



Received: 17-11-2022

Accepted: 27-12-2022

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

Family Responsibilities and Work-Family Conflict as Correlates of Career Advancement of Women in Civil Service in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined family responsibilities and work-family conflict as correlates of women's career advancement in Southwest, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The population consisted of all women in Government +Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample for this study consisted of 1183 adult women from 40 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling procedure. A self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Family Issues and Career Advancement Questionnaire (FICAQ)" was used to collect relevant data for the study. The instrument consists of three sections namely Section A, B and C. The instrument was subjected

to content validity by experts of Adult Education and Tests & Measurement. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that there was no significant relationship between family responsibilities and women career advancement. It was also revealed that there was no significant relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement. The study concluded that family responsibilities and work-family conflict were not related to career advancement of women. It was recommended among others that husbands should continue to encourage their wives in the pursuit of their career advancement at work place.

Keywords: Career Advancement, Civil Service, Correlate, Family Responsibilities, Work-Family Conflict

Introduction

Over the years, there has been raging debates among diverse people over the participation or desire of women in leadership position. Some argue that women are regarded as weaker sex owing to social value, norms and beliefs, which have placed them in a subordinate position to men in any executive or administrative position. Career advancement is a component of industrial education. Rosenberg (2018) [18] defined career advancement as upward progression of one's profession. An individual career is advanced when he or she moves from entry-level job or position to a higher or senior position within the same occupation. For example, career advancement of a university tutor begins the moment he or she moves from the rank of research assistant, up the ladder to the rank of professorship.

Findings show that in all the six states that comprised Southwest, Nigeria, 80 percent of Directors and Permanent Secretaries are male which implies that career advancement of women is very slow (Aghorighor, 2020) [2]. There are five major barriers affecting women's ability to excel in their career, these barriers include stereotypes and perceptions, mentoring and networking availability, family issues, discrimination in the workplace, and availability of fund (Borg & Gall, 2007) [4]. According to Attoh (2017) [3], women faced many challenges in advancing their careers. Challenges may include non-supportive bosses or colleagues, sexual discrimination and male bigotry. Male dominance in the workplace has forced a number of women to adopt a more aggressive model. The constantly reinforced message is that women succeed only if they become more assertive, competitive, and more politically and socially astute (Erasmus, *et al.*, 2000) [6].

The civil service tends to be a lifetime career, from graduation until retirement (at 60). Thus, civil servants rarely quit or get fired, and seldom move from one ministry to another. If an employee's performance is deemed satisfactory, their grade will advance once every three years. Rises in grade do not, however; guarantee promotions to better managerial positions. It appears that the factors that contribute to career success of women were experience, education, seniority, interpersonal skills, ability in tackling superiors, commitment and dedication, support from superiors, colleagues and family and leadership styles. On the other hand, it appears that some factors that hinder women from career advancement are preference for family, limited access to professional training, personality, lack of leadership charisma, lack of confidence, society expectation, gender bias,

lack of qualification; power; prestigious developmental assignments and informal network, no mentoring system, low self-esteem and not taken seriously.

Many directors, almost all men, argue that women have not made significant progress because they do not have the required educational backgrounds, skills, and work experiences. These executives seem to view the slow rise of women as an unbiased fact rather than discrimination. Although most young men and women are promoted based on performance, a gender gap still seems to exist in the rate of promotions and women seem to be at a disadvantage. It appears that women's conditions and challenges of work, negative perception of the society, gender discrimination in the occupation, weak women's ability to assume leadership responsibilities, low financial incentives for women contribute to low level of career advancement among women.

Women generally continue to perform primary care-giving to children and dependents while simultaneously juggling the demands of their workforce participation. Their career advancement issues, concerns, tasks and responsibilities, molded by the work-family pressures they experience, may be distinctly different from those of men. Thus, on account of family responsibilities, women's careers may take forms, continuity and advancement patterns, and directions substantially different from those of men.

