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7. Gender, Work and Better Family Life among Employees of Banks in Ilorin Metropolis

by

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Abstract

Work is an indispensable human endeavour whether it is being paid for or not. The human society believes that work is something one has to do which may be drudgery and not necessarily pleasurable. Gender plays an important role on work and family life of many nations. Family life in many societies has witnessed a lot of changes as a result of work. It is on the basis of this that attempt is made in this study to examine the connection existing among gender, work and better family life. The study was conducted among employees of banks in Ilorin metropolis in 2012. Primarily, questionnaire method was used to obtain data from the selected respondents while personal interview was adopted to supplement data obtained from the main research method. The major finding is that employees of banks varied in terms of demographic data and work has no relationship with better family life among employees of bank based on gender. Therefore, it is recommended that management of banks should encourage more role expansion for their workers so that employees can continuously maintain better family life irrespective of gender.

Introduction

Gender plays an important role on work and family life of any worker in any organization. Over the years, the role of work has evolved and the composition of the workforce has changed. Numerous analyses have been used to explore how work is changing, as we move from the image of work in an industrial based economy to one in which information and knowledge are key factors influencing the nature of work and the institutional policies and practices governing employment relationships. That is why Bailyn, *et al.* (2001) stated that the stylized description of the nature of work and employment has been rendered obsolete by many of the same developments that we focus on. Today's workplaces are highly varied. Family life in many societies has witnessed a lot of variations and people are leaving with different kinds of family life. The changes in family life, driven by both people's decisions on various events, such as to leave the parental home, to marry or move in with a partner, to have a child and to separate/divorce, to move to a new house and lower mortality rates, are analyzed in terms of household

living arrangements. The issue of family life is determined by household categories combined with the household status of its members, which is crucial in the attempt to show what type of family people live in, how they arrange household responsibilities and how they reconcile the competing demands of work and family life. It is against this background that attempt is made to discuss gender as it affects work and better family life.

Gender as a Phenomenon

Over the years, there has been increasing use of the term gender in academic, development, population and family planning circles (International Planned Parenthood Federation's report, 1995). Gender is the short form for the complex social differentiation variable between men and women. It is also one of the considerable fundamental principles for organizing societies. In actual fact, we will understand ourselves better if both men and women in the society understand the true meaning of gender. The issue of masculinity or femininity as caused by biology is a contentious issue, both in the social sciences and in the world at large (Steve. and Steve 2006). They further stated that it is of a piece with the general sociological perspective (which stresses social construction) to see gender differences as owing relatively little to biology and a great deal to culture. Most sociologists would argue, that while maternity is a biological fact, a 'maternal attitude' is a socially-specific cultural construct: different cultures specify different sorts of roles and attitudes as being appropriate for mothers. In sociology, institutions are the main ordering principles of the social life. Meanwhile, gender is a social institution that encompasses four main institutions in sociology- family, economy, religion, and symbolic language. This is evident why Lorber (2000) added that gender structures social life, patterns social roles, and provides individuals with identities and values.

However, the social distinction between male and female has been in existence since time immemorial. Sociologically, gender can be seen as set of social characteristics that are associated with the sex difference culturally. Gender social characteristics according to Robertson (1987) include; differences in hairstyle, clothing pattern, occupational role and other culturally learn activities and traits. Societies however, elaborate gender's division through biological categorization into masculine and feminine. This division of human species into two fundamental categories can be referred to as gender differentiation – a social process by which biological differences are given social and cultural significance and used as basis for social classification. (Steve and Steven, 2006). Invariably it has a long influence

on individuals throughout their lives. Because social statuses of the sexes are generally unequal, hence these gender roles tend to reflect whatever sexual stratification already exists.

In essence, few studies have specifically focused on work-family and gender, and this represents a critical gap in work-family research (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002). Many studies have either been conducted with exclusively female samples (e.g., Bernas & Major, 2000) or have ignored gender in the analyses (Barnett, 1998). Adding to this, Hochschild (1997) found that work takes precedence over home as a source of friendship, accomplishment and even relaxation because workers are beleaguered by disorder, the demands of children and spouses. As such, the culture and organization of paid work, domestic care work, and community organizations hang on the shoulders of the breadwinner; a great challenge on both the family and work-life.

Work and Changing Nature of Work Life

Work is an indispensable human endeavour whether it is being paid or not. By nature, man always praises and showers encomiums on the working hands, but frowns at the idle ones. It could be referred to as any engagement in physical and mental activities in order to achieve results. By assumptions, the society believes that work is something you have to do which involves drudgery but not necessarily pleasure rather it is what you are paid to do and what happens outside the home. Thus, work goes beyond these assumptions.

