

INEQUALITY IN TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN PRODUCTIVITY IN IMO STATE CIVIL SERVICE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The thrust of this study is to investigate the effect of inequality in training and development on women productivity in Nigeria Civil Service using Imo State Civil Service as the main focus. The study seeks to examine whether gender inequality exists in the Imo State Civil Service and to ascertain whether women experience unequal opportunity for training and development in the state's civil service. One hypothesis was formulated and tested in the course of the study. The work reviewed related literature and some empirical studies. The study used the Theory of Patriarchy as the theoretical guide. The data were collected through primary sources (questionnaire and interviews) and secondary sources (textbooks, journals, publications, etc). The purposive, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques were variously applied at different stages. Two purposively selected Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Works and Transport in Imo State Civil Service were used in the study. The data for this study were analyzed using tables and percentages while chi-square statistical tool was employed for testing the hypothesis. The findings showed that there were unequal opportunities for training and development against women and this is negatively affecting their productivity. This situation confirmed the prevalence of gender inequality in the Imo State Civil Service. The study recommends that more efforts should be put to ensure equal opportunity for all staff and to prioritize gender mainstreaming and transparency in civil service activities/programmes in order to encourage a gender friendly working environment for women's enhanced productivity in the Imo State Civil Service.

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Training, Development, Productivity, Civil Service.

Introduction

The system of gender inequality is a socio-cultural practice and phenomenon that appears to be influential in most societies and this tends to impact them in many different ramifications and degrees. It is seemingly a common practice in most societies of the world. Gender inequality has continued to remain prevalent in patriarchal societies and particularly modern societies and even more in the developing countries, including Nigeria. Gender inequality defines the condition in the society whereby there is imbalance or disequilibrium of rights, opportunities and privileges between the genders. Gender inequality which is sometimes called sex discrimination, means receiving unequal treatment based mainly on sex (gender). Gender inequality may be conceived as an issue that affects family, education, healthcare, politics and workplace (Meagher, 2011; Hooks, 2013). Some of the common variables of the system of gender inequality include issues perpetuated mostly against females in society such as unequal opportunities/participation, unequal rights, unequal work conditions and other forms of gender discrimination/domination (Luka, 2014).

More fundamentally, women have been subjected to domination by men. This is as a result of persisting cultural stereotype, abuse of religious and traditional practices, patriarchal societal structures in which economic, political and social power are dominated by men and women have historically related as the followers of men (Nakpodia and Urien, 2012). In the Nigerian context, which is within the African continent, that is widely perceived to be traditionally patriarchal, there seems to exist gender inequality that is particularly imbued and entrenched into its patriarchal system and therefore wherever there is patriarchy, gender inequality is argued to be there (Amadi, 2013). Gender inequality exists in varying degrees in many bureaucracies in Nigeria (Ahmed El-Rufai, 2013). Work organizations in Nigeria such as the Nigeria Civil Service, which is a bureaucracy, is presumed to be facing certain challenges which may include the influence of some social structures like gender inequality.

Some investigations argue that because issues of gender inequality such as inequality in training and development prevail in many bureaucracies in Nigeria, many Nigerians seem to perceive it as a major factor that could be influencing the efficiency and productivity

of women in work organizations (Onyema, 2012). Could it be that inequality in training and development (variable of gender inequality) is influencing the level of productivity of women in the Nigeria Civil Service. However, the factor of productivity is a major one when it comes to the growth, development and status of organizations. Productivity is a crucial factor in production performance of firms, organizations, institutions and nations (Freeman, 2008). The definition of productivity, according to Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013) states that:

Productivity refers to the measure of how much value individual employees add to the goods and services which an organization produces. Productivity represents the economic value of what is produced by an employee which in turn serves as fuel to organizational growth (Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma, 2013: 97)

