PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the perceived discrimination against women employees of media organizations in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study employed survey method using questionnaire as research instrument for gathering relevants data with a population of 285 respondents. The study is anchored on Liberal Feminist theory which focuses on gender roles in social, political, legal and economic equality. Major findings have shown that under-representation of women in leadership positions, sexual harassments and violence against women, unequal promotional opportunities and unequal employees' promotions are some of the manifestations of gender discrimination against women in media houses in Kaduna State. Other findings show that poor media content, mistrust among employees, apprehensive and discontentment, constant conflicts in the stations, de-motivation of female employees, decreased production as a result of no team work, are the effects of gender discriminations on women's performances in media organizations in Kaduna Sate. Based on the findings, the study recommends that media organizations in Kaduna State should have affirmative action for effective development of women career and provide gender sensitive training to both male and female so as to promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for media employees of Kaduna State.

KEYWORDS:
Gender, Discrimination, Women, Perception, Organization

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INTRODUCTION

Gender discrimination is one of the greatest challenges of our age. The issues about gender discrimination have been said to generate a lot of controversy mostly in the area of inequality, violence and discrimination. Women from time suffered humiliation, tribulation, segregation and marginalization from their male counterparts just for the fact that women are a weaker sex. With the conception of being a 'weaker sex' it is believed that they work less, think less, impact a little and produce a little (Okpoko, 2005). The theories of human nature such as the creation in the Bible posit that women and men are different in nature and are, therefore, entitled to different rights in diverse segments of human endeavour. Most research studies about gender discrimination are anchored on the debate about inequality in economic opportunity and development, human development and education as well as representation in law and institutions. This perspective was encapsulated in Iris (2007, p. 7) when she claimed that;

> *…men are in control of the economy, of history, education, and representation. It looks as if women can improve their position by finding a suitable marriage partner, but as soon as they give up their jobs to have children, they are in fact finished. They can no longer fulfill themselves and are imprisoned in their homes from this day forward, preoccupied with silly chores, housewives and mothers just cannot find the time for personal growth, or for contributing to society in any significant way.*

A considerable amount of research on gender discrimination like Blau and Kahn, (2003) have shown some evidence of economic discrimination by studying gender differences such as wage gaps, labour participation rate, working class and earned income. Some of the studies have also shown that discrimination against women can be found everywhere cutting across boundaries of cultures, education, income, ethnicity and age, and the Nigerian media is not an exception. The Nigerian media portray women as submissive and passive in terms of their sexuality and domestic activities and as being concerned mostly with child, husband and home cares. They are as well portrayed as being guided with the expression of emotions, love and morality. As such Nigerian media have created the impression that women ought to be confined to domestic work in the home while the male are portrayed as being dominant, self-confident, active, a national leader, strong decision maker and

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authoritative family bread winner who are supposed to lead and propel the society towards greatness. (Okpoko, 2005)

In the media, the issues of gender discrimination are similar to that of public life. There is a gender division of labour which is evident through the way that beats are assigned. There is a general belief that 'Soft' issues like fashion, culture, arts and lifestyles are often consigned to women media practitioners whereas 'Hard' and what is considered 'Serious' issues like finance, economics, politics, security and agriculture are often within the purview of their male counterparts. Osman (2008, p.10) "claimed notably that, there is a discrimination at work as a result of employers failing to adhere to labour rights of women journalists". They do not receive equal opportunities as male journalists do in terms of training and advancement in their career. Although, more women than ever are working in media, the issue of discrimination still lingers. Women working in the media have continued to trail their male counterparts who dominate the profession of journalism in large numbers. Men are seen in key positions that continued to relegate women to the background. The under-representation of women in top positions appears to contribute to the shortage of women voices in the media and as such less emphasis is given to women issues. Anyanwu, (2001) and Dibetso (2013) claimed that in some countries like Russia and Sweden, women form a majority of the journalism workforce. But they do not play an equal role in the reporting process.

