Communication Strategies: Enhancing Gender Inclusiveness in Nigeria's Emerging Industries

Ajala Adeola Toyosi[1], Alayinde Jemilat Adewunmi[2]

[1]Department of Languages and Linguistics Kings University, Ode Omu, Osun State

[2]Department of Criminology and Security Studies Kings University, Ode Omu, Osun State

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the fundamental role of communication strategies in promoting female participation within Nigeria's emerging industries. As economic growth advances in sectors such as science, technology and finance, encouraging and integrating gender diversity is vital for sustainable development. Grounded in Intersectionality Theory and Social Identity Theory (SIT), this study examines how communication shapes social perceptions and behaviours related to gender roles. One major strategy identified is gender mainstreaming, which integrates gender considerations at all levels of industry practices. This ensures equal opportunities for both men and women. Message framing also plays a pivotal role in shaping public attitudes by strategically presenting information to enhance positive perceptions of gender inclusiveness. Targeted communication campaigns further reinforce these efforts by raising awareness and encouraging active participation in gender diversity initiatives. The use of signage and signposting within industrial spaces also serve as visual reinforcement of an organization's commitment to gender equality. By implementing these strategies, this study provides actionable insights for policymakers and industry leaders in Nigeria. Promoting an inclusive work environment enables emerging industries to harness the full potential of their workforce, driving innovation, productivity, and long-term economic growth. Ultimately, this research underscores the need for strategic communication interventions to pull apart barriers to gender inclusiveness in the Nigerian society.

Keywords*: Communication Strategies, Gender Inclusiveness, Nigerian Emerging Industries, Intersectionality and Social Identity Theory (SIT).*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid Nigeria's economic growth, particularly in the emerging industries like technology, agriculture, and renewable energy is notable. This, however, is motivated by innovation, entrepreneurship, and technological advancements. As these industries continue to expand, there is a pressing need to address issues of gender diversity and inclusiveness within the workforce. Despite strides in gender equality in other sectors, women in Nigeria still encounter numerous challenges in accessing opportunities and achieving parity in leadership positions within emerging industries. According Kansake, Sakyi-Addo and Dumakor-Dupey (2021), the global mining industry is male dominated. In the US, women constitute 13% of the mining workforce and 16% of mining related college programs. Similar trends exist globally. Women bear the brunt in the labour market due to the absence of or relatively low education, discriminatory tendencies in certain occupations, the heavy burden of merger incomes in petty trades and jobs, psychological cum physical pains from childbirth to mention few (George et al., 2021). This study explores the communication strategies that effectively promote gender inclusiveness and empower women in these burgeoning sectors.

Historically, gender disparities in access to resources, employment opportunities, and decision-making roles have persisted. However, this has limited the contributions of women and marginalized groups to economic development. Knowing the essence of diversity, this study highlights some notable communication strategies in promoting gender inclusiveness in Nigeria's emerging industries. Effective communication not only

increases awareness, it also shapes social norms and attitudes. This, however. influences perceptions of gender roles and responsibilities. Employing strategies such as gender mainstreaming, message framing, communication campaigns, and signages, organizations will actively promote an inclusive environment.

The importance of addressing gender inclusiveness is emphasised by global efforts towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This organisation's Goal 5 solely aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls is very crucial. This study seeks to explore how tailored communication approaches strengthen gender equity in Nigerian industries to ensure that both men and women have equitable access to opportunities, resources, and leadership roles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nigeria's evolving industries are key drivers of economic growth and innovation. According to the United Nations Development Programme, a nation that is not engendered is endangered (UNDP, 1995, 2003). In other words, a society, state, or country that is not driven by gender inclusiveness is bound to experience backwardness, stagnation, and underdevelopment (George et al., 2021). However, the inadequate representation of women in these fields is highly significant. Limited access to education, cultural biases, and systemic barriers have contributed to the unequal participation of women in emerging industries. In addition, lack of effective communication strategies intended at encouraging gender inclusiveness has exacerbated this imbalance. Thus, there is a critical need to examine and improve communication approaches to create more inclusive and supportive environments for women in Nigeria's emerging industries. Thus, "the way language is used in any communicative context such as Nigeria is very crucial" (Ajala, Adeyanju & Adebagbo, 2022, p.188).

Communication Theories and Models Relevant to Gender Inclusivity

Social Identity Theory and Intersectionality are critical communication theories in understanding gender inclusivity. Social Identity Theory (SIT) highlights how individuals categorize themselves into social groups, influencing workplace communication and perceptions of gender roles (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In evolving industries, SIT explains biases in professional interactions and how inclusive communication can mitigate gender-based stereotyping. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) expands on this by examining how overlapping identities such as gender, race, and class affect individuals' experiences, emphasizing the need for tailored communication strategies. Intersectionality theory has been celebrated as the 'most important contribution that women's studies has made so far' (McCall, 2005). The influence of the theory has extended beyond the academy to international human rights discourses, as reflected by references made to it by the United Nations' Beijing Platform for Action (2000), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2000), and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, which in its resolution on the human rights of women 'recognized the importance of examining the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination' (Carastathis, 2014, p.304). In 1989, Crenshaw offered intersectionality as a metaphor (Demarginalizing), and, in 1991, she elaborated it as a 'provisional concept' to demonstrate the inadequacy of approaches which separate systems of oppression and isolation of women. This framework encourages a more nuanced approach to communication. It also acknowledges the multiple layers of identity that impact an individual's experiences. Integrating these theories into communication practices, organizations and communities will be able to create spaces where all genders feel seen, heard, and respected.

