

A Critical Examination of Problems of Female Workers in Business Organization: A Study of Swiss Park Hotel, Nnewi

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Abstract: This paper examined the problems of female workers in business organization, in Swiss Park Hotel, Nnewi. The problems of female workers envisaged included: discrimination in employment, social problems, husband's attitude, the female worker-boss relationship, psychological problems, and limited chances of advancement. The objective of the study was to find out the causes of the problems of the female workers in Swiss park Hotel, Nnewi. Design of this study was survey research method and the population of the study consists of all female workers in Swiss Park Hotel and managerial staff. Seven research questions were formulated, which, guided the study. Instruments for data collection **in this study** are questionnaires, oral interview, personal observation, related text books, journals and unpublished documents. Major findings are that female workers, are most times discriminated against in employment; official responsibilities expressly affected private life of female workers. The study recommended that business organizations should make a policy statement opposing age and sex discrimination in employment. The female workers should try to keep their business and private life intact; to protect their marriage and marital relationship.

Keyword: Business organisation, gender inequality, social problems, husbands' attitude, female worker – boss relationship and psychological problems.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to National Female Workers International Association (2005), opines that a female worker is a woman or girl, who is of legal age and gainfully employed for a particular official service. Five decades ago, there were no such things as female workers in establishments. With the rise in the need for cleaners, typists and clerks, the female workers found a place in the office, but then it only ends there. Men and families do not want their wives and daughters, going out every day to where no one can guarantee what they are doing. They argue that the place of women and girls are in the kitchen, where they can contribute in home keeping and raising of kids. One would see this as an unfair treatment but the truth remains that the jobs available in those days are mostly industrial workers and mining which of course women being the weaker sex; cannot comfortably engage in. This is why employers saw no reason to have women in their pool of staff since they cannot lift, pull, push and generally muster the amount of power men can in the nature of jobs available (Aluko,2009). This trend did not proportionately fizzle out with the transition from labour intensive age to the knowledge-based age; where knowledgeable skills and expertise rule supreme. The propagation of what a man can do, a woman can do better have not helped in changing the deep rooted orientation for the place of women in a male dominated world. Though today, women are finding places in organizations doing what the men can do in some cases; doing it better not minding that sex discrimination has not reduced in a way that will

make women comfortable and confident in the world of business (Anderson, 2007).

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

It is the aim of everybody to be an achiever in whatever he or she does in life. People in the business world are looking forward to succeed but unfortunately, females in this career encounter one problem or the other and for this reason they are not pleased with the problems they face in their organizations. Below are some of the problems encountered by female employees in business organizations.

- i. Social suspicion.
- ii. Discrimination in employment
- iii. Sexual harassment from the boss
- iv. Intimidation by male counter parts.
- v. Combination of the office responsibilities and that of home management (Armstrong, 2008).

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of this study, is to examine the problems of female workers in Swiss Park hotel, Nnewi. Specific objectives are:

1. To determine if women can contribute to organizational success of Swiss Park hotel Nnewi.
2. To find out whether the husbands of married female workers in Swiss park hotel interfere with their wives' jobs.

3. To know if female workers are treated as inferior to their male counter parts in Swiss park hotel.
4. To examine if the job of the female workers expressly affects private lives of married and unmarried female secretaries in Swiss park hotel.
5. To investigate whether unmarried female workers in Swiss park hotel, Nnewi have more chances of advancement on the job than their married counter parks.
6. To find out whether female workers in Swiss parks hotel, Nnewi can compete, favorably with their male counter parts.
7. To examine whether official duties of married female workers in Swiss park Hotel, Nnewi prevent them from paying proper attention to their families.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were cited.

1. Does the presence of women in the organization contribute to organizational success of Swiss Park Hotel Nnewi?
2. Do the husbands of married female workers in Swiss park hotel interfere with their wives' jobs?
3. Are female workers treated as inferior to their male counterparts in Swiss park hotel?
4. Does the job of the female worker expressly affect private lives of married and unmarried female secretaries in Swiss park hotel?
5. Do unmarried female workers in Swiss park hotel, Nnewi have more chances of advancement on the job than their married counter parts?
6. Can female workers in Swiss park hotel, Nnewi compete, favorably with their male counter parts?
7. Can the official duties of married female workers in Swiss park hotel, Nnewi prevent them from paying proper attention to their families?

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

The female workers, though not overly differentiated from the male workers in today's business world, still needs a unique definition that will identify its areas of uniqueness so that this study can focus on those areas in finding solutions to the problem under study.

Definitions of the Female Worker

Udoye (2011), further defined the female worker as a woman or girl, married or unmarried, who is gainfully employed to render a particular service to an organization which she is paid for such services. The worker in today's business world, though unique in some circumstances, cannot be discriminated from their male counter parts in terms of the level of skill and expertise they possess and their levels of job performance.

