

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

INTRODUCTION

This study sought to establish whether a relationship existed between how women in leadership positions in the education system in Uganda performed and the strength of their acceptance of gender role. It is also sought to find out whether the sample of the women educational administrators differed in their attitudes and acceptance of culturally prescribed women's role in society. Indications of such differences if any could tend to agree with Bem's (1981) reports that there were three categories of people who describe themselves as feminine, masculine and androgynous on the basis of their acceptance of sex role stereotypes. These findings would indicate attitudinal changes towards prescribed sex roles.

In carrying out this study the researcher used the non-experimental descriptive research method. This method was chosen because the researcher was intended to study human behaviour and deal with opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of women towards their own gender role perceptions; how each woman perceived herself in terms of socially stereotyped gender roles. Therefore, since the socialization processes through which people acquire and internalize gender roles were assumed to have already occurred, and the researcher did not have to manipulate the variable in any way, the non-experimental research method was taken as ideal for this study.

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

Women in administrative posts in post primary educational institutions in central region of Uganda formed the main population for this study. This included women in policy making positions

such as women heads of institutions, Deputy heads, Wardens of halls of residences as well as women heads of departments in the delimited areas of study. Forty-five (45) such women were intended to participate in the study.

Another group of subjects were the subordinates of these women. These in most cases were teachers, lecturers, tutors and sometimes students in the institutions where these women administrators worked. Four subordinates participated to evaluate each woman administrator, two males and two females.

SAMPLING

Not all the women administrators who responded to the questionnaires could be randomly sampled. Due to the limited number of such women, the researcher even had to augment this short-coming by including women heads of departments in the study. As many women administrators as could be found were used as respondents and given questionnaires with the hope that if more women than the required forty-five responded, the researcher could then sample the responses randomly to make the required number. However, only thirty eight (38) questionnaires were returned and these were all analyzed.

The above problem did not however affect the sampling of the subordinates. There were abundant in most cases and since the researcher needed only four per woman administrator, she systematically sampled them using the Kth method of sampling techniques where she was availed with a list of the staff in the institution or chose at random when she found them in their common rooms.

INSTRUMENTS

The researcher used two separate types of questionnaires. One questionnaire was modified from Hawley (1972) and Kaplan (1973). It was called Attitudes Towards Women's Role in Society. This was administered to the women leaders in order to elicit their attitudes towards traditional sex role stereotypes. The questionnaire appeared in three sections and contained thirty six (36) items. In the first section of this questionnaire background information pertaining to the type of institution, qualification, age, marital status, number and ages of children, position and length of service of respondents was collected. This information was vital in that it gave the researcher background on the type of women who get promotion to positions of leadership in these institutions and what type of women leader were tolerated by specific types of institutions. The section was designed by the researcher.

The second section of the questionnaire which contained the Attitudes to Women's Role in Society was designed to tap the attitudes of these women towards gender related roles and beliefs. From the responses of the subjects to this part, individual attitudes to gender issues were computed by scoring them based on the five (5) scales which were: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (2), strongly disagree (1). In some cases the scores were reversed. From these scores, the strength of each respondent's adherence to gender roles and beliefs were concluded. The higher the scores, the stronger was the individual's attachment to gender roles. It indicated the more traditional attitudes of the more feminine individuals, while less scores indicated that the women had rejected the traditional attitudes towards gender roles and were therefore less feminine in their outlook.

The third section of the questionnaire contained open ended questions. In this section the researcher asked the respondents to indicate whatever problems, successes or failures they usually encountered in the course of executing their duties as administrators, in the education system which they

felt were attributable to gender biases from their colleagues, subordinates, superiors and members of the public. The researcher also asked the respondents to indicate how management performance affected their private lives. From subjects' responses to this section the researcher hoped to elicit gender biases faced by women in administration and the conflicts they face in their private lives as female administrators.

