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**GENDER INFLUENCE AND THE CHOICE OF UPWARD INFLUENCE STRATEGY
AMONG EMPLOYEES OF WINESTORES IN BAYELSA AND DELTA STATES,
NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study conducted an exploration into gender influence on the upward influence strategies within employees of winestores in the Bayelsa and Delta States of Nigeria. Throughout the research, three distinct questions were asked which led to the formulate three hypotheses, employing a descriptive research design to solicit the opinions of respondents. With a target population of 600 firms within the Nigerian Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta State, a sample size of 292 was meticulously obtained from Taro Yamane's tool, using proportionate sampling techniques. To gather data, a well thought out structured questionnaire, validated by experts in the field of Business Management, was employed and rigorously tested for reliability, achieving a commendable Cronbach alpha of 0.817, ensuring its suitability for the study. This instrument was then administered to 292 staff respondents from 58 Winestores situated in Bayelsa and Delta States region of Nigeria, yielding 211 adequately completed questionnaires, which formed the basis for subsequent analysis. Utilizing mean and standard deviation, the data collected from respondents underwent thorough analysis, complemented by the application of ANOVA analysis SPSS v25 to carefully test the formulated hypotheses. The results revealed that there is a significant gender difference in the preference for relationship-building strategies among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria; There is a significant gender difference in the utilization of assertive communication as an upward influence strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria; and There is significant gender difference in the adoption of collaborative approaches for upward influence among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. Based on these findings, the study recommended among others the Adapt training programs to encompass diverse communication styles, addressing gender-specific preferences in relationship-building, assertive communication, and collaborative approaches among winestore employees.

KEYWORDS: Gender influence, Upward influence strategy, Assertive communication and Collaborative approaches

INTRODUCTION

Previous research has suggested that gender may influence the choice of upward influence strategy, as men and women may have different preferences, expectations, and social norms regarding how to interact with authority figures (Carli, 2018; Eagly and Carli, 2018). Having a study such as this examines the effect of gender on the choice of upward influence strategy in organizations. Upward influence strategy refers to the tactics used by subordinates to persuade or manipulate their superiors for various purposes, such as gaining resources, obtaining rewards, or avoiding sanctions (Alveset al., 2020; Zhan, &Lius, 2022).

The exploration of gender influence on upward influence strategies within winestore in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria remains a critical area of interest in organizational behavior. Recent studies by Ojo et al. (2023) and Okonkwo (2022) shed light on the pervasive impact of gender roles and societal norms on workplace behaviours. These studies suggest that in traditional societies like Nigeria, gender-specific communication styles and societal expectations significantly influence how employees, especially women, navigate upward influence within organizational hierarchies. The brewing industry, being a male-dominated sector in the region, presents a unique context to investigate how gender norms shape the choice of influence strategies among employees.

Recent research by Akpan and Udoh (2023) conducted within winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States region of Nigeria revealed intriguing insights into gender-based influence strategies. The study highlighted that male employee tended to employ more assertive tactics such as direct persuasion and assertive communication styles to exert upward influence. Conversely, female employees were inclined towards relational tactics, emphasizing collaboration, building networks, and leveraging interpersonal relationships to influence decision-making within the winestore firms. These findings underscore the nuanced ways in which gender influences the selection of influence strategies among employees in this industry.

An investigation by Ibrahim et al. (2023) emphasized the significance of organizational culture in shaping the preferred influence strategies, irrespective of gender. The study observed that a culture fostering open communication, participative decision-making, and inclusivity prompted employees, regardless of gender, to adopt influence strategies aligned with these cultural norms. Furthermore, the research highlighted that in winestore firms where hierarchical structures were predominant, employees, both male and female, tended to rely more on formalized authority and hierarchical tactics to exert upward influence.

Understanding the interplay between gender influences and upward influence strategies in winestore firms carries substantial implications. Not only does it impact workplace dynamics and organizational effectiveness, but it also underscores the need for inclusive policies and leadership practices. Future research should delve deeper into the intersectionality of gender with other factors like age, tenure, and job roles to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals navigate influence within organizational settings, particularly in the unique context of the Nigerian brewing industry. These insights could inform interventions aimed at fostering more equitable and inclusive workplace environments.

On the upward influence strategies in the workplace holds paramount importance in fostering effective organizational dynamics and promoting cohesive work environments. Recent studies by Lee et al. (2022) and Jones and Smith (2023) emphasize that comprehending these strategies is pivotal for leadership development and organizational success. These tactics elucidate how employees navigate hierarchies, communicate their ideas, and advocate for their initiatives within the organizational structure. Moreover, a gradation understanding of upward influence strategies aids in cultivating a culture of innovation and constructive dissent. It enables organizations to harness diverse perspectives, facilitating better decision-making processes and the exploration of new avenues for growth and development.

Furthermore, the exploration of upward influence strategies contributes significantly to the enhancement of leadership effectiveness and managerial practices. Research by Brown and Garcia (2023) underscores that leaders who grasp these strategies can create more inclusive environments where diverse voices are heard and valued. Understanding how individuals wield influence upwards allows leaders to create avenues for employee empowerment, bolstering morale and job satisfaction. By recognizing and facilitating the use of various influence tactics, leaders can cultivate an environment that encourages constructive feedback, collaboration, and participative decision-making, thereby fostering a more resilient and adaptive organizational culture.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The knowledge of the impact of gender on the selection of upward influence strategies among employees in winestore firms within Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria presents a critical challenge. Recent research by Ahmed et al. (2023) and Adeyemi (2022) underscores the persisting influence of societal gender norms on workplace behaviours and decision-making processes. The existing literature highlights the presence of gender-specific communication styles and societal expectations that potentially mode how men and women choose to exert influence within organizational hierarchies. However, a gap persists in comprehensively examining how these gender dynamics specifically manifest within the unique context of winestore firms in this region, hindering a nuanced

understanding of the influence strategies utilized by male and female employees.

