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Socio-Cultural Determinants of Gender Disparities in Kenyan Organizations

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Abstract

Despite various efforts and some notable gains, women's representation in wage employment remains low, forming less than 30% of wage employment in Kenya. The main objective of this study was to identify the levels and the socio-cultural factors that influence gender disparities at the selected organizations in the manufacturing, the service sector and the related trade unions in Kenya. The disparities were examined at three levels, namely: the operational, the management and the trade union. Although several socio-cultural factors influencing gender disparities at work have been enumerated, the study investigated their relative importance to the industrial occupations in the selected organizations and the respective trade unions in Kenya. The study was guided by the structuralism theory and the concepts of division of labor. The fundamental conceptual proposition was that social structure influences socialization, which may lead to gender disparities and the related division of labour. The study used the descriptive survey research design to obtain data from the manufacturing and service sector industries and the related trade unions. Primary data were obtained from 208 respondents drawn from operational, management and trade union levels using interviews and questionnaires, while organizations' records were used for secondary data. The data were then coded and converted to numerical codes, which represent the attributes of the various variables of the proposed study. Data were summarized using percentages, ratios, frequencies and the measures of central tendency. The findings revealed that despite the many strategies employed, gender disparities continue to persist in formal employment in Kenya. The margins of disparities were seen to increase up the organizational hierarchy. Some of the specific possible causes of disparities included family responsibilities, social stereotypes and spouse income. The key recommendations made included the introduction of flexi-time working arrangements and care centres at the workplace.

Keywords: Socio-cultural determinants, industrial occupations

1. Background Information

While several organizations and agencies, both local and international, have devoted substantial efforts to enhancing gender equality at work, including the formulation and enactment of gender policies, affirmative action and gender-based campaigns, studies continue to indicate that gender inequalities are persistent and have led to sexual division of labour and under-utilization of women's economic potential in organizations (Marara, 2006).

A report by the World Bank on the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG3) observes that sexual division of labour firmly favours men over women (World Bank, 2006). The report maintains that sexual division of labour has led to differences in both horizontal and vertical dimensions of organizational occupations. It defines vertical gender segregation as the tendency for women to be concentrated in the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy in terms of wages, status and authority, while horizontal gender segregation, according to Bilton et al. (2002), is the tendency for men and women to be separated into different types of jobs with women mainly in the personal service industries and men in the manufacturing and construction.

Further, much of the work performed by women is unpaid, which is an outcome of the traditional division of labour (IFPRI, 2008). A report by the United Nations (2008) observes, "No more than one-fifth of the world's wages accrue to women because fewer women than men work for wages are engaged in the low-paying sectors and even in these sectors, they are paid less than men doing the same job" (UN, 2008). Kimani (2006) observes that women tend to do more unpaid work while men do more paid work, leading to inequality in economic power between men and women in the family and the society as a whole. Even in agriculture, more women than men work in subsistence farming (IFPRI, 2008).

The current gender disparities in occupations can be traced to the early forms of economic production (McIntosh, 1997). According to Hall and Geiban (1992), some tasks were considered appropriate only for women by pre-industrial societies, while others were exclusively for men. According to Nanda (1991), men were hunters while women were gatherers.

With industrialization, the division of labor was transferred from the family to the workplace (Foner, 1972). Women engaged in service sector occupations such as secretarial, nursing and teaching, while men were represented in

manufacturing-related occupations such as construction, crafts and engineering. Even more interestingly, differential wages emerged. Women were poorly paid, and according to Foner (1972), even the early trade unions in the USA could not permit women to be members because this would encourage employers to reduce the salaries of the male members.

Not much has changed since the early industrial revolution, with reports continuing to indicate experiences of gender disparities in various parts of the world (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2005). In the USA, women comprised less than 5% of senior executive positions in both corporate organizations and unions in 1998 (AJSS, 1999). Even by 2004, women's wages in the US were only 76.5% of that of men (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2005). Today, the median income of full-time yearly rate (FTYR) male workers in the US stands at \$40,798 compared to \$31,223 for female workers (US Labor Statistics, 2008).

In the UK, according to the UK Office for National Statistics (2005), 22% of women in employment do administrative or secretarial work compared with 5% of men. The same reports indicate that the proportion of women to men in manufacturing was less than 1:10 by 2005. In the UK, men are ten times more likely than women to be senior managers and senior officials (UK Office for National Statistics, 2005). Women in the UK, on average, earn 80% of what men earn (Women and Equality Unit-UK, 2003).

In Africa, according to Jouthall (1988), formal wage labour was predominantly a male affair during the colonial period. When they worked, women were given unskilled and poorly paid jobs. They could easily be replaced by machines operated by men. Between 1900 and 1933, Mozambique's minimum wage law set women's wages at about 50% of male wages (Jouthall, 1988). In South Africa, female domestic workers usually received a third less than their male counterparts. After independence, the situation did not change much. By the 1970s, Ghana had only 10% female workers in wage employment while Zambia had 7%. More recent statistics indicate that gender disparities in wage employment in many African countries still persist. In Egypt, for instance, the Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (2010) records that by March 2010, women were only 23.6% of the labour force and 20.2% of the wage employment.