Even though the definitions of productivity may vary slightly, its basic indicators/variables are relatively the same and they include employee regularity to work, employee punctuality, employee level of truancy, time an employee spends on work duty, the number of customers served by an employee and the number of customers' complaints received by an employee in a given time period (Hulten, 2009). These indices of productivity are mainly for the service industries such as the Civil Service. Considering what productivity entails, attaining optimal/high productivity is in itself a fundamental challenge to work organizations, including the Nigeria Civil Service (Anazodo, 2012). The increasing clamour for improved productivity of the Nigeria Civil Service to become globally competitive and impact positively on the nation's economic development is more imperative in these days of national economic down turn, under-productivity and excruciating poverty and hunger (Iheriohanma, 2011). Efforts to enhance women's capacity to work and promote their collective productivity remain a major challenge to the Nigeria Civil Service (Egwuonu, 2015). The challenge emanating from the pursuit of the improved efficiency and productivity of the Nigerian workforce and more especially the Nigeria Civil Service can further be sought after through the empirical investigation of the possibility that issues of gender inequality, particularly inequality in training and development may have spread its institutional structural influence to the civil service with probably some impact on the productivity of women.

Moreover, there are some other Nigerians who argue that unequal opportunity for training and development may not be in existence in the Nigeria Civil Service given its bureaucratic antecedents. They claim that the

civil service is not only bureaucratic in nature but also a non-discriminatory entity that most times gives women some advantages over the men (Amadi, 2013). If this position is true, it could also be interpreted to mean that women are being considered disadvantaged and therefore given some privileges in a bid to let them gain some equity. Taken further, it could also mean that there is existing inequality in training and development in the civil service. The need to ascertain the true situation in terms of the effect of inequality in training and development on the productivity of women in the Imo State Civil Service propels this study and this is the gap this study intends to fill.

Statement of the problem

The twenty-first century work organizations are increasingly being challenged by the issue of productivity in many ramifications and arena. Globally, work organizations are making different strategic efforts to improve on employee performance, organizational growth and productivity. A major challenge to workers, organizations and national development in Nigeria remains that of increased productivity. Work organizations interested in surviving and thriving in the twenty-first century need to take competitive advantage of the ability, talents, energy and resources that the workers, especially women, in these organizations can offer (Offodile, 2011). It may be argued that issues undermining women's efficiency and performance in the work organizations, particularly in the civil service, are also critical issues undermining the overall productivity of the Nigerian workforce and invariably Nigeria's national development. The women working in the civil service in the country may be less efficient and under-productive not because of their inabilities but probably as a result of the effects of some institutional and structural issues with untold negative national implications such as unproductive workforce. Could some of the identified variables of gender inequality, particularly inequality in training and development be among these structural issues?

The presumed absence of equality between men and women working in the Imo State Civil Service in terms of opportunities for training and development has been alleged as one of these structural issues. The issue of women's unequal access to specialized training and programmes aimed at developing and improving the skills of civil service workers could be undermining women's opportunity in terms of acquiring necessary competences that enhance productivity. The presumed belief by some Nigerians that gender inequality and patriarchy gives women fewer

opportunities for training and development in work organizations, including the civil service, could hamper women's productivity and affect civil service productivity as a whole.

Review of related literature

The System and Nature of Gender Inequality in Nigeria

Understanding the meaning, system and nature of the concept and phenomenon of gender inequality begins from comprehending the meaning of the word "gender". Enemuo (1999) avers that, 'gender, as a word, has continued to gain regular currency in the lexicon of human development. It is currently applied to a wide range of socio-cultural phenomenon so as to compare and contrast the differential impact of this practice on men and women, or boys' and girls'. Enemuo went further to state that "in more specific terms, gender is now widely used to designate the culturally defined, socially formed identities of men and women that are highly variable across cultures and are continually subject to change". Gender as socially formed identities of men and women depicts itself as something that has a lot to do with perception. Ugwulebo (2011) avers that "gender perception governs much of human relationships and interactions especially in African societies at large and Nigeria in particular". This view is supported by Ugwulebo and Anele (2001).

