

# Gender Inequality in Leadership of the Civil Service: Impact on Job Performance of Female Officials in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:-** There seems to be gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service against female civil servants. This appears to adversely affect their performance on the job. The study examined the impact of gender inequality in leadership of the civil service on the job performance of female officials in Ekiti State. The study also, investigated the level of gender inequality in leadership and its causes in the civil service of Ekiti State. The study adopted the survey research design using questionnaire as a tool to collect data. One hundred and sixty (160) copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved for analysis. The scores were collated and analysed using SPSS statistical technique, frequency distribution table with counts and percentages. The equity theory of job satisfaction was employed for the theoretical orientation of the study. The study established the existence of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service and identified the stereotypical beliefs and prejudices responsible for discrimination against women in occupying leadership positions. The study equally discovered that the impact of preference for male leadership on the performance of female officials was very high in Ekiti State. The study therefore recommended that a proactive action on the part of government would go a long way in addressing the deep rooted inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service in order to enhance higher performance and productivity of female officials and the entire workforce.

**Keywords:-** Gender inequality, leadership, civil service, job performance, female officials.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality is discrimination on the basis of sex, causing one sex to be prioritized over another. It is the social phenomenon in which men and women are not treated equally. The treatment may be as a result of distinctions regarding biology, psychology or cultural norms in the society. Some of these distinctions appear to be social constructs. Studies show the different experiences of males and females across many domains including education, life expectancy, personality, interests, family life, careers, and political affiliation. According to GRIN (2022) these inequalities have contributed to the creation of a glass ceiling. The glass ceiling is a metaphor for the evident or intangible hierarchical impediment that prevents women

and minorities from achieving elevated professional success. It is a form of barrier that prevents women from reaching upper-level roles in organizational leadership and management.

For decades, headlines have discussed gender inequality in the workplace. We know mixed gender leadership teams boost organizational productivity and profitability, so why is inequality still an issue? Gender mainstreaming programmes and equality laws have been enacted to alleviate the problem with some degree of success, but barriers to female leadership remain. Connors (2019) opined that the problem lies in the fact that it is rooted in our societal beliefs about men, women and leadership. Traditionally, it is believed that men should be agentic (assertive, decisive, strong) and women should be communal (warm, caring, sympathetic). These gender stereotypes clash with the leadership prototype that is the societal view of what a leader should be.

Gender plays a significant role in defining leadership roles and determining the quality of services in organizations. Gender refers to social traits of men and women that are societally constructed and determined. The society instills behaviour and norms such as relationships between people from opposite sex or workmates. The gender structures, relations and social roles influences people's activities and approaches to handling challenges as well as leadership responsibilities. Essentially, leadership decisions and gender have a significant connection that should be evaluated to facilitate smooth operations in organizations. Basically, leadership involves inspiring, guiding, communicating and supervising subordinates towards prompt and appropriate execution of assigned tasks, hence the progress of any organization depends on the ability to motivate subordinates towards achievement of organizational goals, thus both men and women focus on building relevant traits that prepares and projects them for consideration into leadership positions. However, the social set up and cultural projections present women as a weak sex that battles inferiority complex. Hence, women have been perceived as less competent than men in organizational or political leadership. Women across the globe play an undeniable role in political and organizational leadership. The achievements of female leaders in the past years shows that women have the capacity to make substantive developmental decisions that influence national as well as international progress (Pew Research Centre Survey, 2015). In spite of outstanding

leadership characteristics, women occupy few leadership positions both in government offices and business. The status quo that views women from an incompetent and weak angle does not show possible indications of change since organizations have evolved to reward as well as protect masculine efforts. The society presents men as better leaders than women in various aspects despite the notable similarities in the execution of assigned duties. Essentially, both men and women have the capacity to implement change as well as lead subordinates in organizations to achieve established goals and objectives. The existing gender discrimination and disparities have made insignificant contribution to leadership and cannot be used to weigh the ability of an individual to deliver the desired outcomes in an enterprise. The under representation of women population in leadership is not as a result of low confidence or inability of women to lead, but it seems that it is due to the stereotypical view and attachments that women cannot produce effective leaders.

