

EVALUATION OF GENDERED SPACES AND GENDER BIAS IN THE CHOICE OF LEADERS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Discriminations and gender bias have become a global concern. Tertiary Institutions of learning have become sites where gender bias and gender spaces are well pronounced especially in the in the choice of leaders. In this study, descriptive survey research type of non-experimental design was adopted. A total of 403 (192 males, 201 female and 10 who did not indicate their sex) employees from four Nigerian Universities participated in the study. Their ages ranged from 16yrs to 60 years and above. The participants had a mean age of 37.54yrs and standard deviation of 14.45yrs. Two research questions and two hypotheses were postulated and tested using frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviations and t-test. Results revealed a significant difference in the treatment of workers based on their gender particularly in remuneration/wages ($t = 2.71$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$), training and development ($t = 2.39$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$), sabbatical opportunity ($t = 2.30$, $df = 388$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that factors such as, skill, ability, job requirement, educational qualification, and gender were important factors for choice of leaders in Nigerian universities. It is, therefore, recommended that concerted efforts should be made to create awareness and re-orientate the young ones on the issue of gender equity in all spheres of life starting from cradle to adulthood.

Keywords: Gender, Gender bias, Workplace, Leaders, University

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary Institution also known as tertiary education refers to all post-secondary education, including both public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools. Higher education is instrumental in fostering growth, reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity (World Bank, 2018). It is an important ingredient for anyone desiring to proceed to professional stages of their course of study. Employment in a tertiary institution is very

competitive but nonetheless interesting and monetarily rewarding (George, 2016). However, as interesting and rewarding as this is, discrimination and gender bias constitute serious obstacles that have deprived women and favoured men for leadership positions.

Gender is a way of distinguishing between masculinity and femininity of a person. The World Health Organization (2018) defines gender roles as "socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women". This socially constructed roles such as norms, roles and relationships of women and men differ from one community to another community. People are taught appropriate norms and behaviors according to different culture including how they should communicate with others of the same or opposite sex within the family, society and work place. The expectation is then for individual person to conform to the established gender norms; failure to conform will often lead to stigma, discriminatory practices or social exclusion; all of which can be detrimental to health. The existence of gender imbalance in the Nigerian society during the pre-colonial period is such that predominant occupational skills that are within the family are mostly passed down to boys (for example, farming, carpentry, bricklaying, fishing, etc.) while girls are instructed on how to do house-keeping, child rearing and other reproductive functions. However, discussion on the degree to which gender and gender roles are socially constructed (i.e. non-biologically influenced) are haphazard and inconsistent.

According to Chauraya and Mugodzwa (2012), gender bias refers to the practice of granting or denying rights or privileges to a person based on their gender. Gendered spaces refer to the kind of jobs that is believed to be for a particular gender. For example, nursing and Secretarial studies in Nigeria are culturally believed to be for females, whereas Spreeder (2013) reported that typing skill is gender blind and anyone can be a successful typist/secretary provided he/she can devote adequate practice time to the process. As a matter of fact, Otamiri and Ogbonda (2015) in their study revealed that male secretaries were better in computer operation, data processing and in organizing and covering meetings. However, the female secretaries were better in the areas of supervision of staff and handling materials and equipment. Furthermore, researchers such as Quentim (2011) and Oppenheim (2018) have revealed that women are better than men in driving and gardening, professions traditionally associated with men.

The term "leaders" refers to persons who oversee in certain positions of leadership in organizations. Due to the fact that from history, there has been a discrimination against the feminine gender as it relates to leadership positions, the assumption that males were better suited for those leadership roles was, until recently, rarely questioned. We are however in an era where that assumption has been shaken as a number of women have served in different leadership positions such as prime ministers in countries such as: Britain, Canada, India etc; and leaders of other top government positions. Despite this, men and women are better accepted by subordinates and are agreed to be effective leaders when in positions in consonance with their traditional gender roles. Further, despite the increasing

awareness and movement against gender inequality, men still dominate many leadership positions in many organizations today. Olaogun, Adebayo and Oluyemo (2015) note that gender opportunity restrictions exist in all societies, such that men have been noted to be more than women in the corporate world.

