

1-1-2019

The Future of Work: An Investigation of the Expatriate Experiences of Jamaican C-suite Female Executives in the Diaspora, on Working in Multi-national Companies

Suzette Amoy Henry-Campbell

Nova Southeastern University, suzette.henry.campbell@gmail.com

This document is a product of extensive research conducted at the Nova Southeastern University [College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences](#). For more information on research and degree programs at the NSU College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, please click [here](#).

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/shss_dcar_etd

Part of the [Business Administration, Management, and Operations Commons](#), [Caribbean Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods Commons](#), [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Share Feedback About This Item

NSUWorks Citation

Suzette Amoy Henry-Campbell. 2019. *The Future of Work: An Investigation of the Expatriate Experiences of Jamaican C-suite Female Executives in the Diaspora, on Working in Multi-national Companies*. Doctoral dissertation. Nova Southeastern University. Retrieved from NSUWorks, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences – Department of Conflict Resolution Studies. (124) https://nsuworks.nova.edu/shss_dcar_etd/124.

This Dissertation is brought to you by the CAHSS Theses and Dissertations at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Department of Conflict Resolution Studies Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.

The Future of Work: An Investigation of the Expatriate Experiences of Jamaican C-suite
Female Executives in the Diaspora, on Working in Multi-national Companies.

by

Suzette Henry-Campbell

A Dissertation Presented to the
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences of Nova Southeastern University
in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

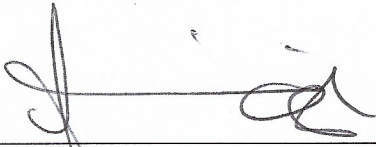
Nova Southeastern University
2019

Nova Southeastern University
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences


This dissertation was submitted by Suzette Henry-Campbell under the direct supervision of the chair of the dissertation committee listed below. It was submitted to the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and approved in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved

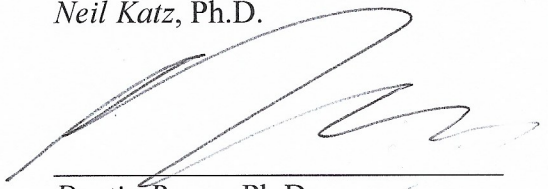
1/29/2019
Date of Defense



Ismael Muvingi, Ph.D.
Chair

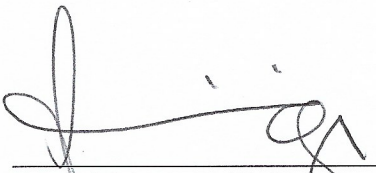


Neil Katz, Ph.D.



Dustin Berna, Ph.D.

1/29/2019
Date of Final Approval



Ismael Muvingi, Ph.D.
Chair

Dedication

To Alex and Skye: You have put up with Mommy's pursuit of her scholarly ambitions. Immensely grateful that both of you became fully invested in this journey.

This product is our success. - Love to infinity.

Acknowledgements

The decision to pursue a Ph.D. was a choice that I felt was important and the idea became entrenched in my mind in 2012. Quite the journey, I could not have completed it without the support, love and well-timed expressions of goodwill from a tribe of people who bought into my dream.

I want to first thank my Heavenly Father. He walked with me when I had my doubts, placing in my path the right persons at the right time to reinforce my why.

Thanks to my Dissertation committee, headed by Dr. Ismael Muvingi and supported by Drs. Neil Katz and Dustin Berna. I cannot think of a better team who helped me pull the pieces of this research together. Dr. Muvingi, your feedback at various points was instrumental to refocusing my attention to my labor of love.

My kids have been a source of inspiration and because of them I trudged on with this seemingly insurmountable task. I owe a lot to them, and with every word written in this research, the product is a testament to what it means to sacrifice.

To Ricardo, you took on the mantle of being there for our children and exceeded the expectations of a father. In a world that mutes the narrative of fathers as care-givers, you showed up for them in every aspect that mattered.

Never-ending gratitude to Ms. G., an affectionate term of endearment for our Nanny who has become a fixture in my children's universe. I don't know in what way I will ever be able to repay you for assuming a role that went beyond what you were required to do. On behalf of two young adults, we salute you.

To Coloris and Eustace (Mom and Dad), who have both been sources of inspiration. Your love, patience and guidance are greatly appreciated. You have in your unique ways cheered me on when my energy and commitment waned.

Nadger, you are one of my closest allies, not because you are my sibling but because you understand what drives me. Our world has been shaped by similar experiences and whenever I needed a listening ear, you were there. You challenged me to use my skills to effect change and to embrace life's bumps in the road with the knowledge they can be overcome. Eternally thankful to you for those phone calls that lifted my spirit and fueled me to keep on pushing. As you pursue your personal academic vision, be assured that I will be as supportive as you have been to me.

I am grateful to the professors, colleagues, friends and practitioners across so many disciplines, industries and sectors who lit a fire in my belly to be more than I ever thought myself capable of becoming. In many ways you challenged me to use my platform to channel change where it was needed. I remain eternally grateful that your paths intersected with mine.

A huge thank you to Salma, who is also walking a similar path. Our shared vision about the future of work led us to partner on several projects of which I am very proud. There are few people who live life to its fullest and who refuse to be boxed in by tradition and stereotypes. You are truly an inspiration and have left an indelible impression on my life.

This research would not be possible without the contribution of eight women who seized the opportunity to share their experiences in a very transparent way. You provided the platform on which this research was built and for that I am grateful.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Background	5
Research Questions	9
Definition of Terms	10
Spotlight on Women in International Business	14
Legacies of the Past	17
Gender Equality in the Caribbean	23
Women’s Suffrage in Jamaica	24
MNCs – Bridging the Gender Divide	27
The State of Professional Women Today	28
Chapter 2: Literature Review	33
The Glass-ceiling Meets Glass Border Phenomenon	43
Global Mobility Trends	46
Self-initiated Expatriates	48
Company Sponsored Expatriates	50
Emerging Mobility Trends	50
Cultural Biases and Social Stereotypes: Inhibitors to Gender Equality	52
Women from Developing Countries	58
The Glass Ceiling and Border Discussion	64

Navigating Stereotypes	75
Theoretical Anchors	81
Critical Race Theory	81
Critical Human Geographers	83
Intersectionality: In the Cross-hairs	84
The Pursuit of an Inclusive Agenda	94
Summary	98
Chapter 3: Research Method	100
Existential Phenomenology – The Frame of Inquiry	100
Role of the Researcher	104
Research Design	105
The Recruitment Tool	105
Participants and Sampling	107
Interview Preparation and Setting	109
Interview Administration and Data Collection	111
Bracketing	114
Transcribing the Interviews	117
Organization and Analysis of Data	117
Data Management	120
Summary and Limitations of the Study	120
Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis	122
Participants’ Demographic Profile	124
Positions of Influence	125

Academic Profile	127
Part I – Horizontalization	127
Part II – Textural Narratives	128
Part III – Thematic Analysis	136
Findings	138
Moving from Invisible to Visible- Disrupting Stereotypes	140
Analysis and Summary	142
Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage	144
Analysis and Summary	150
Renegotiating Rules of Engagement: Rebranding the Role of Women	152
Analysis and Summary	155
Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance	157
Analysis and Summary	158
Improving Skill and Competency Capital	159
Analysis and Summary	161
Building and Maintaining Bridges – Network Management	162
Analysis and Summary	166
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	169
Discussion of Findings	169
Moving from Invisible to Visible	172
Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage	174
Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement: Rebranding the Role of and	
Authority of Women in Business	176

Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance	180
Improving Skill and Competency Capital for New Roles	182
Building and Maintaining Bridges – Network Management	186
Conclusions	188
The Essence Revealed	195
Synthesizing the Research	196
Recommendations	197
Implications for Future Research	197
Implications for Practice	198
References	201
Appendix A: Interview Guide	223
Appendix B: Recruitment Tool	224
Appendix C: Sample Engagement Letter	225
Appendix D: Sample Thank You Note	226
Appendix E: Researcher’s Personal Reflections (Bracketing)	227

List of Tables

Table 1. Participants Demographic Profile	124
Table 2. Moving from Invisible to Visible: Disrupting Bias	129
Table 3. Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage	130
Table 4. Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement:	131
Table 5. Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance	132
Table 6. Rebranding the Role Authority of Women in Business	133
Table 7. Improving Skill and Competency Capital	134
Table 8. Organization Readiness	135
Table 9. Themes Arising from Participants' Narratives	137

List of Figures

Figure 1. Transnational Model of Interdependence between Home and Host	
Territory	98
Figure 2. Participants' Roles	126

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of Jamaican Expatriate Female C-suite executives in the diaspora of working in multinational companies (MNCs). A further question to be answered was the meaning they derived from their experiences. With little research emerging from the Caribbean about this elite class of professionals, the research intended to expose the challenges faced as an outsider in unfamiliar spaces. Research on other groups have exposed limiting factors to women's progress in MNCs. Critical Race Theory with a brief mention of Critical Human Geography and Intersectionality are lens applied to critique the experiences of the eight participants. This research mined the extant literature that looked at navigating barriers, disrupting stereotypes and gender diversity in international careers. The method of inquiry applied to this research was existential phenomenology and its utility in getting to the essence of the women's lived experiences highlighted the glass-border phenomenon. In reflecting on the outcome, this research opens the door for scholars and practitioners alike, to critically assess the expatriate literature and to probe further the complex relationship between international business, the movement of black talent across geographic and culturally diverse boundaries and the challenges encountered. The results of this study illuminated several themes from the participants textual descriptions: (1) Moving from Invisible to Visible – Disrupting Bias; (2) Who am I? – Identity, Gender and Heritage; (3) Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement paired with Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women in Business; (4) Male Sponsorship Leads to Acceptance; (5) Improving Skill and Competency Capital for New Roles; (6) Building and Maintaining Bridges – Network Management.

Chapter 1: Statement of the Problem

As companies increase their presence internationally, and the need for manpower grows, the task of finding top tiered executives is presented as a daunting issue. Across the business landscape, the challenge has been labeled a war for talent, which suggests there are not enough qualified executives available to lead complex organizations.

Whilst this is being presented as a challenge, another emerging narrative suggests that there are forces (structural and systemic) that conspire to keep women from leadership roles. It is evident across the globe that women are accepting more responsibilities and have been able to do so because they have pursued educational opportunities aimed at increasing their competitive advantage in the workplace. However, evidence suggests that women and in particularly black women are far from realizing their full potential in the professional domain. In present day realities, women are in many ways marginalized. But the stories though similar, are related in different ways by women who are identified by race, color, nationality, status and other categories designed to stratify groups of people.

The narratives of women who are identified as people of color, offer insight into their experiences with the divisive nature of race and identity. The complex nature of how humans interact with each other is made even more difficult when signifiers as described above become part of the picture.

In today's business environment, it would appear as though there is a hyper-awareness of the need to improve programs that are geared to diversity and inclusion. As women's concerns gain traction in the MeToo age, there are demands being made of male leaders to level the playing field and to engage women as equals. The feminist agenda of

today calls on males to be advocates in very public and meaningful ways, but whilst there has been movement in many public and private enterprises, there are examples of resistance arising from cultural and societal norms peculiar to each country. From the lens of Critical Race Theory, which will be used in concert with Intersectionality, this research will unpack the experiences of black female C-suite leaders and executives who have navigated complex trails in the international arena.

Critical Race Theory has been described in some quarters as scholarship that stands in opposition to the experiences of whites, whose experiences have been projected as the gold standard (Taylor, 1998). The theory saw its early beginnings from the legal field, where luminaries such as Patricia Williams, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Derrick Bell and Lani Guinier gave voice to the experiences of those who fell outside of the white experience. In what started as an opportunity to contextualize the experiences of African Americans and to situate such experiences into a theoretical frame, quickly found a place in other disciplines, like education, the social sciences and feminist studies (Taylor, 1998).

The integration of intersectionality into gender studies and by extension women's studies is important to understanding the lived experiences of women which differ across geographic location and time. Intersectionality challenges the beliefs that all women experience the environments within which they find themselves in the same way. Pushing back on this perspective are scholars and activists who have brought into mainstream consciousness, the oppressive structures that render black women invisible (Beale, 1970; hooks, 1981; Collins, 1989; Collins, 2000). This group includes bell hooks, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, amongst other prominent personalities. Black feminist

scholars have come to acknowledge that there are many layers of oppression, experienced by people of color and in order to fully appreciate its impact of marginalized groups, focus must be given to how knowledge is produced and reproduced. Intersectionality is therefore an effort to account for the many ways in which oppression is experienced by people of color. For example, a white woman, more qualified than her male counterpart, who has been overlooked for a promotion due to her gender, will perhaps narrate a different experience compared to a woman of color, more qualified than her male counterpart but seen to be different due to her country of origin and her ethnicity. As the lens widens, the discourse on leadership in the 21st century takes on a new form, where male/female roles are being recrafted to engage more women for top tiered leadership.

Sinclair (2008) addresses the issue of leadership and how it is constructed. From a pilot study examining how leaders and by extension leadership is defined, she makes the claim that leaders' bodies and identities are under the microscope, and the debate about women's roles in contexts that are crafted for male success has presented a new challenge in fitting female leadership into a structure that has always favored males. This can be read as non-alignment of bodies and identities that are not in conformity to the dominant group, categorized either by race, gender, nationality and so forth.

A curious look at female leadership in expatriate literature, points to the narratives of white women. Minorities, specifically women who identify as black women and who are from developing countries are hidden. Adler's (1981) seminal research took aim at the perceived biases against women for foreign assignments. Her results debunked suggestions that women were not interested in international assignments and they would not experience prejudice due to their gender.

That the results from her study can be applied generally to all women may not be entirely true. Women of color and more specifically black women, encounter biases in their home countries which leads to the assumption that further discrimination may be experienced as they progress their careers in international business.

This research acknowledges the fact that careers in international business are annexed to the story of migration. Though a valid component to the research, it must be emphasized that the focus is much broader than that of the movement of professionals across geographic spaces. There are many factors that appear to contribute to the marginalization of highly qualified females and these factors contribute to different experiences.

In examining the lived experiences of Jamaican female executives, who are part of the African diaspora, there is an opportunity to explore through the lens of Critical Race Theory, Critical Human Geographers and Intersectionality, the meanings that are attached to significant events in their careers. The stories of women who have shared their experiences about working in male-led institutions, fuel the speculation that gender equality is a far way off because the decision makers in many of these firms hold to patriarchal perspectives that position women's bodies in the home. With globalization showing no signs of waning, a compelling argument exists to explore how black executive women, not identified as African Americans, experience and resolve the tensions in the many forms they are likely to occur. The idea that change is happening at increasing rates brings into sharp focus the urgency of companies to recalibrate how they look at the talent pool available to them. In this new dispensation, diversity and inclusion are prized building blocks for the future world of work. But black women, express

concerns about the presence of structural barriers that thwart their efforts to succeed. The mere mention of a barrier may conjure in the mind's eye a physical structure. In some cases, the barriers are felt rather than seen. For instance, a female executive may feel socially excluded but her peers may not recognize that this is happening. The significance of black women's stories is that the meaning attached may differ based on the environment in which she has been raised and the social networks to which she belongs.

Background

This research is aimed at exploring the lived experiences of the Jamaican C-suite executive in the diaspora of working in MNCs. This inquiry leads to a second question which seeks to get to the meaning they assign to the international experience.

In an age where diversity and inclusion are presented as good for business, there is need to question the seeming resistance to the move by women to go into spheres that are male dominated. Wirth (2001) presented the case that much of what women experience with the glass ceiling phenomenon appears to stem from the reinforced attitudes and beliefs relating to the role of men and women in society. This appears to be a similar response by many women who have reined in their desire to grow their careers internationally. But as more and more women enter the labor market, there has been an awareness of the glaring absence of women in decision-making authority of leading institutions. Gender inequality is thus a recurring theme that must be explored as it relates to highly educated female candidates and their experiences with access to international assignments. But what has become a matter of concern for many scholars and practitioners is the "freezing out" of minority women from senior level roles that are of great importance to an organization's success.

Whilst many occupy mid-level managerial roles, the presence of women in greater numbers at executive levels has not improved. This is not just a challenge for home-based companies, but the low numbers have impacted the number of female executives in expatriate roles. Scholars have argued that there has been increases in the number of women who are on international assignments, with figures pointing to as much as 20% in 2009 (BGRS, 2009). Data today points to approximately 3% of CEOs in Fortune 100 companies being female (BGRS, 2016). A further observation suggests that women comprise at least 40% of the labor market but by applying the current numbers in influential roles, achieving gender parity, even at the highest levels within organizations, will be a slow process (BGRS, 2016).

This noticeable gap produces an even greater challenge for talented Jamaican women who have an interest in accessing expatriate roles. There is a further risk that emerges, and it is embedded in the cultural beliefs and attitudes that appear to be limiting opportunities for women of color to progress beyond the glass border. Although many scholars have delved into the topic of expatriate talent amidst the changing landscape of work, their efforts have been on progressive states, like the United States. It is therefore prudent that attention be given to developing states like Jamaica. If women's participation in the labor market (especially highly educated and technically competent women), is viewed as beneficial to a country's economy, then it is critical to find out what aids or disables access to higher level roles that could lead to expatriate options.

It has been the suggestion of scholars and activists alike that black women are hardest hit in many jurisdictions especially when they aspire to lead in areas that are traditionally held by their male counterparts. Stereotypes about black women continue to

characterize them as “the angry black woman” and other viewpoints seek to attack their intelligence. The media, as a powerful conduit, markets these types of stereotypes, much to the detriment of black women.

In work spaces, perceptions about black women who have achieved mastery in their roles and are rewarded with greater responsibilities are usually mired in language that characterize them as being aggressive, whereas their male counterparts are described as assertive. In such a scenario, the black woman must craft new identities, different forms that are acceptable to the dominant group, for success to materialize. Sinclair (2008) leaders must manage their public persona to assert their authenticity. However, women experience great pressure to conform to standards that are not the same for all women. Women of color recraft their identities in a variety of ways to minimize those characteristics that will deny them access to power. There is evidence to suggest that positioning people as ‘other’ helps to reinforce invisibility. Dichotomies (black man/white woman etc.), as suggested by some theorists serve the purpose of defining and judging people as bodies, without minds when juxtaposed against other categories (Benjamin, 1988). These judgements emerge from one’s socio-cultural experiences.

According to Thai and Cateora (1979), the number of women who are entering managerial spaces and the continued internationalization of businesses will at some point intersect. As businesses expand, they will need to look at expanding their pool of candidates to meet the growing demands of the enterprise. Women who are exposed to international operations are thought to be equipped to assume greater responsibilities across borders. From the literature it appears that women who are now in middle

management roles will begin to seek out international assignments in line with their career ambitions.

Jamaica's history is framed in the history of migration – from the period of the slave trade to the early terse economic and political periods that fueled waves of migration to developed countries. As globalization continues to shape the world of business and the type of skills that will become necessary, migration trends from Jamaica will not slow. As companies enter new geographic spaces, the need will only increase for a skilled labor force. It therefore becomes necessary to examine the realities of an elite group of female professionals who work outside of their country of origin.

Today, with globalization and rising knowledge intensity (Hart, 2006), people and geographic spaces have become increasingly interconnected. This interaction has fueled the need for talent to meet global labor markets and with that incidences of intolerance due to socially constructed labels like race, gender, nationality and so on. As significant numbers of professionals take on international assignments, whether self-initiated or company sponsored, the need emerges to examine the lived realities of those who are deemed different.

A paper produced by staff at the International Monetary Fund, *Women, work and the economy: macroeconomic gains from gender equity* (Elborg-Woytec et al., 2013), spoke to the challenges faced by women in the labor market across the globe. The contributing authors observed that at the time of producing the paper, globally, female participation in senior positions as well as entrepreneurship did not experience significant growth. Citing research from Standards and Poor's 500 companies, covering the period 2008- 2012, the team found that women represented just four percent (Elborg-Wotec et

al., 2013). There is evidence to suggest that gender bias may be a contributing factor that denies female talent progressing into top leadership positions. This research interrogates the Jamaican context; to account for the experiences of women within organizations with an international presence and to unearth what motivates or dis-incentivizes qualified women in an environment of continuous change. The following research question and sub-question were used to form the parameters for this research:

Research Questions

What has been the experience of the C-suite Jamaican executive woman in the diaspora, of working in a multi-national company?

1. What meanings has she given to the experience of working in a multinational company.

Before advancing with the introduction, it is necessary to say how this research is organized. To establish flow, the research is arranged in the following way:

Chapter one offers an introduction of the key undertaking which is intended to respond to the reader's initial thoughts about the necessity of such a research about Jamaican C-suite executive female leaders and their experiences in multinational companies.

Chapter two explores the literature relating to expatriation. Woven into this section is a critical look at the professional woman in Jamaica and her ability to navigate the barriers that would seek to hinder her career aspirations. There are peculiarities across cultures which make it imperative to discuss the history of gender relations within the Caribbean, with focus on Jamaica. It is significant to note that much of the expatriate literature gives voice to women in developed countries. An opportunity was presented to

dissect even further the perceived gender gaps in business, localized to the Caribbean, with the study of Jamaican women. The literature review looked at intersectionality as an approach that offers an opportunity to examine the interconnectedness of the black women in a space that has not been the focus of much research.

Chapter three discusses the methodology. The researcher determined that existential phenomenology was the most suitable theory to apply to the study as the aim is to unearth the experiences as well as the meanings that are attached through a structured and rigorous process. To be clear, the application of this methodology is not intended to speak to the expatriate experiences of all Jamaican women who fit the profile established for this study. Instead, it is intended to expand the discussion to spaces that are traditionally under-represented at the global level, thereby triggering further interest in a neglected piece of international business literature.

Chapter four reveals the results of the research. Data analysis is critical to isolating the themes from the participants' narratives. The analysis demands repetitive engagement with the data to reveal the meanings and essence of the participants' experiences. Chapter five focuses on the discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

Definition of Terms

To support the reader's understanding of the content, the researcher has included a glossary of terms. The following key terms are used generously throughout the research.

C-Suite Executive. C-level executives as the group is sometimes referred to, are persons who have ascended to the coveted spaces at the top of the hierarchy where they wear titles such as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO) and so on. Though the term describes a collection of executives, the broad

application of the term may differ across cultures, geographic spaces and organizations. Beyond the title, it is recognized that companies do exist that may classify their executives in a different way, meaning the designation “Chief” may not be accounted for on the organization’s chart. To support this study, the researcher, recognizing that what obtains in North America may be significantly different to what exists in other parts of the world has expanded the C-suite frame to capture female leaders who are executives with decision-making authority in their companies. The profile of the executive has evolved and continues to evolve in pace with the new demands of international business. This means that titles may not prove to be the best way to determine the level of authority that accompanies the role. For example, work produced by Heidrick and Struggles, found after interviewing senior executives about the requirements for C-level opportunities in the future that the results pointed to a shift from technical and functional competence to expertise in leadership and strategy with goals tied to value creation (Groysberg, B., et. al., 2011).

Expatriate. This word is used in the context of international business and in simple terms, describes an individual who leaves his or her home for professional opportunities in another country. This is either on a temporary or permanent basis. It is common for companies with interests in other parts of the world to draw from their talented in-house resources, those ambassadors who have mastered the technical and managerial competencies suitable for international assignments. As part of migration studies, expatriates are not only considered company sponsored talent, but emerging literature points to a growing professional group who act on their own volition to secure better opportunities for themselves (Hutchings & Michailova, 2014). They are labeled

self-initiated expatriates. The interest of this study is primarily concerned with company sponsored expatriates though it acknowledges the broader application of the term.

Multi-national Companies (MNCs). Business literature point to MNCs as companies that have a presence in geographic spaces other than their home territories. MNCs contribute to millions of foreign direct investments in countries that show huge potential for revenue and market growth. The evolution of globalization has increased the number of businesses that forge relationships with host country enterprises. The aggressive push to access new markets is driven by the need to have dominance in the product and service sectors. Issues arising from the growth of MNCs have led to an inter-disciplinary approach in the academic sphere aimed at furthering research on the new relationships that are being forged among actors – foreign governments, transnational operations, labor market mobility and a host of other threats and opportunities.

The Glass-border. The term glass border is an extension of the glass ceiling phenomenon. The term is credited to Mandelkar (1994) who progressed the idea that stereotypes held by home territory decision-makers about women and leadership affected opportunities for their participation in international assignments. Managerial roles as well as elite leadership roles were still held by males and have come to be framed in masculinist managerialism. In this language, the role of leadership is still associated with constructed attributes of maleness (Elias, 2008). In this study, it is important to reiterate the value of the glass border concerns to that of expatriate females who are senior executives, in global entities. To make the linkages more apparent, senior executives include female leaders who also boast titles associated with the C-suite. A critical

component to this study rests on executives with decision making authority. As the profile of expatriate women become visible, there is a need to mine the data further to dissect the literature for females in multinational companies who occupy elite seats with decision-making authority. To provide greater clarity, Woodall and Winstanley (1988) promote the view that senior managers are stewards with responsibility for the direction of the operations lead. Thus, the senior manager which includes C-suite women are those women with “executive decision-making functions” (Woodall and Winstanley 1988; Linehan and Walsh 1999).

Migrant. The term migrant has been used to capture persons who have moved to a country other than that where he or she typically resides for a period of at least 12 months. The destination or receiving country is therefore viewed as the new residence in lieu of where the person typically resides (IOM, 2010). Interestingly, the term is viewed differently by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), where an individual is accorded immigrant status after residing for more than 6 months (PIOJ, 2011:2010). A curious look at IOM’s website revealed that over two hundred million persons were categorized as international migrants. Labor migrants accounted for in excess of one hundred million persons in 2015 (IOM, 2018). Migrant data is based on a country’s population census records and may include, based on the national reporting system, information about other groups, such as refugees. It is important to parse out from the data, the various groups that would fall under the term migrant.

Diaspora. The term diaspora has been contested on several fronts as it appears to capture a partial view of the various sets of migrants and what propelled them to leave their homeland. Its earliest use has been found to describe Jews who were displaced from

their homeland. The classical definition was confined to the experiences of Jews but in time the word would expand to accommodate the migration patterns of other peoples (Shepperson 1966; Edwards, 2004 and Sheffer 2003). With no uniformed definition in place, this research will apply the definition provided by the International Organization for Migration. *Diaspora* is defined as the “collective of long-term emigrants and the descendants of long-term emigrants, who are currently living abroad” (2012, 33). In accounting for the types of groups who have left their homeland for other countries, the literature points to descriptive terms such as “nationals abroad”, “expatriates” as well as “temporary migrants”. Diasporas are being recognized as powerful actors in shaping political and socio-economic policies. The diaspora as a large community offers to new migrants a safety net in the sense that through diasporic networks, the preservation of one’s identity is supported. It has been argued there is a necessity to expand the range of definitions to account for short term and long-term patterns of migration especially associated with MNCs that move skilled professionals across the globe. There is support for this kind of thinking as evidenced in the World Migration Report (2018).

Spotlight on Women in International Business

As international companies expand their business interests, there appears to be an urgent need for talent to take up decision making roles in global operations. Events over the last several years, have propelled the topic of gender into the consciousness of global companies. The focus on women in international business is not new as several scholars across diverse disciplines have had their attention peeled to the changes brought about by globalization and its impact on talent mobility (Adler, 1984a; Altman & Shortland, 2008; Hutchings & Michailova, 2014; Linehan & Scullion, 2008). In reviewing the literature,

the focus is narrowed to the experiences of women who are not of color and who represent dominant cultural spaces like the USA, Europe and China.

As the research peels back the layers of the experiences of career driven Jamaican females, it is not intended to position the conversation in a way that de-legitimizes the role of men but is meant to capture the perspectives of women who have excelled in some ways but not in others and to identify the blind spots that will inform how corporations manage the complexities associated with inclusion and diversity in international business for the future.

Credible authorities like the United Nations (UN), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), continue to drive home the point that investing in women at the various layers within society is a strategically sound goal. They are not alone, as in 2018, there has been a noticeable shift in the debate about the role women play at the top tiers of the organization and the profitability of such companies. In a study on whether gender diversity is profitable, the Peterson Institute for International Economics, found there was “a correlation between the proportion of women in corporate leadership and firm profitability.” This suggested a possible statistical link which can be further probed to identify whether there is a distinct competitive advantage to companies that have a diverse leadership composition as opposed to those that do not (Noland, Moran, & Kotschwar, 2016). The survey was completed across 91 countries, with over 21,000 respondents. The authors in shaping the discourse, suggest that if gender parity were to be achieved, there would be noticeable change in the profit margins of companies as opposed to what they now realize. The data that is collected is still narrowly focused

on professionals from developed countries and does not identify whether the respondents are nationals or expatriates. Still, the information is critical to understanding the changes that have been taking place in MNCs and what appears to be drivers of change.

The survey revealed two realities that may be drivers for the renewal of interest in female leadership for elite roles. A revisit of the role of women may be attributed to aging populations and a greater number of educated women to men in some countries. As more women enter the labor market, they are also availing themselves of opportunities that will make them financially independent. With this new financial freedom, women are beginning to capitalize on options available to grow their international careers. Whereas many have found options at middle management levels, the literature points to no major increase in female representation where it appears to matter. For example, the 2014 sample of the over 21,000 respondents with firms in over 91 countries, found that 60% had no female board members. Mining further, just a little above 50% of the companies surveyed had no female C-suite executives and less than 5% were able to show they had a female leader who wore the title of CEO (Noland, Moran, & Kotschwar, 2016). These results illuminate the absence of females at the helm of organizations and further drives the concern about how to attract female talent to roles with authority, especially women who not fit the expatriate profile.

Korn Ferry, a recognized consultancy firm, believes that companies are critical to championing the inclusion of women in areas of leadership. From a survey conducted globally on about 7000 business executives, it was revealed that 80% believed “their organizations don’t possess the leadership capabilities they need” (Gray, 2016). This

revelation created an opportunity to revisit the diverse pools of talent that has remained untapped.

The perception that there is a leadership shortage is nothing new as in 2012, similar discussions were being advanced. Harvard Business Review in an article, *The Art of Developing Truly Global Leaders*, made the argument that companies do experience challenges with identifying top talent that would be required to drive the needs of multinational companies. The author makes some assertions as to why there is a shortage of talent, one being the “internal management pipe-lines being too thin” which ultimately leads to poaching from other companies. This assertion however may be hastily contrived as the literature today points to an under-sourced pool of candidates from which critical leadership talent may be possible. The under-utilized pool of certain candidates for executive level job castings provoke deeper questions. The black vs white, developing country vs third-world country among other labels help to construct and reinforce beliefs about the value of workers within organizations.

Legacies of the Past

A former colony of Britain, Jamaica gained its independence in 1962. It’s motto, “out of many one people”, suggests an idealized perspective that is perhaps not embraced by everyone (Palmer, 1989). In a country that is predominantly of African ancestry, the legacy of race permeates social life (Clarke, 1975; Henriques, 1953; Hall, 1977). This has given rise to notions of colorism which informs class structure.

This study is focused on Jamaican women in elite roles. Women who have broken past the glass ceiling and have further shattered the ‘glass-border’. The glass border is a metaphor used to describe the barriers women face as they position themselves to take

advantage of international work assignments. An appreciation of the nation's past, which is nestled in the narrative of migration brings to the fore the powerful interplay of identity (race) and gender in the struggle for equality. Placed in a global context, the black woman who hails from the Caribbean, has to further wrestle with notions that she is somehow inferior because of her nationality. In the past, women were expected to fulfill their roles as wives and homemakers. It was the responsibility of the men to go to work. Such biases helped to exclude women from positions of leadership within public spaces, placing them as second-class citizens. The encounter with this phenomenon can best be explained by those who have been affected by it (Auster, 1973). In that vein, the experiences of women become a rich data source to truly understand the impact of bias because of society's perspective on their role. The researcher acknowledges that the statistics illuminate improvements in women's professional achievements, but they face obstacles as they progress the corporate ladder. This is borne out in their absence from the top tiers of companies.

It has been the argument of some scholars that the preoccupation with race, color and gender bias plague the Jamaican society. In a color stratified space, the features that come close to being white are associated with pedigree and intellect (Hunter, 2013). Dark skin then becomes the symbol of unattractiveness and incivility (Hunter 2013). For many, the legacy of the past contributes to the belief that black women are inferior to light skinned females, placing the black woman at a disadvantage. The society's preoccupation with color, race and gender maintains patriarchal systems which in part drives the competition between women thereby limiting their power within wider social spaces. Barriteau (2003) in bringing light to the male/female dynamic in the Caribbean,

anchors the discussion to the “tensions within ideological and material relations.”

Expanding her analysis even further, she shines a light on the different messages that are directed at men and women as they cement a sort of social order which is accepted as a standard. What is established is a hierarchy that equates masculinity with authority to regulate the behaviors of women. Feminist studies relating to the Caribbean struggle to arrest the various misconceptions associated with the focus of women in public life. To interrogate social relations in the Caribbean context, is to examine the complex nature of power and how it impacts the experiences of men and women. According to Barriteau (2003) the creation of knowledge about women and their experiences is a critical ingredient to developing policies that reflect their needs. Feminist scholarship is then not to be viewed as an attempt to disrupt the familiar notions about who should hold power but must reflect the changes that are evident in the society.

In today’s fast paced and disruptive environment, organizations compete to attract and retain the best minds to meet future needs. The growing needs of the organization reflects the need for next generation thinkers, who would have amassed not only academic credentials but are also agile problem solvers and innovative influencers in an increasingly open market. The new world of work demands that next generation leaders bring to the table diverse skill sets to meet new forces that threaten the business continuity. Women are still an underrepresented group at the executive table, and even more so less likely to be found occupying influential roles in as expatriate executives. Nagpal (2013) explained that approximately 1.2 billion economically engaged women are accounted for in global companies. Yet women represent less than 15% of executive senior level roles spread across the world’s largest corporations (Altman and Shortland,

2008; Kollinger, 2005). This awareness has fueled discussions among large corporations which has led to a reengineering of policies and practices relating to the value of female leadership in the business world. Companies with interests in other jurisdictions, acting on research, have promoted the interests of women within their firms. By investing in the human capital of the company, the strengths of both men and women are harnessed to produce maximum results (Adler & Izraeli, 1994).

There is the suggestion that there is a need to distil the term expatriate to make it clearer (McNulty & Brewster, 2017). It is the thinking of some scholars that the current term expatriate, provides some confusion as there is some misalignment with the word and what it is supposed to investigate (Molloy & Ployhart, 2012). What seems apparent from the literature is the proliferation of new forms of international business travel that will need to be explored to construct a more coherent picture (McNulty & Brewster, 2017).

The investigation into what obtains in the developing country of Jamaica is sparked by the observation that women are occupying managerial roles in many public and private spaces (International Labor Organization, 2015). There is evidence to suggest that women are taking advantage of academic programs at a faster rate than men, but the distribution of women to men especially in male dominated fields remain challenging (International Labor Organization, 2015). Given the increasing rhetoric associated with women's rights concerns and their increasing presence in the labor market, some businesses are championing the need for more women to be integrated into top tiered, influential roles. There are however obstacles to entering certain spheres, especially ones that are mired in gender-based biases and assumptions.

Adler (1994), in examining the North American situation, noted that there are companies that have grasped the value of building a skilled gender-neutral workforce. In doing so they are harnessing the best talent needed to address issues that may arise in a complex global environment. A shift in mental models can be credited to the growing competitive nature of businesses which has forced companies to identify groups of people who are often not often tapped for expatriate opportunities. Adler (1994) notes there is an opportunity cost today that was not quite significant decades ago. The environment continues to be disrupted by new technologies and the growing need to meet the needs of the sophisticated consumer. Managing across borders demands a more coherent strategy for finding talent and that includes taking advantage of all resources available to the organization.

In recent years, business literature has been signaling there is a new threat to the survival of organizations. This threat, identified as the global war for talent, suggests there is a lack of talent for critical roles (Mckinsey Quarterly, 1998; Mehlahi & Collings, 2010). Thought leaders and business scholars have reached the conclusion that for the coming decades, businesses will be confronted with heightened competition (Izraeli & Adler, 1994; Tarique & Schuller, 2010; Scullion & Collings, 2011). With competition, dawns the recognition that serious attention must be paid to staffing, not just domestic operations but those that are penetrating new markets outside their home territories.

Though the literature crafts this issue as a crisis deserving the swift attention of business leaders and other actors, there is another story that seems to contradict some beliefs of doom and gloom in talent management. That alternative narrative seems to intersect with the diversity and inclusion agenda. Here, it is advanced that there exists an

opportunity to look at expatriate female talent in a way that is different to what has been the practice in the past (Adler, 1984a, 1984b; Harrison, 2014; McNulty, 2015; Salamin & Hanappi, 2014;).

A strong advocate for women's rights issues is the United Nations. There has been consistency in its call to engage women in more concrete ways to progress economic growth. The United Nations (UN) has since its inception championed the rights of both genders. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which then became the platform on which two human rights treaties were drafted (United Nations, 2014). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Both Covenants harmonized the position of the UN on the rights of both gender to respect and dignity. In 1967, member States signaled their preparedness to address discrimination against women when they accepted and adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Signatories to the declaration agreed that their countries would take the necessary steps to "abolish existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which were discriminatory against women and to establish adequate legal protection for equal rights of men and women" (Human Rights, 2004, p. 5).