In many societies, women have made considerable progress in attaining leadership roles. However, gender equality remains a distant goal with men currently possessing considerably more power and authority than women in organizations and government, the Nigerian civil service inclusive. Patriarchy, although weakened, still prevails. In most developed societies, women have gained considerable access to management, although the proportion of women in such positions decline with higher organizational rank (Helfat, Harris & Wolfson, 2006). Across all organizations, 28% of chief executive offices are women (U.S. Bureau of Labour & Statistics, 2022). Globally, the percentage of female managers have risen in the last decade and ranges from 59% in Jamaica to 3% in Pakistan (International Labour Organization, 2015). A study of large listed corporations in 29 nations reported 11% median female corporate board representation, with the highest representation in Iceland (48%), Norway (37%) and France (30%), all nations with quotas requiring a minimum female membership (Deloitte, Touche Tohmatsu, 2015). Despite gradual increase, women remain underrepresented in political leadership and across board (United Nations, 2015).

The Nigerian Civil Service is the body responsible for the implementation of the policies and programmes of government. Basically, the civil service performs mainly administrative and executive functions which involve the formulation and implementation of government policies and programmes. The Civil Service is usually stable and remains in place regardless of the government in power. The administrative Head of a Ministry is a Permanent Secretary/Director-General, General Managers and Executive Secretaries having oversight functions over Departments and Agencies of Government as Accounting Officers.

On a general level, job performance describes the contribution of an individual to the overall success of an organization. On a more specific and measurable level, job performance can be broken down into different factors. Depending on the framework you use, the factors vary

(Koopmans et al. 2013). However, there is a broad consensus in the scientific community that job performance consists of two interplaying components. According to Borman & Motowidlo (1993), job performance consists of two main factors. Task performance and contextual performance. Task Performance describes the core job responsibilities of an employee. It is also called in-role prescribed behavior (Koopmans et al. 2013) and it is reflected in specific work outcomes and deliverables as well as their quality and quantity. Contextual Performance goes beyond formal job responsibilities and is also referred to as discretionary extra-role behavior (Ibid). Contextual performance is reflected in activities such as coaching coworkers, strengthening social networks within an organization and going the extra mile for the organization. These two factors must therefore come into play for any organization including the Civil Service, to get the best from its employees. Workers must be internally and externally motivated towards effective job performance and overall productivity. Hence, the need to harness the various skills and aptitudes of workers through inclusive leadership structure devoid of bias and discrimination on the basis of gender differences.

Gender Inequality refers to the unequal and biased treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender. This inequality happens because of socially constructed gender roles. It happens when an individual of a specific gender is given different or disadvantageous treatment in comparison to a person of the other gender in the same circumstance. The concept, gender inequality, has been widely known in human history but not until the beginning of the 20th century has the transformation of gender relations become “one of the most rapid, profound social changes” (Wright & Rogers, 2009). Gender inequality is attracting renewed attention of the world. Women everywhere are rising against gender inequality through protests and social-media campaigns. Even though some social-media campaigns and movements have been successful in raising public awareness of the issue, the struggle for women emancipation still remains. Gender inequality/discrimination has been seen in all aspects of life. From the preference for baby boy over a girl to discrimination at workplace, women have fought and are still fighting for their equal rights. According to Seema (2013), countries like the UK, China, and India have put a ban on finding out the gender of the fetus. This is because many people still follow the tradition of having at least one boy in their family. Parents find out the gender of the fetus and opt for termination if they find out that the baby is a girl.

In Nigeria, it is observed that womanhood is reduced to a mere infidel and a second-class citizen; hence, there is a general belief system that the best place for women is in the kitchen. This trend has brought about tremendous misrepresentation of women rights at the level of the family down to the secular society (Fatile et al, 2011). Women are therefore marginalized, in most cases, from acquiring formal education, mistreated and perpetually kept as house help (Ibid). The average Nigerian woman is seen as an available object for prostitution, forced marriage, street

hawking, instrument of wide-range trafficking and a misfit in the society. Thus, the purported irrelevance associated with the status of women in society has merely reduced an average woman to an inferior commodity. Women constitute about half of the population of the Nigerian State and are known to play vital roles as mothers, producers, managers, community developers/organizers. Their contributions to the social and economic development of societies is also more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. Yet their participation in formal and informal structures and processes, where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made, remains insignificant. The Nigerian society has been patriarchal in nature which is a major feature of a traditional society (Aina, 1998).

