

GENDER INFLUENCE ON MANAGERIAL EFFICIENCY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIA

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This study discusses the influences of gender on managerial efficiency of academic librarians in Nigeria. The rationale for the study was to investigate if gender grouping has an influence on the managerial competence of librarians in Nigeria. The total enumeration sampling technique with a questionnaire instrument was used to collect data from 105 respondents and 89 questionnaires were found usable for the data analysis. The questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS.

The study revealed that there were more male than female librarians in the libraries used for the study while there were more academically qualified female librarians. Despite this, there were more male heads of unit and those in decision-making positions than their female counterparts. The study discovered that gender was not a factor used in getting to decision-making positions in Nigerian libraries rather qualifications and paper publications were used as determinants for getting into positions.

The paper also provides the justifications for the education of females in Nigeria and that the government should educate parents and guardians on

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the need to allow their children and wards to take the career of their choice.

Gender link is not a determinate of getting into managerial cadre in Librarianship in Nigeria. This article is of value to those interested in studying gender inequality.

KEYWORDS: Gender, librarians, Academic Libraries, Nigeria.

Gender issues emerge in the workplace when women are marginalized in leadership, decision making, power distribution, professionalism, selection for training and position of responsibilities, stereotyping among others. Numerous studies (Eno: 2000, Omogbai: 2002, Ogunrombi and Pisagih: 2003) have presented convincing evidences that sex-role socialization is the cause of the lack of women in high administrative post or leadership positions. For instance, at the time of this study (2007) the executive body of the Nigerian Library Association revealed that there were two female librarians in the national executive that occupied the post of the president and 2nd vice president. This is the first time the association would be having a female as president since its inception, these positions have always been dominated by male librarians. librarianship is often perceived as a women's profession, women outnumbered men in library work in all Anglophone speaking countries, as well as throughout Europe and the rest of the world where female are economically active. According to them, men outnumbered women in senior librarian positions. Women status and role in librarianship is inevitably linked to the social status of women in their society.

However, when one focuses on library and information services as a distinct sector, one sees that women's productivity in this sector in Nigeria has been quite extensive, not because the earliest protagonists in library and information were women (the first Nigeria professor in librarianship was a woman) but also that the field can compare with other professions. The need for the enhancement of the productivity of women in the library and information sector in Nigeria has arisen for many reasons. Since the sector has many women professionals, their productivity is very significant and should not be neglected. The underdeveloped status

of Nigeria calls for increase in productivity to achieve rapid socio-economic development.

The image and status of librarianship is said to be devalued because of the large presence of women. Despite this assertion, it should be noted that the LIS profession is now highly rated world wide, for example opening the Yahoo! Page it was noted that LIS courses are now advertised like other professions on the Yahoo!. It has generally been observed that the higher the number of men in a field, the greater the prestige of the field. Information technology and the "science" component of librarianship are seen to be bringing in more masculine traits.

Librarianship in its strive for recognition as a profession; may end up doing away with female associated tasks, relational tasks that require patience, sincerity, understanding (Dasgupta, 1998), and replacing them with what might be termed as male oriented tasks. This social stereotype is clearly reflected in the division of professions which need specific training and higher education. Academia, scientific profession, research, law etc. are male oriented and male dominated professions whereas teaching, social work and later librarianship have been considered as service professions which are suitable for women. It has always been mentioned in both the developed and the developing countries that women by nature and upbringing can support the service profession better.

It is as a result of the foregoing therefore that this research intends to investigate the influence of gender in academic libraries situated in Oyo State, Nigeria. Hence, the findings of this study will be useful in shaping the library and information profession in Nigeria.

Theoretical models

This study is based on some theoretical models where researchers have propounded theories like the discriminatory model and the meritocracy model. Kanter (1977) identified the discriminatory model theory; he pointed to institutional patterns in the training and hiring of administrators that encourage the promotion of men rather than women. Evidence supporting this model showed that there are often qualified women at each level of the career hierarchy who were passed over in favour of male applicants. This model also helps to explain why women, knowing that there is little likelihood of promotion to administrative or managerial position, do not apply in significant numbers for these positions. The discriminating model is supported by an examination of the numbers of years it takes to achieve the rank of administrator.