Without disregarding the numerous stories of women who have attained varying degrees of success, there is a question that continues to lurk below the surface about the worth of women in spheres that are dominated by perceived archaic perspectives about gender.

The United Nations (UN), International Labor Organization (ILO) and many trusted organizations have steadfastly made the clarion call for organizations to look at

issues arising from discrimination based on gender. The UN in its 17 goals to transform our world listed as Goal 5, the vision of achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls. Interestingly, 193-member states ratified the 17 goals, which is construed as a positive step to championing the rights of women and girls (McKinsey Global Institute, 2015). Underpinning the push for equality, is the belief held by some advocates that women's rights are equal rights and such statements support the view that women are indispensable to the social, economic and political discourse. There is however disconnect between the rhetoric being advanced by reputable organizations about gender equality and the attitudes and behaviors of diverse actors to a seemingly important 21st century agenda.

Gender Equality in the Caribbean - Historical Overview

Chapter two delves a bit more into the gender discourse as manifested in the local society. Paving the way is a brief introduction to the relationship between Britain and her colonies and the extent to which the legacies of the past are reinforced today in business and other spheres of life. The system of governance during slavery was organized based on race and profit (Reddock, 2004). The structure was perpetuated and reinforced when the status of Caribbean territories moved from colonial to independent nations. According to Barriteau (1988), the Caribbean adopted the political and economic systems which were associated with the enlightenment philosophy. Enlightenment philosophy was the pivotal point of recognizing the need for nations to determine their own course and as such introduced the idea of democracy. Enshrined in the policies and activities of self-governance was the continuation of practices that discounted the female voice in favor of preserving the status quo. Barriteau (1988) argued that there remains a gap between the

enlightenment perspective and that of contemporary issues affecting women, making the case that there is need to analyze further the matter of gender relations.

The shift toward a greater interest in gender relations appears to be in response to the advocates who have earned for themselves a platform that elevates their voice. The political arena is no longer the prerogative of influential males and females who believe in the preservation of a certain order. That status quo is being challenged today by minorities who have benefitted from opportunities that have positioned them in spaces that were reserved for a specific group.

Women's Suffrage in Jamaica

The history behind women's suffrage in Jamaica is tied to the efforts of women and their male allies in Britain. After securing a win through an Act of Parliament, women who owned property were enfranchised to participate in the election process in Britain. The results led to agitation by the wealthy and elitist class of Jamaican women to seek the same outcomes. As a colony of Britain, the establishment and its standards were strictly adhered to, with clear demarcations according to race, color and social status. What obtained in the colony at that time, mirrored to some extent the establishment in Britain. The identifying features of leadership was male, white, shades of whiteness and wealth. When in 1919 the right to vote was extended to women, it was not all women but the few who had property and represented a segment of society. These women were predominantly white, thus maintaining ethnocentric traditions.

Tracing back to the early 20th century, the move toward women's suffrage in Jamaica was supported by many influential voices, two of whom are mentioned here. H. G Delisser was a white Jamaican Jew who was the editor of the Daily Gleaner, a

newspaper giant of that time and the Hon. Hubert Ashton Laselve Simpson, described as a high brown, which translated to some privilege within the ranks of government (Vassell, 1993). These men were not the only voices in support of women's suffrage, but they were positioned to articulate how the feminist movement would be beneficial to the country. Both men were representatives of the elite class of influencers, espousing values that were inconsistent with the narrative of male dominance at that time. It is felt they were campaigning for women to have voting rights because they were enlightened by what occurred in Britain the year before with the passage of a law enfranchising some women to vote. Another clue offered to the softening of the stance to have women participate in the legislative process may be found in the economic and social tensions of the time. Vassell (1993) notes that the Governor Probyn, who was charged with crafting a new way forward may have accommodated women's right to vote to consolidate support from the elites. This calculating move was more to secure a win in the coming elections of 1919 or 1920 as approximately 300 women would be added to the voters' list (Vassell, 1993). The foregoing is a critical piece to understanding the progress made by Jamaican women, as it exposes the push factors; advocates, the socio-political climate and economic realities that ushered in the need for change.

The right to vote, one must recall was aimed at elite groups of women thus reinforcing the structure of the establishment. The fact that all women were not engaged in this monumental change is not unnoticed. In the collective consciousness of the population, was the reminder of who were defined as the privileged class. Blacks, more so black women at that time were marginalized and their interests were not advanced in the same way as women who were categorized as white or brown skinned.

It is the argument by some Caribbean scholars that permission to vote was a strategy accommodated by the influential males in the society at that time, who seized on the opportunity to maintain power while appearing to be warm to the idea of women's adult suffrage. It was an opportunity seized upon to gain support for reformatory activities. The outcome of this was the continued marginalization of black women.

Though similarities exist within the narratives of women across the globe, the Caribbean experience is unique and the study of women within the construct of the gender discourse is not complete without an appreciation of the historical context within which their rights were recognized. Significant changes in the larger global context has helped to shape the conversations about gender relations in Jamaica and its influence on socio-political and economic development.

Much of the literature on post-colonial gender relations within the Caribbean, highlight a critical component of gender, its meaning and how it has shaped the way in which women are perceived. This archaic view has survived in many spaces albeit the introduction of state led policies. This observation aligns with Barriteau's (1998) critique of gender within the Caribbean context. She points out that the inherited systems from colonial history are magnified in the gender systems that reinforce power relations. Identifying two dimensions of gender systems (ideological and material), Barriteau (1998) makes the case that though women have gained distinctive advantage in the material dimension there has not been that level of transformation in the ideological.

The material she describes as access to power, status, and other forms of tangible and non-tangible resources (Barriteau, 1998). The ideological dimension addresses the construction of masculinity and femininity in the discourse. Institutions as well as the

conversations within private and more so the public space, reinforce the expected behaviors for men and women. The behaviors consistent with this dimension are still evident today. The public space has long been the protected space for men. This thinking persists today among both men and women. An assumption is made that the influence of religion and cultural norms may also contribute to some extent on how the roles of women and men are interpreted. For example, in states like Jamaica, there are leaders who contend that a woman has no place in business and should resign themselves to being homemakers – heeding biblical teachings which say men are head of the household. This belief is thought to have an impact on women’s ability to move beyond certain roles. An opportunity exists to identify if this position factors in the expatriate narratives of Jamaican women.

MNCs – Bridging the Gender Divide

MNCs are believed to be economic triggers in many societies across the globe. Struggling countries have high expectations and to attract MNCs, special concessions are made which on the face of the deal adds jobs to the economy as well as an opportunity to boost the labor market with the new knowledge, skills and technology. Narrowing the focus to women, MNCs are perceived as transformative agencies, especially where their business models reflect practices that are intended to develop women for more influential roles. According to Frenkel (2017), women’s organizations have been particularly hopeful as the entry of MNCs brought with it an expectation that a more equitable environment would be created which would promote the interests of invisible talent.

To access new markets, MNCs have promoted the view that their entry will support the development agenda of host countries. According to Frenkel (2017),

organizations are part of communities that are anchored to social, economic and cultural contexts. I would extend his view to add the political frame due to the influence of such systems on beliefs about power and privilege. MNCs entering new environments must be cognizant of the cultural norms that interpret sex and gender as determinants of the roles to be had. For example, progressive companies, with a record of promoting women to top tiered posts, may find that the host country's perception of the roles for women and men are in stark contrast to that of the home company.

Even as MNCs push to find new locations, they cannot ignore the fact that there is a need to not just examine the location as a source of profit, but they must seriously consider the cultural landscape and what partnerships can be undertaken to meet the expectations of the various stakeholders. Gender is viewed differently across borders which presents a challenge when navigating new spaces. In this new world, being conscious of the historical underpinnings that reinforce gender stereotypes can be useful in bridging the divide between the MNCs expectations and the diverse groups they will target to drive initiatives and deliver results.

The State of Professional Women Today

Over 20 years ago, the glass ceiling was offered as a metaphor intended to illuminate the barriers that limited women's rise to the seat of organizational power. Leadership is usually associated with being male and as such the barriers that are perceived by women to be in place, increases their agitation for equality and acceptance. Stereotypes about the role of men and women are still used to define the profile of candidates best suited for leadership roles (Heilman, 2001). Masculine characteristics such as being a good decision maker, analytical, strategic and assertive are established as

a standard within the organizations leading to the promotion of males of positions of influence. On the other hand, females are typically characterized as nurturing, compassionate, fair and democratic which are positioned as standards less favorable for the seats of power (Fisher & Koch, 2001).

It is often repeated in the business world that we are living in a complex global environment. Leaders have come to recognize and acknowledge that the frequency of change in their internal and external environments, necessitate rapid responses to prevent organizational failure. Globalization has leveled the playing field so to speak, spawning different challenges for which leaders must prepare. Whilst it is difficult to account for every possible event, organizations must, through a raft of appropriate strategies, identify and develop those resources that will provide leverage in a rapidly changing environment.

The decision to write about the expatriate experiences of Caribbean women, more specifically Jamaican women, emerged after reading several articles that spoke to the chronic shortage of talent whilst others sought to understand the underutilization of women in decision-making where it mattered in business. In an age where diversity and inclusion are presented as good for business, there is need to question the seeming resistance by women to go into spheres that are male dominated. Wirth (2001) presented the case that much of what women experience with the glass ceiling phenomenon appears to stem from the reinforced attitudes and beliefs relating to the role of men and women in society. As more and more women enter the labor market, there has been an awareness of the absence of women in decision-making authority of leading institutions. Gender inequality is thus a recurring theme that must be explored as it relates to the highly

educated female candidates and their experiences with access to international assignments.

Whilst many occupy mid-level managerial roles, the presence of women in greater numbers at executive levels has not improved. This is not just a challenge for home-based companies, but the low numbers have impacted the number of female executives in expatriate roles. Many have argued that there has been increases in the number of women who are on international assignments, with figures pointing to as much as 20% in 2009 (BGRS, 2009). Data today points to approximately 3% of CEOs in Fortune 100 companies being female (BGRS, 2016). A further observation suggests that women comprise at least 40% of the labor market but by applying the current numbers in influential roles, achieving gender parity, even at the highest levels within organizations, will be a slow process (BGRS, 2016).

This noticeable gap produces an even greater challenge for talented Jamaican women who have an interest in accessing expatriate roles. There is a further risk that I wish to point out and it is embedded in the cultural beliefs and attitudes that appear to be limiting opportunities for women to progress beyond the glass border. Although many scholars have delved into the topic of expatriate talent amidst the changing landscape of work, their efforts have been on progressive states, like the United States. It is therefore prudent that attention be given to developing states like Jamaica. If women's participation in the labor market is viewed as beneficial to a country's economy, then it is critical to find out what aids or disables access to expatriate options.

A paper produced by staff at the International Monetary Fund, *Women, work and the economy: macroeconomic gains from gender equity* (2013), spoke to the challenges

faced by women in the labor market across the globe. The contributing authors observed that at the time of producing the paper, globally, female participation in senior positions as well as entrepreneurship did not experience significant growth. Citing research from Standards and Poor's 500 companies, covering the period 2008- 2012, the team found that women represented just four percent (Elborgh-Woytek, Newiak et. al., 2013). There is evidence to suggest that gender bias may be a contributing factor that denies female talent from progressing into spheres of leadership. This research examines the Jamaican situation; to account for the experiences of women within organizations with an international presence and to unearth what motivates or dis-incentivizes qualified women in an environment of marked change.

The perception that there is a leadership shortage is nothing new as in 2012, similar discussions were being advanced. A leading business magazine made the argument that companies do experience challenges with identifying top talent that would be required to drive the needs of multinational companies (HBR, 2012). The author makes some assertions as to why there is a shortage of talent, one being the "internal management pipe-lines being too thin" which ultimately leads to poaching from other companies. This assertion however may be hastily contrived as the literature today points to an under-sourced pool of candidates from which critical leadership talent can be found.

A lot of attention has focused on the state of female C-suite leaders in North America, Europe and quite recently, Asia. Occupants of the C-suite are those senior executives in the organization who bear titles such as the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Resource Officer among other such labels. They are charged with not just directing the agenda of the organization but there are emerging realities that have called

for different skills, much different than what was called for in previous years. Groysberg, Kelly and MacDonald (2011) made the point that “technical and functional expertise matters less at the top.” Relational skills are in high demand especially as companies become more attuned to the changing demographics and the new realities of doing business in a digital world.

In recent years, diversity and inclusion has taken on new meaning, shaping the discourse about discrimination and how different social, political and economic forces impact the lives of people who are perceived to be different. In this new era, a company’s reputation can be sullied if it is believed they are holding to traditions that hurt minorities and other groups. This means that companies must be enablers of progress which in turn translates to increased revenue. When we look at the top layers of many recognized global firms, the women who are represented are typically white. In spaces like Jamaica, the expatriate community is typically white or light-skinned. Where black women take on major roles, they are sometimes met with skepticism because of the narrative that have persisted in the country is tied to how the black woman has been mischaracterized from slavery to the present.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The Caribbean's story of women in leadership positions across multinational corporations has been underrepresented within the larger context of international business and female leadership. Many questions emerge, especially in a period marked by the presence of multinational companies (predominantly from developed states) in locations that offer the best opportunities for expansion of their brands. Whilst it is recognized that women have made significant progress there continues to be a disproportionate number of women to men at the highest and distinctive layers of global corporations (Adler, 1984a, 1984b; Altman, 1997; Burke, 2005; Tharenou, 2005). That the profile is almost always that of white women, there is the tendency to believe that the domain of international business is the preserve of one specific group. Peering behind the veil, women continue to encounter barriers to their career aspirations, but the woman of color appears to be hit hardest in realizing her full potential.

In proceeding with the discussion, migration becomes a factor in this study. Much has been written about migration but the expatriate literature relating to Caribbean talent has not registered a significant pulse especially within the context of international business. The exploration of Jamaican executive women in multinational entities frames two issues: the first being what has been identified as an under-representation of top female talent at critical positions and second, the movement of qualified female talent to global spaces. In seeking to connect the dots, the opportunity exists to talk to notable women leaders across different sectors.

The exodus of talent from the Caribbean is nothing new. Localizing the discourse to Jamaica, the country has experienced waves of departure in the past to three main

regions: North America, Canada and England. The literature however seem to be muted on the topic of women who have gained access to expatriate opportunities from local companies with an international presence or from international companies that have facilitated global mobility opportunities. The push factor for many has been the search for better economic opportunities. In other narratives, women dream of pushing their career goals to the ultimate. To reiterate, self-actualizing their dreams. Putting the economic challenges within the country aside, data shows that women are increasingly realizing their educational goals which they are using to boost their chances of climbing the corporate ladder. Many educated and talented females choose to leave the country to (1) further their academic goals usually graduate and professional degrees; (2) improve their economic position; (3) benefit from international opportunities facilitated by companies with an international presence. It's the latter that provokes interest especially in an environment of perceived talent shortage.

The preferred locations named earlier have held a unique appeal to Jamaican's seeking a better life. It must be highlighted that programs have been fashioned by the State in partnership with developed countries to address human resource needs. But these largely appeal to unskilled and marginally skilled members of the society. This joint cooperative arrangement has produced programs like the US/Canada Overseas Employment Program, which is facilitated by the granting of temporary work visas for up to nine months. These jobs are typically seasonal and are in the agricultural and hospitality sectors. These programs are government sponsored programs designed to stimulate the local economy by fostering partnerships between countries in need of seasonal workers which in turn stimulates the local economy through remittances.

Workers in these cases are referred to as seasonal migrants who return home after the season ends.

The literature has exposed a critical need to explore expatriate communities largely because of emerging labels for those who work in the international arena. Extant literature suggests that the word “expatriate” offers some confusion and so many scholars have focused on unpacking its broad use with the goal of providing a clearer picture about business expatriates (McKnulty & Brewster, 2016). It is imagined that an increasingly competitive business environment will see the evolution of new types of arrangements to meet the changing needs of international organizations.

Historically, the term expatriate referred to persons who were domiciled abroad for any length of time (Copeland & Griggs, 1985; Lay, 1925). Such persons included individuals who were attached to the Arts (musicians, writers and so on). The category extended to others as well who were entrepreneurs, students, volunteers and teachers. Many who were employed in the host countries were paid at local rates even though they were not native to the country (Cohen, 1977).

The current use of the word expatriate appears to encompass all persons who are living outside of their national borders (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011). Fechter (2007) makes the point that the word “expatriate” is recognized and interpreted in different ways across geographic locations. It is suggested here that the term may reinforce hierarchical structures associated with race, ethnicity and class (Fechter, 2007) and surfaces discriminatory practices within groups. For example, expatriates from North America or Europe, may be perceived as white and therefore best suited to lead international companies. On the other hand, there may be a perception that expatriates from

developing countries are non-whites and therefore lack the competencies to lead complex operations abroad.

The literature dissects further the different interpretations of the term expatriate and illustrates how problematic it is to find a unifying definition. Research has shown that international work is covered in uniquely different ways. Some scholars have looked at international workers from the frame of the assignment (Derr & Oddou, 1991; Hays, 1974), the professional group to which the worker is assigned (Mahroum, 2000) as well as the career motivations and trajectories of the worker (Andresen & Biemann, 2013). Others have looked at how mobile the worker is and the length of stay in the host countries (Banai & Harry, 2004; Facuda & Chu, 1994).

To declutter the definition, a suggestion from McNulty and Brewster (2016) is to put the focus on the transactional nature of developing a business. The contract between the employer and the global entity is fueled by the need to strengthen market share and to provide technical support to facilities outside the home territory. McNulty and Brewster (2016) propose that time and purpose be used as a means of justifying the use of the expatriate to the business arena which would eliminate its use in categories that are outside that frame.

The literature highlights a problematic area for countries struggling to produce coherent policies that speak to the movement of people between borders. The overarching concern of developed countries, rests in the exodus of citizens from developing states to their shores (Favel et. al., 2007). Expatriation as part of the narrative is therefore obscured. In today's politically charged environment, migration appears to be a divisive topic, pushing the narrative of otherness. The mischaracterization of large, diverse groups

of people, who are often minorities, enables biased attitudes and behaviors (Volpp, 1996). Take for instance the language that permeates political discourse today, where groups of people are vilified because of their heritage, race, ethnicity, religion and so on. In such environments, stereotypes can feed into immigration policies that impede innovation and growth. In an interconnected world, there is need to further collaborative efforts aimed at refining and harmonizing global policies around the topic of migration (Lavenex, 2018).

International agencies like the International Organization for Migration (IOM) offers technical support to countries in the international community to understand the challenges to migration and to strengthen institutions capacity to address country specific issues. As a partner, the IOM's role in 2010 aimed to support the efforts of the Jamaican government in its bid to improve the formulation of policies to address emerging migration trends (Koser & Laczko, 2010). The provision of the Terms of Reference (TOR) acted as a guide to the development of the profile and the definitions used to describe different migrants originated from the TOR. A review of the TOR revealed there was no definition to address professionals in Multinational companies. There was no segment that discussed migration as it relates to movement that is facilitated by multinational companies. The migration trends that were captured were "immigration of foreign-born nationals, return of Jamaican nationals, emigration, the international outward and inward movement of students, visitors, refugees and asylum seekers, and irregular migrants" (Koser & Laczko, 2010). For the period being reviewed (2000-2010), 45,640 persons emigrated to the United States. Of that number, approximately half were in services. The category Management, Professional, Executive and Professional

Specialty accounted for about 17%. A review of this category was not disaggregated to account for persons who were international business workers.

The US and Canada have emerged as attractive destinations for many professionals due to the strong presence of Caribbean nationals in these regions. This does not mean that other destinations are not appealing, as seen in the number of persons who have seized opportunities in spaces like Australia, Dubai and China. Within the Caribbean, the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) framework was developed to not only improve the movement of goods and services among member states, but to encourage the free movement of skilled professionals within the region. The loosening of some travel and work restrictions (the abolition of the work permit system; introduction of the Certificate of CARICOM Skills qualifications and indefinite leave to stay in Member States) have promoted free movement of nationals within CARICOM between host and home countries, thereby diffusing barriers to movement, deepening international business ties, triggering the transference of skills and competencies that are necessary for corporations to succeed. What is not readily visible is the proportion of men to women who have moved into senior level roles in entities that boast an international presence.

With the thawing, somewhat, of regional borders on the movement of persons across states, the CSME has made it possible for transnational companies to access professionals to satisfy labor market shortages. In facilitating this type of arrangement, treaties between member states are critical to ensuring that the arrangements do not infringe on the rights citizens of each participating country. From a regional perspective the development of a structure to guide the movement of skilled regional citizens is to acknowledge the importance of creating a framework that allows member states to build

leadership capacity in industries that may be struggling. In this model, there are examples of qualified female leaders who have made impressive strides at the regional level.

Nurturing talent for the future is not limited to males, but many companies are adopting a posture that is aimed at creating more paths for Caribbean women to grow their careers within the region.

To get a sense of where we are today, it is necessary to pull the curtains back to understand the environment that contributed to the current realities in Jamaica. We will begin with the first wave feminist movement. Jamaica embraced the first wave feminist agenda around the late nineteenth century. This was at a time when Britain's influence on geopolitics was waning and the United States was establishing itself as the replacement. Taking stock of what was happening within the borders of its neighbor and with Britain's declining interest in many of her colonies, middle-class citizens, recognizing the new realities, broadened their strategy to form alliances with the elite class (land owners and merchants) and the working-class members of the society (Rosenberg, 2010).

What must be understood is that the overlapping issues of the time created a new discourse about the role to women to the political, social and economic goals of that period. Feminism was viewed as an opportunity to strengthen nationalism and in its earliest push, the support for more women to play an active role in public life was being championed by many influential men who held the view that middle-class women could be a catalyst to move the country forward. Thomas McDermot, editor of the Jamaica Times, captured the sentiment at that time when he wrote "train the women of a country into ideals of nobility and usefulness and you add immensely to that country's real civilization and prosperity" (Jamaica Times, 1909, p.10). This sentiment was shared by

Robert Love who promoted the view that “the best means of raising a people is by striving to uplift the women of that race (Rosenberg, 2010).

Today, we are witnessing similar conversations relating to removing barriers that may infringe on the rights of women across the globe. Mainstream and social media have amplified the voices of women who have found novel ways to bring their concerns to the global stage. The growing political force of women in the Western hemisphere has not only resulted in bringing their concerns to the fore but has garnered support from a wide network of individuals and businesses. Ideologies that framed how companies operated are being challenged in ways that promote egalitarian principles. Diversity and inclusion have become the bedrock for many companies seeking to maximize their value in a hyper competitive environment (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). For some corporations, advancing female talent can serve as a competitive advantage, as it demonstrates to a wider audience that they not only understand the issues but are willing to act to combat stereotypes. Businesses are also cognizant of the need to advance the interests of women of color in arenas where they are near absent.

But even as the conversations deepen in respect of the current mood where women’s rights are concerned, certainly in Western countries, there are assumptions held by some in leadership roles about the capabilities of women in international careers, particularly at the top levels of the organizations. Earlier research has focused on a plethora of reasons underpinning the presence of marginalized women in international assignments (Adler 1984a, 1984b). Researchers have also explored the perceived lack of interest shown by women to international careers, usually associated with obligations to their families (Fischlamayr & Kollinger, 2010; Tharenou, 1999). Still others have

focused attention on the lack of support from decision makers within the organizations to sponsor women for international assignments (Linehan et al. 2001; Selmer & Leung, 2003a).

In recent studies, there has been a move to examine the impact of national constructs of male and female interactions within public and private spaces and the cultural underpinnings that manage such relationships (Hutchings et al., 2010; Hutchings & Michailova, 2014; Shortland, 2009). The interest in women as underutilized talent to assume expatriate roles of influence is gaining momentum. The literature points to key shifts in the way businesses engage with their environment that has led to re-evaluating the types of talent that are necessary for growth. One reason given for this is the need for companies to attract and retain the best talent ahead of their competitors. In the global labor market, women account for roughly half of the world's manpower (Women at Work Trends, 2016). It important to note that though women are entering the labor market in greater numbers, their presence in roles that attract significant growth opportunities is low.

A 2010 report from the United Nations provided context in relation to women's participation in the labor market from a global viewpoint. Between the period 1990 to 2010, women's participation remained almost steady at around 52 percent. The data however showed a different picture for men, covering the same period. Labor market participation by men declined to 77 percent shifting from 81 percent. Broken out further, the United Nations report revealed interesting statistics from regions across the world. Women's labor market participation in Northern Africa and Southeast Asia hovered below 30 percent. The Caribbean and Central America combined showed less than 50

percent active engagement in the labor market (UN, 2010), suggesting there are still roadblocks to reaching envisioned equality goals.

Though it is widely acknowledged that women are entering the labor market in unprecedented numbers, at least from a Western perspective, what is developing as a pattern is the type and quality of jobs being accessed. Service sector jobs are growth domains that attract a significant number of women in both developed and developing countries, more specifically those that have seen a decline in the agricultural industry (UN, 2010).

Placed in context, women have made significant gains as they push through barriers, psychologically and structurally, but their numbers still fall flat in relation to the aggregate of reported statistics on employment. Evidence of this can be found in the small percentage of women who occupy decision-making roles in any senior and influential capacity. Put another way, the absence of women at elite tiers of the organization may limit access to solutions that are critical to managing a workforce comprised of both males and females. Large corporations in the West, particularly those designated Fortune 500 companies, are male dominated. The presence of women at the helm of large multinational corporations remain small because it would appear as though biased attitudes to the female sex still exists. The current situation holds serious implications for women of color who have an interest in progressing their careers internationally because representatives at the elite levels are white women. This study invites us to examine the experiences of the professional class to get a sense of the challenges and opportunities that exist. These women in their home countries are examples of successful executives have successfully navigated the metaphorical barrier

(the glass border). Insight into their world is critical to create a roadmap for others who hold similar aspirations.

The Glass Ceiling meets Glass Border Phenomenon

The glass ceiling some years ago, presented challenges to women who were determined to grow their careers beyond the administrative roles that appeared to define them. As I mined the literature, the expression “glass border” emerged and seemed to address the paucity of females found in influential positions. This concept, “glass border” conjures up the debate about the ‘glass ceiling’ and its impact on the recruitment and retention of qualified candidates.

Triggered by the quote “The option of limiting international management to one gender is an arm-chair ‘luxury’ that no company can afford” (Adler, 1993b. p.55), the researcher seeks to uncover how the elite class of Jamaican executive women interpret their experiences within complex structures that appear to reproduce inequality. With corporate entities pursuing expansion plans, the need for talented and diverse employees is an ongoing event. Corporations are competing to arm their companies with the new face of talent, and it is assumed that the pool from which such candidates emerge is shrinking.

The future of work is therefore in a state of constant flux and becomes the catalyst for this research. The rationale behind this effort is framed by two observations. The first is there is an abundance of literature on the careers of expatriate women in developed countries like the United States. There appears to be a gap in the literature insofar as the limitations that exist for women who desire mobility opportunities for their career development. The second seeks understand the shifts in international business priorities,

particularly as many companies see it as financially beneficial to expand across geographical boundaries. If there is expansion, then there is the need to illuminate the concerns of groups that appear to be marginalized with the hope of distilling the conversations, prioritizing the areas of importance and producing solutions.

Women across the globe have made impressive strides in business at the international level. Today, top female personalities like Mary Barra (Chairman and CEO of General Motors), Indra Nooyi (Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo) and Sheryl Sandberg (Chief Operating Officer, Facebook) give a credible illustration of what is possible.

The Caribbean boasts notable names as well. Their images and names are quite visible partly because of the unique positions they hold as well as belonging to the elite group of norm breakers in the local and international business community. The group includes women like Anya Schnoor (Executive Vice President, Scotia Bank,) and Annmarie Campbell (Executive Vice President, Home Depot) who have successfully navigated the glass border. As women grow in stature and assume roles of importance within corporations, it is expected that they will not be viewed as a novelty and will be catalysts to further the agenda for gender equality.

Adler and Izraeli, (1988,1994) reinforce this view in their acknowledgment that women have made great strides in entering the professional and mid-management market. The women identified are quite noticeable because of the high-profile position they occupy. Underpinning their influence may be the fact that they are attached to influential corporations especially those that are technology driven. Technology companies have not just disrupted traditional business models but have triggered to some degree the conversations about advancing the agenda of women as an untapped resource. But even

as significant numbers rise to the forefront of international business, it is debated that the number of women occupying influential roles, remain low. For many, there is the view that the old stereotypes still dominate. The glass ceiling debate has not dissipated but now the conversation has widened to include the glass border and its impact on women who want to pursue international business careers.

Although progress can be mapped by pointing to the work of successful women across the globe, focus remains affixed to understanding why women continue to experience perceived discrimination as they climb the corporate ladder. With less women occupying influential roles at the executive level within the organization, the chance of finding them across borders in multinational companies is more so rare. This research is intended to uncover the challenges faced in an environment we are continuously told is more and more globalized. Companies seeking to set up businesses in other countries outside of their host countries have an opportunity to construct a responsive recruitment agenda, by considering the diverse talent in the workplace.

Adler and Izraeli (1988), sought to look at the expatriate challenges of women but examined the limitation through what they presented as a common threat. The realities of globalization have made it impossible to dismiss the fact that it is necessary to “encourage excellence and maximize the human potential in the workforce.” By advancing this narrative, Adler and Izraeli (1988), are challenging the perspectives that would seek to ground leadership and women in the gender discourse. Significant work has been put into widening the discourse about women in leadership, but it has not produced the monumental shift in international business which would signal an acceptance of the value of expatriate women to global entities.

Global Mobility Trends

The term expatriate in today's context is used to describe persons who have, either by their own volition taken up employment in other countries or have been provided an opportunity through company sponsorship, have left their native land to assume roles elsewhere (McNulty, 2013; Tharenou, 2013). This research will explore company sponsored expatriates but will examine the experiences of others who have not taken that path. The literature reveals that other forms of expatriate opportunities are emerging away from long term engagements in other countries. Though there are many contributing factors leading to the reduction, one push factor is the host country's need to manage the number of expatriates without comprising the job opportunities for locals. Highly skilled expatriates are typically expected to transfer knowledge and once this is completed, a suitably qualified local candidate will assume the role. For others, the arrangement may be short term to monitor and resolve crises; to implement new technologies and drive initiatives that are company specific and frequent flyer assignments (Hutchings et al., 2012). The design of the expatriate program is influenced by the nature and scope of the work being undertaken, especially as MNCs re-engineer their businesses based on the quickly changing landscape of international business.

Equality between the sexes continues to dominate discourse, especially in sectors that see an overwhelming number of women progressing to middle management positions. Wirth (2001) makes the pointed observation that one result of gender discrimination is to pigeon-hole women in occupations that prevent them from developing the skills that are necessary for more strategic positions within organizations. My interest in the topic of expatriate women is triggered in part by the assumptions that

the Jamaican woman's progress is stalled due to unchecked biases about their role in business. Though lauded in one sphere (having progressed academically and career-wise), there is an uncomfortable pause in the discussion about their potential to occupy spaces dominated by males. If it is that a wide cross-section of scholars and practitioners alike, justify the benefits of inclusion at the decision-making table, why then is there still the perception that there is resistance to promoting women for senior decision-making posts in international assignments?

Research by Adler (1984a, 1984b) debunked myths that perpetuated biases about women. One such myth was the thinking that women would not be accepted in international roles due to foreigner prejudice in host countries. Her finding was that women were not particularly discriminated against because of their gender. Instead they were viewed as a foreigner. Gender was not a concern because foreign women were distinct from local women (Adler, 1984a). This observation was noted by other researchers (Stroh et al., 2000a & Tung, 2004).

A different perspective is offered via the work of Caligiuri and Tung's (1999) research. They noted that where women found it difficult to adjust—culturally—they were less likely to have a positive experience. This in turn would impact on the willingness of other talented women to assume roles in the host country. Cultural acclimatization is regarded as a potent factor and the experiences of women from diverse cultural backgrounds will be interpreted in different ways. Hutchings and Michailova (2016) offer the view that there may not be overt discrimination, there were cultural norms that women from other cultures would be expected to follow. The literature accounts for the lack luster response to opportunities presented in some countries. For

example, women who determined that they would experience prejudice, contextualized their response based on what they heard or read in the media.

International assignments are more of the norm than years before. It is not uncommon to see corporations from first world countries establishing a presence in territories that are defined as developing countries. Developing countries have also found fertile ground in developed countries with Brands like the Grace Kennedy Group of Companies, Jamaica National and Victoria Mutual Building Society leading the efforts. For some corporations, particularly those in the hospitality industry, the appeal of Caribbean countries seems to rest in the idyllic representation of leisure. International hotel chains like the Marriot, Hilton Worldwide among others, have seized opportunities to grow their brands in spaces that offer handsome returns for their investors. Although prospects remain high for international business expansion in Jamaica, there is the view that women remain at a disadvantage when seeking to grow their skills internationally. Though the literature is expanding to account for the various ways MNCs engage talent, the two forms of that dominate the field are employees who strike out on their own or those who are sponsored by the company.

Self-initiated Expatriates (SIE)

The label self-initiated expatriates began to take form from the work of Inkson et. al (1997), where the discourse was shaped around the differences between professional corporate employees who benefited from company sponsored expatriate assignments and young New Zealand natives who left their countries to participate in what became known as “overseas experience.” SIEs are driven to work abroad for many different reasons. Inkson et. al. (1997) found that among the actors pursuing this employment option, one

driver was a keenness for adventure as discovered in their research on New Zealand natives. SIEs appear to be attracted to potential financial gains to be had by working overseas. Richardson and Mallon (2005) and Richardson and McKenna (2006) discovered that there were other benefits derived from the exposure and they include access to new cultural spaces, improved self-confidence as well as developing new skills and competencies.

The research conducted by Richardson and McKenna (2006) on a group of British academics, revealed that the decision to pursue self-initiated expatriate assignments could be categorized in the following groups: an attraction for adventure and the opportunity to explore from a cultural point of view, a need to escape (personal or professional challenges), improving their financial status and strategically positioning for career advancement opportunities. This may form part of the motivation for women to pursue international careers. Of interest, the researchers revealed that SIEs who were experiencing life altering changes were more likely to seize on opportunities to take on international assignments. The literature suggests that motivation to move overseas is also driven by familial support. In circumstances where family supported the decision, SIEs were comfortable with the fact that they would always be able to return to their country of origin (Richardson & McKenna, 2006).

The downsides to such pursuits were also critical to understanding the SIEs experiences. Richardson and Zizic (2007) found that there were increased risks to this type of migration. In an age where there are increasing incidents of human trafficking, individuals who are pursuing this kind of experience must exercise caution.

Company Sponsored Expatriates

As companies expand their presence across geographical spaces, the need exists to ensure that the vision and mission of the company remain intact. High demand for products, services and the commoditization of knowledge have changed how multinational companies grow their businesses. Black (1988) explains that expatriate employees are “used to implementing the internationalization” of the multinational companies’ interest “in foreign subsidiaries with success.” Their success is possible because they export the standards of the principal organization to the locations where they have a presence.

Company sponsored expatriates are typically seasoned executives who have proven technical competencies and demonstrate in many instances the capacity to manage complex organizational issues with success. It is recognized however that those who are sent on international assignments are males and though over the past decade, there has been an increase in the number of women on international assignments, they represent less than 10% of total number of expatriates. Nancy Adler’s seminal work on women expatriates in the 1980’s aids in appreciating the interest in women as talent for multinational assignments. From her early research, Adler (1984a) revealed that expatriate women accounted for just about 3% of the expatriate workforce. Her research illuminated several myths that were held by business practitioners at that time about the benefits to be derived by assigning women to international roles.

Emerging Mobility Trends

In a dynamic environment, MNCs are conscious of the huge financial cost that is incurred when they relocate employees for business. The literature reveals that new

arrangements are emerging to stem the financial impact of placing people overseas. Many employees move location to location for short periods of time, especially where they are most needed. Such employees are labeled International Business Travelers because they are routinely out of their home countries but not for significantly lengthy periods and can work in any location and cultures (Harvey et al., 2010). This new development is an attractive prospect for international companies because of the cost-savings and the flexibility of employees against the costs associated with long-term expatriates. There are risks associated with this kind of travel on the individual. Long distance travel for business induces stress and other travel-related concerns which may adversely affect the employee's ability to perform at their optimum (Westman, 2014).

Other concerns emerge for the employee's safety. Companies have opted to use international business travelers instead of expatriate employees in regions that experience sporadic and heightened conflicts. Employee safety in these cases are prioritized.

The literature explores another form of employee mobility by looking at international commuters, but studies on this category of mobile worker are few (ECA International, 2012; EY, 2016). The worker in this type of arrangement, lives in one country but works consistently in another (Scullion & Brewster, 2001). The international commuter is perceived to be a cheaper option than expatriation because the cost of relocating is considerably less, especially if the individual is relocating with their family.

Short-term assignees offer another option away from expatriation to MNCs. These are employees who are temporarily assigned to another location for up to one year (Collings et al., 2007). Short-term assignees are typically away from home for extended periods and distance usually prevents them from traveling home frequently.