In spite of abundant evidence that gender equality in leadership is good for business, an overwhelming majority of organizations say advancing women into leadership roles is not a priority. In fact, women hold only 18% of senior leadership positions among 2,300 organizations surveyed worldwide. In other words, men occupy approximately 82 percent of the most influential roles in today's organizations. Also, promoting women is not a priority at 79 percent of surveyed organizations. Respondents estimate it could take more than 50 years to close this gap (Rosita, 2021). Gender-fair legislations and recent evidence had revealed the positive impact of gender balance in leadership of organizations, yet women are still under-represented in leadership roles. Hence, gender stereotypes are considered as one critical factor to explain persistent gender inequality in leadership.

Gender inequality in leadership is the preference for a particular gender. The male gender is usually preferred over the female gender in the selection for leadership positions. This has over time culminated in the current situation where the core leadership of the Ekiti State civil service is dominated by the male gender despite commensurate skills, aptitudes and input into the system, in terms of years of service and career progression by the female folk. As at present in the Ekiti State Civil Service, there are more males in leadership positions than females. There appears to be discrimination against females in the appointment and posting of officers. The study therefore, examined the impact of gender inequality in the leadership of the Civil Service on the job performance of female officials in Ekiti State.

## II. THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

This study adopted the Equity theory of Job Satisfaction and how it influences performance at work. The Equity theory was introduced in 1963 by workplace and behavioural psychologist, John Stacey Adams. He posited that jobs involve a continuous assessment of how much 'give and take' there is between employer and employee. The basic premise of this model is that job satisfaction and motivation result from a fair balance between an employee's inputs and outputs/outcomes (Oliver, 2020). The equity theory contains two primary components: inputs

and outputs/outcomes. It is an employee's perception of these two factors that influence their motivation levels. An input is a contribution an employee makes to receive a reward. Different inputs can include commitments, skills, experience, time, education, daily job responsibilities, personal sacrifice, loyalty to the organization and enthusiasm for one's work; while an outcome or output is the compensation an employee receives as a direct result of the input they provide, such as, salary and pay rises, job security, recognition and reputation, sense of achievement, promotion, pride in one's work and other intangible benefits. Hence, the greater the imbalance (or inequity) between these two factors, the less likely a strong, productive relationship will emerge between employer and employee (Oliver, 2020).

The Adam's equity theory is relevant to the study because it says that for an employee to be motivated, he/she needs to perceive that the rewards they receive for their contributions are fair, and that these rewards are similar to those received by their peers. If individuals perceive that their rewards are not fair, they will feel distressed and demotivated. If an employee feels they are receiving fair payment and treatment for their efforts in comparison to what others receive for the same work, they are more likely to stay motivated and perform better on the job. Thus, it is the idea that what an individual receives for their work has a direct effect on their motivation and invariably their performance. What this means from a leadership and management perspective is that a sense of fairness should be created to ensure the best levels of motivation, engagement and performance. When applied to the study, it means a female official in the civil service with equivalent input into the system in terms of dexterity, experience, years of service, qualification and so on must believe that the reward/outcome received in terms of promotion, recognition and placement is fair and commensurate with that of a male counterpart. If a male official attains leadership position based on his input into the system, then nothing should stop a female official with the same level of input from attaining the same position. However, in a situation where fairness and equity are sacrificed on the altar of gender differences, the shortchanged party becomes dissatisfied and performance/productivity on the job reduces due to the perceived unfairness. Therefore, the equity theory asserts that every organization, the Civil Service inclusive, must strive to create a balanced input/output system devoid of discrimination in order to sustain a productive and vibrant workforce.

## III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Job is one of the most important elements of people's life. Their living standards and social lives depend on their jobs. Therefore, it is necessary for every organization to have a satisfied workforce. There is a general understanding that the overall productivity and success of an organization depend on the effective and efficient performance of employees, and that better performance depend on the employees' job satisfaction. It has been observed that when an employee is satisfied, he/she will perform at his/her level best to achieve organizational

objectives. For that purpose, in order to boost job performance, workers must be given opportunities for career advancement, that is, opportunity to reach the peak of the career they have extensively laboured for.

