

Ability to Deliver and Advancement of Women in Academic and Administrative Positions in Public Universities in Central Uganda

Peninah Beinomugisha¹, Edward Kamya², Bin Said³

Faculty of Education, Kampala International University, &
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training- Dar-Es-Salaam,
TANZANIA.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between ability to deliver and advancement of women in academic and administrative positions in Public Universities in Central Uganda. Objective of the study was; Level of women's ability to deliver in academic and administrative positions. The hypothesis was; there is no significant relationship between the ability to deliver and the level of advancement in academic and administrative positions. The descriptive and correlation design were employed in this study. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were utilized to obtain a sample of 364 respondents; 70 men, 113 women administrators and 181 women lecturers. Two sets of questionnaires, key informants and interview guides were utilized in gathering data. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like means, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis. Findings showed that majority of the respondents were men (80.7%), level of women's ability to perform academic and administrative duties with the average mean of (3.40). In conclusion, to a certain extent women are underrepresented in senior academic and administrative positions not because they are not able to deliver, but because of the stereotypes and social construction with a belief that women are not managers. The researcher recommends that all educational institutions, government and private sector should provide funds to support women to engage in postgraduate courses and more funding in research and publication if women are to be on the same footing as men.

Keywords: Advancement of women, administrative positions, public universities

INTRODUCTION

Over the decades, issues concerning women have taken new dimensions and received varied treatments by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The principle of equality of men and women was first recognized in 1945 in the United Nations Charter, and subsequently in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). In spite of the international declarations, of which Uganda is a signatory, affirming the legal rights and equality of men and women, available literature shows that women still constitute a disproportionately small percentage of those participating in higher education academic and administrative.

According to Gumbi (2006), Universities in United Kingdom, out of 40,000 professors in higher education in the UK in 2003, 13% were women and 87% men, while 73% of senior lecturers and researchers (total of 24,630) were men and 27% women. In Australia, women in executive management in the year 2000 were 34.6% compared to 65.4% men. The USA, admittedly an advanced economy and emulated in many other ways, has not achieved gender equity in higher education. Gumbi (2006) reported that women held 18.7% of full professorships, and only 19.3% of presidents (Vice Chancellors) of colleges and universities. Women constitute half of the workforce in the UK and less than 3% are in top academic and administrative positions jobs across the public and private sectors, and the situation is not

showing much improvement. As noted by Eggins (2009), one can count the number of vice-chancellors and heads of institutions on the fingers of two hands on women entering the professoriate is currently a matter of media attention.

Research across Africa found “very little data available for female education managers in Africa” (Nkomo and Mgambi, 2009). The few figures available showed wide disparities, with Egypt at one end of the spectrum with only 10% of managers being women, while Botswana at the top end had 30%. They searched all the literature in Africa on women education managers and only found 43 publications, with very little work on theories of leadership and academic and administrative positions in Africa.

A study by Onsongo (2004) has revealed that women mainly occupy junior positions in university management in Kenya. A survey of university staffing positions conducted in six universities (four public and two private) reveals that women are missing from among the chief officers of the universities. Reasons cited include; personal attributes such factors as lack of confidence and fear of public office were found to be deterring women from taking management positions. And societal factors such as discrimination against female child education and general beliefs about women’s domestic role were identified as eroding women’s self perception just as those women who succeeded in public domain were seen as failures in their domestic roles.

In Uganda, women occupy lower levels on academic and administrative positions in universities, decreasing significantly in upper administrative, managerial and academia levels. Bantebya (2005) notes that in the Commonwealth Universities, men have taken the top academic and administrative positions, leaving little room for women to show up their performances. Only at the level of lecturer do academic staff numbers begin to be more or less equal.

It appears that very few women can be found in positions of higher education academic and administration in Uganda despite the fact that Uganda has been credited for having made some progress in bringing women into the public sphere. Jagero, Beinomugisha, Rwasheema (2011) assert that at Uganda Christian University, women were severely under-represented in top managerial posts, with only 15% in top positions, 19.07% assistant, junior lecturers and tutorial assistants and only 15% senior and full time lecturers. They stress that this observation is similar to other universities such as Makerere University Kampala and Mbarara University of Science Technology. This study therefore explores some factors that affect the rate of advancement of women. Specifically, the study explores ability to deliver, academic qualification, commitment to duty, and societal attitudes and how these affect such advancement of women in academic and administrative positions in the public universities in Central Uganda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kwoba (1995) and Kwesiga (1997) note that due to the socialization process, women lack self confidence and lack experience and ability in personal goal setting. All these limit their participation in top academic and administration where a high degree of self drive is required and indicates that women are not intrinsically empowered for higher managerial positions.