In summary, the literature has provided evidence that international mobility for business is not slowing. What it has shown is the creative ways that are employed by companies to expand their talent pool and retain their best workers. The new arrangements identified above offer immense opportunities to companies that are keen on progressing their gender equality agenda. Talented women can be groomed for executive or C-suite careers by immersing them in any of the afore-mentioned categories. Such decisions can only strengthen the quality of the team that will be hired to lead the MNC in the future.

Cultural Biases and Social Stereotypes: Inhibitors to Gender Equality

The current study is an opportunity to contribute to the discourse by focusing on the stories of Jamaican women. Capturing their thoughts, feelings and general attitudes about the experience is a way to gather data about inputs for success and perceived enablers of failure. The goal is to distil the content to arrive at a better understanding of how the experiences are interpreted. It has been debated in the public domain that there are strong cultural attitudes that incapacitate Jamaican women on their climb to the top. This is against the background of a study done by the ILO that seems to position the idea that Jamaican women are doing well because they are more likely to be managers across diverse enterprises (ILO, 2015). In addition, the career interests of women may look remarkably different to women who are married than to those who are single.

The study seeks to unpack from the bird's eye view of the women being interviewed, the manifestations of change. Though multinational companies recognize the need to promote competent female executives, more so in an environment that seeks to

advance the interests of women, the worrying challenge today appears to be how *woman* and *womanhood* is perceived outside the domestic sphere.

Focus on the expatriate female is an attempt at expanding the feminist inquiry in spaces that have now moved beyond simply the glass ceiling. Loutfi (2001) reminds us that though significant steps have been made toward achieving gender equality or parity, there is need to move the discourse to remedial activities that will instigate transformation. Loufti (2001) holds the view that the term gender ought not to be linked to the socially convenient label of female or “used as a euphemism for sex.” The idea being advanced is to view gender equality as “different but equal” in its value to the society.

The literature covers, quite generously, the experiences of expatriate women from developed countries. There is however an absence of the voice of women from developing societies like Jamaica and it this observation that makes it necessary to access the narratives of successful female expatriates. One may ask why the focus on women as opposed to both genders and their experiences. The response is simple. It is the researcher’s observation that across the landscape of leadership in the workplace, the literature appears to favor men for expatriate roles. Work produced by Adler (1984), Smith and Still (1986), Sinangil and Ones, (2003) provide an appreciation of the challenges faced by women in navigating the space that has traditionally been reserved for males. Even as women enter traditional male spaces, their numbers at the center of decision-making in organizations with Multi-national presence appear to be insignificant when mapped to the presence of men in similar sectors. Adler (1984c), as well as Paik and Vance, (2002) suggest that the participation rate of women in international

assignments fall behind the participation of men. Researchers have observed that women are frequently not included in the talent pool for international assignments (Adler, 1984b; DeCieri, Dowling and Taylor, 1991; Selmer & Leung, 2002, 2003c). Such observations feed into the narrative about the lesser value of women in the organizational space. Strong traditional views about the expected role of women inform the responses that usually become barriers to women's visibility as best fit for international roles.

The internationalization of businesses has fueled the discussion on diversity, inclusion and equality. Studies before that have focused on gender issues in international management, mainly from the North America perspective, have demonstrated that the preferred candidate for expatriate assignments are consistently male. This continues, although evidence suggests that diminishing the role of women, deprives companies of talent that could create sustainable growth and by extension countries of real economic growth (UN Women, 2011). At its launch, over one hundred CEOs embraced the initiative by committing to advance the principles in their organizations. The principles crafted by the advocates for equality is relevant to the discussion about advancing women beyond national borders. Key to any company's survival is access to a pipeline of qualified talent irrespective of their race, ethnicity and other forms of socially constructed differentiators. In many countries, women make up close to 50% of the population, yet their presence appears to be restricted at the highest level of organizational governance. This is reflected as well in the number of expatriate female executives or c-suite leaders in multinational entities.

Harris (2002) presents the case that work is structured around business models that reinforce patriarchy. Internationalization of work demands a mindset that is global to

respond to the emerging threats. The interventions according to Harris (2002) can be along the lines of maintaining “either a purely ethnocentric or completely devolved polycentric approach”, both of which appear to still be short of delivering a “transnational” mindset.

The focus therefore shifts to understanding the perceived marginalization of women when it comes to working across borders. Schwartz (1989) makes the point that management has always been associated with masculinity. Such views appear to challenge the career aspirations of women across geographical zones. The perception that the glass ceiling remains an impenetrable structure may impact the likelihood of women progressing beyond the glass border, which raises a lot more questions about the full use of available talent to grow organizations.

The research aims to strengthen the literature on women in international business who are atypical to what has been accepted as a standard. The research skirts the issue of migration because the population being examined appear to experience greater scrutiny on account of their nationality. Greater scrutiny is applied to people of color which makes their experiences in the business world quite different to other groups. In order to support the entry of minorities into homogenous spaces, it becomes necessary to create strategic networks that will help both groups to develop healthy attitudes to diversity and inclusion efforts. That process requires sustainable efforts to generate anticipated results (U.S Newswire, 2009).

A global report commissioned by the International Labor Office (ILO) in 2015, pointed to the fact that women were making use of educational opportunities now at their disposal, much more so than men. In Jamaica, there is a high proportion of women

managers from a global perspective. In a study, “Women in Business and Management, Gaining Momentum”, it was revealed that Jamaican women accounted for 59.3%, putting them ahead of developed countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. According to Deborah France-Massin, Director of the ILOs Bureau of Employers’ activities, the report signals that an increasing number of women are participating in the labor market around the world. With the number of women entering the formal work space, there is the perspective that this does not translate to an increase in the number of women who occupy positions of leadership in recognized companies that are local and multi-national, even as women turn to academic pursuits as a means of raising their professional profile. For some women, the question of how to grow their careers remains elusive.

As international businesses build their presence in new locations, competition for talent has increased. Mckinsey & Company, a management consulting firm, promoted the phrase “War for Talent” which was an effort to bring to the fore the threats that would affect the success of organizations, as companies expanded. The year-long study mined data from 77 companies across diverse industries. The research had approximately 6000 participants who held managerial and executive positions. Targeted as well was data from companies regarded as being best in class in their talent management approaches (Beechler & Woodward, 2009). The idea of there being a war for talent raises significant questions about the perceived underutilization of females in spaces that are determined to be underserved by individuals with specific skills and competencies.

At this point of the review, it is critical to point out that aside from the physical barriers to black women’s progress to elite roles, tensions are likely to emerge as a result

of “soft barriers”. Johan Galtung, regarded by many as a pioneer in peace studies, theorized that direct violence, such as punching someone in the face is but one manifestation of violence. Two other forms exist, which are equally destructive but operate below the surface and may not be easily identified. Structural and cultural violence (the other two) are indirect forms of violence. For example, dancehall, a genre of Jamaica’s musical history, weave social commentaries about violence, social injustice and other ills in the society. Dancehall is also known to cover risqué topics that reinforce sex role stereotypes. This musical genre has been of interest to Jamaican scholars, like Carolyn Cooper and Donna Hope, who have sought to understand the evolution of dancehall music in the Jamaican context. Dancehall is about clashes, built on the idea of confrontation. The music is therefore a means of exposing the conflicts within “patriarchal gender ideology and the treacherous morality of fundamentalist Jamaican society” (Cooper, 2006). Within the Jamaican environment women are exposed to forces that act as inhibitors to their success. The women who succeed are likely to have developed coping skills that respond well to incidents of prejudice, where such skills are transferrable in spaces that differ from their land of origin.

One can appreciate Galtung’s expanded definition of violence where he accounts for other forces apart from physical altercation (Galtung, 1969). These forces, structural and cultural are valuable to interrogating the way women are treated in spaces that are created for maintain male dominance. The concern for feminists is therefore with the structures that maintain unequal power which in turn affects the potential of the woman to contribute fully to the organizations and by extension, society’s goals.

Women from Developing Countries

The focus on Jamaican women is triggered in part by the prevalence of various multinational entities on the island. Curiosity about the utilization of female talent in spaces where it truly mattered, in the boardroom and in elite roles, led to an exploration of the profile of companies (local and international), that were, making bold and deliberate steps to grow female talent in line with their growth agenda. A plethora of research on women in international business revealed a biased slant to the narratives of women from developed countries. Developing states like Jamaica have seen a rise in the number of women who are assuming middle management and senior roles. As a favorable investment site for international companies, highly educated females have progressed beyond their borders to occupy influential roles in MNCs. With many companies expanding their markets, a looming challenge is recruiting critical human resources to move the company forward.

Jamaica, being the third largest island in the English-speaking Caribbean has long enjoyed the presence of influential companies spanning hospitality, business process outsourcing (BPO) to the financial sector. Located close to North American markets, its geographic location is ideally positioned to take advantage of commercial and other forms of trade. Jamaica is a recognizable Brand and across the globe, there is some familiarity with the country due to the influence of visible names like Bob Marley, Blue Mountain Coffee, Red Stripe among other notable brands. The success of such brands in the international arena may partly account for the interest in Jamaica as a preferred Caribbean location to create new businesses. The other may be its geographic location. The Government of Jamaica has made credible strides in positioning the country as a

favorable option for new types of business through measures that support limiting barriers to international investment. As companies move across borders, especially to countries like Jamaica, they open the door to tapping into the local talent pool of elite professionals to support the growth of their business. International businesses are therefore provided with more resources from which to choose their next generation of leaders.

Turning our attention to the female talent, data points to an uptick in the number of women who are accessing educational opportunities to support their career aspirations. Tertiary level academic institutions on the island have reported that women are outpacing men in securing higher academic qualifications. It has been suggested that as much as 70% of the graduating class at the University of the West Indies, Mona are women (Hamilton, 2001; Figueroa, 2004). As more women advance their educational goals, there is a growing confidence that propels them to seek roles traditionally believed to be the domain of men, not only in domestic companies but as international talent within MNCs. Another important facet to this discussion is the growing visibility of women who have “made it” in disciplines and roles that have long been male only spaces.

It is an appealing thought to many that women are being recognized as groups of untapped knowledge and expertise. Business media and other fora laud the numerous examples of success and audiences across the world are treated to the profile of wonder-women. Women like Sheryl Sandberg, Meg Whitman, Ginni Rometty, to name a few, are the models of successful white women at the helm of major brands. Though impressive, there is a critical need to expose the stories of women who are outside the dominant group because as minorities, their experiences are not the same as women from dominant

and privileged groups. In an invasive social environment enabled by digital media, it is easy to fall prey to the idea that women in general, are achieving equality status. Visible characters like Sheryl Sandberg are a rarity and not the norm, hence the timeliness of this research. By widening the academic lens, this research attempts to dismantle barriers that obscure the value of black women to international business.

The literature reveals a motif that promotes the interests of dominant groups. This research elevates the discussion and illuminates the paradox that appears to exist where in one vein it is suggested that there is a talent shortage (globally) and in another, that are prepared to take on complex organizational roles, if provided the opportunity to do so. It has been demonstrated that women are capable of leading successful organizations (Adler, 1984; Halter, 2015; Welbourne et al., 2007; Zhang & Hou, 2012). The untapped pool of talented females therefore invites further scrutiny to identify what are inhibitors to their career mobility. In a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) environment, companies are forced to re-imagine their business models which includes leveraging the skill sets of women across the various layers of the company, especially in roles that are invested with authority. It is the view of reputable economic sources that we are operating in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where the environment is digitally enabled and highly interconnected (Leopold, et. al., 2016). Diversity in the composition of executive committees and upper tiered management is hailed as being good for business, with research suggesting that companies perform better than those without a diverse mix of talent. Some estimates suggest “as much as 47 per cent premium on average return and equity making the case for a more gender balanced organization” (The Global Gender Gap Report, 2016).

Globalization has placed unimaginable burdens on the recruitment agenda of MNCs leading to a proliferation of literature about the global war for talent, which appears to be in response to the perception that there are insufficient qualified candidates to meet the changing priorities of businesses (Mckinsey Quarterly, 2007). The Global Gender Gap Report (2016) has shown that women who have graduated from tertiary level programs have gained skills and subject knowledge much in line with their male counterparts. The Report points to lagging statistics, where women are under-represented in STEM programs. As companies seek to find talent in an environment that is being driven by technological advances and other such innovations, efforts must be made to build and sustain a pipeline of women who are able to navigate this space. This requires a recalibration of how societies engage and support the productive members who will eventually become part of the labor market (The Global Gender Gap Report, 2016).

This concern has led to a renewed interest in the role of women in international business. Much has been written about the impact of globalization on the interests of Multi-national Companies (MNCs) and their need to be competitive and underpinning the narrative is the issue of diversity and inclusion.

This research is focused on the experiences of professional Jamaican women in multi-national settings who have demonstrated an interest in expatriate opportunities. This topic emerged as an interest after I stumbled across the phenomenon of glass border, introduced to international business literature by Mandelker (1994). The glass-border is defined as the biased assumptions by “home country senior management about women as managers and about their availability, suitability, and preferences for international appointments” (Mandelkar, 1994, p. 16). Mirroring the concept of the glass-ceiling,

which most assert is still evident, the glass-border reference has added another opportunity to explore the various ways in which women perceive their experiences as different to that of their male counterparts in the business world.

Early readings led to the belief there was a paucity of information relating to the Caribbean experience, especially given the fact that the location continues to attract major foreign investment. Limiting my focus to the Jamaican condition provided a unique opportunity to delve deeper into the lived experiences of women who have made significant strides in their educational and professional pursuits, but who may still to experience challenges as they seek to achieve their career goals.

Though much has been written on the topic of women in business, the content centers on the experiences of women from developed regions including the United States, Europe and Asia. A review of the literature from the Caribbean illustrates the potential for research on the migration of qualified females who are sponsored by their companies for roles of real influence. The literature review is intended to accomplish three things. The first is to gain insight into the expatriate world given the literature that exists on international business and women as talent. The second is use the literature as a supportive frame to address the perceptions held by professional Jamaican women in relation to their own experiences, applying available resources that have been produced by local scholars. The third is to apply a theoretical frame which will help to extract meaningful content to construct at best the supportive systems that are necessary to encourage gender equality at the top of the hierarchy as well as across borders.

Expatriate study is gaining attention for the simple reason that globalization has recrafted how business is conducted across the globe. MNCs in progressing their agenda,

have a distinct opportunity to challenge the narrative relating to the paucity of qualified female C-suite leaders and other executives. MNCs can further enhance their global reputation by investing in minorities and women of color, to assume powerful roles across the organization. Doing so will not only signal their support for the diversity and inclusion agenda of the 21st century but will also connect with diverse populations served by their companies. International expansion therefore creates a need for multi-culturally sensitive talent that will progress the interests of the company as well as improve the reputation of the corporations they serve (Cox, 1991). The multicultural organization must be prepared to address constant changes in its environment and to do, a diverse talent pool must be assembled.

The contribution on the topic of expatriate women emerged from Adler (1979) in her paper, *Women as androgynous managers: A conceptualization of the potential for American women in international management*. She recognized that there was a need to raise in the public domain the disproportion by gender in international assignment. With companies doing business overseas, it soon became evident that top talent, especially at the executive level was critical to build and maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly dynamic environment. Adler (1979), recognizing that globalization would present new challenges for companies with plans of expanding outside their home territories, would have to rethink how they viewed the contributions of human capital – both men and women.

In our modern society, the topic of migration is constantly in the news. Migration studies have focused in recent times on the dislocation of citizens usually due to conflict

or economic reasons. The field of study is quite large and with that recognition, it is important to drill down to the area of interest.

Levitt and Jaworsky (2007) in a paper on transnational migration, brought to the fore the complexities associated with modern day transnational migration. They suggested that the way we viewed the world in the past has evolved from “simplistic national comparisons to re-conceptualizing itself as a study of regional interactions” in different spaces. This statement resonates with the focus of the study as globalization has reshaped how nations interact thus placing pressures on companies to develop new responses to their recruitment practices.

There has been a lot of scholarly material on the experiences of expatriates that has been written about over the last decade. Interest has remained steady as companies grapple with identifying talent to boost their competitive advantage. Approaches have therefore changed to facilitate mobilizing talent to support the MNCs agenda. Provoked by new challenges, companies and employees alike seek new prospects that will meet their objectives.

The Glass Ceiling and Border Discussion

It is important to get a sense of the world at the time of Nancy Adler’s writing. Her articles concentrate on the underutilization of women in international business and illuminated the issues confronting women at that time. Adler’s (1979) article was the first to openly seek a response to the absence of women in international assignments. The period within which she wrote was male dominated as captured by a survey of 13,388 expatriates. Of the 686 U.S. and Canadian corporations with interests in other countries, a mere 3% were women.

Adler (1984a, 1984b) identified several myths that would have impacted on the development of women for international assignments. The first was that women did not want to be international managers. The second was companies refuse to send women overseas. The third myth was the prejudice that would be experienced in foreign countries because of complex cultural perspectives about gender.

The study captured the views of male and female M.B.A.s who were graduating from top tiered universities and who would, within a few months be prospects for hire. The 1,219 participants were pulled from McGill University and the University of Western Ontario (Canada), The Tuck School at Dartmouth, University of California and a Midwestern school that wanted to remain off the grid, and two international schools - the American Graduate School of International Management in Arizona and the Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires in France (Adler, 1984). The striking thing about the group was they had no documented international work experience away from exposure to the topic via their MBA program or through travel outside of their countries. The question of why Adler sought to focus on this group that had no experience may have its response in the lead questions of her study. The first sought to establish whether there was a difference between male and females in their interest to pursue international assignments. The results demonstrated that both genders were interested in pursuing international assignments, if only at least once during their career. Participants revealed that they believed they would gain more job satisfaction if they were able to gain access to more foreign assignments. Of the surveyed group, one third revealed they wanted to travel extensively during their career.

When asked to identify reasons that would influence their decision not to accept an assignment, 58.5% saw location as a deal breaker, citing politically unstable environments, extreme poverty, conflict zones and hostile attitudes to expatriates (Adler, 1984); 34.6% would not pursue an assignment if it were considered boring and without challenge. For these participants, they feared that failure overseas would determine how they would be viewed in the company on their return. The cost of failed assignments, in their mind, was the equivalent of being looked over for future roles at the domestic level (Adler, 1984).

Familial ties were considered an important factor in the decision-making process, 33.4% of the respondents noted that where there were inadequate health and educational resources in the host country, they would be inclined to rethink the move. Dual career marriages posed a threat to taking on international assignments. The decision would be compounded even more if there were kids involved or where the trailing spouse would not be able to find suitable employment in the host country.

Assignments would be considered if the compensation package was attractive. Over twenty-two percent of respondents would refuse the assignment if it was perceived that the compensation package did not meet the standard of living, they were accustomed to or envisioned for their family.

Further variables would impact on the decision to accept an international assignment and these would be: the participant was happy with current job profile, not being in favor of positions that allowed for too much travel, the host country's position on women as leaders, indifference to the company's policies, products and services (Adler, 1984, p. 76).

The results of the survey, though not targeting actual expatriates, offered an opportunity to go through the elements that would go into accepting an international position. Adler (1984) was deliberate in labeling the outcomes “myths”. There was no significant difference between the genders in their desire to pursue assignments overseas. However, Adler’s survey uncovered other aspects of expatriate assignments that would shape the debate in international business in the coming years.

The work of Altman and Shortland (2008), charts the progress of the discourse and progress made in expatriate studies. Global business pursuits created the need for savvy personnel who would be able to represent the home company in diverse geographical spaces, especially those with different socio-political, cultural and economic realities. Cross -border business opportunities grew as globalization fueled the interest of developed countries to increase their market share in a more competitive environment. The work of these two scholars seek to locate in the discourse the interest in women as underutilized talent in MNCs. Providing some context, Altman and Shortland (2008) weigh in on the work of Adler (1979) which was a pivotal period for the interest in studies on women leaders in international business. Adler’s examination of the realities then, provoked the question of where women were to be found (p. 407). At the time of writing, the duo observed that a decade had passed since there was any progress made in advancing the work started by Adler. A literature search done by Izraeli, Banai, & Zeira (1980) failed to produce any reference to women and international business (p. 53).

The 21st century ushered in new realities which called for skills and competencies that were beyond what were applicable to the domestic environment. As MNC’s interests grew beyond their shores, the preservation of the organization’s DNA was critical to

expansion plans. The role of women in business, especially how they could contribute to international business growth moved sharply into focus. As a previously untapped resource, globalization would begin to facilitate their rise in the workplace.

The dialogue has not yet abated about the impact of the glass ceiling on the career aspirations of women but even as that conversation takes place, a lot more focus today is on the glass border. Linehan (1999) in her research on senior female international managers, argued that there were obstacles that women had to overcome as they shattered the glass ceiling which were similar in nature to the experiences of women who were seeking to take on new managerial roles in other jurisdictions. The study focused on 50 female managers in Europe who had succeeded in breaking through the glass border. These women occupied influential roles which differed from the participants in Adler's (1987; 1986) early work. The sample of participants is described in Linehan et. al. (1999) as individuals who occupied junior managerial positions supervising on average 5 persons. One determining factor for this sample is the lack of senior women in executive managerial roles during the time of Adler's work. Women have gained access to middle management roles having invested in their professional development. Equal opportunity legislations as well as the much talked about war on talent, has seemingly not seen a significant impact on the number of professional women who have worked in the expatriate domain. Adler and Izraeli (1984; 1988) note that decision-makers may have demonstrated a willingness to have women access influential roles but there are few women who have been gained access to lead positions overseas.

The glass border is reproduced as an extension of the glass ceiling, where women encounter challenges that appear to be due in part to their biological assignment.

Mandelker (1994) sees the glass border as stereotypical assumptions held by home country executive leaders about the capabilities of women as managers in an international capacity. The notion that women cannot lead and manage the affairs of an organization away from home territory continues to be the view held by many today. Such views are reinforced by stereotypes across cultures that view women's roles as distinct from the roles of men. Augsburger (1992, p. 171) makes the point in his book *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures* that male and female behavior is governed by a combination of "environmental, physical, emotional, religious, and political needs that are woven together in the web of life called culture." Culture is therefore a significant part of the narrative about women and informs how gender differences play out in the context of organizations.

Linehan and Walsh (1999) made an interesting discovery from their research which appears to resonate across the literature on women as leaders. The 50 participants made the point that they were cognizant of the glass ceiling due to their experiences but also of note was the view that the glass ceiling and by extension border appeared to move as they made progress along the hierarchy. Schwartz (1989) whilst recognizing there are impediments (structural and manmade) in the way of progress for women, sees the term "glass ceiling as an inadequate or inappropriate metaphor for what has been described by women. Instead, the term "counterproductive layers of influence on women" has been advanced. Culture and the biases that exist within that frame are strong forces that conspire against women.

The research focus on expatriate experiences of Jamaican women, invites scrutiny of their journey within their borders. Countries with an advanced agenda have had a

steady and growing interest over the past decade in progressing women's rights equality campaigns, because it makes great business sense to do so. Fortunately, developing countries have also recognized the value women bring to enterprise development and management. Governments, supported by international agencies like the UN, the ILO and other stakeholders have taken steps to create policies to support the aspirations of women in their territories. As women continue to make use of educational opportunities and progress along the corporate ladder to occupy senior roles, one can imagine that it will be only a matter of time before they begin request opportunities for international postings.

The senior executive in an organization is usually seen as possessing technical knowledge and skills that are valuable to the organization. Today, there is evidence that there is a growing need to identify quality talent to progress the agenda of MNCs beyond the borders of the home company. But achieving that goal is not as promising as before. One mitigating factor has been the perceived global war for talent, first espoused by Steven Hankin of McKinsey and Company in 1997. In the beginning this description was aimed at finding the best talent to address perceived shortages in STEM related industries. Taken further, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001) argue that the war on talent seems to be particularly focused on executive leadership, and will persist as the influence of economic, social and technological forces continue to drive how businesses compete.

The battle for talent becomes increasingly evident as MNCs pursue new opportunities but even as women show an interest in their academic and professional growth, the literature suggests that international assignments are not readily available to them. The literature about women in international business, serves to remind readers that

the reality of stereotyping based on gender appears to be alive even where policies to address discrimination are present (Burke, 2005).

Altman and Shortland (2008) in seeking to capture the evolving state of research on women in international business, positioned the argument that data they have looked at can be placed into two categories. The first is described as the formative years and covers the period 1980-1994. The second period picks up from 1995 to current period. The first period was aimed at defining and shaping the research agenda around women in international management. The focus from 1995 until today is captured as the growth years - fueled by the increase in the number of women who have moved out of marginal spaces into areas that have not traditionally been occupied by females. The ILO's global report, produced in 2015 makes the claim that though the glass ceiling is showing fractures, women are still not able to break through, even though there is evidence that many more women than in previous years have progressed to managerial roles and have become entrepreneurs, there is still less than 5% governing corporations at home and by extension outside their national borders. Gender complementarities are acknowledged as being good for business, yet the reality does not fit the rhetoric.

Women, having had success at the academic level and who have progressed their careers to middle management roles, continue to have trouble in accessing opportunities for serious decision-making roles. Current literature points to insufficient experience of ambitious women, in general management across different functions within the organization. The lack of exposure scores some blame in the inability of women to progress beyond the glass ceiling. Another phenomenon, described in the report is the glass wall, which identifies gendered managerial roles within occupations. A striking

result of the survey highlighted that 100% of the women polled were aligned to management functions which included human resources and public relations. The incidence of women in management functions like operations and R&D were noticeably less than the functions identified above. The career trajectory of most women it would seem become stymied when they become stuck in functions that do not provide opportunities to understand the organization. Within the complex narrative about women and international assignments is a larger issue of emerges which is to engage influencers to action the strategies that will produce the results they anticipate. That however remains the subject of future studies.

Though the glass ceiling remains a sore issue, the evidence suggests that women are outpacing men as they gain richer educational experiences and have been steadily gaining advantage in managerial occupations, though at the mid-tier and some senior level management functions. The reality appears to be that the glass wall phenomenon, borne out of the stereotypical images that are reinforced by the occupations held by women impacts the upward mobility prospects for women.

Although the ILO report acknowledged that there was a rise in the number of women in managerial spaces today, there was a disproportionate number found at the C-suite level and this extends to international roles. It is not difficult to understand why there would be less women occupying senior level expatriate roles. The survey shows an absence of women at the “high level economic decision-making” platform across different organizations, which triggers the question of why that is so.

Altman and Shortland’s (2008) review of the periods informing the interest in international women study, noted that arising from their exploration over several years,

there were important elements to consider within the defining periods. Focusing on the growth years, they identified a few agency themes that placed into context the events that were helping to shape the discourse. For example, the period 1995-1999 at the individual motivation tier, there was evidence that “women were no less interested than men in international assignments subject to location and constraints” (Lowe et.al, 1999). Alder’s (1984b) research made that observation as well.

The agency theme was muted for a time and for the period 1995-1999, the discourse moved to an examination of policies and procedures to identify if they were non-discriminatory. The next layer of interest for the period aimed at dismissing the myth that being female was an issue for women in host countries. Research during this period illustrated that the experiences of expatriate women were not generalizable and that socio-cultural, political and religious ideologies about the role of women in public spaces, shaped the professional journey of women in MNCs. Taylor and Napier (1996a. 1996b) focused on different dimensions of the female expatriate experience and covered industrialized spaces; Japan as well as emerging economies like Turkey came under scrutiny (Taylor and Napier, 1996a. 1996b). Their research uncovered a raft of responses to the expatriate experience, a few of which were accepting cultural differences, interpersonal skills that are appropriate for the setting, gaining credibility and among other results.

From 2000 onwards, research at the individual level looked at perceived barriers to women assuming international assignments Linehan and Walsh (2000a). Peering through the organizational lens, research interests turned to the examination of inherent biases and the impact on women. Driven by shift in global business needs, attention to

emerging assignments and the types of talent needed internationally drew interest. The focus on the host environment experiences, reinforced the mutual interest of scholars and the business community to identifying what talent would best be suited for international assignments. A change in the focus became evident where women were being engaged to gain competitive advantage in more deliberate ways than preceding years (e.g. Tung, 2004; ILO, 2015).

The age of campaigning (Altman & Shortland, 2008) captured under the category “growth years”, saw energy being put into crafting specific measures by which women would be assessed. The idea was to build transparency into the way individuals were chosen for international assignments. Noting research contributions (Adler, 1984a, 1993b; Tung, 1981) there is still discrimination being faced by women who wish to progress their careers beyond home territories. Harris (1999) made the claim that there is gender-blindness in the literature where women are concerned. This perspective emerged at a time when there was an absence of research on the impact of organizational selection processes that would support the interests of women. Today, the reality insofar as the research agenda about gender and discrimination toward women in the work environment, is quite different. Extensive work has emerged from developed countries giving an elevated platform to the discourse at both the academic and practitioner level. Yet the discourse as well as the reality demonstrates a gender bias which has not been adequately addressed by contemporary literature (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2003; Harris, 1989). The point is made however that the exploration of gender and expatriate studies is advanced by feminist scholars who have woven the issues in recent times into the contemporary agenda on diversity and equal rights. Ashcraft and Mumby (2003) raise for

consideration the view that gender forms an important foundation that intersects with other topics that are relevant to this study. In this instance, women of color from developing states encounter barriers that may be significantly different from the experiences of African-American women.

Navigating stereotypes

Globalization has fueled changes within organizations and has added another layer to the complexities associated with talent management and development. This research interest has uncovered themes that resonate across cultures. With North America, Europe and Asia leading the discourse, there is need to look at developing countries with highly skilled professionals who are employed to MNCs but have had no international experience. The new global work environment presents a distinct opportunity to examine how inequalities are reproduced and equally important to examine how structures and systems further complicate the ambition of career driven women.

For many, women have made great gains in our modern world. This observation is usually pointed to in conversations at various levels within the society. For the uninitiated casual observer, this should satisfy equality concerns. However, there is an entirely complex web of arguments as there are counter arguments about the state of gender relations across different sectors. The ongoing debate has shifted into sharp focus the need to examine the notion of gendered spaces which furthers the debate about the role women ought to play in the society.

At the highest level of governance, Jamaicans elected its first female Prime Minister, The Right Honorable Portia Lucretia Simpson-Miller, much to the jubilation of

many supporters across party lines. Her success was a pivotal point in the nation's history and cemented in the wider Jamaican community that women were assuming their rightful place in spaces that were traditionally the male inherited domain. According to Desmond Allen, in a piece written in the Jamaica Observer, there is a story that emerges about the preparedness of Mrs. Simpson Miller to assume a role that has been held by men of affluence and the revered academic stock – “she was not the manor born”. Nor was she the most educated Jamaican woman (Jamaica Observer, 2014). Balfour goes on to describe the forces that conspired to propel Mrs. Simpson-Miller to the position of Prime Minister. Victory was secured from “the hungry masses, the poor and indigent, the voiceless and the forgotten, the far descendants of the beaten slaves, whose only power was to elect themselves a political savior” (Jamaica Observer, 2014). Cooper (2006) exposes the narrative of two Jamaica's much like what Balfour (2014) covers in his article where the educated are positioned for revered positions. To speak the dialect (patois) positions the individual to lower levels of the socio-economic ladder.

As several writers from the Caribbean have noted, the legacy of slavery has been retained in our institutions and individuals who break barriers still face obstacles steeped in prejudices (Brown-Glaude, 2007; Ford-Smith, 1994; Olsson, 2009). From Balfour's newspaper contribution about the rise of a black woman to the highest level of leadership in government, there is a tension between the perspectives about leadership and who best fits the role. In this example, gender, color and class were in constant play. The masses were ecstatic about the prospect of a female Prime Minister, because it suggested that someone from humble beginnings who was the antithesis to the establishment, could overcome any obstacle. A black female Prime Minister was the embodiment of hope for

the marginalized. This historical context is important to understanding the complex nature of race, color, gender and status, post colonialism. The standard motif for leadership was redefined to an extent, when Mrs. Portia Simpson – Miller took the helm in 2012.

Barritteau (1988) shares a perspective that coincides with the perceptions of today. She notes that the “women’s lives and feminist scholarship and practice have challenged the inherited gender identity “woman” as a barren ontological and epistemological category”. Barritteau (1988), is not lost to the impact of external forces that contributed to women having access to opportunities that in the past were denied to them. The work of advocates (local and international) for women’s rights concerns and the agitation of indigenous members have led to the removal or amendment of legislations that positioned women as inferior to their male counterparts (Barritteau, 1998). For example, in 1975, the Jamaican government introduced The Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women Act). However, whilst hailed as a progressive step, the ideological basis on which many organizations survive remain intact – the law exists- but its effect is not consistent. Women are tied to scripts that project them as child bearers and home makers. Barritteau (1994) offers a definition of gender that illustrates that structures are used to effectively keep men and women locked in a cycle that is driven by the inherited power of men. She notes that gender is a “complex system of personal and social relations through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to, or are allocated status, power and material resources within society (Barritteau, 1994).

A clear picture of the structure and reinforcement of the ideology that gives the male primacy is revealed at the level of the State. Thame and Thakur (2014), ponder the ways in which “men dominate the public and private sphere”, where “masculinity is privileged and hegemonic”. A National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) was developed to support the vision of creating a framework that would progress the equality agenda, consistent with where the world was going. NPGE’s goal was to set guidelines that would favor solutions to address gender disparities within society. In a critique of the National Policy, Thame and Thakur (2014) called into question the State’s role in championing this policy with success, given the systems that help to shape the behavior of both men and women. The issue of women’s rights is overshadowed by patriarchal systems that reinforce how women and men interpret their roles.

Trusted global publications reveal that women are making use of learning and development options to optimize their career prospects. This is true of Jamaican women who have been promoted to middle management roles. Though heralded as a significant step, there is evidence that the concentration of women at the middle management level is not replicated in the C-suite which is not a peculiar observation, given what has been taking place in developed countries. Because of the improvement in data reporting, there are urgent questions about what prevents many qualified women from entering the decision-making space, especially in elite roles. The lack of women at critical positions within the organization would appear to be a valid response to the absence of women in expatriate appointments (Harvard Business Review, 2013).

Thame and Thakur (2014) make the point that the State machinery maintains the status quo of gendered power (p. 12). It is their argument that power is held by a specific

group within the society – middle-class, heterosexual males. Within the argument is the colonial legacy of color and not so much race. Post-colonial organizations retained the patriarchal systems that positioned women in a lesser capacity than men.

There has been ongoing debate in the Jamaican society about women's rising status in education and the labor market, with some suggesting that this has led to the marginalization of the male. For many, this is a dangerous view as it increases perhaps the resistance to policies and programs that aim to reduce biases. Lindsay (2002) notes that male marginalization is a myth, pointing to evidence that shows that women, though participating in the labor market in increasing numbers and progressing educationally, were still locked within norms associated with gender. Her critique was in response to Professor Errol Miller's writings on the marginalization of the black male (Miller, 1986). Even female headed households are not delivered from the interpretations of what it is to be male or female as significant boundaries are in place to remind women of how they ought to act in society.

The literature paints a vivid picture of the struggle to emerge as partners within public spaces that Jamaican women encounter. In her critique of the position that males are marginalized because of the power being consolidated by women, Lindsay (2002) challenges this idea by progressing an analytical frame that questions the enabling environment that reinforces stereotypical behaviors and attitudes in favor of males. Put in other terms, the argument that males are marginalized because women are moving into spaces that threaten to reshape societal norms. Barritteau (2003), in her critique of gender relations from the Caribbean lens, illustrated that analysis of this phenomenon catered to the privileged positions that are held by males at the expense of females. Feminist

scholarship in her view should allow for “creative, analytical tensions...so that we can explore the continuum of gender relations across configurations of race, sexuality, and class” (Barritteau, 2003). In this statement she captures the complexities associated with gender relations and how societal constructs inform inequality regimes. Such regimes are not unique to any one country or cultural group and appears to transcend time and geographic space.

The ILO report, *Women in Business and Management: Gaining Momentum* (2015) suggests there are many more women in decision-making roles compared to 10 years ago. The report highlights the progress made between 2000 and 2012 across 25 countries, where the number of women occupying managerial spaces moved by 5 percent. At the C-suite and executive tiers, the report revealed that 26 percent of the world’s Chief Executive Officers were women. The highest concentration was in Latin America and the Caribbean with a reported 40 percent female chief executive officers and Central and Eastern Europe reporting 45 percent female executive officers. From a global perspective, men occupy influential managerial roles more than women, except for Jamaica, St. Lucia and Columbia (ILO, 2015). The report points to real gains for some countries in promoting gender parity, particularly those that are categorized as developing countries. It would be an interesting undertaking to research what factors enable and support women’s progress in countries that are deemed emerging economies and further, the readiness of black women to assume roles in other countries for which they qualify. The gender equality debate is without doubt a critical inflection point in modern society but raises to collective consciousness the disparities between minority women and representatives of dominant classes. Scholars along with practitioners must unrelentingly

dissect the challenges faced by minorities to advance ideas that will help to resolve the tensions that continue to be a sore point in the career aspirations of talented minorities. To develop a better understanding of the issues concerning black women in international business, three theories may best support further interrogation of the issue. Critical race theory coupled with a brief look at the role of critical human geography and intersectionality, offer such an opportunity. Intersectionality though considered a sub-theme of critical race theory, will be treated as a separate analytical tool in this research.

