

## PERCEIVED GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION: EVIDENCE FROM MAY & BAKER LIMITED, OTA

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### ABSTRACT

The issue of gender equality in modern organizations is receiving more attention from scholars across the globe. The perception of women towards equality in their organization is significant as it directly impacts on their job satisfaction. The study adopted a survey research design which necessitate the use of a structured questionnaire to obtain valuable data from 85 female employees of May and Baker limited, Ota branch. The gathered data was analyzed using Ordinary Least Square method while the hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that fair representation in management by female employees significantly affect the acceptance of policies and regulations ( $p=0.000$ ). Similarly, the study discovered that perceived fairness of promotion exercise significantly affects commitment of the female employees in the study area ( $p=0.001$ ). Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that organizations should promote a gender sensitive atmosphere in order to bolster the performance of female employees in an organization.

**KEYWORDS:** Gender equality, management, promotion, commitment, satisfaction.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Gender equality at the workplace suggests equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities given to men and women in employment (UN, 2013). Equality in itself does not suggest that both sexes will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the collapse of traditional gender segregation as women started making major contributions in the labour force, education systems, academics and public offices. Women have made giant strides in both education and the utilization of that education in the workforce over the past sixty years (Ziman, 2013). More women are receiving higher education which the figure is even surpassing that of men. As a result, women are entering the workforce with high hopes and dreams of future success.

Despite the efforts of women in competing favorably against their male counterparts, research has shown that there exists inequality among the genders in the work environment. Unequal benefits for different genders on the same level create an atmosphere of hostility in the workplace and costly human resource management. Meanwhile, research has shown that a more equalized gender distribution in the workplace offers more hospitality and professionalism, which also guarantees a healthy career path (Ruohan & Xueyu, 2014).

There exist the "glass ceiling" at the workplace which is an invisible barrier that inhibits the progression to higher levels of an organization's hierarchy for women and other disadvantaged minority groups. This is a situation where women are fixed at lower levels of an organization and there is very little or no opportunity for development and advancement. The issue of gender equality is relatively critical to the success of any organization as extant researches have shown that organizations who are very gender sensitive tend to do well compared to those who do not.

It is against this background that the current study set out to examine how perceived gender equality affect the satisfaction of female employees of an organization. To pursue this broad objective, the study seeks to test the validity of these hypothetical statements:

$H_{01}$ : *Perceived fair representation of female employees in management does not affect acceptance of policies and regulations.*

$H_{02}$ : *Perceived fairness of promotion exercise does not affect commitment of female employees in an organization*

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

#### **Female representation in Management**

Human talent such as skills, education level and productivity of both females and males is one of the most important determinants of an organization's competitiveness. In a study carried out by Ruohan and Xueyu on Chilean Manufacturing firms in 2014, it was discovered that small firms with less than 50 employees, higher female labor-force participation among high-skill employees significantly increased the firm's productivity.

The positive effects women leaders can have on an organization's long term achievement has been proven not only in the USA but elsewhere worldwide. Research has shown that European firms with the highest percentage of women in roles with significant influence saw their stock value climb an extra seventeen percent over a two year period (Cooper & Baird, 2017).

Similarly, Annis and John (2016) found that men's thoughts and opinions are often formed and stated quickly and that they look at team work as a quick agenda-driven exercise to conform a course of action and the sooner they can wrap up the meeting and get back to work, the better. Women on the other hand consider teamwork and collaboration to be an essential part of work.

A professor at the London School of Economics also discovered that women tend to be more risk-averse than men. He also concluded that women on boards would be more vigilant than men and would have paid more attention to what executives were doing.

#### **Unbiased promotion exercise and commitment of Female employees**

More education generally equates to higher qualifications. More women are receiving degrees today than ever before. This trend should allow women to achieve higher level positions in the organization through promotion exercise.

Organizations tend to consider a lot of factors in promoting their employees to another level within the ranks (Wittenberg, 2015). It becomes crucial that promotion exercises are unbiased and favorable to the female employees also. However, the sad story that obtains in Nigeria is that female employees do not get their promotion based on merit (which should have been) but through cutting of corners. This would not have been the case if only promotion exercises were more objective and unbiased. Research has shown that female employees who perceives promotion exercise as biased tend to quit the organization.

### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

#### ***Human Capital Theory***

Neo-classical economists argues that a worker's education, training and natural capability determines the rewards they get from their job. The theory argued that organizations configure their recruitment decisions on the market value of each individuals' human capital. This school of thought is called the human capital theory. Human capital theorist explain the position of women in paid jobs in terms of their lesser human capital, arguing that women have reached fewer skills and qualifications and lesser labour market than men (French & Strachan, 2018). This school of thought argues further that because of traditional gender division of labour involving women's engagement with house chores and rearing children, women tend to possess inferior skills as compared to men.

### **Radical Feminist Theory**

Radical feminism originated in the 1970s in USA. Historically, radical feminism began with the assumption that the sexes are adversarially poised, that men have more power over women and that society and its various social relationships can be best understood in terms of their relationship to that situation (Kulik, 2014).

Radical feminist argue that men benefit from domestic labour as a dominant task completed by women in their families. They treat this gender division of labour as the root of patriarchal social relations giving advantages to men and women in employment.

Both human capital theory and the radical feminist theory are important to this study because they typify the situation in Nigeria where as a result of the society, women are not given equal chances like their male counterparts.

## **3 METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive and survey design because data was sought through the use of a structured questionnaire.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprise of all female employees working in May & Baker Ltd, Ota branch with an estimated figure of eighty-five (85).

### **3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

A sample is a representative of the entire population who shares similar features with other members of the population and whose opinion can be generalized on the population. The population of this study was retained as the sample size given the desire for effective generalization of this study.

### **3.4 Research Instrument**

The questionnaire is the chosen research instrument for data collection for this study. The questionnaire is structured on a five point Likert scale: **Strongly Agree (SA)**, **Agree (A)**, **Disagree (D)**, **Strongly Disagree (SD)** and **Undecided (U)**.

### **3.5 Validity and Reliability Test**

The questionnaire validity test was carried out using content and face validity with the help of instrument validation experts and management experts. Cronbach (1951) Alpha test was utilized to test the reliability of the research instrument which yielded a result of .795.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

The collected data was analyzed by Ordinary Least Square method using SPSS version 20 software. The research hypotheses for this study was tested using regression analysis at 5% level of significance.

## **4 DATA PRESENTATION**

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.795	85

Table 1 shows the reliability test with a value of 0.795 which translates that the research instrument was sufficient to obtain the required information from the respondents on the subject matter.

Table 2: Coefficients result<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	90.319	70.879		1.552	.134
	Perceived Fair Representation in Management	3.447	.135	.971	20.887	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Acceptance of Policies

Table 2 above shows the significance of the variables and the relationship between the dependent variable and the predictor. The coefficient result of 3.447 indicates that there is a positive relationship between perceived fair representation in management by female employees and acceptance of policies. The significance value of Perceived Fair Representation in Management standing at 0.000 indicates that the variable is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table 3: Coefficients Result<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	100.183	120.083		.204	.740
	Perceived fairness of Promotion exercise	78.531	11.822	.774	5.129	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Female Employees' Commitment

Table 3 above shows the significance of the variable and also the relationship between the dependent variable and the predictor. The coefficient result of 78.531 indicates that there is a positive relationship between Perceived fairness of promotion exercise and female employees' commitment. The significance value of perceived fairness of promotion exercise standing at 0.001 indicates that the variable is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

## 5 CONCLUSION

When organizations look at the time and expenses associated with eliminating gender inequality in the workplace, it is easy to just stick it on an endless to do list and forget about it. This is a terrible choice because women can add great value, both socially and more importantly to a list of executives, monetarily, to a company.

The findings of this study revealed the implications of having an organization in an atmosphere that is gender sensitive. If companies choose to disregard gender issues, they will only be hurting themselves and their future growth and success.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following were deemed necessary in every organization:

- a. Management should give leadership opportunities to women so that they can have more managerial experience.
- b. Regular training and development programmes should be served to the female workers.
- c. Promotion exercises should be free from biasedness.

## 7 SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Future studies should consider more areas regarding gender equality in order to further improve the generalization of this kind of study to other sectors of the economy.

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