In the Nigerian context, gender inequality remains a growing factor that is perceived by some individuals as a major issue influencing the way people interact and deal with one another. Gender inequality, apart from being prevalent in the Nigerian society, is also presumed to be influencing the capacity and speed of its development in many different ramifications (Amadi, 2013). Ugwulebo (2011) agrees with this position and opines that "favour of one sex against the other is against the tenets of gender equity and negates the spirit of sustainable development. It dictates who benefits from allocation of available resources including the economic and political benefits". Gender inequality is the observed socio-cultural, economic, political and psychological differences between males and females with their attendant cultural alienation, economic exploitation, political marginalization and mental brutalization of women, etc, in society (Esomonu, 2013).

Gender inequality is used to refer to the opposite of gender equality which implies the imbalance or disequilibrium of rights, privileges and opportunities, etc, between the genders. This is the practical nature of gender inequality in most human societies,

including the Nigerian society (Okoroafor and Iheriohanma, 2013). Gender inequality, in essence, implies the unequal treatment and perceptions of individuals based on their gender. It arises from differences in socially constructed gender roles. Gender inequality involves the socio-cultural and economic manifestations in which women and men do not enjoy equal rights and opportunities across all sectors of the society, including economic participation and decision-making. It also constitutes distinctions of behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men (Akinola, 2009). Gender inequality, through one of its predominant dimensions which is gender discrimination, seems to manifest itself in different ramifications in the Nigerian society and particularly in its work organizations. Nakpodia and Urien (2012) posit that gender discrimination is a problem that has eaten deep into the society. Women are seldom allowed to do their work; training opportunities are less for women than men. There is no contesting the fact that there is gender inequality and stereotyping that is skewed to the disadvantage of the girl-child and women in our society. It is a problem that requires a proactive solution not only from parents, governments, the educational system, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) but all and sundry in the society.

Many scholars have argued that it is mainly the issue of gender discrimination which is propagated by gender inequality that actually undermines women's ability and opportunity to effectively contribute to the productive capacity of the nation's workforce (Ahamba, 2013). Gender discrimination is the practice of treating and relating with one particular gender in the society in an unfair way or manner which undermines that gender's progress (Akeidi, 2013). Gender inequality, in all its applied nomenclatures and dimensions such as "gender bias", "gender imbalance", "gender discrimination" or even "gender disequilibrium", connotes the domination, superiority and headship of one gender over the other. In most societies of the world (both past and present), the most common dimension of gender inequality remains the gender discrimination and manipulations of the males over the females (Everest, 2011).

Human Resources management, work organizations and women's productivity in Nigeria

Women constitute a sizeable population of the Nigerian workforce and therefore a formidable group with immense human resource implications in work organizations. Women in the civil service can contribute more to the nation's productivity and national development if their potentials are fully

utilized and managed. Ogundipe – Leslie (1994) cited in Offodile (2011) advocates that, “the empowerment of women results in self-awareness while spurring them on to self-reliance resulting to numerous contributions to their society”. This view is furthered by Ogundipe-Leslie (1994).

The empowerment of Nigerian women here enunciated is recognition of their ability to work and contribute immensely to their society economically and socially. The agenda are in tandem with the ultimate tenets and goals of human resources management. Human resources management has been described as a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic development of a highly committed and a capable workforce using an integrated array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques (Storey, 2001). It is noteworthy to state that one major constituent of human resources is the human capital (men and women) and women make up a reasonable size of the Nigeria Civil Service. Anugwom (2005:98) defines human capital development of an organization as “the provision of learning, training and development opportunities in order to improve individual, team and corporate performance”. Human capital development entails the pursuit and advancement of the intrinsic interests of both genders in terms of proficiency and capacity for work. Empowering human capital development as it pertains to women may be a positive step towards empowering women’s productivity in work organizations in Nigeria. Therefore, effective management of issues affecting women in the civil service constitutes part of the effective management of human capital of the Nigeria Civil Service.

Again, human resources management refers to, “the most comprehensive set of managerial activities and tasks concerned with development and maintaining a qualified workforce – human resources – in ways that contribute to organizational effectiveness” (DeNisi and Griffin, 2005). The connection between the pursuit and sustenance of women’s productivity and human resources management strategies becomes more glaring when views such as that of Akubiro (1998) are considered, in which he states that organizing and treating individuals at work so that they will each get the greatest possible realization of their intrinsic abilities, thus attaining maximum efficiency for themselves and their group and thereby giving to the enterprise, of which they are a part, its determining competitive advantage and its optimum result.