Amondi (2010) states that individual factors which for example women tend to avoid, where they risk facing criticism and receiving negative feedbacks; women have fear of failure hence are reluctant to voice out their opinion; women tend to express less confidence in their ability to assume leadership roles; women in academic and administrative positions tend to be more concerned about how they are perceived by others; fear of sexual harassment, of responsibility, of success, of broken marriages and divorce because of accusations of love

affairs with senior men officers especially when the women rise fast to the top, of paying the price of being at the top, of being labeled iron lady, of taking risks, and finally of being public figures as most prefer to be fairly private; and lastly, women not supporting one another on the upward ladder of academic and administrative .

Person-centred attitude in which the paucity of women is attributed to the psycho-social attributes, including personality characteristics, attitudes and behavioural skills of women themselves. The problem is vested in the individual and she is called upon to adapt herself to the traditional, men concept of academic and administration within the academy. Among personal factors are lack of self-esteem and self confidence; limited aspirations in the field of academic and administrative positions, lack of motivation and ambition to accept challenges to go up the ladder; women's orientation to interpersonal relations with peers which could impede their upward mobility; promoted myths regarding women's low potential for leadership, being less assertive, less emotionally stable and lacking ability to handle a crisis (Bond, 1996).

The implication is that, action speaks louder than words. In other words, confidence is manifested by the ability to perform rather than to talk. Briefly, confidence as a character is perceived to constitute a perfect example of what a positive minded leader can accomplish through performance. Consequently, confidence is important in leadership because performance is based on it. Confidence actually drives performance for where there is no confidence there is no hope, faith, positiveness, assertiveness and the will to do anything. In agreement, Tsoka&Mathipa (2001) add by pointing out that, confidence implies that "as a man thinks, feels, and believes, so is the condition of his mind, body, and circumstances." Put in another sense, performance can be likened to a barometer that indicates whether a person has the confidence to do a particular task or not. Through confidence driven performances, society can succeed in demystifying those restrictive traditional perceptions which still apply to women, despite the fact that they are based on unfounded scientific grounds. Thus, only through performance can society be in a position to debunk stereotypes, biases and prejudices that still regard women as less confident to assume leadership positions.

Studies indicate that when men are assertive, this is perceived as evidence of great talent, but when women exhibit the same behavior, they are seen in a negative fashion, as being too aggressive (Williams, 2004). Similarly, men and women who engage in "self-promotion" are often viewed in different ways, with men being admired for their accomplishments, but women being seen as arrogant. Arguments about women candidates being too aggressive or "difficult" are often used to disqualify them.

Research by (Neidhart& Carlin, 2003) suggested that some women in academic and administrative positions carefully assess career decisions in the light of their own values and beliefs. For these women the barrier was not lack of confidence, but rather an informed choice based on knowledge of what is important to them personally and the extent to which they are authentic. Women are generally more concerned than men about how they are perceived by others in their group. Other individual barriers according to Cubillo (1999) include: the tendency among women to avoid where they risk facing criticism or receiving negative feedback; fear of failure and hence a reluctance to voice their opinions; excess responsibilities and fear of conflict and loneliness; self-doubting; and a different (feminine) style of management.

White (2000) stated that one of the perceptions that exist about women in academic and administrative positions is that they are unstable workers. The author goes on to say that due to the pressure society puts on these managers they are forced to obtain success at any cost. For example White referred to Karen Valenstein "...a woman who's reached a level few

women reach, and she's doing it by combining the arm-twisting tactics of the men tycoon with the manipulative wiles of the traditional women. Women sometimes have to be aggressive, they have to "... trade locker room vulgarities" to be able to survive in the "muscular" world of academic and administration. To some people this can cause them to form the perception that women are unstable workers.

In a study about constraints to women's employment and advancement to top academic and administrative positions in Africa, Jemerigbe (1992), observed that validated traits distinguishing women from men managers is self confidence. And because women lack self confidence they hardly assume top academic and administrative positions. This shows that performance expectations and self evaluation of abilities are lower among women than in men. All these combined affect women's participation in senior managerial positions. This has been attributed to the psychological and socialization process whereby men and women build their self identity. Women learn feminine traits, which don't encourage them to be achievement-oriented or self motivated, thereby affecting the development of their self-esteem. Women still have a fear of being labeled un- feminine, and this impact on their degree of assertiveness and objectivity (Kwesiga, 1997).

