

Gender Disparity in Academia: Examining Administrative Appointments in Institutions of Higher Learning in Kenya

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Abstract: This article endeavors to find out the distribution of the university academic staff in teaching and administration by gender in order to establish how promotions to higher academic ranks and appointments to administrative responsibilities were distributed across gender in Kenyan institutions of higher learning. The theoretical framework which guided this study was based on patriarchal ideology and the implied gender-based division of labour and how it has caused women's absence at top levels of educational teaching and management. The design of the study was mainly descriptive, employing oral interviews and documentary (content) analysis. The participants were drawn from two public universities: the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University. These two universities were purposively selected for the study. Much of the information that was elicited through the interviews was transcribed into written texts by merging the notes taken and the recordings made during the interviews into a single coherent? These data were then organized, examined for completeness and relevancy, and then analysed qualitatively. The study found out that Women not only enter into the teaching profession at the university in small numbers but they also obtain promotion much less frequently compared to their male colleagues. Even where they are found in large numbers, their proportions are much lower than those of male academics. In addition, female academics are usually clustered in the faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and in Education. The common factor among these disciplines is that they lead to careers which have traditionally been known to attract women. The findings also revealed that few women academics have administrative responsibilities. The study results show that socio-cultural values and beliefs coupled with historical factors and the university administration, among other factors, have led to gender inequalities in Kenyan public universities. These factors have also led to the marginalization of women in the family, the school and the workplace. Thus to improve the female occupational status and representation in all sectors of life, this study calls for drastic changes in the Kenyan society to deal with customs and prejudices which have existed for a long time to the detriment of women.

Keywords: Gender Disparity, Academia, Administrative Appointments, Institutions of Higher Learning.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of gender inequality is not peculiar to Kenya alone but is a world-wide problem [1]. Far fewer women hold university posts than men. Acker [2] observes that in 1982, women in Britain constituted only a small minority of full-time university staff and were very scarce at higher levels. There were no women Chancellors. In 1980 - 81, there were 119 women professors, (27 percent of the total professorate)... Women are better represented in the less secure posts in universities [2]. Similarly, only 5 percent of full professors and 10 percent of associate professors were women in the United States in 1969; whereas among the lowly and impermanent grades of instructor and lecturer, the proportions rose to 28

percent and 25 percent respectively Blackstone and Fulton [1]. Although Blackstone and Fulton's evidence is now somewhat outdated, more recent studies suggest that the trends observed by these authors are still continuing [3]. Women teachers have fewer chances of promotion than their male counterparts and are particularly non-existent in top academic administrative positions [4, 3].

Although the Kenyan government has expressed concern about the opportunities for women in formal education at all levels, general observation shows that their representation among the academic staff with senior grades and those with administrative responsibilities has not changed much. The few women

who are successful in obtaining academic posts in the public universities further face discrimination in the form of fewer chances of promotion to various academic ranks, and appointments to administrative responsibilities than their male colleagues.

The majority of them have thus tended to remain in the lower and less prestigious ranks/grades among their well ranked male colleagues [5]. Due to this, women teachers do not have a very significant role in decision making processes in Kenyan public universities. Such a situation implies that women's chances of influencing important decisions (whether these refer of curriculum, admission policies, promotions or appointments) are only good if they are prepared to acquiesce to the decisions of their male colleagues. This is a problematic situation because it implies that women's problems or interests and needs may not be considered during the decision making processes. Women have thus tended to be invisible, which through ages has caused their subordination and their presence in Kenyan public universities to be ignored or dismissed. In view of this, a study was necessary to address gender disparities among the academic staff in teaching and administration in Kenyan public universities. This study also sought to find out whether rewards in the profession in terms of appointments and promotions to various academic grades are distributed to both men and women teachers equally if they have qualifications..

Gender Disparities in University Teaching

Imbalances in gender representation in the field of teaching are a problem for both developed and developing countries. According to a study released in 1973 by the American Council on Education, women made up only 20 percent of the faculty members in the American Colleges and University Campuses during the 1972/73 academic year. The Council further note that even among those women who gained employment in higher education, the comparison with their male colleagues at this level were revealing. Of all college and university instructors, 32 percent were women but only 8 percent of all full professors were women [6].

