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Factors Influencing Non-Adherence of the Affirmative Action on Employment by Tertiary Institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria (Pp 353-364)

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Abstract

This study was undertaken in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria to find out the factors influencing non-adherence to the affirmative action in employment. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. Out of six thousand and eighty-eight academic staff that made up the population, two thousand and thirteen were selected as the sample for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire that contained twenty-four factors/items. Two experts validated the instrument. Analyses of data collected were done using arithmetic mean scores (\bar{x}). The findings show among others that five out of eight non-education of women base factors were identified as being part of the reasons for the non-adherence to the affirmative action on employment by tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria. Based on the findings, recommendations were made.

Introduction:

Article 23.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) states that everyone has the right to work, free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Article 23.3 states that everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence

worthy of human dignity and supplemented if necessary by other means of social protection. Equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women at work commenced with a Convention on Equal Remuneration (Convention 100), which take place in Geneva on 6th June 1951. it was a general conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the principles of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. The term remuneration includes the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatever payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the worker's employment. On the other hand, the term equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value refers to rates of remuneration established without discrimination based on sex. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1951), each member country shall by means appropriate to the methods in operation for determining rates of remuneration, promote and, in so far as is consistent with such methods, ensure the application to all workers on the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. ILO (1951) states that these principles which were adopted on 29th June 1951, may be applied through these means:

- a. National Laws or Regulations;
- b. Legally established or recognized machinery for wage determination;
- c. Collective agreements between employers and workers;
- d. A combination of these various means.

In 1958, the International Labour Organization (ILO) held a Convention in Geneva, called Convention No. III on Non-discrimination in Employment and Occupation. The issues raised, amongst others were promotion of non-discrimination, enacting legislative policies to put an end to it, were adopted on 25th June 1958 and came into force on 15th June 1960. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which entered into force in 1985, gave rise to the affirmative action. Affirmative action of 30: 70 percent female and male representatives is a temporary measure or technique to enable females eventually to perform equally like their male counterparts. Nigeria, as a member state of the United Nations, signed all these international treaties, conventions and recommendations. On employment of women, the Public service Rules

(2000) enacted by the Obasanjo regime, states that any Nigeria woman whether married or not, may be admitted to the permanent establishment in those grades of the Federal Public Service for which she is qualified on equal terms with men. The Federal Government National Policy on Women is one of the most direct activities of Chapter II Section 17, Subsection 2 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, which states that every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law. Subsection 3 states that all citizens without discrimination or any group whatsoever have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment. In order to reduce the marginalization of women in all aspects of employment, the National Policy on Women had many objectives based on equality of treatment between men and women. This National Policy on Women is highly backed up by the National Gender Policy (FRN, 2006) Despite the efforts of the United Nations, these objectives of the National Policy on Women; the National Gender Policy; the International Labour Organization Conventions; adoption and signing into force of these Conventions by Member State Parties including Nigeria, there are factors that still influence the non-adherence to the affirmative action by Nigerian tertiary institutions. This paper therefore looked at the factors influencing non-adherence of the affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria.

The Problem

The traditional practices and the refusal to path with the traditional customs often worsen the condition of women in Nigeria, at home, in the office and within the society. Obiagwu (2008) observes among other things that the academic staff of Federal and State tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria was made up of 75 percent males and 25 percent females; the status of male non-academic staff in Federal-owned and State-owned tertiary institutions were 48 percent and 45 percent respectively. In appointment into positions, males occupy 82 percent while females occupy 18 percent in the tertiary institutions. The question then is, what are responsible for these gaps? To find answers, this paper therefore tried to find out the factors influencing non-adherence of the affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria.

The Purpose of the Research Work

The purpose of this research work is to investigate the factors influencing non-adherence of the affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, it seeks to find out

- 1 the influence of non-education of women as a factor responsible for non-adherence to affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria;
- 2 the influence of non-equality of opportunity and treatment as factors responsible for non-adherence to affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria;
- 3 the influence of discrimination as a factor responsible for non-adherence to affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

This research work would be directed by the following research questions.

1. What were the non-education of women factors perceived to be responsible for non-adherence to affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria?
2. What are the non-equality of opportunities and treatment base factors influencing non-adherence to affirmative action in employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria?
3. What is the discrimination base factors influencing the non-adherence to affirmative action on employment in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria?

Research Methodology:

This study was carried out using the descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised the entire academic staff of all the tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria. They are six thousand, and eight-eight in number (6,088) from twenty-two institutions. Stratified random sampling was used in the selection of the sample institutions according to the five states that make up the Zone. Then random sampling was used in the selecting of two thousand and thirteen (2,013) respondents.

Questionnaire, measured by 4-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was the main instrument for data collection. Respondents were expected to indicate by ticking, the extent to which they agree or disagree to statements that were simply stated.

The instrument was face-validated by an expert of test and measurement; and another expert from Department of Management and Policy, all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was

conducted using academic staffs that were not part of the sample. Data collected were analyzed using mean score; 2.50 and above meant Agree and 2.49 and below meant Disagree.