In Kenya, according to Marara (2006), the bulk of work done by women tends to take place in the home or in the informal sector, while men are mainly in the more economically viable sectors of employment. In wage employment, women tend to be concentrated in the sectors of social, personal and educational services, while the construction and manufacturing sectors are generally dominated by men (Mwambu et al., 2000; CBS, 2009). Reports by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) indicate that the sectors that suffer the highest levels of gender disparities in wage employment in Kenya today are the building, construction and manufacturing sectors. According to the Economic survey (2009), the manufacturing sector recorded 216,600 men compared to 47,500 women (17.9% women) in the year 2008.

A report by the World Bank observes that in Kenya and other parts of the world, gender disparities often start early before women join the labour market and keep women at a disadvantage throughout their lives (World Bank, 2006). In view of this, the study reports that girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school due to family discrimination, education expenses and household duties. Indeed, Kimani (2006) observes that in Kenya, gender disparities are low at junior educational levels but tend to increase with progression to higher educational levels and transition to occupational and trade union levels. More specifically, the Ministry in charge of Education reports that girls constituted 48.4% of the pupils in primary schools in 2005, with the percentage lowering to 45% at the secondary school level (CBS, 2007).

Reports by CBS (2008) indicate that at professional levels, the margin increases, with women constituting 29% of the wage employment and 10% at the management levels. At the trade union level, women form less than 1% of decision-making bodies of all the unions affiliated to ICFTU worldwide (ICFTU, 2007). Of the forty registered trade unions in Kenya, none has a female chief executive officer (COTU, 2009). Hence, gender disparities are highest in trade unions despite trade unions being part of the tripartite committee of the ILO mandated with the role of ensuring fair work practices, including the elimination of gender inequality at work.

Trade unions in Kenya draw their members from the non-managerial (operational) levels of organizations, who are also elected into the management of the union (Labour Institutions Act 2007). While trade unions also recruit directly from the labour markets, the executive levels can only be filled through elections from the operational levels of the represented organizations. Disparities at the operational levels of the organizations are, therefore, likely to influence disparities at both the membership and executive levels of the trade unions. Hence, there are interconnected patterns of gender disparities across organizations and their trade unions. This study examined the determinants of gender disparities at the operational and management levels, specifically in the East Africa Portland Cement Company, Telkom Kenya and respective trade unions.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Despite sustained efforts and some notable gains in achieving gender equality in Kenya, women's representation in wage employment is still proportionately very low, forming less than 30 per cent of wage employment in Kenya. Further, despite the constitutional requirement that no more than two-thirds of the same gender shall occupy a constitutional office, gender disparities continue to exist even in principal occupations. The same inequality is evident at operational, management, and trade union levels of the service and manufacturing sector organizations, which are the backbone of the economy and hire the largest proportion of wage earners in Kenya. This has led to poor utilization of the available human resources, which may lead to the slowdown of economic development, poverty and social ills such as prostitution. A preliminary review by this study revealed that of the forty-three trade unions in Kenya today, none has a female representation in the chief executive office, which is against the ILO recommendation that at least one-third of the trade union representation by members of the opposite gender. Trade unions are expected to play a critical role in fighting for workers' rights, including gender equality, yet disparities are highest within their structures. It is in right of this information that this study sought the following:

- Investigate gender representation in the operational, management and trade union levels of organizations in Kenya.
- Identify social-cultural factors that may influence gender disparities in organizations in Kenya.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the structural-functional theory. This theory examines the contributions that the various parts, structures and systems of a society make towards the social needs of that society and how these structures and systems shape the behaviour of the individuals and groups within them. Structural Marxists argue that the decisions and behaviour of individuals and groups are fundamentally constrained by the structures in which they are located and which exert influence over social and economic processes (Alexander & Colomy, 1990; Maryanski & Turner, 1991; Ritzer, 1996(b)). Social structures guide organizational systems, policies and procedures, which determine the gender composition of the various occupations in organizations and trade unions. Legal structures guide policies and procedures in organizations and, by so doing, govern the behaviour of individuals in these organizations. This study examines the role that these structures play in guiding organizational structures and individuals' behaviour toward gender equality and elimination of gender-based discrimination.

The concept of division of labour was used to explain how social structures are used to maximize career opportunities for some social groups while restricting opportunities for other groups. All societies, according to Allen (1995), display some kind of specialization of tasks. It is one of the fundamental bases for social order. According to Rueschemeyer (1986), the specialization of tasks brings with it increased integration as different groups depend upon one another for the different and complementary skills and products which they provide. Rueschemeyer (1986) observes that the complex division of labour forms the basis of much of modern industrial production and has indeed resulted in vast increases in output and productivity.

In as much as it increases levels of cooperation, interdependence and subsequently productivity, Comte, Spencer, Durkheim (1933) and Cuff & Payne (1979) argue that it also leads to a state of misrepresentation where some groups and their views are not represented during decision making as is evident in trade unions and in many organizations today. It may lead to a state of alienation (Marx 1818 - 1883) or exploitation where individuals are prevented from fulfilling their true nature at work. It is the opinion of this study that the occupational division of labour is a human creation and a product of the intentions and actions of individuals as they organize their lives and those of others within the economic and social framework in which they operate. Sexual division of labour is essentially social in nature and does not automatically arise from biological differences.

