

A Study of Patterns of Gender Representation and Job Performance among Academic Staff of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

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Abstract

The thrust of this paper was to examine the gender representation vis-à-vis the perception of undergraduates toward the job performance of male and female academics. The study adopted both the survey and expo-facto research designs. A total of 987 undergraduates from Parts 2-4 were selected using convenience sampling technique from 10 randomly selected faculties from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. A self-developed instrument titled "Gender and Job Performance of Academic Staff" GJPA was used to collect information. Also, the information on academic staff strength of the university was obtained from the Budgeting and Planning Unit of the school (O.A.U., 2014). The instrument yielded test re-test reliability coefficient of $r = 0.82$ at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that in 2010/2011 academic session, male academics accounted for 630(82%), while female academics had 134(18%). It was shown that in 2012/2013, 392(88%) of male academics were in senior ranks, while, 55(12%) of female academics were in senior ranks. Further, the results showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of undergraduates towards the academic competency of male and female academics ($t = 0.083, p > 0.05$). Lastly, the results showed that there was a significant difference in professional attainment of male and female academics (t -test = 0.667, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded even though male academic staff were more represented at the senior ranks and management positions, yet, this did not place them above their female counterparts when compared their academic competency.

Key words: Gender, representation, job performance and academic staff

INTRODUCTION

Gender representation and job performance in the nation's ivory towers are important issues that can not be handled with levity. Considering the fact that university education serves as the peak of formal knowledge, the place where the nation's future minds are nurtured. It is therefore important that effort should be made to ensure that her products are built to become more productive, self-fulfilling and attain self-actualization.

In recent years, there has been complaint about the quality of graduates being turned out yearly in Nigerian's tertiary institution. It has variously been uttered by the public that academic staff are no longer devoted and committed to the job. To the public, it seems the academic staff who are able to produce a bevy of honoured societal fundamental worth such as honesty, inconspicuous nature, steadfastness, promptness, commitment and loyalty are not

zealous and dedicated to their job. Okebukola (2002) alleged that universities in Nigeria are performing below expectation. Therefore, this scenario stands to jeopardize the ultimate objective of the National Policy on Education for tertiary education (NPE, 2004) which is to develop a high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation. Especially, if her academic staff are not well proactive in their professional duties.

However, for the realization of the above objective; there is a need for the provision of university lecturers who will not only be in quantity but also in quality. It also means that our universities be equipped with lecturers who are proactive, facilitative and imaginative classroom managers (Henson & Eller 1999). This is because, according to Malik (2010), the efficiency of the university is dependent upon the spur of its employees. Hence, the efficient and competent lecturers are the one who will excel in the three core academic duties which are teaching; research and community services (Adeniyi, 2012).

In the education sector, women account for a good percentage of the teaching force especially in the nursery, primary and secondary school levels. However, at the tertiary level, the proportion of female to male academic staff is astronomical. Although, Pereira (2002) believed that despite the fact that the Nigerian University system preaches gender neutral terms, yet the effects of their workings are far from gender neutral. This might not be divorced from the observed gender attributes which regards the lecturing as a masculine profession (e.g. Egunjobi (2009).

In the meantime, a study of gender and performance within the university is important not only because until recently, gender inequality in academia has been largely ignored both in the literature and also the wider public arena (Acker, 1992; Knights & Richards, 2003), but also because of their pivotal role in developing organisations' management cadres (Chepator, Thomson & King, 1996; Starkey & Tempest, 2005). It is also important because of the conscious or subconscious messages it conveys to staff and students about the roles of men and women in organizations Mavin and Bryant (1999). The type of information which the above scenario tends to convey is that one may perhaps come to a conclusion that male academic staff are more productive than their female counterpart. This is an indication that the service of male may be considered more useful than that of female.

A cursory look at the history of education in Nigeria showed that the first female academic staff was employed in 1960 in the Department of History at University of Ibadan. Despite the earlier remark by Onokala and Onah (1998) that there has been an increase in the number of female academic staff recruited into Nigerian Universities, yet, Abiola, (2003) and the Federal Ministry of Education (2006) opined that thirty-six years after the employment of the first female lecturer, the female participation among the academic staff of all tertiary institutions is still low. In corroborating the above, the trio of Adeleke (2003), Duyilemi (2007) and Adegun (2012) confirmed that the percentage of females in the academic sector is still very low and that in tertiary institutions most females are in junior cadre of administration.