The assertion that men are now more than women was also confirmed by Adebayo and Akanle (2014) who noted that women were prevented from accessing employment opportunities because they are seen as rivals and so every form of instrument to eliminate their competitions are used. To buttress all that has been said, a study conducted by Andersen and Hansson (2011) to determine the significant differences in leadership behaviour amongst men and women, showed that the only differences were in decision-making styles, however none were great enough to be considered significant. The differences between women's and men's ability to carry out responsible jobs are therefore minimal, once women obtain the adequate job competence. Women should therefore have equal opportunity in early childhood, and equal access in education and all types of job training and development. This would, therefore equip them enough to be able to compete with men for leadership positions and other jobs.

Several other reasons have been cited for the low proportion of women leaders. Aside the fact that Egunjobi (2009) confirmed that the female workers to male workers ratio in the University of Ilorin for example was 11.6% to 88.4%. One of the reasons for the low proportion of women in leadership position is that a woman's aspirations can be blunted just by the accepted socialization methods she's exposed to according to her culture. This includes submissiveness, passivity, avoidance of aggression and other qualities in the Nigerian culture which are considered "feminine". In addition, it has been found that even when high school boys and girls have the same educational aspirations, boys tend to get more parental support compared to girls (Ota, 2007). Also, the belief that women most frequently occupy managerial positions in organisations where there is exertion of little power and advancement opportunity, or where other women are so rare that their presence is attributed to their sexuality. As reported by (Levy, 2010), aside their paid jobs, women uphold the significant responsibility for the care of their families and homes, this therefore reduces the energy they might otherwise have poured into the pursuit of leadership positions. This makes many women, except very few, unconsciously focus their attention on traditional values and therefore prefer men to handle the leadership roles.

In addition, the percentage of women in senior leadership positions vary considerably because women are not usually given the opportunity to assume leadership positions due to some limitations imposed on them. However, women are still well represented in some areas such as in services like education, healthcare, government, and hospitals, where women tend to be in large number (Bowles & McGinn, 2005; Karau, & Makhijani, 1995) while in management teams in some conventional industries (e.g., manufacturing, construction, and financial services) men are predominant (Oakley, 2000). Furthermore, Bowless and McGinn (2005) reported that even when women are selected for leadership

positions, they are mainly to assist the appointed leader of the establishment (as opposed to the core operations of a business), in less visible positions, and in roles that have less responsibility. Bruck müller and Branscombe (2010) also found that women are more likely to rise to positions of organizational leadership in times of crisis than in times of success.

Over the years, there has been so much speculation about ability of women to compete with their male counterpart. Also, the assumption that men were better suited than women for leadership roles was, until recently, rarely questioned. Leadership positions have predominantly been held by men on the assumption that men are more effective leaders. Women are rarely seen in senior leadership positions leading to inadequate data on how they behave in such positions. However, in recent times, the assumption that leaders are to be men has come under scrutiny by a growing body of scholarly writing on the subject of gender and leadership. Women are believed to have restricted access to some leadership role and hence are denied some work spaces. Denying women access to some work spaces in the University is automatic denial of some benefits to them.

It is strongly believed that adequate development of any community or society rest on the utilization of both genders. Selection of leadership should be strictly based on skill, competence and ability rather than on gender factors. For progress and advancement in any workplace, equal representation of men and women based on ability are needed. There should be no gender discrimination as regards quantity or quality of leaders. Remuneration, promotion and rewards of excellence should never be gender influenced. Thus, empowering women and girls has an effect that promotes economic growth and development. Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only necessary, but also crucial in achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

This leads to the quest by this study to assess the opinions of some selected workers in some selected Nigerian Universities on gendered spaces and gender bias in the choice of leaders in their institutions. The following questions are raised to guide the study.

