

Organisational Factors as Predictors of Female Professionals' Employment Status In Electronic Media In South-West Nigeria

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ABSTRACT:-Female Media Professionals' (FMPs) employment and involvement level in Electronic Media Houses (EMHs) have increased over the years. Despite this significant increase, the FMPs are still concentrated at the lower and middle employment stratum. This study, therefore, examined the influence of organisational and demographic factors on the employment status and job performance of female media professionals in electronic media houses in South West Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. Total enumeration sampling technique was used to select 1,231 FMPs from 42 EMHs across the six states of south-west. The instruments used were Employment Status Inventory ($r=0.82$), and Organisational Factor Scale ($r=0.88$). Two research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed using Pearson's product moment correlation, and multiple regression and content analysis. Organisational and demographic factors jointly predicted FMPs employment status ($F_{(2,1228)} = 1837.67$). The components of organisational factors positively correlated with employment status as follows; networking ($r=0.87$), work environment ($r=0.87$), organisational culture ($r=0.85$), mentoring ($r=0.69$), training ($r=0.62$), condition of service ($r=0.60$) and supervisory support ($r=0.56$). In order to improve the employment status of women it was recommended among other things that male senior managers and directors as well as the few female directors should continue to give required and necessary supervisory support to their female subordinates and ensure that the female workers at the lower levels are properly mentored and encouraged to grow into higher levels in the profession.

Keywords: *Female media professionals, Employment status, Job performance, Electronic media houses*

I. INTRODUCTION

In traditional African setting, labour was gender-defined and age-differentiated (Edewor, 2013) because the women folks were culturally considered feminine and thus trained to handle the roles of child rearing, housekeeping, spinning yarn, weaving, dyeing and the art of buying and selling. Besides, they were also perceived as illogical, passive, emotional and submissive, hence, they were to remain in the background as subordinates to the males. In essence, they were not expected to receive any tangible education outside nurturing and care-giving, while the males on the other hand, were expected to fend for the family, provide security and make decisions which were binding on the women (Omolewa, 1981; Adeleke, 2004). This was the practice in Africa before the advent of the colonialists and the consequent introduction of the 'alien' practices of formal education and paid labour that have often stood at variance with the original African cultural norms and practices. However, Ogwezy (2004) asserts that the electronic media is a dynamic change agent, having the capability of influencing the masses through persuasion, advertisements, news and other means in a way that would have reduced the observed patriarchal influences of the society to the barest minimum. Also collaborating this, the United Nations (1995) as reported by Ajilore and Oyelade (2009) said:

The mass media have great potentials as a vehicle for social change and could exercise a significant influence helping to remove prejudices and stereotypes accelerating the acceptance of women and expanding roles in society and promoting their integration in the development process as equal partners. (pg 90)

This is more important because the media (particularly the electronic media) tangibly controls the conscience of its masses (Borchers, 2002). Ironically, some of the activities of the media reflect elements of patriarchy due to their portrayal of women and the position that women occupy in the industry (Okunna and Dunu, 2006). The fact is that the media profession was traditionally male oriented; it was perceived to be owned and solely operated by men and so women employed into the profession and industry are seldomly allowed to be in the decision-making positions (Nwankwo, 1996; Robin, 2002).

Several revelation of the later years show that although the population of women employees in the media profession has increased over the years, they are still concentrated at the lower and middle management positions. Succinctly, their population has been appreciating over the years; but the job status prevents them in most cases from participating in the media policy making processes (Tolentino, 2001). In 2001, the International

Federation of Journalists noted that women occupied one percent of the management, editorial department and ownership of the media while their total population was more than a third of the journalists all over the world.

In almost every organisation or establishment employers apart from the media, practitioners considered certain factors as basic determinants of their employment status or job position or placement. Notably, almost every job advert in the pages of newspapers these days have specifications like maximum age limit, education qualification, experience and some other requirements to be met by potential employees applying for such positions. This is so because management of these organisations have come to realise that workers with relevant educational qualifications, training and experience who are in their prime age could record better performance on the job.

From the above, it is evident that organisational and demographic factors do affect employment/work status of workers. However, there is a dearth of empirical studies to show the extent to which these factors could impede the female media professionals' employment status. The ironical fact that there are more women joining the media while their job status remain low with continuous exclusion from policies and decision making levels calls for investigation.

II. FEMALE MEDIA WORKERS' EMPLOYMENT STATUS: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS PERSPECTIVES

In a research carried out by the International Women Media Fund (IWMF), it was categorically stated by one of the respondents that balancing work and family has been a big challenge to media women. Armstrong, Wood and Nelson (2006), affirmed that women quit from news coverage as they progress in their career because of marriage. They have to choose between their family and their profession. The problem of mobility has been identified with married women in paid labour when an employee with managerial aspirations is employed by "a group-owned newspaper" promotion usually involve movement from one location to another this is often turned down by married women due to family responsibilities.