Lynch (1990) felt that the perception still remains that the ideal manager must be masculine, self-reliant, forceful, ambitious, and a strong leader. This men belief continues to be the dominant idea of what a principal should be in both schools and communities. During the interviews these ideas (criteria) in many times outweigh more specific criteria such as credentials and instructional leadership skills. Due to this perception women, once appointed, feel that they must adopt men behaviour to please the school and community. This perception does exist and due to the fact that women adopt men behaviours, the men typecast of the ideal manager is reinforced, and the dominance of the men attitude continues. So as long as women managers remain in the minority, the men stereotype of management will endure, and the women in management positions will feel pressured to behave like men (Lynch, 1990).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Correlation research design technique was employed to enable the researcher to establish the relationship between ability to deliver and advancement of women to academic and administrative positions in Public Universities in Central Uganda.

The academic and administrative staff both men and women from the three universities from Central Uganda were used in this study (see table 1). The actual population comprised of 1997 employees from the three sampled Universities namely; MUK, MUBS and KYU. There are three Public Universities in Central Uganda in totality and the study sampled all of them. To determine the ideal sample size for a population, slovin's formula was used.

Table 1. Respondents of the Study

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Sample</i>
1.	Makerere University, Kampala (MUK)	1000	187
2.	Metropolitan University Business School Nakawa (MUBS)	567	99
3.	Kyambogo University, Kyambogo (KYU)	430	78
<i>Total</i>		<i>1997</i>	<i>364</i>

Source: Human Recourse departments, (2012)

Sampling procedure

A Purposive Sampling Technique and Simple Random Sampling Technique were employed.

Research Instruments

Questionnaires

In collecting data, two sets of researcher devised questionnaires were employed. The first questionnaire titled the Administrators' Ability, Women Advancement Questionnaire (AAQ). This questionnaire was used to gather information on both the independent and dependent variables.

The second questionnaire titled the Academicians' Ability and Women Advancement Questionnaire (AAQ). This was employed in seeking information on the dependent and independent variables. It was administered to both women and men academicians from the three sampled Public Universities in Central Uganda.

Data Analysis

Data was tabulated and the researcher employed means to arrive at the mean of level of women's ability to deliver and the level of women's advancement to academic and administrative positions in Public Universities in Central Uganda. The hypotheses were analysed using the Pearson Product moment correlation in determining the differences and relationships between the study variables. Data gathered was imputed using the SPSS following the scale as indicated below and the interpretation that was employed by the researcher.

Scale was structured as follows:

<i>Mean Range</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
4.21-4.00	Very Satisfactory
3.41-4.20	Satisfactory
2.61-3.40	Good
1.81-2.60	Fair
1.00-1.80	Poor

FINDINGS

Level of women's Ability to deliver in academic and administrative positions

The first independent variable that this study looked at was women's ability to deliver in academic and administrative positions. The questionnaire was administered in seeking answers to this variable and it was measured with a number of Likert scaled questions, where 1=SD, 2=D, 3=N, 4= A and 5=SA. Respondents were asked to rate each question by indicating the extent to which agree or disagree with each. Their responses were analysed using means as indicated in table 2.

The results in table 2 shows that the majority of the respondents were very satisfied on the view that women have the ability to perform academic and administrative duties with excellence, with the mean of 4.46. Respondents agreed too on the view that women set personal goals to advance in academic and administrative positions with the mean of 4.27.

Table 2: Level of women's ability to deliver in academic and administrative positions Item Analysis (n=364)

<i>Measures of ability to deliver</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Women have the ability to perform academic and administrative duties	4.46	Very satisfactory	1
Women often perform their duties with excellence	4.34	Very Satisfactory	2
Women set personal goal to advance in academic and administrative positions	4.27	Very Satisfactory	3
Women without children have time to take care of their career	3.68	Satisfactory	4
Women's ability to deliver affects their career advancement in academic and administrative positions	3.62	Satisfactory	5
Women fear positions where they are being criticized	3.13	Good	6
Performance expectations and self evaluation of abilities are lower among women than in men	2.96	Good	7
Women sometimes prefer to work in lower ranks of administration due to much work in senior administrative positions	2.86	Good	8
Women demonstrate less confidence in their ability to assume academic and administrative roles	2.79	Good	9
Women are not assertive as their men counterparts	2.73	Good	10
Women lack self confidence to perform their duties	2.52	Good	11
<i>Average Mean</i>	<i>3.40</i>	<i>Good</i>	

Field data, 2012

The findings are in agreement with Kwesiga (2002), the social construction theory argues that both men and women are constructed in a particular way, how they should behave, what they should do and what we should expect from men and women. Accordingly employers believe that due to the biological make up, women cannot perform certain duties. Women will always take more time since they take much time on maternity leave and child bearing.

