

Identifying Gender Roles and Responsibilities Fulfilled by Nigerian Women Bureaucrats

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Abstract: This paper presents an overview on identifying gender roles and responsibilities fulfilled by Nigerian women bureaucrats.

Keywords: Gender Roles and Responsibilities, Women Bureaucrats

1. Introduction

These terms according to the sociologist, 'gender' and 'sex' are believed to have got no firm consensus on the appropriate use among gender scholars. It is said that some reject the term 'sex' altogether, while some use the terms interchangeably. Sociologists believe there are relations between the two terms. To the sociologist, it is impossible to conceive of sex apart from gender; rather than sex being the basis for gender distinction, as some claim this view argues that gender is the basis for distinctions based on sex. A sociologist says that the biological and the social worlds are interdependent and mutually influential. The biological or genetic aspects of maleness and femaleness cannot be understood as fully separate and distinct from the social processes and practice that give meaning to these characteristics; it is thus impossible to separate the realm of sex from the realm of gender when trying to explain any aspect of social life. Wharton A.S. et al (2014).

To the Africans, the phenomenon of gender is viewed differently from that of the Western view, from the words of Oyewumi (2002) he strongly believed that gender was imposed on an already existing African culture through modernization, and further asked if it is ever possible to vacuum clean the African minds of all traces of its worldview and then replace it with a generous immersion of the Western culture brought about through modernization. Constantine Ngara in 'Revisiting African Ways of Knowing and Pedagogy' stands to argue 'no' (Ngara 2002). According to Reeves & Baden (2000), gender refers to the distinctive patterns of ideas, beliefs and norms which shape the way of life and relations of males and females as groups in society. Included in these patterns of ideas are expectations and characteristics, as well as aptitudes and likely behaviours of manhood and womanhood, because Europe and Africa differ in culture, values and identities, it goes without saying that the application of gender in a European context differs from its application in an African context.

2. Gender Roles

Traditional the gender role of every woman is procreation and home management. A girl-child in the pre-colonial era as in the traditional setting was expected to learn the skills that would make her play the role of responsible adult womanhood. This simply means that gender role was pre-determined by the sex of a person. While female child was exposed to socially imposed responsibilities of motherhood and domesticity, to embrace the characteristics of motherhood which are rooted in the domestic functions reserved for her sex, her male counterpart was being socialized into manhood status. (Ezegbe Bernedeth Nkiruka, Akubue Felicia N. 2012)

According to Ogege Samuel Omadjohwoefe, (2011) Gender roles are human invention in society, organising human social life in culturally patterned ways, shapes social relations in everyday life as well as in the major social structures in society and this forms the basis of gender role differentiation. Where male roles are generally more highly valued and even rewarded than that of the females and the females are made to be subordinate to the authority of the males. The African Journal on Conflict Resolution (2009) sees gender and gender roles as been culturally specific, learned, and changeable over time, and influenced by variables such as age, race, class, and ethnicity.

There are several determinants of the gender roles ascribed to the sexes, and they are: religion which emphasis is from either the bible for Christians, Quran for muslims, tradition and culture, and norms and customs.

From the foregoing gender roles are socially and culturally constructed, men and women perform duties ascribed to them by the society.

3. Methodology

This study is quantitative in nature, in which various information has being sourced from

both secondary and primary sources. The secondary data was obtained from text books, published and unpublished documents such as journal, websites and previous projects. While the primary source was gotten from questionnaire administered.

4. Gender Roles and Responsibilities of Nigerian Women Bureaucrats

Table 1

My house hold responsibilities do not give me time for personal development					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	D	72	40.0	40.0	40.0
	SD	62	34.4	34.4	74.4
	A	26	14.4	14.4	88.9
	SA	20	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 72 (40%) of respondent disagreed that their house-hold responsibilities do not give me time for personal development, 62 (34.4%) strongly disagreed, 26 (14.4%) agreed, while 20 (11.1%) strongly agreed. See chart below as indicated.

