



## GENDER AND LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR: A CASE STUDY OF OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract:**

Although women make up the majority of the local work force, they tend to be concentrated in lower grades and are underrepresented at senior management level Wilson (2002). The phenomenon of overrating men and underrating women job candidates appears to be widespread. There is a need to assess the leadership behavior of both sexes in senior management level to ascertain which of the gender is task-oriented or relationship-oriented to ascertain who has a well balanced approach of leadership behavior. The study adopted a case study research design. Using an adopted and pilot-tested questionnaire, data were collected from the sample of 65 respondents who are Heads of Departments and were selected using proportional sampling technique from each faculty, in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) respectively. Data were analysed using simple percentage. The results showed that the men are more task-oriented while the women are more relationship-oriented and are still able to carry out their task effectively. Thus, it was recommended that more concerns should be shown to more involvement of women in senior management position. An institution grows and thrives better when the subordinates feels that they are part of the organization and their contribution counts.

**Keywords:** gender; leadership behaviour; dean; task-oriented and relationship-oriented

### **1. Introduction**

Nigeria's population is almost 200 million people. According to 2006 Nigeria census data, record had it that, 71,345,488 and 69,086,302 are men and women respectively

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giving a total of 140,431,790. The above figures indicated that 50.8% of the total populations are men and 49.2% of the populations as at that time were women. Salami (2007) acknowledged that participation rate of women in Nigeria's workforce is still below that of men. Most Nigerian women are employed in low paying jobs and are under-represented in several important fields including the sciences, mathematics and technology. Wilson (2002) believes that every prestigious or highly-paid occupation in Britain is dominated by men, both numerically and in terms of who holds the power. In Africa, it is generally believed that women are meant for the kitchen and house chores. However, in the last 30 years, women have started occupying leadership positions in universities such as Heads of Department, Deans, Chairpersons e.g. Chairperson of National Board for Technical Education in person of Prof (Mrs) Adelabu. Using the Leadership Behaviour Approach of Halpin (1969); Are men or women holding Leadership posts showing concern or interested in getting work done or interested in needs or feeling and relationships with people or are women more task-oriented or relation-oriented or are men more task-oriented or relation-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University?

Starting from the inception of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, different campaigns for women empowerment has been on, 30 percent of leadership post should be given to women in every organization in Nigeria. There is no generally acceptable definition for it. Davies (1976), defined leadership as a part of management, but not all of it. According to Lipham(1964), leadership is the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organisation's goal and objectives or for changing an organisation's goals and objectives. Stogdill (1950) considers leadership as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal setting and goal achievement. Leadership is a concept that has to do with a leader that has his/her followers, because a leader must have his subjects or followers whom he is leading. Leadership has to do with goal achievement or accomplishment of goals. Influence is a major ingredient of leadership. It is the power to have an effect on people or things, or having a lot of influence on someone or something. According to Peretomode (1991), the ability to influence, persuade and motivate others is based largely upon the perceived power of the leader.

## 2. Sources of a Leader's Power and Influence

Cole and Kelly (2002) gave the sources of leader's power and influence as follows:

**Reward power:** the power is based on the ability of the leader to control and administer rewards to those who comply with his or her directives. Using a quid pro

quo philosophy (that is you rob my back and I rob your own in return). The leader provides reward. This form of leadership is common in our political system in Nigeria. The people that are on the side of the ruling party are rewarded with money and positions.

**Coercive power:** this power is based on being frightened or fear of the leader to use punishment, work without pay, termination, death and so forth for non-compliance with his/her orders or directives. The use of force is peculiar with this form of leadership.

**Expert power:** is derived from superior competence or special ability skills or knowledge. The followers perceive the leader as having relevant expertise and believe that it exceeds their own.

**Legitimate power:** this type of power is derived from an individual's position or role in the organizational hierarchy. Such powers like that of royalties, eldest son, bale.

**Referent power:** is based on the attractiveness and appeal of the leader. That is charismatic leader. He/she can inspire and attract followers and the followers of ten desires to be like the charismatic leader.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

1. Investigate the gender that is task-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University.
2. Examine the gender that is relationship-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University.

#### 3.1 Research Questions

1. Which gender is task-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University?
2. Which gender is relationship-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University?

### 4. Theoretical Approach

The theoretical approach used for this study is the Halpin (1969) 'Leadership Behaviour Approach'. It is an approach that seeks to explain leaders who are task-oriented and leaders who are relationship-oriented, using the Ohio state university studies: initiating structure and consideration focus is on which gender in leadership positions in Obafemi Awolowo University is task-oriented and relationship-oriented.

## 5. Methodology

The study adopted a case study research design. The population consisted of 65 respondents selected from the 13 academic faculties in the institution. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select Heads of Departments as respondents. Respondents who are Heads of Departments were selected using proportional sampling technique from each faculty. There is only one female Dean among them. The instrument adopted for this study is the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire item by Dimension by Halpin and Winer (1952) LBDQ. The LBDQ is composed of a series of short, descriptive statements of ways in which leaders behave. The items ask subordinates to indicate the frequency with which the leader engages in each form of behavior by checking one of the verbs in a five point scale; always, often, occasionally, seldom or never.

## 6. Results and Findings

The questionnaires were administered by the researcher to ensure high level of return. Out of the 65 questionnaires administered, only 60 questionnaires were retrieved, five questionnaires were missing. Out of the 13 faculties in Obafemi Awolowo University, we have 12 male Deans and just only one female Dean which is also an indication of under representation of women in leadership positions.