Locke (2007) defined a female worker as a person of the female gender who works, usually at a specific job, and gets paid in return for her service. Osuala (2008) defined a female

worker as an employee in an organization, as opposed to an employer manager.

Tejiri (2005), argues that a female worker is a manual labourer or other employee of the other industry and getting paid for her work. Gender discrimination in the workplace happens when an employee is treated differently because of his or her gender. Whenever there is gender discrimination in the work place it affects the terms and conditions of employment; it is against the law. Two kinds of gender discrimination are: Disparate treatment and disparate impact. Disparate treatment gender discrimination: disparate treatment is direct discrimination. To put it simply, it is treating an employee in a different manner because of the gender. Disparate Impact gender discrimination: disparate Impact gender discrimination happens when a company policy excludes certain people from jobs or promotions (Carol, 2010).

Gender Role Discrimination

Employers sometime expect women to perform certain duties like caring for children. If an employer does not hire a woman with small children, but does hire a man with small children then, that is also gender discrimination in the workplace. The employer is entitled to his or her beliefs, it should not affect employment decisions. If an employer is influenced by his or her beliefs in taking decision, that is against gender discrimination laws.

The Effects of Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

Goodman (2003), postulated that Gender discrimination can cause many negative effect on victims and business.

According to (Chan, 2005) Research Surveys, 68 percent of women surveyed believe that gender discrimination exists in the workplace. Federal law protects women and other minorities from discrimination in the workplace. The Equal pay Act of 1963 ended the practice of paying men more than women when performing the same jobs and duties. In 1964, the civil rights Act extended these protections, many women still feel gender-based discrimination is a problem in some business. Victims of gender discrimination loss motivation and morale necessary to perform their jobs effectively. According to a report written by Dreher, 2003 of the world watch institute, gender bias also leads to loss in productivity. Things that may lead to this loss of morale and motivation could include jokes about an employee's gender that imply inferiority, offensive jokes of a suggestive or sexual nature and jokes implying that an employee works is sub-par due to his or her gender. Federal law prohibits this type of workplace harassment, whether by superiors or co-workers Promotions.

In depth Overview of the Problem

Iberiyerari (2007), gave answers to this question: are women sufficiently protected? Relying on traditional gender roles and childcare responsibilities, some employers assume that female employees are less dependable than male employees even if the female worker is not pregnant and has not

suggested that she will become pregnant. Most entrepreneurs believe that being a mother is incompatible with a fast-paced business environment; the fear of such stereotyping most times prompt married female job applicants to their wedding rings before going into an interview. When two equally qualified people, one a woman and the other a man compete for a job, statistically the man will get the job most times (Green, 2002).

These gender-based stereotypes may even place some working mothers in a position in which they are simultaneously viewed by their employers as “bad mother” for investing time and resources into their careers and “bad workers” for devoting time and attention to their families (Hewlett, 2009).

Female Worker Discrimination

Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual based on their membership of a certain group or category. It involves excluding or restricting members of one group from opportunities that are available to another group. The United Nations position on discrimination is that: “discriminatory behaviors take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection”. The person being discriminated against needs to be treated worse than others for some arbitrary reason. Female worker discrimination in business organization happens when a female employee is treated differently because of her gender. Whenever there is gender discrimination in the workplace adversely affects the terms and conditions of employment, it is against the law. What constitutes sexual discrimination varies between countries. Only recently have social movements and laws in the industrialized countries recognized the right of women to have equal opportunities in the workplace, it is yet in many parts of the world, discrimination based on gender is still deeply entrenched. Worldwide, women tend to have less access to education, training and opportunities for employment than men, and women are often given no meaningful protections against such discriminatory acts. (Hultin, 2004).

The Right to Equal Pay

Protection against gender-based discrimination extends to all aspects of employment including hiring, firing, pensions, conditions of employment and promotions. The law specifically mandates that each sex receive equal pay for equal work, which is defined as work requiring substantially the same skill, effort or degree of responsibility. To help assess whether workers of different sex are paid equally for work of equal value, the European Commission has issued a “code of practice on the implementation of equal pay for work of equal value for women and men. The code which is not binding aims to provide concrete advice for employers and collective bargaining partners to ensure that the principle of equality between women and men performing work of equal value is applied to all aspects of pay. In particular, it aims to eliminate sexual discrimination whenever pay

structures are based on job classification and evaluation systems the right to equal pay for equal work applies both to the public and private sectors, whether the pay has been decided by collective agreements, wage scales, wage agreements or individual contracts.

Laws Against Gender Discrimination

Many countries have subscribed to the convention on the elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. Article 2 of the convention provides that states agree to pursue a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and take appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against women. (Udoe, 2011).

