Original Research Article

Stand Out: Women Leadership Behaviours and Organisational Performance

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Abstract

This paper examines women leadership behavior and organizational performance. It determines how women managerscould stand out in the midst of challenges. The survey research design was adopted in this study. The population of the study comprised all commercial bank executives and top managers in Bayelsa State. The total number of the population was 95 executive officers selected from 17 commercial banks. Since the population was not too large, all the executive officers were adopted as the sample size. A structured questionnaire was designed to elicit data. Validity was ensured through expert opinion and reliability was measured through the Cronbach's alpha technique with a reliability of 86% which was appropriate. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The spearman rank correlation coefficient was used as the data analysis technique and the SPSS computer-based method was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of women leadership behaviours such as participative decision making, expectation/reward and controlare significantly related to organizational performance. It was also indicated in the bar chart on the application of leadership behavior, the study revealed that men in leadership prefer total control and sometimes taking corrective measures while women prefer applying role modeling and reward. Thus, this paper concluded that leaders who are transformational oriented irrespective of the gender could better survive in a turbulent environment than leaders who apply transactional leadership style. Therefore, it was recommended that women should be encouraged to advance their career and professional endeavors to the highest echelon of the organization.

Keywords: women leadership behavior, organizational performance, role model, participative decision making, expectation and reward

JEL Classification Codes: D210, D230, L290

1. INTRODUCTION

In the business world today, managing behavioural challenges is critical to overall organizational performance. A significant expectation among businesses and organizations is to combat for customers and standout in the midst of challenges and problems. Both men and women seem to have equal managerial competencies and skills, yet research indicates that women face more behavioural challenges in workplace than their male counterparts. Considering the women's population which makes a significant portion of the workforce, little attention has been given with regards to women in top management and leadership positions. Fallahi, Mehrad and Maelizehee (2015) opined that women's population makes a great fraction of human resources in the labour market, neglecting this immense population would lead to difficulties in society such as lack of job satisfaction. In the past decades, women were not encouraged to advance their career and professional endeavours. The Nigerian work culture till date promotes, encourages and supports male career advancement than their female counterparts'. This work environment and culture have not given women the opportunity to showcase their potentials and prowess, therefore to overcome this psychological block of women discrimination, involvement and participation in management and leadership positions has affected workplace progress and success. Despite the number of women in high management positions their educational equality compared with men is at low level (Fallahi, 2015; Babcocok and Laschever, 2009).

Severalstudies indicated that women discrimination in work place is more prominent in Africa than Europe.Thisis because the African work culture supports men in leadership than women.Decades ago, women were relegated to the management of home affairs and child-rearing despite their unique leadership qualities, women seem to have all embracing people-oriented leadership style that promises to enhance organizational effectiveness. Eagly and Carli (2003), leadership has been historically perceived as a "masculine enterprise" with masculine qualities in leadership. This emphasizes the fact that most organizations prefer men in leadership and top management positions than to women. This masculine leadership over the feminine leadership has devalued the skills, talents, knowledge, experiences and prospects of women in management positions (Orey, 2011; Ulricjh and Smallwood, 2012). That is, motivating workers or employees by transforming their individual self-interest into the goals of the organization. Women leaders in Nigeria have made significant moves to turn around the culturally deficient men-driven work system. Several arguments have been scholarly made to exploit diversity in a workplace as a tool for competitive advantage. (Girdanskiene & Eyvazzade, 2015) Macarie, Hintea and Mora (2011)also argued that the organizations are dominated by organizational cultures made by men for men. Other critical challenges women face in their work environment are: neglecting women resting time, hostile work environment, sexual harassment and discrimination (Macarie et al, 2011). These could be some of the reasons of low women presence and participation in the organizational top leadership positions. Thus, this paper critically examines the behavioural challenges women face in leadership positions and organizational performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of persons to influence the behaviour of others to achieve a common goal. This important role is an act of group