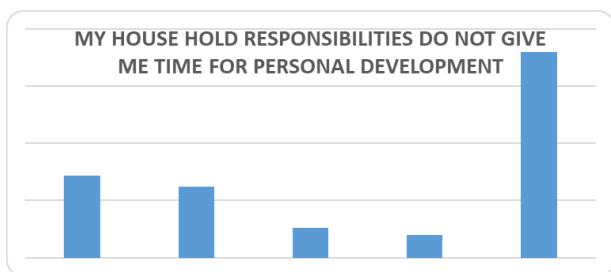


Table 2

I have total control over how my income is spent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	D	20	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Sd	46	25.6	25.6	36.7
	A	52	28.9	28.9	65.6
	Sa	62	34.4	34.4	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 20 (11.1%) of respondent disagreed that they have total control over how my income is spent, 46 (25.6%) strongly disagreed, 52 (28.9%) agreed, while 62 (34.4%) strongly agreed. See chart below

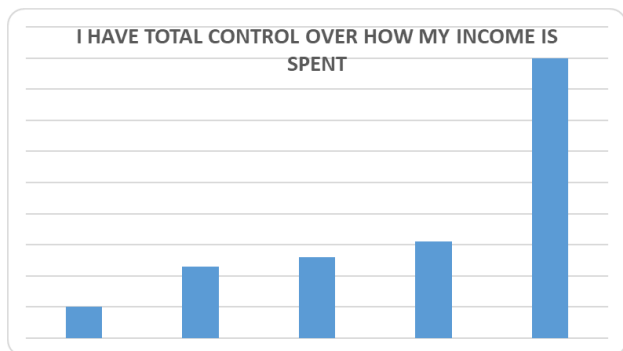


Table 3

It is easier for single men and women to put in their best at work					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	4	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Sd	34	18.9	18.9	21.1
	A	54	30.0	30.0	51.1
	Sa	88	48.9	48.9	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 4 (2.2%) of respondent disagreed that it is easier for single men and women to put in their best at work, 34 (18.9%) strongly disagreed, 54 (30.0%) agreed, while 88 (48.9%) strongly agreed. See chart below

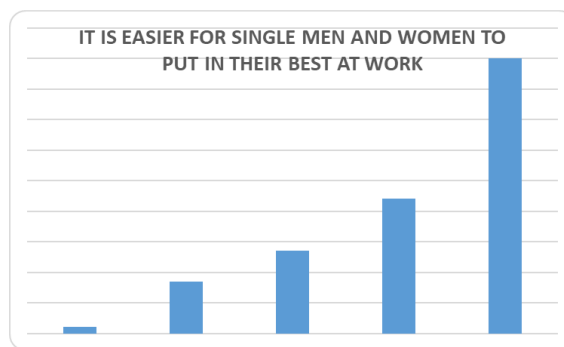


Table 4

I have access to quality child care					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	24	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Sd	40	22.2	22.2	35.6
	A	80	44.4	44.4	80.0
	Sa	36	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table and chart above shows that 24 (13.3%) of respondent disagreed that they have access to quality child care, 40 (22.2%) strongly disagreed, 80 (44.4%) agreed, while 36 (20.0%) strongly agreed. See chart below

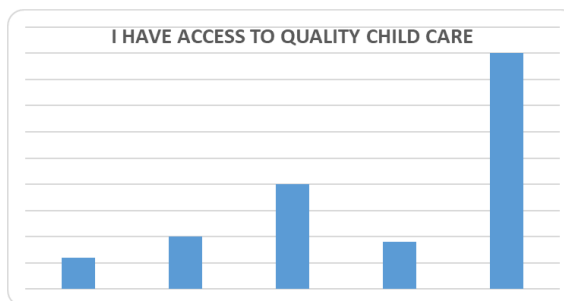


Table 5

Being a man/woman affects my educational development					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	44	24.4	24.4	24.4
	Sd	84	46.7	46.7	71.1
	A	28	15.6	15.6	86.7
	Sa	24	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 44 (24.4%) of respondent disagreed that being a man/woman affects my educational development, 84 (46.7%) strongly disagreed, 28 (15.6%) agreed, while 24 (13.3%) strongly agreed. The chart below is as indicated above

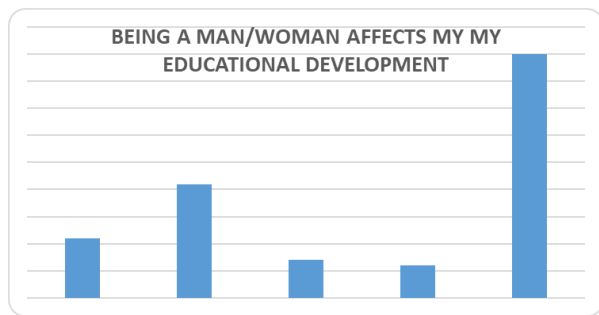


Table 6

The family I grew up in was supportive of gender equality					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	26	14.4	14.4	14.4
	Sd	8	4.4	4.4	18.9
	A	46	25.6	25.6	44.4
	Sa	100	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 26 (14.4%) of respondent disagreed that the family they grew up in was supportive of gender equality, 8 (4.4%) strongly disagreed, 46 (25.6%) agreed, while 100 (55.6%) strongly agreed. See chart below