1. **Equal pay act of 1963:** prohibits wage discrimination based on sex.
2. **Title vii of the civil right act of 1964:** broadly prohibits discrimination in the workplace including hiring, firing, work force reduction, benefits and sexually harassing conduct. The EEOC (Equal employment opportunity commission) is an administrative agency setup in the US to enforce the civil right act of 1964. Title vii prohibitions on sexual discrimination have given significant help to women seeking equality in the workplace. Yet after years of passage of Title vii, nearly 80% of female workers were in “women’s work” as secretaries, administrative support workers and salesclerks. They still suffered from job discrimination and unequal.
3. **Pregnancy discrimination act, which amended title Vii of the civil rights act, of 1964:** covers discrimination based on pregnancy in the workplace. While in the United Kingdom, laws against sexual discrimination includes:
 - i. **UK equal pay act 1970:** provides for equal pay for comparable work.
 - ii. **Sex discrimination act 1975** makes discrimination against women or men including discrimination on the grounds of marital status illegal in the workplace
 - iii. **Human rights act 1998:** provides more scope for redressing all forms of discriminatory imbalances.
 - iv. **Equality act 2010:** provides that it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against you because of your sex.

Remedies against female worker discrimination the relief or remedies available for employment discrimination, whether caused by intentional acts by practices that have a discriminatory effect on many include, back pay, hiring, promotion, reinstatement or front pay. Remedies also may include payment of attorney’s fees, expert witness fees and court costs. Under most EEOC enforced laws, compensatory and punitive damages also may be available where intentional discrimination is found. Damages may be

available to compensate for actual monetary losses, for future monetary losses, for mental anguish and incoherence. Punitive damages also may be available if an employer acted with malice or reckless in difference. Most of these remedies are aimed at putting the claimant in approximately the same economic position she would have been in, had the discrimination not occurred (Jaliisand,2000).

Work-Life Balance

An increasing number of articles have promoted the importance of work-life balance. This highlights the current concern within society and organizations about the impact of professional women and its implications regarding work and family performance and women’s role in society. The following variables influencing the experience of work-life balance were identified while reviewing the international literature.

- a. The multiple roles performed by women
- b. Role strain experienced because of multiple roles, ie role conflict and role over load.
- c. Organization culture and work dynamics: Organizational values supporting work-life balance have positive work and personal well-being consequences.
- d. Personal resources and social support: several studies confirmed the positive relationship between personalities emotional support and well-being.
- e. Career orientation and career stage in which women careers need to be viewed in the context of their life course and time lines
- f. Coping and coping strategies: women use both emotional and problem focused coping to deal with role conflict. (Sokoloff, 2014).

Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict

Work-life balance is the maintenance of the balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work and family have increasingly become antagonist spheres equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for Work-Family Conflict (WFC). These conflicts are intensified by the “cultural contradictions of motherhood” as women are increasingly encouraged to seek self fulfillment in demanding careers, they also face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing “intensive parenting” additional problems faced by employed women are those associated with finding adequate, affordable access to child and elderly care.

WFC has been defined as a type of inter-role conflict where in some responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible and have a negative influence on an employee’s situation. Its theoretical background is a scarcity hypothesis which describes those individuals in certain limited amount of energy. These roles tend to drain them and cause stress or inter-role conflict results of previous research indicate that WFC is related to a number of negative job attitudes and consequences (Mary, 2012).

6. METHODOLOGY

This referred to the plan, structure and strategy the researcher used in order to obtain reliable information and answer to the research questions. The design of this research work was survey method and it involved the use of questionnaire, administered to the respondents to solicit their views “problems of female workers in business organization”.

This study was carried out in Swiss Park hotel, Nnewi, Nnewi-North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Data was collected through the following sources:

- 1. Primary source
- 2. Secondary source

Primary Source: The primary source of data collection includes:

- i. oral interview
- ii. Questionnaire
- iii. Personal observation

Secondary Source: The secondary source of data collection includes:

- i. Related text books
- ii. Published records
- iii. Journals.
- iv. Unpublished works, e.g. Projects and seminars

The population of this study consists of all female workers in Swiss Park and managerial staff. The total number of the population was sixty (60) stake holders.

Sampling Techniques used was

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)_2}$$

Where n = sample size

- N = total population
- e = level of significance
- 1 = constant

Using 5% (0.05) as level of significance

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore } n &= \frac{60}{1 + 60(0.05)^2} \\ &= n = \frac{60}{(1+60(0.0025))} \\ n &= \frac{60}{1+0.15} \\ n &= 52.17391304 \\ n &= \mathbf{52} \end{aligned}$$

The questionnaire of this research work was personally distributed to the sample size by the researcher and equally retrieved.

