

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

No studies on how gender issues affect the performance of women in administration has as yet been done in Uganda, let alone in its education system. However in many parts of the world studies have been carried out on women in management. The drawback to these studies has always been the limited number of women in high level management positions. In fact Epstein (1972: 601) quoted a study by a Harvard Business Review as having complained that:

There are so few women in
management positions that
there is scarcely anything
to study.

Despite this numerical drawback some literature relating leadership to gender issues particularly as it pertains to women are hereafter discussed.

WOMEN AS MANAGERS

In most of the literature so reviewed a consistent bias is noted or indicated towards women in management. Both sexes tend to view women as less competent managers than their male counterparts (Stevens and DeNisi 1980). This seems to be the case despite growing evidence that male and female managers show similar behaviour as reported by Donnell and Hall (1980) Wexley and Pulakos (1982). Many people do not believe that women can be successful managers. They tend to give various reasons

for male and female successes in leadership. When female managers have successfully performed in their capacities as leaders the reasons for their successes are given as easy task or luck but not competence or their abilities. When male ones succeed this is attributed to ability or effort but not easy task or luck. There is therefore a bias based on gender issues linking women with ineffectiveness in their performance of leadership roles.

Powers (1974) found that sex was used as the basis for ascribing attributes of candidates for principalship in Wisconsin, U.S.A. The traditional sex roles were used to discriminate against the appointment of women to positions of headship. She reported that leadership behaviour was sextyped. The masculine leadership behaviour she found in her study, was expected of people who would be effective High School administrators. This meant that professionally qualified women teachers in high schools who did not show masculine traits could not be considered effective future principals. Consequently gender sensitive women were disadvantaged as they could not be considered for appointment to leadership positions. Their exhibition of the feminine gender of leadership behaviour rendered them to be perceived as ineffective administrators. This showed that gender issues influenced appointment of women to leadership positions in that area.

Wheeler (1989) reported from her study of Female Public School Administrators in U.S.A. that as a female moved towards higher management position, her sex role identification became more and more masculine and less and less feminine, and that upper management administrators perceived as ideal administrator to be more masculine and less feminine than lower level administrators. This indicates that appointment of women to high level management positions required a change of sex role behaviour by aspiring women to such positions. Failure to adopt such a change meant the woman in

question was not a suitable candidate for the post. It is not easy to change one's sex role behaviour.

Definitely gender sensitive women find it hardest to change consequently would never reach high level managerial positions.

In another study, DePrete and Soule (1988), researching on Gender Discrimination and Promotion reported that the few women who made it to higher level management were similar in chances, skills and attitudes to men. This indicates that only women who had had equal chances of education with men, been exposed to the same skills and had acquired male attitudes could gain promotion to high level decision making posts. According to Rogers (1980) such few senior women tended to adopt the male system and ideology. They rejected any identification with fellow women. But because they were too few and far between, they tended to feel a sense of being isolated and ignored. This affects and handicaps them as they find themselves usually working almost alone amongst men. Small mistakes they make become glaringly conspicuous. Marland (1983) cited Richardson (1973) as having found that such women felt that in matters of decision making and policy formulations, they had a sense of being left out, ignored by their male colleagues or superiors and having to leave major decisions to the men. Consequently they deny themselves their own capacities to assume executive leadership. Cortina (1989) confirmed this. She reported that many Mexican women were in educational governance but lacked autonomy and decision making capacities within their own positions.

Many of these women are pressurized to side with the male majority against their own kind as a price of membership. This was reported by Rogers (1980). In some cases according to Rogers (Ibid) such women again tended to conform to the Stereotype attached to their group. They became sex objects, mothers, daughters, or younger sisters to their colleagues or superiors, or even became

desexualized militants in order to be accepted by their male colleagues or superiors. They resorted to the phenomenon of self-fulfilling prophecy. Sometimes they were forced to work extremely hard and overtime in order to prove that they were as capable as the men. These reports show that even women who climbed up the ladder of management have a struggle to remain at the top; a struggle which in most cases requires too much sacrifice on the part of the women. But such sacrifices are more or less ridiculed usually. The lone voices of such women hardly make any impression in the male dominated field of management.

The findings could explain the scarcity of women in upper management echelons in almost all sectors of employment. Because, if effectiveness and hence promotions to such positions require that women become more masculine, reject their female ideology and work even harder than the men to prove their worth, then gender sensitive women who hold strong beliefs in gender roles would not be promoted to such levels of management; for they would not easily accept to change and adopt the male ideology, system, and attitudes. The fact that they strongly adhere to and exhibit feminine behaviour would cause them to be automatically labeled as inefficient and ineffective. The controversial suggestions that women fear the consequences of success because they believe that if they are too successful and competitive they would lose their femininity would tend to be supported in this case. In fact (Harari and Kaplan 1982) cited Placente (1974) as having reported that women judged as competent were rated as less feminine. And that achievement of competence in any field by a woman decreased the woman's appeal to members of the opposite sex.