Deem [3] notes that in 1978, only 10 percent of ordinary lecturers were women in British universities, less than 6 percent readers and senior lecturers and under 2 percent professors. She further argues that even those women, who managed to get positions in the universities, further faced discrimination and had fewer chances of promotion than their male colleagues. Deem [3] quotes a female lecturer at a university in South-West England saying this of her institution:

I find there are no women professors at all... At a rough estimate, there are eight women readers or senior lecturers out of 195 and 48 women lecturers out of 502.

On the same subject, Allen [7] observed that of 1181 professors in Australian universities, only 3.7 percent were women in 1987. Of 3141 female academics, 1059 (33.7 percent) were tutors. More than half of the women (53.7 percent) were in the sub-lecturing ranks. The most common academic rank held by men was senior lecturer (30.3 percent) and nearly a quarter of the males (23.3 percent) were either professors or readers. Therefore, while more than half of the male academics were above the rank of lecturer, less than half of the women were above this rank.

The scarcity of senior women in the academic field has been attributed to career interruptions while their children are small and high drop-out rates of women from academic life after undergraduate study, which reduces the pool of women from which potential academics are likely to emerge [3, 7, 8]. UNESCO [5] observes that among the Latin American and the Caribbean countries, women represented on average 34 percent of the teaching staff in 17 countries in 1983. The figure rose to 25 percent and higher in 11 countries, with relatively high percentages in some on them, such as Brazil and the American Virgin Islands (43 percent), Cuba (40 percent) and Nicaragua (34 percent) Argentina and Panama (32 percent) and Uruguay (30 percent). The high percentages at the university level could, however, be found only in exceptional cases in other regions of the world.

In the 19 countries for which information concerning the whole of higher education in Africa was available women were very much under-represented when compared to men. Indeed, they did not even constitute, on average, one-sixth of the total number of teachers, except in Mozambique (21 percent) and in Swaziland (40 percent) [5]. In 1973, there were 189 male university lecturers in Ghana as compared to 40 females (7.4 percent) [9]. Muli [10] quotes a 1989 survey by Kunene and Mascarenhas in which women comprised 17 percent of the total of both teaching and administrative staff at Makerere University, 26 percent of teaching staff at the University of Zimbabwe (31st December, 1988) and 32 percent of both teaching and administrative staff at the University of Swaziland. This Situation has not changed significantly in the last few years. Muli observed that [10]:

Women are seriously under-represented in Universities in Africa, both as students and staff members particularly at a more senior level. Statistics suggest that on average, women constitute between 15 percent and 30 percent of the academic staff at most universities in Africa... [And are] virtually absent from the most senior positions.

In addition to this, gender disparity patterns in faculty positions is manifested in two ways, firstly, the concentration in some particular disciplines which are related to Arts or Education and secondly, a pyramidal

pattern where there are more females at the bottom ranks, less in the middle ranks and a negligible few at the top. The situation in Kenya is very similar to that of many other countries. Even though there are no discriminatory laws at the universities, there are still large disparities in the numbers of men and women who are senior lecturers, associate professors and professors. The gains of women in Kenyan public universities are extremely low in relation to those of men, particularly at the full professor level. As already noted, the general observation in university teaching is that the proportion of women declines at higher levels. At these levels, the proportion of women teachers is very low indeed [11]. On the other hand, Njenga notes that unlike men, very few women are promoted [12].

When the experiences of Kenyan agriculturists and veterinarians were examined, only 29.4 percent of the women reported being promoted compared with 51.9 percent of the men. This observation supports Date-Bah's study of 1979 in Ghana, Accra-Tema. In the latter study, it was found that 59 percent of all male employees interviewed had been promoted compared with only 35 percent of the women [9].

Imbalances in promotion to higher academic ranks are further illustrated by the recent promotions carried out by the Kenyatta University administration. Out of the five associate professors promoted to full professorship, none of them was a woman, while only two of the twenty senior lecturers promoted to the rank of associate professor were women [13]. Going by the above discussion, one can conclude that although the presence of women in higher education has generally increased in the last decade, their participation remains within marked boundaries as they are less likely to be promoted to higher academic ranks. It was the intent of this study therefore to investigate some of the factors that may have contributed to gender imbalances in teaching as well as reduced the promotion prospects for women with a view to suggesting some steps that could be taken to improve gender representation in teaching.