Gender Inequality in the Nigerian Industries

Gender inequality in the industry sector in Nigeria is a significant issue that affects the participation and advancement of women in the workplace. In many industries, women face barriers such as unequal pay, limited access to leadership positions, and discrimination. For instance, women are dramatically underrepresented in mining, oil and gas, construction, and transportations and utilities (Richman et al., 2011). Thus, mining is one of the industries where gender disparity is highly prevalent. Kansake, Sakyi-Addo and Dumakor-Dupey (2021) stated that, this disparity appears to widen up the professional and educational ladder. There is gender imbalance in the mining industry in terms of the number of stakeholders and the roles that

each gender group (male/ female) plays in the industry. While the large-scale mining sector has a high male dominance, the small-scale mining sector has a near gender balance.

Globally, women constitute less than 10% of the large-scale mining (LSM) workforce (Rickard et al., 2017). However, Companies and the government need to work towards creating equal opportunities for both men and women in the workforce. Initiatives like equal pay policies, mentorship agendas, and management development opportunities address gender inequality in the Nigerian industries. Creating awareness and promoting a culture of inclusivity and diversity will contribute to creating more unbiassed workplaces. Invariably, the construction industry has traditionally been male-dominated, with women occupying only a small percentage of the workforce. However, there has been a push to bridge the gender gap and encourage greater inclusivity in this sector. One key aspect that needs attention is effective communication in construction, ensuring that all team members, regardless of gender, can work together seamlessly.

Integration of Gender Statistics in Nigerian Industries

Recent statistics highlight significant gender disparities in Nigeria's workforce. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022), women constitute only 22% of the workforce in the tech industry and 12% in the renewable energy sector (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). The finance industry shows relatively higher representation at 38%, yet leadership positions remain male-dominated, with women holding less than 20% of executive roles sector (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

These statistics underscore the urgency of targeted communication strategies to bridge gender gaps. For example, PwC Nigeria's **Women in Leadership Program** has aimed to increase female representation in senior roles through mentorship and advocacy. Similarly, Google Nigeria has implemented the **#IamRemarkable initiative**, focusing on empowering women in STEM fields.

Presentation of Data

Communication Strategies for Enhancing of Gender Inclusiveness in the Nigerian Industries

Communication strategies that facilitate gender inclusiveness in Nigerian industries is an effort aimed at projecting gender equality and participation in the Nigerian industrial sector through communication (Afulike, Adaeze, Innocent and Ndukwe, 2018). These communication strategies are laid out plans that highlights the approaches organisation and individual bodies employ to communicate with their target audience to achieve specific purposes. These include identifying the audience, considering their needs and preferences, determining the appropriate communication channels, constructing the message and measuring the efficiency of the communication efforts.

The method also includes a budget, timeline and resources required for execution. One cogent goal behind any communication strategy is to build strong relationships with shareholders by employing an operative communication that will align with organizational/personal goals and objectives. Some of the communication approaches for promoting gender inclusiveness include gender mainstreaming, message framing, communication campaigns, and signages/signposting.

Gender inclusiveness is widely explored through various strategies to create just and respectful environments. One significant approach to this is gender mainstreaming. This involves integrating gender perspectives into all levels of policy-making, planning, and implementation (Moser (2005). This tactic is put in place so that the needs, experiences, and contributions of all genders are thoroughly put into consideration to lessen gender inequalities. Researches in this area highlights effectiveness in projecting inclusivity by inspiring traditional gender norms and promoting fairness in diverse settings (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015).

Message framing is another important way of structuring language and discourse to promote and enhance inclusivity. Entman (1993) explains that framing influences public perception by highlighting specific aspects of gender equality. For instance, positive framing stresses empowerment rather than discrimination. This approach has been found effective in promoting gender-inclusive attitudes. By carefully crafting materials and

information to align with diverse audiences will accentuates the importance of language and tone in shaping perceptions. Studies show that positively framed messages encourage greater acceptance and support for gender-participation policies and practices (Nisbet & Scheufele, 2009). Communication campaigns also strengthen these

efforts by publicising inclusive messages across the globe. This strategy leverages various media platforms to increase awareness and curb stereotypes. Studies by Dillard & Shen (2005) revealed that, well-structured campaigns, particularly those using emotional and rational appeals, significantly impact public attitudes towards gender impartiality.

Signages and signposting also play a significant role in encouraging gender inclusiveness, particularly in public spaces (Sczesny et al., 2016). For instance, gender-neutral restroom signs challenge binary notions of gender and signal an organization's commitment to inclusivity. These visual cues serve as constant reminders of respect and equity. All these strategies facilitate more inclusive societies by addressing structural barriers and reshaping societal attitudes toward gender diversity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research design that analysed the basic strategies for promoting gender inclusiveness across various industries. The study emphased on seven prominent organizations and companies: the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the DevCom (Development Communication) Community, PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers), UN Women, Google, and Microsoft. These organizations were randomly selected for the purpose of this study as they exemplify key strategies in promoting gender inclusiveness, using gender mainstreaming (OECD), message framing (ILO), communication campaigns (DevCom), and signages/signposting (PwC, UN Women, Google, and Microsoft). The analysis focused on their initiatives, such as OECD's integration of gender perspectives into policies, ILO's strategic messaging for gender equality, DevCom's advocacy campaigns, and the adoption of gender-neutral signage by PwC, UN Women, Google, and Microsoft.