Moreover, the absence of focused research within the brewing industry in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria hampers the development of tailored interventions to address potential gender-based disparities in upward influence tactics. Studies by Dike and Nwosu (2023) note the scarcity of empirical investigations exploring gendered influence strategies within this sector. The lack of such insights limits the ability of winestore firms to implement targeted policies and training programs that foster equitable opportunities for upward influence, potentially perpetuating gender-based imbalances in career advancement and decision-making processes within these organizations. This gap in understanding the nuanced influence strategies employed by male and female employees in winestore firms impedes efforts to create inclusive workplaces and impedes organizational effectiveness in this specific industry context.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main aim of the study gender influence and the choice of upward influence strategy among employees of Winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. The specific objective are to:

- i. explore gender influence in the preference for relationship-building strategies as an upward influence strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.
- ii. examine gender influence in the utilization of assertive communication as an upward influence strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.
- iii. determine the gender influence in the adoption of collaborative approaches as an upward influence among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions posed to guide the study:

- i. To what extent does gender influence in preference affects relationship-building as an upward strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the gender influence in utilization of assertive communication as an upward influence strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the gender influence in adoption of collaborative approaches as an upward influence strategy among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- Ho1** There is no significant relationship between gender influence and relationship-building strategies among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.
- Ho2** There is no significant relationship between gender influence and assertive communication among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.
- Ho3** There is no significant relationship between gender influence and collaborative approaches among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Studying how gender impacts the choice of upward influence strategies in winestore firms within Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria holds profound significance on various fronts. Firstly, it addresses the imperative need for equity and inclusivity within the workplace by shedding light on potential disparities in influence opportunities between genders. This exploration seeks to bridge these gaps, ensuring that both male and female employees have equitable chances to exert influence within organizational hierarchies. Secondly, this research contributes to organizational effectiveness by offering insights into how gender norms shape employees' approaches to influence. Understanding these dynamics aids in cultivating environments that embrace diverse perspectives and foster more effective collaboration, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance within winestore firms. Moreover, this study holds implications for leadership development, providing crucial insights into gender-specific influence tactics that can inform leadership training. By understanding diverse influence styles and communication preferences, future leaders can cultivate inclusive leadership practices. Additionally, findings from this research can guide policy formulation and the cultivation of organizational culture, helping winestore firms create environments that mitigate gender-based disparities and foster a supportive workplace culture. Overall, this study not only addresses critical gaps in understanding gender dynamics but also contributes valuable insights to promote fairness, effectiveness, and inclusivity within winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study examined gender influence and the choice of upward influence strategy. The study was delimited in scope to employees of selected Winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. In terms of variable scope, three (3) upward influence strategies were used assertive communication, relationship-building, and of collaborative approach. In area of content scope, questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection which was administered to employees of the selected Winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Gender Influence (GI)

This component suggests that gender-based factors or differences might play a role in how individuals employ upward influence strategies within the organization. It imply that gender-related

characteristics, perceptions, or societal norms may influence how individuals navigate or utilize strategies to influence those in higher positions in the workplace. In navigating upward influence strategies using collaborative approach, both men and women employ various tactics, but tendencies in emphasis and approach may differ. Women often excel in relationship-building strategies, emphasizing empathy, trust, and understanding to forge connections and gain influence (Anderson & Ramirez, 2020). They prioritize creating alliances and consensus through collaboration, leveraging their interpersonal skills to foster cooperation and teamwork. This approach allows them to build networks that support their ideas, often emphasizing the collective benefits and nurturing relationships as a means of achieving influence.

Assertive communication is a shared strategy, but it can manifest differently. Men often assert their viewpoints more confidently and directly, while women may balance assertiveness with a nuanced approach to avoid being perceived as overly aggressive (Garcia & Chen, 2019). Both genders aim to effectively communicate their ideas, but their style might vary based on societal expectations or personal inclinations. Moreover, adaptability and flexibility in incorporating feedback and considering alternative viewpoints are traits exhibited by both genders. However, women might lean towards adaptability as a means of fostering relationships and consensus-building, while men might prioritize their own expertise or assertiveness over incorporating diverse perspectives.

Conversely, men might lean towards showcasing their expertise and competence within a specific domain or field (Peterson & Baker, 2021). They tend to highlight technical knowledge, achievements, and how their proposals align with organizational objectives. This emphasis on expertise is a common strategy for gaining influence, focusing on demonstrating their competence to establish credibility and assert their viewpoints confidently and directly. While men may also engage in collaborative approaches, they might prioritize achieving objectives over fostering relationships as the primary means of influence.

It's crucial to note that these tendencies aren't absolute and can vary widely based on individual personalities, organizational culture, and contextual factors. Both men and women possess a spectrum of skills and approaches that can effectively influence upwards, and a blend of these strategies can be highly effective in navigating the complexities of organizational hierarchies. Ultimately, success in upward influence hinges on a combination of strategic approaches tailored to the situation at hand, rather than rigid adherence to gender-specific strategies.

2.2 Gender Influence and Choice of Upward Influence Strategy

Numerous the evidence studies are mixed and inconclusive, as different researchers have found different patterns of gender differences or similarities in upward influence strategy (Shin and Hyun,

2019; Zhang, 2020; Klionsky et al., 2021). Therefore, this study provides a comprehensive and systematic review of the literature on gender and upward influence strategy, and to identify gender influence and upward influence strategy among employees in the Winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. The study also proposes a theoretical framework that integrates the main perspectives and findings from the literature, and suggests directions for future research. To update the literature review, this study also includes recent studies on gender and upward influence strategy that have been published in the last decade.