3. Research Methodology

The study used the descriptive survey research design to obtain data from the manufacturing and service sector industries and the related trade unions. The four organizations selected from these industries were the East African Portland Cement Company, the Telkom Kenya Limited, the Kenya Chemicals and Allied Workers Union (KCAWU) and the Communications Workers Union (CWU). These companies have both a national and international outlook and provide an opportunity for examining gender disparities in an environment of modern technology and business process re-engineering (BPR). Primary data were obtained from 360 respondents drawn from operational, management and trade union levels using interviews and questionnaires, while organizations' records were used for secondary data. The data were then coded and converted to numerical codes, which represent the attributes of the various variables of the proposed study. Data were summarized using percentages, ratios, frequencies and the measures of central tendency. The percentages and ratios were also used for comparing disparities at different occupational levels.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study in regard to the socio-cultural determinants of gender disparities in industrial occupations in Kenya. Based on the study objectives, the chapter presents the findings on the levels of gender representation in the studied organizations and the impact of the new labour laws on gender representation in the organizations studied.

4.2. Status of Gender Representation at EAPCC, Telkom Kenya and the Respective Trade Unions

The first objective of the study was to investigate gender representation at the operational, management and trade union levels of the studied organizations. The findings revealed that of all the 5692 employees of the studied companies, 1982 were women, giving a 34.8 per cent representation compared to 3710 men, who formed 65.2 per cent of all the respondents. However, a deeper analysis of the findings revealed that disparities were higher at certain levels than others within the organization's hierarchies.

4.3. Status of Gender Representation at Telkom Kenya

Gender representation across levels of occupations in both the EAPCC and the Telkom Kenya was not balanced. In Telkom Kenya, there was a 19 per cent women representation compared to 81 per cent male representation at the management level, while at the operation level, the female representation was at 47 per cent women compared to 53 per cent male representation. The management comprised the directors, the company executives, the top management, the middle management and the lower-level management.

Within the management, gender disparities were lowest at the executive and at the top management levels, with women 33 per cent representation compared with 67 per cent male at the executive levels, and 28 women (30 per cent) at the top management compared with 70 per cent men at this level. Women's representation in middle management and lower management was at 20 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively. At the board of directors' level, the female representation was lowest, with only one woman compared to eight men at this level. The executive management of Telkom Kenya consisted of a male Chief Executive Officer, a female Deputy CEO, a male Head of Finance, a male Head of Information Technology and Networks, a male Head of Wholesale and a female Head of Corporate Communications.

Industry	Gender	Management Category					Operational Workers	
		Board of Directors	Executive Management	Top Management	Middle Management	Lower Management	Employees	Total
Telkom	Female	11%	33%	30%	20%	17%	47%	40%
	Male	89%	67%	70.5	80%	83%	53%	60%

Table 1: Status of Gender Representation at Telkom

The data show that at Telkom Kenya, only the operational level, top management level, and executive management levels had met the minimum 30 per cent gender representation recommended by the law (The Employment Act 2007, The Kenya Constitution 2010). The highest disparities were at the Board of Directors' level, which is generally a non-professional level and consists mainly of elected/political positions, and this may have contributed to the high disparities.

Disparities were lowest at the operational level, which was the lowest professional level within Telkom Kenya and mainly consisted of direct customer services, which, according to Bilton et al. (2002), are closely associated with women. Bilton argues that women tend to be concentrated at the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy and usually tend to be in the administrative and customer services. In general, while the overall gender representation of employees at Telkom Kenya was 40 per cent women and 60 per cent men, which is above the minimum legal requirement, the disparities were higher at the management level compared to the operational levels.

4.4. Status of Gender Representation at the EAPCC

The margins of gender representation at the EAPCC, as shown in table 2, were much higher than those of the Kenya Telkom. Of all the levels examined, none had met the minimum recommended 30 per cent women representation except at lower management level. The general gender representation at the management level stood at 20 per cent female compared to 80 per cent male, while at the operational level, the representation was at 21 per cent women and 79 per cent men. The lowest levels of disparities were observed at the lower management level, which mainly constituted the junior administrative staff.

Like the telecommunication industry, the highest disparities were observed at the director level, where women did not have a single representation. The top management of the EAPCC was made up of 8 members consisting of the Managing Director, head of Internal Audit, head of Human Resources, Engineering Projects Manager, head of Finance, Head of Production, and the head of I.TIT. However, of the top managers, only the finance manager was a female in a team of eight top managers.

Industry	Gender	Management Category				Operational Category	Total
		Board of Directors	Executive Management	Middle Management	Lower Management	Employees	
EAPCC	Female	0%	12%	35%	18%	21%	21%
	Male	100%	88%	64%	82%	79%	79%

Table 2: Status of Gender Representation in the EAPCC

This data indicates that at the EAPCC, which is in the manufacturing industry, women's representation was lower than at Telkom, which is within the service industry. It also indicates that, like Telkom Kenya, disparities increase as one goes up the organizational hierarchy, with the highest margins of disparities being experienced at the top management. These findings are consistent with the findings by Mwambu (2000) that margins of gender disparities are higher at the management levels compared to the operational levels. They are also in agreement with reports by Bilton et al. (2002) that gender disparities are higher in manufacturing sector organizations than in service sector organizations.

4.5. Status of Gender Representation at the Trade Unions

Data on gender representation at the union level were gathered to establish if there were gender disparities at this level and to establish if the margins of disparities at the trade unions compared to those at the respective

organizations. The findings on gender representation at the trade union level are shown in table 3. The margins of gender representation at the trade unions were just as high as those observed at the organizational level, with the highest levels being observed at the management level.