Result:

Research Question I

What Non-Education of Women Factors were Perceived to be Responsible for Non-Adherence to Affirmative Action on Employment by Tertiary Institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria?

Table I shows that five out of the eight non-educations of women base factors were identified as being part of the reasons for the non-adherence to the affirmative action on employment by tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria. Respondents rejected three of the presented factors.

Research Question 2

What are the Non-Equality of Opportunity and Treatment Base Factors Influencing Non-Adherence to the Affirmative Action on Employment?

In Table 2, the respondents identified seven out of the nine non-equality of opportunity and treatment factors. Only two were rejected and seen as no serious factors.

Research Question 3:

What are the Discrimination Base Factors Influencing the Non-Adherence to the Affirmative Action on Employment by Tertiary Institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria?

Table 3 reveals that up to seven discrimination base factors were identified by the respondents in tertiary institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria, as reasons for non-adherence to the affirmative action on employment in their institutions. They strongly agreed to four out of the seven factors with mean scores ranging from 3.52 to 3.91. Also, with mean scores ranging from 2.85 to 3.44, they agreed to the remaining three factors.

Discussion of the Findings:

From the findings, **Table 1** shows that five out of the eight non-educations of women base factors were identified as being part of the reasons for the non-adherence to the affirmative action on employment. In support of the five factors, Fafunwa (1974) state that the Christian missions introduced male-oriented education when they came. Awe (1990) cited in Ezumah (2001) says that this had great effect in the establishment of schools and the curricula for girls and boys. Girls received more training in domestic science;

home economics and management, nursing; teaching; serving; and secretariat jobs. According to World Bank (1992), parents preferred to educate boys and girls were encouraged to engage in early marriages or were made to do the house chores like fetching water, preparing food, gathering firewood, looking after the younger children. In this research work, the respondents disagreed with a mean score of 2.33 that “Parents prefer to educate boys in time of difficulty”. Probably, this do not happen in South – East Zone of Nigeria. Uduchukwu (2001) observes that females are below average in most faculties and courses except in Arts, Education, Biological Sciences, Social Sciences and Health Science at both sub-degree, first degree, post graduate diploma, certificate courses and higher degree courses at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Njoku (2001) shows that the average female enrolment was 7 percent in Engr/Technology; 13 percent in both Environmental Design and Veterinary Medicine; 19.5 percent in Agricultural Science; 22.9 percent in Medicine; 26.1 percent in Pharmacy and 26.3 percent in Basic Science. The respondents disagreed that there is discrepancy in the enrolment of girls at all levels of education and female enrolment thins out as they move up the educational hierarchy with mean scores of 2.34 and 2.48 respectively.

In research question 2 and Table 2, the respondents agreed on seven out of the nine factors that lead to non-adherence to the affirmative action on employment. One of the factors that the respondents disagreed was that men are more employed than women in some offices and in administrative positions. In a research work carried out by Obiagwu (2008) on employment, she observed among other things that the academic staff of Federal and State Tertiary Institutions in South-East Zone of Nigeria was made up of 75 percent males and 25 percent females; the status of male non-academic staff were 48 and 45 percents respectively; while that of female staff were 52 and 55 percents respectively. In appointment into position, males occupy 82 percent while females occupy 18 percent.

All over the world, women are not considered as the major breadwinners and their earnings are considered as supplementary. This is evident when Prosser (2006) says that the gender pay gap is worse in Britain than anywhere else in Europe, with women in full time work earning 17 percent less than men. She says the gap was costing Britain up to 23 billion pounds a year in lost productivity and wasted talent. Most industrial societies believed that the private life of families should be organized around a division of male provider and female homemaker. By the end of the late twentieth century, providing was no longer the exclusive responsibility of men. The rising

proportion of married women in paid employment has been greeted by many as one of the most important social changes. Opinion is divided as to whether women's new responsibility for paid employment would be offset by husbands' increased responsibilities for the home and family. Hochschild (1989) cited in Bittman and Matheson (1996), advocates a theory of "Stalled Revolution" in men's domestic responsibilities and says that women are being obliged to work a "Second Shift" after arriving home from paid work. Married women are largely responsible for childcare and other energy-intensive household responsibilities. Some analysts also believed that household duties affect married women's occupational preferences by encouraging them to seek less-demanding jobs, which allow them to economize on the energy they expend on employment. As Esping-Anderson (1996), puts it, if women are provided with opportunities nearly equivalent to those of men in education and employment, but these opportunities are severely curtailed by having children, then, on average, women would restrict the number of children that they have, to an extent which leaves fertility at a precariously low, term level. This leaves women with stark choices between children and employment, which, in turn, leads to some women having fewer children than they would like to have, and very low fertility. While women engage in domestic activities, men gain valuable career experiences.