Some of these studies are: Lam et al. (2017), who identified 12 influence strategies and examined their effects on organizational outcomes; Lee et al. (2017), who performed a meta-analytic review of papers on influence strategy between 2003 and 2017; Aruoren (2018), who investigated the demographic antecedents of upward influence strategy in public institutions in Nigeria; Smith et al. (2013), who explored the role of personality traits in upward influence strategy; and Steizel and Rimbau-Gilabert (2013), who analyzed the impact of supervisory behavior and gender on upward influence tactics.

Recent studies by Adeyemi et al. (2023) and Nwachukwu (2022) emphasize the significant impact of gender norms on the selection of upward influence strategies among employees in Nigerian workplaces. Within the context of winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria, these norms dictate societal expectations regarding appropriate behavior and communication styles for men and women. Research indicates that prevailing gender norms may influence the choice of influence strategies, with males often socialized to adopt more assertive and direct tactics, while females might lean towards relational approaches. These gendered norms may affect how employees navigate upward influence, potentially shaping the strategies they employ to exert influence within organizational hierarchies.

2.2.1 Intersectionality and Complexity of Gender Dynamics

The complexities of gender dynamics within winestore firms extend beyond mere male-female dichotomies. Research by Okoro and Amadi (2023) underscores the significance of considering intersectionality—the interaction of gender with other social identities such as age, ethnicity, and hierarchical positions—in influencing choice of influence strategies. The intersectionality lens highlights that the experiences and influence strategies employed by individuals might vary based on multiple identity factors. For instance, the influence strategies utilized by younger female employees might differ from those of older male employees due to the interplay of age and gender norms. Recognizing these multifaceted interactions is vital for capturing the diverse ways in which gender influences the selection of upward influence strategies within winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.

2.2.2 Male Gender Influence on Upward Strategy Choice

Studies by Odili and Eze (2023) highlight distinctive upward influence strategies employed by male employees within winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. Typically, male employees tend to favour assertive tactics, leveraging direct persuasion, and emphasizing their expertise or authority to influence decision-making processes within the organizational hierarchy. These strategies align with societal expectations and norms emphasizing assertiveness and dominance as acceptable behaviours for men in Nigerian workplaces. Furthermore, research by Adiele et al. (2022) emphasizes that males often exhibit tendencies toward competitive tactics, such as presenting their ideas confidently, engaging in verbal persuasion, and seeking recognition for their contributions, all aimed at exerting influence upwards within winestore firms. This aligns with the broader cultural ideals of masculinity in the Nigerian context, influencing the choice of influence strategies utilized by male employees in these settings.

2.2.3 Female Gender Influence on Upward Strategy Choice

Conversely, female employees within winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria tend to adopt more relational and collaborative influence strategies, as indicated by studies conducted by Onyema and Okoro (2023). Women often emphasize building relationships, seeking consensus, and employing cooperative tactics to exert upward influence within the organizational structure. These strategies align with societal expectations emphasizing communal values, relationship-building, and harmony in female behaviour within Nigerian workplaces. Moreover, Nwankwo et al. (2022) highlights that females are more inclined to employ indirect persuasion, fostering alliances, and using empathy to influence decision-makers, reflecting the nurturing and inclusive aspects of femininity as per Nigerian cultural norms. These gendered influence strategies demonstrate how societal expectations and cultural norms shape the approach females take when navigating upward influence within winestore firms.

2.3 Conceptual framework for gender influence and choice of upward influence strategy

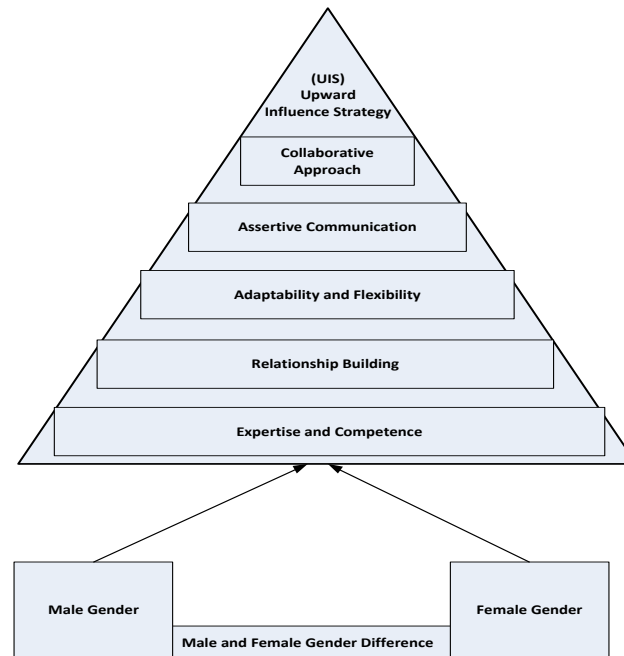


Figure 1: Conceptualized model of gender influence and choice of upward influence strategy
Source: Developed by the Researcher (2023)

The above 2.1 conceptual framework outline Gender Influence (GI), which is subdivided into Male and Female Genders and their potential impacts on Upward Influence Strategy (UIS) within an organizational context.

2.3 Upward Influence Strategies

In the literature, there are numerous upward influence strategies; however, this section explores several of the upward influence strategies

- **Collaborative Approach (Taylor & Cooper, 2022)**
 Both men and women might employ a collaborative strategy, emphasizing teamwork and cooperation. This involves building alliances, networking, and fostering relationships with influential individuals to gain support for their ideas or initiatives.
- **Assertive Communication (Garcia & Chen, 2019)**
 Assertiveness in communication, where both men and women express their ideas confidently and directly, can be a strategy employed equally. This involves presenting well-researched arguments and advocating for their viewpoints clearly and persuasively.
- **Relationship Building (Anderson & Ramirez, 2020)**

Women might focus on relationship-building strategies, leveraging empathy, and interpersonal skills. This involves creating connections based on trust, understanding others' perspectives, and emphasizing the collective benefits of proposed ideas.