In media organizations, the repercussions of this disparity go beyond gender representation and counting numbers of males and females in the workforce. Lower representation at decision-making and governance levels has direct consequences on the content produced, the issues covered, the voices represented and the manners in which women – and men – are portrayed (Byerly and Ross, 2006; White,2009; North, 2009; Djerf-Pierre, 2007). But even when women make it into the media workforce, a host of obstacles that discourage their continuity await them, and many seem to quit early in their careers. As for the few who last, a discriminatory climate keeps them outside of position of power and impedes them from moving beyond the glass ceiling (Melki & Farah, 2014)

The discrimination in gender representation has been well documented in studies both in the developed and developing countries. The problem of under-representation against female gender in the media that aggravates gender discrimination is in the area of inequality and violence against women. Stereotypical portrayals of women in television commercials also show impartial value of womanhood. Gender discrimination is often expressed in

conjunction with other types of discrimination such as discrimination against the handicapped, the aged, albinos and the like. Even after the Beijing conference and other monitoring organizations have deliberated on the issues of gender inequality, media organizations have not implemented active and effective measures to increase the number of female workers. Women are most likely to work as part-timers and freelancers. Whilst insignificant reports focus on Western African Countries and Nigeria in particular, it is nonetheless useful to carry out investigation on perception of discrimination against women working in the media organizations. It is in the light of the above that, this study seek to actually investigate the perception of discrimination against women working in the media organizations in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Gender equality advocates have laboured to ensure that obligations and commitments under Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW and Beijing Fourth World Conference on women are fully implemented and the results are now evident globally, in the form of gender sensitive laws, constitutional provisions, judicial decisions, policies, government structures and allocations.

The Global Media Monitoring Project (2010) indicates that, after fifteen years of monitoring, twice each decades, despite a slow but overall steady increase in women's presence in the news over the past 10 years, the world depicted in the news remains predominantly male Women's inclusion in the media agenda as news subjects, newsmakers and news producers is still significantly below that of men' (Ross & Carter, 2011, p.114). The suggestion that new social media may offer new opportunities for agency, away from old structures, does not find general agreement. A change of medium does not necessarily alter suppressing gender relations and still needs to be interrogated using the familiar questions (Byerly & Ross, 2006)

It suffices to mention that after four world conferences on women, Nigeria women have continued to experience marginalization in every sphere of human endeavor. Newsrooms and the media industry are no exception. In spite of the general belief that an estimated 50% of Nigeria's population is made up of women and girls, the gender disparity in access to paid employment is still very much alive. As an umbrella term, it encompasses various forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, often negatively affecting women more than men. Unequal gender norms within a workplace can compromise productivity as workers are unable to perform their duties effectively. Things that may lead to this loss of morale and motivation could include jokes about

an employee's gender that imply inferiority, offensive jokes of a suggestive or sexual nature and jokes implying that an employee's work is sub-par due to his or her gender. While statistics show that more and more women are training and entering the field, the number of women producers, executives, chief editors, and publishers remains shockingly low. (Byerly and Ross, 2006; White, 2009; North, 2009; Djerf-Pierre, 2007)

United States is said to be among the countries that experience gender inequality in the media. According to Global Media Monitoring Project (2010) Women make up only 37% of positions in America. Studies also in the European Union countries, South African and East African countries on gender discrimination in the media organizations are well documented. Studies identified gamut forms of gender discrimination which include financial inequality, glass ceiling syndrome and gender stereotype among others. In the Western African Countries and Nigeria in particular, research on gender discrimination and inequality remains a challenge even for a global media. It is not about the portrayal of women but also the pay gap and unequal opportunities women could be facing. Challenges women working in the media face today ranges from sexual harassment to physical and biological statuses, pay gap and fewer work promotional opportunities and involvement in decision making positions in media organizations remain among others. What then is the perception of discrimination against women working in the media organizations in Kaduna State, Nigeria. This question constitutes the problem this research investigates.

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives;

i. To find out the perception of how gender discrimination manifest in Media Organizations in Kaduna State.
ii. To identify factors that encourages gender discrimination in Media Organizations in Kaduna State.
iii. To ascertain the effects of gender discrimination on women in media organizations in Kaduna State.

Review of Related Literature:

Gender Discrimination

Gender refers to socially and culturally constructed roles allocated respectively to men and women in particular societies and at particular times. Such roles and the differences between them are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological and cultural factors, and are characterized in most

societies by unequal power relations. Joshua (2008), for instance, says gender roles of men as owners of property, decision makers and heads of household are socially, historically and culturally constructed and have nothing to do with biological differences. Bridge (2002) opines that gender constitutes one of the determinants of how poverty is experienced and of wealth creation. Rights and entitlements of men and women to opportunities, resources and decision making are based on socio-cultural norms rather than on human rights or the respective development capability of men and women. Alamveabee (2005) maintained that gender roles differ from place to place and change with time. And that sex roles are naturally fixed. Cirddoc (2001) defines gender as a system of roles relationship between women and men that are determined not biologically but by the social, political and economic context. Gender issues related to the differences of male and female were pinpointed in decade of 1950s, but highlighted as an important issue in management and organizational studies in between 1980s and 1990s. The duration between these two periods recognized the gender effects in different studies. Robinson (2005) emphasized on female issue in those organizations that are dominated by male. Gender comprises of differences between men and women, extending from the biological to the social. These meanings vary across cultures, social groups and time since nothing about the body including women's reproductive organs, determines univocally how social divisions will be shaped.

