



Barriers for Women Participation in Building Construction Sector: A Case Study of Kebbi State Nigeria

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Abstract: It has been a fact that, certain women have a required knowledge, experience and training and could perform efficiently in building construction industries and other related sectors, but yet they were not fully represented in the sector because some numerous barriers that hinders their carrier development in the constructional Area. So, this paper aimed to assess those challenges faced by female in building construction industry and other related sectors in kebbi state, Nigeria. The objectives of the paper are to identify the barriers and suggest necessary solution that suit the study area. The data for this research were obtained from structured questionnaire distributed to workers of some construction companies, construction sites, Academic personnel and students from the Tertiary institution in kebbi state. From findings it shows that, participations of women in building construction sector is obstructed by culture and religious seclusion, Family responsibilities, inadequate security of job in private sector, work stress and fatigue, inadequate pay, insecurity in working environment and inflexible working hours. The paper suggests that, the assumption of construction industry is a male dominant industry should be de-emphasized, and also equal gender opportunity should be set to attract more women in the sector. Finally, the industry should improve the physical and surrounding factors in respect to women by initiating flexible work hours, reducing work load and making the work less boring and stressful, also the dignity of women in construction sites should be highly respected by discouraging the use of foul languages and harassment.

Keywords: Women, Barrier, Construction site, Challenges, Construction industry

General Background

The construction industry typically is assuming to be male dominated industry, which became the main issue for equal opportunity for women. Construction industry play an important role in the economic development and employment generation in various nation (1). Building construction industry is designed globally for men and women each possessing relative strength and mental capacity in chosen area of expertise to perform a given task on the same sector (2). But very unfortunate, It's believed that building construction industry is a male-dominated industry globally, with poor women representation in every aspect of the construction profession (3) Globally, the construction industry has long been a sector of discrimination which resulted to women under represented (4).

According to (5) "Building Construction industry is term as boy's game, with the majority of the key positions is held by men", the report also add, "as at 2016, over seventy percent of the construction workforce was made up of men, but still the industry is experiencing a deficiency in labour, that is why we need more women in construction."

A report by (6) reveals that "It's not a secret that the construction industry is massively male-dominated. According to (7) only 14.5% of construction workers are women. And if you break that figure down even further, the proportion of women working in skilled manual trades is a disconcertingly low to 2%. A survey by (8) shows that, women in the Nigerian construction industry are noticed to be involved in other vocational skills such as beauty works, dress making, and other opportunity beside their profession, which is seeing as deviation instead of diversification, because of it negative importance to the welfare of the Nigerian construction industry. However, the situational report of Nigeria as today shows that, the rate of women's participation in both industrial and academic environment of construction is very low (9). As could be seen in table 1



Table 1 Data Distribution of workers in Nigeria by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development according to industries

Industry	Female	Percentage%	Male	Percentage%
Agriculture	7,029,237	36.5	12,207,075	63
Fishing	188, 831	1	293,901	1.5
Mining	40,301	0.2	152.,860	0.8
Manufacturing industry	1,197,538	6.2	1,084,390	5.6
Electricity, gas, and water	1,197,538	0.4	233,072	1.2
Construction industry	37,44	0.2	620,749	3.2
Retail trade	5,796,543	30.1	3,037,550	15.8
Hotel/restaurant business	163,561	0.9	53,557	0.3
Transportation and comm. business	96,300	0.5	1,308,250	6.8
Finance business	52,088	0.3	74,337	0.4
Real estate business	187,984	1.2	26,263	1.2
Administration and defense	477,061	2.5	1,352,56	2.7
Education	915,040	4.8	994,109	5.2
Health and social welfare	292,143	1.5	183,185	1
Social services	727,588	3.8	1,112,014	5.8
House helper	98,320	0.5	99,616	0.5
Others	16,113	0.1	50,325	0.3
Total	17,484,163	43.1	23,053,815	56.9

Source: Adapted from (1)cited by (3) in the report of (10).

discrimination in gender equality in Nigeria is more pronounced in Northern part of Nigeria, where by more than half of women population are married between age 15-18 years and would be expected to have a child after the 1st year of marriage (11). Girls have limited access to the types of vocational training and skills acquisition that could improve their access to economic assets and overall financial security (12).

Majority of available research in these area, lack significances of the factors militating against the women participation in the construction industry in Nigeria and in particular in the study area Kebbi State, this paper assessed the challenges confronting women participation in the kebbi state construction industry, Construction Sites, and construction academia, with view to bring a possible solution.

The Barrier to Women in Construction Industry

Based on available past research that discuss the challenges faced by women to participate in Building construction sectors, several factors had been identified for women's low participation in Building construction industry which were highlighted below

culture and religious understanding (13), (14), (15). The image of the industry (16),(17), (18). Career knowledge (19). family commitments (13). Male dominated training courses, and recruitment (20). Unsecured working environment (21). Inflexible working hours (22). Sexual harassment (23),(24), (25), (26).