Industry	Gender	Executive	Officials	Members
Communications Workers Union	Female	0%	41%	42.9%
	Male	100%	59%	57.1%
Chemicals and Allied Workers Union	Female	13%	8%	6%
	Male	87%	92%	94%

Table 3: Status of Gender Representation at the COWU and the CAWU

In Telkom Kenya's Union (CWU), as shown in table 3, there was no female representation at the executive level of the Communications Workers Union. Of the eight members of the CWU executive level of management, only one was a woman. However, 41 per cent and 42.9 per cent of female representation were observed in the officials and members category compared to 59 per cent and 57.1 per cent of the male representation, respectively. The average overall female representation at the CWU was 42.5 per cent. These findings indicate that the trends of gender representation at the CWU are similar to those of Telkom Kenya, where gender disparities are higher at the senior organizational levels compared to the junior organizational levels.

At the Chemicals and Allied Workers' Union, women's representation was below 30 per cent in all levels, with an overall average women representation of 6 per cent compared to 94 per cent that of men. At the executive management level of the trade union, there was only one female member of staff compared to seven male members of staff, while at the union officials' level, there were only four females in a team of 34 officials. Of a total union membership of 732 people, women were only 45 compared to 687 men, making a percentage of 8 per cent and 92 per cent, respectively. Disparities were, therefore, highest at the trade union levels, which, according to Hassim (2003) and Ballington (2004), are because of the political nature of trade unions, where officials are selected through an election process.

4.6. Relationship between Disparities at the EAPCC, Telkom and the Trade Unions

As already mentioned, trade unions operate as the worker's representatives on industrial matters within the sector. They draw their membership from the organizations in the industry they represent, and for that reason, disparities at the organization level are likely to have an influence on the disparities at the trade union level. Indeed, gender distribution in the trade unions under study tended to have trends similar to those of the respective organizations. At the EAPCC, the directors' level had 9 representatives with no female representation, which was similar to its trade union, the CWU, which had 5 representatives at the executive level but similarly had no female representation at this level. The total average representation of women at the EAPCC stood at 21 per cent compared to 79 per cent of men, while at the trade unions level, total women representation was at 6 per cent compared with 94 per cent of men. This reflects a high margin of gender disparities at both the organizational and trade union levels, suggesting that disparities at the organizational level may influence disparities at the trade union level.

Similar disparities in Telkom Kenya and the respective trade unions were also observed. The overall female representation at Telkom Kenya was at 40 per cent compared to the 60 per cent representation of males. This compared well with the representation at the CWU, where women's representation was at 42 per cent compared to 58 per cent of men in this trade union. This indicates that gender disparities at the Telkom Kenya (organizational level) have some influence on those at the trade union level.

An analysis of disparities between the organizations was also done, and as shown in tables 1, 2 and 3, margins of gender disparities at Telkom Kenya (41 per cent women compared to 59 per cent men) were much lower than at the EAPCC (26 per cent women and 74 per cent men). Likewise, between the trade unions, the margins of gender disparities at the CWU (42 per cent women compared to 58 per cent men) were much lower than at the CAWU (6 per cent women compared to 94 per cent men). These findings indicate that disparities at the EAPCC and CAWU (both of which are in the manufacturing sector) were higher than those at the Kenya Telkom Kenya and the CWU (which are in the service industry). These findings are in agreement with the assertion by DeNavas-Walt et al. (2005) that while men tend to be evenly distributed across all industries, women are less distributed in the manufacturing and construction industries.

The findings also revealed that in both the trade unions and the studied organizations, the margins of gender disparities were highest at the management and the executive levels but comparatively lower at the membership and operational levels. The findings are supported by the studies by DeNavas-Walt et al. (2005), ICFTU (2005), and AJSS (1999) that gender disparities continue to be experienced in various organizations and at various levels. The results imply that sexual division of labour and under-utilization of women's economic potential are still persistent in the Kenyan labour market.

4.7. Socio-Cultural Determinants of Gender Disparities

The third objective of this study was to examine socio-cultural factors which influence gender disparities in the selected organizations. To achieve this objective, the study analyzed the effects of marital status, family responsibility, spouse income, spouse attitude and social stereotypes on gender disparities in the selected organizations.

4.7.1. Role of Marital Status on Gender Disparities

To determine the impact of marital status on career participation, the study analyzed the gender representation per category against marital status, and the findings are represented in table 4.

	Gender	Marital Status			
		Single	Married	Separated	Total
Management	Male	28.3%	71.7%	.0%	100.0%
	Female	28.5%	71.4%	.0%	100.0%
Workers	Male	23.8%	76.1%	.0%	100.0%
	Female	32.6%	63.0%	4.4%	100.0%

Table 4: Marital Status of the Respondents

As indicated in table 4, the percentages of married males at the management level (71.7 per cent) were relatively similar to those of the married females (73.1 per cent) at the same level. There was no significant difference between the percentage of married men and that of women at the management level. These findings indicate that marital status at this level was not a determinant of gender disparities and that both men and women at the management level had equal employment and promotion opportunities regardless of their marital status. The percentage of unmarried workers at the management level for both genders was significantly low, indicating that married men and women were either preferred as managers or that they were not discriminated against on the basis of their marital status.

At the operational level, the percentage of married males (76.1 per cent) was bigger than that of females (63.0 per cent) within the gender. These statistics indicate that a bigger percentage of married men compared to women had an opportunity or were able to work at this level. This suggests that either married men were preferred at this level or that a bigger percentage of women than men were unable to maintain their jobs once they attained marital status due to the family demands which are associated with marital status. Indeed, a female respondent at the operational level explained:

Operational-level jobs sometimes involve shift work, which involves working at night. My husband is not happy when I am in a job where I have to work at night. It is not easy to cope with shift work when you are married. It affects my relationship with my spouse. Besides, supervisors prefer working with men and single women, where work involves shift work.