Another theory identified for the purpose of this work is the meritocracy model. The model maintains that the most competent people are chosen to move up the administrative ladder. Therefore, men must be more competent than women because they are chosen so often. Studies carried out have revealed that there was no evidence to suggest or support the fact that men perform better than women in leadership post. Beangor and McDermott (1989), noted that women who eventually achieve senior status report feelings of high visibility and believe that they are often treated merely as representatives of an under-represented group, as evidenced by continual request to be a token presence of senior committees. It is therefore, sufficient to say that women are yet to overcome the conflict over the psychological independence that is necessary for them to spring free and take their proper place at the top level in libraries and organizations.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Find out the relative numbers of male and female librarians in higher in academic libraries in Oyo state;
- 2) Compare the status of female librarians to their male counterparts in academic libraries in Oyo state;
- 3) Determine if disparities actually existed between male and female librarians in academic libraries in Oyo state and possibly investigate the causes. (if it exists);
- 4) Investigate factors inhibiting professional advancement of female librarians in academic libraries in Oyo state; and
- 5) Suggest possible solutions to some of the impediments faced by female librarians in their professional advancement in academic libraries in Oyo state

METHODOLOGY

The design that was adopted for this research is the survey method. The study included five higher institution libraries in Oyo State, Nigeria. The libraries included Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Ogbomosho. (LAUTECH) Central Library, University of Ibadan main Library (Kenneth Dike Library), Oyo State College of Education main Library, Federal College of Education (Special) Library, The Polytechnic Ibadan main Library. The total enumeration sampling technique was used to determine the population of the study which included all the one hundred and five librarians (105) found in the five libraries. This included 51 professional librarians and 54 Para professionals.

Table I. Population of the study

LIBRARIES	PROFESSIONALS	PARA PROFESSIONALS	TOTAL
LAUTECH	10	7	17
U. I	18	28	46
OYSCOED	8	6	14
SPED	8	5	13
POLY IBADAN	7	8	15
Total	51	54	105

The research instrument used for the study was questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A was designed to elicit background information (demographic) while section B contained twenty (20) items which focused on eliciting response on gender issues. Using a four point Likert-type scale, the items in the questionnaire included questions on gender and decision-making, gender stereotype, gender and power, gender and leadership. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for social Science (SPSS).

RESULTS, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table II: Demographic data of respondents of the selected higher institution libraries N=89

			Sex	
			Male	Female
Name of library	LAUTECH	Frequency % within library	10 58.8%	7 41.2%
	U.I	Frequency % within library	19 55.9%	15 44.1%
	OYCOED	Frequency % within library	4 28.6%	10 71.4%
	SPED	Frequency % within library	9 75.0%	3 23.0%
	POLY IBADAN	Frequency % within library	7 58.3%	5 41.7%

Total	Frequency %	49 55.1%	40 44.9%
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Table II revealed that the male librarians are relatively higher in number (55.1%) to their female counterpart in higher institution libraries in Oyo State whose percentage was 44.9%.

The results of the study showed that out of 89 respondents 49 (55.1%) were males while 40 (44.9%) were female librarians. The age range for the male respondents were as follows, 20-29 years (10.2%), 30-39 years (49.0%), 40-49 years (38.8%), 50-59 years (2.0%) and none for 60-69 years. The female librarians' age range was distributed in the following percentages 20-29 years (15.0%), 30-39 years (52.5%) 40-49 years (27.5%) 50-59 years (5.0%). These findings showed that the overall ages of staff of the five (5) academic libraries fell between 30-39 years and 40-49 years.

The findings showed that more females than males come into the profession at tender age and the implication of this is that the females may leave the profession earlier than their male counterparts. As indicated in table III, females had the highest educational qualification (PhD) with 52.5%, while there were more male at the Masters level 54.2%. The result revealed that the females were more qualified than their male counterpart. Therefore, it is expected that their promotion could be rapid after writing the required number of articles stipulated by their institution.