Need For Women in the Building Construction Industry

For the Maximum utilization of human resources, female resources should be considered and adequately represent in the construction industry, because they represent more than half of human resources needed in Nigeria. Based on International Labour Organization data, it is estimated that more than 865 million women worldwide who have the potential to contribute more fully to their national economies, 812 million live in emerging and developing nations, Nigeria included (27).

The employment of female work force on an equal basis, would give opportunity to different industries to make better use of the available talent with potential growth implications (28), (29). The protection of fundamental human right, equity and justice is mandatory for success and development of any sector, this call for balance of identity for both males and females in every sector, construction industries included (30).

Therefore, there is need to tap the talents of the other half of the workforce, ie the female professionals. Females and males appear to possess equal potential to develop the skills required for the pursuit of science; it is both a waste of talent and a deprivation to individuals that the two genders do not participate equally in science (29).(30) argued that women would benefit from graduating in a scientific discipline, due to higher salaries and the possibility to help others. Having more female engineers would also be beneficial to the



economy because of the increasing need for engineers and of the positive impact of diversity on designs. (31), (32)

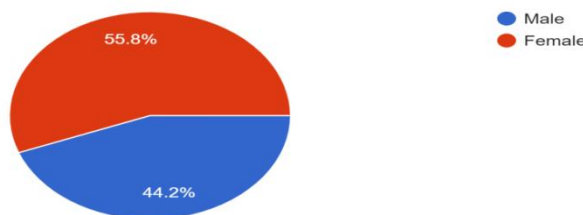
Research Method

A rough data used for this study were Collected using a structured survey questionnaire that was designed to find out the root causes of the barrier in the construction industry. The google survey question platform was used to create the survey and to collect the responses from targeted population, the survey reduced the amount of time needed to collect and sort the responses, there are three sections with different sample questions of the survey. The survey questionnaire was send to 50 personnel of selected construction companies, some selected construction sites, Academic staff and students from selected Tertiary institution as targeted population, who are in environmental courses, in the in kebbi stat, 43 of which respond by completing the surveys Questionnaire.

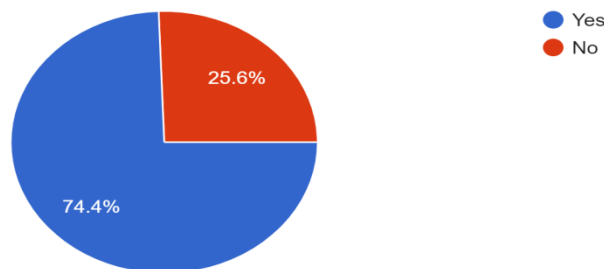
Result and Discussion

Section A

1. What is your Gender
 43 responses



have you notice female under representation in Building construction industry/site
 43 responses



where have you being working?
 43 responses

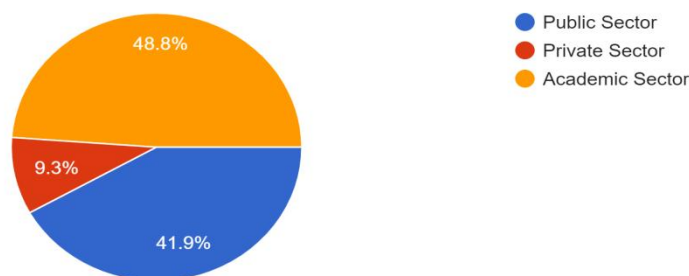


Fig 3 showing the result of characteristic of respondents



Fig 3 shows The results of section one, where the Characteristic of respondent is shown, from results it shows that more than half of the respondents in this research paper who respond to the questions are women, with 55.8% against 44.2%, whom are the main target for the useful data on the research, also 74.4% of the respondent noticed female under representation in Building construction industry/site in the state, while 25.6% respond with no. Again the result shows that 48.8% of the respondent are working in academic environments, either as academic/non-academic staff or student of building construction related courses, while 41.9% are working with public sector (Ministries of work and Housing etc), and 9.3% are working in private sector

Sir, which among the listed factors you think is challenge for participation of women in Building Industry in Kebbi State