There is much evidence that family responsibilities and work-family conflict appears to influence women's career advancement. For example, in Nigeria and Southwest in particular, women's duties are believed to be limited to giving birth, nurturing and bringing up of children, who will grow to become adults of tomorrow. It is also believed that the kitchen is the right place for women. However, modern trends have shown and indicated that women, after all, are not as weak as may be perceived.

In the past, men seem to be regarded as family providers, while women were viewed as home keepers and care-takers. A few women seem to be allowed in the business industry, let alone to hold managerial positions. This appears to be the major reason why the business world is dominated and operated by men. In the traditional African society, male appears to dominate in many aspects of life, since men were expected to protect the country and their families. Based on this, some people appear to still hold the traditional view that a woman is supposed to be a house-keeper; perform all family responsibilities and wait for a man to bring money to the family (Oplatka, 2006)^[16].

One of the functions of women as mothers to their children is related to their child's personal growth. Child's growth is developing one of the factors that shape the child's personality is the role of a mother. Mother has an important role in shaping the personality of a child. Therefore, the role of a mother in the household has made family responsibilities an issue that may influence career advancement of women.

The same belief applies today in most organisations, which seems to be the reason why many organisations are operated or dominated by men. Women's academic achievements and roles in society appear to be hardly acknowledged or recognized. This situation has necessitated the call for the empowerment of women according to their due status, rights and responsibilities and enabling them to participate actively in decision making activities. Many corporate executives and managers argue that majority of women could not make

significant progress because they do not have the required educational background, skills, and work experiences. These executives view the slow rise of women as an unbiased fact rather than discrimination (Fernandez, 2001)^[8].

Although most young men and women are promoted based on performance, a gender gap appears to still exist in the rate of promotions. Women are still concentrated in traditional occupations such as sales and administrative support jobs (Ezeeden & Ritchey, 2009)^[7]. Male-dominated cultures appear to be unhealthy for women in Southwest, Nigeria because it seems to suppress their emotions and needs. This suggests that a gender conscious environment may affect the success of women in the corporate environment.

Some women are finding it difficult to reach the pinnacles of their careers. A good number of women have problems coping with family responsibilities and career advancement. The challenge of maintaining the family has affected women in meeting their various career commitments (Madichie, 2017)^[13]. It is assumed that women cannot devote themselves to their work because they are devoted to their care giving responsibilities in the family.

The phenomenon of work-family conflict has been approached from diverse applications and orientations dealing with extent, causes, consequences and remedies. A woman has to perform the duties of a faithful wife, a sacrificing mother, obedient and respectful daughter-in-law and an efficient and highly placed career woman. There are contradictory role expectations from working woman while she is at work and at home. On the professional front she is expected to be committed, dynamic, competitive, straight forward, non-sentimental and act in a "business or professional like" manner; and at home, she is expected to be sweet, soft, sensitive, adaptable, gentle, unassertive and domesticated (Abdul & Roshan, 2018)^[1]. These contradictory expectations seem to lead to multiple stresses and strains for women which may affect their career advancement.

Due to work-family conflict, the researcher observed that some husbands have forced their wives to resign from paid employments in order for the wives to take care of the homes. An attempt to play one of the roles with perfection could lead to an inadvertent compromise on and sacrifice of the other. Thus, a working woman finds it difficult to do justice while performing several roles simultaneously and hence seem to be facing psychological pressure; stress and health-related problems resulting in declining career advancement.

Subramaniam, *et al.* (2014)^[19] examined the Influence of Family Responsibilities on Women Managers' Career Development in Malaysia. The target population of study comprised of senior, middle and line managers of public firms in Malaysia. Study adopted survey design and questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse data from 466 respondents. The study found that family responsibilities have a significant negative effect on career development in Malaysia.

Another study conducted by Friedman and Greenhaus (2010)^[9] observed that family responsibilities affect career attainment especially women professionals. The authors argued that pressure from family inhibits career advancement of women especially at top managerial level. The authors' stressed that, child-bearing, marriage ties and

family support impede career success of female workers. A nursing mother takes care of new born child and elderly ones. Family responsibilities influence the time and energy that individuals devote to their work which has adverse effect on work effort particularly female professionals.