Namuddu [14] found that there was little data on the levels and quality of employment undertaken by females who had access to higher education. She further observes that women form a small number of academicians at university, although recognizable achievements have been recorded in arts faculties. Graduate women lack options in employment, promotions and upward mobility because of discrimination and their roles as housewives. Such a situation calls for change both in the cultural attitudes towards women and sex-stereotyping of jobs to improve academic women representation in the public universities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive research design which employed oral interviews and documentary

(content) analysis. The participants were drawn from two public universities: the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University. Sampling included determining the area to be covered by the study and selecting the respondents. The target population for this study was the academic staff from the Kenyan public universities. Initially, the researcher intended to sample 76 members of academic staff from the two selected universities. Of these, 38 members (19 male and 19 females) were to come from the University of Nairobi. A similar number was to be sampled from Kenyatta University. The members of academic staff were categorized into various academic ranks: professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, tutorial fellows (and its equivalent rank).

As the review of the academic staff lists for the two selected universities (which had been done separately) revealed the numerical rarity of women in various academic ranks, the researcher employed stratified random sampling procedures to ensure fair representation of the study population. Sub-groups (strata) were formed for both male and female teachers of various academic ranks in each of the selected university. From the sub-groups with higher numbers of academic staff, the researcher employed random sampling procedures to get the required number. However, for the strata with fewer members, the researcher selected them purposively. Since general observation from the academic staff lists of the two selected universities showed that the ranks of professor and associate professor had fewer members of academic staff, especially women, the researcher selected two male and two female academics from each of these ranks in the two selected universities. Such a small number was arrived at in an attempt to ensure that Kenyatta University (which by then had no female full professors and only three female associate professors) is at least fairly represented.

The researcher further randomly selected five female and five male academics from the sub-groups of senior lecturers, lecturers and tutorial fellows from each of the two selected universities. The total expected sample for professors and associate professors was 16. Other categories of academic staff had an expected sample size of 60 members. This gave an intended total sample of 76 academics. This number was chosen on the consideration that the researcher intended to carry out in-depth interviews, which are time consuming, in addition to financial constraints. A larger sample would have thus inhibited the thoroughness of the interviews. This study also called for fair representation and thus involved equal samples of both men and women academics from the two public universities.

In the field, the researcher did not, however, get the expected sample due to unavoidable circumstances. Of the 38 members approached from the University of Nairobi, only 29 gave their consent (15

males and 14 females) while at Kenyatta University, out of the 36 members approached, 31 gave their consent (18 males and 13 females).

Table 1 and 2 carry a breakdown of the respondents who participated in the study from each of the two universities.

Table-1: Respondents from the University of Nairobi

Rank	Number Of Participants		
	Male	Female	Total
Professor			
Associate Professor	2	2	4
Senior Lecturer	1	1	2
Lecturer	4	3	7
Tutorial Fellow	3	4	7
Total	10	10	20

Grand Total 29 respondents

Table-2: Number of Respondents from Kenyatta University

Rank	Number Of Participants		
	Male	Female	Total
Professor	2		2
Associate Professor	1	2	3
Senior Lecturer	5	3	8
Lecturer	5	5	10
Tutorial Fellow	5	3	8
Total	18	13	31

Grand total 31 respondents

A total number of 60 respondents therefore participated in the interviews. This enabled the researcher to collect more detailed information as opposed to having a larger number where only questionnaires would have been used. Questionnaire surveys do not elicit as detailed information as that obtained from interviews [15].

Secondary data was obtained from:

- The universities’ statistical record data for 1995
- The university calendars
- Promotion and appointment criteria documents for the two public universities,

The researcher examined data from published and unpublished official documents that already existed in the two public universities or elsewhere. For the purpose of this study, the following documents were important:

- Senate documents outlining the promotions and appointments’ criteria.
- University statistical records showing the number of academic staff by gender and professional rank/grade in each of the selected universities.
- The most recent university calendars, especially the 1995 calendars.

An examination of these documents was important to this study because it helped the researcher to make a survey of the situation in the selected universities as was reported in written or printed materials. The documentary analysis was thus meant to provide information related to:

- The number of academic staff both males and females in each of the selected universities,
- the numbers of academic staff with top administrative posts by gender;
- the proportions of those promoted to various academic ranks/grades and
- Appointments and promotions procedures.