effort. It is a responsibility that could be carried out by men and women and either of the sexes has the potentials or capacity to achieve well defined corporate objectives. Gender diversity in a workplace should not be ignored or lopsided in favour of a particular sex. Macarie et al, (2011) identified the values of women leaders as follows: interdependence, cooperation, emotional tonus, receptivity and acceptance, while the men are characterized by self-assertion, separation, control, rationality and discrimination. These qualities are an indication that women tend to work in a team rooted environment than their men counterparts (Elmuti, Jia& Davis, 2009; Nelson & Levesque, 2007). Elmuti et al (2009) in their research study noted that the challenges and barriers that affect women in leadership positions include, discrimination, family- life demands, stereotyping and prejudice.
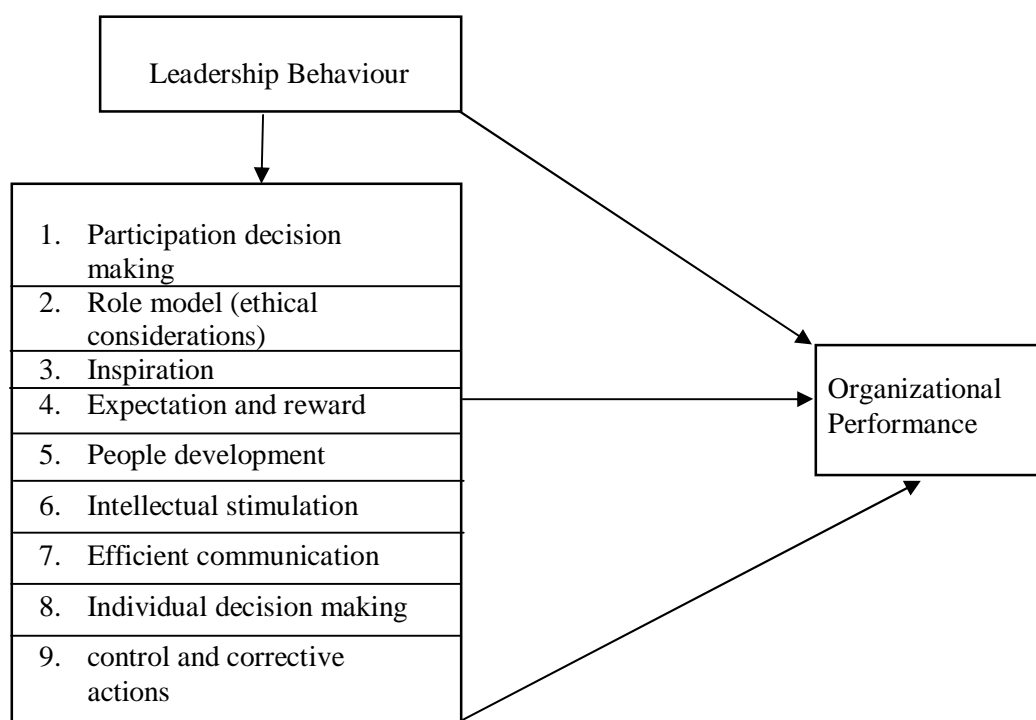
Despite the educational pedigree and notable achievements of women in the world, women have suffered discrimination in different sectors of the economy. In Nigeria, the public sector discriminates against women more than the private sector.Women exclusion is common among politicians and women participate very little in decision making.Womenrepresent less than 20% in elective offices and less than 30% in government appointments. Women seem to participate more in the civil or public service than appointment, some women are directors, permanent secretaries, deputy directors and chief accountants dew to promotion, education and career advancement. Most government appointments do not consider qualification and professionalism rather is done based on nepotism, tribalism and connection or recommendation. This work style is not common in the private sector. The private sector is characterized by effectiveness and efficiency, therefore its concern is human capital development. Mediocrity is far from the private sector because no one would risk his/her business for nothing. Gender diversity is more prominent in the private sector compare to the public sector. The private sector sees female leadership as a competitive edge for the future of their organization (Alapiki, 2004). However, one obvious challenge among women both in the public and private sector is work-life balance. The ability to balance work and family-life has been an age long challenge among career women (Jones and George, 2003). Another notable challenge face by women is sexual harassment (Balkon and Gomez-mejia, 2001). Most times, women fall victim of been used by most men as personal or confidential secretaries and in some cases been compelled or coerced to have sex with their boss just to avert certain challenges.

2.1 Women Leadership Behaviour
Mckinsey and Company (2007) noted that some leadership behaviours such as role model, participatory decision making, inspiration, expectation and reward etc. are frequently applied by women than men in management team. According to them, theyprove to enhance organizational performance and will be key factors in facing future business challenges. Therefore, promoting gender diversity and leadership variety is of strategic importance for business organization. This behavioral style to managing organization promises to enhance organizational performance.

