

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

We live in a gendered world, where the roles, attitudes, traits beliefs and even the personality of an individual are determined at birth by his or her sex. This describes how gender shapes the way we organise, think and know about the world (Cellis et al, 2013). Men and women are different in many aspects of their lives and in what society expects of them.

Beliefs about gender roles get ingrained into an individual from home, in schools, through religion, folklores, myths, the media and the actual differential up-bringing of the sexes, (Megary, 1984). In homes girls learn that caring for children and the home is the work of mothers while boys learn that the job of the father is to earn a living for the family. While achievement is stressed for boys it is never stressed for girls. In schools the curricula channel girls and boys towards gender specific employments. Girls are encouraged to take conventional subjects like Home-management, Needle-work, cookery and the Arts which prepare them for the more conventional female roles in life, while boys are encouraged to take technical or vocational subjects and the sciences. In most cases the way these subjects are time-tabled makes it impossible for the girls to offer both types of subjects. They therefore take one or another. Girls usually opt for the conventional ones: the Arts and Social Sciences.

In the media women are portrayed as the inferior and weaker sex, whose sole role is in the home. Many people have argued even in the press that women cannot carry out both domestic work and engage in employment work and do justice to both. Obbo (1982: 12) quoted the press in the 1960s as having printed a reaction to women involvement in party politics as saying:

“...nothing wrong in being

leaders in the party. Insane talk...

A woman – every blessed one of them

is created to be a mother. A mother's

place is in and about the house”

Normal girls adhere to and are guided by such reactions.

RELIGION

The socialization process: the sex role development and gender stereotyping which continues throughout adulthood is much reinforced by religion. All the major religions in the world Christianity, Islam and Buddhism' believe in one male God who is supreme, (International Council of Adult Education, 1990).

In the Koran women are just above slaves in the hierarchy of power and can never become Shekhs or Kadhis according to Kabuzi (1987). In the Christian teaching the Bible confirms and further reinforces the traditional subordinate position of woman. In the story of Creation in Genesis women is said to have been created from the ribs of man. In I Timothy verses 11 and 12 Paul the Apostle of Christ wrote to Timothy saying:

“Let a woman learn in silence

with all submission. And I do

not permit a woman to have

authority over man”.

Such strong statements from the Bible put women automatically in subordinate position in life.

CULTURE

Gender roles vary from Society to Society and from culture to culture but exert powerful and far reaching effects on individuals. These roles are defined, identified, expressed, maintained and justified by society. Society perceives sex differences and allocates appropriate roles, behavior, attitudes and responsibilities to the sexes. The roles shape and mould adult life and personality. According to Perlman (1968), Ruddock (1969), Bagley (1987), a person takes on the characteristics of the role he or she is relegated to play in life and this determines his behavior, personality, and status in life. The roles designated to women have inferior values and relegate them to subordinate positions and status in all societies. According to Byrnie (1978) the feminine image have for time immemorial carried with it a message of inferiority, lesser importance, dependence and destiny to domestic role.

Disparities in gender roles exist in all cultures and in all spheres of life; social, economic, political, educational, wealth ownership, marriage and employment. In all these fields men are dominant ones. Women who come up or challenge the men in their roles and are successful are labeled as “Manly” or “ambitious”. Consequently many women seem to have accepted the status quo and resigned themselves to the status their prescribed roles have placed them rather than challenge men and lose their femininity.

COLONIAL INFLUENCE

The colonial powers partitioned Africa in the 19th Century. They intended to administer their colonies by themselves with the help of a few Africans. These were the sons and relatives of the African chiefs. Only men were therefore given formal education as they were groomed to be future administrators. As these young men required educated wives, a few girls were educated for this purpose. These girls received education that would enable them to assume their role as good housewives and mothers; an inferior education.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO FORMAL EMPLOYMENT

Women have traditionally been occupied in the non-formal sector of the economy. In formal employment they have been concentrated in jobs that require low levels of skills, responsibilities, and pay like teaching and nursing. This is because women experience overt discrimination in recruitment and promotion in male dominated jobs based on negative stereotyping. However such discrimination now seem to be decreasing as reported by Baron and Byrene (1984). There is now a shift towards more egalitarian roles for both men and women.

Research findings however show that in some developed countries like Britain and the U.S.A. woman are still discriminated against in terms of remunerations. Women with the same qualifications as men are given jobs with lower pay than men. (Morrison and Glinow 1990; Flexner 1971).

In Uganda this discrimination is not experienced. Men and women have access to the same types of jobs with the same pay depending on their qualifications. The 1989 Uganda Man Power Survey Report show that 20% of employees in the formal sector are now women compared to the 1975 ILO

report that only 4% of the women labour force in less developed nations were women professionals and administrators. This is a big leap forward for them.

LEADERSHIP IS A MAN'S JOB

Leadership and management are stereotyped as the preserves of men. People are reluctant to employ women in jobs that require supervision especially of men. They argue that young men resent being supervised by women, that women also fear supervising men and that men are more suited to supervising women. (Chiplin and Sloane, 1982). Very strong opposition to the very idea of women in leadership have been voiced. The strongest was from John Knox in "First Blast of Triumphet Against the Monstrous Regimes of Women, 1558" quoted in the New Vision. It said:

"To promote a woman to bear rule,
superiority, dominion, or empire
above any realm nation, or city
is repugnant to nature".

Women leaders encountering such strong oppositions cannot persevere not have confidence in themselves.