Marlend (1983) reported studies done in the U.S.A. which showed that women had lower aspirations for professional advancement and promotions to certain jobs because they feel that they have

no ability or traits for such jobs like leadership. Such jobs usually require possession of qualities like consistence, assertiveness, self-confidence and independence which according to Horner (1972) are inconsistent with femininity. Gender sensitive women genuinely believe that they lack such traits hence do not aspire for leadership jobs and are labelled un-ambitious.

This view however was disputed by other researchers. Bradley and Silverleaf (1979) were reported in Marland (1983) to disagree with this concept of women having lower aspirations for management positions. They believed that lack of aspirations in women for high level positions were only experienced when there was lack of geographical mobility, preventing women from moving to new job stations for various reasons. When such barriers were not evident, women showed the same levels of aspiration as men for such jobs.

In education systems throughout the world, women tend to concentrate in lower level management positions. They are very many in nursery and infant school headships. This could be explained that women tend to conform to their role as mothers even in leadership. Bamkart (1989) found in his study in Japan that women emphasized that the greatest fulfillment for them was associated with mothering. An earlier study by Byrnie (1978) has also found that in Schools, Senior Mistresses dealt more with social functions, pregnant School girls, and difficult parents while male school administrators dealt more with actual school administration, policy formulation and executions and organization of the school than social events. The explanation of this phenomenon is rooted in sensitivity to gender roles.

On the effective performance of men and women in management there seems to be little or no difference. Wexley and Bulakos (1982), Steinberg and Shapiro (1982), found few differences when they compared traits associated with future successes as managers among male and female business students

in U.S.A. In some cases where differences emerged, the study found that female students scored higher on traits associated with future successes as managers than the male ones. This study indicated that initially boys and girls have the traits for being successful managers in whatever field they chose to pursue in future. But possibly in women these traits tend to be repressed in later life because of adherence to gender roles which society still enforces.

Anya Ocha (1984) while comparing perceived leadership performance of male and female superintendents in high school in Tennessee, U.S.A. found that the two did not differ in matters of policy formulations, and execution, decision making, personnel selection, utilization of human resources, setting regulations and various other fields of leadership. Both men and women performed the same in these areas. This would indicate that given the chance to independently lead without undue outside pressure women perform as well as or even better than men in positions of leadership.

Some researchers have actually reported better performance by female managers than male ones. Marland (1983) reported Gross and Trask (1976) as having found that teachers performed professionally better in female headed Schools than in male headed ones. Even students performance and learning were higher on the average in female headed Schools than in male ones. Accordingly they, (Gross and Trask), concluded that the sex of the head of the School did make a difference in the operations and Management of Schools. Consequently they advocated for an analysis of the relationship between sex stereotyped leadership roles and performance in school planning and administrative processes.

As far as political leadership is concerned, there seems to be no difference between male and female politicians. Constantini and Craik (1972, 1980) found that both men and women in politics were

the same in terms of formulation of public policies, self-confidence, dominance, achievement and orientation. They differ slightly in their motives for being in politics and in their respective parties. Whereas women were in politics because of their concern for people and party members, men were in it for personal advancement.

Despite many such findings, female managers are still very far between. Shapiro and Steinberg (1982) apply put forward this point, "Women populate corporations but do not run them".

The explanation of this discrepancy is important. The factors which influence the decisions of women to work, their choices of occupation and their levels of aspirations need to be analyzed. The concept of women having lower intellectual capacity and ability to undertake work requiring high level concentration has effectively been disproved by the entrance and success of women in fields once dominated by men: like the Sciences, Engineering, Medicine and the Law. It is true one cannot claim that all women are intellectuals and capable just as one cannot claim that all men are.

The question as to why there are so few women in higher level school management and how these few manage and perform is important. Some explanations to these could be found in the influence of gender sensitivity. The researcher believed that the answer to these questions lie in what a woman believed is her role in society, how much she has internalized that role and what treatment she expects from society in the event of her deviation from such prescribed roles. Sensitivity to gender roles the researcher believed would not only influence a woman's career choice but also her performance in her chosen field in this case leadership in educational institutions.

Society does actually underrate and undervalue women's leadership capabilities. Dobbins and Cardy (1988) reported biases in rating the performance of women leaders. They found that the performance rating of women were influenced by the rater's own beliefs in gender stereotypes and reason for the rating. Sextyped raters, those strongly gender sensitive, rated women lower when they believed the rating was for promotional decisions than when they believed they were for routine feedback purposes. This indicates that however efficient and effective a women manager is the gender sensitive members of society would always down play her successes and performances making her appear incapable and incompetent.