Data collection will rely on empirical surveys and some secondary sources such as policy documents, and academic literature on gender inclusiveness. Thematic analysis was employed to identify common patterns and unique contributions of these strategies to promoting gender inclusivity.

Data Selection and Criteria

The study employed a qualitative research design, concentrating on seven key organizations and companies actively engaged in promoting gender inclusiveness. They are the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), DevCom (Development Communication) Community, PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers), UN Women, Google, and Microsoft. These organizations were selected based on their documented efforts in gender mainstreaming, message framing, communication campaigns, and the use of signages/signposting to enhance workplace diversity. Moreover, secondary sources such as policy documents, academic literature, and gender-related statistical reports were examined to provide empirical support. The inclusion criteria were based on the Organizations with explicit gender inclusiveness policies and programs. Also, Industries with a significant gender gap in Nigeria, including technology, finance, and renewable energy were also selected. Another criterium was the availability of documented initiatives that address structural barriers to women's participation. Lastly is the statistical and policy-based evidence supporting gender mainstreaming efforts.

Presentation of Data

This segment presents the analysis and discussion of the communication strategies in the seven selected Nigeria's emerging industries to enhance gender inclusiveness. The sampled companies and organisations are labelled D1 to D7 for easy reference in the course of the analysis and discussions. The study examines how these entities employ language, discourse patterns, and strategic communication to promote gender-equitable workspace. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, the analysis emphases on key

themes such as inclusive language use, corporate discourse on gender diversity, the role of workplace policies in shaping communication, and the influence of these approaches on employee engagement and organizational culture.

D1: Gender Mainstreaming: The concept of 'gender' came in when many limitations focusing exclusively on women became strong. According to Hannan (2022, p.11), "gender mainstreaming is an essential aspect of all practitioners in development policy and practice. It is a strategy for encouraging gender equality by integrating gender perceptions into all policies, programs, and decision-making procedures at all levels and in all areas of society". Gender mainstreaming includes recognising and addressing the diverse needs, priorities, and perspectives of women and men in all aspects of social, economic, and political life. For instance, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an organization whose main goals are to promote economic growth, financial stability, and social cohesion among its members, as well as to contribute to global economic policy coordination and development. This organisation mainstreamed the following at the meeting of the OECD Council at the ministerial level in Paris in 2023:

"**Gender equality is a core value and a strategic priority for the OECD".** The OECD Vision Statement adopted in 2021 affirms the OECD's commitment to accelerating the development of policy options to help close gender gaps and ensure that all its analysis, research, and policy advice integrates a gender equality perspective. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is also part of Members' commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"**While progress has been made in narrowing some longstanding gender gaps, additional meaningful progress is needed across the board".** Gender gaps have narrowed in education, employment, and public leadership in most OECD Members. Discriminatory social institutions and other structural challenges continue, however, to constrain women from fully benefiting from opportunities including those created by the green and digital transitions and the increase in flexible work practices. The current global context further challenges the pursuit of gender equality (Culled from (OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2023).

"**Realising gender equality and removing structural barriers"** – including those related to discrimination and that intersect with other inequalities **"must remain a priority",** as a matter of basic human rights and long-term economic well-being and prosperity. "**Gender equality drives economic growth, strengthens democracy, enhances social cohesion, and increases the well-being of all members of society"**. (Culled from (OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2023).

"**Mainstreaming gender dimensions in all relevant policy work."** The OECD will renew its efforts to mainstream gender equality into its core products (e.g., economic surveys8, country reviews, reports, standards, toolkits, and guidance) and data collection processes across policy areas where the OECD………. (Culled from (OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2023).

"**Transforming harmful social norms and gender stereotypes and eliminating discriminatory laws."** Using regulatory reviews and gender impact assessments, the OECD will support Members and non-members in removing discriminatory legal and/or policy frameworks, as well……… (Culled from (OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2023).

"**Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through diplomacy and development cooperation."** The OECD could further strengthen its existing work to support OECD Members' efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in diplomacy including through the DAC GENDERNET. The OECD could also deepen its ongoing efforts to support collective actions to increase the quality and quantity of development finance for gender equality (ODA in particular but also blended finance, gender lens investing, and gender-responsive budgeting) (Culled from (OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2023).

Examining the above six gender mainstreamed information utterances linguistically, the OECD actions promoted gender equality using foregrounding for prominence. Foregrounding in stylistics is a technique used to draw attention to certain elements in a text. It involves emphasizing specific words, phrases, or literary

devices to create a particular effect or meaning. Sentences and phrases such as "Gender equality is a core value and a strategic priority for the OECD"; "While progress has been made in narrowing some longstanding gender gaps, additional meaningful progress is needed across the board"; "Realising gender equality and removing structural barriers", "must remain a priority", "Gender equality drives economic growth, strengthens democracy, enhances social cohesion and increases the well-being of all members of society"; "Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through diplomacy and development co-operation" are all inscribed in bold prints, a graphological device for reiteration of the organisation's mission and vision.

Capitalizations and acronyms such as OECD and DAC GENDERNET are other graphological devices for stylistic effect. According to Ajala and Adeyanju (2020, p. 199), "The essence and the usefulness of stylistics is that it highlights to enable the immediate understanding of utterances and texts, thereby maximizing the reader's enjoyment of the texts". From the culled text, the techniques of explication allow the readers to define objectively the information the text is trying to pass across to the interlocutors (the target audience, i.e., the recruiters in the Nigerian Industrial sector). The application of stylistics in communication is very crucial because it attempts to establish principles capable of explaining the particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language ((Ajala & Adeyanju, 2022).