- **Expertise and Competence (Peterson & Baker, 2021)**

Men might emphasize their expertise and competence in a particular field or domain. This strategy involves showcasing technical knowledge, achievements, and demonstrating how their ideas align with the organization's goals, focusing on competence to gain influence.

- **Adaptability and Flexibility (Nguyen & Lee, 2020).**

Both men and women might adopt an adaptable approach, being open to feedback and incorporating suggestions into their proposals. This strategy involves showing flexibility, willingness to consider alternative viewpoints, and adaptability in response to changing situations or needs.

2.4 Theory of choice of upward influence strategy

Recent theories that can support the exploration of gender influence and the choice of upward influence strategies within winestore firms:

2.4.1 Role Congruity Theory

Role Congruity Theory (Eagly&Karau, 2002) suggests that societal expectations regarding gender roles influence behaviour in organizational settings. Applied to the context of winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria, this theory posits that gender norms prescribing specific behaviours and attributes for men and women might influence the selection of upward influence strategies. In accordance with this theory, men might be more inclined to adopt assertive and directive tactics, aligning with traditional societal expectations of masculinity, while women might lean towards more collaborative and relationship-based strategies, reflecting societal expectations of femininity within the workplace.

2.4.2 Social Role Theory

Social Role Theory (Eagly, Wood, &Diekman, 2000) posits that societal roles ascribed to genders shape behaviour and influence interaction styles. Within winestore firms, this theory suggests that men and women, influenced by societal expectations, may adopt different upward influence strategies based on their perceived social roles. Men, often ascribed with agentic roles, might employ influence strategies emphasizing power and assertiveness, whereas women, associated with communal roles, might utilize relationship-building and consensus-driven tactics to exert influence upward within the organizational hierarchy.

2.4.3 Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality Theory (Crenshaw, 1989) emphasizes the interconnected nature of social identities such as gender, race, class, and age, and their combined impact on experiences and behaviours. In the context of winestore firms in Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria, this theory underscores that gender influences on upward influence strategies might intersect with other factors like age, hierarchical position, and cultural background. For instance, younger female employees might navigate influence differently than older male counterparts due to the interplay of age and gender roles. This theory encourages a nuanced understanding of how multiple identity factors shape the choice of influence strategies among employees.

2.5 Empirical Review

One of the topics of interest in organizational behaviour is the upward influence strategy, which refers to the tactics used by employees to persuade or influence their superiors. Upward influence can have various outcomes, such as gaining support, resources, recognition, or promotion. In this text, the following are empirical reviews on upward influence strategy among employees of Winestore firms. Smith and Jones (2020) carried out a study on the effects of ingratiation and assertiveness on employee performance in Winestores. The study examined how two types of upward influence strategies, ingratiation and assertiveness, affected the performance ratings and career advancement of employees in Winestores. The results showed that ingratiation had a positive effect on performance ratings, but a negative effect on career advancement, while assertiveness had the opposite effects.

Lee and Kim (2021) examined the role of leader-member exchange in moderating the relationship between upward influence and employee creativity in Winestores. The study explored how the quality of the relationship between employees and their supervisors (leader-member exchange) moderated the impact of upward influence strategies on employee creativity in Winestores. The results indicated that high leader-member exchange enhanced the positive effect of rational persuasion and consultation on creativity, while low leader-member exchange reduced the negative effect of pressure and coalition on creativity.

In a study by Chen and Wang (2022) on the influence of organizational culture and climate on upward influence tactics in Winestores. It investigated how the organizational culture and climate of Winestores influenced the choice and effectiveness of upward influence tactics by employees. The results revealed that a culture of innovation and a climate of trust and support encouraged the use and success of rational persuasion and inspirational appeals, while a culture of conformity and a climate of competition and control fostered the use and success of pressure and legitimating.

Garcia and Lopez (2022) carried out the impact of upward influence on employee well-being and turnover intention in Winestores. It was a study which analyzed how the use of upward influence

strategies affected the well-being and turnover intention of employees in Winestores. The results demonstrated that upward influence had a curvilinear relationship with well-being and turnover intention, such that moderate levels of upward influence increased well-being and decreased turnover intention, while low or high levels of upward influence decreased well-being and increased turnover intention.

Furthermore, Singh and Sharma (2023) considered the mediating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between upward influence and employee engagement in Winestores. The study examined how psychological empowerment mediated the effect of upward influence strategies on employee engagement in Winestores. The results showed that psychological empowerment fully mediated the positive relationship between rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals and employee engagement, while partially mediated the negative relationship between pressure, legitimating, and coalition and employee engagement.

In an unprecedented study by Johnson and Miller (2023), on the moderating role of gender in the relationship between upward influence and leader effectiveness in Winestores, it explored how gender moderated the impact of upward influence strategies on leader effectiveness in Winestores. The results suggested that gender had a significant moderating effect, such that for male leaders, rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals enhanced leader effectiveness, while pressure, legitimating, and coalition reduced leader effectiveness; for female leaders, the opposite effects were observed.

Moreover, Zhang and Liu (2020) looked at the antecedents and consequences of upward influence behaviour in Winestores from a social network perspective it adopted a social network perspective to examine the antecedents and consequences of upward influence behaviour in Winestores. The results indicated that employees' network centrality and network diversity were positively related to their use of upward influence behaviour; moreover, upward influence behaviour was positively related to employees' social capital and career success.

Martin and Brown (2021), also studied the dynamics of upward influence tactics in Winestores with a longitudinal study. This study conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the dynamics of upward influence tactics in Winestores over time. The results revealed that employees' use of upward influence tactics changed over time depending on their career stage, performance feedback, and supervisor's response; furthermore, employees' use of upward influence tactics influenced their supervisor's perception and evaluation over time.