The organization and treatment of individuals at work includes the organization and treatment of women in work organizations, including the civil service. To get the best (or at least the optimal) performance out of women in the civil service may require that certain structures in society (at home and workplace) that undermine women’s capacity and efficiency and lead to their low productivity must be dismantled to allow them work at best level for themselves and their work organizations (Okebukola, 2004). The present day challenge of turning around our poor economy, low-productivity and increasing poverty and hunger in Nigeria can be better tackled if there is effective management of human (women) resources to the benefit of the Nigeria Civil Service. Imaga (2001:214) asserts that, “human resource management function has been elevated today because of the increasingly critical nature of problems, and challenges in the more effective utilization of human resource”.

The assurance of productivity through the effective pursuit of good human resources management in work organizations can result in a number of positive implications for women’s productive capacity in the Nigeria Civil Service, following the submission of Purcell, Kinnie, Rayton and Swart (2003).

These submissions on efficient human resources management are clear objectives that can engender women’s increased productivity if adequately and effectively put in place in work organizations in Nigeria, particularly in the civil service. These submissions if effected may help to minimize the issues of gender inequality such as an equal opportunity for training and development among men and women civil servants and also create a more gender balanced and goal oriented civil service. This is in line with the measures or strategies that may dismantle most forms of social and economic structures and obstacles impeding women’s effort or capacity to be more productive. The development of a positive psychological contract and means of increasing the motivation and commitment of employees; and the formulation and implementation of policies which meet the needs of individuals and create a great place to work will imply eschewing and doing away with issues of social and gender inequalities against women. Women are a part of the workforce that needs motivation and commitment, like their male counterpart, to be more productive and to complement men in creating a great place of work. Effective human resources management may enhance and sustain women’s productivity in work organizations, particularly in the civil service.

Empirical review

Some documented empirical studies have demonstrated that issues of gender inequality such as inequality in training and development exist and that these issues have some link with the efficiency and productivity of women in the Nigeria Civil Service. Below are some of such studies.

Onah (2008) carried out a study on gender and career development in civil service, in order to contribute towards building an empirical base for improved women's participation in career development programmes in the civil service. This study provided empirical evidence on how women's participation is unequal to that of men in the civil service with data collected from the questionnaire and the result with the use of estimated multinomial logit model shows that the participation of men in career development programmes is more than that of women partly because men are greater in number than the women in the civil service as at that point in time (2007). He finds that men's dominance in the top hierarchy of the civil service and common attitudes of nepotism and favoritism combine to create a civil service system that gives men more opportunities than women.

According to Ahamba (2013), on statistics about women in civil service training and development, found out that women participation in career development programmes has increased since the 1990's, that women began to participate in greater numbers, and their career development participation increased rapidly from 28.6 percent in 1978 to 54.8 percent in 2012. The statistics also indicated that the proportion of men's participation in training and development when compared with the women was at a ratio of about 3:1 in 2012 as against 5:1 in 1995. More importantly, the recent findings by Nwokocho (2014) have established that many women belong to the junior cadre while men dominate the management cadre. From this advantaged position, men influence and dominate participation in different career development programmes in the public service.

Akinola (2009) conducted a study using 700 male and female civil servants in the Lagos State civil service to determine the level of women/men opportunity for training and development in the civil service. Data were gathered using structured questionnaire and interview. After using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to analyze the data, the author found out that women's situation/experience in terms of opportunity for training/development is mainly as a result of two major issues: that the majority of the management staff who go for training and

development programmes are mainly dominated by men and therefore the whole process is skewed to favor more men than women. Again, that the issues of nepotism, favoritism and cronism influence the process of decision about participation in conference, workshops and other training programmes. It was found out that in some ministries, selection of personnel for training is sometimes determined by one's relationship or closeness to those (mostly men) at the helm of affairs.

