
GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND WOMEN EMPLOYMENT SUSTAINABILITY IN OGUN STATE

Adedayo Oyewole SOFADEKAN & Zabur Olayiwola SOLUADE

Department of Sociological Studies,
College of Social and Management Sciences,
Tai Solarin Federal University of Education,
Ijagun, Ogun State.

Abstract

The study examined the effect of gender discrimination on women's employment sustainability in Ogun State. The descriptive research design was adopted while a self-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 196 women's opinion across the study area, while mean, standard deviation and regression analysis were adopted to analyse the data. The study revealed that gender discrimination occurs in different dimensions looking down of women's ability in spite of appealing qualification, sexist comments and harassment, exclusion of women in senior administrative cadre, among others, in the employment process and workplace. It also revealed that religious doctrine, cultural beliefs and values, the perception that some professions are inappropriate for women, among others, fueled gender discrimination against women's employability and sustainability in Ogun state. The study disclosed that discrimination created hostile work environment and caused psychological and physical stress that decreases employee morale, job satisfaction and productivity among women. The study recommended among others

that governments should strengthen the implementation and enforcement of affirmative action and gender quotas, as well as conduct frequent reviews of anti-discrimination laws.

Keywords: Gender, Discrimination, Gender discrimination, Women, Employment, Sustainability.

Introduction

Women have faced significant discrimination throughout history, including lack of legal rights, limited independence and being regarded as inferior specie. Despite having over 50% of the world's population, women are limited to few privileges and rights compared to men. This issue is particularly pronounced in Africa, where women are deprived of official input into governance. Colonialism in Nigeria transferred gender discrimination from the Western world, denying women access to a level playing field and limiting their ability to contribute to society (Nnana & Nsan, 2024). Thus, gender discrimination remains a pervasive issue in Nigeria, manifesting in various aspects of social life, including cultural, economic, religious, political and socio-cultural aspects. Women are often perceive as subordinate to men and are relegated to specific roles such as motherhood and domestic work. This patriarchal society system in country further exacerbates the issue of gender discrimination, as it gives men the moral right to dictate women's actions, hindering their employment as well as job sustainability (Badom & Ndeue, 2024; Zoranen & Elem, 2020).

Gender has been perceived to significantly influence employment choice with women historically primarily engaged in domestic responsibilities. The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2010) reported that 48.8% of females are inactive in the labour market, compared to 22.3% of males. This is largely due to gender bias, which prioritises domestic duties, negatively impacting girl child education and skills for skilled employment (Lambin & Nyssölä, 2022; Oladokun & Alawode, 2024). Also, many women are “discouraged” workers, not included in unemployment statistics due to lack of work

opportunities or discrimination. They often face gender penalties as mothers, with employers fearing the cost and hassle of motherhood. Stereotyping and misinformed perception of women's roles, abilities, commitment and leadership style contribute to discrimination (Nnana & Nsan, 2024).

Discrimination in the place work can be seen as treatment of employees or groups unfairly and unjust, not based on their ability to perform their job. This can lead to feelings of alienation, anger, and negative work-related behaviours (Bilkis, et al 2010). In Nigeria, gender discrimination experiences are either explicit or implicit in forms. Explicit discrimination involves individuals' awareness of their prejudices, leading to physical, verbal and psychological harassment. Implicit discrimination on the other hand, is subtle and can be hidden, impacting assessment, decision-making and relationships in the employment process (Nnana et al., 2023). Therefore, women in the country face discrimination in the workforce, particularly in the civil service. They face limited access to the labour market, lower employment rates, higher unemployment rates and often work part-time jobs, often overqualified for their work (Nnana, et al., 2024).

Though, Nigeria has enshrined the principle of non-discrimination in its 1999 constitution. Notwithstanding her dedication to the non-discrimination principle, the country fails to achieve the intended outcome of providing equal chances for social, educational, political, and economic advancement for men and women (Nnana & Nsan, 2024). Thus, gender discrimination persists in employment, with women facing unequal representation, compensation and career advancement opportunities. Discrimination includes unequal pay, limited leadership access, biased performance evaluations and harassment. This negatively impacts organisational performance, leading to decreased morale, unsatisfied job and increase turnover rates. Consequently, due to gender discrimination, female employees feel undervalued, which affected recruitment and retention of employment across different sectors in Nigeria (Onoigboria, et al., 2024). Based on the foregoing background however, this study examined the effects of gender discrimination on women's

employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Across the globe and majorly in Africa, the complicated issue of gender discrimination is evident in organisational procedures, practices and structures. Human resources procedures are where some of the most damaging gender discrimination against women is practiced. This is due to the fact that hiring, training, compensation and advancement of women are impacted by human resources practices such as policies, decision-making and their implementation. Also, Nigeria's long-standing patriarchal system limits women's access to remunerated employment directly and indirectly, which affects the length of time women civil servants can serve there.