Theoretical Anchors

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

In today's discourse, particularly in the West, it would appear there is an increase in racial tensions. We are talking a lot more about diversity and inclusion but amidst the conversations, numerous examples emerge that tell a different story. People who accept the notion that they are part of the African diaspora, have experienced micro-aggressive behaviors that have left them feeling frustrated (Delgado et al., 2001). The perceived micro-aggression may become visible in many ways. For example, a woman of color enters a hotel and is paid scant regard but observes a different type of engagement taking place between the guest service agent and the white traveler. One must exercise caution however, as in some interactions, it may not be a matter of stereotyping an individual but can be an issue of an encounter with someone who is rude.

In the age of smart phones and other technological advances, many incidents have been captured that suggest that people of color are treated differently than their white counterparts in the way others engage with them. CRT interrogates relationships in a broader context. It widens the discourse to studying the impact of economics, history,

emotions and the unconscious behaviors that fuel perceived differences (Delgado et al., 2001). CRT has given birth to activists who whilst they have an interest in theorizing about the concerns of people of color, they are also attuned to crafting solutions to improve the lives of marginalized peoples.

CRT had its early beginnings in the 1970s and was an important evolutionary step beyond the civil rights era. Scholars, activists and practicing lawyers became alert to the fact that with the changing dynamics, particularly in the U.S. it was necessary to develop bodies of work that helped to place in context the needs of people of color in environments where subtle forms of racism were being encountered and with frequency. CRT grew to embrace feminist perspectives as it pulled into focus the relationship between power and how roles are organized in patriarchal societies.

To critique the experiences of the black Jamaican woman working in an MNC, one must review how dominant societies racialize minorities across time and geographic spaces. Embedded in the black woman's experience is the legacy of slavery, where her kind were viewed as chattel. According to Delgado (2001), society establishes the standards by which people are valued. Though these standards evolve overtime, people of color remain disenfranchised and point to complex oppressive systems that deny them equal status to those in dominant groups.

As much as there is optimism about people of color and the strides made, that celebration is dampened when stories surface about how blacks are treated. The idea that people dominant groups are tolerant of minority groups and understand the nature of their complaints is challenged by those who share their experiences. In a critique by Bell (1980), he observes that the civil rights movement has been established as an inflection

point for black progress, however, he argues that the movement coincided with changing economic conditions. In this light, Bell (1980) is of the view that the win gained by the movement was more in line with positioning the economic agenda of the white elite class. A similar argument may be made for the current focus on diversity and inclusion in the business environment. That is, the acceptance that change must be advanced because the current economic and political agenda demand transformation. This, if we are to follow Bell's argument, oftentimes has very little to do with progressing equality on moral ideals. To move away from just a discussion on the black/white binary which usually gets the lion's share of attention in minority discourse, this research expands its lens to gender and nationality.

To further critique race and racialized experiences within black communities, it may be insightful to speak a bit about the role of critical human geographers who complement CRT scholarship.

Critical Human Geographers

Critical human geographers study race and ethnicity to capture the idea that racialized processes are linked to the landscape. Scholars in this discipline are of the view that socially valued persons enjoy visibility and those who do not, are usually relegated to the spaces where they are not (Sibley, 1992). We see this in the way communities are organized. Marginalized groups typically occupy spaces where they are less visible; where they do not threaten the status quo. CRT and critical human geography are both concerned with stereotypes that feed into systems designed to reinforce and justify prejudice (Kobayashi and Peake, 2000). The extent to which laws play a role in rendering

minorities invisible, is predicated on the notion of one group's power over another to decide what spaces minorities should occupy (Woods, 2002; Wilson, 2007).

In positioning the black executive female's experiences in the CRT and critical human geography narrative, there is evidence to suggest that they continue to meet barriers because of their otherness. Questions will surface about their suitability for roles because of the fallacies about the competency of minority women. The attempt to control the career aspirations of minorities, especially to the ranks of leadership may be interpreted as an attempt to preserve the status quo.

Intersectionality: In the Cross-hairs

It has been suggested by Zanoni et. al. (2010) that formalized interest about inequality in organizations began to take shape in the 1970's. Researchers then related much of their content to sociological differences that appeared in different groups within the organization. Acker (1990), introduced to the discourse the concept of "gendered organizations" which looked at the structural dimensions that gave rise to inequalities, moving away from the application of sociological theories as analytic frames. Further along in her research Acker (2000, 2006, 2009, 2012) would introduce the concept of "inequality regimes", which moved from gender as a single focal point to illustrate how categories such as class, race, age and social status intersect to perpetuate and maintain discriminatory practices. Drawing on the content rich resource of intersectionality as the lens of inquiry, it is a valuable exercise to discuss its relevance to the inquiry about Jamaican expatriate executive women in the diaspora who work in the international arena.

Intersectionality, employed as a lens to critique the lived experiences of female expatriates, provides a window into the complexities associated with identity thus opening for scrutiny the interaction between dominant and subordinate groups. Against the backdrop of progress, when compared to the challenges of the past, there is tension between and among groups whose experiences differ. In seeking to understand the regimes of inequality, intersectionality makes transparent those systems and structures that maintain inequality. To support the forgoing, Weber (2001) proposes that “systems such as gender, race, class and sexuality are embedded in three societal domains – ideological, political, and economical”. His perspective is grounded in power relations and control, where subordinate identities are held in check by institutions that maintain and reinforce the expected behaviors between and among groups (Weber, 2001).

The birth of intersectionality as a credible frame through which we can understand the experiences of women of color in an environment of power and control is credited to Kimberlé Crenshaw, an African American law professor. Crenshaw (1989) sought to show that inequities are not experienced as one episode, but are for women of color, a matrix of identities that place them in the cross-hairs for acts of injustice. Her critique extended to illuminating how the law and policies reinforced ideologies that made invisible the experiences of others outside the dominant group.

Crenshaw (1989) explains that the way one individual experiences discrimination will be different for another because people encounter multiple forms of exclusion. The privileging of one group’s narrative over another perpetuates the oppressive nature of relationships.

Intersectionality speaks to the reproduction of social hierarchy which is supported by institutions within the public space. The occurrence of discrimination is made possible by legal frameworks that have overtime controlled the lives of those within the structure. The case that led to the revelation of black women's curious position pointed the fact that the legal system defined who were protected groups which therefore rendered other groups invisible (Crenshaw, 1989). In this instance the black female was obstructed from justice because of her color and her gender.

Progressing the utility of intersectionality as an appropriate lens to assess forms of privilege juxtaposed against forms of oppression, Patricia Hill Collins points to the potency of social forces that maintain inequality regimes (Collins, 2000). In accounting for the black woman's experience, Collins exposes the various systems that reinforce discrimination. She advances the argument that positions intersectionality in a larger frame which she identifies as a matrix of domination. Such a system protects the interests of the dominant group because the structures are created and maintained by them. It is therefore apparent that the lives of people of color are inextricably linked to those who are white and the stories that emerge from interactions in that space, will be told through the white experience, which ultimately leads to the invisibility of people of color. bell hooks (1992) notes that "most white people do not have to 'see' black people and they do not need to be ever on guard nor observe black people to be safe, they can live as though black people are invisible and they can imagine that they can be invisible to blacks". This assertion is best understood by examining the interrelated domains of power, which Collins describes as structural, disciplinary, hegemonic and interpersonal (Collins, 2000).

The structural domain organizes power relations and is slow to change because it is built on traditions associated with patriarchy. Though change is slow, evidence shows that it can be disrupted by large societal shifts set in motion by oppressed groups. The disciplinary domain manages and controls behavior. Collins applies the concept of discipline in this framework to illustrate how the structure reinforces behaviors. The near exclusion of black voices from expatriate literature gives credence to the notion that some voices are more important than others.

The hegemonic domain reinforces beliefs. It links all the other domains and is a sustaining force because people hold strongly to their convictions about how things ought to be. Humans reproduce cultures through language and symbols and it in this way that traditions and customs are retained. To exist in the hegemonic domain means accepting the boundaries that have been created by one group to the demise of others.

The interpersonal speaks to relationships. To disrupt this domain, Collins is of the view that change can be effected if the individual begins to assess their response to incidents of bias. The difficulty in doing so is that the oppressed is more likely to recognize the oppression that closely mirrors their experience but reject other forms of oppression because it is unrelatable. As Collins (2000, p. 287) notes, “oppression is filled with such contradictions because these approaches fail to recognize that a matrix of domination contains few pure victims or oppressors”.

There are scholars who take the position that intersectionality as a theory, is constantly evolving and caution should be exercised in its application as a theoretical frame to interrogate marginalized groups (Winker and Degele, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006). It is suggested that intersectionality, has been gaining traction across mainstream

academic disciplines and is suitably positioned to address concerns about marginalized groups, particularly in business (Riza Arifeen & Gatrell, 2013; Zanoni, 2010).

Scholars such as Kathy Ferguson, have noted that there is need to open for scrutiny, the structure of organizations and how the processes, people and other systems interact calling upon the diverse theoretical lens that are available to researchers (Ferguson, 1994). Her objective seems to be to take task the entrenched behaviors of the status quo that denies other voices a place within the organization. Through her investigation, Ferguson (1994) illustrated the impact of race, gender and class on systems and processes that resulted in marginalization. Her work emphasized the need for more “gendering, coloring and classing” of organizational research which would achieve three outcomes. The first is to contest the dominant discourses that limit the production of other theoretical and methodological frames. Secondly, attracting and including the works of diverse scholars and lastly, engaging in work that leads to more academic focus on the organization, (Ferguson, 1994).

Several years later, Holvino (2008) took a similar position to that of Ferguson, (1994). He further strengthened the literature by including ethnicity, sexuality and national origin as bases for inequality in contemporary settings. Intersectionality in this sense finds itself grafted to the experiences of post-colonialism and transnational feminism (Holvino, 2008). In accounting for these categories, there is an acknowledgement that one’s perception of another is designed around ideologies that are socially constructed. This view is supported by several scholars who have positioned the debate about gender as a “modern social institution’, that places women in subordination to men (Lorber, 1994).

In our interrogation of the experiences of the Jamaican executive female, there is space to explore how race, gender, class and national origin help to construct their experiences in international business. Socially constructed categories help to reinforce beliefs about how men and women ought to act in private and in public (Acker, 2006; Giddens, 1984; Risman, 2004; Syed and Murray, 2009). For many women, even though they have made academic and professional progress, it is felt that they must work harder than their male counterparts to be taken seriously especially in the business. The perceived hurdles are further magnified in the context of navigating the gateway to international work opportunities. The literature exposes that women still face barriers to accessing roles at the higher tiers within corporations as well as opportunities for international assignments. For women in developing countries, education may have afforded some measure of privilege in that they are able to move away from low income jobs to opportunities that afford greater financial independence. However, whilst success is recognized, by the number of women who are entering middle management roles, the consensus is there is a lot more work to be done to achieve gender parity in all tiers of the organizations (Hutchings & Michailova, 2017).

Women in domestic operations appear to face challenges which can be easily be dismissed as a byproduct of their gender assignment. In some instances, there are Jamaican's who believe that race, class and color pose a threat to the status quo which echo the colonial past. Such beliefs seem to run counter to statistics that point to approximately 60 percent of women as managers, in the Jamaican reality (International Labor Organization, 2015). Since this revelation, there has been an attempt to understand what has triggered this momentum. Part of the response may rest with the Government of

Jamaica (GOJ) taking a proactive role in developing policies that promote gender equality. For example, in March of 2011, the GOJ announced an initiative; the National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE). This initiative fell under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Women's Affairs (BWA) and was funded by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The role of outside influence may have had a positive impact, and if this so, international partnerships can be acknowledged as critical to sustaining efforts toward gender equality.

Globally, there are positive signs that women are carving out a larger space in the public domain. They are elected officials, intellectuals in academia, lead actors in major films and leaders in large transnational companies. As visible players, women who have broken the glass-ceiling have demonstrated to others that their aspirations can become reality.

The professional elites working in multinational entities who are from developing countries are invisible actors in international business. A study carried out by the ILO (2015) determined that Jamaica ranked first in the number of women in managerial roles. Hailed as an impressive achievement, the national papers and other media outlets pushed the story, which allowed for comments from the public. There were mixed sentiments shared on various social media platforms, many of which illustrated the deeply held stereotypes about women and management. For example, ricky89ja made the comment:

“No wonder things stay so”.

His statement appears to imply that women have not achieved the kind of success expected, simply because of their gender.

Another contributor with the profile name JacninSerbiqa shared the opinion:

“...this explains the state of the country and the economy ... too much emotions at the top.”

JacninSeriqa, also appears to equate the poor state of the economy with the belief that women are not suitable for leadership roles because they are too emotional.

The Jamaica Observer ran a similar story on January 12, 2015. A difference in the presentation of the content was observed, and interaction with it by the public was varied – touching on the realities of not just organizational life but the arena of politics. The political thread was significant due to the gender of the Prime Minister, the Honorable Portia Simpson – Miller and illustrated mixed perceptions about her success as the first female Leader of the Peoples National Party (political party) and Prime Minister of Jamaica. Examples of the responses can be seen below:

Studies have shown (with few exceptions) that women and girls are discriminated against in education and consequently, employment opportunities. However, good judgment has prevailed in Jamaica and we see that there are more girls than boys in schools, and they ultimately become professionals. As a past student of the University of Technology (formerly CAST), I am proud of that institution’s contributions to academia by embracing and teaching modern technological advances to all genders. We find that the women in our society who avail themselves to the educational opportunities, and acquired the necessary tools, are now entering the male domain – e.g. jurists, medical professionals and CEOs. I applaud these strides, and we should endeavor to sustain and improve on these achievements. – Ken Roderick.

Roderick (2012) elevated the discussion noting the strides that have been made by Jamaican women given the perception they have been discriminated against. Contrarian views to the ILO report were captured in the comments below:

I regret to say it is a recipe for failure.

For example, look at the school system. It is dominated by women leadership and nothing works. The kids show no respect to their teachers, they fight at will, they stab will, their parents come to school and fight the teacher, if their kids are disciplined.

And most regretful, a large percent, of the kids cannot read. Sorry, it is a bad idea.

- openmine

The comment offered by openmine is perhaps provoked by personal experiences or what he has heard and may have informed how he interprets the results of the ILO survey.

An interesting comment was made by timmo@canada which sought to put into context the influence of patriarchy which is perceived to be at every layer of the organization's hierarchy.

Jamaica like all other countries are patriarchal. This means men are in the positions of power. They make rules, dictate, mismanage and get away with it.

The fact that a few women are in managerial positions does not change the Jamaican society to being one of matriarchy. - timmo@canada

The public's perception of females in leadership roles (Jamaican context) factor into the discourse and point to the difficulty in positioning women in leadership roles, even in the face of credible research. There are Jamaican men and women who hold strong views about the type of roles that are suitable for the sexes. Timmo@canada's

(2015) position is supported by some scholars who put forward the view that organizations are led predominantly by males who have used their privileged positions to create and maintain structures that reinforce standards and behaviors about the profile of a leader (Adler, 1984a; Harris, 2002, Halter, 2015; Mandelkar, 1984; Oakley, 2000). There are suggestions that male gender blindness is part of the story mitigating against women's advancement. Halter (2015) makes the point that male gender blindness occurs when leaders in the organization refer to large numbers of women in the organization as a success even though the women do not have decision-making authority. As evidenced in the literature, achieving critical mass in some organizations, does not mean women have gained access to power in the boardroom and other public spaces (Adler, 1984a, 1984b; Adler & Osland, 2016). For the woman who expresses an interest in conquering new spaces, there is the belief that she will be viewed in much the same way as she is in her own country by members of the country. The women who are 'successful' in accessing male spaces of power, are usually seen as atypical. It is believed they assume male attributes, which includes, being assertive working late, being readily available for projects and travel should the business require it, have sacrificed relationships to get to the top and are usually part of a group of like-minded persons. But these attributes can also pose a challenge to women's career aspirations. Eagly and Carli (2007) describe some of these attributes as the double-bind dilemma for women in leadership, because adopting male characteristics of leadership may not yield the anticipated results.

In concluding this chapter, the theoretical application of CRT, critical human geography and intersectionality, point to the challenges that continue to tax human interaction, particularly in efforts that seek to improve race and gender relations. An

interdisciplinary approach to international business is a likely response to many of the challenges encountered. With increased numbers of women agitating for fairness and equality, the ground is shifting. The voices that are championing change are not white voices but minorities who have come to recognize that they have a platform in which to make their message public. The softening of attitudes to women in leadership roles in this century may not necessarily be as a result of society's sudden acknowledgement of their value as equals or some moral awakening, but this marked shift may be tied to economic and political expediency.

The Pursuit of an Inclusive Agenda

The literature suggests there is a lot more work to be done in achieving equality between the sexes. The belief that women are gaining momentum in male dominated entities is but part of the picture, but globally, women continue to experience being locked out of public arenas due to entrenched stereotypes. To break through structural and systemic barriers, women with access to power are being looked to for leadership in the pursuit of an inclusive agenda.

Internationalization will not abate anytime soon and the need for talent will only increase. Data shows that global trade and investment fuel foreign direct investments (UNCTAD, 1996a; UNCTAD, 1996e). These positive flows are possible because organizations trade with other entities, as well as conduct business across national borders. With such activities, there is usually movement of people between countries to protect the interests of the parent company. As with many large multinational brands, protecting their interests means having a team on the ground to set the standards for local subsidiaries. The relationship between host and home countries is dependent on

reciprocity. Apart from the obvious benefits that are associated with internationalization, expatriates facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills that are the bedrock of innovations. One disadvantage that consistently emerges in the literature about expatriation is the loss of talent (brain drain) from developing countries. It is suggested that developing countries will remain at a disadvantage economically if the talent does not repatriate to improve the skills and knowledge gap. However, some countries have treated this challenge as an opportunity to strengthen their national strategy for developing their human resource capacity (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002, 2000). One strategy that can be used to address the perceived skill loss from developing countries is to create a space for expatriates to return as consultants where the appropriate transfer of 21st century skills can be transferred.

The Jamaican government, recognizing the collection of skills that could boost the country's labor market recently turned to developing strategies to tap into the diaspora. To enhance the country's human capital development, the government began drafting a diaspora policy which is intended to capitalize on the expertise of Jamaicans overseas. Such engagement with the diaspora is regarded as a critical partnership to build capacity within the country. On closer review of the draft document, however, it neglects to point to a policy position on the mining of skills from expatriates returning home. The value of the diaspora, many of whom have emigrated is not disputed, but the repatriated employee can be tapped for knowledge and skill transfer, if the appropriate strategies are implemented. The participants believed that not much care was taken to support the repatriation process, and in some instances, the subsidiary in their country of origin was not prepared to absorb them. Weak human resource practices typically accounted for this

dilemma, where in some developing countries there are less developed human resource policies (Punnett, 2012a).

There is an opportunity to construct a more inclusive framework for minorities from developing countries who are tapped for roles in MNCs. It is recognized that today, the discussion about immigration has been politicized and adds a burden to MNCs that wish to attract talent from different jurisdictions. A further challenge can be anticipated where talented women, put off by anti-immigrant rhetoric may begin to dial back on their ambitions for an international career especially if the organization lacks supportive structures. Remedying the lack of women or minorities in executive expatriate roles will require a comprehensive international policy to underpin mobility partnerships, that situates the diversity and inclusive agenda as part of the solutions for economically strong countries (Panizzon et al., 2011).

Eliminating structural and systemic barriers enhance the opportunity for increased partnerships. There is no shortage of evidence that point to the benefits to be derived from a diverse and inclusive workforce. As the diagram below indicates, there are benefits to be derived from a multi-cultural workforce and the positives can be had from a well-engineered recruitment and retention program. This is often led by a company's human resource department but as the world of work evolves, traditional models will have to be revisited as labor market conditions change.

The diagram below captures the positives that are associated with internationally mobile executives. The benefits accounted for in the diagram speak to a system that recognizes the importance of both the host and home territories to the process. There is a fear that developed countries strip critical talent away from developing states, thereby

leaving the latter in an economically disadvantaged position (Lien, 1987a). Whilst a frightening position for countries that struggle to emerge from depressed conditions, scholars have presented viable alternatives to the phenomenon of brain drain.

Two distinct options may be worth examining to respond to the challenge. The first is the return option and the second, the diaspora option. According to Ite (2002), the return option is linked to the repatriation of executives who have completed their assignments. This has worked well in countries such as Singapore where the government has been instrumental in creating the conditions that will successfully re-acculturate their returning citizens.

The diaspora option appears to be a novel approach to addressing brain drain. The campaign is to attract professionals to help with the development goals of the country of origin. Strengthening relationships with members of the diaspora provides access to other socio-professional networks that can support domestic human capital development needs. Within this framework is the opportunity to advance the agenda of black women, through active engagement between the country of origin and the MNC. The figure below underscores the interdependence between developed and developing countries where, if managed well, can result in a win-win outcome for all stakeholders and improve the economic stock of developing countries.

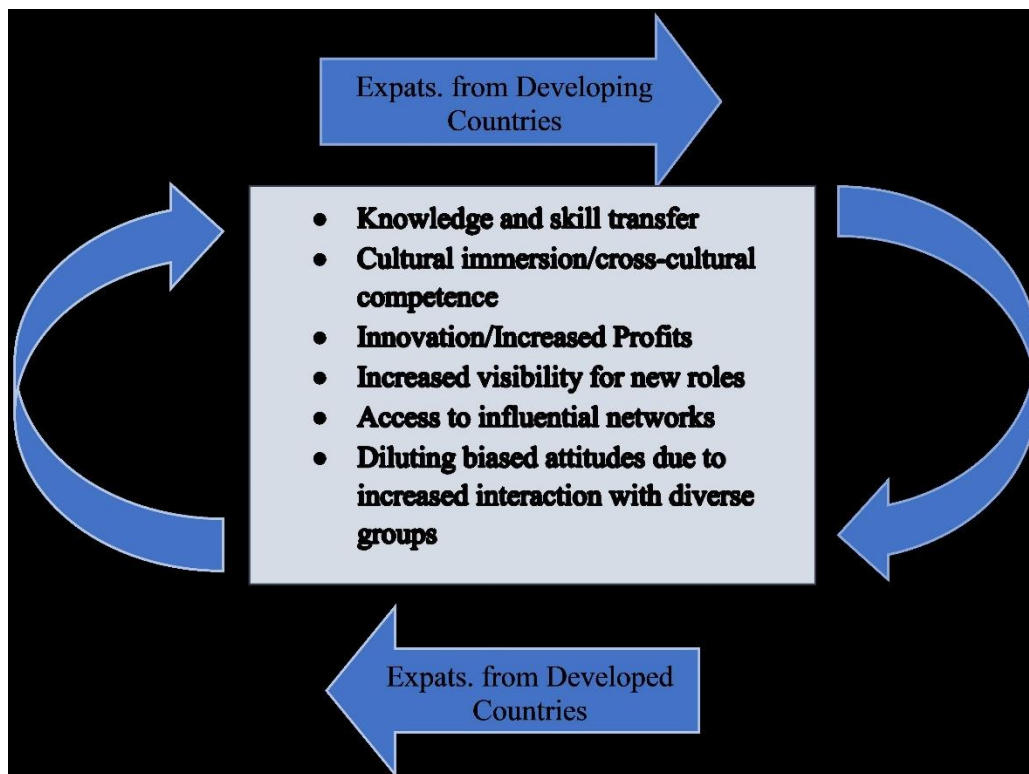


Figure 1. Transnational Model on Interdependence between home and host territories

Summary

Women of color have made progress in areas of business but continue to be disproportionately represented in international business at the executive and c-suite levels when compared to white females. Black women are often overlooked for roles that would help them progress their career aspirations and highly credentialed talent remain invisible in some spaces. The literature suggests that women of color face greater barriers to their upward mobility due to racial and gender bias. The legacies of slavery persist today, where the black woman is deemed inferior by those who occupy powerful roles. Within black societies, where one's color can propel or stymie progress, the black woman is faced with working twice as hard as her light skinned female counterpart to be recognized within some companies. This is also true for black women who work in MNCs that are racially homogenous. For companies to compete effectively in today's new environment,

they must tune in to the changing demographics and align recruitment strategies to mirror the markets they serve. Challenging stereotypes and entrenched ideologies seem to be a massive task however companies have at their fingertips a treasure trove of statistical evidence that can support their diversity and inclusion efforts.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Existential Phenomenology -The Frame of Inquiry

The choice of a phenomenological approach to this study was appropriate given the research agenda. Much of what we know about international work and women, is the culmination of academic work on women who represent a dominant group. This reveals a gap in the literature that positions other women's lived experiences as subordinate. The design of the study pursued objectives relating to accessing the experiences of women within a specific group using a set of criteria established to maximize the results. This section of the paper provides in a detailed way the process that was used.

First, it is important to understand how this methodology supported the research agenda. This will be followed by working through the design and operationalization of the method to achieve the objective of this study. The section will culminate with a discussion on the findings and future implications.

Moustakas (1994) defines phenomenology as an opportunity to access the experiences of participants who have experienced a phenomenon; mining through the descriptions and arriving at the essence and meaning. Phenomenology has four core platforms. They are epoche; reduction; imaginative variation followed by the unearthing of the essence of the experience. Epoche or bracketing, helps the researcher limit the intrusion of bias into the subject being researched (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). To support this process, the researcher suspended judgement by documenting the emotions and attitudes that are raised by the topic. By starting the process this way, the researcher acknowledged personal interest in the area being studied and took steps to rein in the intrusion of bias. In addition, notes were made in the margins of the transcripts during the

interview and review process, which helped the researcher focus on the participants' reflections.

Phenomenological reduction describes the act of immersing oneself in the data. The researcher moved beyond the mere presentation of the data to discovering more about the thing being studied. This stage of the process required that the researcher remain open to the phenomena by interacting with the textural qualities of the data. Phenomenological reduction is a reflective process, requiring focus and a deliberate, almost clinical approach to reviewing the data (Husserl, 1931). Imaginative variation challenges the researcher to uncover the various meanings that could possibly surface from the data.

From the textural themes, the researcher identified structural themes. The researcher utilized intuition to extract structures that were informed by “time, space, materiality, causality and relationship between self and others” (Moutaskas, 1994).

The last stage of the process was to review the data with the objective of unpacking the essence. Here the researcher synthesized the textural and structural description. The data is condensed to a statement that reflects the experiences of the participants. In arriving at the essence of the phenomenon, the researcher would have met what Sartre (1965) described as the “concatenation of appearances”. This means the essence becomes separated from the phenomena. What is important to note is that the essence that is derived from the participants is not exhaustive. The essence represented the events within a given time and place and what the researcher extracts as the essence is the completion of a cycle that involves dedicated interaction with the material –

subjecting the data to scrutiny, synergizing the textural and structural descriptions to locate the essence of the groups' experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

The tradition of phenomenology that lends itself to this study is existential phenomenology. Existential phenomenology is a method used to investigate the lived experience of the subjects being interrogated. Proponents of the tradition, believed that the process of getting to the essence of one's experience required the description of that experience, through the voice of the subject (Heidegger, 1962; Valle & Halling, 1989). Existential phenomenology is considered a blending of existentialism and phenomenology with the objective of engaging in a rigorous exercise of examining human life from the subject's vantage point. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, recognized as architects of this tradition, laid the foundation for a more robust inquiry that would reveal the nature of an individual's experience through active reflection, considering the inextricable link between consciousness and the world (Nowell, 1996). The application of existential phenomenology then becomes an exercise aimed at bringing to consciousness a new way of interpreting the experience.

Existential phenomenology follows a descriptive model that seeks to uncover the meaning of the lived experience of the participants to the research. Proponents of the tradition are of the view that one cannot separate the individual from the social world. The human experience is derived from meanings associated with the act of experiencing an event. The interaction between object and subject helps to inform the meaning of the human experience (Nowell, 1996). There is a common thread amongst advocates of existential phenomenology as a coherent tradition to address the experience between subject and object and the meanings derived from the experience. Schalk (2011) makes

the claim that existential phenomenology facilitates the revelation of rich insights obtained from the lived experiences of the subject.

Unlike phenomenological forms that shift the focus to revealing the essence and whilst that is a byproduct from any serious inquiry into the lived experiences of the subject, the focus of existential phenomenology is on the lived world of the participants' experiences based on the meanings attributed to them (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008). Protecting the integrity of the subjects lived experience is the goal of the methodology and doing so requires that the researcher become immersed in the subject's narrative whilst recognizing and taking appropriate steps to minimize the interference of bias (Chenail, 2011; Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994).

An article produced by Garko (1999) lends clarity to the appropriateness of existential phenomenology to research that examines the lived experiences of women. To appreciate the complexities of being female in a male constructed world, Garko (1999) echoes work done by Stanley and Wise (1993) that suggests that to understand the female voice it is important that "the woman's language, a language of experience" be engaged. Valle and Halling (1989) submit that existential phenomenology is built on how individuals perceive the world through their experiences within given spaces. Women's lived experiences, as captured in their own language disrupts the patriarchal paradigm. Women are thus able to challenge the misconceptions about their lives and to create new meanings that reveal the subject as full beings acting on the object – that is being researched. Existential phenomenology is designed to understand the human condition in all aspects of life.

Existential phenomenology opens the door to understanding the interaction of people in their social spaces. Communication is a product of human interaction and within social spaces, people develop a sense of community – shared reality in a variety of ways. The existential phenomenological method gives rise to the meaning of one's existence from the deep reflection of the individual's subjective experience (Von Eckartsberg, 1998).

In defending the appropriateness of this approach, the researcher is of the view that there has been a virtual absence from the archives of elite female leaders from geographic spaces like Jamaica, whose narratives have not been explored to the extent that it improves the body of literature on gender relations, female discrimination, organizational leadership as well as diversity and inclusion.

Role of the Researcher

Creswell (2014) cautions the researcher against corrupting the data. There are multiple dimensions of this study that are likely to connect with the researcher's own experiences. Appropriate steps were taken to monitor the intrusion of the researcher's experience into the descriptive experiences of the participants. The researcher documented personal reflections to the primary question and has accounted for biases that may emerge during the interaction with the participants.

The research explored the expatriate experiences of Jamaican female executives, including C-suite leaders, who have worked in multinational companies. These roles are typically decision-making positions with the women occupying seats at the executive level. The study sought to place in proper perspective their experiences and the impact of such experiences on their lives. The participants were Jamaican women at varying stages

of their careers, spanning different industries. The theoretical lens to be applied in this study is existential phenomenology. Existential phenomenology is a method used to investigate the lived experience of the subjects – where the subject is given the chance to reflect on and offer through their voice, an account of their experiences.

Research Design

In designing this research agenda, Moustakas' (1994) perspectives on human science research was engaged. Drawing on this resource, the researcher designed the study to support the revelation of the meanings that the participants attributed to their experiences. Ten questions were crafted to guide the interaction. Each participant was viewed as a co-researcher, which helped to communicate the value of their reflections to the process. Where there was need to probe further, follow up questions were introduced during the interview which helped the participant uncover more specifics about the phenomenon.

In keeping with the objectives of the research agenda, there was a need to identify participants who could lend credible insight into the phenomenon. There were two main criteria to satisfy when identifying participants. The participants would have occupied significant decision-making roles at the executive level, and they would have worked across cultures in multinational companies.

The Recruitment Tool

In developing the recruitment tool, the researcher wanted to ensure that it caught the attention of the target audience. Attracting this target audience meant devising a way to communicate quickly the intention of the study. A recurring theme among many prospects appeared to capture how busy they were, given the breadth of their

responsibilities. The recruitment tool was designed to engage the reader at the start and was helpful in providing context. The researcher created a one-page brief, which provided additional information that was not captured in the recruitment tool. It addressed the rationale for the study, the participants profile and the researcher's contact information. The design of the recruitment tool featured the images of recognizable Jamaican female influencers which was visually appealing and helped to communicate the kind of individuals that were needed. The one-page brief offered a bit more information to candidates, including the efforts that would be taken to secure their information.

The brief, alongside an introductory note was sent to the target companies, which included associations with a large corporate presence. Using this approach was a reasonable response to the need to enter larger networks. Other networks were tapped to identify suitable participants for this research, including the researcher's personal network. Once interested persons responded, the researcher progressed to the next stage of inviting interested parties to a short, one on one meeting. The date, time and medium for exchange was mutually agreed upon with email reminders sent by the researcher a minimum of two days prior to the meeting.

The researcher, in seeking to improve clarity, anticipated that it was necessary to build rapport with the participants before seeking their support for the study. Fraelich's (1989) model of pre- engagement was adopted as a means of engaging with interested parties to help them understand the focus of the study and how they could support the agenda. Preliminary interviews were conducted with prospects. Each interview was set for between 15 and 20 minutes. This approach not only helped to clarify the research

agenda but lead to what the researcher described as “breaking the ice”. It was important to have this type of interaction to support buy-in and to set the tone for further interaction. For many of the participants the issue of time was a concern as well as how the information would be used. It was important for them, given their role in many of the organizations they represented, that the data not reveal their identities. There appeared to be some reservations to participating, even though each acknowledged the importance of the research. The general feedback was an inability to commit due to the demands of their job and family obligations. The researcher provided details about how the data would be managed and the mechanisms that would be triggered to keep the data secure.

Participants and Sampling

Jamaican women with managerial and/or executive roles were identified for this study. Included were executives who held C-suite titles. Participants would have at one point in their career held roles in countries that were not their home territory and were involved in a combination of short and long-term work assignments. The researcher interviewed women who were engaged in an expatriate capacity. The pool of possible candidates was considered if they were (1) Jamaican women working in an executive capacity (C-suite leaders included), (2) had a minimum of 3 years’ experience in sectors like banking and financial, hospitality industry, oil and gas industry and/or manufacturing, (3) were in influential roles in the context of the organization, (4) open to being audiotaped in the sessions (5) agreed to the publication of the results in dissertation format. Locating these women, the researcher took steps to ensure that the candidates met the criteria. Snowballing and purposive sampling were integrated into the search method.

Excluded from the research were women who were nationals of other Caribbean territories; women who were naturalized citizens and women with whom the researcher had worked alongside in an executive capacity. Also excluded were individuals who worked less than three years in a multinational company.

To engage the type of women needed for the study the researcher used purposive sampling. The researcher contacted agencies and companies that would be able to facilitate introductions. Contact was made with local institutions which included Human Resource Associations as well as institutions that had a strong emphasis on coaching and developing leaders for different industries. The Jamaica Employers' Federation was engaged to evaluate whether they would be able to support the effort of the researcher. Professors from the University of the West Indies, Mona campus were contacted, particularly those who engaged with students in the Executive MBA program. The Executive MBA program was considered an ideal source for participants as many of the students were mature learners with significant roles in the organizations they represented. It was believed that they would be able to provide access to their network for the kind of participants that were needed for the research.

Other sources for participants were explored, including the personal contact list of the researcher. LinkedIn, a social media site for professionals, was used to identify additional participants. The profile of each prospect was reviewed to reveal their work history and suitability as determined by the researcher's standards. Persons who fit the researcher's profile were contacted with a brief message about the research agenda. An invitation was extended to them to contact the researcher, should they have an interest.

It is not unheard of to limit sample sizes to a minimum when pursuing qualitative studies such as phenomenology with some scholars accounting for 6 to 15 persons being the norm (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Moustakas, 1994). Purposive sampling was employed to select the target population for the study. The ambitious target was 8 participants, which was determined by the researcher to be an appropriate number given the type of study. A total of 8 participants accepted the invitation to be part of the study and all participated. The intent of the study was shared with them, which again framed the context and helped to eliminate concerns that could serve to undermine the results (Sarantakos, 2005). Each participant received an interview package, including the Consent Form, with details about what to expect. The documents were sent electronically to expedite the process. Participants had the opportunity to probe further about how their role would assist with developing a better understanding of the phenomenon. The researcher anticipated that like most studies, there would be some attrition due to the type of study as well as the time-consuming schedule kept by the targeted group. To stave off any potential fall out in achieving the target number, the researcher increased efforts to attract prospects through snowballing.

Interview Preparation and Setting

After the preliminary interview stage, the researcher reviewed the phenomenon to satisfy that there was alignment with chosen methodology (Fraelich, 1989). A review was conducted of the participants who had verbally consented to participate in the research. The review reminded the researcher of the goal of the research, that of seeing through the eyes of the participants to make meaning of their expatriate experiences. Participants were engaged by phone, Skype and Zoom. The use of technology in most instances,

proved to be ideal, as it offered an easier option to expedite the interviews especially given the participants hectic work schedules and their mounting personal commitments.

The interviews were conducted using digital interface (Skype and Zoom) where preparation was not as intensive as it would have been for if the parties met at a physical location. However, due care was taken to preserve the data collection activity just as care would have been taken in a face to face interview. A potential risk with meeting on-line, for example via Skype, is the researcher is unable to know with certainty if the location used by the participant offers privacy. To mitigate against interruptions, the researcher employed two strategies.

