

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated women participation in financial and personnel management in public secondary schools for the effective school administration in North-Central Nigeria. The research design was a descriptive survey design. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. The target population consisted of 13,769 male and female secondary school teachers and principals. The sample of the study was 384 respondents; proportionate random sampling technique was used to select three states out six states and the Federal Capital territory (FCT) in North-Central Nigeria. The instruments for data collection were researcher's developed questionnaire titled: "Women Participation in Decision-making in Administrations Questionnaire (WOPIDAQ) and semi-structured interview. The instrument was validated by two experts in Educational Administration and one from Measurement and Evaluation from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The overall reliability yielded 0.86 using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient method, data was analysed using percentage and frequency counts. Mean ratings and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using independent simple t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The major findings of the study was that women are entrusted with the responsibility of handling financial matters in schools but given less freedom to carryout expenditure in schools and that attention given to female grievances in comparison to their male counterparts is at low extent.

Keywords: Women participation, financial management, personnel management, effective administration, public schools, North-central Nigeria.

Introduction

Countries of the world recognise education as the cornerstone for sustainable development. It is a yardstick for development in economic, political, social, technological and human resources of any nation. The contribution of women of educational, political and cultural development all over the world and Nigeria in particular are a global reality. Women Advocate Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC, 2003) states that without the active participation of women and incorporation of women's perspective in all levels of decision making, the goals of equality and peace cannot be achieved. Participation in the context of this work has to do with making process for effective administration of public secondary schools.

While discussing their roles, it is worth to understand that the word woman can be used to mean any female human or specifically to mean adult female as contrasted with girl. Also, the UNESCO's (2003) mainstreaming implementation Framework defines woman as an adult female person. Consequently, taking cognizance of the concept from Nigerian leadership and decision making perspective, a woman could be defined as a female who has attained the age of franchise and by Nigerian standard, the minimum age is 18 years. The roles played by women have made them significant in the society. Women are mothers, wives and even workers. They also have the numerical strength that are worth reckoning with. For instance, women constitute about 50% of the Nigerian population and over 70% of them reside in the rural areas (Otite & - Oginonwo, 2006). Apart from their numerical strength, they have great potentials necessary to evolve a new economic order, to accelerate social and political development and consequently transform the society into a better one.

Awe as cited in Lasiele (1999) perceived the importance of women from their roles as managers of homes. The author noted that the peace and stability at home depend largely on the managerial abilities of the women folk. Women as mothers, plan, organize, direct and coordinate all the resources of the home, both human and material to the benefit of all the members of the family. Apart from these, women are naturally endowed with qualities that make them good administrators. Nakpodia (2010) enumerated and acknowledged qualities of women as tolerance and endurance, high need for association, and frankness in matters they consider serious; persuasiveness, consideration and fairness, stubbornness to a belief, emotional stability and forgiveness.

Consequently, women around the world have made their marks in different areas of endeavour. Nigeria, for instance has a rich history that is sprinkled with inputs of women who have broken out of the mold to participate in decision making in administrative positions. The Aba women riot of 1929 in Eastern Nigeria was spearheaded by women who were precursor and role models of better known political activist (Nduka, 2001). Recent history bears testimony of prominent women leaders like Prof. Mrs. Grace Allele Williams, the mathematician and the first female Vice Chancellor, University of Benin; Mrs. Funmilayo Ransom Kuti, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, Hjiya Gambo (Frontline Women, 2017). All these women portrayed their determination to change their mental and attitudinal structure of the Nigerian society. Others are Prof. Nken Dora Akuyili, former Director General of National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control, who reduced the incidences of fake drugs from 90% to 68% in 2001. Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, the current Director General of the World Trade Organization, the first African to hold this office, who successfully transformed the Nigerian economic platform when she succeeded in negotiating a debt relief package for Nigeria as the Finance Minister (July, 2003-June, 2006) under Obasanjo's administration.

Participation is the act of taking part in an event or a situation where one's views are represented in a decision-making process. One of the areas in which women need active participation in decision-making is public secondary school's administration. Kumar and Scuden (2000) asserted that participation enables teachers to become active participants in school management process. This makes them have a wider and greater ownership of the school, its vision and priorities and motivation to carry out their tasks. Participation of women in school management and leadership therefore enables female teachers to have greater ownership of the school and this motivates them to increase their

Administration is the general behavior which defines and achieves its ends through organizations (Olorunsola&Olagemi, 2011). It is that component part of management concerned with facilitating the accomplishment of objectives of an organization through the systemic management of constraints and careful utilization of the available limited resources which include human capital, material, space and work techniques or technology (Asema, 2010) school administration is therefore the utilization of human and material resources in the school to attain desired objectives and getting things done. Secondary school administration is often time conceptualized as the job of the principal whose functions include; holding together the organization, making progress towards set objectives and getting things done. In public secondary schools, the principal reports directly to the government.