Research questions

1. What are the opinions of workers in Nigerian universities on which gender best fits the available work space in the institutions?
2. What are the factors influencing the choice of leaders in Nigerian universities?

Evaluation Model

Participatory evaluation model was adopted for the study. It is an approach that provide for the active involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process. Participatory evaluation methods, in comparison to more mainstream evaluation practices, make space for input from locals who have a specialized and more personal set of knowledge on the community's needs.

The key idea is that stakeholders, that is, all groups with both an interest and that are affected by the phenomenon, are given an opportunity to provide feedback. Within these contexts, stakeholders are involved at all levels to provide information on how they are being affected by the phenomenon under consideration, including planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant gender difference in the treatment of workers in Nigerian universities.
2. There is no significant difference in workers' response on gender bias in Nigerian universities generally.

METHOD

Design

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study.

Population

Population comprised all categories of workers (both academic and non-academic) from selected Nigerian tertiary institutions. Four universities (2 Federal, 1 State and 1 Private) were purposively selected.

Participants

Four hundred and three (403) workers from four Nigerian universities participated in the study. Two hundred and twelve (52.7%) of the respondents were from federal universities, 91 (22.6%) were from private universities and 100 (24.8%) from state universities in Nigeria. With regards to their gender, 192 (47.6%) of the respondent were male, 201 (49.9%) were female while 10 (2.5%) did not indicate their gender. Their ages ranged from 21yrs to 60 years and above. The participants had a mean age of 37.54yrs and standard deviation of 14.45yrs. The participants' level of academic qualification shows that 191 (47.4%) of the respondents had postgraduate degree certificate, 171 (42.4%) had First degree, 19 (4.7%) had secondary school certificate while 15(3.7%) had primary six leaving certificates. In terms of their job status, 218 (54.1%) of the respondent were administrative staff, 141 (35%) were academic staff, 14 (3.5%) of the respondents worked in the security unit, and 3.7% (15) were cleaners while 15 (3.7%) did not indicate their job status. Out of 403 workers, 329 (81.6%) of the respondents were Christian, 71 (17.6%) were Muslim 1 (2%) other and 2 (5%) did not indicate religion.

Instrument

A well-structured questionnaire, consisting of four sections eliciting information on **i.** gender that best fit a particular work spaces(21 items) with four responses and scoring {Either (4), male (3), female (2), I don't know (1)}, **ii.** considerable factors in the choice of leaders (9 items) with four with four responses and scoring {Most often (4), Often (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)}, **iii.** gender bias in the treatment of workers at workplace (9 items) with three responses and scoring {Men & women

treated equally(3), Men treated less favourably(2) & Women treated less favourably(1)} and **iv.** gender bias in general (29 items) with four responses and scoring {Stongly agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1). The reliability coefficient of the sections as determined by Cronbach alpha are 0.91, 0.68, 0.64 and 0.77 respectively.

Compliance with Ethical Standards Ethical Approval:

This article was cleared by the ethical committee. All procedures carried out in the study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from individual participants and they were informed about their rights to full disclosure, participation and self-determination.

RESULTS

Research question 1: What are the opinions of workers in Nigerian universities on which gender best fits the available workspace in the institutions?

Table 1: Analysis of opinion of Workers on Gender that best fit available Workspace in the selected Universities