**Table III: Educational Qualification of Respondents according to gender
N=89**

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Educational qualification in your library	Ph. d	Frequency	19	21	40
		%	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%
		% within sex	39.6%	52.5%	45.5%
	Master	Frequency	26	14	40
%		65.0%	35.0%	100.0%	
% within sex		54.2%	35.0%	45.5%	

	Bachelor	Frequency % % within sex	2 50.0% 4.2%	2 50.0% 5.0%	4 100.0% 4.5%
	Diploma	Frequency % % within sex	1 50.0% 2.1%	1 50.0% 2.5%	2 100.0% 2.3%
	Others	Frequency % % within sex	0 100.0% 0%	2 100.0% 5%	2 100.0% 2.3%
Total		Frequency % % within sex	48 54.5% 100.0%	39 45.5% 100.0%	87 100.0% 100.0%

The findings also revealed that there were more male than female as heads of unit than their female counterparts. The sex distributions of librarians as head of units were 54(62.1%) male librarians and 31(35.6%) as female librarian. Table IV below revealed that both male and female librarians were represented in all the library cadres with slight difference.

Table IV: Status of librarians in the library according to gender.

N=89

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Respondent status	Chief librarian/University librarian	Frequency % % within sex	3 50.0% 6.1%	3 50.0% 7.5%	6 100.0%
	Deputy chief librarian/ Deputy University librarian	Frequency % % within sex	4 66.7% 8.2%	2 33.3% 5.0%	6 100.0%
	Principal lib	Frequency % % within sex	3 60.0% 6.1%	2 40.0% 5.0%	5 100.0%
	Librarian 1	Frequency % % within	5 45.5% 10.2%	6 54.5% 15.0%	11 100.0%

		sex			
	Librarian 11	Frequency % % within sex	5 45.5% 10.2%	6 54.5% 15.0%	11 100.0%
	Assistant lib	Frequency % % within sex	11 68.8% 22.4%	5 31.3% 12.5%	16 100.0%
	Library officer	Frequency % % within sex	14 51.9% 28.6%	13 48.1% 32.5%	27 100.0%
	Others	Frequency % % within sex	4 57.1% 8.25	3 42.9% 7.5%	7 100.0%
Total		Frequency % % within sex	49 55.1% 100.0%	40 44.9% 100.0%	89 100.0%

The respondents were asked to rate the position they occupied as been appropriate for them. The study revealed 24.5% male and 30.0% female who rated their positions as high, 59.2% male and 65.0% female rated their positions as medium while 16.3% male and 5.0% female rated their current position as low. This implied that the females were more contented with their status compared to their male counterparts, which might be responsible for their not being prominent at the headship post despite their higher educational qualification. The respondents were asked to stipulate the time lag between their last promotion and their present promotion. The study revealed that 10.9% male and 21.1% female indicated 1 – 2 years as the time range between their last promotion and present position, 43.5% male and 21.1% female indicated 2-3 years, 39.1% male and 55.3% female indicated 3-5 years while 6.5% male and 2.6% female revealed they were promoted last in the past 6 years. This implied that time range in promotion cannot be seen as a discriminatory practices against women librarians in academic libraries in Oyo State because promotion is based on paper publications in all the libraries used for the study.

The respondents were asked to indicate if they were in decision-making positions in their libraries, Table V indicated that 57.9% male and 42.1% females indicated 'yes' as taking decisions, 39.6% male and 40.5% female indicated 'no' while 14.6% male and 16.2% female responded 'sometimes'. These findings revealed that decision making positions were more occupied by the male librarians than the female librarian in academic libraries in Oyo State.

Table V: Distribution of respondents in decision-making positions
N = 89

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Decision making post	Yes	Frequency	22	16	38
		%	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
		% within sex	45.8%	43.2%	44.7%
	No	Frequency	19	15	34
		%	55.9%	44.1%	100.0%
		% within sex	39.6%	40.5%	40.0%
Sometimes	Frequency	7	6	13	
	%	53.8%	46.2%	100.0%	
	% within sex	14.6%	16.2%	15.3%	
Total		Frequency	48	37	85
		%	56.5%	43.5%	100.0%
		% within sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The results revealed that female librarians did not experience marginalization when promoted to senior positions in the academic libraries used for the study (Table VI). This disagreed with the notion of female librarians being affected by discriminatory practices like sex discrimination, decision-making, and selection as committee member or been considered for further training.

