, while men are often viewed as the main providers for the family. Such expectations can create additional pressure for women who want to develop their careers. Adisa et al. in a study involving female employees and managers in two Nigerian banks, found that patriarchal attitudes developed within society and the home could be transferred into organizational settings. These attitudes could contribute to discrimination against women and the maintenance of male-dominated workplace structures.

Cultural and gender expectations refer to beliefs about what men and women should do in society. These expectations may influence women's education, employment, family roles and career choices. Where society views leadership, authority and decision-making as mainly masculine roles, women may experience difficulties when seeking senior positions. Evidence from the Nigerian banking sector shows that these expectations can continue even when women have the required education and professional qualifications. Pepple et al. found that patriarchal societal and occupational cultures were connected to the way gendered occupational roles were understood in the Nigerian banking sector. The study also found that organizational culture and leadership were important in explaining the difficulties women faced in progressing to senior positions. This suggests that cultural expectations do not remain outside the workplace. They can influence managers,

employees and organizational practices. For this reason, societal factors should be considered when examining women's career progression in the banking industry.

Domestic and caring responsibilities include childcare, household duties and caring for family members. These responsibilities can affect women's working experiences because women are often expected to take greater responsibility for family and household activities. Olotuah et al. examined the work-family experiences of women in the Nigerian banking industry. The researchers interviewed 21 women from different parts of Nigeria and found evidence of patriarchal systems at social, organizational and individual levels. The study showed that culture, gender expectations and family responsibilities were connected to women's work experiences. At the same time, the women demonstrated the ability to negotiate these expectations and develop ways of managing work and family responsibilities. Domestic and caring responsibilities therefore do not necessarily prevent women from progressing in their careers, but they can create additional demands that may affect career decisions and opportunities. The availability of family support, workplace flexibility and supportive organizational policies can help women manage these competing responsibilities [6].

Organizational factors are conditions and practices within an organization that influence employees' work experiences and career opportunities. They include recruitment practices, promotion opportunities, mentoring, organizational culture, leadership behaviour, training opportunities and workplace policies. For women, organizational factors can either support or limit career progression. Organizations that use fair recruitment and promotion procedures, provide mentoring opportunities and maintain an inclusive culture may create better opportunities for women. On the other hand, discriminatory practices, biased promotion decisions and male-dominated organizational cultures can restrict women's advancement. Pepple et al. found that organizational culture and leadership were important factors associated with the glass ceiling experienced by women in the Nigerian banking sector. Their findings suggest that having gender-neutral policies alone may not be enough if organizational practices and workplace culture continue to reproduce gender inequality.

Recruitment practices refer to the methods organizations use to attract, select and employ workers. Fair recruitment should be based on qualifications, skills, experience and job requirements rather than gender. Recruitment is important to women's career progression because the position at which an employee enters an organization may affect later promotion opportunities. When women are recruited into lower-level positions or positions with limited opportunities for advancement, their chances of reaching senior management may also be reduced. In the Nigerian banking sector, recruitment and selection therefore form an important part of the wider organizational environment within which women develop their careers. Transparent recruitment processes can reduce gender bias and provide women with a fair starting point for career advancement.

Promotion opportunities refer to the chances employees have to move into positions with greater responsibility, authority and rewards. Promotion is a major part of career progression because it determines whether employees can move from junior positions to middle and senior management. Women may experience barriers to promotion when decisions are influenced by gender stereotypes, informal networks or assumptions about women's family responsibilities. Pepple et al. reported that senior male employees in Nigerian banks recognized challenges faced by women in relation to promotion. The study further linked poor female career progression to organizational culture and leadership practices. Similarly, Ajede and Onyeonoru examined the implementation of the National Gender Policy in selected banks in Ogun and Lagos States. Their study involved 322 bank employees and 22 in-depth interviews. The findings showed that although many employees were aware of gender policies, awareness of their implementation was relatively low. The study also found that some respondents believed implementation of

gender policy had a positive effect on opportunities for women's career progression. This indicates that formal gender policies can support women's advancement, but their actual implementation within organizations is important [7].

