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## **Gender Attributes as Determinants of Organisational Efficiency**

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### **Abstract**

*Whether a leader is a male or female with the attendant sex personality consciousness could be serious determining factor of the performance of either of the leaders in work organisation. This paper therefore examined attributes of gender and the impact on leadership effectiveness and the efficiency of the organisation. A structured survey instrument was used in collecting data from a sample of one hundred and forty-five workers randomly selected from purposively selected work organisations. Data were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques and chi-square. The results showed that male usual authoritative way of leadership did not promote organisational efficiency and that female adherence to rules to ensure ethical values positively affected organisational efficiency. This study established that gender attributes have effects on the efficiency of work organisation. It is therefore recommended that the negative stereo-type bias about male and female leaders should be done away with, that the positive attributes should be encouraged and training should be made use of to help the leaders enhance the efficiency of the organisation.*

**Key words:** Gender, Attributes, Leadership, Organisational efficiency

### **Introduction and Background to the Study**

One of the main aims of any organisation is to be efficient and effective in production of goods and rendering of acceptable services to its customers and so many factors go into play in this regard. One of such factors is the quality of the leader which will show the efficiency of the leader and the organisation. The leader must be able to make the

subordinates work by leading and coordinating well for the overall efficiency of the organisation.

The gender of the leader could be looked at with special attention to determine the overall efficiency of the organisation. Gender which operates alongside other factors like personality, class, race, age and even the sexual identity of the individual are important factors that help in shaping the individual and by extension, the organisation. These factors play major roles in determining how an individual operates within a system. The belief system and culture of the society about the attributes of an individual gender are also of great essence. Women are expected, by the society to be submissive and obedient and by so doing abide by lay down rules, whereas men are expected to be assertive, masculine and authoritative. These are expected to reflect in their daily activities and could have effect on their job as leaders in organisations hence, the need to find out the role of these attributes in determining the efficiency of the organisation based on the gender of the leader.

From the ideas, biases and stereotypes that have been passed down through many generations on the differences between male and female attributes and their performance in relation to societal belief of their abilities to perform as leaders; there seems to be a gulf between male and female leaders in the way they perform their leadership duties which determine the tone and overall efficiency of the organisation.

Charlesworth and Baird (2007) explain that viewing gender from the perspective of marginalised women does not allow for gender equity and therefore affects organisational efficiency and also silence men's interests in better work/life outcome. Madden, (2011) says gender stereotypes are pervasive and have impact on all aspects of women's and men's behaviour and that differences in leadership styles associated with gender affect the perceived effectiveness of the leaders.

Women in many cultures are still treated as inferior to their male counterparts and so, they are seen and perceived as not capable of leading well. Cornwell (2005) says that, women are



still treated in many African cultures as second class citizens, they are denied rights to land and inheritance, play the second fiddle and subjected to the preferential treatment in which men's entitlements are regarded by the legislative, customary and statutory institutions. Well, women treated in this way might not and are not expected to have self-esteem but in spite of these denial and seemingly unfair treatment, there are some women in leadership positions like their male counterparts howbeit; they may be fewer in number compared with the number of their male counterparts.

Globally, the general assumption is that leadership is mainly an exclusive area for men who are seen as authoritative, assertive, masculine and bold but studies in recent times talk about women in leadership position and their performance like their male counterpart (Collins, 2000; DeLany and Rogers, 2004). It is established that women are generally under-represented in positions of authority in workplaces if compared to their male counterparts (Reskin & McBrier, 2000; Reskin, 2003; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Gorman 2005; Kalev, 2009).

In spite of the discrimination and stereotype belief of women's inability to perform well as leaders, some of them have been able to break the glass ceiling and attain leadership positions in their careers or workplaces. Some people belief that women do not deserve leadership positions which are not bequeath to them anyway, but they work hard to get to the positions (Ridgeway and Correll 2004; Eagly and Carli 2007). This study intends to find out the role gender attributes play in the leadership method of male and female leaders in enhancing organisational efficiency.

### **Methodology**

Survey research design method was adopted for the study. A structured survey instrument was used to collect data from a sample of 145 workers that were randomly selected from purposively selected organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria. The respondents were workers who have been in the service for three years and above.

A set of self-developed questionnaire titled 'Gender Attributes and Organisational Efficiency Scale (GAOES)' was the main instrument used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.82 using the Cronbach-alpha method. Data were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques and chi-square.

The instrument elicited information from the respondents on the efficiency of their organisation based on the gender of their work team leaders, unit leaders and heads of departments. The instrument among other things found out from the respondents about meeting of deadlines under the leaders, customer satisfactions based on their comments and reactions; and employees' satisfaction and commitment to duties under the leaders.