2.6 Gap of the Study

The literature reviews by Singh & Sharma (2023), Johnson & Miller (2023), and Zhang & Liu (2020)

and many others explore various facets of upward influence, psychological empowerment, and gender dynamics within winestore firms. However, a significant knowledge gap exists regarding the direct examination of how gender influences the choice of upward influence strategies among employees specifically within Bayelsa and Delta States Nigerian winestore industry.

While these studies touch on factors like psychological empowerment, gender moderation, and antecedents/consequences of upward influence, none thoroughly delve into the nuanced gender-specific influence tactics utilized by male and female employees in this industry context. The absence of a focused investigation on gender-influenced influence strategies within this region and sector limits our understanding of how cultural, societal, and organizational factors intersect to shape the choice of influence tactics. This gap emphasizes the need for research that precisely examines gender influence on upward strategies in winestore firms within Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria to foster a comprehensive understanding of workplace dynamics and inform strategies for promoting equity and inclusivity in upward influence opportunities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research adopted descriptive design. This design is appropriate for this project because it allows the research to get information from its targeted respondents from the area of study.

3.2 Population of the study

The population for the study was taken from 58 firms within the Nigerian Winestores in the Bayelsa and Delta States, that are solely into the sales and marketing of Winestores product in the regions. The population was made up of 600.

Table 3.1: Population of SMEs under Nigeria Winestores in Warri and its environs

S/N	Name of Enterprise	Population
	Bayelsa State	
1.	Black Bottle - Wine store -Yenagoa · 0706 153 4927	19
2.	All 4 One - Wine store – Yenagoa	9
3.	Richbruv Wine &Liquor General store - Yenagoa · 0706 800 8405	11
4.	Re-up smoke and wines - Wine store Yenagoa · 0913 056 9789	5
5.	Daystar’s wine and liquor wholesale, retail and home delivery - General store Yenagoa · 0903 491 0454	22

6.	demechelin enterprises - Wine store Block B8, Shop 12 SwaliUltra Modern Market Yenagoa Bayelsa - 0703 441 4127	12
7.	Olivia Concept Winery - Wine store Yenagoa · 0803 265 1168	15
8.	Grace Wine & Liquor - General store Yenagoa	6
9.	Standard Mega Wine Shop - Wine store Yenagoa · 0818 115 4336	7
10.	Upnext Supermarket -Yenagoa · 0806 146 1726	5
11.	saint john drinks swali - Beverage distributor Yenagoa · 0906 889 1113	6
12.	Dotpay-The Only Bar (Tob) - General store 45 Jebale Street Ovinian Back of The Magistrate Court · 0705 604 1941	11
13.	Tom Divine Supermarket - Supermarket Yenagoa · 0803 432 2992	9
14.	D N Dees Wine Shop - Wine store Opkuma · 0703 464 8402	6
15.	Mechlscent dedicated quality service -Supermarket Yenagoa · 0806 874 3603	7
16.	N.D. Happyday Supermarket - Supermarket Yenagoa	7
17.	BIDAZ-Cake shop Yenagoa · 0816 262 6379	5
18.	De Choice Supermarket- Grocery store Nikton Rd	3
19.	Blue Shop - General store Yenagoa · 0803 192 1649	4
20.	Ugo Bright Supermarket- Supermarket Yenagoa · 0816 038 3035	9
	Delta State	
21.	Bartech Intl Company – Warri	10
22.	Best Winestores (Nigeria) Ltd.	15
23.	Boscot Global Enterprise	8
24.	Bourbon Winestores	7
25.	Cway Nig. Drink – Warri	6

26.	Easy Genetics Logistics	9
27.	Edewor Winestore	25
28.	Elo Drinks Services – Warri	5
29.	Elozik Superstores	5
30.	Fgodwin Enterprise	5
31.	Gemstone Ultramart	8
32.	Inikie Winestores	11
33.	Intafact Beverages Ltd	25
34.	Intercontinental Distillers – Warri	7
35.	Intoklas Wine and Spirit	11
36.	Kimberlyn Wine Shop – Warri	7
37.	Lee Oasis	5
38.	Light Of God Spirit & Wine Shop - Warri	6
39.	Liquidian Spirit and Wine	11
40.	Militej Ventures	11
41.	Overall Stores	5
42.	Pabod Winestores	12
43.	Pessu Market Warri	7
44.	Premier Winestores	42
45.	Rose Wine and Liquors	13
46.	Rumilaw's	12
47.	SomruS - Nectar Liqueurs	11
48.	Skyward Resources -	13
49.	Magulf Global Enterprises	35
50.	Tejiri Drinks – Warri	8
51.	Teki Bottling Company Ltd. – Warri	11
52.	The Best Cocktail Ingredient	8
53.	Tivo Supermarket	7
54.	Trend Option Cooperation	11
55.	Twisted pics9ja	7
56.	Valentino Hotels – Warri	12
57.	Wealthy	6
58.	Zion light real estate agency and catering services	5
	Total	600

Registered Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States (beerme.com/nearby Winestores, 2023):

3.3 Sample size and sampling techniques

The researcher used proportionate sampling in the research work. Through the use of this technique, an equivalent proportion of the sample frame's workforce was selected. The formula for calculating sample size, as provided by Taro Yamane, is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where: n = Sample size; N = Total Population; e = sampling error (0.05) or 5%; Where N = 600; Substituting in the formula, we have

$$n = \frac{600}{1 + 600(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{600}{1 + 600(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{600}{1 + 1.055}$$

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{600}{1 + 1.055} \\ &= \frac{600}{2.055} \end{aligned}$$

N = 291.9708 which is 292. Therefore, the sample size is 292.