Discrimination is the act or process of treating people or a particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people on the basis of their skin, colour, religion, class or sex. It is a symptomatic of a situation where patterns of structural inequality are maintained by rules, norms and procedures that dictate a role for women in all spheres of society. "Discrimination is treating people differently on the basis of sex or race". On the basis of the above definitions, we can conclude that basically gender discrimination is a preference of one gender upon the other. Gender discrimination mirrors and reinforces discrimination in other social spheres, e.g. family, community, school and political arena and intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as race or age. It is equally understood as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of socially constructed roles and norms that prevent a person from fully enjoying their rights. Khalid and Aroosh (2014) added that gender discrimination may exist in various dimensions which include hiring discrimination, differences in salary and wages, discrimination differences in promotion and inequity related to different goods and facilities provided to different gender. Employee is a back bone of the organization that performs critical tasks for the survival of the

organization and employees' productivity can be affected by gender discrimination. Hence, this study is designed to investigate perceived gender discrimination and its effect on employee's productivity.

Causes of Gender Discrimination

The causes of gender inequality in any society are inadvertently centered on inequalities in the allocation of resources at the household levels, wage differentials between women and men in workplaces and the decision making process to mention but a few.

The most common socio-cultural factors associated with gender discrimination are:

(a) **Male Chauvinism**: This refers to the belief that women are intellectually inferior to men; their worth is the extent to which they perform as sexual objects, dutiful mothers and wives. Their major role in government, business and in academics is limited to appendage role of bearing and bringing up children and doing crude work with low wages.

(b) **Religion**: The belief that God created man first and made him a ruler over all creation, while a woman is just a helpmate. For example, the Christian religion believes that the women were formed from one of the seven ribs of the man and as such are the weaker sex whose role is restricted to their submission and obedience to the man. The Christian religion also believes that women are not expected to speak or air their opinions openly in the church. Women are therefore seen as passive and thence are expected to air their opinion to their husband at home, not in the public. The bottom line is that they are not expected to be part of decision making in the church. In the Islamic setting, the system of purdah restricts the movement of women to their homes and aside from their husbands; no other male is allowed access to them. The implication thereby being that they remain perpetually dependent on their husbands to meet their needs.

(c) P**roblem of Patriarchy**: Patriarchy is an unjust social system that is oppressive to women. It is a social system in which the male are the primary authority and the central roles of political leadership, moral authority and controls of property. Originally used to describe the power of the father as the head of household, the term 'patriarchy' has been used within post 1960s feminism to refer to the systematic organization of male supremacy and female subordination (Poindexter, 2008). The term has been defined as a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic

institutions. According to Pearson (2000,p.23) "The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection". Patriarchy has a strong influence on modern civilization in which the female genders are left in the mercies and dictates of the male, a condition of being tied to male apron strings.

(d) Problem of Women: Another visible and outstanding issue in gender discrimination is the problem of women themselves despising their fellow woman who may aim at bridging the discriminatory gap between men and women. This stems out from innate hatred and jealousness. A peculiar symptomatic factor of not wanting another person to grow.

Impact of Gender Discrimination on Productivity

Discrimination in the workplace, whether real or simply perceived, can negatively impact three major components of the employee's behaviour that can affect job performance. Painter and Ferrucci (2015) opined that such effects could be classified into: organizational commitment, job satisfaction and the organizational citizenship behaviour.

(a) **Organizational Commitment**: An employee who has a positive organization perceives having bond with the company as positive, which is related to employee loyalty and a higher likelihood to remain with the company.

(b) **Job Satisfaction**: Job satisfaction is an employee's measure of the positive emotional state resulting from assessment of overall job experience. Studies indicate that happy workers are profitable for bottom line. Employees who report satisfaction are more productive and are healthier than those that report job dissatisfaction.

(c) **Organizational Citizenship Behaviour**: An employee who perceives discrimination may be likely to engage in organization citizenship behaviour which refers to voluntary, informal co-worker relationships and low level participation. In a healthy atmosphere and environment, these positive relationship results in providing co-workers with advice and suggestions, helping finish projects and offering positive feedback on work tasks. An employee is subject to workplace discrimination is apt to lose interest in his duties and in the company. For instance, a female gender that have flare for covering criminal news when debarred for a reason of being a female can affect work enthusiasm. And as such could attract discouragement and send performance morale on a downward spiral which results in lack of productivity.