A study carried out by Esomonu (2013) used 1500 male and female workers in Lagos state Civil Service to establish the disparity in levels of participation in career development programmes for women and men. Data were gathered using questionnaire, primary and secondary sources. When subjected to T-test analysis, result showed that more men gain opportunity to conference and workshops than women and that this one major factor hindering many women from attaining top management positions as much as in the Civil Service. The author found out that this unequal opportunity/participation helps to undermine women's capacity and job efficiency and their contribution to Civil Service productivity and national development.

Morgan (2010) observed after a study that unequal access to training and career enhancement programmes affect women's productivity in work organizations. He studied 410 women who work in the British public sector and found out seventy-three percent of those interviewed were of the view that men had more opportunities than women in having access to trainings, 11% reported that men and women gain equal access to trainings. About 16% claimed that they do not know which of the genders actually has more of such opportunities for training. Further, sixty-two percent of the women stated that this situation of unequal trainings against women affects their level of productivity negatively by undermining the capacity to carry out their job responsibilities adequately. This position is supported by Okoli (2012), who posits that women's unequal opportunity to necessary training and development programmes when compared with their male counterparts remains a major factor driving all other forms of gender inequality prevalent in the Nigeria Civil Service.

Akedi (2013) examined the factors which affect the promotion of women in the public service. He found out that unequal working conditions and inequity in terms of respect for women's rights and opportunities have impact on the career growth/promotion of women. Issues of unequal access to training for

career growth, violations of rights and unequal working environment negatively affect women's proficiency and capacity to grow through the ranks as rapidly as the men in the public sector. The author suggests that women's condition of service as it prevails in the Public sector in Nigeria largely influence their career development, promotion and productivity.

Theoretical framework

In 1990, Sylvia Walby developed an approach to understanding gender in contemporary societies. In her work, "Theorizing Patriarchy", Walby points out that patriarchy must remain central to a feminist understanding of society. To her, "patriarchy" is indispensable for an analysis of gender inequality. Walby argues that there are six patriarchal structures which restrict women and help to maintain male dominance and female subordination in society and they include: paid employment, household production, culture, sexuality, violence and the state (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008).

The Theory of Patriarchy as espoused by Sylvia Walby will serve as the theoretical framework upon which the analysis will be based. The choice of the theory for the study result from the fact that it has features that try to critically analyze the issues/variables of gender inequality such as unequal opportunities for training and development between women and men in modern work organizations such as the civil service. The theory attempts to explicate the issues of gender inequality not just as they pertain to the larger society but also as they affect work organizations. The system/structure of gender inequality, in no small measure, tends to influence the quality of life and productivity of women, helping to define their roles and status, and also determine their cultural alienation, economic exploitation, political marginalization, psychological condition and general well-being (Hogan, 2006).

The challenges of increased productivity in contemporary work organizations and the need to take competitive advantage of the abilities, talents, energy and resources that workers, especially women can offer are some of the issues that bring the arguments and presentations of the theory to the fore in this investigation. The study presumes that the system/structure of gender inequality has interactive synergy with the productivity of women in work organizations such as the civil service. Moreover, the impact of inequality in training and development on women in work organizations in contemporary societies is one issue that has continued to raise debates and controversies, with some schools of

thought arguing that there is no significant room for such gender inequality in work organizations (Storey, 2003). The theory of Patriarchy categorically emphasizes the role of paid employment in entrenching the dominance of men and subordination of women in modern work organizations. In fact, it considers the state and paid employment the major structures of patriarchy and gender inequality. Haralambos and Holbon (2008:471) assert that "through male dominated organizations, trade unions and even the state, women's opportunities are limited". However, paid employment, such as civil service, has been and remains a key structure for creating disadvantages for women (Miles, 2002). In support, Ajibola (2015) posits that "in the twentieth century, the Nigeria Civil Service had male dominated trade unions and the federal and state governments ensured that women's opportunities were significantly limited". This would affect women's capacity to gain opportunities for training and development that could enhance their productivity.