From the foregoing analysis, the gender mainstreaming of the OECD aims to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities, resources, and outcomes and that gender inequalities are eliminated or minimized. It requires a systematic and proactive approach, involving continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into all aspects of policy and practice.

To this end, it is apparent that gender mainstreaming is fundamentally recognised as a critical tool for achieving sustainable development and gender equality.

D2: Message Framing: Message framing is when a message is presented or framed to influence how it is perceived and understood by the audience. This has to do with selecting certain aspects of the message and presenting them in a particular way to shape the audience's interpretation and response. Sikorski and Matthes (2020) submit that message framing is choosing specific aspects of a perceived reality, making them more salient, while disregarding other elements. According to Oluwasanmi and Fagbadebo, 2025, it refers to the deliberate presentation of issues or events in a manner that constructs a meaningful yet selective representation of reality. Even at the international level, the actors leverage message framing as a veritable tool to sell their interest with other actors and individuals within the international communities. Message framing can be used in various forms of communication, such as advertising, news reporting, political speeches, and social media posts, to influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. The intention behind any message framing is to advance a particular issue, such as problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, or treatment recommendation, in favour of a specific orientation and course of action (Entman, 1993; Sikorski and Matthes, 2020). Framing messages is a powerful tool in shaping public opinion and decision-making, but it should be used with caution and transparency to avoid manipulation or misinformation.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) founded in 1919 became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946. Their main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection, and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues (Australian Aid, 2012). The organisation's missions also recognize the importance of communication in promoting gender equality and inclusiveness to create awareness, and promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards gender equality. In commemoration of Gender Equality awareness worldwide, the table below reflects the linguistic communication using message framing mechanisms for promoting and encouraging gender inclusiveness.

Examples of some message framing by The International Labour Organization (ILO):

Economic Empowerment Frame:

- *"Gender equality is not just a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world."* https://www.ilo.org/gender-equality

Decent Work Frame:

- *"Securing decent work is crucial for women and men, making it possible for them to build more promising futures for themselves, their families, and their communities."* (International Labour Conference, 98th Session, 2009). https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40dgreports

Social Dialogue Frame:

- *"Promoting gender equality through social dialogue involves engaging employers, workers, and governments in discussions to create inclusive workplaces." (*Copyright © International Labour Organization 2011 First published 2011)

D3: Communication Campaign

Communication Gender-Focus Work: Examples from the DevCom Community

Devcom is a shortened form of ''Development Communication'' It refers to the use of communication strategies and approaches to promote positive social change and development. Devcom encompasses various methods such as media campaigns, community engagement, and participatory communication to address social issues, create awareness, and empower communities. Their roles include facilitating dialogue, sharing information, and fostering collaboration for sustainable development initiatives. Some gender focused campaigns of some organisations are stated below:

ORGANISATION	GENDER FOCUS WORK	KEY QUOTES FROM MISSION STATEMENTS & LANDING PAGES (FRAMED MESSAGES)
1. **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**	> Gender and Development	"Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for meeting Asia and the Pacific's aspirations of inclusive and sustainable development. ADB recognizes that to reduce poverty rates, helping women and girls must be a priority in its work."
2. **African Union**	> Women, Gender & Development (WGDD) > AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	"If we don't put women in history books, they get edited out of history."- **Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former chairperson AUC**
3. **Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**	Gender Equality	"The Gender Equality Branch supports Australia's leadership on gender equality and women's empowerment across foreign policy, economic diplomacy and development programs."
4. **Austrian Development Agency (ADA)**	ADA: Gender Equality	"Gender equality and the empowerment of women are major preconditions for poverty reduction, economic growth and social development. This is why the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) requires all its project partners to make a contribution towards gender equality."

5. Global Affairs Canada	> Gender Equality: Tools & Resources > Priorities & Initiatives	"Canada helping women & girls around: Our work to empower women and girls and promote gender equality in all our international development."
6. European Commission	Gender Equality	"Promoting equal economic independence for women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision making, ending gender-based violence and promoting gender equality beyond the EU."
7. European Investment Bank (EIB)	Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment	"As the EU bank, it is our duty to ensure that the projects we finance protect all parts of our communities. Women, men, girls and boys must have the opportunity to benefit from them equally and equitably."
8. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland	> Ministry of Social Affairs & Health: Gender Equality > MFA – Generation Equality	"The promotion of gender equality is one of Finland's foreign policy priorities. The Generation Equality campaign offers Finland an opportunity to reinforce its role as a frontrunner in advancing gender equality."
9. Agence Française de Development	AFD and Gender: Working Towards More Equal Development	"Women are discriminated against in all areas: employment, education, health and governance. Gender inequality causes both injustice and poverty. It hinders economic and social development. The reduction of gender inequality and education, and the empowerment of women and girls are central to our strategy. We take gender issues into account in all the projects we support and we are a resolutely feminist institution."
10. Germany (GIZ)	GIZ: Gender & Development	"Gender equality is an essential precondition for a human rights-based, socially just, economically and ecologically sustainable development of democratic societies. Yet people around the world are still affected by gender-specific discrimination and excluded from equal participation in public and political life. In order to actively combat this, German Development Cooperation is actively engaged in promoting gender equality."
Iceland	> Directorate of Equality – Iceland >Government of Iceland – About Gender Equality	"Important steps have been made towards gender equality in Iceland in past decades. Among achievements is the increased participation of women in politics, both at the parliamentary and municipal level. Important legislation has been passed to ensure a more equal society, such as legislation to increase the number of women in leadership positions, and to combat gender-based and sexual violence and harassment."