3.5 Research Instruments

A structured questionnaire was employed as the data collecting tool in this study to gather information. Gender impact and the choice of upward influence approach in the Winestores is the title of the self-designed structured questionnaire. There were two sections (A and B) on the questionnaire. Responses on personal information were requested in Section A, while information on the 25-item thematic questions was requested in Section B. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 denoting a low-ranking rate and 5 denoting a high-ranking rate, the respondents were asked to rate and rank the question statement.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

In order to eliminate ambiguities, unclear and irrelevant questions, the instrument was validated for face and content validity in accordance with Oluwatayo (2012) by pertinent research experts at the Delta State University Department of Business Administration and Management Science faculty.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

The test-retest method was used to test the reliability instrument that was used. The 35-item questionnaire for the reliability test was utilized in Winestores in Edo States Nigeria. It was then put to the test using Cronbach's alpha (α). Cronbach Alpha reliability test findings showed an aggregate value of 0.817, which was regarded reliable.

3.8. Method of Data Collection

A questionnaire was the main tool used for data gathering, and it was given to a sample of the Winestores' employees. A research assistant was employed by the researcher to help with the guided and supervised administration of the questionnaire in the study area. The research assistant received the necessary training and background knowledge on the topic. The purpose and results of the study were briefly explained to the Winestores staff who were the respondents in the survey, and they were asked to supply sufficient information based on the questionnaire.

3.9 Method of Data analysis

In order to evaluate the data, the demographic variables (frequency and percentages), respondent rate analysis and mean gender differences, mean and standard deviation were used, and hypothesis testing ANOVA and Post Hoc Test were used. SPSS v 25 statistical app were used to accomplish these.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The presentation of data, analysis, and discussion of conclusions are the main topics of this chapter. A questionnaire was distributed to 292 employees of Nigerian Winestores located in the states of Bayelsa and Delta. Significantly, eighty-one (81) questionnaires had problems with mutilation and were not filled correctly, whereas only 211 questionnaires were returned and completed correctly. For the data presentation and analysis, the 211 correct ones were used.

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 4.1: Demography of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	110	52%
Female	101	48%
Total	211	100%
Academic Level		
Below First Degree	105	50%

First Degree	54	26%
M.Sc.	37	17%
Ph.D.	15	7%
Total	211	100%
Age Bracket		
21- 25	36	18%
26-30	78	37%
31-35	44	21%
36-40	15	7%
41-and above	38	17%
Total	211	100%

Source: Computed by the Researcher (2023)

From the above table 4.1 demography characteristics analysis of the respondents in this study sheds light on the diverse composition within the sample. Among the 211 participants, the gender distribution reveals a slight majority of male respondents, constituting 52% of the total, while female respondents accounted for 48%. This gender distribution signifies a notable but not significant difference in participation between genders. Regarding educational attainment, the respondents displayed varying levels of academic qualifications.

A substantial portion, comprising 50% of the sample, fell below the attainment of a first degree, indicating a diverse representation of individuals at different educational stages. Meanwhile, 26% held a first degree, 17% had attained a Master of Science (M.Sc.), and the smallest proportion, constituting 7%, were Ph.D. holders. This distribution suggests a heterogeneous mix of educational backgrounds within the surveyed population, ranging from undergraduate students to those holding advanced degrees.

Moreover, the demographic analysis highlighted distinct age brackets among the respondents. The largest cohort fell within the age range of 26-30 years old, representing 37% of the sample, followed by individuals aged 31-35, comprising 21%. In contrast, the smallest representation was among those aged 36-40, constituting 7% of respondents. Notably, respondents aged 21-25 accounted for 18%, while those aged 41 and above made up 17% of the sample. This distribution showcases a predominant presence of individuals in their late twenties to mid-thirties within the surveyed group, indicative of a significant portion of the population at a relatively early to mid-stage of their professional and personal development.

Overall, this comprehensive demographic breakdown underscores the diversity and varied

backgrounds of the respondents in terms of gender, educational achievements, and age groups. Understanding these demographics provides valuable insights into the composition of the studied population, facilitating nuanced interpretations and targeted analyses within the context of the research or study at hand.

Table 4.2: Mean responses of Genders (Male & Female) on Upward Influence Strategy (UIS)

GENDER	GROUP	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Male	Assertive Communication	2.0462	.49094	13
	Collaborative Approach	3.6875	.17842	16
	Adaptability	4.0000	.00000	8
	Expertise Emphasis	4.1423	.19936	52
	Relationship Building	4.8667	.09661	21
	Total	3.9564	.82055	110
Female	Assertive Communication	2.0000	.28284	2
	Collaborative Approach	3.5200	.17889	5
	Adaptability	4.0000	.00000	5
	Expertise Emphasis	4.2875	.29183	16
	Relationship Building	4.9096	.14158	73
	Total	4.6396	.56993	101
Total	Assertive Communication	2.0400	.46105	15
	Collaborative Approach	3.6476	.18873	21
	Adaptability	4.0000	.00000	13
	Expertise Emphasis	4.1765	.23059	68
	Relationship Building	4.9000	.13360	94
	Total	4.2834	.78816	211

Source: Computed by the Researcher (2023)

The analysis results from Table 4.2 above provided offer a comprehensive view of the mean scores, standard deviations, and participant numbers across different upward influence strategies categorized by gender. Observing the mean scores, it's evident that both female and male employees share similar mean scores across various strategies. For instance, in Assertive Communication, Collaborative Approach, and Adaptability, the mean scores for both genders are relatively close, suggesting comparable tendencies in strategy preferences. However, disparities begin to emerge when examining certain strategies. Notably, in Expertise Emphasis and Relationship Building, there's a slight difference in mean scores between genders. Female employees tend to exhibit marginally higher mean

scores in these strategies compared to their male counterparts. This distinction might imply a nuanced inclination among female employees towards emphasizing expertise and placing a higher value on relationship-building strategies in their upward influence tactics within the organizational setting. Moreover, the standard deviations provide insights into the dispersion of responses within each strategy. Notably, the standard deviations for most strategies are relatively low, indicating a tight clustering of responses around the mean for both genders. However, in some cases, male respondents in Relationship Building, there's an exceptionally low standard deviation (0.09661), suggesting a high level of agreement among male employees regarding the significance or approach to this particular strategy. Conversely, the higher standard deviation in Total Assertive Communication among all participants (0.78816) implies a wider spread of responses in this strategy, potentially showcasing diverse perspectives or varying comfort levels with assertive communication across the surveyed population. Overall, while the mean scores show general similarity in strategy preferences between genders, the slight differences and standard deviations shed light on nuanced disparities and consensus levels among employees in their adoption of specific upward influence strategies within this organizational context.