A preliminary survey of the staff strength of most universities revealed that there are more male than female academic staff. For instance, in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, it is believed that in every ten lecture rooms, there are eight male and two female academic staff. Even at the management level, the story still remains. This therefore calls for the investigation on the patterns of gender representation among the academic staff and at the management level as well as the effect these may have on their job performance.

Ridgeway's (1997) study on staff productivity showed that men traits are generally viewed as more valuable than women's and men are mostly judged as more competent. Also, Perma

(2001) perceived female academics as being “less productive and / or incapable of succeeding in full time academic work. This explains why females’ job performance in academic area is being subjected to both more scrutiny and higher standards than comparable to their male counterparts (Williams 2004).

Apart from the fact the female academic staff are regarded as less-productivity; some scholars argued that the academic profession should rather be exclusive for male than female. For instance, Mason and Goulden (2002) opined that women academics with children are less productive than non-parents. The duo of Mason and Goulden believed that nursing mothers are prone to having less time to present in the classrooms and other academic duties like their peers. The above point may justify the reason why the employers of academic staff prefer to work with male staff than female. The fact remains that an employer facing female and male applicants that are equally qualified will employ the male applicants. The notion that academic work is somehow strenuous has therefore created gender discrimination in the academic circle.

Apart from the above point, the previous studies on the relationship between gender and job performance has indicated that organizational policies on women contribute to cultural biases and values which invariably affect their performance in the work place (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). In most cases, these original rules, policies, and practices have been modified very little to account for the enormous influx of diversity into the workplace, resulting in reduced opportunities for the women in the organization. This is why Kawakami, White and Langer (2000) were of the opinion that gender could affect the job performance of administrators in the university. A key premise of the current research is that job performance can be affected by the combined effects of gender-role stereotypes held by job raters thereby creating negative consequences for job performance among academics women in the university.

Even among the students, female lecturers are perceived as being less knowledgeable as compared with their male counterparts, Nasir (2001) and Yolonfoun (2003). The conclusion is that women do not possess requisite skills and knowledge to take up the academic profession. In view of this, female have to work twice as hard in order to legitimize their positions and authority. They also go as far as developing masculine heart in their approach to academic work in order to live up to expectation.

In their contribution, Poole, Bornholt and Summers (1997) believed that there is a demonstrated pattern of difference in academic work associated with lecturer’s gender. Poole, et al (1997) further affirmed that women spend more time on teaching and administration than their men counterparts. In the contrary, Damian (2005) opined that sex of the lecturers has no effect on their academic practices There is even sufficient research indicating that appointment committees, research committee and other organization apparatus are dominated by males (Morley, 1994; Dines 1993; Lie & Malik 1994). It is therefore unclear whether male lecturers are better than female lecturers in O.A.U. Ile-Ife.

The importance of quality research cannot therefore be overlooked; quality research exposes academic staff to new information and sharing of socio-cultural ideas with others. Research attainment of someone is determined by the number of published articles in referred journals and conferences proceedings of repute (Oloruntoba & Ajayi, 2006). This implies that research publication is very significant for academic staff promotions. It increases the social prestige of the academic staff status to the rank of a professor irrespective of their gender. Yusuf (2005) noted that the cliché “publish” or perish” is quite popular in the university setting. It

constitutes a key criterion for the promotion of academic staff (Forster, 2000). Although, Davis and Astin, (1999) remarked that despite the fact that women are been regarded as less productive than men are, the result is still not conclusive. But, Asmar (1999); Duyilemi (2007) and Adegun (2012) stated that there is dearth of female lecturers at senior levels in most of universities. The argument is that female lecturers find it more convenient to devote more of their time on teaching than to expend it on other professional duties such as research and community service. There is even sufficient research evidence that management positions are dominated by males (Morley, 1994; Lie and Malik, 1994).

Consequent upon the above arguments, it is necessary to establish how the female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, are placed beside their male counterparts in terms of professional attainment and quality. This is therefore the trust of this paper.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

- a. ascertain the pattern of distribution of male and female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria;
- b. investigate the numbers of male and female academic staff at the senior ranks and in the management positions;
- c. examine the perception of the undergraduates towards the teaching competency of male and female academic staff; and
- d. assess the perception of the undergraduates towards the professional attainment of male and female academic staff.