The basic principles and tenets of the Theory of Patriarchy seem to have linkages with the system/structure of gender inequality that are presumed to be hampering not only the efficiency and output of women but also the productivity of the Nigerian workforce. For instance, Walby (1990) argues that there are six patriarchal structures which restrict women and help to maintain male dominance and female subordination in the society and they include: paid employment, household production, culture, sexuality, violence and state. These patriarchal structures help to give a broader approach to studying the system/structure of gender inequality in present-day work organizations in Nigeria, including the civil service, because the issues they raised are related to the presumed problems and challenges confronting these organizations. Some of the presumed problems of the civil service and other work organizations in Nigeria include that gender inequality may have spread its institutional structural tentacles to the work organizations, the discrimination of women arising from the absence of gender equality, the issue of unequal opportunities for training and development between men and women in work organizations, etc. Conclusively, Walby's theory of Patriarchy posits critical views through which women's conditions and experience in work organizations such as the civil service can be observed more objectively and constructively.

Methodology

The geographical scope of the study is Imo State Civil Service in Imo State, while the thematic scope of the

study is an investigation on the effect of inequality in training and development on women's productivity in the Imo State Civil Service. Two ministries of the state's civil service were purposively selected for the study: Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources and Ministry of Works and Transport. The choice of these ministries was done to allow for a more gender-balanced sample. The Ministry of Works and Transport is mainly dominated by male staff while the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources has in its employ more women than men.

For the purpose of this study, the survey design was used to obtain data. In this survey design, the questionnaire is specifically designed to solicit information concerning the variables of gender inequality and participation of women in training and development.

A sample of the staff from the Ministries of Works and Transport and Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources were used for the study. The total number of workers in the Ministry of Works and Transport is 598 while the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources has 715 workers. The total workforce is 1,313 (Imo State Civil Service Handbook, 2014). In justifying the right sample size based on the population of the study, Nwanna's (2007) postulation was adopted which states that, "if the population of study is a few hundreds, 40% or more sample will do; if many hundreds, a 20% sample will do; and if several thousands, a 5% or less sample will do". Therefore,

the sample size of 40% which is 525 of the total staff size in the selected ministries is therefore regarded as representative of the total population (1,313) of the selected ministries. In the Ministry of Works and Transport, 40% of the population was selected and this approximates to 239 staff while in the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources, 40% of the population were selected and this approximates to 286 staff.

In choosing the sample for the study, the purposive, proportionate, and simple random sampling techniques were variously applied at different stages. The primary and secondary sources of data collection were used in this study. The primary sources consist of questionnaire and key persons interview. The key persons interview involved the interview of ten (10) human resource managers, five (5) from each of the ministries. The secondary sources consist of information from textbooks, journal articles, newspapers and other published works related to the phenomena under study. Out of 525 copies of questionnaire distributed, 400 copies were successfully retrieved. Data collected from the field were presented using frequency distribution tables and simple percentages (%), while the Chi-square (χ^2) statistical tool was employed to test the hypothesis formulated in the study. Below are tables showing data on distribution and collection of questionnaire used in the study:

Table 1. Distribution and Collection of Copies of the Questionnaire

	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources.	Ministry of Works and Transport.	Total
Total copies of questionnaire distributed	286	239	525
Total copies of questionnaire returned, properly completed	244	156	400
Total copies of questionnaire not returned	20	35	55
Total copies of questionnaire returned, not properly completed (invalid)	22	48	70
% of questionnaire returned	85.31	65.27	76.2
% of questionnaire not returned	6.99	14.64	13.75

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 2: Distribution of Copies of Questionnaire Across the Cadres and Ministries

Position of Staff (Cadres)	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)		Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)		Total pop.	Total %
	Total pop.	40% (sample)	Total pop.	40% (sample)	Total pop.	40% (sample)
Management	53	21	38	15	91	36
Senior	155	62	134	54	289	116
Junior	507	203	426	170	933	373
Total	715	286	598	239	1313	525

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on Perception of Unequal Opportunity Among Worker

Options	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)		Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)		Total	
	No. of respondents	%	No. of respondents	%	No. of respondents	%
Yes	147	60.24	117	75.0	264	66.0
No	80	32.78	32	20.51	112	28.0
Not sure	15	6.14	3	1.92	18	4.5
Don't know	2	0.81	4	2.56	6	1.5
Total	244	100	156	100	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

In table 3, 60.24% of respondents in Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources indicate in affirmative to the question: do you agree that there is unequal opportunity for training/development among workers in the Imo State civil service? 75.0% of the respondents in Ministry of Works and Transport and 60.24% in Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources also indicate yes. This shows that a higher percentage of the respondents in the two ministries agree that there is unequal opportunity between men and women civil servants in Imo State Civil Service.