As with many organisations used for this type of study that border on personality, participants always request for anonymity, this study is not an exception.

### **Presentation of results of hypotheses tested.**

#### **Hypothesis I**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Male usual authoritative way of leadership does not promote organizational effectiveness.

		Organizational performance		Total
		Agree	Disagree	
Male headship	Agree	103	25	128
	Disagree	17	0	17
Total		120	25	145

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.012 <sup>a</sup>	1	.045		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	2.760	1	.097		
Likelihood Ratio	6.889	1	.009		
Fisher's Exact Test				.044	.032
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.984	1	.046		
N of Valid Cases	145				

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.166	.045
Nominal Cramer's V	.166	.045
N of Valid Cases	145	

$X^2 = 4.012$  ( $X^2$  is calculated chi-square) with associated significance level (Asymp. Sig which is also known as P-value) = 0.045,  $r = 0.166$  ( $r$  is significant of correlation attributes) and degree of freedom is 1.

Since, P-value= 0.045 is less than  $\alpha=0.05$ , we accept  $H_0$ .

Base on the data at hand, it is concluded that male usual authoritative way of leadership does not promote organizational effectiveness.

**Hypothesis II**

$H_0$ : Female adherence to rules to ensure ethical values does not significantly affect organizational effectiveness.

		Organizational performance		Total
		Agree	Disagree	
Adher	Agree	75	51	126
	Disagree	0	19	19
	Total	75	70	145

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.427 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	21.104	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	30.767	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	23.265	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	145				

**Symmetric Measures**

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.402	.000
	Cramer's V	.402	.000
N of Valid Cases		145	

$X^2 = 23.427$  ( $X^2$  is calculated chi-square) with associated significance level (Asymp. Sig which is also known as P-value) = 0.000,  $r = 0.402$  ( $r$  is significant of correlation attributes) and degree of freedom is 1.

Since, P-value= 0.000 is less than  $\alpha=0.05$ , we reject  $H_0$ .



Base on the data at hand, it is concluded that female adherence to rules to ensure ethical values significantly affect organizational effectiveness.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The communal and other attributes women acquire from the society based on societal beliefs and practices about their femininity, submissiveness and abiding by the rules help them to excel and perform well in their positions. Male are expected by the society to be assertive and authoritative (Envic, 2008) and these reflect in their method of leadership practice. Abolade (2012) found that leadership style is one of the predictors of organisational efficiency.

The finding of this study support that of Borkowski and Ugras, (1998); and Franke, Crown, and Spake (1997) where their meta-analyses showed that women were more likely to support ethical business practices. Luthar (1996) found out that, autocratic managers are not high performers and that autocratic male managers in particular are not high performers. These are in agreement with the finding of this study that male authoritative way of leadership does not promote organisational efficiency.

The findings of this study show that male usual authoritative way of leadership does not promote organisational efficiency and that female adherence to rules to ensure ethical values significantly affect organisational efficiency. Lowen (2013) says that women leaders are more likely to ignore rules and take risks whereas, this study shows that they adhere to rules to ensure ethical values which enhances organisational efficiency.

Ross-Smith and Kornberger (2004) referring to Nagl-Docekal (1999), Setdler (1994), Winter and Robert (1980) that abstract thought, objective judgement or general principles are seen as masculine characteristics, whereas subjectivity, emotions and orientation towards the concrete are female. The point of orientation towards the concrete that is feminine attribute will make female leader hold on to ethical values according to the finding of this study.

Ross-Smith and Kornberger (2004) explain that the modernization of bureaucratic rules and procedures reinforce the power of men. It is expected that organisation need to be rational, strategic, tough and aggressive and men are the ones the society associate with these attributes but this study has established that the authoritative characteristic of male leaders do not promote organisation efficiency of the organisation.

Lowen (2013) referring to the 2005 Caliper findings explains that women leaders have a stronger need to get things done and are willing to take risks than male leaders. Wen (2013) referring to the research carried out by Laura Kray and Michael Haselhuhn says that women are able to maintain a high level of ethical standards irrespective of what their self-interest could be. Eagly (2013) says that men, more than women, adopt a top-down command and control style. This is in agreement with the finding of this study that male leaders are authoritative which do not promote organisation efficiency.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

It has been established by this study that gender attributes play major role in the leadership method of male and female leaders which have effects on the organisation. Policy makers and even management should ensure that biases against male and female leaders should be done away with. The positive attributes of these leaders should be encouraged and necessary training programmes could be employed to help them perform their roles efficiently. This will give them the first reward a worker looks for in a job –satisfaction. It will yield good dividend for the management and keep the organisation in business and give it an edge over competitors.

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