Furthermore, the belief that some occupations, including white-collar work, are unsuitable for women, along with limitations on the number of jobs that are open to women, are major obstacles to the growth of female employment options and sustainability. Women in the civil service face disadvantageous employment contracts, low pay, bad working conditions, irregular hours as well as limited and uncertain career chances in Nigeria. The majority of women work in low-paying occupations or very small businesses that force them into repetitive manual labour and separated reputations in the country.

Discrimination against female employees can make them feel alienated and underappreciated, which can increase turnover rates and make it harder to find and keep outstanding personnel. Though, several efforts have been made by the government, scholars and other stakeholders to address the issue of gender discrimination various spheres of live. However, the problem still persists and permeates all sectors. Therefore, this study investigated the effect of gender discrimination on women's employment sustainability in Ogun State. The specific objectives are to:

- I. identify the nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State; and
- ii. examine the implication of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Research Questions

- i. What are the nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State?
- ii. What are the implications of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State?

Hypothesis

H₀: Gender discrimination has no significant implication on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Methods

This study adopted a descriptive research design. Women working in different organisations within Ogun State, Nigeria, were the subjects of this study. One Hundred and Ninety-Six women were sampled for the study adopting simple random sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire named "Gender Discrimination and Women Employment Sustainability Questionnaire (GDWESQ)" was used as instrument for data collection. In order to determine the content and face validity of the instrument, two copies of the draft questionnaire were given to two experts for additional review, revision and comments. This was done in order to determine whether the instrument was appropriate in terms of language, presentation, clarity and application. Also, 20 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents in Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State to test the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient determined was 0.96. The research questions were analysed using descriptive mean and standard deviation because it made visualisation of data simple and facilitated meaningful and intelligible presentation of data, which is easy to draw inference and conclusion. While the stated hypothesis was tested using regression analysis because it shows how one variable affects another or influences changes on/in another variable, essentially cause and effect.

Results

For the presentation and analysis of data, the descriptive mean and standard deviation were utilised. The decision rule is that a mean score

of 2.0 or more was considered to indicate the respondents' agreement, while a score of less than 2.0 indicates the respondents' disagreement with the issue raised.

Research Question I: What are the nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State?

Table 1: Nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State

S/N	Issue Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Preference of man to women in employment process is commonly witnessed in Ogun State	196	2.98	0.955
2	Looking down of women's ability in spite of appealing qualification is another dimension of gender discrimination in Ogun State	196	3.08	0.708
3	Gender discrimination against women reflects during hiring, training, pay and promotion processes in Ogun State	196	3.00	0.737
4	Gender discrimination occurs in form of sexist comments and harassment during employment or promotion process in Ogun State	196	3.02	0.856
5	Exclusion or preferences of men to women in senior administrative cadre commonly occur in Ogun State	196	3.02	0.856
6	Discrimination against women manifests in various aspects of the workplace, including employment, promotion, salary, training opportunities and assuming leadership roles in Ogun State	196	2.90	0.894
7	Religious doctrines, cultural beliefs and values contribute to gender discrimination against in women's employment in Ogun State	196	3.02	0.679
8	General preference for men negatively affects women's employment in Ogun State	196	2.99	0.804
9	The perception that some professions are inappropriate for women affects their employability in Ogun State	196	3.06	0.830
10	Human resource policies and decision-making contribute to this discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State.	196	3.01	0.788
Grand Mean			3.01	

Source: Field Work, 2025.

Table 1 presents the respondents' response on the nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State. Item 9 which stated that "The perception that some professions are inappropriate for women affects their employability in Ogun State" recorded the highest mean score of 3.06 (SD = 0.830), followed by item 2 which stated that "Looking down of women's ability in spite of appealing qualification is another dimension of gender discrimination in Ogun State" with the mean score of 3.08 (SD = 0.708). The lowest mean score in the distribution was recorded by item 6 which stated that "workplace, including employment, promotion, salary, training opportunities and assuming leadership roles in Ogun State" with the mean score of 2.90 (SD= 0.894) followed by item 1 which stated that "Preference of man to women in employment process is commonly witnessed in Ogun State" with the mean score of 2.98 (SD=0.955). However, all the items mean score are above the average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the grand mean of 3.01 and the higher degree of similarity between the standard deviations of the ten (10) items in the table indicate that all of the concerns mentioned are related to the nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State.

Research Question II: What are the implications of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State?

Table 2: Implications of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State

S/N	Issue Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Sexual harassment and sex discrimination are linked to greater levels of work unhappiness among women in Ogun State	196	3.12	0.832
2	Gender discrimination at workplace causes psychological and physical stress for women in Ogun State	196	3.13	0.766

S/N	Issue Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
3	Gender discrimination against women creates hostile work environment lead to decreases employee morale, job satisfaction and productivity in Ogun State	196	3.09	0.858
4	Gender discrimination results to substandard wages, poor working condition, unstable hours and disadvantageous employment contracts for women on Ogun State	196	3.00	0.835
5	Efficacy, teamwork, productivity and employee satisfaction are all negatively impacted by discriminatory practices against women in Ogun State.	196	2.86	0.791
6	Female employees experience of discrimination make them feel undervalued and marginalised, leading to higher turnover rates and difficulty in attracting and retaining talented staff in Ogun State	196	3.03	0.787
7	Gender discrimination limits women's access to career advancement opportunities in Ogun State	196	3.04	0.864