This statement explains that there are some elements of the operational level jobs which may discourage married women from fully participating in their jobs, leading to gender disparities, hence the lower percentage of married women than men at this level. It further explains the role of shift work in discouraging female workers from participating in wage employment at the operational level of the studied organizations, hence encouraging disparities at this level. It further explains why single women's representation at this level competes well with that of men.

4.7.2. The Role of Dependants on Gender Disparities

In addition to marital status, parenting was considered an important variable of this study because children require parental attention to determine the level of family responsibilities. Children can be born within a marriage or within single parenthood. Table 5 below categorizes the respondents in terms of gender and parental status to show the role of parenting on gender disparities. As shown in table 5, there were more men at the management level with children living with them compared to those who did not have. Indeed, 100 per cent of married males at the management level had children living with them. Overall, 74 per cent of all male workers at the management level had children compared to only 26 per cent who did not.

	Gender		Do You Have Children Living with You?		Total
			Yes	No	
Management staff	Male	Telkom	70%	30%	100%
		EAPCC	76%	24%	100%
		CWU	67%	33%	100%
		CAWU	75%	25%	100%
	Average		72%	28%	100%
	Female	Telkom	63%	37%	100%
		EAPCC	67%	33%	100%
		COWU	75%	25%	100%
CWU		50%	50%	100%	
Average		63.75%	36.25%	100%	
Operational Worker	Male	Telkom	76%	24%	100%
		EAPCC	65%	35%	100%
		COWU	75%	25%	100%

		CWU	67%	33%	100%
	Average		70.75%	29.25%	100%
Female		Telkom	69%	31%	100%
		EAPCC	61%	39%	100%
		COWU	63%	37%	100%
		CWU	75%	25%	100%
	Average		67%	33%	100%

Table 5: Respondents Living with Their Children

These findings indicate that the parental status of the male managers did not influence their gender representation negatively but may have had some positive influence. Likewise, findings on the females at the management level indicate that more females had children living with them (72 per cent) compared to those who did not (28 per cent). However, the percentage of women with children living with them was lower than that of their male counterparts. These findings indicate that more women than men in management may have been affected by their responsibilities towards their children than men were. When asked if family responsibilities may affect their performance in the organization, more women than men at the management level answered in the affirmative (Table 6).

At the operational level, the observation was similar to those made at the management level, where a bigger percentage of men living with their children (70.9%) was reported compared to that of women (66.7%), although the margins were narrow. These findings indicate that a bigger percentage of women were affected by the presence of children in their homes compared to men. The management was asked if family responsibilities affect performance in the organization. In their response, more women than men responded in the affirmative (Table 5). These findings are in agreement with Longo (2001), who argues that child care is perceived to be more challenging for working parents and more so for women who are considered the primary caregivers. Childcare is, therefore, likely to influence women's decisions on job retention more than men's and, therefore, has an influence on gender disparities.

4.8. Influence of Family Responsibilities on Gender Disparities

To assess the influence of family responsibilities on gender disparities, the respondents were asked if family responsibilities would affect their work responsibilities and to indicate on a five-point Likert scale (Table 6 below) where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

	Gender		Family Responsibilities Would Affect My Job Performance				
			1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Undecided)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
Management staff	Male	Telkom	9%	33%	33%	25%	
		EAPCC	18%	35%	29%	18%	
		CWU	11%	33%	45%	11%	
		CAWU		88%	12%		
	Average		9.5%	47.25%	29.75%	13.5%	
	Female	Telkom			25%	63%	12%
		EAPCC		17%	30%	50	9%
		COWU			25%	75%	
		CWU			50%	50%	
	Average			4.25%	32.5%	59.5%	5.25%
Operational Workers	Male	Telkom	10%	56%	24%	10%	
		EAPCC	4%	45%	31%	14%	6%
		COWU	25%	50%	25%		
		CWU		67%	33%		
	Average		9.75%	54.5%	28.25%	6%	1.5%
	Female	Telkom		25%	25%	38%	12%
		EAPCC		17%	28%	33%	22%
		COWU			50%	50%	
		CWU			25%	75%	
	Average			10.5%	32%	49%	8.5

Table 6: Influence of Family Responsibilities on Job Performance

As shown in table 6 above, more women than men strongly agreed that family responsibilities would affect their job performance. Likewise, more men than women strongly agreed that family responsibilities would not affect their job performance. These findings were similar across all the organizations. However, women at the operational level of the EAPCC seemed to be more affected by family responsibilities than in other organizations and at other levels. This could be because, being a manufacturing organization, jobs at the operational level of the EAPCC are manual and involve working long hours and on shift time. The least affected were the men at the management level of Telkom Kenya. These findings

indicate that while women are generally more affected by family responsibilities than men, those in the operational level of a manufacturing organization may be affected more than those in the management levels of the service organizations.

4.8.1. The Role of a House Helper on Gender Disparities

As observed from table 6, a majority of both men and women are able to cope with both family responsibilities and job demands. To determine the extent to which the employees engaged external support in coping with this role, the study sought to examine the extent to which the employees engaged assistance from adults other than their spouses and a cross-tabulation was conducted and presented as shown in table 7.