| 11. Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)	> AICS: Gender Equality Page	"The Italian strategy on gender issues and development aims in particular to strengthen collaboration with national and decentralized institutions, with Italian universities and NGOs to define a specific approach that takes into account the experiences made by Italian women in participating in life."
12. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Women's Rights and Gender Equality	"The theme 'Women's rights and gender equality' is about equal rights and opportunities for all. These are essential for peace, prosperity and development. The world cannot prosper if half the population is disadvantaged. In the reporting period, the Netherlands supported more than 68,000 women and strengthened 882 civil society organisations working to achieve gender equality. We also contributed to better legislation and changes to norms and values to better protect women's rights."
13. OECD	> OECD – Gender Equality > Gender and Development	Economies are more resilient, productive and inclusive when they reduce gender inequalities and actively support the equal participation of women in all spheres of life"
14. Portugal Camões Institute	> CIG Gender Page "Women Create Value" – IWD 2022 > Camões: Gender page	"Gender equality is particularly relevant to the coherence of development policies, so it is important to strengthen the transversality of the gender equality dimension in Portuguese cooperation, bilaterally and multilaterally, and in partnerships with civil society actors and the private sector, in order to ensure the full realization of women's human rights."
15. SEGIB	> Gender Equality	"In accordance with the binding mandates of the Ibero-American Summit and recognizing its centrality to the achievement of sustainable development in the region, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) promotes gender equality as a strategic axis of Ibero-American cooperation."
16. Spain (AECID)	> Por Una Cooperación Feminista webpage	"Defending the rights of women and girls means moving forward on the path to a more just, prosperous, sustainable and peaceful society"
17. The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)	> Sida: Gender Equality	"Gender equality is about the equal rights of all people. No one should be discriminated because of their gender. Gender equality is not only a goal per se, it is also a prerequisite for the elimination of poverty. Global gender equality is a priority issue for Sida that permeates most of our development cooperation efforts."

18. The World Bank Group	> The World Bank in Gender	"The World Bank Group takes as its starting point that no country, community, or economy can achieve its potential or meet the challenges of the 21st century without the full and equal participation of women and men, girls and boys."

According to Su and Li (2022), message framing is a communication tactic that aims to shape individuals' judgment, attitude, and behaviour by presenting persuasive arguments through alternative versions, conveyed either in terms of potential gains or losses that could arise from the decision to purchase a product. Studies have indicated that the effectiveness of message framing in advertising is influenced by individual differences, and when a framed message aligns with an individual's needs, it is more likely to achieve the desired outcome (Lagomarsino et al., 2020; Su & Li, 2022).

In the table above are eighteen (18) framed messages from eighteen organisations, (Gender Focus Work) and key quotes of the organisations' mission which are the framed messages. Out of the Eighteen framed messages, fifteen of the messages are gain-framed messages while the remaining three (Nos. 1, 9, and 18) are loss-framed. Gain-framed messages underscore the positive outcomes of engaging in a specific behaviour, while loss-framed messages underline the negative and undesirable results (Chi et al, 2021; O'Keefe & Jensen, 2008). Both gain-framed and loss-framed messages are effective in influencing attitudes and behaviours, but their influence relies on factors such the characteristics of the audience, and the specific context in which the message is delivered.

Communication campaign, is a strategic effort to promote an idea to a target audience through several communication channels. In the context of promoting gender inclusiveness, a communication campaign can involve using various forms of media, such as social media, traditional media and community events to promote awareness about gender inclusiveness. The campaign can also involve using storytelling, role models, and other creative approaches to engage audiences and inspire action.

D4, D5, D6, D7: Signages/Signposting. Signages and signposting are pictorial/graphic communication means that use text, images, or symbols to convey information or instructions. One outstanding organization that uses these visuals to enhance and encourage gender inclusiveness is PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers). As part of their commitment to creating inclusive workplaces, PwC has implemented inclusive signage to sponsor gender inclusiveness within its offices. For instance, in early 2023, PwC Ireland introduced a new gender expression and identity policy, which included updating bathroom signage to be more inclusive (Haran, 2017) . This initiative was part of a broader effort to aid a welcoming atmosphere for all employees, regardless of gender identity. While specific examples of signage and signposting are not extensively detailed in publicly available sources, PwC's commitment to sponsoring an inclusive workplace is evident through various initiatives. The firm stresses the importance of creating an atmosphere where individual differences are valued and respected, which encompasses the use of inclusive signage and communication materials (Haran, 2017).
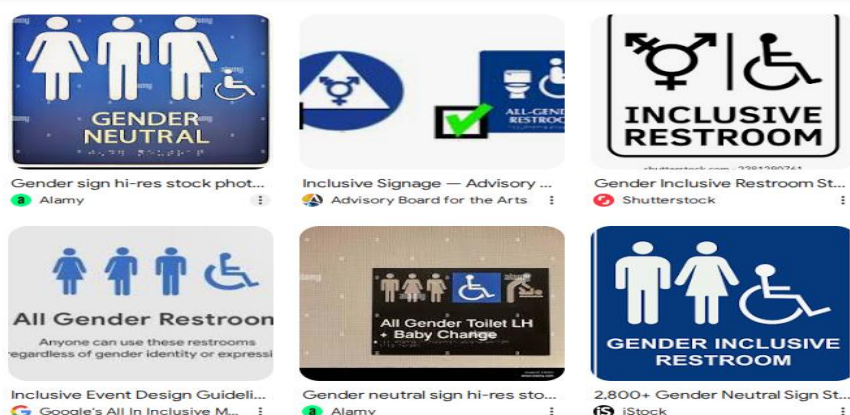
Fig 1: PwC's signages promoting gender inclusiveness