Research data fell into two broad categories, each of which called for a different analysis strategy. The two data categories are the academic staff records data (documentary data analysis) and the qualitative data derived from the interview schedules. **Documentary Data Analysis:** This involved examination and organisation of the information collected from the selected documents of the two public universities. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts of academic staff were done using the statistical records of the two selected universities. This helped the researcher to identify which gender was represented most in teaching and administration. The percentages of members of academic staff in various ranks/grades were also calculated. The data was organized and presented in the form of tables and a summary of the findings was indicated after each table. Tabular layouts were important especially for the first two objectives of this study. Harper [16] observed that the use of a tabular layout would enable any desired figures to be located more quickly and would make comparisons between different categories to be made more easily. The layout makes it possible to reveal patterns within figures which cannot be seen in the narrative form.

Qualitative Data Analysis: Much of the information that was elicited through the interviews was transcribed into written texts by merging the notes taken and the recordings made during the interviews into a single coherent? These data were then organized, examined for completeness and relevancy, and then analysed qualitatively. Qualitative procedures are important to this study because as Bog [17] notes, qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected are in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The written results of the research contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation. Qualitative analysis therefore provides a means of accessing unquantifiable facts about the actual people interviewed. An attempt was made to analyse the data with all of their richness as closely as possible to the form in which were recorded or transcribed. Such data were presented in narrative form.

However, in some instances, the researcher found it necessary to blend both qualitative and quantitative analysis together. Berg [18] notes that the most obvious way to analyse interview data is content

analysis. He further suggests that some blend of both quantitative and qualitative analyses should be used. The approach suggested by Berg was useful to this study because it helped the researcher create tally sheets in order to determine specific frequencies of relevant categories where it was found necessary. On the other hand, the qualitative procedures helped the researcher to examine various ideological mindsets and themes that were covered by the study.

RESULTS /FINDINGS

The Distribution of Academic Staff in Teaching and Administration

The first objective of this study was to establish the distribution of the university academic staff in teaching and administration by gender. The researcher covered the year 1995 only because data for previous years in the two universities did not show the distribution across gender. In the following paragraphs, the findings on this objective are presented and discussed. Tables 3 and 4 show the distribution of the academic staff for Kenyatta University and the University of Nairobi.

Table-3: The Distribution of Academic staff at Kenyatta University by gender - 1995

Faculty	Male	%	Female	%	Total(n)	% of Total Pop.
Arts	156	70.0	67	30.0	223	35.9
Education	137	66.5	26	33.5	206	33.2
Science	133	86.6	26	19.5	159	25.6
Commerce	10	76.9	3	23.1	13	2.1
Environmental Studies	10	50	10	50	20	3.1
Total	446	71.8	175	28.2	621	100

Personnel Data Office - Kenyatta University - 1995

Table-4: The distribution of academic staff at the University of Nairobi by gender - 1995

Faculty	Male	%	Female	%	Total (N)	%
Agriculture	86	81.9	19	18.1	105	8.8
Veterinary medicine	106	89.9	12	10.2	118	9.9
Add	56	90.3	6	9.7	62	5.2
Engineering	86	97.7	2	2.3	88	7.4
Arts and social science	224	72.4	85	27.5	309	25.8
Law	26	78.9	7	21.2	33	2.8
External studies	5	71.4	2	28.6	7	0.6
Commerce	48	85.7	8	14.3	56	4.7
Science	123	87.6	17	12.1	140	11.7
Dental science	15	78.9	4	21.1	19	1.6
Pharmacy	16	88.9	2	11.1	18	1.5
Medicine	157	80.5	38	19.5	195	16.3
Education	34	72.3	13	27.7	47	3.9
Totals	982	82.0	215	18.0	1197	100.2

University of Nairobi Computer list - 1995

"ADD: Architecture, Design and Development.

*POP: Population

The findings show that women form a small proportion of university teachers. At the University of Nairobi alone, only 18 percent of the academic staff

were women in 1995, while at Kenyatta University, 28.8 percent were women during the same period. With the exception of the Faculty of Environmental Studies

at Kenyatta University, where women constituted 50 percent, and the Faculty of Education at the University of Nairobi 41.3 percent, women teachers make up less than 40 percent in all other faculties in the two universities studied. The situation is even worse at the University of Nairobi where we have more professional courses. Women are heavily under-represented in the faculties of Engineering (2.3 percent); Architecture, Design and Development (9.7 percent); Veterinary Medicine (10.2 percent); Pharmacy (11.1 percent) and Science (12.1 percent).