The first was to address the protocols to be observed during the pre-interview stage. Here, the researcher underscored the importance of collecting the data in as “sterile” an environment as possible to limit interruptions. Secondly, the consent form clarified how the data collection process would be managed.

Each interview was arranged around the time that was most convenient to the participant. Leading up to the date of the interviews, the researcher sent alerts to remind the participants of the interview. On the day of the interview, an alert was sent an hour ahead of the scheduled meeting.

An opening statement was prepared, by the researcher which was read to each participant at the start of the interview (Fraelich, 1989). The statement thanked the participants for carving time from their schedule to talk about the research and encouraged open and honest reflection about their experiences. Below is the actual statement:

I want to start this interview by thanking you for agreeing to be part of this research agenda. I understand time is of the essence and you have chosen to spend some time to share your experiences in the expatriate context. You are reminded that the information being collected will be used in the manner outlined in the consent form that bears your signature. You are also reminded that you can elect to discontinue this interview at any-time during this call. You will be referred to in the ensuing documents by a pseudonym. Again, thank for partnering on this study.

Interview Administration and Data Collection

The participants were asked to share demographic information which was collected after the reading of the opening statement.

An interview guide was developed to support the process. Broad questions were designed to encourage meaningful discussions. The semi-structured questions made it possible to probe further into the life of the female expatriate. The guide was useful in encouraging open and honest feedback as the participants reflected on their experiences. Patton (2002) advocates for the development of a guide as it helps organize the sequence of questions to improve data collection. The guide began with the research question, What has been your experience as a C-suite Jamaican executive female expatriate in the diaspora, of working in MNCs? This question was deliberately asked to help the participant reflect on telling her story in an authentic voice. By beginning with the research question, the researcher felt it would help to anchor the discussion to the main question. Where there was need to extract more information, the researcher encouraged deeper reflection by asking a variety of questions. A sample of a probing question was “following on that experience, how did that help or hinder your progress?”

The researcher's interaction with the participants was treated as a conversation. The relaxed atmosphere helped to promote trust and a tacit understanding that the research was of value to a larger audience. Their stories provided material from which to examine the phenomenon. Each interview was approximately one hour, and took place using the technology that they were most comfortable using. Skype and Zoom were the two main digital platforms used in this study. In one instance, the interview was conducted by phone. The researcher conducted the interview from her home office, taking the necessary steps to control for privacy. The participants were reminded to find a secure location during the interview for confidentiality reasons and to limit distractions.

An important feature of this study was to make it clear to the participants they had the freedom to discontinue the process. This was clearly articulated in the pre-interview stage and again on the day of the interview. An item on the Consent Form also accounted for this option. Ethical considerations were paramount and involved protecting the identity of those interviewed by using pseudonyms in place of their names and place of work (Creswell, 2014).

Participants understood that by consenting to be part of the research, the interview would be audiotaped and that the recorded data would be transcribed verbatim (Creswell, 2014; Van Manen, 1990). During the interaction, the researcher incorporated techniques that encouraged the participant to be open which helped to minimize unease and build trust. Blanck et al. (1992), suggests incorporating a debriefing session to create an inviting atmosphere that encourages individuals to be active participants and not just subjects under study. This was executed during the interviews with the researcher leading the discussion in a conversation-styled manner. The debriefing session became a critical

feature during the interview sessions because it helped both the researcher and participant understand the phenomenon in greater detail. The researcher would pause at intervals to check in with the participant. Participants were invited to ask questions, if a question was not clear or if they needed additional time to think about the question.

Notes were taken by the researcher during the interview to account for behaviors when participants were reflecting on an experience. Long pauses, intonation and verbal acknowledgement that something was revealed to the participant during the reflexive act, improved the richness of the data. These notes were used during the review of the audiotapes and the transcripts to bolster the researcher's understanding of their lived experiences.

All eight women were interviewed using the interview guidelines that were prepared. Where there was need to follow up with probing questions, the researcher carefully introduced the new question in her bid to help the participants uncover new information. In some instances, by stepping back and allowing the women to freely talk through the experience, the researcher had no need to ask several of the questions on the interview guide, as any follow up question was addressed in during the reflexive process. The researcher noted that in three instances, the participants were awakened to new insights about their experiences and spent a few minutes unpacking what was revealed. Before ending the interview, the researcher checked the guide to verify that all questions were addressed

At the end of the interview, all eight participants received a thank you note sent via email, no less than two hours after the interviews were conducted. It provided details about what would happen next. Participants were invited to review the transcripts, and to

share any concern they felt needed to be addressed. They were provided with the opportunity to amend their statements to improve clarity.

Of the eight participants, two responded that they had confidence in the researcher's transcription of the audiotaped interviews. Six responded they were unable to review the transcripts due to time constraints at the time the request was made.

Bracketing

A challenge that plagues phenomenological research is ensuring that the voice of the researcher is muted in the interaction the participants. To manage for bias, the researcher reflected on the question and documented reactions that emerged from the reflective process. In this way, the researcher was able to erect a metaphorical wall between personal experiences and that of the participants. This practice of bracketing ensured that the participants data remained pure.

Chenail (2011) suggests that the researcher should be "pragmatically curious" to rein in the temptation to have the methodology lead the research alone but to also complement the process by using the questions and goals to guide the outcome. Another important reminder offered by Chenail (2011) was the iterative nature of the qualitative process. The researcher engaged in a constant review of the processes, revising at different stages to become better acquainted with the data. Adopting this approach also protected the integrity of the data from personal bias.

The leading question of the study led to probing questions as the interviews progressed. The researcher felt it was best to design the questions in a semi-structured and open-ended way to remove the kind of constraints that typically follows other

interview methods. Some prepared questions were used and were specifically designed to be icebreakers (Creswell, 2014).

The researcher had explored different ways to enter the world of the participant which would limit the interference of personal experience being captured. Safeguards were adopted, beginning with acknowledging feelings, perspectives and biases that could negatively impact the data collection and by extension the data analysis. The researcher adopted an active process known as reflexivity. Reflexivity is concerned with the researcher being open about her interest and the extent to which biases about the phenomena may impact the study (Primeau, 2003; Ahern, 1999). One recommendation made by Wall, Glen, Mitchinson and Poole (2004) is to use a diary to enhance the bracketing skills and improve the decision-making process as the research unfolds. This method binds the researcher in a conscious manner to what may be best described as a built in “check and balance” solution. The researcher made notes during the interview process about the participants’ disposition when reliving the experiences. During the transcription phase of the study, newly formed impressions about the participants’ experiences were accounted for in the margins of the working document.

The researcher when interacting with the data, consciously engaged in self-monitoring. Self-monitoring involved, re-reading the participants words, pausing at significant meaning units, reverting to the main research question and semi-structured questions to evaluate the relevance of the participants’ responses. By periodically returning to the transcripts, the researcher was able to secure new information that might have been overlooked on previous reviews.

Moustakas (1994) promotes the view that to achieve epoche the researcher must suspend biases, beliefs and pre-conceived ideas. Noting the rationale for bracketing, the researcher decided to use existential methodology as it did not suppress the researcher's natural curiosity but instead helped to create a space for conversation.

Another key strategy to bracketing is it establishes clear boundaries that help the researcher enter the participants world through laser like focus, to cue into opportunities for follow up questions (Ray, 1994). Because the researcher is tuned into the voice of each participant, she is alert to the changes in pitch, tone and other indicators that may suggest there is something more that can be said about the participant's experience. After the interview, the audio-tapes along with notes from the interview (memos) can be cross-referenced to reveal new data that may point to the essence of the participant's experience. It also helps the researcher to manage and monitor the imposition of bias as the research progresses. The probing nature of the conversation supported the agenda of accessing the lived experiences of the participants (Smith & Osbourne, 2003).

Colaizzi (1973) promotes the view that the participant provides a distinct advantage in confirming if the experience is adequately captured. It is worth noting there is disagreement among scholars about the utility of this procedure (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). The point being made is that there may be a difference between the experience and the meanings assigned to the experience by each participant. Though that wrench is tossed into the debate, the natural design to the phenomenological study invites the researcher to adopt a Husserlian position to "get back to the things themselves" through a re-examination of the participants' words (Eagleton, 1983, p. 56; Kruger, 1988, p. 28;

Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). This position was adopted during the research process to protect the integrity of the data and illuminated that which was not visible.

Transcribing the Interviews

The audiotapes were transcribed manually by the researcher. The transcription was reviewed in concert with the audiotapes and where necessary corrections were made. During the transcription phase, the researcher made notes of what appeared to be relevant insight gained from the initial interaction with the data. These documented reactions would be helpful in further review of the transcriptions.

Organization and Analysis of the Data

Creswell (2014) describes the interpretation stage as “peeling back the layers of an onion as well as putting it back”. The aim is to approach the analysis as thoroughly as one can, to get to the information that will give a better understanding of the phenomenon. One cannot disconnect from the fact that the interviewer and participants are central figures to this process. They are inextricably linked, with the researcher being critical to detecting and deciphering meaning from the mountain of data that was gathered.

The interviews were intended to elicit a comprehensive account of the participants experience. The researcher seized opportunities to probe and the semi-structured, open-ended questions best supported the process

The researcher adopted the modified Stevick (1971)– Colaizi (1973) – Keen (1975) method, as advanced by Moustakas (1994), to analyze the data. This method is situated in the phenomenological tradition and was found to be uniquely suited for data analysis because it systematically reveals relevant meaning units from large textural data

which can be further analyzed to illuminate the essence of the experiences being investigated.

The application of the Stevick-Colaizi-Keen method is best described in this way. From the data, significant verbatim statements are extracted from the textual data. These statements help the researcher identify relevance to the research question. Tables are created to document the verbatim statements of the participants and from these tables, the researcher generates written descriptions that bring to the fore the essence of the participants' experiences.

Moustakas (1994) identifies two aspects to organizing the data. Transcription of the data was an important step to the process. Once this was done, the data was organized to allow for the line by line analysis that would be conducted. By horizontalizing the data, the researcher was able to focus on each line to decode the meaning units. Each horizon was examined for relevance to the topic as modeled by Moustakas (1994). Before this process is undertaken, the researcher brackets her experiences to guard against introducing bias to the process.

The process of horizontalization is developed in this way:

- (1) Organizing the data horizontally to check for relevance to the topic.
- (2) From the horizontal statements, the researcher checked for units of meaning and accounted for them by listing them in the margins of the worksheet.
- (3) The units of meanings were then placed into clusters (common categories) known as themes. Redundant statements were removed.
- (4) Clustered themes were used to create the textual descriptions accessed from the participant's experience.

- (5) The textual descriptions helped to inform the structural descriptions and by integrating both, the meaning and essence attributed to the phenomenon were extracted.

Moustakas' (1994) modification of the Stevick- Colaizzi-Keen method of analysis for phenomenological studies proved to be the best choice to unpack the data, thus illuminating the essence of the participants' realities. The transcribed data for each participant was reviewed until no new meaning units emerged.

Each statement was manually checked for relevance to the research question through a thorough examination. Each line that appeared to reveal redundant statements were checked against the research question, where the researcher paused to reflect on what meaning could be had from the line or phrase being examined. Where nothing new was revealed, the researcher then placed a mark in the margin of the working document which rendered the statement of no value to the process. Meaning units that were determined by the researcher to be relevant to the research topic were accounted for by noting the emerging themes in the margins of the working document. The researcher continued to check each statement against the research question to vet the appropriateness of the theme that was emerging. Common themes were arranged into categories which helped to reduce the data to manageable portions. This step was found to be laborious but reinforced the necessity of managing for bias and maintaining the integrity of the data analysis process. Applying a laser focused review of the emerging themes, the researcher decided which categories pointed to the essence of the participants lived experiences. The emerging categories were documented in a new file for further review.

The researcher through every interaction with the data, relived the conversations with the participants. Notes that were made, at specific points during the interviews were retraced to uncover new clues about the participants' interpretation of their experiences. Parse, Coyne and Smith (1985) in describing the researcher's interaction with the data emphasizes that the researcher must "dwell with the subjects' descriptions in quiet contemplation" (p. 5). It is the continuous review of the data that helped to separate the essence of the experience from the audiotapes, transcriptions and notes taken during the interview (Creswell, 2014; Moustakas, 1994).

Data management

Participants were identified using pseudonyms to protect their identities during the reporting stage. Working with such sensitive data (written notes, voice recordings and digital documents), the researcher after using the files, locked them away in a file cabinet reserved for the sole purpose of this research. The researcher was the only one with access to the file cabinet. Files stored on the researcher's personal computer were only accessible using a password known only by the researcher. Nova Southeastern University has a range of protocols that supported the data management process. These guidelines were adopted to further protect the research. One such protocol is to protect the data of all participants for 36 months. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet until the stipulated period. Following this timeframe, all documents relating to the research will be incinerated.

Summary and Limitations of the Study

The data analysis unearthed several themes that helped to situate the experiences of the female executives in what was revealed to be a complex interplay between

personal obligations and their career aspirations. The themes pointed to an insatiable drive to succeed, but more importantly, the eight women saw themselves as catalysts for change in their chosen fields. All eight women were oriented to taking control of their careers and intentionally crafted strategies to execute their plans. This included joining professional networks and pursuing academic interests. Other findings proved valuable to future research on female expatriates as it expands the frame to include less visible international employees in Multi-National Corporations. It is important to give voice to the arguments and counter-arguments raised which will enhance future studies on expatriates.

The research had its fair share of challenges. One challenge that threatened to derail the research was the difficulty experienced in accessing influential females. The researcher used a variety of means to reach out to several elite professionals, leaning into professional networks, personal networks and social media sites such as LinkedIn. The results were mixed. The responses were a combination of curiosity without commitment and commitment to the process with the reality of time constraints. Several women who were approached to participate in this research appeared torn between demonstrating they could manage both the demands of an intense work schedule and their personal obligations, leaving little room for anything else.

Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

The interviews offered an opportunity to peer behind the curtain into the world of women from a developing State, Jamaica, to help understand the experiences within the frame businesses operating across boundaries. The study of global business is part of the migration narrative and whilst relevant, this study pulls back the curtain to explore the lived experiences of Jamaican women who have broken through the glass-border. Black women across the globe speak to being invisible in a world that privileges ‘whiteness and maleness’ (Harvard Business Review, 2015). For many who are credentialed and qualified to assume senior leadership opportunities within their companies, they are often looked over for someone who is less qualified. At this time, when companies suggest there is a lack of qualified talent available to lead major functions in their MNCs, one question that must be asked is, “are they focused too much on familiar faces and spaces? Many studies have been conducted across multidisciplinary frames, but the literature does not sufficiently address the experiences of women outside the mainstream corporate body, namely women of color from countries that are categorized as developing countries. Developing countries is the term adopted here as opposed to the more pejorative label, third-world country.

With the lens of migration widened further, engaging women on the challenges and opportunities that emerged as they moved up the corporate ladder and across geographical boundaries, helps to situate their story within the diversity and inclusion narrative, where being different because of one’s race, ethnicity and nationality seem to contribute to the difficulty in achieving their career goals. As an understudied phenomenon, the researcher recognized the value of adding to the discourse via the voices of 8 women

who at several stages in their career, had the opportunity to shatter barriers in cross-border businesses. Their stories gave new meaning to the idea of being ‘different’ in the business world that continues to evolve, based on push and pull factors that arise from globalization.

Research conducted on women in leadership, the international business traveler and expatriate females in business unpacked several themes that were used to formulate the interview guide. The questions were open-ended, which supported the effort of the researcher to get the participant or co-researcher talking. The conversation-styled approach was effective in putting the women at ease as they reflected on their journey.

The themes that emerged from the interviews aligned with broad areas of women in international business. It was anticipated that the research would uncover obstacles that were unique to the 8 Jamaican nationals. Four broad themes emerged following the initial review of the data and were organized under the headings: career advancement, family and cross-cultural sensitivity, stereotypes and language barriers. As the researcher deep-dived into the transcribed material, the outline of other themes emerged.

The research focus led to discussions about race, color, class and other prejudices and how they are used to inform how people are treated. Navigating the intersectional spaces adds greater layers of complexity for women who do not fit the profile of successful expatriates. A Google search for images of successful expatriate females in multinational business revealed two things. The first was the lack of images that captured women in serious business roles and secondly, when such images were found, they fit the public and accepted profile that leaders in business were white and male. In a connected digital

world, where the worth of another can be reduced or inflated based on the types of images found, it then becomes critical to normalize black men and women as competent leaders in the business environment.

Participants demographic profile

A total of 8 co-researchers were engaged for this research. They represented companies ranging from financial services to the energy sector. The women held prominent decision-making roles and in their capacity as influencers, were highly visible in the sectors they represented. From the 8 participants, 1 represented a reputable conglomerate that had successfully entered the international marketplace. The table below provides a snapshot of the demographic profile of the co-researchers. Actual names were replaced with pseudonyms to offer anonymity to the co-researchers and served the purpose of providing a safety net for sincere reflections.

Table 1

Participants demographics

Parti- cipants	Industry	Age Range	Children	Marital status	International/ expatriate career in years	Roles
Angela D.	Pharmaceuticals	51-55	2	Divorced	15+	Regional Director
Rosa P.	Financial	61-65	1	Divorced	30+	Country Head
Oprah W.	Energy	51-55	2	Married	15+	Project Director
Angela B.	Hospitality	41-45	1	Single	7+	Director
Maya A.	Sports	41-45	2	Married	10+	Executive Director
Shonda R.	Tourism	41-45	2	Married	15+	Regional Director
Viola D.	Manufacturing	51-55	2	Divorced	15+	Executive Director
Ursula B.	Financial	36-40	1	Married	5+	Vice-President

The 8 women represented diverse companies which made it possible to explore how their experiences were similar and/or different. Arising from the interviews, the researcher noted that in some companies, international business travel was a precursor to an expatriate career. For example, Viola D. spoke to the fact that “the plane was her tool”,

as she was always traveling to countries where her company had interests. Her reference to travel as an integral part of her entry into the expatriate world was a significant contribution to priming women for roles that would help to advance their careers.

The range of multinational industries provide a balanced view of how women's roles are evolving in environments that are often considered the domain of males. As more companies move toward internationalization of their Brands, there is a shift in the labor market composition and the women who participated in this study give credence to the transformation taking place.

Positions of Influence

The women occupied senior level roles within the organizations they represented. However, of note is the application of C-suite across industries. Half of the women interviewed, did not hold the title of C-suite but were senior executives with significant influence on the decisions that were intended to shape the future goals of the company. The absence of the title (C-suite), though framed around persons who hold titles such as Chief Financial Officer or Chief Executive Officer, did not diminish the stature and the power held by the 8 women. Instead, their roles were amplified by the nature and scope of their responsibilities. Their roles included the following: country head, executive director, project director, vice-president and regional director. In such elite roles, the women were visible actors in the organization. When redirected to the expatriate literature, one can see that there is some consistency with the roles and functions that women are likely to hold in global enterprises, though the number of women occupying elite roles (finance, business, STEM) in reputable organizations hover at around three or four percent globally (Brookfield Global Relocation Services, 2018).

Senior Executive Roles Occupied by Participants



Figure 2. Participants' Roles

Although this sample cannot be used to make sweeping generalizations about expatriate Jamaican women of influence in the international business environment, it helps to situate the conversation about the low percentage of women who are represented at the levels often designated as C-suite. In pulling apart the data further, the women who bore the title executive director, vice-president and country head, would most likely fit comfortably in the narrow description of C-suite. Expanding the lens to not just account for women with the title of C-suite, the research reveals a layer of influential females with impactful roles. This observation was underscored by the co-researcher whose title fell within the ambit of project director – “I think the size of the organization is also a thing because where I had influence over my business pursuits, I don’t think I had the influence on decisions that were being made in all aspects of the organization.” Mining further, this participant was able to leverage her technical skills within the company and this projected her status as a critical voice to the decision-making process. As she built her personal brand, opportunities emerged for her to enter spaces that were not diverse.

Academic Profile

The educational background of the co-researchers demonstrated their commitment to personal growth. All had invested in earning a graduate degree. One participant boasted a terminal doctoral degree. It is important to note that all women viewed education as a vehicle to support their ascent to leadership roles within the organization. Access to education paved the way for better jobs and financial independence.

Within this chapter, there will be discussion about the approach that was taken to illuminate the themes. The discussion is divided into three parts, starting with the process of examining each line for relevance to the research question.

Part I: Horizontalization

By organizing the meaning units into broad themes or categories, greater insight was achieved into the lives of the women being interviewed. Paring away at the layers of each story made it clear to the researcher that the women were still in some way catalysts, as they navigated spaces that were evolving in a climate that was still resistant to the idea of women in leadership roles. In this vein, the professional titles weighed little against the responsibilities that each held. This meant that influential leaders had a platform where they could make significant contributions in the direction of the company and were visible partners both within and outside the firm. Jamaican women were not only breaking barriers about Caribbean talent, but where they excelled, the women felt they were open to more scrutiny and with that more pressure to perform. To help the reader appreciate each story, the complex journey is captured verbatim under the categories that emerged from the data.

Part II: Textural Narratives

Textual narratives help readers get a sense of the individual stories. Put another way, it opens the door to the core searchers' own description of their experiences. From the process outlined in the methodology, the researcher having isolated pertinent themes from the narratives, created a matrix to capture the impressions of the 8 women. As a reminder, the method developed by Stevick- Collaizi- Keen, amended by Moustakas (1994) was applied to this research.

The tables below illustrate in an abridged form, textual narrative of the participants' reactions to the research question as they reflected on their elite roles. Continuous review of the data gave rise to several categories. These categories were arranged in the form of a table and accounted for the experiences of all 8 women.

Table 2 captures the sense that the women believed they were in positions where they were being recognized. In many instances, becoming visible was illustrated in the meetings they were now being brought into or the kind of projects they were asked to lead.

Table 2

Moving from invisible to visible – Disrupting Bias

Angela D.	“Males tend not to be at home often. Because we were not at home, we were in the office ... I don’t want to say 24/7, but we were in the office from early in the morning to late at nights and we felt ok ... we didn’t have a problem.”
Rosa P.	“I moved very quickly through the ranks – everybody knew I worked hard.”
Oprah W.	“It was important for me to let those who I was advocating for, know publicly where I stood and that was also for those in power to know publicly where I stood -to understand who they were getting.”
Angela B.	“When I got there, the first thing I had to do was create buy-in and I had to network and I figured the only way I could prove myself as a black Jamaican female executive was to prove to them that I could do the job.”
Maya A.	“I think what sort of guided my career and got me here was that I’ve always believed in working harder than anyone else ... if I am going to work hard, I am going to build a strong reputation and I recognized early how people move forward ... everything happens based on a sponsor.”
Shonda R.	“Now I have won through demonstrating the quality of work that I do, I have won some male sponsors, so I think, knocking on the doors, doors being opened, march all you want without advocacy, I think that is true – to a degree – you have to know where you want to work.”
Viola D.	“It was my productivity levels-when I was in meetings, they would ascertain what the other guys had done and then they came to me and then they say, “what are you projecting for the next quarter? And when I told them they said no, no – I think you made a mistake and I said no, I have not made a mistake in what I am projecting... you have to get rid of the mindset that people want you to have – you don’t belong there – Yes – you belong there.”
Ursula B.	“In an environment like what I work in, that is predominantly white and predominantly male helps me succeed because I don’t necessarily assume ... what makes me a minority a hinderance.”

Table 3 captures the abridged narratives of the women in relation to identity, gender and heritage.

Table 3

Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage

Angela D.	“So, when we stepped into a meeting in our regional office in Costa Rica, for example, you know we tend to be a minority ... whether it’s female or it’s by virtue of your ethnicity, so now definitely you are one in a million of persons who are basically black.”
Rosa P.	“What they did a lot which didn’t impact me was preparing those women who were going into Latin America, Asia ...you know, language challenges, the cultural differences and because we were English-speaking Caribbean, that wasn’t done with us. But guess what? I realized we needed that ... there I am, this brilliant black Jamaican woman, going into their environment to lead them.”
Oprah W.	“I was clear to people that I identified as a black woman, even though I would say my employers were not as - they weren’t savvy enough I guess about race and culture and so didn’t understand why I would identify that way.”
Angela B.	“I was the only black female in a Dutch company and people were looking at me like ok, like what can this little Caribbean girl from Jamaica say or do to help me improve my operations.”
Maya A.	“That it is likely that I will be the first Jamaican they know ... professionally and if I expose myself as Jamaican then I am going to be a part of setting their understanding of who Jamaicans are. Creating a positive impression about a minority group is important as you are either opening or closing the door for other Jamaicans.”
Shonda R.	“I think it would be fair to say that as a Jamaican woman, Jamaican professional, we are more open to diversity and culture, languages, and we have an appreciation for tradition and people...I think just the culture of being Jamaican definitely sets one up for success.”
Viola D.	“Female and black. Those are two no nos. I experienced that again and again, you are female you are not to be educated; you are not supposed to be intelligent; you are not supposed to have job like the one you have”
Ursula B.	“I think our upbringing in Jamaica, especially speaking from my ... a woman’s perspective is that I don’t think we ever felt that we could not achieve, so having a background of not being hindered by our gender, or nationality, race, ethnicity .”

Table 4 gives an assessment of the need to renegotiate the rules of engagement between men and women in the home as well as the workplace. The participants articulated in quite similar ways how change in their careers affected other spheres in their lives. This gave rise to numerous tensions in their personal and professional lives.

Table 4

Rules of Engagement between Men and Women

Angela D.	"...they (females) were well paid than their husbands and it is a phenomenon I thought about at one time too ...they were divorced, and their children were like mine, raised by helpers."
Rosa P.	"I had excellent support from my son and you know I said to him the other day, I can't remember doing homework with you because I was always with clients, you know, I was really a career focused person."
Oprah W.	"... as new kinds of companies came in and you started getting younger executives and you started to see more people starting their own companies then the voices that were being heard, started to sound a little bit different – that's all of what helped to influence and open the door and promote some of this change to include more women."
Angela B.	"I think we have gotten to the point where males have recognized that we are a force to be reckoned with ... we are able to galvanize and organize ourselves and you find that a lot of women are no longer settling for mediocre anymore and you know, just being at home taking care of the kids but they are actually going back to school, furthering their education so that they can aspire to higher roles."
Maya A.	"I put a lot of caveats ... I can say just do it because I have a spouse that supports that ...he is not giving me grief at home. I imagine that 1. I wouldn't marry someone like that because I knew I knew who I wanted to be and 2. If that were happening, we would have been divorced."
Shonda R.	"At first, I had a lot of guilt, you know, oh, I am not there, and you know – but in life you are never going to be fully there for them all the way through ... And I think I am not guilty anymore ... I think I feel purpose ... I feel they need to own their direction as well and can't be as dependent – we are their sponsors..."
Viola D.	"The children didn't seem, though I put things in place. I had a live-in Nanny that would prepare structured meals ... my mother was old but provided some kind of...some kind of what you would call, parent or guardianship."
Ursula B.	"My husband understood what I did ... he has a busy schedule so we just, you know, we do know what we are working towards."

Table 5 represents thoughts on men who are accounted for in very senior roles and as such define the culture and transformation agenda of the organization. What emerged from the discussions is a sense that the rules of engagement must be renegotiated, and both sexes have a responsibility to create the new agenda, especially as women access educational opportunities and move into the labor market. As the women moved beyond domestic borders into international territories, they felt that they had other complex layers to navigate. It was here that they recognized the value of sponsors and in many instances, the sponsors they spoke of were men. This realization seemed to fit into the general idea

that acceptance of women in areas of elite leadership cannot happen in a vacuum and requires a softening of male attitudes about gender roles.

Table 5

Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance

Angela D.	“As a sponsor, they are looking for fit, then they will provide the training. The higher you go internationally, that is where we found it was more male dominated.”
Rosa P.	“My mentors, my sponsors at the time were men...they did not want an ambassador of their country to fail. So, they took the initiative ... they were proactive in saying come and sit with me ... and prepare you.”
Oprah W.	“We (women) are under the impression that we can stand on the outside and say let me in. If someone on the inside is not willing to listen, to be empathetic and understanding and a promoter and a supporter, it’s not happening...usually you find one or two men inside the organization with daughters who are coming up and who are now starting to see and feel...so they are hearing the conversations of their daughters. I am convinced, even if they never admit it that this is part of what is influencing some of the changes.”
Angela B.	“When you come into the industry and you get into leadership roles it’s really a male dominated environment and so you have to be exceptional in the field to be recognized and promoted.”
Maya A.	“I don’t have a lot of mentors...I’ve had a lot of sponsors and I think the power of sponsorship is that even people who don’t understand or don’t know where you are going can invest in you getting there. Sponsorship extended into my career ...and ironically most of those people were white men. I did good work and I delivered, and they extended their capital to me.”
Shonda R.	“I think women have tended to advocate for themselves more where men don’t necessarily have to...I don’t think men and women are equipped to deal with what it is we are asking for. It’s going to be a learning process. I have a seat at the table that is very critical to changing the landscape of what the typical General Manager or Executive Committee look like.”
Viola D.	“They are sitting around conference tables with men who feel that they probably shouldn’t be there, but they respect the fact that they are there.”
Ursula B.	“... when you are senior, right, and this is my opinion of just corporate institutions broadly speaking today ... who is reflective of the C-suite in America at least, are white males or white, Anglo-Americans.”

Table 6 provides an abridged narrative from each of the participants and puts focus on rebranding the power of being female in organizations that have traditionally interpreted leadership as a male prerogative. This theme is anchored to the theme of renegotiating the rules of engagement. These statements appear to corroborate the challenge women face in organizations where male influence is dominant. In the

discourse lies the subtle reminder that the support of men in reengineering the work environment is important to the equality initiatives.

Table 6

Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women

Angela D.	“Women tend to think too small, you know but I think it is getting better, it’s improving.”
Rosa P.	“I am a member of the Board...he always insists I sit on his right, I guess he knows I am the one who is going to say, “hold a minute Chairman, let’s look at it this way.”
Oprah W.	“Organizations that were doing things more progressively, you see them bringing in women and were more open to that. They were the ones who recognized the contribution of having someone who thinks a little bit different of empowering the women who were sometimes in their own households when they sat and thought about it, were decision makers in the household on some of the day to day stuff.”
Angela B.	“If I disagreed with them, I did not outright say I am sorry I disagree with you. What I did was I provided them with options or I provided them with solutions and of course one of the solutions I provided was what they put forward.”
Shonda R.	“You want to stay true to yourself as an individual but at the same time you want to be successful in the room that you are standing in. Yes, you enter the room, and everybody knows you are there because you are the loudest person or the one with the biggest smile but is that how you want to enter the room anymore, you know. So, I think the challenge for me was knowing how to manage my emotions; how to deepen my social awareness and dial back on my personality when I needed to.”
Maya A.	“What I think has been most helpful for gender equality in our world really is that women who have ascended to positions of power have hired other women, have put other women in positions of power.”
Viola D.	“You are exposed to chauvinism, you are exposed to even racial discrimination, you know, you are exposed to all kinds of things , and so if you are not strong, you bend... we are not just pretty, but we are intelligent and that we have a lot to offer, we bring a lot to the table.”
Ursula B.	“They came over, big hug, like very informal greeting, these were older white men, which demonstrates a level of comfort with the relationship I fostered with them the last three years as head of my group. I was a little taken aback by it, but I think I think it was good for me because it meant I was impactful.”

Table 7 provides an abridged narrative of the participants’ views on raising their skill and competency capital to match that of their male counterparts. Part of this ongoing narrative is finding the best opportunity that fits their career interests and boosts their climb of the corporate ladder. With an increase in opportunities to engage in more meaningful and fulfilling roles, the women credit their access to education as the vehicle that made their progress possible. The talent pool of women illustrates educationally

qualified candidates as data shows more women are enrolled in tertiary institutions. The gap appears to be too few women who are placed in roles that lead to elite positions in the organization.

Table 7

Improving Skill and Competency Capital

Angela D.	“What I learned from an early age is that I would go and get myself qualified, right? Because I didn’t want anybody anywhere to say I wasn’t qualified, so personally I prepared myself...I went on weekends and I did studies, I got my degrees and when I realized that I needed this one, I was not afraid to enroll in a course, whether or not the company was going to pay for it.”
Rosa P.	“I went to TASC at the time... I don’t know if you know...now UPTR and I did banking, and it was a core program where summers you would go and work in a bank. I went on to UWI, then did my MBA overseas because at the time there was no MBA offered in Jamaica...that allowed me to have a smooth transition...my experiences were recognized.”
Oprah W.	“I somehow inherently knew, even though I wasn’t a kid who particularly plunged myself into my school work, you know I think I had some natural talent and I used, I lived off the natural talent as much as I could. I soon realized that education ..., was an influencer in what I was doing in my life and career.”
Maya A.	“Columbia validated me to white people ... it sort of put me in a place where they could understand who I was, my degree was an endorsement. And that opened doors for me.”
Angela B.	“Having a Masters, I was like I need to be able to utilize my master’s more and also to get a return on my financial investment as well ... even though I talk about my experiences, a lot of doors have been opened for me and I am very happy for it”
Shonda R.	“The higher skilled candidate won. The last two were males for key roles. So, what does that mean? It means that women, although they are being considered for these roles, do not possess the skills, capabilities and readiness to assume these roles in a successful way. It’s almost as if you need an incubator in some way.”
Viola D.	“I went into the company as an Account Executive, and when I looked around me it was mostly males, all my colleagues were males, so they were not used a female doing that job, even though I was qualified for the job.”
Ursula B.	“I went into law school. I was a lawyer for four years for a private equity firm...and I’d never been exposed to Finance so that was my first exposure and I enjoyed what they were doing. I wanted to be more involved in the discussions. I wanted to be part of a big global institution that would have provided exposure and access that I wouldn’t get elsewhere.”

Table 8 illustrates selected abbreviated narratives that addressed the level of readiness shown by the organization to support women’s aspirations for a greater piece of the leadership pie. Women in this instance must craft strategies to help amplify their

skills. The women agreed that timing was crucial, especially in today's disruptive environment, to advance their careers.

Table 8

Company Readiness - Networks

Angela D.	"It always depends on the management ... we were led and protected by a G.M. that headed our region – he was people oriented, so it didn't matter if you were male or female. We looked at the competency and skill, did you have it or did you not have it. We were respected for the competencies and capabilities we had."
Rosa P.	"You know, I was very lucky in 2002 when I spent that year in T* It was that period when a number of multinational companies were trying to increase the number of women in senior management...the bank and the corporate world were pushing. I was the Deputy to a very strong black man who was the Chief then and when I look back the senior management team were mostly women."
Oprah W.	"Companies now have succession plans that say currently leadership is 90% men. We need to target that by the year 2025 we have 25% and by the year 2030, we have 30% to be reflective of the demographics in which we live."
Maya A.	"I think what they were happy about is I could assimilate ... and I could understand them and they didn't have to bend to understand me ...that is an exhausting position to always be understanding other people, but that has been my existence, that they didn't have to adapt their way of operating so they could understand who I was , and what I brought to the work, I always adapted."
Shonda R.	"We have come up on challenges in some of the other countries in the Americas, that are strongly, that have a culture of machismo, but we have pushed back, and we have been successful. You are going to face cultures that are male dominated and male-centric, but I think as a multinational you have to stand your ground and you have to emphasize skill over gender."
Angela B.	"You have to understand working in an environment – it's the cruise industry ... things happen quickly. So, the environment, you had to adapt to change; you had to be very flexible but anyway, when I got there, the first thing that I had to do was I had to create buy-in and I had to network and I figured the only way I could prove myself as a black, Jamaican female."
Viola D.	"I accepted a salary that I thought was a good one and I negotiated hard. My colleague, he was chauvinistic, believed that being female, you don't really need a salary as the others are getting. The others are married, they have families, you are single, you live alone, your expenses are not as high and those were all the excuses I got."
Ursula B.	"I don't think anyone is scouring the employee population and figuring out where women can be better utilized, I think what they are doing are creating programs that women can participate in, if they would like ... mobility initiative that targets women, I don't think anything like that exists."

Part III: Thematic Analysis

The narratives of each participant brought into focus the complex layers that inform the expatriate experience. The lives of the women were peered at through the lens of existential phenomenology, a branch of phenomenology that addresses the essence of people's lived experiences. Credit has largely been given to philosopher Edmund Husserl as the father of phenomenology. His work pushed the boundaries of inquiry to examine the study of consciousness (Wertz, 2005). Adding to Husserl's work, proponents of existential phenomenology such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Adrian Van Kaam and others sought to advance methods of inquiry that would support scientific rigor. Wertz, 2005, seizes on describing phenomenological inquiry by its very structure is scientific and require three actions that will enhance results. These are critical thinking, creativity and reflective interaction with the data (Wertz, 2015). Existential phenomenology, whilst not totally abandoning the earlier traditions, seeks to expand the lens of scientific inquiry to address interpretative as well as descriptive dimensions of the phenomena (Finlay, 2009).

Moustakas' (1994) modified Stevick- Collaizi- Keen Method was used to analyze the data and identifies two aspects to organizing the data. Transcription of the data was an important step to the process. Each transcription was subjected to multiple readings to get comfortable with the content, voice and possible meanings. Each line was scrutinized to assess relevance to the research question, then arranged as separate units for further inspection. This is described as horizontalization and is useful to the data analysis process as it makes it easier to identify and note emerging meaning units or themes. These meaning units were accounted for in the margins of the each working document.