Work Space	Male	%	Female	%	Either	%	I don't know	%
Security	291	72.2	6	1.5	96	23.8	10	2.5
Cleaner	20	5.0	238	59.1	135	33.5	10	2.5
Gardeners	323	80.1	11	2.7	56	13.9	13	3.2
Technicians	261	64.8	14	3.5	118	29.3	9	2.2
Office Assistants	34	8.4	151	37.5	207	51.4	10	2.5
Messenger	93	23.1	64	15.9	234	58.1	11	2.7
Typist / Secretary	31	7.7	193	47.9	170	42.2	9	2.2
Drivers	334	82.9	11	2.7	40	9.9	12	3.0
Supervisors	80	19.9	40	9.9	271	67.2	12	3.0
Technologist	122	30.3	21	5.2	250	62.0	10	2.5
Chief technologist	108	26.8	14	3.5	258	64.0	22	5.5
Lecturers	38	9.4	21	5.2	327	81.1	17	4.2
Vice Chancellors	114	28.3	21	5.2	256	63.5	12	3.0
Deputy Chancellors	59	14.6	51	12.7	278	69.0	15	3.7
Provost	104	25.8	22	5.5	263	65.3	14	3.5
Registrars	57	14.1	46	11.4	286	71.0	14	3.5
Bursars	81	20.1	32	7.9	277	68.7	13	3.2
Librarians	41	10.2	58	14.4	291	72.2	13	3.2
Deans	65	16.1	21	5.2	303	75.2	14	3.5
HOD/HOU	45	11.2	21	5.2	317	78.7	17	4.2

Table 2 revealed that majority (above average) of the respondent agreed that either of the gender (male or female) can best fit the following workspace in the universities as shown: office assistant 51.4% (207), messengers 58.1% (234),

supervisors 67.2% (271), technologists 62% (250), chief technologists 64% (258), lecturers 81.1% (327). For all the above mentioned workspace in the selected Universities, the next gender following “either” is the male gender with the exception of office assistants, typists/secretary which goes for female after considering either of the gender. Majority of the respondent answered that men should be security (72.2%), gardeners (80.1%), technicians (64.8%), and drivers (82.9%) while jobs like cleaning and typing (47.9%) should be handled by women. In addition, results revealed that for all leadership positions, a larger percentages of the respondents agreed to the fact that either of the gender can best fit such positions.

Research question 2: What are the factors influencing the choice of leaders in Nigerian universities.

Respondents were allowed to give their opinions on some factors they want in a leader. The results is presented in Table 2 below

Table 2: Analysis for Factors affecting choice of Leaders in Nigerian Universities

Factors	Most often	%	Often	%	Rarely	%	Never	%	Mean	STD DEV
Passion for leadership	195	48.4	117	29.0	58	14.4	28	6.9	3.2	.94
Peer group influence	86	21.3	120	29.8	121	30.0	70	17.4	2.6	1.02
Skill/ability for the job	221	54.8	131	32.5	36	8.9	12	3.0	3.4	.78
Salary level	131	32.5	103	25.6	111	27.5	49	12.2	2.8	1.04
Gender	64	15.9	108	26.8	152	37.7	74	18.4	2.4	.97
Vission	103	25.6	153	38.0	103	25.6	37	9.2	2.8	.93
Educational qualificatn	186	46.2	138	34.2	55	13.6	19	4.7	3.2	.86
Religion	60	14.9	71	17.6	138	34.2	130	32.3	2.2	1.04
Tribe	38	9.4	69	17.1	132	32.8	160	39.7	2.0	.98

Table 2 revealed that a good number of the respondents from the selected universities often consider factors like passion for leadership 312 (77.4%), skill and ability for the job 352 (87.3%), salary level 234 (58.1%), vision 256 (63.6%), and educational qualification 324 (80.4%) for choosing their leaders in the universities. It is worth noting that only 74 (18.4%)of the respondents will never give gender a consideration as one of the factor for choice of leaders in universities. Again, 130 (32.3%) and 160 (39.7%) of the respondents respectively will not give religion

and tribe a consideration, however, a substantial number of the respondents will still consider gender 324 (81.6%), religion 269 (67.7%) and tribe 239 (60.3%) as factors for choice of leaders in the universities. Nonetheless, when the mean and standard deviations of the responses are considered, the factors with the mean of 2.5 and above can actually be the factors considered for the choice of leaders in universities which include passion for leadership, skill, ability, requirement for the job and educational qualification.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant gender difference in the treatment of workers in Nigerian universities?