Public secondary schools are the secondary schools that are owned, controlled and funded by the Federal or State Governments. The administration, management and funding of the schools are shared between the state Ministries of Education, the National Secondary Education Commission and other agencies as prescribed in the legislation. Secondary education is an important level of education for youths that cannot be side lined for any reason. UNNDP (2017) emphasized the need for proper administration of secondary education in order to properly prepare the youths during their formative stage.

Despite their qualities and roles in socio-economic development, women participation in decision-making is low generally, not only in school's administrations. Data from the UN- Women (2018) show that globally there are 38 countries in which women account for less than 10% parliamentarians in lower houses, including five chambers with no women at all.

Again, there are deafening lamentations amongst women regarding low level of participation in educational leadership at secondary school in most of Nigeria. In North-central Nigeria, only few women are heads of public secondary schools. For example, data from Benue State Teaching Service Board (2018) and factsheet (2018) show that only 23 out of 323 (7.1%) secondary school principals are females. In Plateau state, 9.3% of principals are females; in Kwara, 8.7% of principals are females (Factsheet, 2018). Similarly, Endale, Alemu and Hora (2014) affirmed that women suffer from work stereotype and gender distribution of labour. Oleye (2009) supported the fact that men and women in human resource management are viewed differently and in nearly all cases, the biases are in favour of male managers.

In recent times, there seems to be a concern from international organizations like the UN- WOMEN, International Women Congress, private organizations, individuals and public institutions like the National Assembly on the primary causes of this under-representation. Given the rising level of concern, the need to investigate these factors especially in North-Central Nigeria where there are notable cultural practices that discriminate against women, cannot be over-emphasized. And some of the cultural practices include the denial of women's right to inheritance and according automatic leadership on men over women irrespective of their age, experience and knowledge. These practices are universal in North Central Nigeria as they apply to the cultures of Tiv (Benue State), Igala (Kogi state), Birom (Plateau State), Idoma (Benue State), among others. These also include the continuation of long held societal attitudes that assume women make poor leaders, direct harassment and exclusion of women

Based on the cultural practices and social attitudes towards women that prevail in North Central Nigeria, here is bound to be a high-level underrepresentation in the area than what has been claimed which requires an empirical investigation to unravel the extent of women participation in the administration of schools especially in sensitive areas such as financial management, school plant management and staff personnel management. Also, if women have administrative skills and decision-making through their inherent virtues such as tolerance and endurance, high need for association, frankness in matters they consider serious, persuasiveness, consideration and fairness, stubbornness to a belief, emotional stability and forgiveness, why are they underrepresented in the administration of schools in most states in North Central Nigeria? The need to investigate these factors also prompted the study.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent of participation of women in decision-making of public secondary school in North Central States. The study specifically sought to;

1. Determine the extent of women participation in financial management.
2. Ascertain the extent of women participation regarding staff personnel management.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the study:

- i. To what extent do women participate in financial management in North-Central Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent do women participate in staff personnel management in North-Central Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null Hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H01: There is no significance difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding financial management in North-Central Nigeria.

H02: There is no significance difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding staff personnel management in North-Central Nigeria.

Research Method

The design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey to investigate the participation of women in public schools in North-Central Nigeria, known to be dominated by male principals while female principals are in the vast minority. North-Central Nigeria is also characterized by cultural practices that are against women holding leadership positions. The population of this study comprised 13,769 male and female secondary school teachers and principals from which a sample of 384 male and female teachers and principals of public secondary schools in North-Central Nigeria was drawn using the proportionate sampling technique. In each state, seven schools were selected for the study and a principal and 48 teachers were selected in each of the state making it an average of 7 teachers per school. The

The questionnaire was a 4-point Likert scale with each of the option assigned values as follows: very Great Extent (4), Great Extent (3), Little Extent (2) and very Little Extent (1). The interview involved the researcher and a few selected principals and teachers. The instrument was subject to content validated by three experts, two in educational administration and one in measurement and evaluation in department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education at the university of Nigeria, Nsukka. These experts thoroughly examined, modified and advised the researcher on suitability of items in the instrument. The expert asked the researcher to modify some of the items and also make such that each cluster has the same number of items. The researcher then made the modification to the corrected items and increased the number items in each cluster to eight. Cronbachs alpha which was used to test the reliability of (WOPIDAQ) using the statistical percentage for social science (SPSS, version 20.0) was 0.861, which was considered reliable given that the score was above 0.70. The instrument was trial-tested using 35 respondents drawn from seven secondary schools North Central States. Respondent bio data were analyzed using frequency distribution tables and percentage. Mean ratings and standard deviations were used to analyzed the research questions. The formulated hypothesis was tested using independent samples t-test at 0.05 significance level. The cluster means scores of all categories of respondents was calculated through a summation scale by adding the mean scores of all the items in the cluster and dividing them by the number of items. Any cluster mean whose score was below 1 was considered negative.