According to Giddens (2009), work is described as the carrying out of tasks that require the expenditure of mental and physical effort, which has its objective to be the production of goods and services that cater for human needs. Work can also be referred to as the physical or mental activities which transform natural materials into a more useful form, improve human knowledge and understanding of the world, provide or distribute goods to others (Kuper and Kuper, 1999). The definition of work is far beyond the activities alone but must also look more critically into the context within which those activities are being carried out. In view of this, Ogunbameru (2008) defined work as an activity that produces something of value for other people. From literature, work seems to have different categories which are; Full-time work, Part-time work, Casual work, Temporary or Contract work.

Full-Time Work: Employment that is based upon a contract of employment for a standard hour of engagement (generally between 35 to 40 hours per week) is

referred to as full-time work. Full-time employees are paid either by wage based on hourly rate or a monthly based salary.

Part-Time Work: This type of work is performed by any employee who is engaged for a number of hours, fixed or varied, which are fewer than that of specified standard hours in the relevant award. Some awards stipulate the maximum as well as minimum hours for which part-time workers can be engaged. Part-time workers are entitled to accrue holiday and other leave entitlements on a pro rata basis that is, the ratio of hours worked to standard hours.

Casual Work: A casual worker is someone hired by the employer on an hourly or daily basis usually to perform work of a short-term, irregular or seasonal in nature, either working full-time or part-time. Casual workers usually receive a flat hourly rate plus an hourly loading ranging between 15% and 35%. The casual loading compensates for the lack of annual leave and sick leave.

Temporary or Contract Work: Temporary employees are often employed for a specific time period to complete a particular project or to replace employees absent on leave. They generally receive entitlements such as annual and sick leave on a pro-rata basis. Employment status and the type of contract of employment will determine whether a temporary worker has access to unfair dismissal provisions in the event that the worker is dismissed.

Changing Nature of Work

Numerous analyses have explored on how work is changing, as we move from an image of work in an industrial manufacturing-based economy to one in which information and knowledge are key factors influencing the nature of work and the institutions, policies, and practices governing employment relationships (Cappelli et al., 1997; National Research Council, 2000). The former image presented the typical work setting as a stable, long-term relationship in a large industrial firm competing in an expanding domestic market with two classes of workers managers or exempt white-collar salaried employees, and production workers or nonexempt hourly workers. The skills, decision-making responsibilities, loyalties, and legal status of these two groups were assumed to be different. Both sets of employees and their employers were seen as bound together in an implicit social contract in which loyalty and good performance by the employees were exchanged for satisfactory wages, benefits, and long-term security. Wages and benefits were expected to move upward gradually in tandem with improvements in productivity and profits.

This stylized description of the nature of work and employment has been rendered obsolete by many of the same developments that we focus on in this report. Today's workplaces are highly varied. They are located in a mixture of small and large firms scattered across service and manufacturing sectors, and in subcontracting arrangements that blur traditional industry categories.

Organizations are devolving decisions and other responsibilities traditionally reserved for managers to employees and groups so that the management/worker and exempt/nonexempt distinctions are also becoming more blurred. Employment status is now more varied, mixing "standard" employees with contract, temporary, and project workers, and employment durations of even the standard white-collar and blue-collar workers have become more uncertain. Clearly, the old social contract no longer describes the expectations that either the majority of workers or employers bring to their relationships today. How this plays out in the future, however, is at best uncertain. While all these developments in work and employment have a bearing on the relationship between work and family life, the one that is perhaps of most consequence is the changing pattern observed in working time. We give special attention to this issue here. In organizational settings, individuals are more likely to engage in sense making when they encounter problematic experiences at work (Weick, 1995).

Theoretical Framework

Expansionist theory

Researches nowadays emphasize on expansionist approach when it comes to the analysis of "multiple roles." The roles which are not limited to one gender such as the worker role among women with children and the role of partners and parents among employed women (Barnett and Hyde, 2001), which states that "multiple role occupancy has beneficial effects" such that "adding" the worker role is beneficial to women, and "adding" family roles is beneficial for men. Various terms have been used to refer to the process by which one role strengthens or enriches the quality of the other roles, such as work-family enrichment, work-family enhancement, work-family facilitation and positive spill-over.

However, this theory consists of four testable statements:

- (i) Multiple roles are beneficial for one's mental, physical and relationship health.
- (ii) The benefits are derived from processes such as "buffering, added income, support, opportunities to experience success, expanded frame of reference, increased self-complexity, similarity of experiences and gender-role ideology" (Barnett and Hyde, 2001).

- (iii) There are upper limits to the benefits, limited by the role conditions such as the number of roles, the quality of roles and the time demands of each.
- (iv) Psychological gender differences are generally small.