Research Questions

1. What is the pattern of distribution of male and female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?
2. What is the numbers of male and female academic staff at the senior ranks and in the management positions?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the perception of the undergraduates towards teaching competency of male and female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.
2. There is no significant difference in the perception of the undergraduates towards the professional attainment of male and female academic staff.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted both the survey and expo-facto research designs. A total of 1,000 undergraduates from Parts 2-4 selected using convenience sampling technique were selected from 10 randomly selected faculties from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. A self-developed instrument titled "Gender and Job Performance of Academic Staff" GJPA was used to collect information from the undergraduates on their perception towards academic competency and professional attainment of male and female academic staff. GJPA comprised three sections. Section A requested information that were related to students' demographic variables such as faculty, department, level etc. Section B was divided into two sub sections. Each of the sections contained 14 items; and they contained questions on their perception towards the academic competency of both male and female academic staff, while the section C of the instrument contained two sub sections of nine items each. Each sub section requested the students to respond to the items on professional attainment of male and female academic staff. Also, the information on academic staff strength of the university was obtained from the

Budgeting and Planning Unit of the school (O.A.U., 2014). The instrument was validated through the assistance of the experts' judgment. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test re-test which yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.82$ at 0.05 level of significance. This confirmed the appropriateness of the instrument.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What is the pattern of distribution of male and female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 1: Pattern of Distribution of Male and Female Academic Staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

STAFF STRENGTH									
Academic Session									
	2010/2011			2011/2012			2012/2013		
Faculties	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Administration	45 (83%)	9 (17%)	54	45 (83%)	9 (17%)	54	63 (82%)	14 (18%)	77
Agriculture	53 (74%)	19 (26%)	72	53 (74%)	19 (26%)	72	76 (80%)	19 (20%)	95
Arts	100 (83%)	21 (17%)	121	139 (86%)	23 (14%)	162	139 (86%)	23 (14%)	162
Basic Medical Science	43 (84%)	8 (16%)	51	56 (86%)	9 (14%)	65	56 (86%)	9 (14%)	65
Education	54 (70%)	23 (30%)	77	52 (63%)	30 (37%)	82	52 (63%)	30 (37%)	82
Environmental Design and Management	72 (92%)	6 (8%)	78	86 (92%)	7 (8%)	93	86 (92%)	7 (8%)	93
Law	30 (86%)	5 (14%)	35	32 (89%)	4 (11%)	36	32 (89%)	4 (11%)	36
Pharmacy	36 (72%)	14 (28%)	50	41 (72%)	16 (28%)	57	41 (72%)	16 (28%)	57
Social Sciences	82 (86%)	13 (14%)	95	103 (89%)	13 (11%)	116	103 (89%)	13 (11%)	116
Technology	115 (88%)	16 (12%)	131	114 (92%)	10 (8%)	124	114 (92%)	10 (8%)	124
Total	630 (82%)	134 (18%)		721 (84%)	140 (16%)		762 (84%)	145 (16%)	

Table 1 above showed the pattern of distribution of male and female academics in the ten faculties selected. It was shown that male academic staff were more represented in all the selected faculties and in all the years selected than the female academic staff. For instance, during 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic sessions the percentages of male academic staff in the Faculty of Administration were 45(83%), 45(83%) and 63(82%) while that of female academics were 9(17%), 9(17%) and 14(18%). Also, in the Faculty of Agriculture, percentages of male to female academics in the number sessions considered were 53(74%), 53(74%), 76(80%) and 19(26%), 19(26%) and 19(20%). The overall results showed that the percentage of male academics in 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic

sessions were 630(82%), 721(84%) and 762(84%) while the overall percentages for female academics for the periods were 134(18%), 140(16%) and 145(16%). From the above, it can be inferred that male academics greatly outnumbered the female academics.

Research Question Two: What is the numbers of male and female academic staff at the senior ranks and in the management positions?