The level of marginalization of women in the civil service is observable in recruitment, posting and appointment processes, where a larger percentage of the vacancies available are filled with male candidates despite similar qualifications and skills by female candidates. Likewise, the core leadership of the Ekiti State Civil Service appears dominated by the male gender despite commensurate dexterity and contributions to the system, in terms of years of service and career progression by the female folk. Currently in the Ekiti State Civil Service, there are only six (6) female Permanent Secretaries/specialized posts, as against twenty-six (26) male Permanent Secretaries/specialized posts, one (1) female General Manager as against thirteen (13) male General Managers, and eight (8) female Executive Secretaries compared to seventeen (17) male Executive Secretaries. Likewise, the first and the incumbent female Head of Service emerged in the 23rd year since the creation of Ekiti State after 7 male Heads of Service.

Therefore, in a situation where a portion of the workforce, in this case the female folk, feels discriminated against on the basis of gender, it will be difficult for them to give their best to the Civil Service as an institution of government. This form of discrimination seems to affect motivation which may invariably affect performance because it could create an underlying unpleasant feeling that no matter how much a female officer contributes to the system, attaining leadership status remains far-fetched or a mirage due to the stereotype that presents the gender as weak as and less competent than the male gender. In view of the observed gender inequality in the leadership of the Civil Service, this study investigates gender inequality in the leadership of the civil service in Ekiti State and its impact on job performance of female officials.

#### A. Main Objective of the Study

The study investigated gender inequality in leadership of the Civil Service and its impact on the job performance of female officials in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

#### B. Specific Objective of the Study

The study:

- Identified the level of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service.ii examined the causes of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service.
- Assessed the impact of gender inequality in leadership on job performance of female officials in the Civil Service of Ekiti State.
- Proffered strategies for ending gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State CivilService.

#### C. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated for the study.

- What is the level of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State civil service?
- What are the causes of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State civil service?
- What is the impact of gender inequality in leadership on the job performance of female officers in Ekiti State?
- What are the strategies for curbing gender inequality in leadership of Ekiti State civilservice?

#### D. Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses of the study were:

- There is no significant relationship between gender and effective leadership.
- There is no significant relationship between gender and job performance.

#### E. Significance of the Study

The essence of this study is to determine the impact of preference for male leadership on effective job performance of female officials in Ekiti State Civil Service. Effective job performance plays a major role in the development of an organization; hence the need to address underlying issues that hinder performances of officers. The study would enable people to be aware of the number of females in leadership positions in Ekiti State Civil Service. The study would enable government to know the impact of marginalization of females in leadership positions on their job performance. The study would help government to know the strategies for enhancing increased female leaders in the Civil Service. There are various expressions of gender inequality in the civil service, but the study only focused on discrimination in leadership of the civil service and its resultant effect on job performance of female workers. Also, job performance was measured in terms of quality of input into the system and achievement of set goals and objectives. The study was restricted to the Civil Service of Ekiti State.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

The design for this research was the descriptive research design of the survey type. Structured and self-designed questionnaire was employed to carry out the study.

#### A. Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised all male and female officers across the Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Ekiti State Civil Service. The sample for the study was selected using the multistage random sampling. In the first stage, one hundred and sixty (160) male and female officers from Grade level 7 and above, (being the category encompassing the senior level officers in the Civil Service) were sampled. The officers were purposely selected from the Administrative, Executive and Professional Cadres in the Civil Service.

In the second stage, simple random sampling was adopted to select the officers (comprising 80 males and 80 females) from the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government depending on the number of senior officers available per office.

**B. Instrument**

For this research study, questionnaire was employed to collect information from respondents. The questionnaire was structured into seven (7) sections: A-G. Section A of the questionnaire addressed the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B elicited information on the level of gender inequality in leadership of the Ekiti State Civil Service. Section C contained items that obtained information on causes of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service. Section D contained items that elicited information on the impact of gender inequality in leadership on job performance of female officials in Ekiti State Civil Service. Section E obtained information on the strategies for ending gender inequality in leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service. Section F obtained information on the relationship between gender and effective leadership, while section G of the study elicited information on the relationship between gender and job performance. The research instrument contained both open and close ended questions in 4-style Likert format.