Respondent were requested to respond to how workers are being treated based on their gender on a likert scale as follows: “women treated less favourably”-1; “men treated less favourably” -2; “men and women treated equally” -3. Independent T-test analysis was used, the results is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Gender bias in treatment of workers in Nigerian Universities

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
recruitment and selection	male	192	2.5938	.71744	.05178	.291	391	.771
	female	201	2.5721	.75234	.05307			
remuneration/wages	male	192	2.8854	.40597	.02930	2.706	391	.007
	female	201	2.7463	.59186	.04175			
appraisal performance management	male	191	2.8168	.45065	.03261	1.965	390	.050
	female	201	2.7065	.63907	.04508			
training and development	male	192	2.8385	.46890	.03384	2.392	391	.017
	female	201	2.7015	.64842	.04574			
sabbatical opportunities	male	192	2.8490	.44966	.03245	2.300	388	.022
	female	198	2.7273	.58437	.04153			
Promotion	male	192	2.8438	.45368	.03274	1.794	391	.074
	female	201	2.7463	.60852	.04292			
reward for excellence	male	192	2.8490	.43787	.03160	1.605	390	.109
	female	200	2.7650	.58436	.04132			
disciplinary action	male	192	2.6510	.65370	.04718	.857	391	.059
	female	201	2.5920	.70904	.05001			
Prov. of office equipmt	male	192	2.7396	.52667	.03801	.337	390	.737
	female	200	2.7200	.61929	.04379			

Table 3 shows a significant difference in the response of workers on the treatment of workers based on their gender particularly in remuneration/wages ($t = 2.706$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$); training and development ($t = 2.392$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$); sabbatical opportunity ($t = 2.300$, $df = 388$, $p < 0.05$); however, results show no significant difference in the treatment of workers based on their gender in other areas such as recruitment and selection ($t = .291$, $df = 391$, $p > 0.05$); appraisal performance management ($t = 1.965$, $df = 390$, $p = 0.05$); promotion ($t = 1.794$, $df = 391$, $p > 0.05$);

reward for excellence ($t = 1.605$, $df = 390$, $p > 0.05$); disciplinary action ($t = .857$, $df = 391$, $p > 0.05$); and provision of office equipment ($t = .337$, $df = 390$, $p > 0.05$)

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in workers' response on gender bias in Nigerian Universities generally

Table 4: Independent t-test on Gender Bias in Nigerian Universities

Group Statistics						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
There is gender discrimination in my work-place	Male	191	2.0890	1.11329	.08055	-3.019	390	.003
	female	201	2.4478	1.23228	.08692			
I have lost a job opportunity because of my gender	Male	192	2.0625	1.11920	.08077	-2.113	391	.035
	female	201	2.3085	1.18506	.08359			
I have to work harder at my job because of my gender	Male	191	2.4660	1.28867	.09325	-.838	390	.402
	female	201	2.5721	1.21902	.08598			
In my workplace, men are more superior than women	Male	192	2.1979	1.18560	.08556	-.297	391	.767
	female	201	2.2338	1.21246	.08552			
Women at my workplace receive less opportunities than men	Male	192	1.9115	.96941	.06996	-5.321	391	.000
	female	201	2.4975	1.19635	.08438			
A woman will be able to fill a top position at my workplace	male	192	3.3854	1.36807	.09873	-.565	391	.572
	female	201	3.4627	1.34159	.09463			
I had to employ desperate measure to get promotion because of my gender	male	192	1.8906	.99397	.07173	-2.914	390	.004
	female	200	2.2000	1.10276	.07798			
Men get promoted more than women at my workplace	male	192	1.8073	.90914	.06561	-4.231	390	.000
	female	200	2.2450	1.12307	.07941			
Both men and women get paid the same amount of money for the same job at my workplace	male	192	3.9167	1.19481	.08623	2.731	391	.007
	female	201	3.5771	1.26699	.08937			
Men and women should be treated equally at work	male	192	3.9427	1.19854	.08650	-1.357	391	.175
	female	201	4.0995	1.09089	.07695			
I receive the respect I deserve from my colleagues	male	192	3.8333	1.02499	.07397	1.606	391	.109
	female	201	3.6716	.97038	.06845			
My boss encourages me at work	male	192	3.8333	.98859	.07135	3.295	391	.001
	female	201	3.4975	1.03017	.07266			
Women are too emotional to be effective leaders.	male	192	2.9792	1.23203	.08891	4.540	391	.000
	female	201	2.4179	1.21839	.08594			
Women and men running executive boards together causes problems.	male	192	2.2344	1.11264	.08030	-.759	390	.448
	female	200	2.3200	1.11976	.07918			