Mentoring involves a more experienced employee providing guidance, advice, knowledge and support to a less experienced employee. Mentoring can help employees develop professional skills, understand organizational systems and gain access to career opportunities. Mentoring may be particularly important for women because access to informal professional networks can influence career development. A mentor can provide advice about promotion, professional development and leadership opportunities. Nwosu et al. examined employee mentoring, career success and organizational success in Nigeria using data from 345 respondents. The study reported a significant positive relationship between mentoring and career success. Therefore, effective mentoring programmes can provide women with professional support and information that may improve their ability to progress within organizations.

Women's career progression refers to the movement of women from lower positions to positions with greater responsibility, authority, recognition, remuneration and decision-making power. It may include promotion to supervisory, managerial and executive positions. Career progression is not limited to promotion alone. It can also include access to training, professional development, leadership opportunities, challenging assignments and participation in organizational decision-making. In the Nigerian banking industry, women have increasingly participated in professional employment, but challenges remain in reaching senior leadership positions. Ajede and Onyeonoru found that women bankers had high aspirations for management positions, while also identifying challenges related to the implementation of gender policies. Women's career progression should therefore be understood as the result of both individual effort and the social and organizational environments within which women develop their careers.

Societal and organizational factors are closely connected. Societal beliefs can influence organizational behaviour because managers and employees are members of society and may bring social beliefs and expectations into the workplace. Similarly, organizations can either reinforce existing social expectations or create workplace practices that challenge them. For example, a society that expects women to give priority to family responsibilities may influence managers' perceptions about women's suitability for demanding leadership positions. Such perceptions can affect recruitment, promotion and leadership decisions. In the same way, an organization that provides flexible working arrangements, fair promotion systems and supportive policies can reduce some of the disadvantages created by traditional gender expectations.

Adisa et al. provide evidence of this connection by showing that patriarchal attitudes practiced at home could be transferred into organizational settings in Nigerian banks. Olotuah et al. also provide evidence of the connection by identifying patriarchal systems at social, organizational and individual levels in the experiences of women working in Nigerian banks. These findings support the view that societal and organizational factors should not always be examined as completely separate influences.

The interrelationship between societal and organizational factors refers to the way these two groups of factors influence each other and jointly shape women's career experiences and advancement. Societal factors may influence the organizational environment through gender expectations, cultural beliefs and family responsibilities. These influences may affect recruitment decisions, promotion practices, leadership perceptions and organizational culture. At the same time, organizational practices may strengthen or reduce the effects of societal expectations.

For example, where society expects women to prioritize family responsibilities, managers may assume that women are less willing or able to accept demanding leadership roles. If such assumptions influence promotion decisions, a societal expectation becomes

an organizational barrier. However, if an organization uses transparent promotion criteria, mentoring programmes and family-friendly policies, it may reduce the effect of such societal expectations [8]. The findings of Pepple et al. are particularly relevant because the study connects patriarchal societal and occupational culture with organizational culture and leadership in explaining women's career progression in Nigerian banking. Olotuah et al. similarly demonstrate that women's work-family experiences are shaped by factors operating at social and organizational levels. Therefore, this study argues that understanding women's career progression requires attention to both the social environment in which women live and the organizational environment in which they work.

This study is anchored on Social Closure Theory, propounded by Max Weber. The theory explains how dominant groups can control access to valuable opportunities and resources, thereby limiting the advancement of less powerful groups. In the workplace, social closure may occur through formal practices such as recruitment and promotion, as well as informal practices such as professional networks, mentoring and managerial relationships. The theory is relevant to this study because societal beliefs and organizational practices can work together to limit women's career progression. Cultural expectations, gender stereotypes and family responsibilities may influence how women are perceived at work, while organizational practices may either reinforce or reduce these disadvantages. Adisa et al. found that social and gender-related barriers contributed to women's career difficulties in Nigeria, while Pepple et al. linked women's limited advancement in Nigerian banking to patriarchal culture, organizational culture and leadership practices. Similarly, Ibáñez and García-Mingo showed that gendered social closure can operate through occupational and organizational structures.

Thus, Social Closure Theory provides a suitable explanation for the interrelationship between societal and organizational factors and women's career progression. It suggests that when societal expectations are reflected in organizational practices, women may have reduced access to recruitment, promotion, mentoring and leadership opportunities. The theory therefore supports the view that women's career progression is influenced not only by individual qualifications but also by the social and organizational structures within which they work.