**C. Validity of the Instrument**

The constructed questionnaire was given to the supervisor and other lecturers/research experts in the Department of Gender and Development Studies, who validated the relevance and appropriateness of the

instrument to the study based on face and content validation process.

**D. Reliability of the Instrument**

The researcher conducted a pilot study twice on 40 Civil Servants at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity in Ado Ekiti, that were not part of the research within two weeks interval. This test-retest method was used to ensure that the research instrument was reliable. The responses were collated, scored and analysed using t-test analysis. The result was 0.85 coefficients, which was considered high enough for the instrument to be termed reliable.

**E. Administration of the Instrument**

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and the field assistants that were engaged for this purpose.

**F. Data Analysis**

The questionnaire that was retrieved from the field were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency counts and percentages for the research questions. The two hypotheses were tested using T-Test analysis method. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**G. Ethical Consideration**

The study observed all the principles of research ethics. All the participants were briefed on the nature, procedure, essence of their volunteered information and the importance of the study. Verbal and written informed consent of participation was given by the respondents used for the study.

**V. RESULTS**

➤ **Research Question 1: What is the level of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service?**

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	There are more male Permanent Secretaries/General Managers/Executive Secretaries than female PS/GM/ES.	77 (48.1)	77 (48.1)	6 (3.8)	-	3.44	0.57	Agreed
2.	There are more male directors than female directors in the civil service	122 (76.3)	24 (15.0)	14 (8.8)	-	3.68	0.63	Agreed
3.	Male officials rise faster in the civil service than female officials	-	18 (11.3)	106 (66.3)	36 (22.5)	1.89	0.57	Disagreed
4.	Male officials are believed to be more competent than females in the discharge of duties	51 (31.9)	68 (42.5)	32 (20.0)	9 (5.6)	3.01	0.87	Agreed
5.	The achievements of women in the civil service are less recognized and celebrated than men's	36 (22.5)	63 (39.4)	47 (29.4)	14 (8.8)	2.76	0.90	Agreed
6.	Men have stronger voice and influence in the affairs of the civil service than women	45 (28.1)	54 (33.8)	41 (25.6)	20 (12.5)	2.78	1.00	Agreed
7.	Male officials have more chances of elevation to leadership positions than female officials	27 (16.9)	51 (31.9)	59 (36.9)	23 (14.4)	2.51	0.94	Agreed
8.	Male officers get better postings than females.	32 (20.0)	87 (54.4)	32 (20.0)	9 (5.6)	2.89	0.78	Agreed

Table 1: Level of Gender Inequality in the Leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service N= 160

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

On table 1, item 1 on the number of male Permanent Secretaries/General Managers/Executive Secretaries in Ekiti State Civil Service, 154 (77+77) respondents (96.2%) agrees that there are more male PS/GM/ES than female PS/GM/ES, while 6 respondents (3.8%) disagrees with this. In item 2, 146 (122+24) respondents (91.3%) agrees that there are more male directors than female directors in the civil service, while 14 respondents (8.8%) disagrees. In item 3, only 18 respondents (11.3%) agrees that male officials rise faster in the civil service than female officials, while 142 (106+36) respondents (88.3%) disagrees. Item 4 revealed that 119 (51+68) respondents (72.4%) agrees that male officials are believed to be more competent than females in the discharge of duties, while 41 (32+9) respondents (25.6%) disagrees. In item 5, only 99 (36+36) respondents (61.9%) agrees that the

achievements of women in the civil service are less recognized and celebrated than men's while 61 (47+14) respondents (38.1%) disagrees. Item 6 showed that 99 (45+54) respondents (61.9%) agrees that men have stronger voice and influence in the affairs of the civil service than women while 61 (41+20) respondents (38.1%) disagrees. In item 7, only 78 (27+51) respondents (48.8%) agrees that male officials have more chances of elevation to leadership positions than female officials while 82 (59+23) respondents (51.3%) disagrees. Table 1, item 8 shows that 119 (32+87) respondents (74.4%) agrees that male officers get better postings than females, while 41 (32+9) respondents (25.6%) disagrees. Most of the items in table 1 reveal a high level of gender inequality in the core leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service.