	Gender	Do You Have Children?	Other Than Your Spouse, Do You Have a House Helper?		Total
			Yes	No	
Management	Male	Yes	81.25%	18.75%	100.0%
		No	25%	75%	100.0%
	Female	Yes	100%	0%	100.0%
		No	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Operational Workers	Male	Yes	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		No	63.3%	36.7%	100.0%
	Female	Yes	88.6%	11.4%	100.0%
		No	40%	60%	100%

Table 7: Support with the Family Responsibilities

From table 7, it was evident that the majority of both male and female employees at the management level and operational workers' level had a house helper to assist in family responsibility. The majority of the employees reported that the adults they lived with were house helpers, though others reported living with relatives. This implies that employees in the selected organizations are able to cope with both the job demands and family responsibilities but with the assistance of an adult in the house to ease the burden of family responsibilities. To handle both employment and family chores, all married females had someone in the house other than their spouse. Among the married male workers, only 80 per cent had an assistant in the house other than their spouses. These findings indicate that more married men than women could cope with employment demands without the need to engage an assistant in the home other than their spouses. It shows that family responsibility was more of a woman's responsibility than a man's, with the possibility that more men than women had non-working spouses who were housewives.

4.9. Influence of Working Conditions on Gender Disparities

The working conditions that were examined in this study involved being on the job for longer hours and included reporting to work early or working late, night shifts, transfers from the home area, and the requirements for travel. Generally, all these conditions involved being at the workplace for a longer period than the normal working day or/and being away from home for longer hours.

To account for the role of the longer working hours on gender disparities, respondents were asked if working conditions involving being at work for a longer time may affect their continued employment and 65 per cent agreed, indicating that they will not have time with their children, or interfere with the relationship with the spouse or it will affect their activities in the house. Of the 65 per cent who said that longer working hours would affect their family relations and responsibilities, 63 per cent were women, while only 37 per cent were men (figure 1).

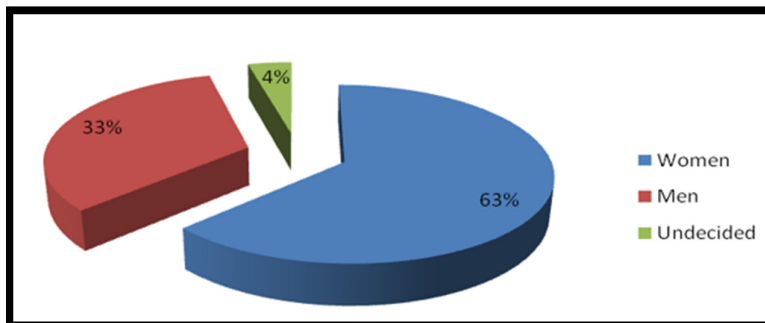


Figure 1: Opinions on Whether Long Working Hours Affect Family Responsibilities

These findings indicate that working conditions that involve spending more time in the workplace are likely to create more role conflicts in women than men. This, as shown in figure 1, would, in turn, affect both job performance and decisions on job continuity. These findings are consistent with findings by Longo (2001) that working conditions such as long working hours, working in night shifts, working at heights and frequent travelling may discriminate indirectly against women or employees with young families.

4.9.1. The Role of Spouse Income on Gender Disparities

Workers are motivated by the need to satisfy certain human needs, Maslow (1954). Workers' level of participation in organizations will be influenced by the level of the family's economic needs and the ability of the household income to meet these needs. Spouse income is an important part of the household income. When asked if the spouse income supplements expenditure, the findings for both married men and women are presented as shown in table 8.

Level	Gender	Does Your Spouse Contribute to the Household Income?	
		Yes	No
Management	Male	75.8%	24.2%
	Female	100.0%	0%
Operational Workers	Male	38.8%	61.2%
	Female	100.0%	.0%

Table 8: Spouse's Contribution to Household Income

From table 8, all the married women both in the management and operational workers categories agreed that their spouses supplement their income compared to 76 per cent of men in the management and 39 per cent in the operational workers category. These findings indicate that more women than men have additional income from their spouses, which may facilitate the running of the family in case one opts out of employment. More men than women are, therefore, the sole providers for the economic needs of the family and are likely to be more concerned about the continuity of their jobs than their female counterparts. These findings also indicated that families continue to uphold the culture where a man is considered the family provider. Men are expected to be in formal employment more than women and will strive more than women to maintain their jobs to ensure that they meet their family responsibility of providing financial needs. Generally, the findings indicate that while women have more responsibility in the management of the families through roles that require physical presence, men meet their responsibilities by ensuring that the economic needs of the family are met, and these may influence gender disparities in the workplace as men strive to maintain their jobs while women will strive for opportunities to be more with the family.

To assess the level of resilience on the job, both the married men and women were asked to indicate if unfavorable working conditions would influence their continued employment with respect to their spouse's income, and the findings are shown in table 9 below.

		My Spouse's Income Would Influence My Decision on Job Continuity If Working Conditions Were Unfavorable		
		Yes	No	Total
Women	Management level	63%	37%	100%
	Operational level	78%	22%	100%
Men	Management level	0%	100%	100%
	Operational level	0%	100%	100%

Table 9: Role of Spouse Income on Job Resilience

These findings revealed that more married men whose spouses had an income were more resilient to their jobs than the women whose spouses had an income. In further response to this question, a female respondent explained:

If my husband has an income sufficient to sustain the family, I see no reason why job conditions such as transfers should inconvenience the family. I would not, for instance, relocate and leave my husband to take care of the children while I go to work in a different town. However, if he has no income, then the options are few; we may decide on how to cope with the demanding job requirements.