When the respondents were asked to give their views on such a pattern, one male respondent had this to say:

Obviously, I would not say this pattern is as a result of gender discrimination at the university level. I would be more comfortable in saying that such a development is a result of differential treatments of genders either in secondary schools or even earlier and consequently, different subject choices once at the university.

This argument was supported by several other respondents (21.7 percent) who pointed out that in the past, women have not been taking science subjects and mathematics seriously. A female respondent noted that women have all along been made to believe that science and mathematics are difficult subjects, suitable only for men. She further observed that even when some girls have had a chance to attend science classes, they put very little effort because they have accepted the popular myth that science is for men. Their teachers help them to believe so.

She gave her own experience in the following words.

My school was well equipped with science laboratories. I had high hopes of becoming a dentist but my career master (a male) misled me. He scared us all that if we wanted to pass and join the university, we should leave science alone. I chose to pursue history and religion because he made us feel that these subjects were quite easy and could easily enable us pass our exams. I really wanted to pass.

The above arguments seem to be in line with Trow's [19] observation that discrimination usually starts at the earliest moment the relevant characteristics can be detected for women. Trow notes [19]:

Long before they become undergraduate students (and certainly before they enter job markets if they do), women as a whole have been so affected by cultural expectations of their society as well as its frequently outright rejection of their ambitions, that they have been subjected to a kind of selective attrition.

The researcher therefore noted that even where girls are encouraged to pursue formal education, the society's expectations have been such that they are expected to take certain careers which are considered feminine and thus acceptable. This therefore partly explains why women academics are to be found clustered in a narrow range of disciplines such as Education, Arts and Social Sciences, Medicine etc., while being conspicuously absent in others such as Engineering and Veterinary Medicine, which, as Boserup [20] observes, are still patronized by men.

Academic Staff with Administrative Responsibilities

This study also attempted to answer the question: What is the distribution of academic staff with administrative responsibilities by gender? To do this, the study considered top administrative posts at the university where important decisions are made and implemented. They include the posts of the Vice-chancellor and their deputies; the Principals of constituent colleges, Directors of Institutes or Programmers; Deans of Faculties and Heads of departments. The findings revealed that very few women academics are appointed to administrative positions compared to their male colleagues. Of the total number of 118 senior administrators found at the University of Nairobi, only 7.6 percent were women in 1995. Of these, 4.2 percent were heads of departments (the lowest rank on the ladder according to this study). There were 92.9 percent male deans compared with 7.1 percent females; 90.9 percent male directors compared with 9.1 percent females and 83.3 percent male principals compared with 16.7 percent female principals.

At Kenyatta University, there were 53 senior administrators 1995 out of which 9.4 percent were females. However, all of them were heads of departments. Commenting on the situation, one female respondent had this to say:

We are simply locked out of the 'high table' where important decisions that later affect us are made. All we have to do is to accept whatever is passed to us whether we want it or not.

However, a male professor from the University of Nairobi did not agree with the above respondent. He defended the male gender and the university administration by advancing the following argument

We have done our best. We find no women who are qualified for senior administrative posts. Those who are qualified have already been appointed. Look at Professor 'A' and professor 'B', they all have good posts. What else do women want?

From the above discussion, the researcher noted that while there may be subtle means of discrimination at the university preventing women

academics from rising up to positions of power and authority, their small numbers at the university could to a large extent have affected their Share of administrative responsibilities. The pool of men from which the administrators are drawn is more than twice that of females at Kenyatta University and more than 4 times at the University of Nairobi. The result of this imbalance is that women teachers do not play a very significant role in the decision-making processes in Kenyan public universities. To investigate further the cause the differences thus far observed between male and female academics, the researcher sought the views

of the respondents from the two public universities studied.

Distribution of Academic Staff by Gender and Rank

Another objective of this study was to find out how promotions to higher academic ranks/grades and appointments to administrative responsibilities were distributed across gender. Table 5 shows the proportions of the academic staff promoted to various ranks for both Kenyatta University and the University of Nairobi.