Regarding the view that women lack self confidence to perform their duties, the respondents rated themselves good with the mean of 2.52. This means that women to some extent are confident and have self esteem to perform their academic and administrative duties. The findings therefore disagreed with Jemerigbe (1992), Onsongo (2004), and Kwesiga (1997) who observed that because women lack self confidence, they hardly assume to top academic and administrative positions.

Self confidence and esteem go back to the way people socialize and the way people were brought up. The family background differs, some are prepared to be leaders especially men and women to be followers. So this affects their esteem in future. For example men in public meeting put up their hands and talk, whether what they are talking makes sense or not. That is not the issue of whether what they are talking makes sense or not but women will not have that courage of putting up their hand, of arguing, saying this and the other and making noise. Men will make noise even where it is not necessary just because from the socialization process, men are made to talk and argue which is quite different from women who are made to be silent in the background.

It is worth noting that most women are clustered in lower levels of academic and administrative positions and in lower ranks of teaching like the teaching assistant and

assistant lecturers. Family meeting encouraged boys to talk and discuss compared to girls. This is due to the socialization and the gender role. Even women feel that whatever they discuss will not be taken seriously, this is in agreement with Otieno (2001) who observed that the socialization process results in boys and girls conforming to the socially determined behavior. Boys learn to be masculine and girls learn to be feminine.

The finding reveals that women have the ability to perform academic and administrative duties and they perform with excellence. Women should thus be given an opportunity to advance in academic and administrative positions. The average mean is 3.40 which means that to some extent, women have the ability to deliver in academic and administrative positions in public universities in Central Uganda. This is because, the respondents ranked themselves good and the findings disagrees with Amondi (2010), Kwoba (1995) who argues that due to socialisation process, women lack experience and ability in goal setting.

In the analysis, the respondents ranked these measures with the highest ranks; women have the ability to perform, they set personal goal to advance, perform their duties with excellence which means that university employees believe and trust women to do a better job and know that education a woman is educating a nation. And the trend of having and seeing women in the kitchen is changing that is why respondents were very satisfied with the notion that women set personal goals to advance in academic and administrative positions unlike in the past.

Respondents however, ranked these items lower; women lack self confidence to perform administrative duties, women are not assertive like their men counterparts, women demonstrate less confidence in their ability to assume to academic and administrative duties. The respondents rated them good meaning that they never believed so and this means that women are self confident; they need space and trust from these universities to prove their worth. To sum it up therefore, the findings revealed that women have the ability to perform academic and administrative duties. And the study also found out that women often perform academic and administrative duties with excellence. The findings also revealed that women have confidence and self esteem. Women therefore have self confidence to perform academic and administrative duties.

Thus, unlike what most writers (Kwesiga, 2002, and Kwoba, 1995, Onsongo, 2004 and Amondi, 2010) write, women like their men counterparts have the ability to deliver, and women are fairly self confident. Confidence actually drives performance for where there is no confidence there is no hope, faith, positiveness, assertiveness and the will to do anything. Women have been perceived to be less confident, less assertive and less performers this is not so in universities. Women deliver and perform their duties with excellence.

Relationship Between the Level of Ability to Deliver and Level of Advancement Of Women In Academic And Administrative Positions

For this, the researcher tested a null hypothesis that the two variables are not significantly correlated. The Pearson Linear Correlation was employed while testing this null hypothesis at 0.05 (95%) level of significance, as indicated in table 3

Table 3: Relationship between the level of ability to deliver and level of advancement of women in academic and administrative positions

<i>Variable correlated</i>	<i>r-value</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Decision on H_0</i>
Ability to deliver Vs advancement	0.056	0.285	No significance relationship	Accepted

Field data, 2012

The Pearson Correlation is at 0.056 with the significance of 0.285. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted which means that women's lack of ability does not affect their advancement to managerial positions. Women can advance in academia and administration with little or less confidence. This hypothesis is in agreement with Kwoba (1995) and Amondi (2010) who claim that women tend to express less confidence in their ability to assume leadership roles and that women lack ability in personal goal setting. From this study, null hypothesis was accepted and this indicates that there is no significant relationship between the women academicians and administrators' ability to deliver and their advancement in management positions in Public Universities in Central Uganda.