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on liberal feminism theory.

Liberal Feminism Theory

According to Lengerman and Niebrugge-Brantley (2000) Liberal Feminist theory focuses on gender roles, the patriarchal division of labour in work and family, and the impact of gender roles on social, legal, political, and economic equality. The theoretical premise of liberal feminism is based upon the social contract theories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, meaning that the natural and legal rights of women must be protected in order to maintain an organized society.

Liberal Feminists argued that women are equal to men as they both possess the inherent human capacity for reasoning and moral agency. One key area of emphasis for liberal feminist theorists is equality of opportunity—in particular, gender equality with regards to education, economics, and politics (Hooks, 2000). Additionally, they focus on the codification of universal human rights, a restructuring of the division of labour within law, work, and family spheres, and the acceptance of individualism and personal choices.

For Baumgardner and Richards (2000) the focus of liberal feminists therefore is about creating a level playing field for both genders in terms of legal and social systems, gender norms and gender socializations for what they believed as the key to gender equality. Liberal feminists believe that ignorance and socialization are the main cause of gender inequality, and social institutions are inherently patriarchal. From the theory, it can be observed that inequality in terms of education, economics and politics can be detrimental to the potentialities of female gender. Since the theory believes in a march to progress in which men and women can gradually come together to be equal at work and family, then women ought to be encouraged and not to be relegated to the background.

Methodology

The study used the survey design and employed questionnaire as the instrument to illicit data on the Perception of discrimination against women working in media organizations in Kaduna State. The population of the study comprised of the staff selected in media organizations in Kaduna metropolis of Kaduna State. [a] Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Kaduna Zonal Network Centre with a total number of 121 staff; [b] Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), Kaduna with a total number of 682 staff; [c] Kaduna State Media Corporation (KSMC) both radio and television with 219 staff and [d] AIT with

44 staff. Therefore, the total population is 1,066 staff of the selected organizations. Based on the total population of 1,066 from the four media organizations studied the sample size for the study was two hundred and eighty-five (285). The size was determined using the sample size determination table.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data is collated, analyzed and presented below;

Table 1: Manifestations of Gender Discrimination in media house in Kaduna State

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Under-representation of women in leadership positions	36	12.6
Sexual harassment and violence against women	19	6.7
Unequal promotional opportunities	61	21.4
Unequal employees' promotions	23	8.1
All of the above	146	51.2
None of the above	0	0.0
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

Table 1 above presents data on the manifestations of gender discrimination against women in media houses. According to the table, 146 otherwise (51.2%) respondents believed that under-representation of women in leadership positions, sexual harassments and violence against women, unequal promotional opportunities and unequal employees' promotions are some of the manifestations of gender discrimination against women in media houses in Kaduna State.

Table 2: Awareness of Training Opportunities for Women in Media house in Kaduna State

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Fully aware	251	88.1
Not fully aware	34	11.9
I do not know at all	0	0.0
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

The question on table 2 sought to find out if media practitioners in Kaduna State are aware of training opportunities for women in media houses in Kaduna State. The data on the table indicated that the practitioners are fully aware of women's training opportunities in media houses in Kaduna State with a high percentage of 88.1, representing 251 respondents.

Table 3: Involvement of women in decision making in organizations reduces gender discriminations against women

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	32	11.2
Strongly Agree	188	66
Agree	55	19.3
Neutral	3	1.0
I do not know	7	2.5
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

From Table 3 above, 188 (66%) respondents strongly disagreed that the involvement of women in decision making in organizations reduces gender discriminations against women.

Table 4: Encouraging factors of gender discrimination in organizations

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural and social factors	12	4.2
Inability to perform assigned duties.	22	7.7
Pregnancy and motherhood	16	5.6
Patriarchy effect of the society	34	11.9
All of the above	201	70.6
None of the above	0	0
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

Table 4 sought to know factors that encourage gender discrimination in organizations. The data of 70.6% representing 201 respondents showed that cultural and social factors, inability to perform assigned duties, Pregnancy and motherhood and patriarchy effects of the society are the factors that encourage gender discrimination in organizations.