Results

Based on research questions, the results are presented in the following tables;

Table 1: Mean Rating of the Respondents on Extent on Women Participation in Financial Management

S/N	Item statement	Teachers n=330			Principal n=52		
		Mean	SD ₁	D ₁	Mean	SD ₁	D ₁
1	Extent of women participation in financial planning	3.02	0.86	GE	3.17	0.51	GE
2	Extent of women participation in financial committees	2.98	0.74	GE	3.04	0.59	GE
3	Extent of women appointed as accounting officers	2.94	0.96	GE	2.96	0.69	GE
4	Extent of women participation in women freedom to carry out expenditure	3.13	0.9	GE	3.31	0.61	GE
5	Extent to which women are preferred in handling financial matters	2.80	0.79	GE	2.62	0.75	GE
6	Extent to which schools with female administrators receive government funds	3.19	0.93	GE	3.21	0.67	GE

7	Extent to which women are considered good financial managers	3.07	0.75	GE	3.31	0.58	GE
8	Extent to which women are entrusted with	2.70	0.90	CF	2.75	0.76	CF

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Table 1 above shows the mean ratings of the respondent on the extent of women participation in financial management. Using the principle of the real limit of number, the result of data analysis reveal that women are involved in financial management to a great extent on all the items. The overall mean showed that women participate to a great extent (indicated by mean value of teachers =2.98, principals =3.05) in decision making regarding financial management in secondary school’s administration.

The individual items showed the extent of women who have the freedom to carry put expenditure (Teachers =3.13, Principals =3.31), extent of women participation in financial planning (Teachers 3.02, Principals =3.17), extent to which female administrators receive funds (Teachers =3.9, Principals =3.2 1) and extent of women are considered good financial managers (Teachers =3.07, Principals =3.3 1) are ranked highest, while extent to which women are entrusted with responsibility of handling matters (Teachers 2.70, Principals 2.75) ranked lowest as regards extent of women participation in financial management.

Research Question 2: To what extent do women participate in decision making regarding staff participation management?

Table 2: Mean rating of the Respondents On the extent of Women Participation in Staff Personnel Management.

S/N	Item statement	Teachers n=330			Principal n=52		
		Mean	SD ₁	D ₁	Mean	SD ₁	D ₁
1	Extent to which women administrators involve in the determination of staff allowances/welfare.	2.89	0.91	GE	3.12	0.62	GE
2	Extent to which women administrators participate in decision making regarding staff recruitment.	2.84	0.98	GE	2.81	0.79	GE
3	Extent of female staff participation in mediation on disputes.	2.78	0.70	GE	2.98	0.42	GE
4	Extent to which women are discriminated against in training such as seminar, workshop and conferences.	2.28	0.98	GE	2.58	0.83	GE
5	Extent to which female staff grievances are attended to as compared to that of their male counterpart.	2.47	0.91	GE	2.75	0.79	GE
6	Extent to which female staff are delegated with duties.	2.74	0.77	GE	2.86	0.67	GE

7	Extent to which women are made head of interview and promotion panels.	2.80	0.87	GE	3.12	0.58	GE
8	Extent to which women chair welfare committee.	2.64	0.88	GE	2.88	0.70	GE

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Table 3 shows the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent of women participation in staff personnel. Using the principle of real limit of numbers, the results of the data analysis reveal that women participate in staff personnel management showed great extent on item 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7, while to low extent for items 4. The overall mean showed that women participate to a great extent (indicated by mean value of teacher =2.68, principals =2.89) in decision making regarding staff personnel management in secondary school administration.

The individual items showed the extent to which women administrators are involved in the determination of staff allowances/welfare (Teachers =2.89, principals = 3.12), extent which women administrators participate in decision making regarding staff recruitment (teachers = 2.84 principals = 2.81) extent of female staff participation in mediation on disputes (teachers =2.78, principals = 2.98) and extent of women are made head of interview and promotion panels (teacher = 2.80, principals = 3.12) are ranked highest, while extent in which women are discriminated against in training such as seminar, workshop And conferences (teachers =2.28, principals 2.58) ranked lowest as regards extent of women participation in staff personnel management.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding financial management.