Linge (2015) ^[12] examined Family Factors and Career Advancement of Kenyan Women Employees. Study adopted survey approach as instrument of data collection. Data were collected from a population of 400 female workers. A total of 366 responses were received from the participants and used for the analysis, while the remaining 34 were not utilized. Data were analysed using Chi-square to test the significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Findings showed that family factors were not perceived as barrier to career advancement of Kenyan women employees.

Rosa, *et al.* (2017) ^[17] investigated the Challenges and Success Factors for Women's Career Development. The target population of study comprised of female workers in lower, middle and top management positions. Descriptive survey and semi-structure interview was used as instrument for data collection. Out of 54 questionnaires administered to the female participants, only 43 were returned and used, while the remaining 11 were not returned and used for the study. 10 female workers were interviewed face-to-face which lasted for 45 minutes. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to analyse survey data from fifty-four respondents. Study adopts data categorization approach for the analysis of the empirical findings to see the connection between theory and practice. Result showed that family obligation has significant influence on women career development.

Mohan and Ashok (2011) ^[14] conducted a study on work-family conflict, which is a recent phenomenon. He stressed the conflict between the traditional role expectations associated with women and the rational demands placed by the modern work organizations in which women are entering in greater numbers in recent years. Further, the nature of work and extent of responsibility associated with work are found to be crucial in determining career advancement of women.

Buddhapriya (2009) ^[5] examined Work-Family Challenges and Their Impact on Career Decisions: A Study of Indian Women Professionals. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the impact of family responsibilities on women professional career decisions. The population of study comprised of 121 women professionals working in, government services, public sector, private sector, and NGOs. Study adopted descriptive survey approach and questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Out of 121 questionnaires administered to the participants, only 113 were returned while the remaining 8 were not returned and used for the study. Mean score was used to analyse data to generate study result. The findings showed that work-life challenges influenced their career decisions.

Wang and Cho (2013) ^[20] investigated work-family conflict influences on female career development and expectations. The objective of the study was to investigate whether family responsibilities influence female career development and expectation. The total population of the study comprised of 92 female employees of Lin Yi University and Shandong Medical College. Study adopted descriptive survey approach and questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Pearson

Product Moment Correlation and Regression Method were used to analyse data to generate study result. Research findings showed that work-family conflict influence female career development and expectations.

Against this backdrop, this research work examines family responsibilities and work-family conflict as correlates of women's career advancement in Southwest, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were generated for the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between family responsibilities and women career advancement.
2. There is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The population consisted of all women in Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample for this study consisted of 1183 adult women from 40 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling procedure. In stage one, four States were selected from the six states in Southwest, Nigeria through simple random sampling technique. The second stage involved the selection of 10 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) from each of the four States using proportional stratified sampling technique. In stage three, 30 women were selected from each of the state selected Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) through stratified sampling technique so as to include women in the junior, senior and administrative cadre.

A self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Family Issues and Career Advancement Questionnaire (FICAQ)" was used to collect relevant data for the study. The instrument consists of three sections namely Section A, B and C. Section A of the instrument sought for bio-data of the respondents among which such as age, marital status, among others while Section B consists of 10 items on family responsibilities, and work-family conflict as related to career advancement. It is prepared using four-point scale of Likert type as follows: Strongly Agree - 4, Agree - 3, Disagree - 2 and Strongly Disagree - 1. Section C consists of 20 items which contained information on career advancement. Four-point scale of Likert type is used as follows: Strongly Agree - 4, Agree - 3, Disagree - 2 and Strongly Disagree - 1. The instrument was subjected to content validity by experts of Adult Education and Tests & Measurement.

The researcher obtained permission from the authorities of the various Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The researcher administered the instrument with the help of four trained research assistants. The trained research assistants were responsible for the administration and collection of the instrument from the respondents under the supervision of the researcher.