Alexander and Hofstetter (2021) stated that experts in mediation signpost people to third party agencies (TPAs) through the interactional resources available to participants. According to them, assistance is offered in ways, using signposting, to reshape the institutional and interactional trajectory for the provision of services. In the context of promoting gender inclusiveness, signages are used to create a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere in Nigerian industries. Some examples of signages that mounted to promote gender inclusiveness include:

1. Gender-neutral restrooms: These are signages used to label lavatories as "restrooms" instead of "men's restrooms" or "women's restrooms." This is to create a balanced working atmosphere for both genders.

2. Gender-neutral dress codes: Signages are used to indicate that dress codes are gender-neutral. For instance, "business attire" instead of "business suits for men" or "skirts for women." This can help create a more inclusive environment for people who do not conform to traditional gender norms in dress codes.

3. Gender-neutral job descriptions: Signages can be used to indicate that job descriptions are gender-neutral, such as "customer service representative" instead of "customer service representative (female)" or "customer service representative (male)."

5. Gender-neutral language: Signages can be used to indicate that language is gender-neutral, such as "chairperson" instead of "chairman" or "chairlady.

6. Gender-neutral signage for events: Signages can be used to indicate that events are gender-neutral, such as "all-gender networking event" instead of "women's networking event" or "men's networking event." This can help create a more inclusive environment for people who do not conform to traditional gender norms in networking roles.

8. Gender-neutral signage for training programs: Signages can be used to indicate that training programs are gender-neutral, such as "leadership development program" instead of "leadership development program for women" or "leadership development program for men." This can help create a more inclusive environment for people who do not conform to traditional gender norms in leadership roles.

9. Gender-neutral signage for job titles: Signages can be used to indicate that job titles are gender-neutral, such as "team leader" instead of "team captain (male)" or "team captain (female)." This can help create a more inclusive environment for people who do not conform to traditional gender norms in leadership roles.

10. Gender-neutral signage for company values: Signages can be used to indicate that company values are gender-neutral, such as "equality and inclusion" instead of "women's empowerment" or "men's leadership." This can help create a more inclusive environment for people who do not conform to traditional gender norms in company values.

Google and Microsoft have also taken some notable steps to promote gender inclusiveness in Nigerian industries using signage, signposting, and broader workplace creativities. Google employs the use of visible signage in its offices and digital platforms to projects gender-neutral spaces (see Fig.2). Additionally, they use posters and digital exhibitions to celebrate diversity, share stories of female leaders, and promote internal programs meant to empower women in tech. These efforts are often documented on their official blogs and social media channels for insights into their local impact.

Similarly, Microsoft also integrates signposting in Nigerian workplaces to direct employees to resources like mentorship programs, women-focused training sessions, and networking events (see Fig. 2). They also use signage to promote campaigns like "Women in Cloud" and "Girls Learn Code," which aim to bridge the gender gap in technology. Both companies collaborate with local organizations to amplify these initiatives, ensuring that signage and communication materials resonate with Nigerian cultural contexts

Lastly, is the UN Women. This United Nations entity advocates for gender equality and the empowerment of women universally. In various initiatives and programs, UN Women often employs graphic signages, infographics, and public awareness movements to signal inclusivity and encourage gender-sensitive practices

in workplaces and communities. Their campaigns frequently highlight the importance of creating gender-inclusive environments through clear messaging and visual.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study highlight communication strategies in promoting gender inclusiveness within Nigeria's emerging industries. Through the efforts of prominent organizations like Google, Microsoft, PwC, and UN Women, it is evident that these initiatives align with theoretical frameworks of Intersectionality and Social Identity Theory (SIT) in promoting inclusive environments for women.

Intersectionality, as discussed earlier is a theory for analysing overlapping identities such as gender equality. In the context of Nigerian industries, intersectionality highlights the challenges confronted by women relegated in the society due to their socioeconomic status, ethnic background, or religious affiliation. For instance, female employees from rural areas may encounter additional barriers compared to their urban counterparts, (George et al., 2021). From existing studies, despite women showing immense talent and interest in tech careers, they often face numerous obstacles to getting into and staying in the industry. It is particularly tough for women from low-income backgrounds, who have even more hurdles to overcome (Ekohchukwukelu, 2024). However, organizations like Google and Microsoft tackle these complexities by incorporating culturally relevant signage and communication materials that align with diverse audiences (See Appendix). Examples include gender-neutral restroom signs and posters celebrating female leaders from various backgrounds (Vijayan, 2024). However, this practises, signal an acknowledgment of intersecting identities to promote inclusivity across diverse dimensions (Castellanos-Monfil, 2015). Also, the implementation of campaigns by Microsoft illustrates an intersectional approach to empowering women in tech (Gilhooley (2020). These initiatives recognize that gender inequality interconnects with other forms of discrimination, such as lack of access to digital tools or mentorship opportunities (Dhiman, 2023).