**Research Question 1:** Which gender is task-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University?

The results showed that the female dean, is not task-oriented and at the same she is able to carry out her task as expected. The male deans are more task-oriented. Item showed that 55 men 100% of the male deans always criticize poor work. Item 6 showed that 100 percent of the male Deans always assign staff members to a particular task. Item 8 showed that 100% of the male Deans always maintain definite standard of performance. Item 9 showed that 100% of the male Deans always emphasize the meeting of deadlines. Item 10 showed that 100% of the male Deans always encourage the use of uniform procedure. Item 14 showed that 91% and 9% of the male Deans always and often respectively sees to it that staff members are working up to capacity. Item 15 showed that 100% of the male Deans always see to it that the work of staff members is coordinated. The results showed that men are more task-oriented.

**Table 1: Initiating Structure**

S/N	Items	Always		Often		Occasionally		Seldom		Never	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
01	He/she makes his attitude clear to the staff.	0	35	0	20	0	0	3	0	2	0
02	He/she tries out his new ideas with the staff.	5	25		25	0	5	0	0	0	0
03	He/she rules with an iron hand.	0	50	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	0
04	He/she criticizes poor work.	5	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
05	He/she speaks in a manner not to be questioned.	0	50	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
06	He/she assigns staff members to particular task.	0	55	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
07	He/she works without plan	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	5	35
08	He/she maintains definite standard of performance.	0	55	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09	He/she emphasizes the meeting of deadlines	0	55	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	He/she encourages the use of uniform procedure.	0	55	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	He/she make sure that his part in the faculty is understood by all members.	0	30	5	20	0	5	0	0	0	0
12	He/she asks that staff members follow standard rules and regulations	5	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	He/she lets staff members know what is expected of them	5	25	0	20	0	5	0	5	0	0
14	He/she sees to it that staff members are working up to capacity.	0	50	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	He/she sees to it that the work of staff members is coordinated.	0	55	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Fieldwork 2017

**Research Question 2:** Which gender is relationship-oriented in Obafemi Awolowo University?

**Table 2: Which gender is relationship-oriented**

S/N	Items	Always		Often		Occasionally		Seldom		Never	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
01	He/she does personal favours to staff	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	50
02	He/she does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of staff	5	0	0	0	0	35	0	10	0	10
03	He/she is easy to understand.	5	2	0	3	0	5	0	10	0	35
04	He/she finds time to listen to staff members.	5	0	0	0	0	10	0	20	0	25
05	He/she keeps to himself	2	25	0	5	2	10	1	5	0	10

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06	He/she looks out for the personal welfare of individual staff members.	5	3	0	7	0	15	0	25	0	5
07	He/she refuses to explain his actions	1	20	1	15	1	10	1	5	1	5
08	He/she acts without consulting the staff	1	15	1	15	3	10	0	5	0	10
09	He/she is slow to accept new ideas.	1	30	1	5	1	5	1	10	1	5
10	He/she treats all staff members as his/her equals.	5	25	0	5	0	5	0	15	0	5
11	He/she is willing to make changes	5	10	0	10	0	15	0	10	0	10
12	He/she is friendly and approachable	5	15	0	5	0	10	0	10	0	15
13	He/she makes staff members feel at ease when talking with them	5	10	0	10	0	16	0	14	0	5
14	He/she puts suggestions made by the staff into operations	5	20	0	5	0	15	0	5	0	10
15	He/she gets staff approval on important matters before going ahead.	5	5	0	5	0	15	0	20	0	10

**Source:** Fieldwork 2017.

The results showed that the male Deans are not relationship-oriented. They are interested in carrying out the task attached to their position. But the female Dean is more relationship-oriented. Item 1 showed that 90.9% and 9.1% of the male deans never and seldom respectively, do personal favours to staff. While that of the female gender is 100%. Item 2 showed that 63.63% occasionally, 18.18% seldom and 18.18% of the male deans never does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of staff. While that of the female gender is 100%. Item 4 showed that 18.18% occasionally, 36.36% seldom and 45.45% of the male deans never finds time to listen to staff members. Item 6 showed that 5.45% always, 12.72% often, 27.27% occasionally, 45.45% seldom and 9.09% of the male deans never looks out for the personal welfare of individual staff members. While that of the female gender is 100%. Item 10 showed that 45.45% always, 9.09% often, 9.09% occasionally, 27.27% seldom and 9.09% of the male deans never treats all staff members as his/her equals. Item 13 showed that 18.18% always, 18.18% often, 29.09 occasionally, and 25.45 seldom, 9.09% of the male deans never make staff members feel at ease when talking with them. Item 14 showed that 36.36% always 9.09% often, 27.27% occasionally, 9.09% seldom and 18.18% of the male deans never puts suggestions made by the staff into operations. Item 15 showed that 9.09% always, 9.09% often, 27.27% occasionally, 36.36% seldom and 18.18% of the male deans never gets staff approval on important matters before going ahead.

## 7. Summary

The study focused on gender and leadership behavior, it sought to know which gender in leadership position in Obafemi Awolowo University is task oriented or relationship oriented. The study was carried out using the leadership post of deans of faculties in Obafemi Awolowo University as the case study. Questionnaire was used to gather data from heads of departments. Simple frequency and percentages was used to analyze the data.

## 8. Conclusion

The study concluded that the male deans are more task-oriented while the female dean is relationship-oriented. But they both have ways of balancing.

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