Table VI: Perceived areas of marginalization practices against women librarians
N=89

Marginalization practices	Frequencies				Percentages			
	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
Marriage	8	7	36	37	9.1	8.0	40.9	42.0
Sex	-	10	43	36	-	11.2	48.3	40.4

Domestic responsibilities	5	12	50	20	5.7	13.8	57.5	23.0
Decision making	11	22	38	17	12.5	25.0	43.2	19.3
Selection for committee training	7	26	37	19	7.9	29.2	41.6	21.3
Professionalism	11	32	30	16	12.4	36.0	33.7	18.0
Male domination	2	12	52	23	2.2	13.5	58.4	25.8
Total	44	121	286	168	49.8	136.7	323.6	189.8

Note: SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree

The study revealed that female librarians do not experience any inhibiting factors in rising to top positions in academic libraries (Table VII). Factors such as self confidence, lack of competitiveness, dependency, dedication to duties do not hinder female librarians from rising to the top.

Table VII: Behavioural attitude of women as inhibiting Factors to top position attainment in librarianship N=89

Variables	Frequencies				Percentages			
	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
Bossy	8	38	26	6	20.5	43.2	29.5	6.8
Aggressiveness	5	26	37	21	5.6	29.2	41.6	23.6
Lack of competitiveness	5	11	53	17	5.8	12.8	61.6	19.8
Dependency	9	29	39	11	10.2	33.0	44.3	12.5
Hard work	30	46	9	4	33.7	51.7	10.1	4.5
Higher education qualification & experience	27	54	6	2	30.3	60.7	6.7	2.2
Good relation & competence	20	53	12	2	23.0	60.9	13.8	2.3
Dedication to duties	31	44	10	4	34.8	49.4	11.2	4.5
Honesty	29	48	9	3	32.6	53.9	10.1	3.4
Total	174	349	201	70	196.5	394.8	228.9	79.6

Note: SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study had revealed that women appear to possess the higher educational qualifications and they equally possess the qualities to head libraries as their male counterparts. More so, both sexes do not experience biasness in their selection for positions held in libraries. According to this study, marriage did not hinder career advancement; instead it had supported their advancement to the upper echelon in their profession in that they enjoy encouragement, moral and financial support from their spouses. Likewise male domination, domestic responsibilities, sex-role marginalization and stereotyping do not hinder women from rising to leadership position in librarianship. However, lack of ambition, confidence, and inadequate professional qualification had limited some women from attaining leadership positions in librarianship. Despite the fact that some female librarians are more qualified than their male counterparts; yet contrary to expectation more males are found at the unit headship and decision making post than their female counterparts. This could be due to the assumption that male academics find it easier to write and publish academic research papers than their male counterpart. Female academics /librarians are sometimes hindered by domestic chores like housekeeping, pregnancy periods, caring for children etc which may slow down the pace of their research paper publications. Paper publications earn librarians promotions to higher levels in their professions.

The role of women are changing into the hitherto men-dominated areas culminating in positive contributions to the development of society, the researchers believe that female education and mass literacy campaign should be encouraged in order to bring women at par with their male counterparts. This is born out of the fact that educated women are easily mobilized and sensitized towards national goals and aspirations than the uneducated ones. The acquisition of western education by women had helped them to acquire new jobs, gain new consciousness and thus lead to elevated status.

In the light of the above, it is pertinent for the Nigerian Government to educate parents and guardian through public lectures such as conferences, workshops and seminars on the need to allow their children/wards to take up any career of their choice irrespective of gender. Also government should encourage the female who had broken the tie of gender discrimination on their choice of career by giving them immediate employment. Scholarship should be given to female students who are pursuing courses other than the

society assigned ones. In view of the new economic world order, men should allow their wives to be involved in other economic venture outside the home in order to alleviate the heavy family financial burden. Also, international and national organizations should continue to propagate the right of women to education as a vital necessity for freedom from poverty and ignorance.

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