Fifty-two (52) questionnaires were distributed and only forty (40) were retrieved while twelve (12) were lost due to logistic problems. In the validity and reliability of research instrument: The researcher believed that the questionnaires are testable and reliable but subject to various constraints. The researcher chose to represent the data collected in tables of frequency, using simple percentage method of analysis, thus:

7. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of the fifty-two (52) questionnaire that were distributed to respondents, only forty (40) were filled and returned therefore the analysis was based on the forty (40)

Question 1: Does the presence of women in the organization contribute to organizational success?

In Table 1, out of 40 respondents, 18 respondents (45%) responded that the presence of women in the organization contributed in organizational success, while 22 respondents (55%) responded negatively to the above question.

Question 2: Does the husbands of married female workers in Swiss park interfere with their wives jobs?

Table 2, shows that out of 40 respondents, 30 respondents (75%) responded that the husbands of married female workers in Swiss Park interfere with their wives' jobs, while 10(25%) responded no to the opinion.

Question 3: Are female workers treated as inferior to their male counterparts in Swiss Park hotel?

Table 3, revealed that out of 40 respondents, 25 respondents (62.5%) responded positively to the question, while 15 respondents (37.5%) responded negatively to the above question.

Question 4: Does the job of the female workers expressly affect private lives of married and unmarried female secretaries in Swiss Park Hotel?

Table 4 above shows that the percentage of respondents which confirmed that the job of the female worker expressly affect private lives of married and unmarried female secretaries in Swiss park hotel was lesser than those who disagreed to the opinion.

Question 5: Does unmarried female workers in Swiss Park hotel Nnewi have more chances of advancement on the job than their married counterparts?

Table 5 shows that much percentages of respondents agreed that unmarried female workers in Swiss Park Hotel Nnewi have more chances of advancement on the job than their married counterparts while lesser percentage responded otherwise.

Question 6: can female workers in Swiss Park Nnewi compete favorably with their male counterparts?

This shows that the female workers in Swiss Park hotel Nnewi compete favorably with their male counterparts. This is supported by 42.5% respondents against 57.5% who think otherwise.

Question 7: Can the official duties of married female workers in Swiss Park hotel prevent them from paying proper attention to their families?

From the table, it was observed that 28(70%) agreed that official duties of married female workers in Swiss Park hotel prevent them from paying proper attention to their families while 12(30%) disagreed.

From the foregoing, Swiss park hotel Nnewi should encourage the female workers to improve their ability to work and focus on their duties. Married female workers

should leave all marital problems or issues at home before coming to work.

Relying on traditional gender roles and child care responsibilities, some employers assume that female employees are less dependable than male employees,

Most entrepreneurs believe that being a mother is incompatible with a fast-paced business environment. The fear of such stereotyping most times prompt married female job applicants to remove their wedding rings before going into an interview. When two equally qualified people, one a woman and the other a man compete for a job, statistically, the man will get the job most times.

In summary, the problems of female workers in Swiss Park hotel Nnewi should not be neglected.

The management should find out the problems encountered by female workers in their office like negligence of duty, being rude to people or customers, absent from work, sleeping in the office, quarreling, discrimination in employment, husbands' attitude, the female worker-boss relationship social problems, psychological problems and limited chances of advancement. However, employers should know how to react to their female workers or employees, know the working environment that will be best for maximum efficiency and the entire work of the organization.

The relief or remedies available for employment discrimination, whether caused by intentional acts or by practices that have a discriminatory effect may include; back pay, hiring, promotion, reinstatement or front pay. Remedies also may include payment of attorney's fees, expert witness fees and court costs. Under most Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforced laws, compensatory and punitive damages also may be available where intentional discrimination is found. Damages may be available to compensate for actual monetary losses, for future monetary losses, for mental anguish and inconvenience. Punitive damages also may be available if an employer acted with malice or reckless indifference. Most of these remedies are aimed at putting the claimant in approximately the same economic position she would have been in, had the discrimination not occurred.

8. CONCLUSION

From the findings of this research study, it was concluded that there are significant problems facing married and unmarried female workers such as:

- i. It gives fear to those intending to pursue their careers in the male dominated industries and civil positions.
- ii. It makes women to be reluctant to their responsibilities.
- iii. Discrimination in employment, husband's attitude, the female workers boss relationship, social problems, Psychological problems and limited chances of advancement.

- iv. Finally, the findings of the study serve as a means of providing new ideas on how to improve the morale of married and unmarried female workers.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher made the following recommendations based on the findings and conclusion above:

1. Swiss Park hotel Nnewi should pay more attention to the female workers in their company knowing that the female workers also contribute to the growth of the company.
2. Female workers in Swiss Park hotel Nnewi should work harder to improve their job performance.
3. The hotel should consider the needs and well-being of female workers both married and unmarried.
4. Both male and female workers should understand that they need each other support and understanding for a good job performance in order to achieve the company's goal.

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