My boss show gender discrimination towards me on the basis of my religion?	male	192	1.8958	.99190	.07158	-3.055	391	.002
	female	201	2.2040	1.00657	.07100			
The selection criteria are framed in favour of the male?	male	192	1.9115	.93645	.06758	-3.782	390	.000
	female	200	2.3100	1.13594	.08032			
I have been denied incentives only because I am a female?	male	192	2.1094	.97267	.07020	-1.519	391	.130
	female	201	2.2587	.97608	.06885			
I have been denied promotion only because I am a female?	male	192	2.1563	.98500	.07109	-.281	391	.779
	female	201	2.1841	.98028	.06914			
I have missed a scholarship/grant only because I am a lady	male	191	2.1466	.92308	.06679	.337	390	.736
	female	201	2.1144	.96532	.06809			
I have missed an award only because I am a lady	male	191	2.1990	.95267	.06893	.716	390	.475
	female	201	2.1294	.97118	.06850			
My career choice is more female oriented profession?	male	192	2.3229	1.12091	.08089	-1.628	390	.104
	female	200	2.5200	1.26793	.08966			
Men are better leaders than women	male	192	2.7552	1.40212	.10119	5.065	391	.000
	female	201	2.0846	1.21976	.08604			
Men should earn more money than their female counterparts	male	191	2.2723	1.20927	.08750	1.161	390	.246
	female	201	2.1294	1.22604	.08648			
Men have more power over women	male	192	2.7813	1.26328	.09117	2.183	391	.030
	female	201	2.4876	1.39682	.09852			
Women should have the same rights as men	male	192	3.3594	1.36563	.09856	-3.245	391	.001
	female	201	3.7811	1.20907	.08528			
Women are only good for cooking and cleaning	male	192	1.8958	1.10666	.07987	1.774	390	.077
	female	200	1.7100	.96465	.06821			
Women are supposed to have cl“clean” jobs such as teachers, nurses, secretaries and librarians	male	192	2.5677	1.30468	.09416	1.782	391	.075
	female	201	2.3383	1.24699	.08796			
Women are supposed to make less money than men	male	192	1.9167	1.03516	.07471	1.418	391	.157
	female	201	1.7711	.99868	.07044			
Women are better at raising children.	male	191	3.2827	1.46311	.10587	-.391	390	.696
	female	201	3.3383	1.35092	.09529			

Table 4 shows a significant difference in the response of workers on the issue of bias generally in the selected University based on their gender particularly to some statements such as ‘There is gender discrimination in my work-place’ ($t = -3.02$, $df = 390$, $p < 0.05$); I have lost a job opportunity because of my gender ($t = -2.11$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$); Women at my workplace receive less opportunities than men ($t = -5.32$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$); I had to employ desperate measure to get promotion because of my gender ($t = -2.91$, $df = 390$, $p < 0.05$); Men get promoted more than women at my workplace ($t = -4.23$, $df = 390$, $p < 0.05$); Men are better leaders than women ($t = -5.07$, $df = 391$, $p < 0.05$) and so on; however, results show no significant difference in the issue of bias generally based on their gender in other areas such as A woman will be able to fill a top position at my workplace ($t = -.57$, $df = 391$, $p > 0.05$); Women and men running executive boards together causes problems ($t = -.76$, $df = 390$, $p > 0.05$); I have been denied promotion only because I am a female ($t = -.28$, $df = 391$, $p > 0.05$) and so on.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that a little above average of the respondents are in support that either of the gender can fit into some of the available workspace in Nigerian universities while still believe that security guards, gardeners, technicians and drivers, should be the male gender. This opinion is contrary to the findings of Quentin (2011) who found that women are better than men at gardening because they were better at choosing, arranging and tending to flowers, planting hanging baskets and selecting garden ornaments. It will then be a great mistake to discriminate totally against female applicants who may love to become a gardener. In addition, research findings reported by Oppenheim (2018) revealed that male motorists commits motorist offence four (4) times as much as women motorist.