Tolentino (2001), observed from a focused interview carried out on some women Journalists that the married ones shifted to less demanding jobs to have more time for their children. Blau et al (1998) cited in Eleni, Irene and Leda (2006), found out like other researchers that been married lead individuals to give their personal lives, priority over their work lives and decreases the possibility of career advancement. In buttressing this, Ogan's(1998) findings suggest that marriage and raising a family are somewhat inconsistent with holding a high level managerial position for women.

In their own study, Endang et al (2009) found that female workers could only reach high positions if they attained at least a diploma level of education. They concluded that to some extent, educational background determines employee's position level. However, due to increase in the number of degree holders, higher position has become competitive hence a woman may possess a high educational qualification and still be placed at a lower position (Endang et al, 2009).

Galloway and Bernasek (2004) and Hurley and Sonnenfeld (1998) in Endang et al (2009) respectively agree that improvement in women's education are beneficial in promoting development and that male and female managers with tertiary education were more likely to be selected to fill top management positions than those without such education. Endang (2009) however states that, although an employee's position is determined by his/her education, it is no longer automatic for a female graduate to be put at a higher position with a first degree due to competition, a female may still be placed at a lower level in the organization hierarchy.

Some studies have shown that there is a limited supply of mentors available to women than to men; and that women may be less likely than men to develop these relationships (Zarufallah, 2000; McDowall-long, 2004; Nickie and Charlotte, 2000). 40 interviewees out of the 50 interviewed in a study by Linehan et al. (2008) confirmed that they had mentors and that the benefits provided by the mentors have undoubtedly facilitated their career advancement. Women find it difficult to get mentors and engage in networking because of the fact that only a few women hold high positions, both men and women shy away due to the likelihood of discomfort in cross-gender relationships, fear of the misinterpretation of the individual's motives and lack of time on the part of the female employee as a result of the need to balance work and family

Garavan et al (2003) suggested that networking forms an essential dimension of organizational life and individuals who excel at networking generally excel within the organizations in which they operate. From all indications, networking and mentoring cannot be thrown away considering the need of employees particularly women to advance in their careers. In an interview with women and men in senior management positions in Wales, one of the interviewees told Nickie and Charlotte (2000) that the major problem female workers face on the issue of networking is that if a guy goes to lunch with his boss, he is networking, he is trying to make career progression but if a woman goes to lunch with the boss, he's trying to get his leg over. This is the perception of everybody else, and it frightens a lot of men.

Organizational networks influence promotion and acceptance, particularly of female employees Linehan and Scullion (2008). Their findings also revealed that effective networking is a key barrier to the

development of female global managers and that the continued inaccessibility to male networks is particularly damaging as men continue to hold power in most organizations.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant prediction of organizational and demographic factors on female's professional workers employment status.
2. There is no significant correlation between the organizational factors (age, marital status, educational qualification, mentoring, networking, experience and training, organisational culture and supervisor support) and female' employment status.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Descriptive survey research design of the ex-post facto type was used. This was because the research was cause effect in which the researcher did not manipulate the independent variable (Organisational Factor) as predictors of employment status of female professional in electronic media houses.

Population of the Study: The population consisted of all female media professionals in South-West, Nigeria. These were estimated to be one thousand, four hundred and seventeen (1,417). The States included; Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti and Oyo.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique: For the purpose of this study, respondents were selected using total enumeration technique. This is because the estimated population of one thousand four hundred and seventeen (1,417) was considered not too large to be handled. The contact persons in the media houses were the Directors of Human Resources, general managers and female media professionals. One thousand four hundred and seventeen copies of the questionnaires (1,417) were administered on the female staff of the three core media departments (News, Programmes and Marketing) and out of these, one thousand, two hundred and thirty one (1, 231) were returned. These one thousand, two hundred and thirty one (1,231) copies returned, therefore formed the sample size. These translated to eighty seven percent (87%) of the estimated population.

Instrumentation: Three questionnaires were used in this study namely:

i. **Employment Status Inventory (ESI):** This was a questionnaire designed by the researcher on a four Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (A), Agreed, (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). It contained 12 items on employment status of female media workers. The content and construct validity of the questionnaire was ensured. ESI yielded an Alpha Coefficient of 0.82.

ii. **Organisational Factor Scale:** This was a questionnaire designed by the researcher on a four Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed, (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). It contained 48 items on Organizational Factors of female media workers. The content and construct validity of the questionnaire was ensured. ESI yielded an Alpha Coefficient of 0.82.

The Procedure for Questionnaire Administration: The questionnaires were administered by the researcher with the assistance of five Proctors. This facilitated the explanation and interpretation of some aspects of the questionnaire in order to prevent misinterpretation and false responses. However, the assistance of personnel officer in each media outfit was sought.

Method of Data Analysis: The demographic data collected on the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics while the data on core variables covered by the study was analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation.

V. RESULTS

Table 1: Regression of Organizational and Demographic Factors on Employment Status of Female Workers in Electronic Media Houses.

Model	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square (MS)	F-Ratio	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Regression	277525.9	2	138762.932	1837.668	0.000	0.750	0.749
Residual	92726.715	1228	75.570				
Total	370252.58	1230					

Table 1 reveals that the combine effect of organisational and demographic factor on the employment status of female media workers is significant at F- ratio = 1837.668, P = 0.00. The R² is 0.750 while the adjusted R² is 0.749. The R² shows the degree or extent of variability in the outcome (employment status) that is accounted for by the predictors. Thus the regression result shows that organisational and demographic factors (Predictors) jointly accounted for 0.750 variations in the employment status of female workers in electronic media houses.