43 responses

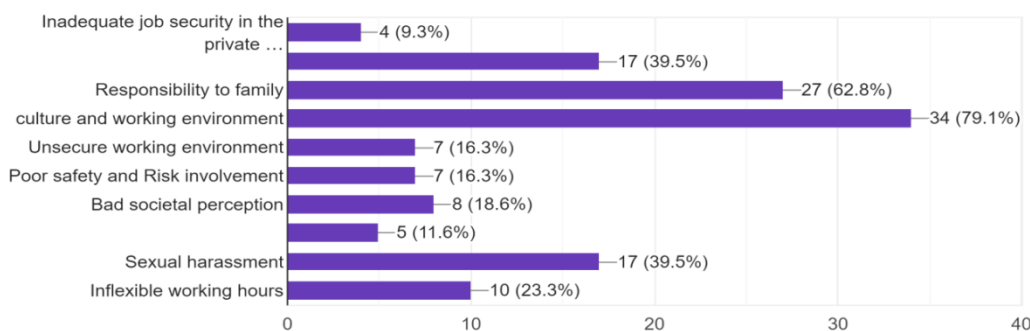


Fig 4 shows that 79.1% of the respondent believed that, the major barrier and challenge of women in participation in Building construction industries/site in kebbi state is culture and working environment, kebbi state whose 98% of its overall population has a unique culture of not allowing women to full intermingling of women with men in all their social, economic, political and spiritual activities. It is only in some sector that women can be seen with partial participation in areas like health and education, the result also testify the literature of (20), and (21)

Furthermore, from the figure 4 also, 62.8% of respondent believed that, responsibility to Family is also a second barrier for women participation in Building construction industries/site, Northern Nigeria form 70% of Nigerian population, so Majority of women in the region concentrate more in day-to day activities of families, nourishment and orientation of young ones which take their attention from participation in other sectors, as some time work and family duties cannot be met simultaneously, this also confirm the view of (Maryam and Mulaikat 2015). Subsequently, figure 4 also shows that, approximately 40% of the respondent do believe that Male dominance industry and Sexual Harassment are also barrier to women participation in Building construction industries/site. Finally, 23.3%, 18.6%, 16.3, 11.6% and 9.3% of respondent, also believed that, inflexible Working Hour, Bad Societal Perception, Unsecure Working Environment, poor safety and risk involvement, lack of understanding of career opportunity and inadequate Job Security in the private sector are among barriers to women participation in Building construction industries respectively.

how do you think the problem of low participation of women in building construction in industry can be solve or resolve in Kebbi State.

43 responses

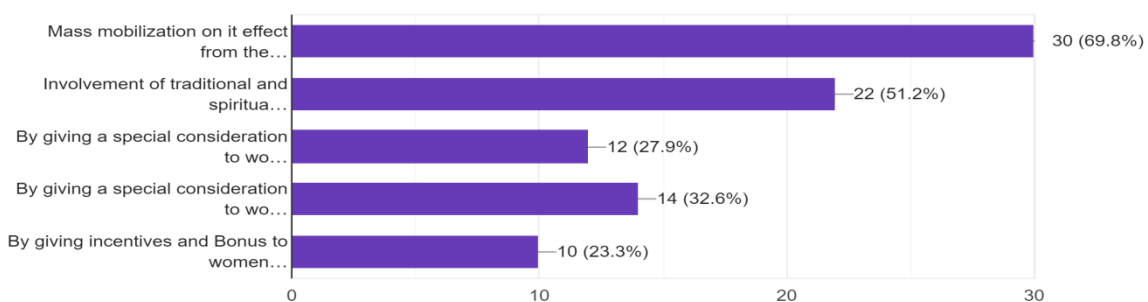




Fig 5 shows that almost 70% of respondents believed that with Mass Mobilization from grass root, on the importance of women participation in the building construction industries will definitely solve the problem. Involvement of traditional rulers and spiritual leaders within the society, whom are the most dignity people, having the full respect of the entire society, with 51.2% of respondent view. Giving a special consideration to women in construction site, giving a special consideration to women in Construction Academia, giving a special incentives and Bonus to women in construction sites will help in motivating women to participate in the industry with 32.6%, 27.9% and 23.3% of respondent view Respectively. However, some respondent suggest that, emphases should be given to women on basic Technological Knowledge, due to their weakness in Science and Technology courses in the state, others suggest that suggest that, women should be financially supported to join the industry

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study found that there is a discrimination and gender bias in the kebbistate building construction sector, and that some employers prefer to employ men for their construction projects, and the main reason behind was that, the state is predominantly an Islamic state and the majority of people has a unique culture, but in reality, male and female in terms of employment requirements and career development should have equal opportunity. Based on the findings in this study, for women to be encourage in participation in construction, the assumption that, construction industry is a male industry should be de-emphasized and equal gender image should be focus so as to attract and retain talented women. Also, the industry should improve the environmental factors in respect to women by introducing flexible work hours, reducing work load and making the work less tedious and stressful. The dignity of women in construction sites should be highly respected by discouraging the use of foul languages and harassment, also women should be supported to balance work and family responsibilities.

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