The analysis from the table above is in consonance with the views of Roberts (2004) which state that the history of women in Nigeria's public bureaucracy presents an account of tremendous diversity in the civil service; there can be no mistake in the widespread and presence of women in the civil service of Nigeria. Yet, female senior public administrators are relatively rare. However, prejudice continues to exist, as does the glass ceiling that limits women from enjoying truly equal opportunities in the Nigerian public service.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on the Effect of Unequal Opportunity on Women's Efficiency and Productivity.

Options	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)		Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)		Total	
	No. of respondents	%	No. of respondents	%	No. of respondents	%
Yes	163	66.80	118	75.64	281	70.25
No	45	18.44	18	11.53	63	15.75
Not sure	28	11.47	9	3.68	37	9.25
Don't know	8	3.27	11	4.50	19	4.75
Total	244	100	156	100	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

In table 4, 66.80% of respondents in Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural resources indicate that there is unequal opportunity that affects women's efficiency and productivity, 75.64% in Ministry of Works and Transport indicate also, that it affects women's efficiency and productivity. The total

percentage of 70.25 of the respondents indicates that unequal opportunity for training and development affects women's efficiency and productivity. Therefore, this implies that women workers in Imo State Civil Service are influenced by this situation/experience.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on the Extent Unequal Opportunity Negatively Affects Women's Efficiency and Productivity

Options	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)		Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)		Total	
	No. respondents	of %	No. respondents	of %	No. respondents	of %
Great extent	113	46.31	91	58.33	204	51.0
Considerable extent	39	15.98	27	17.30	66	16.50
Moderate extent	29	11.88	20	12.82	49	12.25
Slight extent	63	25.81	18	11.53	81	20.25
Total	244	100	156	100	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

In table 5, 51.0% of the respondents indicate that unequal opportunity negatively affects women's efficiency and productivity to a great extent, 16.50% indicate it affects women to a considerable extent, 12.25% indicate it affects them to a moderate extent while 20.25% are of the view that it affects them to a slight extent. This implies that to a great extent unequal opportunity in terms of training and development negatively affects women's efficiency and productivity in the Imo State Civil service.

Test of Hypothesis1

H₀1 = There is no significant relationship between unequal opportunity for training and development and the productivity of women in the Imo State Civil service.

The question on if you agree that unequal opportunity for training/development is affecting women's efficiency and productivity negatively, to what extent has it done so is used in testing hypothesis 1.

Table 6: Extent Unequal Opportunity Negatively Affects Women's Efficiency and Productivity (Response Analysis)

Options	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)	Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)	Total
Great extent	113	91	204
Considerable extent	39	27	66
Moderate extent	29	20	49
Slight extent	63	18	81
Total	244	156	400

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 7: Calculation of Observed and Expected Frequencies for Test of Hypothesis 1

Options	Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources (MAENR)	Ministry of Works and Transport (MW&T)	Total
Great extent	113 (124.44) 55.39%	91 (79.56) 44.61%	204 100
Considerable extent	39 (40.26) 59.09%	27 (25.74) 40.91%	66 100
Moderate extent	29 (29.89) 59.18%	20 (9.33) 40.82%	49 100
Slight extent	63 (49.41) 77.78%	18 (31.59) 22.22%	81 100
Total	244	156	400

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 8: Chi-square Test of Hypothesis 1