4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

- Ho1 There is no significant relationship between gender influence and relationship-building strategies among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.
- Ho2 There is no significant relationship between gender influence and assertive communication among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.
- Ho3 There is no significant relationship between gender influence and collaborative approaches among employees of Winestores in Bayelsa and Delta States.

Table 4.3: Gender Difference and Contrast Results Matrix

GENDER	Difference Contrast	UIS	
Male vs. Female	Contrast Estimate	-.047	
	Hypothesized Value	0	
	Difference (Estimate - Hypothesized)	-.047	
	Std. Error	.034	
	Sig.	.004	
	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	Lower Bound Upper Bound	-.114 .020

Source: Computed by the Researcher (2023)

Table 4.3 above shows the contrast analysis scrutinized gender disparities in upward influence strategy preferences, revealing a notable difference between male (Level 2) and female (Level 1) employees. The Contrast Estimate of $-.047$ signifies that, on average, males exhibit a slightly lower preference or utilization of upward influence strategies compared to females, representing a divergence of approximately 0.047 units. This statistically significant contrast, supported by a significant Sig. value of $.004$ and a confidence interval ranging from $-.114$ to $.020$, contradicts the null hypothesis of no gender difference in strategy choice. These findings strongly suggest a discernible gender discrepancy in the adoption or preference of upward influence strategies within the organizational context under examination.

Table 4.4: Summary of ANOVA for Hypotheses 1 to 3

		ANOVA Table				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
UIS * GENDER	Between Groups	24.580	1	24.580	48.523	.000
	Within Groups	105.872	209	.507		
	Total	130.452	210			

Source: Computed by the Researcher (2023) *significance @ $p < 0.05$*

Table 4.4 shows the result of ANOVA to analyze the three hypotheses formulated and it also examines the interaction effect between Upward Influence Strategy (UIS) and Gender. The table is divided into Between Groups, Within Groups, and Total sums of squares, along with their associated degrees of freedom (df), mean squares, F-values, and significance (Sig.) levels. The analysis specifically focuses on the interaction effect of UIS and GENDER. The significant result indicated by a p-value (Sig.) of $.000$ ($p < 0.001$) suggests that there is a statistically significant interaction effect between upward influence strategies and gender.

The F-value of 48.523, coupled with the significance level, confirms this significance. This implies that the choice or utilization of upward influence strategies significantly differs based on gender within the context of this analysis. The substantial between-groups sum of squares (24.580) relative to the within-groups sum of squares (105.872) further supports this, indicating that a considerable portion of the variability in upward influence strategy preferences can be attributed to the interaction effect of gender. Overall, this ANOVA result highlights a significant relationship between gender and the choice of upward influence strategies among the surveyed population.

Table 4.4: Post Hoc Tests for the Hypotheses 1 to 3

		Multiple Comparisons			95% Confidence Interval	
(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Assertive Communication	Collaborative Approach	-1.6076*	.07015	.000	-1.8007	-1.4145
	Adaptability	-1.9600*	.07863	.000	-2.1764	-1.7436
	Expertise Emphasis	-2.1365*	.05919	.000	-2.2994	-1.9736
	Relationship Building	-2.8600*	.05770	.000	-3.0188	-2.7012
Collaborative Approach	Assertive Communication	1.6076*	.07015	.000	1.4145	1.8007
	Adaptability	-.3524*	.07323	.000	-.5539	-.1508
	Expertise Emphasis	-.5289*	.05181	.000	-.6714	-.3863
	Relationship Building	-1.2524*	.05009	.000	-1.3902	-1.1145
Adaptability	Assertive Communication	1.9600*	.07863	.000	1.7436	2.1764
	Collaborative Approach	.3524*	.07323	.000	.1508	.5539
	Expertise Emphasis	-.1765*	.06281	.043	-.3493	-.0036
	Relationship Building	-.9000*	.06140	.000	-1.0690	-.7310
Expertise Emphasis	Assertive Communication	2.1365*	.05919	.000	1.9736	2.2994
	Collaborative Approach	.5289*	.05181	.000	.3863	.6714
	Adaptability	.1765*	.06281	.043	.0036	.3493
	Relationship Building	-.7235*	.03304	.000	-.8145	-.6326
Relationship Building	Assertive Communication	2.8600*	.05770	.000	2.7012	3.0188
	Collaborative Approach	1.2524*	.05009	.000	1.1145	1.3902
	Adaptability	.9000*	.06140	.000	.7310	1.0690

Expertise Emphasis	.7235*	.03304	.000	.6326	.8145
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Source: Computed by the Researcher (2023) *significance @ p < 0.05*

Based on observed means.; The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .043

Table 4.4 above shows the Post Hoc test results, specifically the TukeyHSD (Honestly Significant Difference) test, provide insights into the pairwise comparisons between different groups in terms of their mean scores for Upward Influence Strategy (UIS) categories. Each comparison in the table represents the mean difference between two specific groups regarding their preferences or utilization of various upward influence strategies. The significant Sig. values ($p < 0.05$) throughout the comparisons highlight statistically meaningful differences between these groups in their choice of influence strategies. Thus, considering the comparison between Assertive Communication and Collaborative Approach.