Also, the relative effect estimate in table 2 below shows the relative contributions of the individual predictors (organisational factors and demographic factors) to the female media workers employment status. From the table, the relative contribution of organisational factor is $\beta = 0.803$, $P=0.000$ while the demographic factor is $\beta = 0.083$, $P=0.000$. The results further indicate that organisational and demographic factors were both significant as predictors of employment status.

Table 2: Relative Effect of Independent Variables (Organizational and Demographic Factors) on Employment Status of Female Media Professionals

Variables	B	SE β	Standardized coefficient	t	Sig
Constant	7.894	0.575	Beta contributions	13.730	0.000
organisational factor	0.382	0.010	0.803	38.476	.000
Demographic	0.071	0.018	0.083	3.984	.000

Although there is paucity of literature on employment status, those available supported the findings of this study with indications that organisational and demographic factors affect employment status. Tolentino (2001) observed from a focused interview conducted on women journalists that, married women journalist shifted to less demanding jobs in order to have more time for their children. Thus shifting from one job to another due to marital status and family may have effect on the employment status. Also Ogan (1998) confirmed that marriage and raising a family are somewhat inconsistent with holding a high level managerial position for women. This implies that marriage and raising family affect women employments status because it is challenging for married women to combine high level managerial position with raising family. The following In-Depth Interview result further buttressed this fact.

Table 3: Correlation summary of organisational factors and employment status of female electronic media workers

	Networ king	Mentor ing	Train ing	Supervis ory Support	Organiza tion Culture	Work Environ ment	Conditio n of Service	Employe nt Status
Network ing	1							
Mentori ng	0.823** 0.000	1						
Training	0.706** 0.000	0.821* *	1					
Supervis ory Support	0.323** 0.000	0.082* *	0.71* 0.013	1				
Organiza tion Culture	0.590** 0.000	0.354* *	0.324 **	0.710** 0.000	1			
Work Environ ment	0.866** 0.000	0.792* *	0.663 **	0.345** 0.000	0.572** 0.000	1		
Conditio n of	0.673** 0.000	0.787* *	0.959 **	0.058* 0.043	0.326** 0.000	0.627** 0.000	1	

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed) * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)**

Using Pearson correlation (r) to test the above hypothesis, the results are as shown in table 3 above. The result reveals significant relationship between organisational factors and employment status; for networking at $r=0.874$, $P=0.00$ mentoring at $r=0.687$, $p=0.00$, experience at $r=0.628$, $p=0.00$ and training at 0.619 , $P=0.000$. For supervisory support at $(r) =0.556$, $p = 0.000$, for organisational culture at $(r)=0.847$, $p=0.000$, work environment at $(r)=0.865$, $p=0.000$ and condition of service at $(r)= 0.598$ $p= 0.000$.

This is consistent with the findings of Garavan et al (2003). According to Mink, Hank and Sarah (1980), the main purpose why individuals go into networking is for them to share knowledge, undertake some other activities and achieve professional set goals. Garavan et al., (2003) suggested that individuals who excel in networking generally excel within the organizations in which they operate. Thus this may directly or indirectly improve their status as well.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and the research findings, this study concluded that:

1. Organisational and demographic factors significantly affected employment status of female media workers in electronic media houses.
2. That there was a significant relationship between organisational factor (networking, mentoring, training, supervisor's support, organisational culture, work environment and condition of service) and employment status of female workers in electronic media houses.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made to the government, media owners both private and public, advocacy groups, media women and potential ones who are likely to take over when the current ones retire from the job and the society at large. This is in order to improve the employment status of women and the entire women folk.

1. Owners and management of public and private electronic media organisations should adopt policies that will impact positively on organizational and demographic factors in order to enhance the employment status of female workers in electronic media houses.
2. Male senior managers and directors as well as the few female directors should continue to give required and necessary supervisory support to their female subordinates and ensure that the female workers at the lower levels are properly mentored and encouraged to grow into higher levels in the profession.
3. Management should provide opportunities for further education, manpower development and improved mentor-mentee activities.
4. Female workers should be more determined and endeavour to engage in more networking activities. This will further expose them to their counterparts from other media industries and also events in other countries of the world, thereby improving their performance and invariably their status on the job.

VIII. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study would be eye opener to the policy makers of both Private and Public media organisations that, Organizational and Demographic factors could affect either negatively or positively the employment status and job performance of female electronic media workers. Thus, the policy makers, specifically the management and the supervisory bodies of the electronic media house would have to engage in staff development and welfare policies that are not gender biased in order to close the gap between the male mentor and the female mentee in electronic media.

Also, they should make policies that will ensure that trained media women professionals are hired and that they are empowered through constant training and retraining after employment. Deliberate attempt should be made to have strong and consistent networking and mentoring programmes that female media professionals can share from.

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