The second questionnaire was developed by incorporating the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) used by Halpin (1959) Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) used by Halpin and Croft (1963) and the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) by Stern and Steinhoff (1965). It contained 55 items based on eleven (11) functions of leaderships. It was administered to the subordinates of the women administrators.

The first part of this questionnaire dealt with the background of the subordinates. The last part was intended to elicit the subordinates' perception of their superiors in terms of the women leaders' behaviour and performance on the various leadership dimensions such as Production emphasis, Decision making, Team work, Motivation processes, ability to handle complex demands and crisis firmly and so on. How often the women leaders indulged in certain actions under these dimensions were graded also on a five-point scale as Always (5) Often (4) Occasionally (3) Seldom (2) and Never (1). Higher scores indicated better performance by the leader on the dimension in question.

Lastly in the process of administering the questionnaires to the subordinates, the researcher had opportunity to talk to some of the subordinates from whom she obtained a lot of useful information for this study. This was used for discussions on the various leadership dimensions.

PROCEDURE

Both questionnaires were modifications of already existing ones whose validity and reliability had already been tested. The researcher discussed them with her supervisor and friends, pilot run them, removed irrelevant items and then administered them to the respondents. According to Stogdill (1974), the subordinate questionnaire containing the LBDQ had a validity of 0.9 and a reliability of 0.87. For the women administrators questionnaire the reliability was calculated using Cronbach's method and found to be 0.89. After receiving the Okay from her supervisor, the researcher obtained a letter of Introduction from the Dean, School of Education which she used to introduce herself to the respondents wherever she went to administer the questionnaires.

The researcher hand delivered and administered the questionnaires to both groups of respondents herself. To the women administrators the questionnaires were administered to them in their offices and the researcher then had occasion to discuss with those of them who had time to spare for her.

To the subordinates, the researcher personally gave the questionnaires, briefed them on how to answer, waited for them to answer them, then collected the questionnaires back. In cases where the subordinates could not answer the questionnaires there and then the researcher left them with instructions not to hand the completed questionnaires to their superiors but keep them until she returned for them. This was done as a necessary precaution against subordinates giving untruthful biased information for fear of having their responses read by their superiors whom they were evaluating. This meant that the researcher sometimes had to make several trips to the same institutions for the purpose of collecting those forms.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher encountered several problems which she believes limited the accuracy and generalization of this study.

The limited number of women educational administrators in post primary institutions was a major drawback. The researcher had intended to use only heads of institutions who control the climate, all decisions and running of their institutions but had to use even deputies in institutions headed by men. Such deputies have little control over many decisions and the running of the institutions because they only follow already prepared courses of action by their male superiors.

Lack of funds was also a major limitation. The researcher was unable to travel all over the delimited area of study. She could not get more representative subjects for study, neither could randomness be ascertained as she had to limit herself to areas which she could visit within a day's travel.

Non-cooperation by subjects was also a limitation to this study. The researcher encountered resistance especially from heads of institutions earmarked for study. In some cases she met downright refusals and the reasons given usually being that they were too busy. Some indicated that they were tired of answering questionnaires for Master of Education students from Makerere. The researcher had to beg the respondents to participate in completing the questionnaires. In such cases the researcher feels that some of the information given may not be reliable.

Fear from subordinates could also have caused limitations to this study. Despite promises by the researcher to the subordinates that whatever information given would be treated in absolute

confidence, many still feared to participate in answering the questionnaire. This was especially true in cases where the researcher was introduced to the subordinates by the heads or deputy heads themselves.

Time was another factor of constraint. Data was collected from these institutions especially secondary schools during the period when students were about to break off for holidays. Consequently both teachers and their heads were too busy to give enough time to the questionnaires. In some cases the questionnaires were shelved or put aside to be completed at later dates but were eventually lost.

Finally, the researcher believes that as a beginner in the field of research, and her research being a pioneer one, her lack of experience, and lack of previous data for purposes of comparison is an important drawback on this research.