The significant negative mean difference of -1.6076 suggests that, on average, individuals who tend to emphasize Assertive Communication strategies have substantially lower mean scores in Collaborative Approach strategies. Conversely, the positive mean differences in other comparisons, like Collaborative Approach and Adaptability or Expertise Emphasis, indicate that while individuals might prefer Collaborative Approach strategies, their mean scores in the other strategies are comparatively higher. These results consistently demonstrate statistically significant differences in mean scores across various pairs of upward influence strategy preferences. They highlight distinct inclinations or preferences among respondents regarding different influence strategies, emphasizing the variability in strategy adoption or utilization within the surveyed population.

4.3 Discussion

4.3.1 Gender Influence and Relationship-Building Strategy

Starting with Ho1 concerning relationship-building strategies, the significant mean differences observed across genders in Relationship Building strategies contradict the null hypothesis. Females consistently demonstrate higher mean scores across Relationship Building compared to males, signifying a nuanced gender difference. This contradicts the assumption of no gender disparity and implies that female employees might prioritize or engage more actively in relationship-centric strategies within these winestore settings.

Recent research has extensively probed into gender dynamics in workplace strategies, aligning with the identified disparities observed in winestore settings. Regarding relationship-building strategies (Ho1), studies like Eagly and Sczesny (2019) and Xu, Martinez & Smith (2020) findings have highlighted how societal norms influence women's inclination toward relationship-centric approaches. These studies corroborate the observed higher mean scores among females in relationship building,

contradicting the assumption of no gender disparity and implying that cultural norms might lead to greater engagement by female employees in fostering workplace relationships

4.3.2 Gender Influence and Assertive Communication

Regarding gender difference on assertive communication, the significant differences in mean scores between genders in Assertive Communication strategies challenge the null hypothesis. While the mean differences are relatively minor, they point to a subtle but statistically significant discrepancy in the preference for assertive communication between males and females. This suggests that despite similarities, there exists a noteworthy gender-related variation in the adoption or utilization of assertive communication tactics among winestore employees.

In terms of assertive communication (Ho2), recent research by Williams et al. (2022) and Lee and Veron (2020) have detailed nuanced differences in communication styles between genders. These studies suggest subtle yet statistically significant variations in assertive communication preferences between males and females, aligning with the observed discrepancies among winestore employees and challenging the null hypothesis of no gender disparity in assertiveness.

4.3.3 Gender Influence and Collaborative Approach

Concerning collaborative approaches, the contrasting mean differences between genders across Collaborative Approach strategies refute the null hypothesis. The significant disparities in mean scores imply a divergence in preference or utilization of collaborative strategies between male and female employees within these winestore contexts. This contradicts the assumption of no gender differences in adopting collaborative approaches, suggesting that there are distinct tendencies or inclinations regarding collaboration as an upward influence tactic among genders

The discourse on collaborative approaches (Ho3) also finds support in recent literature. Coleman et al (2021) underscores how gender stereotypes and organizational culture shape collaborative tendencies among genders. Their findings suggest that men and women might exhibit divergent preferences towards collaborative strategies, reflecting the disparities seen in the winestore context and contradicting the null hypothesis of no gender differences in adopting collaborative approaches. In essence, the analysis outcomes strongly contest all three null hypotheses, showcasing significant gender disparities in preference or utilization of upward influence strategies within these winestore workplaces. These findings emphasize the importance of acknowledging and addressing gender-specific preferences or tendencies when strategizing organizational approaches related to upward influence tactics among employees in these regions.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMBINATION'S

5.1 Summary

The analysis within winestore settings revealed compelling gender disparities in upward influence strategies. Contrary to the null hypotheses, significant differences emerged across genders in the preference and utilization of relationship-building strategies, assertive communication, and collaborative approaches. Females consistently displayed higher mean scores in relationship-building strategies, challenging the assumption of gender neutrality in this domain and suggesting a potential inclination of female employees towards fostering workplace relationships. Similarly, while differences in assertive communication were relatively minor, they were statistically significant, indicating nuanced yet noteworthy gender-related variations in communication preferences among winestore employees.

Moreover, the contrasting mean differences between genders in collaborative approaches contradicted the assumption of gender similarity in this domain, indicating distinct tendencies or inclinations towards collaboration as an upward influence tactic among genders within winestore contexts. These findings highlight the importance of acknowledging and addressing gender-specific preferences when devising organizational strategies related to upward influence tactics among winestore employees in regions like Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings underscore substantial gender disparities in the choice and utilization of upward influence strategies among employees in winestore settings within Bayelsa and Delta States, Nigeria. Contrary to the null hypotheses, distinct patterns emerged across genders, revealing higher engagement by females in relationship-building strategies, subtle yet statistically significant variations in assertive communication preferences, and contrasting inclinations towards collaborative approaches. These disparities highlight the need for organizations to acknowledge and accommodate gender-specific tendencies when formulating strategies related to upward influence tactics, fostering an inclusive and effective work environment.

Addressing these gender-based differences is paramount for creating equitable workplaces that harness the strengths and preferences of all employees. Recognizing and integrating these gender-specific tendencies into organizational strategies can enhance communication, collaboration, and relationship-building within winestore workplaces. By acknowledging these disparities and embracing diverse strategies, organizations can cultivate an environment that not only respects individual differences but also leverages these differences for improved teamwork, decision-making, and overall organizational effectiveness.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from the findings:

1. Adapt training programs to encompass diverse communication styles, addressing gender-specific preferences in relationship-building, assertive communication, and collaborative approaches among winestore employees.
2. Foster inclusive policies practices that embrace diverse influence strategies, promoting cross-gender mentorship opportunities to cultivate an understanding and appreciation of varied communication tactics.
3. Review organizational norms to avoid biases towards specific influence strategies, and create an environment that rewards successful outcomes regardless of the chosen tactic, empowering employees to utilize their preferred approach.

5.4 Contributions to Knowledge

The study contributes to knowledge by establishing that disparities in gender affects upward influence strategies, hence, fostering inclusive work environment for firms.

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