On a similar question, a male responded explained:

I would not expect my wife to provide for my family. I will stick to my job even if it means relocating my family or leaving the family behind if my wife is working.

These findings indicate that more men than women were resilient to their jobs and were willing to cope with the job demands regardless of whether their wives had an income or not. More women, on the other hand, were less resilient than men and were more willing to sacrifice their jobs if the husbands had an income and if the continued engagement on the job would inconvenience the family.

4.10. Spouse Support for Additional Job Responsibilities

Additional job responsibilities referred to any engagement by the employee that involved being at the workstation longer than the usual working hours, including transfers away from home, working longer hours, frequent travels, and working at night. When asked if their spouses would support additional responsibilities, 55 per cent of the respondents indicated that their spouse would have no problem when they get additional responsibility while 35 per cent indicated that their spouses would be concerned. Ten per cent of the respondents were undecided. Of the 35 per cent who indicated that their spouses could get concerned, 30 per cent were women, while 5 per cent were men. These findings indicate that while generally, the spouses were permissive to additional job responsibilities, more women than men were permissive to their spouses working longer hours and night shifts.

My husband is always very concerned when I report home late from work, and I know he would not be comfortable with me working on the night shift. Getting a transfer to another town is out of the question. It would mean I resign and look for another job.

The findings indicate that while society is slowly accepting challenges associated with careers and while many married couples are willing to have their spouse participate in demanding working conditions, husbands are still not as permissive of their wives as the wives are of their husbands.

4.11. Influence of the Social Stereotype on Gender Disparities

To determine the role of stereotypes in gender disparities, the employees were asked whether, in their opinion, there were jobs which were more suitable for men or women. Of the male respondents, 78 per cent answered in the affirmative, compared to 22 per cent who felt that any job could be performed by any of the sexes. Of the female respondents, only 56 per cent responded in the affirmative compared to 44 per cent who felt that the gender of the individual does not determine the level of job performance.

Fewer women than men, therefore, felt that there were jobs which were suitable for one gender and not the other. A female respondent from the operational level of the EAPCC reported:

As a woman, I have been working in the manual sector for five years, where I worked with men, and my performance was better than most of them. It is difficult to be hired in such jobs, and when hired with a man at the same time, the supervisor already "knows" that the man can do the job better and will give him a promotion before you. I, however, have to "prove" myself capable. I attest that there are some women and men, as well, who do not belong in certain positions. It all comes down to the individual, not their sex, that determines if they are "fit" for a particular job.

Yet another female employee from the operational level of Telkom Kenya reported:

We are not prevented from doing any job, but some jobs, such as climbing poles, are meant for men and not for women. It's not that women cannot climb poles, but what will people think? It is not within our culture for women to climb trees or work away from home. I would not apply for such a job.

These statements show that, indeed, there are gender-based stereotypes in the workplace, and while some women are willing to take up the challenge of proving that they are just as good as men, there are those who are unwilling. These statements also show that stereotypes are likely to influence both the recruitment and promotion decisions of managers, leading to gender disparities.

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study. It provides general information on the determinants of gender disparities in industrial occupations in Kenya by using a case of the East Africa Portland Cement Company, Telkom Kenya, and their respective Trade Unions. The purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of gender disparities in industrial occupations in Kenya.

5.2. Summary of the Findings

The first objective sought to investigate gender representation in the operational, management and trade union levels of the manufacturing and service sector organizations in Kenya. The study established that gender disparities continue to be experienced in industrial occupations in Kenya, with women being underrepresented in the studied organizations. The study revealed that while disparities were observed in all the studied organizations and at all hierarchical levels, the margins tended to be higher at the management level than at the operational level. The margins were thus lowest at the operational levels of Telkom Kenya, which is a service industry, but highest at the management levels of the EAPCC (which is within the manufacturing sector) and the related trade union. It was further revealed that disparities at the organizational level tended to march those at the respective trade union mainly because trade unions draw their membership from the organizations which they represent.

The second objective was to investigate institutional factors which may influence gender disparities. The factors examined here included the employment policies and procedures and the level at which the organizations had

implemented the various gender-responsive provisions of new labour laws. An analysis of the organizational policies revealed that while all policies put emphasis on employment equality, the implementation of many of these policies was still way below target. Each of the organizations studied had a standard recruitment policy which, among other things, required that recruitment be on an equal employment opportunity basis. Statistical records revealed that more men than women had been recruited at all levels.

It was also observed that both the policies and procedures of the organizations lacked provisions for appeal and provisions for assessment of the recruitment process by an independent external third party. An appeal system and assessment by a third party would provide an effective control mechanism against any possible gender discrimination or other forms of discrimination. An analysis of the person specifications and job descriptions revealed that while there were no indications of gender discrimination in the administrative jobs, there were indications of indirect gender discrimination in the job description and person specifications of the technical positions. For instance, while some technical jobs require long working hours, others require working at heights and yet others work at night.

Training and promotion policies and procedures in both companies were based on self-improvement, job performance, and the availability of vacant positions. The two policies did not give any indications of gender preference in training or promotions. The two policies stated that nominations of employees to attend courses should be based on identified needs. They failed to explain the process of identifying the training needs. On promotional opportunities, it was observed that while at the operational level, a similar number of women respondents as men reported to have been promoted, at the management level, more men than women respondents reported having been promoted.