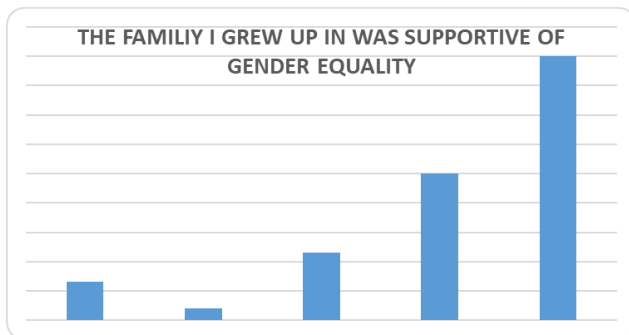


Table 7

I often have to juggle work and family responsibilities					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	36	20.0	20.5	20.5
	Sd	30	16.7	17.0	37.5
	A	96	53.3	54.5	92.0
	Sa	14	7.8	8.0	100.0
	Total	176	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.2		
Total		180	100.0		

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 36 (20%) of respondent disagreed that they often have to juggle work and family responsibilities, 30 (16.7%) strongly disagreed, 96 (53.3%) agreed, while 14 (7.8%) strongly agreed. This is as indicated in the chart below.

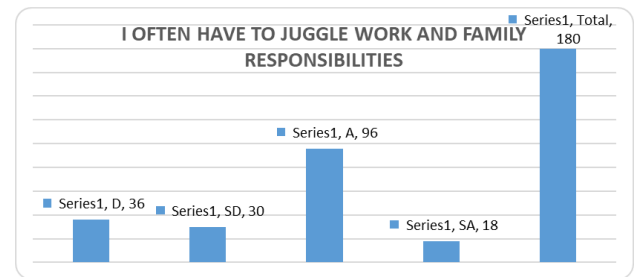


Table 8

Society today frows at women who work outside the home					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	.00	2	1.1	1.1	1.1
	D	32	17.8	17.8	18.9
	Sd	74	41.1	41.1	60.0
	A	20	11.1	11.1	71.1
	Sa	52	28.9	28.9	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 32 (17.8%) of respondent disagreed that society today frows at women who work outside the home, 32 (17.8%) strongly disagreed, 20 (11.1%) agreed, while 52 (28.9%) strongly agreed. This is as indicated in the chart below

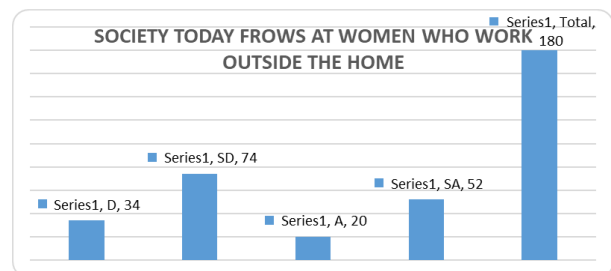


Table 9

My husband/ wife is very supportive of my job/work					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	4	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Sd	22	12.2	12.2	14.4
	A	44	24.4	24.4	38.9
	Sa	110	61.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table and chart above shows that 4 (2.2%) of respondent disagreed that their husband/wife are very supportive of their job/work, 22 (12.2%) strongly disagreed, 44 (24.4%) agreed, while 110 (61.1%) strongly agreed. This is as shown in the chart below.

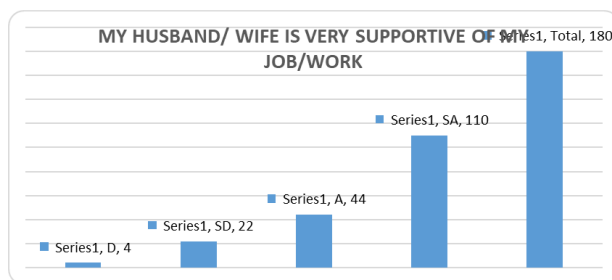
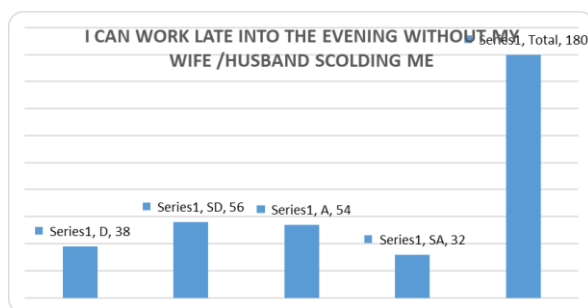