Table 2a: Numbers of Male and Female Academic Staff of O. A. U at the Senior Ranks Career Progression

Career Progression									
Academic Session									
	2010/2011			2011/2012			2012/2013		
	Professor, Reader and Senior Lecturer			Professor, Reader and Senior Lecturer			Professor, Reader and Senior Lecturer		
Faculties	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Administration	29 (94%)	2 (6%)	31	29 (93%)	2 (17%)	31	37 (92%)	3 (18%)	40
Agriculture	27 (77%)	8 (13%)	35	27 (84%)	5 (16%)	32	45 (88%)	6 (12%)	51
Arts	48 (86%)	8 (14%)	56	67 (87%)	10 (13%)	77	67 (87%)	10 (13%)	77
Basic Medical Science	21 (84%)	4 (16%)	25	27 (87%)	4 (13%)	31	27 (87%)	4 (13%)	31
Education	30 (81%)	7 (19%)	37	32 (80%)	8 (20%)	40	32 (80%)	8 (20%)	40
Environmental Design and Management	23 (92%)	2 (18%)	25	30 (94%)	2 (6%)	32	30 (94%)	2 (6%)	32
Law	9 (82%)	2 (18%)	11	15 (88%)	2 (12%)	17	15 (88%)	2 (12%)	17
Pharmacy	20 (87%)	3 (13%)	23	25 (78%)	7 (22%)	32	25 (78%)	7 (22%)	32
Social Sciences	31 (78%)	9 (22%)	40	55 (90%)	6 (10%)	61	55 (90%)	6 (10%)	61
Technology	45 (92%)	4 (18%)	49	59 (89%)	7 (11%)	62	59 (89%)	7 (11%)	62
Total	283 (85%)	49 (15%)	332	366 (87%)	53 (13%)	419	392 (88%)	55 (12%)	447

From Table 2a above, the results showed male were more represented in senior cadre than their female counterpart. For instance, in 2010/2011 academic session, 283(85%) of male were from Senior Lecturer and above, while only 49(15%) of the female were in the same position. Also, in 2011/2012 academic session, 366(87%) of academic staff in senior cadre were male while 53(13%) were female. Finally, in 2012/2013 academic session, 392(88%) out of the 100% of those in senior cadre were male while the remaining 55(12%) were female. Judging from the above results, it can be concluded that more male academics were more in the senior cadre than female academics.

Table 2b: Numbers of Male and Female Academic Staff in the Management Positions

Academic Session												
	2010/2011				2011/2012				2012/2013			
HEADSHIP POSITION												
	Dean		HOD		Dean		HOD		Dean		HOD	
Faculties	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Administration	1	0	4	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	4	0
Agriculture	1	0	5	1	0	1	5	1	1	0	4	2
Arts	1	0	8	1	1		7	2	1	0	7	2
Basic Medical Science	0	1	5	3	1	0	4	4	0	1	3	5
Education	1	0	6	1	1	0	5	2	1	0	5	2
Environmental Design and Management	1	0	6	1	1	0	5	2	1	0	4	3
Law	1	0	4	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	4	0
Pharmacy		1	4	2	1	0	3	3	0	1	3	3
Social Sciences	0	1	7	1	0	1	7	1	1	0	7	1
Technology	0	1	8	1	1	0	8	1	0	1	7	2
Total	6	4	57	11	8	2	52	16	7	3	48	20
	(60 %)	(40 %)	(84 %)	(16 %)	(80 %)	(20 %)	(76 %)	(24 %)	(70%)	(30 %)	(71 %)	(29 %)

Table 2b revealed the distribution of management positions between male and female academics during the three academic sessions considered. The results showed that in 2010/2011 academic session, 60% of the Faculty's Deans were male, while the remaining 40% were female. In 2011/2012, 80% of the Faculty's Deans were male and 20% were female. Also, in 2012/2013 academic session, 70% of the Faculty's Deans were male and the remaining 30% were female. For the position of Head of Departments, in 2010/2011 academic session, the percentage of male occupied the position was 84%, while the female was 16%. Furthermore, in 2011/2012, male had 76% and female had 24%. Lastly, in 2012/2013, 71% out of 100% were male while the remaining 29% were female. Arising from the above, it can be summarized that female were sparsely represented in the administrative positions.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the perception of the undergraduates towards teaching competency of male and female academic staff in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Table 3: t-test Analysis on the Perception of the Undergraduates towards the Teaching Competency of Male and Female Academic Staff

Teaching Competency	Academic Staff	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-test	p
	Male	987	23.39	11.74	985	0.083	> 0.05
	Female	987	29.13	5.46			

Not Significant at $p > 0.05$

Table 4 showed the perception of undergraduates towards the academic competency of male and female academics. From the results, the mean and standard deviation values of male academics yielded 23.39 and 11.74 while female had mean and standard deviation values of 29.13 and 5.46 respectively. The t-test result indicated that $t = 0.083$; $df = 985$, $p > 0.05$. The result implied that there was no significant difference in the perception of undergraduates towards the academic competency of male and female academics. This accepted the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the perception of the undergraduates towards the professional attainment of male and female academic staff.