Ajede and Onyeonoru investigated national gender policy and women's career progression in selected banks in Ogun and Lagos States, Nigeria. The study used a cross-sectional survey and qualitative interviews. A total of 322 bank employees participated in the survey, comprising 158 females and 164 males, while 22 management and senior union officials participated in interviews. The findings showed that although 65.5% of respondents were aware of the existence of gender policy, 51.6% reported low awareness of its implementation. Also, 38.8% indicated that gender policy implementation had a positive effect on women's career progression, while women's aspiration to attain management positions was high. The study demonstrates the importance of organizational policies in supporting women's advancement [9]. However, it did not directly examine how organizational policies interact with societal factors to influence career progression.

Olotuah, et al., examined the work-family experiences of women in the Nigerian banking industry. The researchers used interviews with 21 women from Northern and Southern Nigeria, covering locations such as Kano, Kaduna, Akure, Lagos, Ibadan and Abuja. The study found that patriarchal systems existed at social, organizational and individual levels. It also showed that cultural expectations, gender norms and family responsibilities influenced women's work experiences. However, the women were not passive; they developed strategies to negotiate and resist some of the social and cultural restrictions placed on them. This study is particularly relevant because it demonstrates that societal and organizational factors can operate at different but connected levels.

Nevertheless, the study focused mainly on work-family experiences rather than directly testing the relationship between societal factors, organizational factors and career progression.

Imhanrenialena, et al. examined how institutionalized patriarchy relates to career outcomes among women in Nigerian organizations. The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 508 middle-level managers and analyzed the hypotheses using structural equation modelling. The findings showed that patriarchal-induced gendered work practices had a significant negative influence on women's career adaptability. However, patriarchal discrimination did not have a significant negative influence on subjective career success and job satisfaction. The study recommended that organizations review their human resource policies to address gendered practices associated with patriarchy. This study is important because it directly connects societal patriarchy with organizational practices and women's career outcomes. However, it examined career adaptability, subjective career success and job satisfaction rather than specifically examining women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry.

Akaiji, et al. investigated how professional women manage career stereotypes in traditionally male-dominated occupations in Nigeria. The study used 30 interviews with female bank managers and senior engineers. The findings showed that women encounter career stereotypes associated with gender and social dominance and that female professionals develop strategies to confront or manage these stereotypes in their workplaces. The study is relevant to the present research because it demonstrates that societal gender stereotypes do not remain outside the workplace; they can influence women's professional experiences and career opportunities within organizations. Nevertheless, the study covered both banking and engineering rather than focusing exclusively on the Nigerian banking industry, and it explored women's strategies for managing stereotypes rather than statistically testing the relationship between societal and organizational factors and career progression [10].

Akpera examined women's career advancement and organizational effectiveness in the Nigerian banking industry. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and collected data from 476 women employees drawn from seven selected deposit money banks. It examined work-family balance, women's aspirations, self-development and organizational culture as dimensions of women's career advancement. The findings indicated positive relationships between these career advancement dimensions and measures of organizational effectiveness, including productivity, profitability and service quality. The study recommended leadership-development programmes, supportive organizational policies and measures to improve work-family balance. The study is relevant because it demonstrates that organizational culture and work-family conditions are important dimensions of women's career advancement in Nigerian banking. However, it primarily examined the consequences of career advancement for organizational effectiveness and did not explicitly integrate broader societal factors such as patriarchy, cultural expectations and gender norms into the analysis [11].

Olanipekun, et al. examined the effect of sexual harassment on the career advancement of female employees in selected Nigerian banks in Lagos Metropolis. Using qualitative in-depth interviews with 47 respondents who had experienced sexual harassment in the banking system, the study found that sexual harassment could have dysfunctional consequences for women's career advancement. The findings also indicated that some victims remained silent because of concerns about further victimization and possible consequences for their employment and career. The study is relevant because sexual harassment represents a workplace manifestation of gender power relations and social expectations, while its consequences can directly affect women's career advancement. However, the qualitative design and focus on women who had experienced

sexual harassment limit the generalizability of the findings, and the study did not directly model the interaction between societal and organizational factors.