The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of family responsibilities and work-family conflict as it influences career advancement (N = 1183)

S. No	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD
Family Responsibilities							
1.	The demands of the family affect women in their place of work	142 (12.0)	479 (40.5)	481 (40.7)	81 (6.8)	2.58	0.79
2.	Family responsibilities interfere with women responsibilities at work	28 (2.4)	350 (29.6)	654 (55.3)	151 (12.8)	2.22	0.69
3.	Family related strain interferes with women’s educational pursuit	188 (15.9)	493 (41.7)	270 (22.8)	232 (19.6)	2.54	0.98
4.	Putting the well-being of the family as priority affects career prospects of women	152 (12.8)	436 (36.9)	349 (29.5)	246 (20.8)	2.42	0.96
5.	Family responsibilities do put internal pressures on women	52 (4.4)	522 (44.1)	569 (48.1)	40 (3.4)	2.50	0.64
						12.24	
Work-Family Conflict							
6.	Work and family responsibilities make it difficult for women to acquire additional qualifications	-	307 (26.0)	500 (42.3)	376 (31.8)	1.94	0.76
7.	Women are always finding it difficult to simultaneously balance the demand of family and work	-	396 (33.5)	391 (33.1)	396 (33.5)	2.00	0.82
8.	Some of the official assignments of women are sometimes done at home	-	401 (33.9)	450 (38.0)	332 (28.1)	2.06	0.79
9.	Inability to balance work and family roles affects women’s career prospects	-	307 (26.0)	551 (46.6)	325 (27.5)	1.98	0.73
10.	The time for family and work issues negatively influences women’s educational pursuit	-	432 (36.5)	438 (37.0)	313 (26.5)	2.10	0.79
						10.09	

Mean Cut-Off: 2.50

Table 1 showed the item analysis of family responsibilities and work-family conflict as it influences career advancement with family responsibilities having mean value of 12.24, while work-family conflict had a mean value of 13.52.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between family responsibilities and women career advancement.

Table 2: Relationship between family responsibilities and women career advancement

Variables	N	Mean	Stand Dev	r-cal	P-value
Family Responsibilities	1183	12.24	2.45	0.015	0.613
Women Career Advancement	1183	39.75	8.33		

P>0.05

Table 2 showed that the r-cal value of 0.015 is not significant at 0.05 level of significance because the P-value (0.613) > 0.05. The null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between family responsibilities and women career advancement.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement.

Table 3: Relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement

Variables	N	Mean	Stand Dev	r-cal	P-value
Work-family Conflict	1183	10.09	2.98	0.012	0.691
Women Career Advancement	1183	39.75	8.33		

P>0.05

Table 3 showed that the r-cal value of 0.012 is not significant at 0.05 level of significance because the P-value (0.691) > 0.05. The null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement.

Discussion

The study revealed that there was no significant relationship

between family responsibilities and women career advancement. The probable cause could be due to the fact that most family responsibilities are jointly shouldered by the man and the woman in the family. The implication of this finding is that women career advancement will not be influenced by family responsibilities. This finding is in line with the findings of Linge (2015) [12] who concluded that family responsibilities were not perceived as barrier to career advancement of women. Contradicting this finding, Subramaniam, *et al.* (2014) [19] found that family responsibilities have a significant negative effect on career development in Malaysia. Ilo (2010) [10] revealed that working whilst having family responsibilities was the most significant barrier by career women. Friedman and Greenhaus (2010) [9] observed that family responsibilities affect career attainment especially women professionals. Rosa, *et al.* (2017) [17] found that family obligation has significant influence on women career development.

The study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between work-family conflict and women career advancement. The implication of this finding is that work-family conflict will not be influenced by women career advancement. Contradicting this finding, Wang and Cho (2013) [20] found that work-family conflict influences female career development and expectations. Netemeyer, *et al.* (2015) [15] found that there is significant negative relationship between work-family conflict/family-work conflict and career advancement. Karatepe and Sokmen (2016) [11] found a significant negative relationship between both work-family conflict and family-work conflict with career advancement of women.

Conclusion

The study concluded that family responsibilities and work-family conflict were not related to career advancement of women.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

- Husbands should continue to encourage their wives in

the pursuit of their career advancement at work place

- Society should encourage gender equality in all spheres of life especially in the workplace

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