The null hypothesis was accepted; there is no significant relationship between ability to deliver and the level of advancement in academic and administrative positions ($p = 0.285$).

CONCLUSIONS

Most women are still clustered in lower levels of administration; these therefore need to work on whatever is holding them to. Some of these women however are Masters Graduates. The university administration like human resource should take them into consideration. Women are called upon to keep and improve on their abilities to perform academic and administrative duties.

The study revealed that women to certain extent are self confident; they are being challenged to improve on their confidence levels and to be assertive as their men counterparts if they are to deliver in academic and administrative positions.

REFERENCES

- [1] Amondi, O. (2010). Representation of Women in Top Educational management and Leadership Positions in Kenya. *Advancing Women in Leadership*. Vol. 31, pp. 57-68, 2011
- [2] Bantebya, G. K. (2005). *Women in Academia: Voices from South*, Department of Women and Gender Studies, Kampala: Makerere University printery.
- [3] Bond, S. (1996). Academic leadership. Unpublished trainers module prepared for the Commonwealth Secretariat, London.
- [4] Cubillo, L. (1999). Gender and leadership in the NPQH: an opportunity lost? *Journal of In-Service Education*, Vol. 25(3), 545-55.
- [5] Davies L. (1990). *Equity and Efficiency? School management in an International Context*. London: Falmer Press.
- [6] Dinçer, A. (2010) *The absence of women in universities administrations*. Daily News; Leading News Source for Turkey and the Region
- [7] Greyvenstein, L.A.& Van der Westhuizen, P.C. (1992). South African Women in Educational Academic and administrative : A Holistic approach. *South African Journal of Education*, Vol. 12:270-276.
- [8] Gumbi, R.V. (2006). "Women in higher education leadership in The 21st century": address at the launch of WHEEL," September 2005, Protea Hotel President, Capetown. In UNCFSP-TEL).
- [9] Jagero, Beinomugisha,&Rwashema. (2011). How government policies affect women in management positions in universities: A case study of a private university in Uganda. *Prime Journals*, Vol 1 (4)

- [10] Jemerigbe, H. (1992). *Constraints to women's Employment and Advancement to Top management Positions in Africa*. A paper presented at Senior Policy Seminar on Women in Top management in Africa: the case study for Nigeria. Nairobi-Kenya.
- [11] Kwesiga, C. J. (1997). 'Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Gender and Academic and administrative '. A paper presented at the 8th Quarterly Seminar on Gender and management. Makerere University, Kampala.
- [12] Kwoba, C.A. (1995) 'Women and management. A paper presented in a seminar on Women in Top management, Kampala.
- [13] Lynch, K. K. (1990). Women in School Administration: Overcoming the barriers of Advancement. WEEA Digest
- [14] Neidhart, H.& Carlin, P. (2003,). Pathways, incentives and barriers for women aspiring principalship in Australia Catholic Schools. Paper presented at NZARE/AARE Conference, Auckland. Retrieved from http://209.85.229.132/search?q=cache:_
- [15] Nkomo, S. & Ngambi, H. (2009). "African women in leadership: current knowledge and a framework for future studies." *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, Vol.4:1. 49-68.
- [16] Onsongo, J. (2004). Factors Affecting Women's Participation in University Management In Kenya Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, Eithiopia. Gender Issues Research Report Series - no. 22
- [17] Tsoka & Mathipa (2001). Possible barriers to the advancement of women to leadership positions in the education profession: *South African Journal of Education*, 2001, 21(4)
- [18] Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) *Human Rights Quarterly* © 1991 [The Johns Hopkins University Press](http://www.jhu.edu/~rights/).
- [19] White, K. (2000). Women in the Professoriate in Australia. *International Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 3(2), 64-76
- [20] Williams, J. (2004). "Hitting the Maternal Wall." *Academe*, 90 (7 pages). Retrieved November 23, 2004. <http://www.aaup.org/publications/Academe/index.htm>
- [21] World Summit for Social Development (1995) *Economic and Social Development at the United Nations* Copenhagen, 1995.