Social Identity Theory illustrates how individuals categorize themselves into social groups based on shared characteristics, which influences their perceptions of others and interactions in workplace settings. Within Nigerian industries, Social Identity Theory (SIT) expounds on the biases and stereotypes that perpetuate gender disparities. For instance, traditional philosophies of masculinity often dominate sectors like mining, construction, and transportation, resulting to the marginalization of women in these fields (Kansake et al., 2021). However, signages and signposting constantly serve as prompts of an organization's commitment to discard prejudiced practices. Simpson and Yinger (1985) describe discrimination as "drawing an unfair or injurious distinction" (p. 23). This is a distinction based solely on the basis of membership in a particular group with effects favourable to ingroup members and/or disadvantageous to outgroup members (Duckitt, 2001).

Gender-neutral labels for restrooms, dress codes, and job titles can also redefine group boundaries, encouraging employees to transcend restrictive gender roles (Sczesny et al., 2016). Similarly, visual cues like pronoun signage empower individuals to express their identities freely, emphasising a culture of respect and equality. Through these initiatives, organizations signal the value of diversity and strive to create inclusive spaces where everyone feels involved.

Communication strategies are thus, instrumental in reshaping societal attitudes toward gender inclusiveness. For instance, the International Labour Organization (ILO) use positive language to highlight the benefits of gender equality. This type of message framing is employed to reach large audience to increase productivity and innovation (Entman, 1993; ILO, 2023). Also, communication campaigns led by DevCom were championed to motivate positive behavioural change. These approaches leverage cognitive processes outlined in SIT, where exposure to inclusive messaging reduce intergroup prejudice.

By promoting an inclusive culture, emerging industries can harness the full potential of their workforce, leading to innovation, productivity, and overall economic growth (UNDP, 1995, 2003). This research ultimately advocates for a concerted effort in communication practices to pull apart barriers to gender inclusiveness for a more equitable society in Nigeria.

Local Business and Government Initiatives Promoting Gender Inclusiveness

The Nigerian government and private sector have introduced various programs to promote gender inclusiveness. Notable examples include:

1. **The Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) Gender Mainstreaming Policy**: This policy seeks to integrate gender considerations into national economic planning.

2. **Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) Women's Program**: Provides grants and training for female entrepreneurs in emerging industries.

3. **SheWorksHere Initiative**: A private-sector-led program fostering mentorship for women in tech and finance.

4. **FATE Foundation's Women's Digital Entrepreneurship Program**: Trains women in digital skills to increase participation in the fintech sector.

CONCLUSION

Promoting gender inclusiveness in the Nigerian emerging industries requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the challenges faced by women. These can be achieved when industries use initiatives that can change attitudes, policies and practices towards gender inclusiveness. These include gender training programs, mentoring programs, networking programs, advocacy campaigns, research studies, communication strategies revisions, and branding strategies revisions to mention a few. It is important to recognise the significance of enhancing communication strategies in promoting gender inclusiveness within Nigeria's emerging industries. By adopting inclusive language that avoids gender biases, fostering safe spaces that encourage open dialogue, and implementing equal opportunities for individuals of all genders, we can cultivate a more diverse and harmonious workforce. Organisations, policymakers, and individuals must collaborate synergistically, dismantling barriers and cultivating an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered. Through these collective efforts, we can drive substantial positive change, paving the way for a future where gender inclusiveness thrives within Nigeria's emerging industries."

By aligning corporate and governmental efforts with empirical data, this study emphasizes the role of strategic communication in advancing gender inclusiveness within Nigeria's emerging industries.

REFERENCES

1. Afulike, C., Adaeze A., Innocent, I. & Ndukwe, E. (2018). Nigeria Media Awareness Strategies for Gender Equality in Post-2015 UN-Development Agenda. International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR). 8. DOI: 10.21275/ART20201677.
2. Ajala, A. Adeyanju, R. & Adebagbo, A. (2022), Politeness and face management in selected editorials on the abduction of the Chibok Girls in Bornu State In B. Bernard (ed.) Humanus Discourse: A Journal of the Network for Utilitarian Studies, Vol. 2. No. 4. pp.178-188. Ede, Redeemer University.
3. Ajala, A & Adeyanju, A (2022), The stylistics and pragmatics of the Nigerian Culture in Lola Shoneyin's secret lives of baba Segi's wives in O.Abdul-Hamid, M. Adedimeji, A. Azeez and A. Abdulkabir (eds.). The Place of Ilorin Emirate in the Development of Nigeria. University of Ilorin, pp.196-211. Ilorin: Unilorin Press.
4. Alexander, M., & Hofstetter, E. (2021). Somewhere to turn to: Signposting in service provision. Discourse & Communication, 15(2), 119-138. Accessed on https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1750481320982091
5. Australian Aid (2012) Australian multilateral assessment. "International Labour Organization (ILO). Commonwealth of Australia". Accessed from https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/ilo-assessment.pdf. Retrieved on 27/01/2024.
6. Carastathis, A. (2014). The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. Philosophy Compass. 9. 10.1111/phc3.12129.

7. Cornwall, A., & Rivas, S. (2015). The Participation Reader. Zed Books.

8. Chi O., Denton G., & Gursoy D. (2021). Interactive effects of message framing and information content on carbon offsetting behaviours. Tourism Management, Google Scholar.

9. Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.' University of Chicago Legal Forum (1989): 139–67

10. Dillard, J. P., & Shen, L. (2005). On the nature of reactance and its role in persuasive health communication. Communication Monographs, 72(2), 144–168.

11. Duckett, J. (2001). Reducing prejudice: A historical and multi-level approach. In M. Augoustinos & K. Reynolds (Eds.), Understanding the Psychology of Prejudice and Racism (pp. 253-272). Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

12. Duckitt, J., & Sibley, C. G. (2017). The Dual Process Motivational Model of Prejudice. In C. G. Sibley and F. K. Barlow (Eds.), The Cambridge Handbook of the Psychology of Prejudice (pp. 188-221). Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press.

13. Ekohchukwukelu, O. (2024). Intersectionality in Tech: Overcoming Socioeconomic Barriers and Driving Innovation. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/385099433_Intersectionality_in_Tech_Overcoming_Socioeconomic_Barriers_and_Driving_Innovation. [Accessed on 22nd March, 2026].

14. Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. Journal of Communication, 43(4), 51-58. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466. 1993.tb01304.x

15. George, T. O., Onwumah, A. C., Ozoya, M. I., & Olonade, O. Y. (2021). Good governance, social order, and development in Nigeria: The critical role of gender inclusion. African Journal of Reproductive Health, 25(5s), 202-209.

16. Hannan, C. (2022). Handbook on gender mainstreaming for gender equality results. Retrieved from https://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1/2001/Handbook-on-gender-mainstreaming-for-gender-equality-results-en.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed: 15 April, 2024]

17. Castellanos-Monfil, R. (2015, November 4). New gender-neutral bathroom signs unveiled. YaleNews. https://news.yale.edu/2015/11/05/new-gender-neutral-bathroom-signs-unveiledDhiman, D. B. (2023). Education's Role in Empowering Women and Promoting GenderIne quality: A Critical Review. Available at SSRN 4556375.

18. Gilhooley, J. (2020) Empowering women in tech to create diverse and inclusive cultures, Microsoft UK. Retrieved from https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/industry/blog/cross-industry/2020/03/03/empowering-women-in-tech-to-create-diverse-and-inclusive-cultures/ Accessed on 22nd March, 2025.

19. Haran, J. (2017). From science to inclusive culture: How John leads the way on diversity. PwC Global. https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/about/diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-solution-and-solver-profiles/from-science-to-inclusive-culture-how-john-leads-way-on-diversity.html

20. Kansake, B. A., Sakyi-Addo, G. B., & Dumakor-Dupey, N. K. (2021). Creating a gender- inclusive mining industry: Uncovering the challenges of female mining stakeholders. Resources Policy, 70, 101962.

21. Lagomarsino M., Lemarie L., Puntiroli M. (2020). When saving the planet is worth more than avoiding destruction: The importance of message framing when speaking to egoistic individuals. 118, 162–176. Journal of Business Research. Google Scholar

22. McCall, L. (2005) 'The Complexity of Intersectionality.' Signs 30.3 1771–800

23. Moser, C. O. N. (2005). Has gender mainstreaming failed? A comment on international development agency experiences in the South. International Feminist Journal of Politics, 7(4), 576–590.

24. National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Statistical report on women and men in Nigeria. National Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads/2022_Statistical_Report%20on%20Women%20and%20Men_%20in%20Nigeria.pdf (Accessed 28 March, 2025)

25. Nisbet, M. C., & Scheufele, D. A. (2009). What's next for science communication? Promising directions and lingering distractions. American Journal of Botany, 96(10), 1767–1778. https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.0900041

26. OECD (2023), "The OECD's Contribution to Promoting Gender Equality". Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/The-OECD-Contribution-to- Promoting-Gender-Equality.pdf OECD: Paris. [Accessed: 28 January, 2024]

27. O'Keefe D. J. & Jensen J. D. (2008). Do loss-framed persuasive messages engender greater message processing than do gain-framed messages? A meta-analytic review. Communication Studies. 59(1), 51–67.

28. Oluwasanmi, O. P. and Fagbadebo, O. M. (2025). Communication as a tool for Electoral Victory: Analysing Campaign Strategies in 2023 Presidential Election. An upcoming Journal Article.

29. Plasser, F., & Plasser, G. (2023). Global political campaigning: a worldwide analysis of campaigning professionals and their practices. In The Political Communication Reader (pp. 138-144). Routledge.

30. Rickard, S., Treasure, W., McQuilken, J., Mihaylova, A., Baxter, J., (2017). Women in Mining, Can a Mining Law Unlock the Potential of Women? Adam Smith International and International Women in Mining, London.

31. Simpson, G.E., & Yinger, J.M. (1985). Racial and cultural minorities: An analysis of prejudice and discrimination (5th edition). New York: Plenum Press.

32. Sczesny, S., Formanowicz, M., & Moser, F. (2016). Can gender-fair language reduce gender stereotyping and discrimination? Frontiers in psychology, 7, 154379.

33. Su Q., & Li F. (2022). Gain or loss? The congruence effect of message framing and mindset on consumers' willingness to pay a premium for pro-environmental hotels. Journal of Sustainable Tourism. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2022.2159420

34. UNDP (1995, 2003), Human Development Report, Oxford University Press, New York.Vijayan, V. (2024). Unveiling the Power of Teacher Education Promoting Gender Equality in Education. Research Culture Society and Publication.

APPENDIX

Fig. 2: Pictorial representative of signages and signposts from UN women on Gender inclusiveness