The consequences are that there are very few women in high ranking decision making positions throughout the world even in developed nations like the U.S.A., Europe and the USSR. According to Morrison and Glinow (1990), in the U.S.A., only one-third of management positions are filled by women. Most women are in low tiered jobs with little authority and power.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Women face a lot of discriminatory practices in education. They under participate and underachieve in post secondary institutions and are under represented in Senior Posts in educational services. In Uganda very few women are in decision making, high level planning and managerial positions in the educational system. Kasawuli (1990) reported in his study of headships in Secondary Schools in Jinja and Kampala districts that of those in headship positions in the two districts only 19% were women and 81% men. According to Sources from the Schools and Colleges Section of the Ministry of Education in Crested Towers, of the 529 Government Aided Secondary Schools in the country, only 40 are headed by substantively appointed headmistresses. Very few women especially in Church founded Schools are in acting capacities. There are 56 Deputy Headmistresses. Taking both Headmistresses and Deputy Headmistresses together a figure of 18% women in administration in Secondary Schools in Uganda is arrived at. This is very low figure. There are no women Directors of N.T.C. in the whole country. Yet there are many women in the teaching services especially at the lower levels. This situation seems to be the same throughout the world where women constitute the majority of employees in education in both third world and developed nations but have no power of decision making. According to reports in International Council of Adult Education (1986), in many parts of the world women form about two-thirds of the classroom teachers and adult educators at grassroots levels; dealing with children. But the higher the promotional ladder the fewer the percentage of women in managerial positions. The reign of power in education is still firmly held by men.

In Uganda no women has ever headed a boy's School let alone deputized in one, yet there are many men heading purely girls' Schools.

The explanation to this disparity could be gender influenced. It is possible that they have deflated views of their own competence and ability to contribute meaningfully to the decision making processes in Schools. It is possible that with such outlook of their competence they tend to perform poorly when in headship positions to such an extent that policy makers are biased about appointing them to such deserving posts. However no researcher has so far investigated this.

There has also been talk of women having fear of the consequences of success but not the success itself, (Deaux 1977, Horner 1972). With success women gain superiority and lose their femininity. This loss of femininity has a negative effect on some women to such an extent that some prefer to retain their feminine traits rather than become superiors. MacBrayer (1960) pointed out that the truly feminine women accept their inferior positions in life.

The dilemma therefore is that cultural attitudes and beliefs are still so deeply rooted in both men and women that it is difficult to convince the majority of both sexes that gender inequalities are neither biological nor God given and can be corrected. Trying to change the traditional roles of men and women according to Obbo (1982) raises a lot of opposition, fears and anxiety. Many women doubt the desirability of opting for change thus they prefer to remain in the security of culture.

The extent to which gender stereotypes are accepted and perpetuated by the women themselves and the extent to which such social pressures affect and influence women participation and performance while in educational leadership need to be ascertained.

A phenomenon known as self-fulfilling prophecy was demonstrated by Skrypnek and Synder (1982). It means engaging in Stereotypes behaviours because it is expected of one. Some women engage

in this phenomenon thereby proving their own incompetence especially in leadership. According to Sampson (1980) women who describe themselves as typically feminine have low self-esteem and difficulty in social adjustment. They cannot perform effectively as leaders because they lack leadership capabilities.

However, the extent to which people absorb cultural and traditional roles vary from individual to individual. Not all people in the same society have the same qualities. According to Bem (1981) people differ in their gender self-concepts. There are masculine, feminine, and androgynous people. Androgynous people have both masculine and feminine traits and perform better in both feminine and masculine tasks. Therefore categorizing people as leaders or non-leaders on the basis of their sex could be misleading. In fact, Plato in his Republic argued that no function on society is peculiar to men as man, or woman as woman, and the Natural gifts are similarly distributed in each sex, therefore it is natural to share all occupations equally with men.

No researcher has so far investigated the influence of gender on job performance of female administrators of Uganda. This need to be ascertained.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was undertaken based on the assumption that women educational administrators were adversely affected by gender issues. It was assumed that this also affected their leadership performance. The study therefore sought to establish whether:

- (i) female educational administrators in Uganda which has a non-Western culture differed in their sensitivity to culturally accepted gender roles;

- (ii) if the women exhibited different sensitivity to gender issues, how this differences affected the way they performed in their positions as administrators in the educational system;
- (iii) then basing on significant findings the study sought to recommend a course of action as regards gender sensitivity through training and schooling.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken because the researcher believed that there was need to increase the participation of women in high level decision making positions in the educational system of Uganda in order to effectively utilize the abundant human resources represented by women in that field. The Study would show how gender sensitivity influences the performance of women in educational institutions and it would go a long way in supporting or disproving the stereotyped beliefs that versus women in administration. Basing on significant findings and recommendations it would enhance the access of women to jobs formerly denied them on grounds of gender biases.

Usually policies and decisions which affect women in the education system are made by men. Such policies do not take into consideration the needs, interests and views of women. More women need to be represented in educational policy making organs in order to ensure their full participation in the implementation of educational plans and programmes geared towards solving their problems and bringing them the economic main stream of the nation. This study would make society and policy formulating organs aware of gender based shortcomings which have adversely affected women for so

long in educational leadership, with the hope that society and the educational system in general would then try to change social roles and prejudices attached to gender through training and schooling.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this study Acker's (1984) definition of gender was adopted. She defines gender as a set of meanings, beliefs, attitudes, roles, traits, and expectations a society ascribes to femininity or masculinity. It excludes biological sex differences which are physical, physiological, hormonal, and genetical.

Sensitivity in this context is taken to mean being influenced by, awareness or acceptance of, (gender issues). It is based on Webster (1984) New World Dictionary. Gender sensitivity in this book means awareness, acceptance or adherence to gender stereotyped roles, attitudes, or traits.

Performance refers to the way the leader accomplishes her leadership functions or roles. In this study gender sensitivity was taken as the independent variable on which performance was based.