Table-5: Professional Ranks by Gender and Institution - 1995

Rank	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Professor	56	94.9	3	5.1	59	14	100			14
Associate professor	78	88.6	10	11.4	88	21	91.2	3	8.8	34
Senior lecture	204	90.3	22	9.7	226	76	83.5	15	16.5	91
Lecturer	506	82.0	111	18.0	617	224	69.7	97	30.3	320
Tf/ga*	138	66.7	69	33.3	207	102	63.0	60	37.0	162
Totals	982	82.0	215	18.0	1197	446	71.8	175	28.2	621

University of Nairobi
 1 Kenyatta University
 Male

*TF/GA: Includes Tutorial Fellows and Graduates Assistants
 University of Nairobi Computer list - 1995.
 Personnel data Office - 1995

The results of the study confirm that women not only enter the teaching profession at the university in smaller numbers but in both universities, they obtain promotion much less frequently. Only a handful of female academics have been promoted to higher academic ranks compared with their male colleagues. In no rank in the two universities studied does the proportion of women come nearer 50 percent (37.0 percent) among the tutorial fellows, and Graduate Assistants at Kenyatta University is the highest of the total number of academic staff.

women seem to be doing well, for instance in the ranks of lecturer and tutorial fellows, the proportions are much lower compared to those of their male counterparts - (18 percent and 30.3 percent for the ranks of lecturer at the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University, 33.3 and 37.0 percent for the ranks of tutorial fellows at the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University respectively).

Women’s representation is especially low in the ranks of professor (5.1 percent) at the University of Nairobi and none at Kenyatta University. Even where

To get more information on the pattern of promotions, the respondents were asked to give the number of promotions they had been awarded during their years of service at the university. Table-6 presents the findings.

Table-6: Instance of Promotion of Academic Staff at the University Of Nairobi and Kenyatta

Promotion	Male	%	Female	%	Total
One	20	60.6	13	39.4	33
Two	4	44.4	5	55.6	9
Three	2	40.0	3	60	5
Over three			2	100	2
None	7	63.6	4	36.4	11
Total	33	55	27	45	60

The findings show that a majority of the respondents had received a promotion once the most interesting finding is that female academics seem to have received more promotions than men as 44.4 percent males had been promoted two times compared to 55.6 percent females ; 40.0 percent males were

promoted three times compared with 60% females and no males were promoted more than three times in addition 63.6 percent males had not been awarded any promotion in their present institution compared with 36.4 percent females. Asked whether they thought the

female gender had been favored a female professor at the University of Nairobi said:

That is not true .the only reason why we (women) seem to have received more promotions is that we are handicapped .we are not able to move to other universities like men transfer to Moi, Egerton and other institutions for a second one as for me I got all my promotions from here and I think this is also applies to many other women academics.

In support of this 36.4 percent of the male respondents admitted having transferred from other universities for the purpose of promotion while all the female respondents had served only in their present institution. Asked for views on why the female gender was not able to move more often like their male colleagues, a majority of the respondents (71.1 percent) argued that the female gender was bound by socio-cultural customs and women prefer a job or a promotion that will not take them away from their families. One female respondent put this more precisely:

However much as I would like to move, I cannot even if I am promised a promotion in another university outside Nairobi. My husband works here in the city and my children attend different primary schools here. I cannot disturb them. My husband won't even allow it.

A similar response was registered from a Kenyatta University female Associate Professor:

I entered Kenyatta University as a Graduate Assistant. All along, I knew other universities especially Moi and Egerton were attracting members of academic staff for

promotion because Kenyatta University requires higher standards for promotion. I wanted to go but could not because my family is here. I decided to wait for a promotion here however long it took so as to be close to my family.

The foregoing shows that female academics are aware that most of their male colleagues transferred to other universities mainly for the purpose of promotion. It was however noted that most female academics were not able to transfer very often like their male counterparts because of family responsibilities. The society expects the woman more than the man to be close to her family most of the time. At other times, the researcher noted, females transfer from one institution to another may be restricted by their spouses' location of work place. This supports earlier studies [21, 7] that once married; many women operate under the handicap of 'contingent mobility' with their movements being limited by the location of their husbands' job location. What this means is that women (especially the married ones) are of necessity less mobile and are likely to miss the opportunities such as promotions and appointments that arise as a result of changing the institutions and the benefits that accrue to such movements, for instance, higher salary and better working conditions.