➤ **Research Question 2:** *What are the causes of gender inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State civilservice?*

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Men are perceived as better leaders than women because they are believed to be more intelligent and dynamic.	30 (18.8)	52 (32.5)	48 (30.0)	30 (18.8)	2.51	1.00	Agreed
2.	Employees/subordinates are more inclined to taking directives from a male boss than a female boss.	7 (4.4)	90 (56.3)	56 (35.0)	7 (4.4)	2.61	0.65	Agreed
3.	Women may not make good leaders as men because family responsibilities conflict with official duties	24 (15.0)	58 (36.3)	62 (38.8)	16 (10.0)	2.56	0.87	Agreed
4.	Male officials are more suitable for leadership positions than female officials.	29 (18.1)	79 (49.4)	46 (28.7)	6 (3.8)	2.82	0.77	Agreed
5.	Male officials understand the mechanisms/operations of the civil service more than female officials.	31 (19.4)	83 (51.9)	38 (23.8)	8 (5.0)	2.86	0.78	Agreed

Table 2: Causes of Gender Inequality in the Leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service N= 160

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

Item 1 on table 2 reveals that 82 (30+52) respondents (51.3%) agrees that men are perceived as better leaders than women because they are believed to be more intelligent and dynamic, while 78 (48+30) respondents (48.8%) disagrees. In item 2, only 97 (7+90) respondents (60.7%) agrees that employees/subordinates are more inclined to taking directives from a male boss than a female boss, while 63 (56+7) respondents (39.4%) disagrees. Item 3 revealed that 82 (24+58) respondents (51.3%) agrees that women may not make good leaders as men because family responsibilities

conflict with official duties, while 78 (62+16) respondents (48.7%) disagrees. In item 4, 108 (29+79) respondents (67.5%) agrees that male officials are more suitable for leadership positions than female officials, while 52 (46+6) respondents (32.5%) disagrees. In item 5, 114 (31+83) respondents (71.3%) agrees that male officials understand the mechanisms/operations of the civil service more than female officials, while 46 (38+8) respondents (28.7%) disagrees.

➤ **Research Question 3:** What is the impact of gender inequality in leadership on the job performance of female officials in Ekiti State?

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	I am not willing to give my best to any organization that places more value on one gender over the other for attainment of leadership positions.	22 (27.5)	54 (67.5)	4 (5.0)	-	3.23	0.53	Agreed
2.	I am encouraged to be more diligent at my duty post if merit, qualification and experience counts more than whether I'm male or female	61 (76.25)	19 (23.75)	-	-	3.74	0.44	Agreed
3.	No organization deserves the loyalty of any officer as long as promotion/elevation is based on gender and not performance	20 (25.0)	56 (70.0)	4 (5.0)	-	3.20	0.51	Agreed
4.	I am less productive and efficient at my duty post when I am perceived as weak and incompetent because of my gender	8 (10.0)	68 (85.0)	4 (5.0)	-	3.04	0.39	Agreed
5.	Access to reward and opportunities based on effectiveness and performance at work motivates me to do better	40 (50.0)	40 (50.0)	-	-	3.49	0.50	Agreed

Table 3: Impact of Gender Inequality in Leadership on the Job Performance of Female Officials N= 80

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

On table 3, item 1, out of 80 female respondents, 76 (22+54) of them (95.0%) agrees that they are not willing to give their best to any organization that places more value on one gender over for attainment of leadership positions, while 4 respondents (5.0%) disagrees. Item 2 reveals that all the 80 female respondents (100%) agrees that they are encouraged to be more diligent at their duty posts if merit, qualification and experience counts more than whether they are male or female. In item 3, 74 (20+56) female respondents (95.0%) agrees that no organization deserves the loyalty of any

officer as long as promotion/elevation is based on gender and not performance, while 4 respondents (5.0%) disagrees. Item 4 showed that 76 (8+68) female respondents (95.0%) agrees that they are less productive and efficient at their duty post when they are perceived as weak and incompetent because of their gender, while 4 respondents (5.0%) disagrees. In item 5, all 80 female respondents (100.0%) agrees that access to reward and opportunities based on effectiveness and performance at work motivates them to do better.