Table 4: t-test Analysis on the Perception of Undergraduates towards the Professional Attainment of Male and Female Academic Staff

Professional Attainment	Academic Staff	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-test	p
	Male	987	28.7	4.9	985	0.667	< 0.05
	Female	987	29.3	5.6			

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 4 showed the perception of undergraduates towards the professional attainment of male and female academics. The results showed that male academics had mean and standard deviation values of 28.7 and 4.9. The mean and standard deviation values of female yielded 29.3 and 5.6. Also, the t-test value yielded 0.667 at $p < 0.05$. The result implied that there was a significant difference in professional attainment of male and female academics. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

The study has examined the pattern of gender composition and job performance of academic staff. Even though, Onokala and Onah (1998) revealed that there has been an appreciable in the number of female academic staff. This however negated the findings of this study. For instance, the findings showed that there were more male lecturers than female lecturers in all the ten faculties selected for the study. This findings has buttressed the previous studies e.g. FME (2006), Duyilemi (2007) and Adegun (2012) views that the female lecturers are under – represented in the academic profession. This is an indication that male are preferred in academic profession than female even when the two sexes have the same qualification. It is also supported the observation that the lecturing job is a masculine profession (Egunjobi, 2009). From the above, it can be inferred fact that employers of labour considered female lecturers as less competent like their male counterpart. Probably because it is assumed that they are preoccupied with domestic chores; and this might inhibit them from pursuing full-time academic work.

Again, the findings revealed that senior ranks and management positions in the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife were dominated by male. Asmar (1999) and Adegun (2012) explained that there is dearth of female lecturers at senior ranks in most of universities. There has been evidence e.g. Mason and Goulden (2002) that women especially the nursing parents are less productive in academic profession because of the need to take of their family. At the same time, their inability to be proactive in other academic endeavours (research and community service) as limited their progression in management positions (Deans and Head of

Departments). A key factor in this is that most female academic staff still have poor self-concept about their ability to compete favourably with the male in the field.

Furthermore, the findings on the hypothesis one revealed that there was no significant difference in the perception of undergraduates towards the teaching competency of male and female academic staff. The findings has upheld the previous findings of Damian (2005), who considered sex of the lecturers as not relevant to their academic performance. In this case, the notion that female lecturers are less knowledgeable has been disapproved. Conversely, the result contradicted the findings of the trio of Poole, Bornholt and Summers (1997) that academic difference is associated with lecturer's gender. The above scholars might be conceived with the impression that women do not possess the requisites skills and knowledge to take up the job. But the findings from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife might suggest that female lecturers see themselves as having possessed self-efficacy to operate under the same level with their male counterpart.

Lastly, the findings has indicated that there was significant difference in the perception of undergraduates toward the professional attainment of male and female academics. A common saying "publish or perish" in the university circle has revealed the incompetency of the female academic staff to be measured up to the male counterpart. For instance, Asmar (1999) and Mason and Goulden (2002) corroborated the findings by revealing that female academics have less time to attend to other academic duties. The earlier position that females are competent in teaching has clearly showed that they find it more convenient to teach than to share their time on other professional duties such as research and community service. Thus, it can be concluded that female lecturers, especially the nursing mothers greatly find it difficult to combine the task of teaching with other academic matters.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The inference from the study is that because of the nature of academic job, more males take and enjoy lecturing job than females. Because of this, more males are in the senior ranks and management positions than their female counterpart.

It is therefore recommended that the female academics should consider themselves as being capable of achieving greater height like their male counterparts. They should consider other aspects of academic duties as very necessary for their professional growth.

Lastly, the university authority should believe that what is good for goose is also good for gander; therefore they should stop gender discrimination in the recruitment of male and female academics. Instead, a kind of academic waiver can be given to female academics in order to assist them because of the dual gender roles they performed.

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