Table 10

I can work late into the evening without my wife /husband scolding me					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	D	38	21.1	21.1	21.1
	Sd	56	31.1	31.1	52.2
	A	54	30.0	30.0	82.2
	Sa	32	17.8	17.8	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey by Researcher

The table above shows that 38 (21.1%) of respondent disagreed that they can work late into the evening without their wife/husband scolding them, 56 (31.1%) strongly disagreed, 54 (30.0%) agreed, while 32 (17.8%) strongly agreed. This is as indicated in the chart below.



5. Summary of findings

The gender roles Nigerian women bureaucrats fulfil are numerous, from cultivating some basic essential characters supposedly meant for a girl child, to female role in the family

like the girl child who has to emulate the adult females and learn to replicate their duties and responsibilities, like give care to the rest members of the family (the adult male, children (both male and female) and the elderly ones), must own the best knowledge of the position of the home (as the home keeper), her place is at home because she's tender and not expected to speak much at societal gatherings. These roles are identified and discussed in the questionnaire below:

Questions 1 (My household responsibilities do not give me time for personal development) the response states that 40% of the respondent disagreed, 34% strongly disagreed, 14% agreed and 11% strongly agreed.

Question 2 (It is easier for single men and women to put in their best at work), the response states that 2.2% of respondent disagreed that it is easier for single men and women to put in their best at work, 18.9% strongly disagreed, 30.0% agreed, while 48.9% strongly agreed.

Question 3 (I have access to quality child care), the response states that 13.3% of respondent disagreed that they have access to quality child care, 22.2% strongly disagreed, 44.4% agreed, while 20.0% strongly agreed.

Question 4 (Being a man/woman affects my educational development) and the response states that 24.4% of respondent disagreed that being a man/woman affects my educational development, 46.7% strongly disagreed, 15.6% agreed, while 13.3% strongly agreed.

Question 5 (The family I grew up in was supportive of gender equality) and the response states that 14.4% of respondent disagreed that the family they grew up in was supportive of gender equality, 4.4% strongly disagreed, 25.6% agreed, while 55.6% strongly agreed.

Question 6 (I often have to juggle work and family responsibilities) which also states that 20% disagreed, 16.7% strongly disagree, 53.3% agreed, and 7.8% strongly agreed.

Question 7 (The society today frown at women who work outside the home) and the response is that 17.8% of respondent disagreed that society today frowns at women who work outside the home, 17.8% strongly disagreed, 11.1% agreed, while 28.9% strongly agreed.

Question 8 (My husband/wife is very supportive of my job/work) and the response states that 2.2% of respondent disagreed that their husband/wife are very supportive of their job/work, 12.2% strongly disagreed, 24.4% agreed, while 61.1% strongly agreed.

Question 9 (I can work late into the evening without my wife/husband scolding me) the response states that 21.1% of respondent disagreed that they can work late into the evening without their wife/husband scolding them, 31.1% strongly disagreed, 30.0% agreed, while 17.8% strongly agreed.

The gender roles that women fulfil as dictated by the society is today undermining the position of both men and women in the society, for some gender roles does not necessarily have to deny either men or women their opportunities educationally, at work or in the society, while some are of the opinion that

women gender roles are still to be performed as stated by the society. But to a better extent there has being improvement on how women gender roles are addressed in Nigeria today.

6. Conclusion

It was found out that gender roles have automatically moulded an identity for women in every area of endeavour in Nigeria, that it automatically lower and subtle the presence and undertaken of women. Which means that Gender roles will significantly deter mine the career progression of women bureaucrats and its statistically proven and accepted, because it was generally noted that women's place is not at the top as defined by the society and till date its manifestation is robust. Also based on findings the level at which gender roles has eaten deep into the minds and way of living of the Nigerian citizen is high and this perception affects the mode of interaction and relationship even at work.

Recommendations

1. Encourage gender support and avoid stereotype and gender bias.
2. Integrate gender awareness programmes at homes, schools, religious places and in all offices both public and private.
3. Make interventions for women who are

marginalized on their job as a civil servant.

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