Table 5: Effects of gender discrimination on women performance in media house organizations in Kaduna State

Options	Frequency	Percentage
(a) Poor media content	11	3.9
(b) Mistrust among employees	9	3.2
(c) Apprehensive and discontentment	2	0.7
(d) De-motivation of female employees	18	6.3
(e) Decreased production as a result of no team work	16	5.6
(f) Constant conflicts in the stations	11	3.9
(g) All of the above	218	76.4
(h) None of the above	0	0.0
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

The question on table five was to identify the effects of gender discrimination on women performances in media house organizations in Kaduna State. The data showed 76.4% representation of 218 respondents which indicates that Poor media content, mistrust among employees, apprehensive and discontentment, constant conflicts in the stations, de-motivation of female employees, decreased production as a result of no team work, are the effects of gender discriminations on women's performances in media house organizations in Kaduna Sate.

Table 6: Awareness of the Practice and Enforcement of Anti-discrimination Policies in the media houses in Kaduna State

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Not aware	19	6.7
Fully aware	199	69.8
Partially aware	67	23.5
Total	**285**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, June 2019

The question from table 6 was to know the awareness of the practice and enforcement of anti-discrimination policies in the media houses in Kaduna State. The data with 199 (69.5) respondents showed that they are fully aware of the anti-discrimination policies.

Discussion of Findings

Major findings based on data gathered and presented have shown that; under-representation of women in leadership positions, sexual harassments and

violence against women, unequal promotional opportunities and unequal employees' promotions are some of the manifestations of gender discrimination against women in media houses in Kaduna State. This finding agreed with Pande, Mallhotra and Grown (2015) when they identified the causes of gender discrimination in South African media workplaces and how the gender discrimination is a problem in South African media workplace. This also aligns with the common socio-cultural factors associated with gender discrimination highlighted in the literature review as; chauvinism, religion and patriarchy. Another finding showed that cultural and social factors, inability to perform assigned duties, Pregnancy and motherhood and patriarchy effects of the society are the factors that encourage gender discrimination in organizations.

Other findings show that Poor media content, mistrust among employees, apprehensive and discontentment, constant conflicts in the stations, de-motivation of female employees, decreased production as a result of no team work, are the effects of gender discriminations on women's performances in media house organizations in Kaduna Sate. The study also discovered that the involvement of women in decision making in organizations reduces gender discriminations against women.

The study also discovered that media practitioners in Kaduna State were aware of the practice and enforcement of anti-discrimination policies in the media houses in Kaduna State. This confirms the theoretical premise of liberal feminism that it is based upon the social contract theories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, meaning that the natural and legal rights of women must be protected in order to maintain an organized society.

Another finding has shown that media practitioners are fully aware of women's training opportunities in media houses in Kaduna State. Education is the bedrock of any establishment, a situation where all of the staff of the broadcast media is sponsored for the development of the organization irrespective of gender status.

Conclusion

The study set out to investigate the discrimination against women working in media organizations in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The objectives were to find out the perception of women in gender discrimination in media organizations in Kaduna State, identify factors that encourage gender discrimination in media organizations in Kaduna State, to ascertain the effects of gender discriminations on women in media organizations in Kaduna State.

Findings of this study established that gender discrimination manifests mostly in the area of under-representation of women in leadership positions as well as unequal promotional opportunities in the sampled media organizations in Kaduna State. Furthermore, findings revealed that religion, patriarchy, socio-cultural issues, and traditional issues are factors that encouraged gender discrimination within the sampled media organizations. Finally, findings revealed the effects of gender discrimination on the productive ability of women to include bias in content; lack of motivation and dedication to work from women; withdrawal from journalism practice; deprivation of media houses of the rich perspectives of female journalists to content of news and programmes; exclusion from leadership and decision-making makes women to sense hostility from their male counterparts, which makes them feel uncomfortable and unwanted. Other effects of gender discrimination on productivity in media organizations as revealed in the study shows that it causes poor media content; de-motivate employees especially the women; causes conflict; and decreases production as a result of no team work and refusal to put in their best. The foregoing research findings have proved that gender discrimination against women working in the media organizations in Kaduna State exists. This is because gender discrimination manifests mostly in the area of under-representation of women in leadership positions as well as unequal promotional opportunity in the sampled media organizations in Kaduna State

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and the conclusions drawn, the study recommends the following:

i. Media organizations in Kaduna State should have affirmative action in effective development of women career.
ii. Media organizations should provide gender sensitive training to both males and females so as to promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles.
iii. The administrative managers of media organizations should be careful while hiring and promoting employees. There should be provision for adequate security as well as convenience facilities to both male and female employees in order to avoid gender discrimination because it has a direct bearing on employee productive ability and tendency to reduce organizational productiveness.

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iv. The management of the media organizations in this study should look into issues of organizational bias as it affects female gender and bridges the disparity in promoting both males and females employees.

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