Few people who have worked under women managers have reported favourably about them according to Stoner and Wankel (1986). But the vast majority of the subordinates have been found to show discrimination against women leaders. Sanders and Schmidt (1980) found that subordinates tended to work harder when they perceived the manager was a male than when they believed the manager was a female. In their study which involved card sorting, both a male and female subordinates worked harder for a male manager than for a female one. This study indicated that female managers tended to be given less cooperation by their subordinates than the male ones. In consequence they were made to appear less effective and less successful and labeled as incompetent; not because they did not work as hard as the men, but because subordinates were not willing to give them maximum cooperation. This attitude the researcher believed was the manifestation of deep rooted beliefs in gender roles. Subordinates believed that a woman's position should be subordinate not super-ordinate and that a woman's leadership performance was inferior.

Mannila (1972) in her study of sex role attitudes in Finland found that the average educated unmarried men did not accept women in positions of leadership and were unwilling to work for them. But highly educated men did not mind having women as leaders possibly because of their high levels of education, they did not envisage any threat from women managers in their fields.

Megargee (1973) found that while women did not feel uncomfortable about working for men, men did feel discomfited in working under the directions of women. These findings could explain the subtle resistance women managers experience their subordinates especially male ones.

It appears from the preceding research findings that even women have overcome their barriers to promotion to leadership positions, they are still deliberately sabotaged and made to appear incompetent. This is the result of strong adherence to gender roles inherent in the women's subordinates, colleagues and superiors. This attitude needs to be changed.

Whereas external biases emanating from people who should work with or for women, employ, and promote them cause serious obstacles to the promotion and performance of women, internal factors arising from the women's own gender self-concepts could, the researcher believed, present even more serious obstacles to the overall performance of some women already in managerial positions.

This could serve to enhance gender biases against other women aspiring for promotion to such positions. Many women are still greatly influenced by what society expects of them. They do not completely accept or reject sex role appropriate behaviours and attitudes. They instead try to accommodate them. Most try to make their career roles and their traditional roles compatible. In so

doing they become inefficient and subject to inner conflicts which could affect their leadership performance adversely.

Horner (1972) reported that most competent women faced a conflict between their feminine image and showing their capabilities, adjust their behavior to suit their internalized sex role stereotype.

Although research on leadership traits disregard personality variables as factors of leadership effectiveness, Lindgren (1973) reported that subjects rating high on traits of dominance usually volunteered or were forced into playing leadership roles. Megargee (1973) in his study of the effect of Sex Role Stereotypes on the Manifestation of Leadership Roles found that when women who were dominant were paired off with men who were not dominant: the women tended to appoint the male partner as the leader while they relegated themselves to subordinate positions. This study indicated that women were sensitive to their gender roles of being subordinates. They let tradition take precedent in cases where they could actually successfully lead. The study showed that women were reluctant to take overt leadership over men. This results in women underperforming. The disguising of women's capabilities are costly to the women emotionally. They are constantly worried about losing their femininity and therefore do not carry out their career roles effectively. This is also costly to society in terms of human resources as competent women became underutilized.

According to Cortina (1989), the few women who advanced to high management positions in education in Mexico were usually political appointees. She reported that women competing with men for leadership positions were usually disadvantaged because the demands for advancement required far more time that was compatible with their desire to have normal family lives. Accordingly she found that of the women in leadership positions in her country the majority were divorced or had never married. Of

the married women the majority had few or no children. These women had more free time because of their lighter domestic chores. This shows that women have to make a choice between taking leadership roles and their family lives. Most prefer normal family relationships.

To stop gender biases attached to women in administration from repressive to capable women the few women in administrative positions need to strive to stop the self-fulfilling prophecy associated with the stereotyped attributes of women from becoming true. They need to be optimistic self-confident leaders who believe in their abilities to perform just as well as men. To do this women need to the whole hearted assistance of the very society which has hitherto held them in low esteem and marginalized them. Society need to accept, encourage and help women who are in jobs once called male jobs especially, to show their full potential, instead of looking at them as deviates thereby causing them to be inhibited.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

The researcher's intention in carrying out this study was to endeavor to show that strong adherence to socially ascribed gender roles still affected adversely the performance of women in leadership in educational institutions in Central Uganda, and Uganda in general which has a non-Western culture. She believed that strongly gender sensitive women (more feminine ones) would not perform as well as the less gender sensitive (less feminine ones).

In order to guide the research along this line the researcher developed two hypothesis which she stated in the Null form.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no difference in expected and observed gender sensitivity among female administrators in educational institutions in Central Uganda.

Hypothesis 2:

Gender sensitivity is not related to performance of female educational administrators in Central Uganda.