The researcher navigated between the textural and structural narratives to obtain a greater level of understanding of the phenomenon. This process is integral to developing a fuller picture of the meaning and essence of the participants experience (Creswell, 1998).

In progressing the data analysis, the researcher read each participant’s transcript several times. This was done to minimize bias entering the personal narratives of the women and to project the voice of the women as owners of their story. This approach also lent itself to the identification of clusters of meanings that would further the reduction process. In gaining access to their voice, it was important that the researcher retain the authenticity of the participants lived experiences. Chenail (2011), adds value to this approach when he cautions that the researcher should engage in “pragmatic curiosity”, using the data to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon.

Table 9

Themes arising from participants’ narratives

Common Themes	Angela D.	Rosa P.	Oprah W.	Angela B.	Maya A.	Shonda R.	Viola D.	Ursula B.
Moving from Invisible to Visible – Disrupting Bias	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Who am I? – The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Renegotiating the rules of engagement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rebranding the role and authority of women in business	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Codeswitching – amending language registers (tone, accent etc.) to improve	X		X	X	X			

communication in order to fit in.								
Improving skill and competency capital for expanding roles	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Timing and new spaces for women to share stories	X	X	X		X	X	X	
National and international priorities in support of women's right issues	X		X		X	X	X	
Disrupting traditional norms associated with the female role in the home	X	X	X	X		X		X
Incidents of divorce as a byproduct of career aspirations	X		X	X	X		X	
Building and Maintaining Bridges: Network Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Navigating biases associated with "third world" labels.	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Cultural sensitivity and emotional intelligence	X	X	X	X			X	X
Humility in the face of criticism	X	X			X	X	X	
Trailblazer effect that typecasts women	X	X			X		X	
Combating loneliness where familiar faces are nonexistent	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Reintegration once assignment is over	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Fulfilling purpose – legacy shaping	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Religious/spiritual values as anchors to adapting to change	X		X		X		X	

Findings

The table above captures the themes that were illuminated following the process of reduction and analysis. These findings appear to suggest that the expatriate experiences of the Jamaican C-suite female executive in the diaspora intersect at these notable points.

The discussion that follows will examine the following themes: (1) Moving from Invisible to Visible – Disrupting Bias; (2) Who am I? – The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage; (3) Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement accompanied by the subtheme Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women in Business; (4) Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance; (5) Improving Skill and Competency Capital for Expanding Roles; (6) Building and Maintaining Bridges: Network Management.

The researcher noted that a few of the women interviewed held positions of influence within firms that had a global presence. Absent from their titles was the label “chief of”. Instead, their roles were equivalent to the status that would be accorded a C-suite leader. The scope of their responsibilities and the impact their decisions had on key business objectives, made them visible actors in an environment that was coming to terms with the value of women in positions of leadership. Their influence in the organization was cemented in expert and legitimate power.

As expressed in Chapter 3, an interview guide was created to help the women reflect on their experiences. The type of questions asked were developed from the literature review which illuminated concerns held by women when it came to international and expatriate assignments. The goal of the study is in part an attempt to advance a more nuanced look at women of color who are perceived to be invisible due to their racial, national and ethnic identity and to position them as part of the broader narrative associated with migration, gender relations and international business. The glass-border phenomenon, as a metaphorical description of the barriers faced by women in the organization is perpetuated by men and women who hold on to strong convictions about the role of the sexes. The complexities associated with being female in a world still

authored by the male voice, illuminated the extent to which women are held to one standard as opposed to their male counterparts.

In discussing the findings, the themes that were considered relevant will be introduced, with the aim of fully ventilating the experiences of the eight women. It is through the descriptions of their experiences, their interpretation of the events as they recall them, and the solutions engaged to resolve the tensions encountered, that a broader appreciation will be obtained from the experiences of women who are not often captured in expatriate literature.

Moving from Invisible to Visible – Disrupting Bias

A theme that resonated among the women was the view that they represented a shift in how minority women from developed countries were perceived. Moving from a space of obscurity because of their nationality to suddenly being thrust in a multicultural space was an event that created opportunities but also led to challenges that they had never encountered. In describing their experience, the participants used phrases and words like “behaved very differently”, “resilience”, cautious optimism”, and “loneliness” to describe their experiences. To get a better portrayal of their experiences in this context, here a few textural accounts. Angela B. said:

I have persons who were so intrigued with a Jamaican who spoke the Queen’s English, because in their mind, when I would go and say hi, I am Angela B. from Jamaica, they would do a double take and they would be like, “you were born in Jamaica? You don’t live there anymore?” And I would say yes, I live there, and they would be, “you live in the States”. “You don’t sound like a Jamaican and my

response would be, “how does a Jamaican sound.” They cannot put it into words, but I know what they mean.

In this account, the participant was aware of how different she was to the larger population of her work space. In what could be construed as a multicultural environment, being Jamaican appeared to attract curious questions and intrigue.

Viola D. lends credibility to Angela B’s. interpretation of her experience, that of moving from invisible to visible. The textural account finds a place between gender and race as intersections that proved to be problematic.

So, I experienced that and again, you are female; you are not supposed to be educated; you are not supposed to be intelligent; you are not supposed to have a position like the one you have...

Oprah W. in her critique of her experience said:

I think because having lived in America long enough I knew the whole context of race and what that did and when I saw things happening that I did not particularly like, I would try to – I wanted them to understand what influenced or what side of the coin I was standing on, and where I was speaking from. That didn’t always help but that was fine by me.

Ursula B. pointed to the issue of underrepresentation in the financial and technological sectors. “There is an under-representation and that is driven by a couple of things; (1) in general biased hiring, whether that is unintentional, but just general biased hiring and then (2) unfortunately in a role like mine, finance, the number of minorities, whether that be gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, it’s just not there. You are already pulling from a small pool of candidates who are even interested in the career path.”

Ursula B. has introduced an important piece to the narrative which cannot be ignored. In many respects, women who progress to very senior influential roles in their organization have had unique experiences where they are visible because they are a rarity. This is borne out in careers like finance and technology development.

Analysis and Summary

Participants' shared experiences point to a reality that is influenced by how they are perceived in a global space. In some respect, the further afield they go, the more there is curiosity about their abilities. In a sense, their visibility depends on who validates them. As Shonda R. explains:

“I’ve had female leaders who have nominated and vouched for me, sponsored me...and now I’ve won through demonstrating the quality of the work that I do, I’ve won over male sponsors.”

Maya A. progresses the conversation by suggesting that the best advocates, the ones who are better able to validate women, are in fact women. She opines, “what I think has been most helpful for gender equality in our world really is that women who have ascended to positions of power, have hired other women – have put other women in positions of power.”

Her argument promotes the idea that women who enter spaces once denied them and are successful in reorienting members of that space to what women can contribute at the executive level, pave the way for other talented women to be visible.

Previous studies on female expatriates have suggested that foreigner prejudice is not necessarily problematic in host countries. Research produced by Adler (1984 (a), 1984 (b) found that expatriate women were identified as foreigners first and female after.

This meant that expatriate women were not expected to behave like local women. Other scholars, like Caligiuri et al. (1999) supported the findings with data of their own which suggested that women would not experience prejudice in host countries.

What emerged from the experiences shared by the eight women, offers a different way of looking at the issue. As expatriates, they have voiced feeling discomfort in spaces that are far different to their home territories. As part of their narrative, it was felt that for them to gain respect and acceptance in the positions held, they first had to prove they were competent. The question of competence, they felt, was tied to stereotypes held about people of color, especially women.

Viola D. underscores her experience in this way: “these were elderly white men who referred to me as girl, the little girl...what I felt was racial discrimination, yes, I felt that they wanted me to think and feel that I don’t belong here because I am female.”

Oprah W. weighs in by calling attention to the fact that many companies that have spread internationally, have no experience addressing racial biases. Where they may have encountered gender equality concerns, their homogeneity has not prepared them to deal with race and other labels.

I came back to a hardcore, male dominated environment and because it was also a multinational company there is an arrogance they had about them because coming from some of these countries that never acknowledged the kind of -isms that they also propagated within their organizations, it was easy for them to say, well we are very fair, and we hire and promote fairly. But when you looked at it, it was not necessarily so.

Oprah W's. experience is supported by work from Hutchings et al. (2013) that revealed that expatriate women may not experience prevalent discrimination but will encounter challenges especially where there is evidence of a strong adherence to traditions that promote male interests. In spaces that are predominantly one race, there is an expectation that foreign women, especially women who are influenced by Western values will encounter prejudice (Hutchings et al., 2013). Stalker and Mavin (2011) showed that though foreign-born women may have greater access to opportunities, there was still evidence of gender discrimination in countries where discrimination was the norm. The national context determined how women were treated in the organization (Napier and Taylor, 2002). The participants suggested they had to work twice as hard to prove their worth and it was only then that they were able to disrupt stereotypes.

Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage

As the interviews progressed, the researcher found that the women expressed a strong sense of who they were and demonstrated confidence that perhaps helped them pursue their career goals. They identified first as Jamaicans, Black, followed by female executives. Other descriptors were clearly defined such as being a parent. For those women with children, the goal was not just to provide a better life but to illuminate the importance of working hard to achieve desired goals. There was no attempt to diminish themselves to fit in but there was a premium attached to be the best. As the textual narratives will show, there is an acknowledgement that new strategies must be adopted when expatriate women move into unfamiliar spaces.

Oprah W. pulls back the screen to identity, gender and heritage when she says:

Much of the every-day piece of it, the biases were there because the first thing

you think of or assume somehow, there is always this thinking that no matter how a man or how people will say the woman is smart- you have to speak louder and stand taller and be much tougher to be heard. That was always there. That still is there. That never went away. But the minute you identify yourself as a woman who is a black woman or woman from the Caribbean you know whatever you want to call it - the moment you say it you start to...it's as though you start to lose legitimacy in saying that.

Captured in her narrative is the belief that Jamaican women, having progressed to the highest ranks in multinational companies are required to prove that they are the best fit for the positions they occupy.

Shonda R., in sharing her experience as an expatriate in one of the world's renowned hospitality brands, recognized the immense pressure to do well, not only as an agent of the company but as an ambassador of her country. She expresses her thoughts in this way:

...because you know not many other people have the opportunity that you do, so you do make the most of it, just because you carry your values from an island such as Jamaica to a greater country if you will just by size perhaps – we carry that over to North America – it's not a weight on your back but it's an expectation. An expectation that you will represent the country, Jamaica; an expectation that you will do your best, because in Jamaica they say, “only your best is good enough” so you have that added push to succeed and North Americans interpret that as drive and as passion. So many people think of me as being passionate about what I do, and it is stemming from the fact that I am from

a Caribbean island such as Jamaica, where everybody wants to see you do well, even as a country, you know, you have the country's support.

Shonda R. held the belief that her previous work had paved a way for healthy respect among her peers. She felt that having been part of the company for over a decade, her work in the company improved her visibility across the various brands. She felt that this inoculated her from overt expressions of discrimination. This did not mean that such expressions, behaviors and attitudes were non-existent. This was borne out in her reflection on the culture of the company and how it protects the interests of its stakeholders.

Well within the work environment, I haven't come across any racism, no micro-aggression, no ... and that's why I am really insistent with everyone that I help, is to advise people to make sure they join a company that they have the same values and I have been lucky – I have not heard from any of my colleagues who are diverse about any intersections that they have had where they have come across racism. Now I have heard people make jokes not in my presence directly but I have also heard them being corrected within the same breath (chuckles) so I think that is a great thing – I am not in the presence of a joke but when the joke is being said they are corrected by others hearing the joke, immediately. So I think, there is this, there is a certain awareness with multinational companies like ours – the blue chip companies, 100 years or so in business and there is a secret to the sauce; there is a secret to that kind of success – if you are in business for 100 years by slipping up and by not ensuring that you have a global culture and that's one of the things that this company does very well.

As the layers were pulled back, Shonda R. revealed an incident that on further examination, seemed to expose a subtle element of bias. Following an interaction with another senior leader, Shonda R. R. received feedback about her sunny disposition.

My challenge- I smile too much and that you know, I guess it has to do with emotional intelligence to a certain degree, you know, reading the room. If nobody is smiling AW don't smile. You're not here to change the temperature of the room; you are here to wade into a discussion and move on and I think coming from the Caribbean where we are warm and everybody gets a hug (pause) it's different – you want to stay true to yourself as an individual but at the same time you want to be successful in the room that you are standing in.

Following the feedback, she learned to regulate her emotions to reflect the tone of the room. She submitted to the dominant culture to fit in and the catalyst for this change was due to the expressed discomfort of a senior male white male influencer.

Rosa P. provided another perspective of the Jamaican C-suite executive and how being identified as a strong and assertive female impose penalties in male dominated spaces. In a role that had oversight for several countries in the Caribbean, this C-suite leader became aware of the biases that existed in spaces that shared a common history. In her own words, Rosa P. described on? employees felt about expatriates entering their environment. “You are coming in as an expat ... usually you are given a fabulous home, a fabulous car ... you are the head of an institution that part of a larger global framework. All the things they want to be but can't be ... so there is this resentment about expatriates in their environment.” In this instance, the resentment was directed at a Jamaican

woman, who had made significant progress in her career; broken the glass-ceiling and had now decimated the concept of the glass-border, at least regionally.

Situated in this discussion is the perceived tension between Jamaica and other island states which is further exaggerated in the workplace.

Angela B. felt there were occasions where she felt like truly an outsider. She recognized the value of muting some parts of her identity that would cause discomfort. The structure of her organization was predominantly male and its members at the elite levels were Europeans. There were incidents that made her feel unwelcomed, expressed in this way– “I noticed his demeanor and attitude changed towards me.” Other incidents led her to believe that male leaders were quick to take the side of other males of equal standing – “he didn’t even listen, he didn’t even want to hear my side.” As she related the story, the researcher noted a break in her voice, which was interpreted as an experience that was still unresolved.

The opportunity to work in an environment that would boost her career and strengthen her global business acumen was a dream that came true, but she never imagined how insulated other spaces were when it came to diversity and inclusion, particularly around themes like race and nationality. Angela B. captured a moment she felt challenged to make sense of the hostility she was facing. “He didn’t really like that, because he is male, and he didn’t like the fact that there was a female coming to tell him how to construct a performance improvement plan. When I first approached him, I thought he was a little bit defensive ...”. Describing her male counterpart as “he was a little bit defensive”, suggested that the participant was hesitant to characterize the behavior in lesser terms. This could be interpreted as an awareness of the power-play

within the organization where it was felt that the dominant male environment could stymie future opportunities for the participant.

The interaction between Angela B. and her male counterpart reflected a tension between two cultures. She describes her counterpart as being from India and added further, “you know how they relate to females.”

In describing her own responses, Angela B. stated, “nobody is more confident than me.” To excel in her new role, Angela B. sought to engage new strategies to push through the resistance. Her modus operandi started with accepting she made a choice to take up the assignment overseas. This was followed by becoming sensitive and appreciative of the cultural differences between her country and the host country while finding areas of commonality. In this instance, the commonality was found in harnessing innovative ways the group could work to improve the company’s bottom-line. Angela B.’s determination to succeed appeared to be a strong catalyst in the years she spent with the company.

The key is once you are competent in your role, once you know your job and you are performing, and you produce results people will gravitate toward you and people will want you to succeed and they will want to have you within their sphere of business minded people.

Ursula B. offers through her reflection what is a trigger for her success. Growing up in Jamaica and socialized by her family unit, she does not believe she was ever made to think she couldn’t be successful.

Speaking from my ... from a woman’s perspective, is that I don’t think we ever felt that we could not achieve, so having a background of not being hindered by

our gender or nationality, ethnicity or race ... I don't necessarily assume what makes me a minority a hindrance.

Analysis and Summary

The barriers experienced by many of the participants are similar in nature. Across all the narratives, there is the feeling of being tested to prove that they deserve to occupy their current space. In their reflections, they confront ideologies associated with race but the discrimination they face today are covert in nature. Their experiences converge around what can be described as a trifecta of challenges - being female, from the Caribbean and being of afro-descent. The description of events that lead to a composite image of the world within which the Jamaican female elite executive of afro-descent is invited to participate, is still framed within a larger image that views them as subordinate to others within the same space. The barriers they face, though not unique, are maintained by traditions, customs and beliefs that accompany being born either a boy or a girl (Hofstede, 1991).

Combing through the narratives of each, there is an acute awareness that when they are thrust in the public space, there is an expectation that they will have to work harder than their counterparts who are different based on race, gender and ethnicity. Already saddled with the knowledge that they will be confronted with perceived and real biases, the participants acknowledged that having a sense of who they were helped them craft how they presented themselves in global spaces. They felt duty bound to project an ambassadorial image as they were not just opening doors for themselves but also for other women who are likely to face obstacles due to their race, color, ethnicity and nationality.

The legacy of slavery is embedded in the collective memory of the women and they acknowledge the struggles that were endured by the women who came before them as those stories provided a blueprint from which to chart their own journey. Having been exposed to discrimination regarding their gender and at times color and class within their homeland, the women felt they had developed the kind of resilience necessary to survive in countries where they were labeled a minority. According to Barriteau (2004), “black women’s experience of race in the Caribbean differ from that of black women in North America.” This is also true of any other space they relocate to where they are marginalized based on their race, nationality and heritage. For the majority who relocated to predominantly white spaces, they felt compelled to wear their heritage with pride, oftentimes publicly disclosing their nationality.

There appears to be a driving need for the women to express in visible and meaningful ways, what makes them unique and how identifying as a Jamaican, shapes their interaction with the rest of the world. It would appear as though a declaration of who they are will help to debunk myths that are held about Jamaican women in positions of leadership.

Cole (1997), cautions us against the claim that women of color experience and interpret their environments in the same way. For example, the experiences of black women in other jurisdictions such as the USA, Brazil, and England may have similarities but to think that they are identical is to reduce their experiences to a single narrative. Cole (1997) makes the point using this illustration about the range of experiences given the historical and cultural norms of a society.

In North America, white middle class women, Afro-American women, Hispanic

women, Asian-women, and Indian and Native-American women, are bound by shared experiences of living in a country where sexism is a fundamental part of the ideology of the society. But the daily lives of these various groups of women can be as different as night and day.

This picture is true of the experiences of Jamaican women, as even among them, there are diverse stories relating to their experiences and interpretation of such experiences. A common feature in their experience however is the reality of slavery, the brutality that accompanied colonization, the path to independence and the tensions that are associated with building an inclusive society.

The black woman's place in Jamaica has been framed along suggestions of being inferior to their light skinned counterparts. Education then became the vehicle that would progress black women into favorable roles within and outside their country of origin. Education did not appear to be a buffer against discrimination because even though they climbed the corporate ladder as an elite group of professionals, there was still the perception that they experienced discrimination in ways that were not normally seen with those of a lighter hue. In identifying who they are, the women seem to suggest that their rise to influential roles within corporations is in homage to the women who made their lives possible.

Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement: Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women in Business

Compared to several decades ago, many women have entered the labor market. Trends in some parts of the globe, point to a steady increase in women who are entering middle management roles. This has translated into a small percentage of women who are

promoted to elite positions of leadership, domestically as well as internationally. As women entered these public spaces that were dominated by men, they were faced with the task of renegotiating the rules of engagement in ways that would be favorable to their success. Sinclair (2008) made the point that the shaping of who is a leader is produced by society. Societies regulate the behaviors of leaders and, also create sanctions should someone not meet the criteria. The outcome is that leaders either conform to or struggle against established criteria in both organization and by extension the wider society.

In sharing her experience, Rosa P. articulated the importance of renegotiating the rules of engagement in a way that did not seek to usurp men's idea of leadership but to progress an alternative perspective that helped them with expanding the image of what was possible. It meant actively seeking to understand how her counterparts saw the world. This attitude was deemed important because it created an avenue for the parties to develop effective work partnerships.

I think it was the relationships I built in Jamaica...I had worked very closely with the government, the opposition ... so, you develop that, not just the business relationship but the personal relationship as well.

This approach appeared to lead to a softening of attitudes about her competence and ability to carry out her function as a CEO and board member in the illustration she provides next.

...a powerful man in the country... always insisted I sit to his right ... I guess he knows I am the one who will say, hold a minute, let's look at it this way.

The participant's reflection seems show the value of building strong relationships and the importance of this as currency to navigating bias both in domestic and multinational

companies.

Viola D. shared narrative honed-in on the theme in a vivid way. She was very aware of how the company she represented viewed women. Unlike the other 7 participants, Viola D's experience was in the context of growing a local company overseas. Whereas the others were significant in size and had already crafted their brand on an international scale, her company sought to increase its global presence. She describes the anatomy of the business in this way:

...the company is what you can describe as a chauvinistic company. They are old school and although some of the guys are retired and gone, it's like that hierarchy followed from one generation to the next, so when I joined the company, the first thing they asked me was what I was doing there... All my colleagues were males and they were not used to seeing a female in that role.

This reflection was significant to the participant as she then shared that she had to take different approaches to earn their respect. Her primary approach was that of outperforming her male counterparts. Added to that, her reputation as an out of the box thinker was rewarded with greater responsibilities which widened her influence. She noted that her work ethic may have contributed to how they viewed her worth and may have triggered a revisit to female talent within the company that was underexposed. To summarize her narrative, her key measurable achievements helped to rewrite female power and influence in a male dominated space.

Shonda R. makes the point that some multinational companies are more progressive than others and within that frame the experience of marginalization is not likely to be as astounding as the stories told by other women. This is from a North

American perspective. She does however share the point that women are constantly being assessed and their competence is rated against their male counterparts. To that end, it could be concluded that women who were pioneers in breaking the mold and reengineering the way both genders worked together, were successful because of their contribution to the financial success of the company. She explains it in this way:

I have a seat at the table that is very critical to changing the landscape of what the typical General Manager or Executive Committee look like. What I have done in my role is I have advocated for a diverse pool of candidates that we can evaluate to assume next level responsibility... stakeholders are reminded of the goal to balance our male and female leadership ratio across the Americas.

In this narrative, the participant demonstrates that though she has the authority due to the position she holds, she is also applying her experiences in that domain to renegotiate the relationship in spaces that are typically biased to male leadership.

Analysis and Summary

Each woman's narrative begins with an understanding that she is starting from ground zero. This is particularly true in environments where women's roles are still being contested and measured against socially constructed norms. As organizations progress their agenda on a global scale, it is a given that they will have to embrace the idea of pulling from racial and ethnic groups that were previously overlooked. The female expatriate is presented with an opportunity to impact the way women and minorities are perceived in spaces outside of her home territory.

An improvement in diversity initiatives across many industries have led to revolution in how women are perceived in traditional male spaces. The Jamaican female

expatriate is tasked with applying new skills to successfully navigate workplaces that are still learning how to integrate women into senior management roles.

As shared by the participants, assimilation into the culture is essential but not at the expense of losing their authenticity. They must adopt bold strategies which include working twice as hard, thus eclipsing their male counterpart's productivity levels. This was reinforced by Viola D's reflection when she spoke to developing strategies that raised the profile of the company in the international arena. Her output signaled that she was capable, and her personal brand grew as she became a visible partner in the company. She captured her experience in this way, "I moved the needle or moved the bar in a way that my brand became much more in demand." Her influence in the organization grew because she was an asset to the company. An added benefit as well was when she decided to leave the company, her skills were in high demand, which meant she was also able to set out a fee schedule with the assurance that she would not have to tweak it because the company claimed an inability to pay.

Though challenging, the woman who is considered different by the standards of the host country must assimilate to build trust. As an outsider, she is expected to conform, to speak in a way that amplifies her voice. Today, more and more companies are talking about boosting their diversity initiatives. In cultures where there is a dominant group, improving diversity may not mean paying attention to race and ethnicity. It may mean something different and the expatriate without the support of corporate sponsored initiatives and HR policies, may find that they will have to let their productivity speak on their behalf. When this happened, they were invited to sit at the table and their voices or as one participant described it, "her brand was so much more in demand."

Male Sponsorship Leads to Acceptance

The participants revealed that there was always someone at another tier who saw them as the future of the organization. This was away from the succession plans that were created by the company and extended beyond the traditional scope of mentoring. For the expatriate executive, sponsoring did not end when they were seated at the table. As the narrative of the women reveal, sponsoring is a continuous endeavor and remains an essential feature in the career path of female expatriates.

Shonda R. shared strong sentiments about the role of sponsorship in the career aspirations of expatriate executives and C-suite leaders. She held the belief that her own experiences demonstrated the value of allies as one climbed the corporate ladder both domestically and internationally. She was thankful for allies, particularly female executives in her career development and summarizes her experience by pointing to “female advocates... female leaders in key roles who reached out to me throughout my career to help me transition from a developing country to a developed country.” She included also the fact that her female allies “nominated and vouched for me, sponsored me.”

Maya A. shared that her allies were “white males” as there were not many women or people of color at senior level positions in the industry she worked. Her narrative exposed the fact that mentoring did not necessarily take place in her career. It was clear to her that she was being assessed both formally and informally. In her reflections, she shared “I’ve had a lot of sponsors and I think the power of sponsorship is that even people who don’t understand or don’t know where you are going can invest in getting you there.”

She posits that the end goal was to create a successful company and the men who sponsored her were not too concerned about her race, nationality or gender. They wanted the right talent and looking back, she can only imagine that they found what they were looking for in her.

I did good work and I delivered, and they extended their capital for me and it worked out and my commitment was I am never going to let you feel bad about the decision.

The theme of sponsorship was illuminated by Rosa P. as well. She acknowledged that internal stakeholders were valuable contributors to her development and subsequent career appointments in other countries, but equally important to her development were influential public figures who had served on prestigious bodies in the international arena. This was clearly seen in her summary of one interaction that helped to prepare her for a powerful role in the Caribbean region.

They helped me by giving me introductory letters ... to all persons they thought were critical to help me adapt to my new role and new environment...my mentors, my sponsors at that time were men.

It is important to note that her years working in the Caribbean region, she was supported by male counterparts who were of African descent.

Analysis and Summary

Women of color are still in some instances seen as an anomaly in leadership roles and geographic spaces where they are regarded as a minority. Stereotypes undermine the value they bring to the workplace and can prove to be a serious barrier to attracting future talent. The women have shown however that advocacy for the role is important. This

advocacy on the one hand would be expected from females who wield influence in the organization, but the narratives point to a greater role played by men with influence.

This leads the researcher to surmise from the participants' experiences that women are bound by rules that are still biased to the male perspective. Their stories capture a reality that suggests that women need the blessings of their male counterparts to assume powerful roles. As illustrated by Shonda R., there were instances where influential women opened doors to superior roles but in these cases, the trusted female allies appeared to have made their mark in the eyes of their male counterparts and as such were deemed qualified to vouch for and sponsor talent to elite roles in MNCs.

Improving Skill and Competency Capital for New Roles

The 8 women established the importance of continuous learning. "It does not stop," says Angela D. "Women are constantly under the microscope and are assessed by standards that reinforce masculine roles, and as such I learned from quite early that I needed to get qualified. I didn't want anyone, anywhere to say I wasn't so I personally prepared myself."

Ursula B. recognized this need as well and determined that as a young executive, she would need to not only know her craft but to be savvy and up-to-date with new knowledge that was emerging in her field. She summarizes her reflection on this theme this way:

I wanted to be involved ...so for me investment banking is kind of where most people want to get their feet wet. I wanted to be with a big global institution, that would provide me with the experience and access I would get no-where else.

The researcher got the sense that the women were fiercely competitive, independent and

strategically positioned themselves to take advantage of opportunities that were deemed critical to their career aspirations.

As underrepresented minorities, particularly in sectors that were finance and technology based, they appeared to understand that they needed to create distance between themselves and their male counterparts in the areas of critical skill sets. Shonda R. argues that in her industry, there is a preference for male CEOs and executives who are tasked with operations and finance responsibilities. In a global capacity, many of the office holders are responsible for territories or clusters which is marketed informally as the male domain. To combat this stereotype, she strategically aligned her goals with educational opportunities – either by earning a graduate degree or undertaking courses that led to certification. Interestingly, the MNC partnered with leading institutions across the globe to tailor programs for its executive members which supported the effort of retaining their elite teams. Like Angela D. she was conscious of the need to be qualified on paper, but she also knew the value of engaging in projects that would improve her skill and competency capital. That meant accepting responsibilities that challenged her to improve on identified weaknesses.

Assessing the lack of women of color in elite leadership roles across MNCs, Shonda R. theorizes that whilst there are indicators pointing to biased hiring for expatriate roles, her experience points to men outpacing women as ideal candidates for international assignments. Further insight into her perspective is had from this verbatim statement:

...women, although they are being considered for these roles, they do not have the skills, capabilities, readiness to assume the roles in a successful way.

To drive home her point, Shonda R. maintains that the approach to C-suite leadership and executive roles must be more than a “drip/drop method” to grooming female talent and equally important is the personal action taken by the expatriate to help shape her career in the MNC. Ursula B. refers to that kind of personal motivation as a willingness “to put one’s hand up” when opportunities are presented.

Analysis and Summary

Formal education proved to be a catalyst that inspired change in the circumstances of the 8 women. They admitted to having natural talent, but it was education that fueled their drive to succeed. Many recalled media messages that reinforced the idea that education was a way out for young and vulnerable women. Oprah W’s memory of one such media messaging captured the potency of education at a significant time in her life.

I lived off my natural talents... and soon realized that education and you hear it around you ... remember I grew up in the age of “two is better than too many” and Judy Smith, the math brain in primary school who use to help me ...

The media campaign then was an attempt to help young girls pursue better life choices. Oprah W. shared that such interventions led her to embrace educational opportunities. For women of color, securing a college degree is a critical first step to accessing better opportunities within the organization.

The women pointed to the fact that education was a preparatory step to entering the workplace, but the nature and scope of their roles honed the required skills necessary for new responsibilities. They agree that whilst many women are entering the labor market and securing for themselves middle-management roles, Caribbean women of color encounter barriers to elite leadership opportunities. The reality is there are not many

women of color who are breaking the glass ceiling in MNCs and so, there will be less expatriate leadership roles for women of color who are not from the host territory.

In predominantly white spaces, several of the women were encouraged by the support they had from their white male and female counterparts. Though labeled as outsiders in the beginning, they were able to “win” the respect of the organization because they were able to disprove myths that were associated with labels such as “third-world natives” and similar perceived pejorative labels.

While noting that women need to assert themselves fully within the structure of the organization, it must be a methodical approach. One way is to invest the time to work on projects that lead to improving skills and competencies. There is an important byproduct to engaging with others on efforts that may be out of one’s comfort zone. This is clearly articulated by Angela B. in this way:

Immersing oneself in the culture of the MNC requires that I lend my skills to projects within a team setting. This leads to cross-cultural sensitivity and I become aware of my idiosyncrasies as well as what my counterparts are motivated by.

Building and Maintaining Bridges- Network Management

This theme is anchored to the sub-theme of belonging. When the decision is taken to relocate, the participants did not put much thought into what they would be giving up. Their narratives pointed to being in a state of euphoria as they were experiencing their career aspirations coming to fruition. The theme maintaining bridges emerged on two levels. The first addressed a feeling of disconnection from their peers, colleagues and support systems in their country of origin. The second was feeling bouts of anxiety in an

environment where they were perceived to be outsiders. Creating and maintaining relationships are important features of the expatriate experience (Fakuda & Chu, 2004).

The textural data that follows support this assertion.

Rosa P. reflects on the price you pay when you decide to pursue an international career.

It was great in the first 12 months and then it became more challenging as you realize you make mistakes oftentimes and you realize you are missing home and you are missing relationships...at the same time you have to be there for others and when you get into the assignment you are so busy, just trying to adapt to the situation that often times you don't realize that you are not communicating effectively.

Through her eyes, one gets the sense that her time was consumed with the weight of the new assignment and adapting to norms of a new society that was different to her country of origin. As she unpacked the emotions, Rosa P. pointed to the "pulling from within" to reduce the internal conflict that arose out of leaving the known for the unknown. Key to her discovery was the need to preserve familial and social ties from her home territory to the point where she returned to Jamaica several weekends at a time.

Angela B. shared her discomfort in the initial months, questioning whether she made the right decision to take the new position. "I don't think at the time, I thought this through and felt uncertain I had made the right decision." Not wanting to appear weak, she immersed herself in her assignment with a determination that had her working brutal hours to keep loneliness at bay.

Her strategy included crafting a plan to support rapport building. As she puts it:

When I got there, the first thing I had to do was create buy-in and I had to network and I figured the only way I could prove myself as a black, Jamaican, female officer was to prove to them I could do the job ... I created an atmosphere of inclusion where I listened to their individual needs and incorporated their voice where possible.

Networking was an essential component of surviving in a new environment. Six out of the eight participants admitted that their companies had emotional support systems in place for their expatriates. One example of this was to introduce the expatriate to networks that would help them become acclimatized. Whilst this was a positive, the participants common take on the experience was they had to assume responsibility for their success which meant they had to develop a positive attitude to networking. That meant accepting corporate sponsored invitations to events that widened the network pool. The aim was to improve business ties as well as social networks and to fulfill the need to belong.

Shonda R. believed that her successful assimilation was a combination of the efforts of the company and her own natural affinity for engaging others. She describes the orientation process as “indoctrination” a word that was also used by Rosa P. She further suggested that “the indoctrination process helps to promote a “mental sense of belonging ... a spiritual sense of belonging.”

Networking was proven to strengthen bonds with different communities which was essential to establishing one’s place in the society. Angela D. suggested that this was less about being a social butterfly and more about building strong ties for future opportunities. Read another way, this was assimilating and adapting to the role as it was

the “nature of the beast – the nature of the job.”

Viola D. argued that while some MNCs had mastered the art of onboarding expatriates, her relocation to the USA was frustrating. Her feeling of alienation is captured in this textural description:

I was coming from my beautifully structured home, all laid out in Jamaica. The transition was very, very rough...very unstable. I was single, and I came and there was nobody here that really offered any kind of support.

She admitted that she was motivated to accept the expatriate offer on the basis that it would be an opportunity to grow her personal brand. Her experience was very different to what she imagined, and she found that new mental models had to be crafted to ensure she succeeded. This required becoming part of networks that would help her boost her professional brand in a very different environment. In her words:

I don't like failure and so I came into this role and knew I would have challenges but the level of challenges I went through meant I had to take an active role in becoming a part of the community. I became a member of a women's group comprised of successful Jamaican women. Doing so helped me find my footing and expanded my network.

For many women today, growth in one's career is benefited by the groups to which one is affiliated. With the prevalence of social media professional networks such as LinkedIn, the Cru (largely supporting women's career aspirations) among many others, the 8 women conceded that traditional forms of networking (face to face) was critical to advancing their careers.

Analysis and Summary

It appeared that the participants had to evaluate their environment and seize on opportunities that would create acceptance. They were outsiders and the cultural norms of the society were outside their comfort zone. Transitioning from one country to another proved to be difficult and although the MNCs offered relocation support, it became critical that the women forge relationships away from what was provided.

As visible representatives of the MNC, the participants concurred that assimilation was not only required for organizational success but successful integration into the community was a priority. Networks are valuable resources and for the female expatriate it enhances access to influential voices. The female expatriate who is committed to a career at the international level is aware of the need to grow her brand. It bears reiterating that the successful expatriate woman of color gains acceptance within a dominant group when she is visible in the space of those who wield power. International organizations are complex structures and women are still a far way off from attaining negotiating power in male dominated spaces. Ardener, (2006) argued that women are still a “muted group” and are given prominence through the actions of another dominant group. The experiences of the participants point to the support of influential males who were instrumental in getting them before the right audience. It becomes imperative for female expatriates to strengthen and maintain ties with those who will provide support for their career aspirations.

The lived experience of women who are not representative of the dominant culture is important to the field of international business and avenues must be created for them to share their stories. In expanding their network, women of color become visible

participants and key contributors to the success of MNCs.

Adler's (1984c) research along with Paik and Vance (2002) pointed to the participation rates of women in international business, indicating that they fell behind that of their male counterparts because companies assume they had no interest in expatriate assignments. The researcher found that the women who were tapped for international roles had mastered the art of networking and were rated as high performers and over-achievers in their home territories. Even though the centers of political and economic power were controlled by their male counterparts, their visibility in the organization played a role in reducing some stereotypes about women's role in local and international business. The candidates who best exemplified the host company's culture, and who were top producers were given access to networks they would otherwise not have been able to access. This is borne out in Ursula B's textual account of an event which she felt was a validation of her contributions to the growth of the enterprise.

I was at a tech conference and one of the clients I had not been around for years, came over, gave me a big informal hug, which demonstrates the level of comfort in the relationship I fostered ... I was taken aback by it, but I think it was good for me because it demonstrated I was impactful... I think key moments like that are validating.