Avorlio and Bass leadership behaviour and organizational performance model is adopted in this study

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│     Leadership Behaviour     │
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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 1. Participation decision    │
│    making                    │
│ 2. Role model (ethical       │        ┌───────────────────┐
│    considerations)           │        │  Organizational   │
│ 3. Inspiration               │        │  Performance      │
│ 4. Expectation and reward    │───────▶│                   │
│ 5. People development        │        └───────────────────┘
│ 6. Intellectual stimulation  │
│ 7. Efficient communication   │
│ 8. Individual decision making│
│ 9. control and corrective    │
│    actions                   │
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Source: Avolio and Bass (2004). Transformational leadership development: Manual for the multifactor leadership questionnaire. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Avolio (1990) noted that leadership behaviours that improve organizational behaviour includes participatory decision making, role modeling, inspiration, expectations and reward, people development, intellectual stimulation, effective communication, individualistic decision making and control.Mckinsey and Company (2007)noted that the frequent application of these attributes differ from men and women. Their study revealed that the differences in the consistent application of leadership behaviour between men and women showed that women use the first-five leadership behaviours than men. That is, women leadership behaviour is rooted in participative decision making, role model, people development, inspiration and expectation and reward, while men often use control and corrective actions, individualistic decision making and effective communication.

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance in this context simply refers to efficiency and effectiveness of work processes in an organization. George and Jones (2003) asserted that organizational performance is a measure of how resources are effectively and efficiently utilized in an organization to achieve goals. Effectiveness to them is the measure of appropriateness of defining and achieving corporate goals while efficiency is the measure of the degree to which organizational resources are well used or how well resources are used to achieve corporate objectives. Organizational performance also comprises of the actual output of an organization as measured against its intended output. The three basic elements of organizational performance includes: financial performance, product/market performance and shareholders' dividend.

This study is a clear indication that women in leadership positions tend to build teamwork and promote collective

organizational goal achievement than their men counterparts.

Research questions: The following research questions were raised to guide this study
1. To what extent does participative decision making relate to organizational performance?
2. To what extent does expectation and reward relate to organizational performance?
3. To what extent does control and correction relate to organizational performance?

Hypotheses
H_01: There is no significant relationship between participative decision making and organizational performance.
H_02: There is no significant relationship between expectation/ reward and organizational performance.
H_03: There is no significant relationship between control and correction and organizational performance.

3. METHODOLOGY
This study examines the women leadership behaviour and organizational performance.

Critical issues are systematically and theoretically analyzed to enable women stand out. To achieve this, the researcher adopted the survey research design which will enable the researcher to collect data followed by the use of questionnaire instrument. The population comprised all commercial bank executives in Bayelsa State. The total number of the population was 95 executive officers from 17 banks. The population was not too large therefore it was adopted as the sample size. The questionnaire instrument was validated through expert opinion and reliability was ensured through the use of Cronbach's alpha method with a reliabilityof 86% which was suitable for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was used as the data analysis techniques and the SPSS computer-based method was used to validate the hypotheses

Data analysis
The research questions and the hypotheses raised in this study were authenticated through the collection of data and test of hypotheses

The table below showed the men and women application of the nine leadership behaviours

SN	Leadership Behaviours	Men	Women
1.	Participation decision making	32	68
2.	Role model (ethical considerations)	35	65
3.	Inspiration	44	56
4.	Expectation and reward	36	64
5.	People development	44	56
6.	Intellectual stimulation	44	56
7.	Efficient communication	63	37
8.	Individual decision making	73	27
9.	Control and corrective actions	90	10