➤ **Research Question 4:** What are the strategies for curbing gender inequality in leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service?

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Government should place more value on qualification, skills and competence of officers than their gender	99 (61.9)	53 (33.1)	8 (5.0)	-	3.57	0.59	Agreed
2.	Consideration for elevation to leadership positions in the service should be based on performance not gender	105 (65.6)	55 (34.4)	-	-	3.66	0.48	Agreed
3.	Access to opportunities and reward for improvement and career progression should be open to both male and female officers	88 (55.0)	72 (45.0)	-	-	3.55	0.50	Agreed
4.	To enhance the morale/enthusiasm of workers for better performance, government should endeavour to eradicate all forms of gender discrimination that can hinder effective performance.	105 (65.6)	47 (29.4)	8 (5.0)	-	3.61	0.58	Agreed
5.	The civil service will be better improved if the idea of labeling female workers as weak and incapable to lead is consciously eradicated.	70 (43.8)	90 (56.3)	-	-	3.44	0.50	Agreed

Table 4: Strategies for curbing Gender Inequality in Leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service N= 160

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

On Table 4, Item 1 reveals that 152 (99+53) respondents, that is (95.0%) agrees that government should place more value on qualification, skills and competence of officers than their gender, while 8 respondents (5.0%) disagrees. In item 2, all the 160 (105+55) respondents(100.0%) agrees that consideration for elevation to leadership positions in the service should be based on performance and not gender. In item 3, all 160 respondents (100.0%) agrees that access to opportunities and reward for improvement and career progression should be open to both

male and female officers.

Item 4 showed that 152 (105+47) respondents (95.0%) agrees that in order to enhance the morale/enthusiasm of workers for better performance, government should strive to eradicate all forms of gender discrimination, while 8(5%) disagrees. Item 5 also reveals that all 160 (70+90) respondents(100.0%) agrees that the civil service would be better improved if the idea of labeling female workers as weak and incapable to lead is consciously eradicated.

• **Test of Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between gender and effective leadership.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	P
1.	Being a male or female does not affect leadership capability/quality	160	3.29	0.45	91.59*	159	.000
2.	Male and female officials make good leaders	160	3.34	0.57	73.89*	159	.000
3.	Leadership is not determined by gender	160	3.14	0.58	68.43*	159	.000
4.	Gender should not be a factor for selecting a leader in the civil service or any organization	160	3.60	0.58	77.85*	159	.000
5.	Leadership should be determined by merit, skill and competency	160	3.51	0.50	88.61*	159	.000

Table 5: One sample T-test showing Relationship between Gender and Effective LeadershipN= 160

\*p<0.05

On table 5, one sample t-test was used to test the significance of each of the items raised above. All the items were significant because the p<0.05. Item 1, being a male or female does not affect leadership capability/quality (t=91.59, p<0.05); Item 2, male and female officials make good leaders (t=73.89, p<0.05); Item3, leadership is not determined by gender (t=68.43, p<0.05); Item 4, gender should not be a factor for selecting a leader in the civil

service or any organization (t=77.85, p<0.05); and Item 5, leadership should be determined by merit, skill and competency(t=91.59, p<0.05) were all significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between gender inequality in leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service and job performance of female officials.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	P
1.	I do my work conscientiously regardless of my sex	160	3.41	0.64	68.65*	159	.000
2.	I contribute my quota to the development and progress of the civil service regardless of my sex	160	2.86	0.65	67.60*	159	.000
3.	I comply with directives from my boss regardless of his/her sex	160	3.17	0.60	55.37*	159	.000
4.	My sex does not affect my performance at every duty post	160	3.20	0.51	67.27*	159	.000
5.	My loyalty and contributions to the civil service is not affected by my sex	160	3.41	0.64	79.13*	159	.000

Table 6: One sample T-test showing Relationship between Gender and Job PerformanceN= 160

\*p<0.05

On table 6, one sample t-test was used to test the significance of each of the items raised above. All the items were significant because the p<0.05. Item 1, I do my work conscientiously regardless of my sex(t=68.65, p<0.05); Item 2, I contribute my quota to the development and progress of the civilservice regardless of my sex(t=67.60, p<0.05); Item 3, I comply with directives from my boss regardless of his/her sex(t=55.37, p<0.05); Item 4, My sex does not affect my performance at every duty post (t=67.27, p<0.05); and Item 5, My loyalty and contributions to the civil service is not affected by my sex(t=79.13, p<0.05) were all significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