To show the experience of male and female academic staff with regard to promotion, it was necessary to find out the number of years they had served before they were promoted. This also helped the researcher to establish whether there is any gender that took a longer time than the other in getting promotion. Table-7 presents the findings.

Table-7: Number of Years served by the Male and Female Academic staff of the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University before promotion

Number of years	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Under 2 years	4	16	2	8.7	6
2-5	14	56	8	34.8	22
6-10	5	20	4	17.4	9
Over 10	2	8	6	26.1	8
Not sure			3	13	3
Total	25	100	23	100	48

As indicated in Table-7 above, male academics served for fewer years before they were promoted. Some 16.0 percent of male respondents had served for a period of less than two years before they were promoted compared with 8.7 percent of female respondents. Similarly, only 8.0 of male respondents had served for over ten years without a promotion compared with 26.1 percent female respondents.

Asked to comment on the situation, the Chairman of Promotions and Appraisal Committee, Kenyatta University, had this to say:

This has nothing to do with gender discrimination. If it is there, it does not take place in my office... could be at the departments where these files (referring to files of academic staff who had applied for promotion to various ranks) come from. Once here, I do not separate files of males and females. I go through them as they come... My observation is that more men qualify for promotions and we give them what they deserve. Several ladies have come to me complaining of not being promoted. For those who do come, I pick their files and we go through them together. One particular lady came complaining that she had taught for six years without even being considered for an interview. But she

had not published anything! Many of them want promotions while they hardly go out for research. Teaching alone cannot earn one a promotion at the university.

The above observation was supported by the evidence from a number of interviews. Several female respondents, 36.4 percent admitted they had stayed for a long time without applying for a promotion because they had not completed their Ph.D. Another 18.5 percent of female respondents said they were not ready for a promotion in terms of publications needed for various ranks. In contrast, 30.3 percent of male respondents had not completed their PHD and only 3.0 percent of them did not have publications needed for various ranks. Many female academics complained of housework and child care which claimed much of their time. A female lecturer at Kenyatta University put it this way:

No one has discriminated against me. It is my entire fault. I have taken a long time to write my PhD proposal. It was read some time ago but still I have not applied for research funds. I need some time for my young girl because I intend to travel to Machakos for field work and I cannot travel with her.

From the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that female academics take a longer time to get a promotion than their male colleagues. This, however, has nothing to do with discrimination. As for the ranks of associate professor and professor, one should have a PhD. Show evidence of good quality teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; have at least five years teaching and research experience since being appointed a senior lecturer (for associate professors) and 5 years' experience in teaching and research since being appointed as Associate professor (for professors).

In addition, associate professors should have at least 4 articles in a refereed journal since being appointed senior lecturer or at least 2 refereed books, while professors should have at least 6 articles since being appointed associate professors or published at least 3 refereed books. Both associate professor and professors should contribute in learned conferences/seminars, have administrative experience, where necessary, and participate in departmental activities.

The researcher, however, went further to investigate whether the laid down criteria are properly followed and whether there were other factors besides the laid down criteria that influenced one's appointment or promotion. This was done by seeking the views of the respondents. From the interviews conducted, only 10 percent of the respondents believed that the criteria were properly followed. Their main argument was that they had successfully applied for Promotions to various ranks, having attained the required qualifications. This

was, however, contradicted by 18.3 percent of respondents comprising of 11.7 percent males and 6.7 percent females who complained that they had attained all the qualifications needed yet they had not been promoted

A majority of the respondents pointed out that there were other underlying factors that influenced promotions and appointments. They include: problems related to the university establishment, uncertain promotion criteria, and critical shortage of staff, campus politics, and interpersonal relationships. Each of these is discussed below.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that few women academics have administrative responsibilities in higher institutions of learning. It was concluded that while subtle means of discrimination cannot be ruled out as contributing to this situation, the small numbers of women teachers at the university could have largely contributed to their proportionately small numbers in senior professional ranks and in administration. No overt gender discrimination was, however, noted in this study

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study results show that socio-cultural values and beliefs coupled with historical factors and the university administration, among other factors, have led to gender inequalities in Kenyan public universities. These factors have also led to the marginalisation of women in the family, the school and the workplace. Thus to improve the female occupational status and representation in all sectors of life, this study calls for drastic changes in the Kenyan society to deal with customs and prejudices which have existed for a long time to the detriment of women

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