Taken together, the reviewed studies demonstrate that women's career experiences and advancement in Nigeria are shaped by both societal and organizational conditions. Societal factors, including patriarchy, gender stereotypes, cultural expectations and domestic responsibilities, can influence women's perceptions, opportunities and experiences, while organizational factors such as organizational culture, leadership practices, gender policies and workplace practices can either reinforce or mitigate these constraints [12]. However, relatively limited empirical research has jointly examined how societal and organizational factors interact to influence women's career progression specifically within the Nigerian banking industry. This gap provides the basis for examining the interrelationship between societal and organizational factors and women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry.

2. Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative research approach based on a narrative literature review. The study relied exclusively on secondary sources of data, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports from relevant government and professional bodies, conference papers, and other credible scholarly materials. These sources were carefully reviewed to examine the interrelationship between societal and organizational factors and women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry, with particular attention to how societal factors such as cultural and gender expectations, domestic responsibilities and caring responsibilities interact with organizational factors such as recruitment practices, promotion opportunities and mentoring practices to influence women's career progression. The literature was analyzed thematically to identify common patterns, relationships, areas of agreement and gaps in existing research. The review was guided by the study's objectives and Social Closure Theory, which provided the theoretical basis for understanding how social and organizational structures may create or reinforce barriers to women's career advancement.

3. Results

The study indicate that societal and organizational factors are closely connected in shaping women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry. Societal beliefs, cultural expectations, gender stereotypes, family responsibilities and traditional views about the roles of men and women can enter the workplace through the attitudes and decisions of managers and employees [13]. These societal expectations can subsequently influence organizational culture, recruitment, promotion and leadership decisions. From the study, women may be expected to give greater attention to marriage, childcare and household responsibilities, while men are often regarded as the main providers. Such expectations can create additional pressures for women pursuing demanding professional careers [14].

4. Discussion

Furthermore, the study revealed that organizational factors can reinforce or reduce the influence of societal factors. Recruitment practices, promotion opportunities, mentoring, organizational culture, leadership and workplace policies determine how women gain access to employment, development opportunities and higher positions. Where these practices are transparent and fairly implemented, they can provide women with opportunities to progress. However, where organizational decisions are influenced by gender stereotypes, informal networks, organizational politics or unequal access to professional relationships, existing societal inequalities may be reproduced within the workplace. The interaction between societal and organizational factors influences

women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry [15]. Women's progression is therefore not determined only by their qualifications, skills, experience or individual effort. Their opportunities are also shaped by the social expectations surrounding them and the organizational conditions within which they work.

5. Conclusion

Societal and organizational factors have an important interrelationship in shaping women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry. Societal expectations concerning gender roles, family responsibilities, marriage and motherhood can influence workplace attitudes and organizational practices. These influences may become visible in recruitment, promotion, leadership and access to professional opportunities. Organizational factors can either reinforce or reduce the effects of societal barriers. Where organizational practices are affected by gender stereotypes, informal networks and biased perceptions, they may restrict women's advancement. Conversely, transparent recruitment and promotion systems, effective mentoring and supportive workplace policies can reduce the disadvantages created by societal expectations. Women's career progression is therefore not determined by individual qualifications and performance alone but is also influenced by the social and organizational structures within which their careers develop. The study concludes that understanding women's career progression in the Nigerian banking industry requires an integrated consideration of societal and organizational factors. Addressing only one dimension may provide an incomplete solution. Greater attention to the interaction between social expectations and organizational practices is necessary to create more equitable opportunities for women to advance into senior management, executive and leadership positions. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed: Organizations in the Nigerian banking industry should recognize the relationship between societal expectations and organizational practices when developing policies and procedures for women's career advancement. Since cultural expectations, gender stereotypes and family responsibilities can influence workplace attitudes and decisions, banks should strengthen transparent and equitable recruitment and promotion systems and ensure that these processes are implemented fairly. Organizational policies should also provide supportive conditions that enable women to participate effectively in career development and leadership opportunities without being disadvantaged by traditional expectations about their family responsibilities. Also, banks should strengthen organizational practices that can reduce the negative effects of societal and organizational barriers on women's career progression. In particular, effective mentoring programmes, fair promotion criteria and supportive workplace policies should be implemented consistently across the organization. Mentoring should provide women with access to professional guidance, career information and leadership development opportunities, while promotion decisions should be based on clear and transparent criteria rather than informal relationships, gender stereotypes or assumptions about family responsibilities. These measures can help create a more inclusive organizational environment and improve women's opportunities to progress into senior management and leadership positions.

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