Source: Survey Data, 2019

The bar chart below showed the men and women application of the nine leadership behaviours
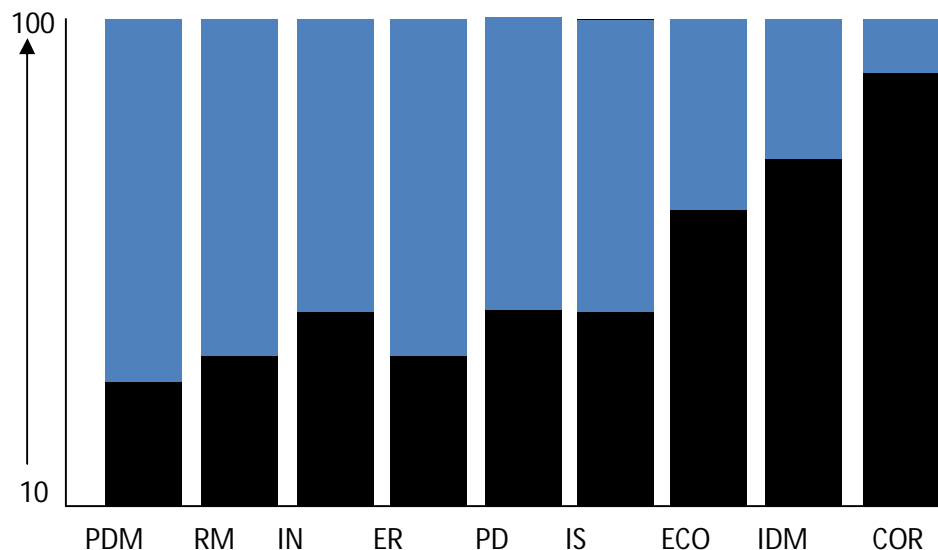
Source: Research work, 2019

Men and Women Leadership Behaviour
Keys:

⇨ Men ▮ ⇨ Women ▮

PDM = Participation decision making
RM = Role model
IN = Inspiration
ER = Expectation and reward
PD = People development
IS = Intellectual stimulation
EFC = Effective communication
IDM = Individual decision making
COR = Control and corrective action

Test of hypotheses: The following leadership behavioural variables were tested.

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between participative decision making and organizational performance.

Correlations

			Participative decision making	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	Participative decision making	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.902[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	95	95
	Organisational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.902[**]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.

		95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

$H_{02:}$ There is no significant relationship between expectation/ reward and organizational performance.

Correlations

			Expectation and reward	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	Expectation and reward	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.926**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	95	95
	Organisational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.926**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

$H_0 3$: There is no significant relationship between control and correction and organizational performance.

Correlations

			Control and correction	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	Control and correction	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.881**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	95	95
	Organisational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.881**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion of Findings

Leadership and leadership positions several decades ago were known to be a masculine enterprise with stereotypically masculine traits in leaders (Eagly and Carli, 2003). This is critical to the fact that most individuals prefer to work with men and women. However, the findings of this study are totally different from the views of describing men as better leaders than women.

Some authors argued that women are more likely to use transformational leadership style than men (Orey, 2011; Alimometcafe, 2010; Ulricjh and Smallwood, 2012). To further confirm this, a question was asked to know the men and women applicability of the nine leadership behaviours described by Avolio and Bass, 2004, it was indicated in theabove bar chart that women apply the first five leadership behaviours than men while the men apply more on effectiveness, communication, intellectual stimulation, individual decision making and control or correction. The McKinsey and Company Consulting group also confirmed this view in their 2007 research study. Several studies further revealed that men are more dominance in leadership position and would

prefer to apply the approach of the "glass ceiling" to exclude women participation (Ann, 2015; Elmuti et al, 2009; Li and Leung, 2001; Babcock and Laschever, 2009).

Furthermore, considering leadership behaviour and organizational performance, the finding generally revealed that there is a significant relationship between participative decision making, expectation and reward, control and correction and organizational performance.

Avolio and Bass (2004) supported this view and noted that leaders who are transformational oriented could better survive in a turbulent environment than leaders who apply transactional leadership style leaders who enjoy the cooperation of workers apply participative decision making, effective communication good reward systems and inspiration (Akpinaar – Sposito, 2013; Nelson and Levesque, 2007; Yukongdi, 2005 and Schein, 2007). The findings also revealed that the use of control and correction is not as effective as stimulating and inspiring or motivating workers in an organization (Yukongdi and Benson, 2005, Welch and Welch, 2006; Ahsan et al, 2009). From the findings of this study, it is important to note that the diversity in workplace including men and women should not be seen as a threat rather should be exploited and explored as a competitive advantage as some women are better leaders than their men counterparts.

Conclusion
The paper concluded that women should be encouraged to advance their career and professional endeavors to the highest echelon. The idea of the glass ceiling as a means of women exclusion might deny the organization from benefiting the total workforce. Organizations should not encourage and adopt African cultures that devalue and exclude women participation and involvement in workplace. From the findings of the study, it was clear that men

in leadership positions are subtle or hard to understand behaviourally than their women counterparts. Thus there is a nexus between leadership behaviour and organizational performance.

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