Ob.	Ex.	Ob-Ex	(Ob-Ex) ²	(Ob-Ex) ² Ex
113	124.44	-11.44	130.87	1.051
39	40.26	-1.26	1.59	0.039
29	29.89	-0.89	0.79	0.027
63	49.41	13.59	184.69	3,739
91	79.56	11.44	130.87	1.645
27	25.74	1.26	1.59	0.062
20	19.11	0.89	0.79	0.041
18	31.59	-13.59	184.69	5.846
				12.450

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The formula for Chi-square application is:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(of-ef)^2}{ef}$$

Where χ^2 = Chi-squared
 Σ = Summation sign
 Ef = Expected frequency
 Of = Observed frequency

Level of Significance = 5%
 Degree of Freedom (DF) = 3 (ie 4 - 1 = 3)
 Where 4 = no. of options in the question

Calculated Chi-square (χ^2_{cal}) = 12.450

Decision rule for hypothesis 1

Accept H_0 if Chi-square calculated (χ^2_{cal}) > chi-square tabulated (χ^2_{tab})

Chi-square tabulated (χ^2_{tab}) = ($\chi^2_{0.05}$), 3 = 7.815

Since chi-square calculated (χ^2_{cal}) = 12.450 is greater than (>) chi-square tabulated (χ^2_{tab}) = 7.815, we reject H_0 and conclude that there is a significant relationship between unequal opportunity for training and development and the efficiency and productivity of women in the Imo state Civil Service at $\alpha = 0.05$.

From the above result, it shows that 55.39% of the respondents in the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources indicated that unequal opportunity negatively affects women's efficiency and productivity to a great extent while 44.61% did the same in the Ministry of Works and Transport. The analysis from the table also indicated as follows:

In terms of how unequal opportunity negatively affects women's efficiency and productivity: (considerable extent- Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources. (59.06%), Ministry of Works and Transport (40.91%), Moderate extent-MAENR (59.18%), MW&T (40.82%); slight extent - MAENR. (77.78%), MW&T (22.22%).

Discussion

The findings of the study reveals that majority of the respondents (66.0%) indicate that there is unequal opportunity for training and development against women in the Imo State Civil Service. This confirms that today, one of the greatest challenges facing the Nigeria civil service is the syndrome of unequal access to and inadequate participation in various aspects of civil service career development

programmes (Amadi, 2013). The implication of this is that many women who would have gained more knowledge, experience and expertise from conferences, seminars, workshops and in-service trainings are not properly equipped and opportuned to carry out their duties and responsibilities. This situation contributes in undermining women's efficiency. Furthermore, it adversely affects women's morale and commitment to work and this could have a negative impact on their individual productivity and the overall productivity of the civil service. This finding is in line with previous findings in this regard (Ahamba, 2013; Nkwokocha, 2014).

From the response on the interview guide, the interviewees, to varying degrees, were of the opinion that there is some level of unequal opportunity between the men and women working in the Imo State Civil Service. They opined that more men enjoy higher opportunity for training/development than the women. One of the interviewees stated that:

In the Imo State Civil Service, men often get more and better opportunity for In-service training, conferences and workshops than the women. Despite the fact that there are more women in the ministry where I work (Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources), the men seem to dominate in getting such opportunities (A female Director, aged 54, Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resource)

Again, majority of the interviewees argued that part of what causes the domination of men in having opportunities for training and development more than women is the issue of nepotism and favoritism which is borne out of some managers' pursuit of selfish and primordial interests.

Conclusion

From this study, it is concluded that in the Imo State Civil Service, there is unequal opportunity for training and development against women and this confirmed that gender inequality exists in Imo State Civil Service. Again, the prevalent inequality in training and development undermines women's efficiency and productivity, thereby undermining the overall productivity of the state's civil service.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

- a) Imo State Civil service, as a matter of urgency, should prioritize its goals to put more focus on ensuring that there is equal

opportunity for training and development for both women and men in its service. Women should be encouraged to participate in trainings and career development programmes to boost their capacity and job efficiency.

- b) Overall, the Imo State government should prioritize gender mainstreaming and transparency in the activities/programmes of its Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in order to encourage more women to be efficient in work conditions that are gender friendly, respect human rights and observe equality for enhanced productivity of its agencies and particularly the state's civil service.

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