Networking in its truest form has the potential to increase one's career capital. It seizes on the expatriate's need for support in an environment that may be riddled with obstacles. In a paper by Linehan and Scullion (2008), the authors argued that women may miss opportunities for global assignments because they lack organizational support in providing mentors, something that men do not have to grapple with as much. Gatekeepers

are characterized as dominant males who may want to maintain their dominance by excluding women from informal networks for mentoring and networking. It is assumed that without clearly articulated policies to guide the diversity agenda with organizations, the perpetuation of stereotypes will keep women away from the networks that can support their aspirations.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the expatriate experiences of Jamaica C-suite executives in the diaspora working in MNCs. The application of existential phenomenology as the lens of inquiry aimed to unpack the stories to illuminate the essence of the experiences of eight women who represented the elite professional class and the meaning they derived from their experiences. The chosen methodological approach was ideal because it met one criterion of the researcher's goal which was to develop a rapport with the participants, so they would be open to sharing their stories in an atmosphere of transparency. The researcher felt that if the participants were shareholders and as such treated them with the respect that would be accorded co-researchers to the study. It was through their honest reflections that the phenomenon would be best understood. This chapter will illuminate further, what was extracted from the narratives, recommendations for practice, recommendations for future research, limitations and conclusions.

Discussion of Findings

Six themes emerged from the textural descriptions that were common to all eight women. These were: (1) Moving from Invisible to Visible: Disrupting Bias; (2) Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage; (3) Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement/ Subtheme of Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women in Business; (4) Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance; (5) Improving Skill and Competency Capital for Expanding Roles; (6) Building and Maintaining Bridges- Network Management.

The expatriate journey of the Jamaican C-suite executive female was structured in three ways to yield the best outcome. The first was to explore what attracted them to an

expatriate career. The second was to uncover what they felt were important milestones to their evolution in environments that were dissimilar to their own country of origin. Lastly, there is the need to understand the importance of support systems for women who aspire to international careers.

The findings revealed that professional women are still not finding a place at the highest levels of leadership, both within home countries as well as internationally run operations. This observation extends as well to women who are not citizens of developed countries that are often regaled as the gold standard for women's rights. As a sub-category of the group "women of color", the Jamaican expatriate female will encounter challenges in jurisdictions where she is labeled a minority due to her external appearance and country of origin. They have multiple layers of obstacles to navigate which are not only part of the racism or sexism narrative but also ageism as well as colorism.

In an example recounted by a participant, she was practically shamed in her country of origin because of her lighter hue. As a light-skinned Jamaican she attracted mean spirited comments which suggested that she was able to land sought after roles because Jamaican companies had a bias toward light skinned women. Working in the Caribbean region, she also encountered opposition to her appointment to esteemed roles due to the belief she was chosen because she looked like the dominant class. In countries scarred by the legacy of slavery, there are subtle and sometimes overt expressions of skepticism when the candidate's outer appearance does not represent the majority.

The experience was quite different when she entered predominantly white spaces. Experience was a valuable currency, but it also helped that she was able to pass as part of the dominant group. In explaining this curious transition, Oprah W. made the point that

“once she straightened her hair” she was able to navigate privileged spaces with ease. She was able to pass as a white person because she possessed Caucasian features. The two worlds, working in a predominantly black society and a predominantly white environment, provided insight about the marginalization of those who do not fit into a category that is acceptable to the dominant group. In this example, race and color are intricately woven into the narrative of the expatriate experience. One can interpret that if the expatriate fits the profile of the majority, acceptance into the community may not be as concerning to them as to others who are considered outsiders because they do not look like the dominant group.

The expatriate’s rise to the top echelon requires that they learn to “code-switch” and to be emotionally mature. As described by one participant, Viola D. there is a need to manage emotions to untoward events. “You have to keep your emotions in check because you are in an environment where the behaviors of those around you tell you that you don’t belong.” Shonda R. described this chameleon like posture as “reading the temperature of the room”.

Jamaican women in this group grapple with similar challenges as other women around the globe. They were presented with crises that threatened to derail their careers and spoke in unison of the need for a supportive family structure. From the group, three were divorced, with grown children, one was single with a minor and the other four were married, with children as young as a year old. Although, their backgrounds were different, all experienced guilt about not being home as often and as much was expected. They had to juggle different parts of their lives and even then, there were instances that suggested they were failing. One participant made the point that when she got divorced,

she was at a stage where her “career was much more important than being married.” A common feature among all the women was they had support systems in place that created a safety net for their children during their absence. This included spouses, extended family, the church and numerous other trusted networks. Today, even as society expresses disapproval of the absence of women from the home, the women acknowledged that they had to continually review their reality considering new opportunities to progress their careers. Instead of looking at reasons why they could not accept an expatriate role, they problem-solved to produce a win-win outcome.

Moving from Invisible to Visible: Disrupting Bias

In patriarchal societies, the roles that men and women occupy are clearly defined and attempts to destabilize the order result in resistance from those who seek to protect the status quo. Today there is mounting challenge to the structure where the roles of men and women are being renegotiated. In this new world, women have begun to agitate a lot more than their predecessors for a greater stake in having control over their life-choices. Today, we are witnessing women across various societies who are using their platform to elevate the concerns of other women. The continued agitation for women’s rights in the public domain has disrupted the norm and placed gender relations at the center of socio-political and economic discourse.

As corporations grow and the need for talent becomes a priority, organizations have not escaped scrutiny. Whilst acknowledging that women have gained enormously in the world of work in many countries, there is still concern about shattering the glass-ceiling. The implications for breaking the glass-border are dim, partly because women have not achieved critical mass in spaces where their voices have equal weight to that of

their male counterparts. The invisible, sometimes socially constructed barriers remain enforced and act as obstacles that prevent women from leading at top tiered levels.

The Jamaican female expatriate who occupies senior level roles in multinational companies represents the face of women from worlds that have been labeled “third-world nations.” The pejorative label can act as a deterrent to women who seek to advance their careers internationally because it seeks to reduce the value of those who are not from developed nations. Angela B. argued that having worked with Europeans, she has encountered individuals who doubted her abilities. In an environment where people of color (mostly blacks) occupied menial roles, she always felt they were waiting for her to fail. Her complexion made her visible and she therefore had to prove that she was equal to or in some cases better than her white counterparts. It was her ability to resolve complex issues through “out of the box thinking” that helped to break the resistance to her being part of the team. She interpreted her experience this way, “you face a lot of things, a lot of it was covert; you face discrimination, but I was there to do a job and I wanted to succeed.”

Angela D. pointed to the fact that coming from a predominantly black country, she never had to deal with many of the -isms she faced when she went on international assignments. These new “distractions” made her reassess her worldview. She noted that women, especially women who did not look like the dominant group were constantly being assessed and the measures of success differed for women of color (Edmondson Bell & Nkomo, 2003). This meant putting in the hours and taking on assignments that were not ideal because, “if you decide you are coming to work at 8 and leaving at 5 o’clock, and you take one-hour lunch, and you don’t travel when they say it has to be done, you

will not go anywhere.”

The idea of working twice as hard as your white counterpart is a reality for expatriates. When on assignments, the Jamaican C-suite executive is particularly aware of the pressure that comes with being a power-broker. There is the sense they are representing an entire population of people of color and that they must do their best to alter perceptions about the worth of blacks. Work done by Kanter (1977) found that persons who identified as Black felt they had to take on the role of representative for an entire group of people, or they perceived they were expected to speak on an entire race's behalf. This sentiment was expanded by Bell and Nkomo (2001) who found that Black women in dominant white spaces experienced unfair portrayals about the reason they were hired. Race and gender are therefore two components of the female expatriate's experience that cannot be separated, and this is borne out in the narratives of the participants. One participant's observation is this: “I cannot hide my color and it would seem that I am judged by it a lot more than I am by my talent, but when I excel, I am seen as an asset because I make the company profitable.” There is an acceptance among the group that disrupting stereotypes demand that they excel in the roles they are occupy despite the challenges they encounter (Davis, 2012, Davis & Maldonado, 2015).

Who Am I? The Weight of Identity, Gender and Heritage

For many women, a career in international business is an attractive aspiration. Today, there is evidence that women are breaking the glass-ceiling but as the literature suggests, their numbers remain small. According to Wirth (2001), the number of women occupying managerial roles rarely exceed 20 percent, which is startling given the percentage of women in the world's labor market. As women move up the ranks, they

appear to reach stasis at which point they encounter barriers to realizing their full potential. At the highest levels of the organization, the gender divide is quite evident.

Turning the attention to expatriates and women of color who are further represented as 'other' due to their nationality, little attention has been demonstrated in understanding their experiences. They remain invisible in international business literature. Their absence from mainstream business discourse could be the result of being so few as well as the penchant to focus exclusively on dominant groups. It is of value to the international business literature that the lens be expanded to explore pools of talent that have been otherwise overlooked. This is critical in an age where the rhetoric of the war for talent can be interpreted as the perpetuation of stereotypes directed at groups that do not fit the profile of expatriates.

As the participants disclosed, they became much more aware of their gender and race when they started working in MNCs. The experience, described as jarring, brought them to a place where they had to confront stereotypes they did not have to address before. The theme, that emerged from their reflections provoked a reassessment of how they perceived the world and the actors within the spaces they occupied. One participant described her early experience with race bias as not being overt, but the tension was evident, and she acknowledged the racial undertones.

In a calculated move, the women determined that they would convert what made them different to useful currency to aid their mobility aspirations. It was important that they fit in but not to the degree of minimizing their heritage. Maya A. indicated that being a proud Jamaican, she adorned her office with artifacts from her heritage. She embraced her identity and was resolved to volunteering information about her origin whenever

possible. This level of confidence became her calling card in most interactions, which helped to shape the relationships she developed with those inside and outside the organization. Some scholars argue that it is essential that women of color cultivate confidence and protect it as it can be easily shattered by actions within the workplace (Smith, 2003). Such confidence arose from a strong sense of self, which appears to be grounded in how the women were socialized. Their heritage was a celebration of their history and it was important to them that they hold true to their identities.

Renegotiating the Rules of Engagement: Rebranding the Role and Authority of Women in Business

This theme resonated with the subtheme of rebranding the role and authority of women in business. This research is being conducted during a period where women's rights matters have taken center stage. Activism has been met with push back in some quarters and the narrative has been skewed toward an attack on males. The organization has not been spared from the intensity of the debate where women with influence have used their platform to agitate for a larger share of the leadership pie. The dominant players in the agitation for equality may seem to be from white corporate elite professionals, but as the literature supports, there are diverse voices that are keen on disrupting the stereotypes that informed how women are treated.

With such an intense scrutiny on women, there was much to weigh in on as the 8 women reflected on their individual journeys. The women's lived experiences pointed to the painful exercise of having to prove in almost every situation that they were ideally suited for the roles they occupied. They encountered barriers not only among actors in white spaces but as one participant recalled, "being black and female in a predominantly

black, male run entity, comes with its own challenges. Chief among the problems cited was the propensity to ask their executive female members to take notes or take care of coffee. Such requests suggested that gender specific roles were reiterated in the relationship male executive leaders had with their female counterparts. They felt that making such requests was one way to communicate to the rest of the organization that the female's worth was not as equal to that of the male and the woman's role was viewed in a domestic way. They experienced internal conflict in some instances about how to manage the emotions that emerged in such encounters. For some they simply complied for fear they would encounter future challenges that would sideline their careers. For others, they had gained enough leverage and would respectfully remind their male counterparts they were being sexist in the way they communicated.

Maya A. felt that the tension between both genders within the business and economic spaces was a "recalibration of the system" that prioritized and reflected habits that were created by men. As societies evolve, actors who were once on the periphery have seized on the opportunities provided to bring greater awareness to their causes.

Global organizations have become conscious of the part they must play to survive in an environment where "the personal is the political" (Hanisch, 1969). Where women's experiences differ (race, ethnicity, national origin and historical context included), there is a common feature in the stories that speak to oppression and discrimination that will have different meanings. It is the unique experiences of women who occupy marginalized spaces that help to unpack how their personal lives impact their interpretation of struggles that appear to be similar experiences of other women (Mohanty et. al., 1991).

As societies evolve and new demands are made by participants in the labor

market, domestic and international companies are confronted with untoward events that trigger changes in how business is transacted. As active participants in the labor market, women are using their voice to champion change in the public domain. Oprah W. made the point that in her mind:

The drivers of that change are everything to do with globalization, modernization, technology evolution, social media and social responsibility...people are becoming more aware about the influencers and the influenced and the people who have always been outside of the power pool.

She posited as well that though a hunch she was led to believe that powerful men who had teenage and young adult daughters, in an environment focused on women's rights, were being confronted at home about decisions that could impact their future. The discourse between fathers and their daughters may have changed from the narrative of the past, where it was expected that the female would get married and carry on the traditions of homemaker. If this was so, Oprah W. felt that:

You now find one or two men inside the organization because they are now having daughters who are coming up and who are starting to see and feel the effects. So, they are hearing the conversations of their daughters. I am convinced, even if they never admit it that is part of what is influencing some of the change.

Renegotiating the rules of engagement requires advocates and emerging from the women's narratives was the discovery that change had to be facilitated by male voices. Put another way, organizational structures are reinforced by patriarchal beliefs and remodeling the physical structures will inform how women and men engage within these spaces (Osland et.al., 2013). This requires advocates who are mostly men who have

consolidated power and influence in significant ways. The small percentage of women will need to illuminate in material ways, how their presence at the highest levels of leadership can bring about the kind of change anticipated in the future. Female leaders who enjoy equal status to men in MNCs are called on to do two things. The first is they must continue to use their platform and influence to get more talented females into elite roles, which means they must go beyond being mentors in the process. Secondly, they must find the language that will help their male counterparts review their mental models about the role of women in the context of business. Reshaping the way men and women engage at the senior levels will require what Rosa P. imagined as part of the solution:

I think it was my humility that made them think that ...she will accept my offer, my help. I have seen persons in elite roles who you don't dare tell them how to do things.

She believed that in the fight to gain respect at the leadership level in MNCs, it is necessary to invite men to discussions about the challenges faced by women in the boardroom and other public spaces. She suggested that women must summon the courage to speak to the issues but must do so in language that is "dressed-up" as being supportive. Being emotionally in-tune with how male leaders process information is another way that may perhaps signal a willingness to listen to sensitive topics. In one example she shared how this can be achieved.

...we spoke about how we can help him get the best talent to achieve the desired objectives. You can't be confrontational ... in our society we need them ... we must build relationships, but we need to do it in a way that they do not feel threatened.

Transparency is critical in devising how new relationships will progress. The women were confident that more racially and ethnically diverse women will make it to very senior levels in MNCs. It is the belief that it may take longer because women of color are still excluded from elite leadership roles because they encounter barriers that stunt mobility from the home territory. The lens must be focused on identifying the resistance and steps adopted to increase access to spaces that will facilitate improved relationships between genders.

Male Sponsorship Signals Acceptance

Threading the research is the overarching theme of male support at the level of leadership. Owners of capital are predominantly men. So too are those who are hired to grow the enterprise. It is largely held across cultures, time and space that men are imbued with attributes that make them better leaders. These beliefs are reinforced in the language and symbols used in every-day human interaction between the sexes.

In recognizing that men are still the dominant representatives of power and influence, there is the view that acceptance in the public space begins with them. This view began to take shape as the participants explored the support systems that enhanced their success. They admitted they were very good at their craft. But that alone might not have contributed to their mobility, both domestically and internationally. They pointed to the role influential males played in advancing their careers. For some, the engagement was a structured program that was engineered and executed by the Human Resource Office. For others, it was an insatiable drive to for self-actualization which meant sacrificing some parts of their personal lives. Being visible was key as it suggested that the individual was invested in the success of the company. It was the norm for men to

leave the office late at nights. As a senior leader, there was an unwritten code that his was expected as well. In some cultures, working beyond typical hours won the respect of male counterparts.

Angela D. found that as female executives what they did was normal: “we were in the office from early in the morning to late at night and we felt okay ... we didn’t have a problem.

She admitted that this lifestyle affected the family structure, even though support systems were in place to manage their personal affairs.

Ursula shared the same view that prior to her marriage and the birth of her child, she would work beyond normal hours. This was a symbol of commitment in a male dominated environment and was an unspoken value-added attribute for women in international business.

Similarly, Rosa P. described herself as a workaholic. As a single mother, she would take work home and at one point she had two secretaries due to the amount of work she took on.

I moved quickly through the ranks. Everybody knew I worked hard. Don’t ask me about work/life balance. There was none. I remember an account I was handling that no one else wanted and he said, “where can we find more women like you?” That was when they started hiring more women...because they realized that we deliver.

It is evident that women who are strong producers are likely to be supported by their male counterparts when opportunities arise because they not only see the commitment, but they are able to measure their contribution to the bottom-line. These examples become

the standard by which men appraise the value of women's contributions.

Though there is progress in this regard, there is still the belief that the absence of women and by extension women of color in elite roles, does not reflect the perspectives of wider constituents and the decisions are likely to reflect the will of male leaders.

An absence of critical research on black women from the Caribbean and their experiences in MNCs provides a challenge as they remain invisible. This research focuses on a small group of elite professionals and may be the opening needed to explore further, the implications for internationalization given the experiences of other groups who are from different geographic spaces. Redefining how we see leadership and who is ideally suited to be a leader means that companies must begin to ask difficult questions, which might include, why is the company resistant to hiring or developing diverse talent for top roles in MNCs? In communities where the population is diverse, demonstrating that the leadership team is equally diverse can help to frame the story of the organization in a positive way. Given the age of greater access to information, an informed public will match rhetoric with action and hold companies accountable for perceived gaps. Activism on gender equality issues is one example of groups that insert themselves in the conversation to hold companies accountable for what they say in the public domain.

Improving Skill and Competency Capital for New Roles

The war for talent builds its argument on its inability to find skilled and competent talent to fill available leadership positions across the globe. Gender disparities at the highest levels of the organization appear to support the narrative that women may not be prepared for roles that are held by their male counterparts. Shonda R. in her current role, shared that being part of the decision-making team moved her closer to the

hiring realities of her company. As one of the global hospitality brands, the company is invested in boosting the presence of women at top-tiered roles. The strategy to be employed over the next decade is a deliberate, carefully coordinated plan to increase the number of female CEOs. She believed that the company was focused on improving the ratio of women to men but conceded that female talent that met the company's requirements were a small pool and were already working for the competition. She condensed her argument this way:

...women, although they are being considered for these roles, they do not have the skills, capabilities and readiness to assume these roles in a successful way.

She offered what she thought was a reasonable solution to the dilemma. She stated that:

If you think about it, it's almost as if we need an incubator for female talent for the C-suite or ... it would have to go beyond a mentorship or coaching type of thing but it has to be something like a three-year incubator where you have a job shadowing with someone in that role ... you meet the same people they meet, go the same dinners they attend...so it becomes a seamless transition. You get the introductions, you get to meet the people, you get to network, which prepares you for the role.

The idea that is pitched goes beyond the implementation of diversity initiatives. It suggests that organizations must own their agenda and promote the initiatives that they believe in and can support. As reported in the most recent ILO study, women are assuming middle management and other leadership roles particularly in developing countries (ILO, 2015). Where they seem to hit an impenetrable wall is at the most senior levels of the organizations. According to Barry and Franks, (2010), women appear to be

academically qualified with the necessary work-experience that should lead them to accessing roles with power. But the statistics suggest otherwise.

Angela D. believed that women should make it a habit to invest in their future. It should not be the case she stated that “you are told you are not qualified on paper for the role”. Maya A. supported Angela D’s perspective but added that in any role, the female talent must guard her brand. She said:

You don’t know when an opportunity is going to come...you don’t know who is watching you, you don’t know what they are watching about you...every single moment you are putting yourself forward is building toward the opportunity you want in the future and you never know who is going to walk through the door...

Embedded in her statement is the need to be in a perpetual state of readiness. This includes taking advantage of opportunities that help to develop competencies that are weak. Ursula B. did just that when she recognized she wanted to position her career in a strategic way. Though a trained lawyer, her foray into investment banking emerged when she realized she wanted to be in the room when decisions were being made. She recognized that being ancillary to the process did not provide the thrill and challenge she desired. She seized the opportunity to develop her skill by first pursuing a finance program but going further, she determined that having mentors would be critical in helping to finesse her skills.

Academic qualifications are helpful but as studies illustrate, talent is groomed when individuals are immersed in activities designed to help them improve. All 8 women experienced representing the organizations on short-term assignments. From these experiences, they grew more confident and tolerant of cultures that differed from theirs.

Business immersion supported by inhouse mentors were strategies that were employed to strengthen the leadership pipeline for female talent (Edstrom & Galbraith, 1977; Harris, 2006; Selmer & Leung, 2003).

Viola D. opined that women must constantly appraise their worth if they aspire to be internationally mobile. Adopting this approach brings the female talent much closer to opportunities when they emerge. She added: “you don’t lose by investing in yourself because you are preparing to meet the next opportunity.”

The 21st century global C-suite leader must demonstrate new competencies, if they are to succeed today and in the future. Whilst it is recognized that education and other formal process play a role in preparing employees for the next level of organization life, the literature suggests that mentoring can be useful in shaping the experiences of international assignees. Women of color will stand out in spaces that see them as “other” and it is important that organizations facilitate inclusion through the development of programs that will support their aspirations to executive roles. Women of color navigate different boundaries as opposed to their white counterparts. Even within groups that seem to share similar backgrounds, black women will still encounter discrimination based on their gender, color and race. Some participants pointed out that even though they had similar credentials, as their white female or male counterparts, they still confronted bias which they concluded was due to deeply held stereotypes about their race and ethnicity.

Though they still faced discrimination, the participants felt that having earned their degrees, especially from recognized universities, validated them to groups that would otherwise have rejected their value to the organization. This was underscored by Maya A. who credited being accepted in corporate America as an acceptance of her ivy

league education.

Columbia validated me to white people. I just does in a way that it almost doesn't matter what I actually am ...it sort of put me in a place where they could really understand who I was...my degree was my endorsement.

More work needs to be done to expand the programs that benefit minorities. That was the consensus of the participants on the issue of getting more women of color from developing countries into strategic positions within MNCs. It was suggested that women were usually thought of as administrators. As one participant shared, in her company women headed departments like human resources, marketing and public relations. These gendered roles appeared to be consistent across some companies and women were identified as being qualified to take on administrative roles whereas finance, operations and engineering were the arena of males.

Such trait-based assumptions are being critiqued vigorously in scholarship (Adler & Osland, 2016). Women do exhibit similar leadership traits that are typically associated with their counterparts. One can conclude then that across the continuum of leadership traits, the sexes will identify with some competencies that are necessary for success in the 21st century. On other skills and competencies, the literature supports the development of cross-cultural programs to improve skill and competency deficits.

Building and Maintaining Bridges: Network Management

The findings of this study suggest that nurturing relationships is critical to success of expatriate executives. They are considered outsiders and as such they are likely to face resistance in the new environment. Having an appreciation of the cultural differences and norms in one context is helpful to the expatriate experience. In one example shared by a

participant, her relocation and onboarding experience were fraught with challenges. Though the company failed to provide the support systems to minimize feelings of alienation, she identified several networks that would help her immerse into the culture. Contact was made through professional associations. Aided by colleagues from her home territory, the participant made inroads with groups in the host country. She felt that the company was not equipped to address her concerns and could have made the transition seamless had they sought external guidance. Fortunately for her, external support from colleagues in her network reduced the anxieties that would accompany someone moving to a new country. In this example, the company was a locally owned entity seeking to enter the North American market, and its failure resided in not viewing the relocation process as a disruptive event for the expatriate.

The other seven participants perceived their experiences to be in line with their expectations. The corporations were established in the global market and as such would have finessed the expatriate process after many years. The women spoke of having a personal guide, someone at the senior level who was assigned to help them assimilate.

A significant theme emerging from the narratives point to the importance of maintaining networks. For women of color to get ahead, it is an expectation that they invest the time to build and maintain relationships. Networking creates bonds with professionals of similar backgrounds and has the potential of expanding the expatriate's network to other influential groups. With a plethora of different groups that were not limited to the industry alone, some women who were active members in their local Church, found that the integration process was much easier, and they were able to access networks in the host country through affiliate groups. Black professional groups were

another access point for the women and associations like this were critical to helping them grow their professional presence in an environment that labeled them as minorities. As active members of professional networks, the women found that they were able to boost their brand and image as experts in their specific fields.

According to one participant, “you cannot shrink yourself to fit in.” As she reflected, she felt it took a long time for her to stop doubting her capabilities and to simply lead in a manner that conformed to her values. Another participant added to the narrative when she suggested that women who are minorities must “read the room” and adjust their interaction to suit the environment. The goal being that of illuminating their talent in spaces where the value of their contributions may be contested due to stereotypes.

One participant was quick to point out that simply being part of associations or professional communities where the members all looked the same, robbed Jamaican female expatriates of the ability to assimilate in countries where the majority were of a different race. Instead, she argued it was essential that women of color at the senior executive level entertain networks that are opposites to what they would normally be part of as it challenges the stereotypes about black women in the professions. Building and maintaining relationships across cultural and geographic divides is a 21st century prerequisite that ought not to be ignored.

Conclusions

This opportunity to pull back the curtains in the lives of expatriate senior Jamaican female professionals offered another layer to the expatriate literature that typically focuses on the white experience. As companies push their international interests

by entering new markets, attracting and retaining competent talent is presenting a challenge. Current conversations in the business world seem to point to an absence of talent at the higher end of the business structure. Here we are talking about senior executives, including C-suite leaders who are charged with shaping the direction of the company. They have a seat at the table and the complementary skills help to drive company profits.

As the business world recalibrates, the outcome of this research suggests there is a pool of talented women and their stories that remain hidden. Women of color in expatriate literature remain an under-researched group. International business literature presents a homogenous approach to researching the lived experiences of women and this subsumes the voices of others whose cultures are different. To accept that all women experience the same challenges as expatriates is to buy into the idea that we are all the same irrespective of our nationalities, socialization, race among other differentiators.

As members of a minority group, women of color are affected by the beliefs and attitudes that question their worth and are likely to be limited in their growth because of stereotypes that position them as inferior. The eight women offered insight into their journey which is a starting point to expand the academic discourse to include minorities and their experiences at the highest levels of leadership within international business.

As evidenced by the experiences of the eight Jamaican women, growing their international career is difficult because there are barriers; some being of the talent's making but often there are structural and systemic challenges to overcome. In many ways, women appear to struggle to access positions of power, but minority women are affected a lot more because white enterprise has not endorsed them as qualified

candidates to take on senior leadership roles. This picture is true as well for black led companies where the dominant authority subscribes to patriarchal traditions.

Though there is a shift in the equality discourse, stereotypes about black women find comfort in the “normative assumptions about leaders (Harvard Business Review, 2015). For example, male leaders are characterized as assertive and confident. Black females are usually characterized as assertive and confident, similar descriptions as their male counterparts, yet they are not provided with the same opportunities, which are arguments made by Katherine Phillips, senior Vice Dean of Columbia Business School and the Paul Calello Professor of Leadership and Ethics (Harvard Business Review, 2015).

To challenge the stereotypes about black women and their appropriateness for certain roles, it becomes necessary to take control of the narrative; to engage leaders in difficult but honest conversations and to craft responses that can be measured. Efforts as suggested above have the potential to help leaders “see” others who do not look like them.

The obstacles faced by the eight participants pointed to the structure of organizations that are still enamored with the belief that men are better suited for positions at the apex of the pyramid. This is perpetuated in spaces that are determined to be at different evolutionary stages in the gender equality conversation. They unique stories uncover the struggle that plays out in the lives of the women as they grow their careers and manage the societies rigid standards about the role of women. Like other women, the black woman has multiple demands on their lives. The women in this research are mothers, some with adult children. Their struggle to the top is marked by

sacrifices, particularly as it relates to family life. As one participant disclosed, she was driven, and her career choices were not by accident. Her love for numbers led to a career in finance and although a male-dominated field at the time, she was not deterred. She had no regrets and her marriage, she weighed in, would have been an obstacle to her career aspirations. Their identities in the public space revolve around gender, race and other labels, but they have found effective ways to communicate they are much more than stereotypes. As one participant puts it, “I was clear to people that I was black... It was more important to me to be clear on who I am.”

The black woman’s experience as several of the participants recounted their stories, presents a greater challenge in non-black spaces because they are an unknown actor in locations that are largely homogenous. For example, one participant who worked in a Scandinavian country experienced what she described as ‘covert racism’. The new work team was skeptical about what if anything she could contribute to the organization. Some, she felt took offense to the idea of a black woman telling them what to do. Black women, in their world, were characterized as workers who occupied line level roles. The experience provided a sobering picture about the challenges faced by minority women when they accept expatriate roles in locations where they are invisible.

Where there is no example of black women reaching coveted spaces, the expatriate who identifies as black will be measured against her counterparts in the dominant group on two prongs: gender and color. The black woman in this context must be seen to be a hard worker; a person who contributes to the profitability of the company. She must double her efforts when compared to executives against whom she is measured. To succeed in their various roles, the women managed to separate their personal lives

from the professional, career driven woman brand they created.

The research uncovered a concern that there is the perception that women are not generally supportive of other women, especially women who aspire to leadership roles both in domestic and international environments. Their stories revealed incidences where they were left feeling frustrated because they felt let down by females who were positioned to offer support. In many of the cases shared, there was the perception that women made it harder for other women to succeed. One guess was the “threat” other women with similar ambitions posed in male-run sectors. Barash (2006) explained this through her research on women and rivalry, where she observed that women were actively engaged in competition with each other because there was the perception that coveted roles were in limited supply. Women who were much older, and who would have established themselves both financially and professionally were more inclined to support the development goals of younger executives (Barash, 2006). Several of the women pointed to the fact that their ascension was facilitated by white, older males in predominantly white led companies. In majority black spaces, this also appeared to be the case. Participants shared that they did not always feel they were supported by other females and this proved to be a disincentive in seeking to align themselves with visible female leaders. Oprah W. captured this feeling this way:

I have not had the greatest pleasure working with a lot of whom I would consider ... brilliant talent in the sense of who they are as people. Many of them were smart and brilliant to get to where they wanted to, but I found they did not do what men did which was to create a pipeline of other women they were willing to raise up, that they were willing to prepare for other roles. I found they were the

biggest detractors of hiring other women, other women for positions of authority and I am not sure I know why that was.

Other participants cited varying degrees to which they felt they were the target of other women who may have felt threatened by their career aspirations. In those instances, they found it difficult to find common ground with women who had advanced their careers to the top layers of the company. There was skepticism about the agenda of some women who publicly proclaim they have an interest in growing other women. This disconnect has been informed by personal experiences with public figures who have adopted the current rhetoric of helping other women succeed.

A positive perspective was provided by two members who found that MNCs that have positioned their companies as ‘great places to work’, focus on unifying their mission and vision statements into visible outcomes. This does not mean tensions are eradicated but informs the practice of continuous improvement in the effort of reducing the impact of micro-aggressive behaviors that can derail from the MNCs global vision. As one participant shared, “leaders bought into the vision and helped to sustain it because the company proved overtime that it practiced what it put out in the public domain.” Many of these companies were over a century old and would have learned from the mistakes of the past. This means if the direction of the company moved toward embracing a more gender balanced executive committee, the intentional culture would help to drive the initiative. That being the case, there was an expectation that the executive members live the values espoused by the MNC. Any deviation would be corrected by members of the company who bought into the company’s vision. For example, if there was gender bias directed at candidates during recruitment, the core

values of the company would be invoked as a reminder of the standards that were expected. If women at the executive level subscribe to the belief that they are critical to moving the needle on getting more black women into spaces that are difficult to access, then they would be underwriters for significant change in how black professional women are perceived. The participants concurred that sponsorship of diverse talent means putting one's reputation on the line and this was sometimes difficult to do as they were constantly under the microscope.

For many of the participants, the exposure to new cultures was an opportunity to celebrate their identity and heritage, by expressing their authentic selves. Conscious of the biases that were demonstrated through incivility, the executives developed different ways of coping when they felt there was a lack of support from the organization. It meant they had to be more culturally aware and sensitive to the needs of a community that differed from their home territory. As proud Jamaican's, they claimed their heritage and volunteered information about themselves when appropriate, which helped them to manage the conversations in a way they were most comfortable. As experts in their culture, they stood a better chance of countering myths and stereotypes about black females. Getting in front of the story was an opportunity to present other perspectives about women from invisible spaces in the larger global business sphere. Adapting to the new environment meant managing and monitoring their behaviors when they engaged with others in multicultural settings, whilst noting cues that would encourage them to share more about themselves. This does not imply that the executive mis-represent or shrink themselves to fit into the adopted space. Rather, the savvy expatriate will know when the environment has softened to their presence.

The participants were able to adapt quickly because they presented an image that was not filtered. They had risen to the top ranks within the business world because they worked hard and invested in becoming more than society imagined them to be. The level of comfort the women had in claiming their heritage and identity may be due to the current climate and support for people who are different. For example, one participant spoke to the fact that decades ago, women who could pass for white women, claimed that identity to minimize incidences of being discriminated against. As a female who could, she made the point that she was proud to identify as a black woman because she had the platform to do so. It meant when she spoke, the executive committee would understand why some decisions were harmful for groups that did not look like the dominant group. Her voice at the executive table provided a perspective that was often lost because the majority were white, older males and females. Their experiences shrouded them from understanding how detrimental some decisions would be on the larger organizational scale. By positioning herself in the conversation the participant, like many others were able to shape the decisions that would ultimately be cascaded across the company.

The Essence is Revealed

The themes crafted a reality that confronts women who wish not to be governed by patriarchal standards. Business leaders have joined the call for gender diversity at the highest levels of leadership, however, the rhetoric has not been converted into real change. This is even more apparent for black women who navigate real and perceived barriers that are erected by home country decision makers and reinforced by foreign companies. The black woman as an influencer in international business is a rarity and they still struggle to access meaningful roles in MNCs. What has emerged from their

narratives is a growth mindset that challenges the status quo. Their lives are framed in a cycle of continuous struggle to demonstrate they are qualified to assume roles despite their gender, nationality and race.

Synthesizing the Research

There are several learning outcomes to be had from this research. However, focus in this paragraph will be on the female who is seen as different because of her race and nationality. Within the conflict resolution field, gender is conceptualized as socially constructed and is built on hierarchies that project males as leaders. Gender order is therefore a byproduct of structures that attempt to maintain the status quo. Add to this, cultural stereotypes associated with being a black woman from a “third world country” and how she is perceived in spaces that reinforce a certain type of order.

The black woman’s experience is framed in conflict and she is forced to constantly prove her worth as she moves up the hierarchy. What is clear however, is that her successful navigation of spaces that seek to marginalize her, is the result of crafting responses that enable her survival in entities that are multicultural and transnational. The environment helps to produce “fight or flight” responses but as the eight women demonstrated, they developed resilience to the various manifestations of structural and cultural violence.

The black marginalized female executive in MNCs continues to refine her ability to read the environment and amend her responses to achieve better outcomes from the social groups to which she belongs. Put another way, the black female executive, due to her exposure to diverse groups, has developed a type of emotional resilience, born out of learning obtained from encounters in different geographical spaces, diverse peoples and a

recognition that the experiences in her country of origin have prepared her for a future that is outside that social space.

In closing, it is important to point out that Galtung's construct of a violence triangle (direct, structural and cultural) provides an opportunity to engage interdisciplinary scholarship to understand social relations and how they affect different sectors. The eight women, through their stories have shown in several examples practical solutions that can be used to navigate an increasingly complex transnational environment.

Recommendations

Implications for Future Research

This outcome of this research has prompted other questions which opens the door to further inquiry into the lived experiences of Jamaican C-suite female executives in the diaspora of work in multinational companies. The research also prompts the need for focus on the unique experiences of women from the Caribbean and the interpretation of their lived realities. The researcher identified several research opportunities that can improve the body of literature currently available.

In dissecting the results, it was observed that the literature still focuses on the experiences of white women who have traditionally been recruited for expatriate roles. A concern that emerges is the invisibility of Caribbean women in international business literature. Giving voice to black women outside mainstream literature will help to purge the assumptions about their readiness to assume complex roles across borders. The findings from the study will inform how minority women progress their international careers where the host country and by extension the organization, favor male leadership.

A second opportunity is presented to examine how categorizing countries as

developing, third world etc., reinforces stereotypes about people who do not resemble the dominant group. Pejorative labels that are used to describe countries appear to inform how expatriates are perceived in the global space. Such a study would illuminate hidden biases that inform who is able to access opportunities for international assignments.

The findings of the study identified a gap in the literature about the type of programs available to women of color from marginalized countries that would help to boost the skills and competencies necessary for international business. Participants lamented the fact that men were prepared by male sponsors for international assignments. Identified male candidates were supported by robust programs that were designed to help them succeed. It may be useful to the expatriate literature that a comparative study be conducted to analyze the methods that are employed by MNCs to groom men and women for expatriate roles.

Finally, an opportunity is presented to examine how words associated with migration are perceived by various groups. Migration is a problematic word that leads to a variety of interpretations given the arena within which it is raised. From the research, the word expatriate conjures up the image of an elite group of professionals who are typically white. On the other side of the coin, the word 'migrant' appears to speak to minorities who are fleeing economically depressed and politically charged countries. Further research is needed to unpack the divergent views and the implications for policy development in an increasingly competitive environment.