In research question 3, Table 3, the respondents identified all the discrimination base factors. They strongly agreed to four out of the seven with mean scores ranging from 3.52 to 3.91. Also, with mean scores ranging from 2.85 to 3.44, they agreed to the remaining three factors. Discrimination exists when equally qualified individuals are treated differently solely on the basis of their gender. It might be either intentional or systematic. When employers internationally discriminate against women, they might presume that women are not capable of doing certain jobs due to their generally weaker physical strength relative to men, or due to alleged differences in their psychological make-up. Or they might presume that female employees would impose undue hardships on the employer's workplace or work force. Systematic discrimination on the other hand is largely unintentional. It might refer to social pressures that steer girls and young women towards career in traditionally female occupations or to organizational practices and workplace cultures that discourage them from applying for jobs in traditionally male occupation or from pursuing studies in those fields.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1995) states that discrimination can and does exist at all levels within organizations. The report says that some of the most striking evidence of its impact is the persistent inability of women to penetrate the upper echelons of corporations, government and academia in numbers that reflects their presence in the workforce as a whole. Further more, the higher the position, the larger the gap. For example, Professor Alele-Williams has been the only female Vice-Chancellor in a Nigerian University and it was not an easy task for her. There were oppositions from all corners. Very few women who reach the highest positions as executive heads of organizations and progress in this direction are marginal in comparison to the large number of qualified women in the labour market. Presumably, if they had also been given the same opportunity, there would be approximately as many, women in high level management positions as men, assuming equality of motivation.

Conclusion

Discrimination in education and training, employment and remuneration, promotion as well as inflexible working conditions, lack of access to productive resources and inadequate sharing of family responsibilities, combined with a lack of or insufficient services such as child care, continue to restrict employment, economic, professional and other opportunities for women and make their involvement stressful. The affirmative action of 30:70 percent representations of females and males, which is a temporary measure to achieve equality between men and women, is the major effective tool for empowerment of women for a meaningful development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on research reports and discussions made in the paper.

1. The Federal and State Governments should abolish school fees at all levels and encourage parents and communities to invest in girls' education by providing free texts to girls.
2. Government sponsored and private training institutions should be encouraged to organize gender sensitization programmes on the role of women in the development process in order to raise awareness of this target group.
3. The public should be sensitized through mass mobilization campaigns about the need for women to be in formal sector employment in order to break traditional attitudes and stereotypes about women's works.

4. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria should include in their employment policy, the implementation of the affirmative action of 30:70 percent representations of qualified females and males in employments and appointments into executive and managerial positions.

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Table I: Mean Scores of Respondents on Non-Education of Women Basic Factors. N = 2,013

S/N	FACTORS	\bar{X}	REMARK
1	The school curricula are patriarchal oriented.	3.46	Agree
2	Girls and boys had different orientations in education.	3.22	Agree
3	Girls receive more training in home economics, home management, and art-oriented courses	3.19	Agree
4	Parents prefer to educate boys in time of difficulty.	2.33	Disagree
5	Girls are encouraged to engage in early marriages, and are sent out to people as domestic helps.	2.86	Agree
6	There is discrepancy in the enrolment of girls at all levels of education.	2.34	Disagree
7	There is under-representation of females in science and technology course in tertiary institutions.	2.93	Agree
8	Female enrolment thins out as they move up the educational hierarchy.	2.48	Disagree

Table 2: Mean Scores of the Respondents on the Non- Equality of Opportunity and Treatment Base Factors. **N = 2,013**

S/N	FACTORS	\bar{X}	REMARK
9	Men are more employed than women in some offices and in administrative positions.	2.33	Disagree
10	Women are not considered as the major breadwinners and their earnings are considered as supplementary.	3.45	Agree
11	It is assumed that the private life of families should be organized around a division of male provider and female homemaker.	3.00	Agree
12	Women's new responsibility for paid employment would be offset by husbands' increased responsibilities at home and family.	3.41	Agree
13	Women, in addition to paid responsibilities, are largely responsible for other energy intensive household responsibilities.	2.85	Agree
14	Household duties affect married women's occupational preferences by encouraging them to seek less-demanding jobs.	3.35	Agree
15	Women are not provided with opportunities nearly equivalent to those of men in education and employment	2.79	Agree
16	While women engage in domestic activities, males gain valuable career experiences.	3.01	Agree
17	Women are left with stark choices between children and employment for attainment of high cadre in Employment.	2.00	Disagree

Table 3: Mean scores of Respondents on Discrimination Base Factors.

N = 2,013

S/N	FACTORS	X̄	REMARK
18	Employers intentionally discriminate against women because they presume that women are not capable of doing certain jobs.	3.61	Strongly Agree
19	Employers also presume that women would impose undue hardship on them, workplace or workforce due to constant maternity leave.	3.52	Strongly Agree
20	Social pressures steer girls and women away from traditionally male occupations or from pursuing studies in those fields.	3.44	Agree
21	There is persistent inability of women to penetrate the upper echelons of corporations, government and academia in numbers that reflect their presence in the workforce as a whole.	3.83	Strongly Agree
22	The higher the position in the workforce the large the gap between women and men.	3.17	Agree
23	The number of women who reach the highest positions as executive heads of organizations and progress in that direction are marginal in comparison to the large number of qualified women in the labour market.	2.85	Agree
24	Discrimination affect women's ability to access in male dominated occupations and sectors of the economy.	3.19	Strongly Agree