The labour policies whose level of implementation was examined included the two-thirds rule, the extended maternity leave policy, the equal opportunity policy, the sexual harassment policy, the policy on the employment of young persons, and the health and safety policy. According to the Kenya constitution (2010), no more than two-thirds of members of elective or appointive bodies should be of the same gender. However, while the organizations studied seemed to comply with this requirement, the two-thirds requirement did not take into account the different levels in the organizational hierarchy, especially at the management level. It was evident that while the rule was observed at the lower cadres of many organizations, this was not so at the management levels.

While it was evident that most of the employment laws relating to gender equality had been entrenched into the organizational policies of the studied organizations, many were not implemented, and some of those implemented had loopholes that could encourage gender disparities. For instance, it was observed that extended maternity leave could discourage employers from recruiting young women. The Occupational Health and Safety Act lacked a provision for the safety and comfort of expectant mothers while at the workstations, and consequently, no effort had been taken in any of the studied organizations to ensure the health, safety and comfort of the expectant mothers. The role of investigating and punishing sexual harassment offenders is endowed to the employer and the management, who have also been identified by the same Act as potential offenders. The requirement that the confidentiality of the sexual harassment victim be maintained may also mean the protection of the confidentiality of the culprit.

On labour inspection, while the unions reported that they had the mandate to inspect the workplaces and have actually done so, the workers and management respondents reported that gender issues have never been a focus of any such inspections. None of the inspections was on gender equality. Likewise, while the Ministry in charge of Labor is mandated to conduct regular monitoring and inspection of all workplaces, the organizations studied reported that they had not received a labour inspector for as long as any of the interviewed persons could remember.

The third objective sought to identify socio-cultural and economic factors that may influence gender disparities in industrial occupations. The female respondents reported that any job responsibility that demanded that they work long hours, travel a lot, work odd hours, or transfer them from their families was likely to interfere with their family responsibilities and would affect their family relations. However, due to salary incentives, they would not mind taking the job. Younger women tended to carry a heavier burden of family responsibility, yet they seemed to be more represented at both the operational and management levels than older women.

More men than women are reported to have the support of their spouses in events where the job requires longer working hours and travelling. Likewise, more women than men had other persons other than their spouses to help them with the household chores, while more men than women had their spouses as housewives. Generally, men had more responsibility towards the economic needs of the family while women had a bigger responsibility towards the physical household chores; hence, men tend to dedicate more time and effort to the workplace than women.

5.3. Conclusions

The study concluded that gender disparities continue to exist in manufacturing, industrial and trade union sectors. The disparities tend to favour men over women at all organizational levels. The disparities are higher at the management levels than at the operational levels of the organizational hierarchies. They also tend to be higher at the trade union level compared to the organizational level. Disparities at the manufacturing organization are also higher than at the Service organization.

The disparities are attributed to both institutional and socio-cultural factors. The institutional factors include the organizational policies and procedures on recruitment, promotion and training and the failure of the institutions to implement the gender-responsive provisions of the new labour laws. These include poor recruitment, training and promotion policies and procedures at both organizational and respective trade union levels, disclosure of sex in the recruitment documents, and indirect gender discrimination for certain technical jobs.

Disparities will also be caused by poor implementation of the two-thirds rule of gender representation, poor implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act for expectant mothers, lack of organizational policies on the

protection of young mothers before and after childbirth and poor perception by the managers towards the maternity leave. Other factors seen to cause gender disparities at the organizational level were the poor implementation of the sexual harassment provisions of the Employment Act, poor implementation of affirmative action, failure by both the trade unions and the ministry in charge of labour to inspect the workplace on issues relating to gender equality and failure by the trade unions to focus their campaigns on gender issues.

The socio-cultural factors which influence gender disparities include family responsibilities and spouse support for additional job responsibility, spouse income, presence of dependants, presence of house helper, poor working conditions and social stereotypes towards certain jobs. Personal attributes such as age and academic achievement also influence gender disparities.

5.4. Key Recommendations

It is evident from this study that gender disparities continue to persist at the operational, management and trade union levels of organizations in Kenya. The disparities can only be reduced if tight measures are taken, including the formulation of gender-responsive policies at the organizational level, implementation of gender-responsive practices, proper implementation of the new labour laws and implementation of gender-responsive working conditions in organizations. Specifically, the study proposes the following strategies, which may lead to reductions in gender disparities in organizations and the respective trade unions in Kenya.

- From the findings, it was clear that while the organizations were keen to observe the two-thirds rule at the overall organizational level, gender representation at the various levels of the organizational hierarchy, especially at the top management level, fell below the requirements of this rule. The two-thirds gender representation rule should be implemented at all levels of organizational hierarchy, including the various operational, management, and trade union levels.
- Organizations should have gender-responsive working conditions, including split shifts and teleworking arrangements which accommodate both married and single employees who have additional family responsibilities. There is also a need for flextime arrangements for workers with more demanding family responsibilities, including expectant and young mothers. This would allow them flexible working hours to take care of themselves during pregnancy and more time to be with the newborn babies longer than the recommended maternity leave. It is also evident from the findings that no specific measures have been taken to establish care centres for young mothers. Care centres are inexpensive but would be a great encouragement for young mothers who wish to compete favorably with other workers in job performance and career progression without interruptions to go and look after their young babies (Dean, 2008). These would specifically be beneficial for organizations whose workers' motivation is based on performance.

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