Implications for practice

The findings of this research reveal that minority women's efforts to access positions of power are thwarted by barriers that straddle multiple layers. For some, there

is a fear of being too visible in the public domain as they may run the risk of ruining their careers should they make mistakes. As women of color, there is the belief that they can be penalized for being too outspoken and many of the participants pointed to being hyper aware of how their actions could be construed in environments that were male dominated. The ones who held more influence experienced freedom in challenging their male counterparts and did not suffer the consequences of being alienated from decision-making processes.

The eight women demonstrated what is best described as tenacity that appears to be a key requirement in climbing the corporate ladder. They proved to be audacious and decisive about the future they wanted and utilized the available means to get them there. Interestingly, the participants spoke to the lack of sponsorship by decision-makers in MNCs to move black talent through the leadership pipeline. The research pivots to the creation of incubators for minority talent, specifically designed to begin the process of grooming minority talent for mobile assignments. The vision here is to craft a model that will go beyond the transactional preparatory process. What is being advocated is a fully developed program that attends to the psychological, community and organizational demands that an expatriate will encounter. One recommendation that has been put forward by a participant is to “return to a blank canvas because what worked decades ago, has no value today.” A multi-modal, multi-visionary response is needed and will depend on the effectiveness of partnerships between and among interdisciplinary scholars, practitioners, business leaders and policy shapers. An ever-evolving world of work will require the insights and skill sets of conflict practitioners to support the development of new mental models to successfully transform sectors that are moving to a

more inclusive environment.

References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4(2), 139-158.
- Acker, J. (2000). Revisiting class: Thinking from gender, race and organizations. *Social Politics*, 7(2), 192-214.
- Acker, J. (2006). Inequality regimes: gender, class and race in organizations. *Gender and Society*, 20(4), 441-464.
- Acker, J. (2009). From glass ceiling to inequality regimes. *Sociologie du Travail*, 51(2), 199-217.
- Acker, J. (2012). Gendered organizations and intersectionality: problems and possibilities. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31(3), 214-224.
- Adler, N. (1979). Women as androgynous managers: A conceptualization of the potential for American women in international management. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* Vol 3, 407-436.
- Adler, N. (1994). Competitive frontiers: Women managing across borders. *Journal of Management Development*, 13(2), 24 - 41.
- Adler, N. J. (1984a). Women in international management: Where are they? *California Management Review*, 26(4), 78-89.
- Adler, N. J. (1984b). Women do not want international careers: and other myths about international management. *Organizational Dynamics*, 13(2), 66-83.

- Adler, N. J. & Osland, J. S. (2016). Women leading globally: what we know, what we thought we knew, and need to know about leadership in the 21st century. In advances in global leadership (Volume 9), 15- 56. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Ahern, K. J. (1999). Ten tips for reflexive bracketing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9, 407- 411.
- Al Ariss, A. & Syed, J. (2011). Capital mobilization of skilled migrants: A relational perspective> *British Journal of Management*, 22(2). 286-304.
- Allen, D. (2014, February 5). Jamaica's first woman prime minister the overwhelming choice of the hungry masses. *Jamaica Observer*. Retrieved February 20, 2018.
- Altman, Y. (1997). The high flying, fast tracking Anglo-Saxon executive. *Career development international*, 2, 324-330).
- Altman, Y. & Shortland, S. (2008). Women and International Assignments: Taking stock - A 25- year review. *Human Resource Management*, 2(47), 199-216.
- Andresen, M. & Biemann, T. (2013). Career concepts of self-initiated and assigned expatriates: Self-initiated expatriation: Individual, organizational and national perspectives, 105-121.
- Ardener, E. (2006). Belief and the problem of women and the ‘problem’ revisited. *Feminist anthropology: A reader*, 47-65.
- Ashcraft, K. &. (2003). *Reworking gender. A feminist communicology of organization.* Sage Publications.
- Banai, M. & Harry, W. (2004). Boundaryless global careers: The international itinerants. *International Studies of Management and Organization*, 34(3), 96-120.

- Barash, S. S. (2006). *Tripping the prom queen. The truth about women and rivalry.* MacMillan.
- Barriteau, E. (1998). Theorising gender systems and the project of modernity in 20th century Caribbean. *Feminist Review*, 59(1), 186-210.
- Barriteau, V. E. (2009). The relevance of black feminist scholarship: A Caribbean perspective. *Feminist Africa 7: Diaspora Voices*.
- Beale, F. M. (1970). Double jeopardy: To be black and female. In T. Cade Bambara (Ed.), *The Black woman: An anthology* (pp. 109 – 122). New York, NY: Washington Square Press.
- Beechler, S., & Woodward, I. (2009). The global "war for talent". *Journal of International Management*, 15(3), 273-285.
- Beeson, J., & Valerio, A. M., (2012). The executive leadership imperative: A new perspective on how companies and executives can accelerate the development of women leaders. *Business Horizons*, 55(5), 417-425.
- Bell Jr., D. A. (1980). *Brown v. Board of Education and the interest-convergence dilemma.* *Harvard Law Review*, 518 – 533.
- Bell, E. (1990). The bicultural life of experiences of career-oriented black women. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 11(6), 459-477.
- Bell, E., & Nkomo, S. (2001). *Our separate ways: Black and White women and the struggle for professional identity.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Benjamin, J. (1998). *Shadow of the other: Intersubjectivity and gender in psychoanalysis,* New York. Routledge.

- Black, J. S. (1988). Work role transitions: a study of American expatriate managers in Japan (Vol. v. 19). *Journal of International Business Studies* [S.l.].
- Blanck, P. D., Bellack, A., Rosnow, R. L., J, R.-B. M., & Schooler, N. R. (1992). Scientific rewards and conflicts of ethical choices in human subjects research1992. *American Psychologist*, 47(7), 959-965.
- Brooke, B. (2012). *The art of developing truly global leaders*. Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Brookfield Global Relocation Services (BGRS). (n.d.). Closing the gender gap and talent mobility's role. Retrieved August 8, 2018 from https://www.bgrs.com/tmts_article/closing-the-gender-gap-and-talent-mobilitys-role.
- Brookfield Global Relocation Services (BGRS). (2009), *Global relocation trends survey report*, Woodridge, IL: Brookfield Global Relocation Services.
- Brookfield Global Relocation Services (BGRS). (2016), *Global mobility trends survey report*, Woodridge, IL: Brookfield Global Relocation Services.
- Brown- Glaude, W. (2007). The fact of blackness? The bleached body in contemporary Jamaica. *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, 11(3), 34-51.
- Burke, R. J. (2005). High achieving women: progress and challenges. In R. J. Burke & M.C. Mattis (Eds.) *Supporting women's career advancement. Challenges and opportunities*, (pp. 13-30). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Catalyst. 2011. *The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women's Representation on Boards (2004-2008)*, New York.

- Chenail, R. J. (2011). Ten steps for conceptualizing and conducting qualitative research studies in a pragmatic curious manner. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(6), 1715 - 1732.
- Cohen, E. (1977). Expatriate communities. *Current Sociology*, 24(3), 5-90.
- Colaizzi, P. (1973). *Reflection and Research in Psychology: A phenomenological study of learning*. Dubuque IA: Kendall-Hunt.
- Cole, J. (1997). Gender, culture and Caribbean development. *Gender: A Caribbean Multi-Disciplinary Perspective*. Edited by Leo-Rhynie E, Bailey B, Barrow C. Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 4-13.
- Collings, D. G., Scullion, H., & Morley, M. J. (2007). Changing patterns of global staffing in the multinational enterprise: Challenges to the conventional expatriate assignment and emerging alternatives, *Journal of World Business*, 42(2), 198-213.
- Collingridge, D. S., & Gantt, E. E. (2008). The Quality of Qualitative Research. *American Journal of Medical Quality*, 23(5), 389–395.
- Collins, P. H. (1989). The social construction of Black feminist thought. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 14, 745-773. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/494543>
- Collins, P. H. (1986). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of Black feminist thought. *Social problems*, 33(6), s14-s32.
- Collins, P. H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.), NY: Routledge.
- Confortini, C. C. (2006). Galtung, violence, and gender: The case for a peace studies/feminism alliance. *Peace & Change*, 31(3), 333-367.
- Cooper, C. (2004). *Sound clash: Jamaican dancehall culture at large*. Springer.

- Cooper, C. (2006). Supporting Sister P: Feminist alliances in class-prejudiced Jamaica. *JENdA: A Journal of Culture and Women Studies* (9).
- Copeland, L. & Griggs L. (1985). *Going international*. Random House, New York. N.Y.
- Corporate executives say more minorities in the C-suite is good for business. (2009, Jan 08). *U.S. Newswire* Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/docview/450628938?accountid=6579>
- Cox Jr, T. (1991). The multicultural organization. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(2), 34-47.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *U. Chi. Legal F.*, 139.
- Davis, D. R. (2012). *A Phenomenological Study on the leadership development of African American Women Executives in Academia and Business*. UNLVTheses/Dissertations/Professional Papers/Capstones. Paper 1721.
- Davis, D. R. & Maldonado, C. (2015). Shattering the Glass Ceiling: The Leadership Development of African-American Women in Higher Education. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 35, 48-64.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. New York: NYU Press. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=74312&site=ehost-live>

- Derr, C. B. & Oddou, G. R. (1991). Are U.S. multinationals adequately preparing future American leaders for global. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 2(2), 227-244.
- Duehr, E. E. & Bono, J. E. (2006), Men, women, and managers: Are stereotypes finally changing. *Personnel Psychology*, Vol 59(4), 815-846.
- Eagleton, T. (1983). *Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, reception theory. Literary theory: An Introduction*, 47-48.
- Eagly, A. H. & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth*. Harvard Business Press.
- ECA International, (2012). *Commuter Assignment Survey*, London: ECA International.
- Edmondson Bell, E. L. & Nkomo, S. M. (2003). Our separate ways: Black and white women and the struggle for professional identity. *The Diversity Factor*, 11(1), 11-15.
- Edwards, B. H. (2004). The uses of diaspora. In *African diasporas in the new and old worlds: Consciousness and imagination* (p. 3).
- Edstrom, A., & Galbraith, J. R. (1977). Transfer of managers as a coordination and control strategy in multinational organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 22, 248-263.
- Elborgh-Woytek, M. K., Newiak, M. M., Kochhar, M. K., Fabrizio, M. S., Kpodar, M. K., Wingender, M. P., ... & Schwartz, M. G. (2013). Women, work, and the economy: Macroeconomic gains from gender equity. *International Monetary Fund*.
- Elias, J. (2008). Hegemonic Masculinities, the Multinational Corporation and the Developmental State. *Men and Masculinities*. 10(4), 405-421.

- EY (2016). Tomorrow's workforce: Data driving mobility – global mobility effectiveness survey, London: EY
- Facuda, K. J. & Chu, P. (1994). Wrestling with expatriate family problems: Japanese experience in East Asia. *International Studies of Management and Organization*, 24(3), 36-47.
- Favel, A., Feldblum, M., Smith, M. P. (2007). The human face of global mobility: A research agenda. *Society*, 44(2), 15-25.
- Fechter, A. M. (2016). *Transnational lives: expatriates in Indonesia*. Routledge.
- Feng, J. S. (2015). *Educational strategies for the Next Generation Leaders in Hotel Management*. Hershey, PA IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-8565-9
- Ferguson, K. E. (1994). On bringing more theory, more voices and more politics to the study of organization. *Organization*, 1(1), 81-99.
- Figuroa, M. (2004). Male privileging and male academic underperformance in Jamaica. *Interrogating Caribbean masculinities: Theoretical and empirical analyses*, 137-166.
- Fischlmayr, I. C. (2010). Work-life balance - a neglected issue among Australian female expatriates. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(4), 455-487.
- Fisher, J., & Koch, J. (2001). *Presidential Leadership*. Phoenix, AZ: The Onyx Press.
- Fraelich, C. B. (1989). *A phenomenological investigation of the psychotherapist's experience of presence* (Doctoral Dissertation, ProQuest Information and Learning).

- Frenkel, M. (2017). Gendering the MNC. In *Multi-national corporations and organization theory: Post-millennium perspectives* (pp. 357-388).
- Ford-Smith, H. (1994). Making white ladies: Race, gender and the production of identities in late colonial Jamaica. *Resources for Feminine Research*, 23(4), 55.
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of peace research*, 6(3), 167-191.
- Garko, M. (1999). Existential phenomenology and feminist research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* (23), 167-175.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giscombe, K. & Mattis, M. (2002). Leveling the playing field for women of color in corporate management: Is the business case enough? *Journal of Business Ethics* 37(1), pp. 103 -119.
- Groysberg, B. K. (2011). The new path to the C-suite. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(3), pp. 60-68.
- Groysberg, B., Kelly, K. K., & MacDonald, B. (2011). *The new path to the C-suite*. Harvard Business Review, 89(3).
- Gupta, A. K., & Govindarajan, V. (2000). Knowledge flows with multinational corporations. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(4), 473-496.
- Gupta, A. K. & Gobindarajan, V. (2002). Cultivating a global mindset. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 16(1), 116-126.

- Halter, J. T. (2015). Why women: The leadership imperative to advancing women and engaging men. Fushian LLC.
- Hamilton, M. (2001). UWI- A progressive university for women? *Caribbean quarterly*, 47(2-3), 58-82.
- Hanisch, C. (1969). The Personal is the Political.
- Harris, H. (2002). Women in international management. In C. Brewster & H. Harris (Eds.) *International HRM: Contemporary issues in Europe*. London, UK.
- Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Bhaskar – Shrinivas, P. (2004). Going places: Road more or less traveled in research on expatriate experiences. In *research in personnel and human resource management* (pp. 199 – 247). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Harrison, E. (2014). Where are the voices from South America?: Argentine, Brazilian and Chilean women in international management. In K. Hutchings, & S. Michailova (Eds.), *Research Handbook on Women in International Management* (pp. 186-216). Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hart, D. M. (2006). Managing the global talent pool: sovereignty, treaty and intergovernmental networks. *Technology in Society*, 24(8), 421-434.
- Harvey, M. H., Mayerhofer, H., & Hartman, L. (2010), Corraling the horses to staff the global organization of 21st century, *Organization Dynamics*, 39(3), 258-68.
- Hays, R. D. (1974). Expatriate selection: Insuring success and avoiding failure. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 5(1), 25-37.

- Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(4), 657-674.
- Heilman, M. E. (2012). Gender stereotypes and workplace bias. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 32, 113-135.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organizations. Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. Software of the mind*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Holvino, E. (2010) Intersections: The Simultaneity of Race, Gender and Class in *Organisation Studies. Gender, Work & Organisation*, 17,3, 248-277.
- Hooks, b. (1981). *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*. Boston, MA: South End Press
- Hunter, M. L. (2013). *Race, gender, and the politics of skin tone*. Routledge.
- Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General Introduction to pure phenomenology* (W. R. Boyce Gibson, trans.). New York, Collier.
- Hutchings, K. & Michailova, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Research handbook on women in international management*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hutchings, K. M. (2010). Exploring Arab Middle Eastern women's perceptions of barriers to, and facilitators of international management opportunities. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(1), 61-83.
- Inkson, K. A. (1997). Expatriate Assignment Versus Overseas Experience: Contrasting Models of International Human Resource Development. (Vol. 32(4)). *Journal of World Business*.

- International Labor Organization. (2015). *Women in business and management: Gaining momentum*. Geneva: International Labor Organization.
- International Labor Organization. (2015). *Global estimates of migrant workers: results and methodology*. Geneva: International Labor Organization.
- International Organization for Migration. (2018). *World Migration Report*.
- Izraeli, D. N., & Adler, N. J. (1994). *Competitive frontiers: Women managers in the global: Women managers in a global economy*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Jackson, D. C. (2005). Exploring the Dynamics of New Zealand's Talent Flow. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 34(2), 110–116.
- Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York, N.Y.: Basic Books.
- Keen, E. (1975). *Doing research phenomenologically*. Unpublished manuscript. Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA.
- Kinser, A. E. (2004). Negotiating spaces for/through third-wave feminism. *AWSA Journal*, 124-153.
- Kobayashi, A. & Peake, L. (2000). Racism out of place: thoughts on whiteness and antiracist geography in the new millennium. *Annals of Association of American Geographers*, 90, 392-403.
- Kollinger, I. (2005). Women and expatriate work opportunities in Austrian organizations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(7), 1243 – 1260.
- Koser, K., & Laczko, F. (2010). *World Migration Report 2010. The future of migration: building capacities for change*, Geneva, Switzerland. IOM: International Organization for Migration.

- Krugar, D. (1988). *An introduction to phenomenological psychology*. (2nd Ed.). Cape Town.
- Lavenex, S. (2018). Regional migration governance-building block of global initiatives? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1-19.
- Lay, T. H. (1925). *The Foreign Service of the United States*. Prentice Hall, New York, NY.
- Leopold, T. A., Ratcheva, V., & Zahidi, S. (2016). The global gender gap report 2016. In *World Economic Forum*.
- Lien, D. (1987). Asymmetric information and multi-stage brain drain. *Economics Letters* 23: 305-309.
- Lindsay, K. (2002). Is the Caribbean male an endangered species? *Gendered Realities: Essays in Caribbean Feminists Thought*, 56-82.
- Linehan, M. &. (1999). Senior female international managers: breaking the glass border. *Women in Management Review*, 264-272.
- Linehan, M. &. Scullion, H. (2008). The development of female global managers: The role of networking and mentoring. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(1), 29-40.
- Linehan, M. (2001). Women international managers: The European experience. *Cross-cultural Management: An International Journal*, 8(3/4), 68-84.
- Linehan, M., & Walsh, S. (1999). Senior Female International Managers, breaking the glass border. *Women in Management Review*, 14(7), 264-272.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- Loutfi, M. F. (2001). *Women, gender and work: What is equality and how do we get there?*

- Mahroum, S. (2000). Highly skilled globe trotters: mapping the international migration of human capital. *R& D Management*, 30(1)23-32.,
- Mandelker, J. (. (n.d.). Breaking the glass border, *Working Woman*, 19(1), 16.
- Margarey, S. (2001). *Passions of the first wave feminists*. UNSW Press.
- McNulty, Y. &. (2017). The concept of business expatriates. In *Research handbook of expatriates* (pp. 21-60). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- McKinsey & Company. 2012a. *Unlocking the Full Potential of Women at Work*. New York.
- McKinsey & Company. 2012b. *Women Matter. Making the Breakthrough*.
- McKinsey & Company. 2015. *The Power of Parity. How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth*. New York.
- McKnulty, Y. & Brewster, C. (2016). The concept of business expatriates. *Research handbook of expatriates*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- McNulty, Y. (2015). Acculturating non-traditional expatriates. A case study of single parent, overseas adoption, split family and lesbian assignees. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 49, 278-293.
- Mellahi, K., & Collings, D. G. (2010). The barriers to effective global talent management: The example of corporate elites in MNEs. *Journal of World Business*, 45(2), 143-149.
- Merleau-Ponty, M., Edie, J., & Wild, J. (1964). *The primacy of perception*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Miller, E. (1986). *Marginalization of the black male: Insights from the development of the teaching profession*.

- Mlambo-Ngcuka, P., & Krishnan, M. (2015). At the United Nations: A push for true gender equality. McKinsey Global Institute. Retrieved 10 16, 2017, from <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/at-the-united-nations-a-push-for-true-gender-equality>
- Mohanty, C.T., Russo, A., & Torres, L. (Eds.). (1991). *Third world women and the politics of feminism*. (Vol. 632). Indiana University Press.
- Molloy, J. C. (2012). Construct clarity: Multidisciplinary considerations and illustration using human capital. *Human Resource Management Review*, 22(2), 152-156.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage.
- Nagpal, G. (2013). *Talent economics: The fine line between winning and losing the global war for talent* (Vol. 35. No. 12). Kogan Page Publishers.
- Napier, N. K., & Taylor, S. (2002). Experiences of women professionals abroad: Comparisons across Japan, China and Turkey. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13(5), 837-851.
- Noland, M., Moran, T. & Kotschwar, B. (2016) *Is gender diversity profitable? Evidence from a global survey*. PIIE Working Paper 16 – 3. Washington: Peterson Institute for International Economics.
- Nowell, B. C. (1996). *The experience of interpersonal connection* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis database. (The UMI No. 9709046).
- Olsson, O. (2009). On the democratic legacy of colonialism. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 37(4), 534-551.

- Osland, A. Bird, G. Oddou, M. Maznevski, M. Stevens, & G. Stahl (Eds.), *Global leadership: Research, practice, and development* (2nd ed., pp. 40-79). London: Routledge.
- Osland, J. (2013b). An overview of the global leadership literature. In M. Mendenhall, J. Osland, A. Bird, G. Oddou, M. Maznevski, M. Stevens, & G. Stahl (Eds.), *Global leadership: Research, practice, and development* (2nd ed., pp. 40-79). London: Routledge.
- Over 160 CEOs support UN's women's empowerment principles. (2011, Mar 18). *Al-Africa.Com* Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/docview/880604122?accountid=6579>
- Paik, Y. & Vance, C.M. (2002). Evidence of back-home selection bias against U.S. female expatriates. *Women in Management Review*, 17(2), 68-79.
- Parse, R. R., Coyne, A., & Smith, M. (1985). The lived experience of health: A phenomenological study. *Nursing Research. Qualitative Methods*, 27-37.
- Panizzon, M., Lavenex, S., & Kunz, R. (2011). Introduction: governance through partnerships in international migration. In *Multilayered Migration Governance* (pp. 21-40). Routledge.
- Primeau, L. A. (2003). Reflection on self in qualitative research: Stories of Family. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57, 9 - 16.
- Ray, M. A. (1994). The richness of phenomenology: Philosophic, theoretic and methodologic concerns. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods*, 117-133.

- Reddock, R. (2004). Reflections on Gender and Democracy in the Anglophone Caribbean: historical and contemporary considerations.
- Richardson, J. & Mallon, M. (2005). Career Interrupted? The Case of the Self-Directed Expatriate, 40(4), 409–420.
- Richardson, J. & McKenna, S. (2006). Exploring Relationships with Home and Host Countries. A Study of Self-directed Expatriates (Vols. 13, 1). Cross Cultural Management.
- Richardson, J. & Zikic, J. (2007). The Darker Side of an International Career. Career Development International, 12, 2, 1, 64–186.
- Risman, B. J. (2004). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. Gender & society, 18(4), 429-450.
- Riza Arifeen, S., & Gatrell, C. (2013). A blind spot in organization studies: Gender with ethnicity, nationality and religion. Gender in Management: An International Journal, 28(3), 151-170.
- Rodriguez, J. K. (2016). The Theory and Praxis of Intersectionality in Work and Organizations: Where do we go from here? Gender, Work and Organization, 201-222.
- Rosenberg, L. (2010). The new woman and the "dusky strand": the place of feminism and women's literature in early Jamaican nationalism. Feminist Review, 1, 45-63.
- Salamin, X., & Hanappi, D. (2014). Women and international assignments: A systematic literature review exploring textual data by correspondence analysis. Journal of Global Mobility, 2(3), 343-374.
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). Social Research. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

- Selmer, J., & Leung, A. S. (2003). Personal characteristics of female vs male business expatriates. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, 3(2), 195-212.
- Selmer, J., & Leung, A. S. M. (2003a). Are corporate development activities less available to female than to male expatriates? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 43, 125-136.
- Selmer, J., & Leung, A. S. M. (2003b). Expatriate career intentions of women on foreign assignments and their adjustment. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 18, 244-258.
- Schalk, K. (2011). Job loss and the couple experience: An exploration of coping within the marital context. (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis database. NR83544.
- Scullion, H., & Brewster, C. (2001). The management of expatriates: messages from Europe. *Journal of World Business*, 36(4), 346-365.
- Scullion, H., & Collings, D. (n.d.). *Global talent management*. Routledge.
- Sheffer, G. (1986). A new field of study: Modern diasporas in international politics. In G. Sheffer (Ed.). London: Croom Helm.
- Sheffer, G. (2003). *Diaspora politics: At home abroad*. Cambridge University Press.
- Shepperson, G. (1966). The African Diaspora or- the African Abroad. *African Forum*, 1(2), 76-93.
- Shortland, S. (2009). Gender diversity in expatriation: evaluating theoretical perspectives. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 24(5), 365-386.
- Sibley, D. (1992). *Geographies of exclusion: society and difference in the West*. London: Routledge.

- Sinclair, A. (2008). 7. Bodies and Identities in Constructing Leadership Capital. *Public Leadership*, 83.
- Smith, J. A. (2003). Interpretative phenomenology analysis. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, 53-80.
- Smith, W. L. (2003). The effects of workplace support on the career paths of professional African-American women in corporate employment sector. UMI Dissertations Publishing, 3080010.
- Snyder, C. R. (2008). What is third wave feminism? A new directions essay. *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society*, 175-196.
- Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (1993). *Breaking out again*. London: Routledge.
- Stevick, E. L. (1971). An empirical investigation of the experience of anger. *Duquesne studies in phenomenological psychology*, 1, 132-148.
- Stalker, B., & Mavin, S. (2011). Learning and development experiences of self-initiated expatriate women in the United Arab Emirates. *Human Resource Development International*, 14(3), 273-290.
- Stroh, L. K., Varma, A., & Valy-Durbin, S. J. (2000a). Women and expatriation: Revisiting Adler's findings. In M. J. Davidson & R. J. Burke (Eds.), *Women in management* (pp. 104-119). London: Sage.
- Syed, J., & Murray, P. (2009). Combating the English language deficit: The labour market experiences of migrant women in Australia. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 19(4), 413-432.
- Taylor, E. (1998). A primer on critical race theory: Who are the critical race theorists and what are they saying? *The journal of blacks in higher education*, 122.

- Thai, N. L. (1979). Opportunities for women in international business. *Business Horizons*, 2221- 27.
- Thame, M., & Thakur, D. (2014). The Patriarchal State and the Development of Gender Policy in Jamaica.
- Tharenou, P. (1999). Gender differences in advancing to the top. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 1, 111-132.
- Tharenou, P. (2005). Women's advancement in management: What is known and future areas to address. In R. J. Burke & M. C. Mattis (Eds.), *Supporting women's career advancement. Challenges and opportunities* (pp. 31-57). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Tharenou, P. (2010). Identity and global mobility. In *The psychology of global mobility* (pp. 105-123). New York, NY: Springer.
- Tung, R. L. (2004). Female expatriates: The model global manager? *Organizational Dynamics*, 33, 243-253.
- UNCTAD (1996a). *Incentives and foreign direct investment*, New York and Geneva: United Nations.
- UNCTAD (1996e). *World investment report 1996*, New York and Geneva: United Nations.
- United Kingdom: *Women in Business*. (2014). San Francisco, CA: Aperian Global.
- United Nations. (2010). *The World's Women 2010. Trends and Statistics*. Retrieved from https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_color.pdf

- United Nations. (2011). Women's Empowerment Principles: Equality Means Business. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2011/10/women-s-empowerment-principles-equality-means-business>
- Valle R. S. & Halling, S. (1989). *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology: Exploring the breadth of human experience*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Volpp, L. (1996). Talking "culture": Gender, race, nation, and the politics of multiculturalism. *Columbia Law Review*, 96(6), 1573-1617.
- Von Eckartsberg, R. (1986). *Life-World Experience: Existential-Phenomenological Research Approaches in Psychology*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology & University Press of America
- Vassell, L. (1993). The movement for the vote for women 1918 -119. *Jamaican Historical Review*, 18(40).
- Wall, C., Glenn, S., Mitchinson, S., & Poole, H. (2004). Using a reflective diary to develop bracketing skills during a phenomenological investigation. *Nurse Researcher*, 11, 22 - 29.
- Weber, L. (2010). *Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Welbourne, T. M., Cycyota, C., & Ferrante, C. J. (2007). Wall street reaction to women in IPOs; an examination of gender diversity in top management teams. *Group and Organization Management*, 32(5), 524-547.

- Wertz, F. (2005). Phenomenological research methods for counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 167-177.
- Westman, M. (2004). Strategies for coping with business trips: A qualitative exploratory study. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 11(2), 167.
- Wilson, D. (2007). *Cities and Race: America's new black ghettos*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Winker, G., & Degele, N. (2011). Intersectionality as multi-layer analysis: Dealing with social inequality. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 18(1), 51-66.
- Wirth, L. (2001). Women in management: closer to breaking through the glass ceiling. In *Women, gender and work*.
- Women in business and management: Gaining momentum. Global report. (2015).
Beaverton: Ringgold Inc.
- Woodall, J. & Winstanley, D. (1998). *Management Development: Strategy and Practice*.
Blackwell: Oxford.
- Woods, C. (1988). *Development arrested: the blues and plantation power in the Mississippi delta*. London: Verso.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and feminist politics. *European journal of women's studies*, 13(3), 193-209.
- Zanoni, P., Janssens, M., Benschop, Y. & Nkomo, S. (2010) Unpacking diversity, grasping inequality: rethinking difference through critical perspectives.
Organization, 17,1, 9-29.
- Zhang, Y., & Hou, L. (2012). The romance of working together: benefits of gender diversity on group performance in China. *Human Relations*, 65(11), 1487-1508.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Nationality:
 # of years' experience in expatriate role:
 Roles within MNCs:
 Name: [Apply Pseudonym]
 Industry: [Apply Pseudonym]
 Role/Sphere of influence:
 Marital Status:
 Children:
 Caregiver:

Leading Question:

“What has been the experience of C-Suite Jamaican executive expatriate women in the diaspora of working in multi-national companies?”

- A. *Describe your experience as a Jamaican Executive woman in the diaspora of working in a multinational company.*
- B. *How has your experience in multinational companies shaped your views of female talent management in MNCs?*

Probing Questions:

- A. *Describe the climate at that time- how encouraging was it for women to apply/be considered for international assignments?*
- B. *Describe how your interest in international business emerged and since then how it has evolved.*
- C. *Who emerged as allies?*
- D. *How did they demonstrate their interest in your development?*
- E. *What challenges did you encounter?*
 1. Do women have the same opportunity as men to move between divisions (within MNCs) that are geared toward building experience?
 2. From what you have described, how important is international experience to women's careers?
 3. In the company/companies worked, how would you describe the effect of programs that are used to prepare individuals for international assignments?
 4. How would you describe your journey from _____ to your current role as _____?
 5. Could you give me a sense of how international assignments are handled in your company?
 6. To what extent is there support from senior male leaders when female talent is identified?
 7. How did you prepare for the new assignment?
 8. Describe the challenges encountered in cross border assignments.
 9. Describe the gratifying moments.
 10. How did you manage the tension between family and career goals? What actionable steps did you take to resolve the tension?

Appendix B: Recruitment Tool



JAMAICAN EXPATRIATE WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Research Brief
The intent of the study is to explore the expatriate experiences of the Jamaican executive female employed to Multi-national companies.

Why is this study important?

1. There is a gap in Caribbean literature exploring the migratory experiences of females who boast skills needed for international business.
2. Given the glass-border phenomenon, the research intends to uncover the meanings expatriate Jamaican women assign to their experiences.
3. This study adds another dimension to the career mapping programs that are developed for female talent within Multi-national companies.

Participants Profile

- ✓ Female Jamaican national
- ✓ Expatriate experience in a multi-national company – minimum 3 years.
- ✓ Current/past executives are invited to participate
- ✓ Occupy roles with decision making authority.

Information about the Researcher
Suzette Henry-Campbell is a Doctoral Candidate at Nova Southeastern University, FL, pursuing the program Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Contact details:
E-mail: sh570@mynsu.nova.edu
Mobile: 954-937-4839

You may also visit the NSU IRB website at www.nova.edu/irb/information-for-research-participants for further information regarding your rights as a research participant.

Multi-national entities include NGOs, Private Sector Companies, Government Agencies with an international presence.



Appendix C: Sample Engagement Letter

Dear _____,

My research focus is on the lived experiences of Jamaican women in the diaspora who occupy influential roles in MNCs. In that vein, the questions will look like this:

1. What has been your experience as a Jamaican C-suite/executive female expatriate working in an MNC?
2. What barriers from your experience, were you able to navigate to get to the senior role now occupied?
3. Describe the support received as a female executive to develop competencies necessary for next tier leadership?

I am currently having my research protocols reviewed by the Internal Review Board, especially as I will be working with human subjects.

As a research participant, your identity is protected as I will be applying pseudonyms to each participant and the organizations they serve. All participants data will be secured. More information is given in the *Consent Form* before active interviews begin.

The process will seek to have 45 mins. to an hour of your time. The consent form speaks of approximately 3 hours but is noted should there be interruptions during the interview process.

The data collected from the participants will construct a picture of the expatriate experiences of Jamaican expatriate female executive.

Part of my methodology is to have a 15- minute conversation which will help us align our expectations.

Appendix D: Sample Thank You Note

Dear _____,

I wanted to document my thanks to you, given the numerous obligations that demanded your attention today.

In carving out the time to help me develop a sense of your expatriate journey, you have contributed to the expansion of content about the experiences of Jamaican and by extension Caribbean elite female influencers.

Once the transcription is completed, I will send a copy for your review.

Best,
Suzette

Appendix E: Researcher's Personal Reflection (Bracketing)

This topic seemed to be the most appropriate choice given my interest in people, their development and organizations that support growth. In the early stages of my career, there were observations made in relation to who wielded influence in the organizations. The structures of governance were occupied by males, even though there were many women who had gained impressive academic credentials occupying roles that were just below the influential positions of their male counterparts. State run departments appeared to live the traditions of roles of leadership being the mainstay of males and the administrative roles the domain of women.

In some private sector companies, traditions framed in male leadership were visible, but also visible were corporations that were slowly engaging women to assume roles that were outside of the tradition of administrative functions. From my observations, the roles that meant something, for example complex roles that helped to shape the financial and operational direction of companies, were still largely held by males. The question of what accounted for this was not quite clear and I did not want to fall prey to assumptions.

As I climbed the company's hierarchy, I found that working in a multinational company, there were still echoes of the traditional structures associated with gender roles. However, there seemed to be signs pointing to a paradigm shift. I began to take note of the subtle changes for example, the tone of the company in respect to transforming its corporate culture. The emphasis was on a more inclusive agenda. I assumed that the bold initiatives targeting women for influential roles in the company was being led by changes in the larger context. Equality amongst the sexes appeared to have earned greater attention than before.

It is here that I disclose my personal interest in this problem by acknowledging my own experience as an expatriate working in an organization that had a global presence. The sector exposed the story about leadership and the gendered organization. This observation influenced a closer look at women from the Caribbean and how their roles in organizations were being reimagined.

Thoughts on Gender Inequality

On any given day, one's gender is under the microscope. My keen interest in roles and the appointment of talent to roles within corporations has led me to examine the composition of leaders who sit in elite positions within the organization. By pure observation, there appears to be some truth to the lack of female talent where it matters most; where the worth of the candidate is visible and celebrated across the company. Where it matters most include those tiers that are operational and financial focused, and these enviable positions are in most cases held by men. Though attempts are made to increase the participation of females through deliberate effort and corporate sponsored programs, the top positions continue to have a strong male presence. It struck me then that the word equality evoked mixed reactions in spheres that maintained cultural beliefs that were not easily shattered. The idea of equality is a threat to the status quo and decision makers who hold firmly to structures that maintain their dominance would not be convinced of the need to change, even as the world around them evolved.

Recognition of my biases

To control for biases that can intrude on this research, I am documenting my reaction to the research topic. By doing so, I can check in periodically to verify if data is contaminated by my voice, because of my personal experiences.

- ✓ I have reflected on the pace by which women are considered equal in the business environment given the fact that many have attained academic credentials and have held supervisory roles in elite corporations in Jamaica.
- ✓ I have reflected on the career development mechanisms which in some cases have not been supportive of talented female candidates.
- ✓ I have reflected on my past experiences working with a global entity and recognize there were at times inconsistencies between what was intended and what the outcomes were. In some instances, the agenda behind some initiatives were largely for optics than willful investment in the careers of talented women.

- ✓ I have reflected on the role of mentors who were instrumental in my success at different stages of my development and how working alongside them provided visibility to those who would eventually play a pivotal role in future opportunities.
- ✓ I have reflected on perceived barriers to personal development within and outside of my control. In accounting for the emotions, I am mindful of the complex pieces and yet acknowledge I held implicit biases which could have impacted my worldview.
- ✓ I have reflected on the fact that I am passionate about the career development of female talent. The top tier of the decision-making pyramid struggled to align vision with reality and so many well-intentioned programs did not get the traction needed to survive.
- ✓ I have reflected on my research agenda and the why behind this effort.

Why am I pursuing this research?

- ✓ Women in international business from the perspective of Caribbean nationals is an understudied element of migration and gender research. It is acknowledged that research on the topic has been through the lens of researchers from developed states where cultural, historical and socio-economic values may differ in relation to women from developing states.
- ✓ With a gap in the literature, the opportunity exists to turn the spotlight on migration patterns and experiences of highly skilled Jamaican females who have accessed roles in multinational entities. As with most Caribbean territories, migration has been part of Jamaica's history. The first example, though not a palatable reminder is cast in economic fortunes for colonial empires. Migration in this instance was forcible.
- ✓ In their own words, the Jamaican woman in international business should provide invaluable insight by helping the researcher understand the metaphorical glass border phenomenon and the significance of those experiences to their careers.