The t-test analysis presented in table 7 showed that the t-value of 1.487 at $p > 0.05$ level of significance, indicating

Table 3: The t-test analysis of the mean Rating of Responses of Principals and Teachers on extent women participate in decision making regarding management.

Group	X	SD	N	DF	t-cal	Sig.(2-tailed)	Rank
Principals	3.05	0.86	166				
Teachers	2.98	0.65	38	202	1.487	0.181	NS

Extent women participation in decision making regarding management

The t-test analysis presented table 7 showed that the t-value of 1.487 at $p > 0.05$ level of significance, indicating that the result is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis of there is no significant difference

between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding financial management of secondary schools is accepted.

Hypothesis2: there is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding staff personnel management.

Table 4: The t-test Analysis of the Responses of Male and Female teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding Staff Management

Group	X	SD	N	DF	t-cal	Sig.(2-tailed	Rank
Principals	2.89	0.88	166				
Teachers	2.68	0.66	38	202	0.115	0.138	NS

Extent of women participation in decision making regarding staff personnel management

The t-test analysis presented in table 9 showed that the value of 0.115 at $p > 0.05$ level of significance, indicating that the result is not significant, the null hypothesis of there is no significant difference between the mean rating of principal and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding staff personnel management of secondary schools is accepted.

Summary of Major Findings

The following constituted the summary of major findings of the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding financial management.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of women participation in decision making regarding staff personnel management.

Discussion of Findings

Extent of Women Participation in Decision Making Regarding Staff Management

Evidence from the research question one revealed that the extent of women participation in financial management is at a fairly high extent, this is because the result showed that women are members of financial committees and financial planning, irrespective of this findings revealed that they are still sidelined in areas that concern directly with entrusting them with financial matters. In the result, the extent at which female administrators receive funds from government and the rate at which they were entrusted with responsibility of handling financial matters in schools were at a very low extent. Women experience lower socio-economic status in general and hence is marginalized from making decision at all levels. Nonetheless, women are poor in terms of access to resources, services. Through the semi interview session question were posed to school principals and teachers of secondary school thus: In response many said no, that the same thing apply to either male

or female principal few also said yes, that sometimes when its female principal that need financial allocation for school, she will be denied because they believe the female administrator will not bribe those in charge of approving or disbursing the money like their male counterparts.

Based on the findings, women administrators to a great extent were involved in chairing welfare committees, participate in mediations on disputes, participate in decisions regarding staff recruitment and also at a very great extent been involved in training such as seminars, workshops and conference allowance. However, at a very low extent, they have been made heads of interview and promotion panels, involved in the determination of staff allowances and welfare and also the attention given to female grievances in comparison to their male counterpart is at low extent. This buttressed that men and women in human resources management are viewed differently, and in nearly all cases, the biases are in favour of male manager.

For instance, a study conducted by Ade, Gbadegesin and Olaye (2015) revealed that there is a significant difference between managerial efficiency of male and female principals. Also, Olaoye, (2009) observed that female principals exhibit an accommodative style of leadership while males maintain distance in order to assert value status. However, Oluwadamilare (2012) who examined demographic and motivational variables as correlates of teacher productivity in public secondary schools found out that there is no significant relationship between teachers' gender and teacher' productivity. This suggests that although, gender differences affect their administrative performances of human resources management, productivity does not differ significantly between male and female teachers.

Conclusion

The outcome of the study revealed that despite the natural and valuable qualities of leadership that women possess, they still face attrition and slow career improvement in their places of work, particularly in secondary school education. An enabling environment can be very important avenue for women to proceed and develop in order to get promoted and also to improve the society. Women must be present in leadership positions in education system worldwide to provide a gendered perspective on educational change and development, and to ensure social justice through gender equity at leadership and decision making levels. There is need for women in leadership positions in schools in Nigeria to provide a general perspective on educational change and development, and to ensure social justice through gender equity at leadership and decision-making levels.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to the relevant authorities to improve the participation of women in decision making in the administration of public secondary schools in North Central of Nigeria.

1. There is need to entrust women with the decision that involved financial matters to also believe in them to make judicious use of the money allocated for the development of secondary schools
2. Women should be given the necessary support to be able to provide physical infrastructural facilities needed in their schools.

3. Women should be given the utmost opportunity to make decisions concerning some sensitive areas of staff welfare.
4. Women should be adequately represented on school committee for appropriate decision-making in administration and they should also be seen by their male counterparts as compatriots and not as inferior in all aspect of secondary school management.
5. There is a great need to change the mindset of women so that they can develop the ability and confidence to reach leadership position without waiting for those positions be given to them.

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