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 2 presents the respondents' response on the implications of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Item 2 which stated that “Gender discrimination at workplace causes psychological and physical stress for women in Ogun State” recorded the highest mean score of 3.12 (SD = 0.766), followed by item 1 which stated that “Sexual harassment and sex discrimination are linked to greater levels of work unhappiness among women in Ogun State” with

the mean score of 3.12 (SD = 0.832). The lowest mean score in the distribution was recorded by item 5 which stated that “Efficacy, teamwork, productivity and employee satisfaction are all negatively impacted by discriminatory practices against women in Ogun State” with the mean score of 2.90 (SD= 0.894) followed by item 8 which stated that “Gender discrimination promotes limited and insecure employment opportunities and sustainability for women in Ogun State” with the mean score of 2.93 (SD=0.866). However, all the items mean score are above the average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the grand mean of 3.03 and the higher degree of similarity between the standard deviations of the eight (8) items in the table indicate that all of the concerns mentioned are related to the implications of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

H₀: Gender discrimination has no significant implication on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Table 3: Regression Analysis on the implication of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	61.128	7	8.733	30.731	0.000 ^b
Residual	53.423	188	0.284		
Total	114.551	195			

Source: Field Work, 2025.

From table 3, the result of the test showed a coefficient of regression $R = 0.731^a$ and $R^2 = 0.534$. The implication of this regression coefficient is that there was strong direct effect of gender discrimination on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State. Also, the F- statistics, which is $F = 30.731$ was significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis that gender discrimination has no significant implication on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State is rejected. This means that gender discrimination has implication on

women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Discussions

The findings revealed that there are different *natures of nature and factors promoting gender discrimination against women's employment preference in Ogun State. The nature of gender discrimination against women's employment preference includes preference of man to women in employment process, looking down of women's ability in spite of appealing qualification, sexist comments and harassment, exclusion or preferences of men to women in senior administrative cadre, among others. These findings complement the opinion of Gupta and Bhandari (2019) in their study where they expressed that disparate treatment, harassment, unequal compensation and restricted access to career progression opportunities are just a few examples of the ways that gender discrimination in the workplace.*

Findings also revealed that religious doctrine, cultural beliefs and values, general preference for men, the perception that some professions are inappropriate for women, human resource policies and decision-making, among others, contribute to gender discrimination against women's employability in Ogun State. These findings complement the argument of Oladokun and Alawode (2024) that existence of socio-economic barriers such as reproductive obligations, a lack of childcare facilities, cultural prejudices and religious beliefs, and place of residency are some of the factors that have been connected to gender and career choice.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that gender discrimination has negative implications on women's job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State. Gender discrimination such as sexual harassment and sex discrimination against women lead to greater levels of work unhappiness, causes psychological and physical stress, creates hostile work environment lead to decreases employee morale, job satisfaction and productivity in Ogun State. It also affects low wages, inadequate working condition, irregular hours and unfavorable employment contracts for women. Gender

discrimination restricts women's access to career advancement opportunities as well as promotes limited and unstable job prospects and sustainability for women in Ogun State. These findings complement the submission of Badom and Ndeue (2024), and Zorane and Elem (2020) that patriarchal society system in country further exacerbates the issue of gender discrimination, as it gives men the moral right to dictate women's actions, hindering their employment as well as job sustainability. The finding is also in agreement to the conclusion of Onoigboria, Nwagbala and Okeke (2024) that due to gender discrimination, female employees feel undervalued, which affected recruitment and retention of employment across different sectors in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study examined the effect of gender discrimination on women's employment sustainability in Ogun State. It argued that gender discrimination in the employment process and workplace occurs in different dimensions like preference of man to women in employment process, looking down of women's ability in spite of appealing qualification, sexist comments and harassment, exclusion of women in senior administrative cadre, among others. Also, gender discrimination against women's employability and sustainability in Ogun state are been influenced by religious doctrine, cultural beliefs and values, general preference for men, the perception that some professions are inappropriate for women, human resource policies and decision-making, among others. Furthermore, the issue of gender discrimination causes psychological and physical stress and creates hostile work environment that lead to decreases employee morale, job satisfaction and productivity among women. Therefore, it was concluded that gender discrimination gave men moral privilege over women's actions, which snowballed to negatively affected women job performance and employment sustainability in Ogun State.

Recommendations

In order to improve women's employment sustainability, governments should strengthen the implementation and enforcement of affirmative action and gender quotas, as well as conduct frequent reviews of anti-

discrimination laws. Also, Government should make sure that public agencies, organisations, businesses and companies provide a flexible work environment that allows women to participate productively at work while also finding time for their families. This will guarantee women's employment sustainability and improve job performance. In order to promote inclusivity and equal opportunities for women's employment sustainability, the National Orientation Agency, Civil Society Organisations, religious bodies and the media should prioritise addressing gender discrimination in the hiring process and workplaces through regular awareness-raising, campaigns, training, mentorship programmes and diversity initiatives.

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