Application of Expansionist Theory to Gender, Work and Better Family Life

It can be observed from the assumptions of this theory that roles spill-over has beneficial effects on work and better family life of workers, especially the employees of banks. This is because roles spill-over is not limited to a particular gender, such as the worker role among women with children and role of partners and parents among employed women (Barnett and Hyde, 2001)

In essence, multiple roles can enrich quality of other roles by reducing the stressor surrounding the work and family life of employees of banks. For instance, if their children went to school and the wife is still engaged during the school closing hours, the husband can extend his roles into that of the woman for betterment of their family.

Also, findings from the theory acknowledged that gender has some benefits to work and family life. Such as buffering, income, support, expands frame of reference, increasing complexity and gender role ideology. Meaning that role spill-over can safeguard their work and family life. This can be done through adding worker role by women and adding family roles by men; that is expanding frame of reference which may invariably lead to income increase and self complexity of employees of banks.

Despite all the provisions of this theory, it failed to make assumption on the fact that energy and resources are limited and fixed, rather than they are expandable through the occupation of various roles, a person may expand his or her energy supply. Despite the limitations, this theory is still relevant to explain work and family affairs.

Results of Empirical Research

Method

The study was conducted among employees of banks in Ilorin metropolis in 2012. A total of one hundred and fifty workers were involved in the study. Primarily, questionnaire method was used to obtain data from the selected respondents. Personal interview was then adopted to supplement data obtained from the main research method, i.e. questionnaire.

Find below the findings of the investigation:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	105	70.0
Female	45	30.0
Total	150	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2012).

As shown in the table 1 above, 105 (70%) respondents were male while 45 (30%) were female. Thus, the male bank employees were numerically greater than the females in the study setting. This observed pattern can be explained by the fact that male bank employees are more than female bank employees. However both men and women were fairly represented in giving information relevant to the research work.

Table 2: Respondents' Opinion on whether Job gives Better Family

Opinion	Frequency	Percent
Yes	87	58
No	63	42
Total	150	100

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2012).

On the source of work and better family life, the table above indicates that 87 (58%) respondents agreed that they have better family life through job, 63 (42%) respondents disagreed that they have better family life through job.

This means that most of bank's employees have better family life from the job point of view.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis from this study is concern with whether there is a relationship between the work and better family life among the employees of bank on the basis of gender.

The hypothesis tested is stated thus:

H_0 : There is no relationship between the work and better family life among the employees of bank on the basis of Gender.

H_1 : There is relationship between the work and better family life among the employees of bank on the basis of Gender.

Table 3 (a): Relationship between Work and better family Life on the Bases of Gender

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.115 ^a	0.013	0.007	0.49359

Source: Researcher Field Survey, (2012).

Table 3 (b):

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	0.483	1	0.483	1.982	.161 ^a
Residual	36.057	148	0.244		
Total	36.54	149			

Source: Researcher Field Survey, (2012).

P-Value=0.161

Decision Rule

Setting the level of significant at 95%, that is $\alpha = 0.05$, reject H_0 if p-value reported from the analysis is less than the alpha level ($P\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.05$). An in-depth examination of the regression table presented above certainly revealed some hidden results about the relationship between the two variables under consideration. Going by the data presented above, since $P\text{-value} = 0.161$ is not less than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore H_0 is accepted, meaning that there is no relationship between work and better family life among employees of bank in on the bases of Gender.

Discussion of Findings

The issues of work-family and gender have attracted little research; this could be attested to reason why Parasuraman & Greenhaus (2002) affirm that there is a critical gap in work-family research. This finding demonstrates the reality of banking employees in developing countries especially Nigeria; despite the fact that there is economic instability, most of the employees in banks have better family life from the job point of view. This does not justify that they are contended but due to the unemployment level, it is difficult to secure job opportunities elsewhere. This finding notwithstanding, emphasizes Frone (2003) summary that, in many samples with divergent characteristics, there are no meaningful differences in levels of work-family conflict and family--work conflict. Grzywacz and Marks

(2000) found this to be the case with their measures of work-family facilitation and family--work facilitation as well.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This work examined gender, work and family life among employees of banks. From this study, it can be concluded that the employees of banks that were studied varied in terms of demographic data and involvement in works. Generally, gender, was an important factor examined in this study.

It was discovered that, work has no relationship with better family life among employees of bank based on gender. The major contribution of this study to existing knowledge is not only that socio-economic factors, but also that the nature of work tends to affect the quality of family life.

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proffered. Such recommendations if adequately implemented can be of help in minimizing the problems associated with work and better family life among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis and Nigeria as a whole.

1. Management of banks should encourage more role expansion for their workers and role sharing as well to give more even time for them.
2. Banks employees should as well improve their effort to continuously maintain better family Life.
3. Individual workers should be more enlightened in order to have more recognition of their roles.
4. Government should encourage non-governmental organizations that are based on gender issues to include work and family life issues in their agenda.

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