Oppenheim’s study examined insurance, crime and driving test statistics and found out that women came out on top in almost every metric, one in four (25%) of all offences were men speeding as compare with one in fifteen (7%) where women were charged with the same offence. This is an eye-opener that no gender should be slighted when it comes to the matter of driving. For the workspace of typist and cleaner, female gender takes the largest percentage, which is contrary to Spreeder’s (2013) opinion who in his article maintained that touch typing is manual dexterity skill that is gender blind and anyone irrespective of the gender, who has the interest and able to devote adequate practice time to the process can learn to type efficiently well. Also, Otamiri and Ogbonda (2015) in their study revealed that male secretaries were better in computer operation and data processing and in organizing and covering meetings, while the female secretaries were better in the areas of supervision of staff and handling materials and equipment. The current results exposed the truth of gender stereotype for some aspect of workspace.

Selection of leadership particularly in an educational setting such as the universities should be strictly based on skill competence and ability rather than on

gender factors. The statistics for this study shows that factors considered for the choice of leaders in the selected universities are passion for leadership, skill, ability and educational qualifications (Table 3). However, only 18.4% of the respondent will never give gender a consideration for the choice of leaders. Again, when workers were asked to specify which gender they will prefer as their immediate boss, majority of the male and female respondent prefer the male gender as their immediate boss. It was only 8.9% of the respondent that prefer either of the gender, it then implies that there is still a subtle gender bias in the choice of leaders in the University settings.

Findings also revealed a significant difference in the response of male and female workers on the issue of gender bias generally in the selected University. This corroborates the report of Olaogun, Adebayo and Oluyemo (2015) who noted that gender opportunity restrictions exist in all societies and that women were prevented from accessing employment opportunities because they are seen as rivals and so every form of instrument to eliminate their competitions are used. Result also revealed a significant difference in the treatment of workers based on their gender particularly in remuneration/wages, training & development and in sabbatical opportunities. This explains the experience of Hanna (2019) who was repeatedly denied training and promotion opportunities, and many years of equal opportunity for advancement, which was granted to less qualified male coworkers.

The difference in treatment may be subtle, unwritten and sometimes not intentionally implemented by some boss in trying to defend their personal interest. However, results show no significant difference in the treatment of workers based on their gender in other areas such as recruitment and selection, appraisal performance management, promotion, reward for excellence, disciplinary action and provision of office equipment. This is an improvement on treatment of workers which may have been the consequence of the recent advocacy on gender equity and it is also in line with the proposal of Denmark Ministry of employment that equal value should be placed on men and women by given them equal rights and entitlements. Besides, it follows the suggestion of Stanley (2016) that all workplace should try to provide equal opportunities for men and women.

CONCLUSION

On a general note, important factors such as passion for leadership, skills, ability, salary level, vision, and educational qualification are considered for choice of leadership without any prejudice however, the results still revealed a subtle, unwritten and though sometimes un-intentional gender bias in the treatment of workers from the selected universities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. Concerted efforts should be made to create awareness and re-orientate the young ones on the issue of gender equity in all spheres of life starting from the cradle to adulthood
2. Any form of attitudes, policies, and administrations that promote gender discrimination should be strongly condemned in our institutions and communities
3. Special gender centers should be set up at various level of the societies to address gender based discriminations.

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