On the level of gender inequality on leadership, the study found out that gender inequality is very high/prevalent in the core leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service, which corroborates the submission of Adepoju (1994) that the systemic inferior position of women inside and outside the civil service and households in Nigeria points to the necessity of treating gender as a force on its own in sustainable development issues in the nation. Meaning, for productivity and performance to be enhanced in the civil service, gender inequality in leadership is an issue that must be consciously addressed. On the causes of gender



inequality in leadership of the civil service, the study revealed the perceptions/stereotypes about the female gender that are responsible for the limited number of women in leadership positions. This establishes the fact that the under representation of women population in leadership is not as a result of low confidence or inability of women to lead, but it is due to the stereotypical views and unfounded beliefs that women cannot produce effective leaders. On the impact of gender inequality on leadership of the Ekiti State Civil Service on the job performance of female officials, the study found that gender inequality impacts negatively on the performance of female officials by lowering their motivation and loyalty to the system. Therefore, this supports the position of Kadence (2006) that an individual's performance is usually determined by factors like motivation, the desire to do the job, ability to do the job and so on. Hence, organizations must strive to maintain employees' motivation towards effective performance. However, in a situation where the morale/motivation of a major portion of the workforce, that is, female officials is already dampened by bias/discrimination and the management/leadership positions are occupied on the basis of gender and not competence, the civil service is at a risk of underdevelopment and low productivity. On the strategies for ending gender inequality in the civil service, the study established the proactive measures that must be adopted on the part of government, in terms of placing more emphasis/value on qualification, skills and competence rather on gender for attainment of leadership positions, and taking conscious steps towards eradication of bias/discrimination against women. This in turn would enhance job performance and productivity in the civil service. On the relationships between gender and effective leadership on one hand and job performance on the other hand, even though the null hypotheses states that gender has no significant effect on job performance and the ability/capacity to lead effectively as both male and female respondents supported the fact that their ability to do their job and to lead is not determined by their gender but by their skills, qualification and experience on the job, yet the hypotheses were rejected. This means that though various past research works and feminist movements support the fact that gender should not be a factor for judging effective leadership and job performance in any organization including the civil service, however in reality, it is a parameter that is often used to determine the appointment or elevation of the female gender to the top echelon of public service leadership. It is posited that there is no reasonable justification for this systemic and well entrenched practice, save the age-long stereotypes and discrimination which is to the disadvantage of the female gender.

## VII. CONCLUSION

It is obvious from the research that gender inequality is prevalent in the leadership of the civil service and its consequence on the job performance of female officials cannot be overlooked. The study also established that societal prejudices and stereotypes about women is the root cause of gender inequality in leadership of the civil service. If the Nigerian/Ekiti State Public Service is to reach its maximum potential for progress and productivity, then the skills, competence and experience of the entire workforce

must be thoroughly engaged without gender prejudice or discrimination. Therefore, the study concluded that it is necessary for the State Government to employ proactive measures such as placing premium on dexterity, qualification and experience of officers rather than on their gender for consideration into leadership positions. Also, creating an enabling environment where both male and female officials can access opportunities for career progression and self-actualization would go a long way in addressing the existing gender inequality in leadership of the Ekiti State Civil Service, which would in turn boost the progress and development of the State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, it was recommended that a proactive action on the part of government would go a long way in addressing the deep rooted inequality in the leadership of Ekiti State Civil Service in order to enhance higher performance and productivity of female officials and the entire workforce. Government should place more value on qualification, skills and dexterity of officers rather than on their gender in order to enhance performance and productivity in Ekiti State Civil Service. Consideration for elevation to leadership positions in the service should be based on performance and not gender. Access to opportunities and trainings for career improvement and progression should be open to both male and female officials without discrimination. Conscious and deliberate action must be employed by Government to eradicate all forms of gender inequality in the leadership of the civil service. The stereotype/prejudices that classify female officials as weak and incapable to lead should be purposefully addressed towards improved performance and productivity in the Ekiti State Civil Service.

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