

Survival in Male-Dominated Career: Women A Reflection from Tanzania People's Defense Forces

By

Andrew Mushi, PhD

Lecturer in Governance and Development

Mzumbe University, Dar es salaam Campus College

28 Olyimpio Street, Upanga

P.O. BOX 20266, Dar es salaam, Tanzania

andrew.mushi@mu.ac.tz

&

Annastella Bujane

Masters of Leadership and Management

Mzumbe University, Dar es salaam Campus College

28 Olyimpio Street, Upanga

P.O. BOX 20266, Dar es salaam, Tanzania

bujaneannastella@gmail.com

Abstract

This study attempted to examine how women adapt and cope in the Tanzania Peoples' Defense Forces (TPDF) which is the male dominated career. Data were collected through interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and documentary reviews. Respondents were selected using purposive and convenient sampling techniques while data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings show socio-cultural perspectives, gender roles stereotypes, *glass ceiling and glass front door effects* were found to be the main issues women are struggling to survive in the TPDF. The study findings also indicated that, women's competence, self-esteem and self-efficacy are core criteria towards their survival in TPDF. Furthermore, the study revealed that, women have extra cognitive worth and special qualities over men such as ability to multitasking, resilience, emotional, strictness, and focused, royal, integrity, sensitive, sympathetic, understanding, approachable, emphatic, creative and good communicators of which are added advantages to their prosperity especially when performing in male dominated careers. The study concludes that, there is no any good reason for women to lag behind instead they should believe in themselves, avoid unnecessary excuses, perform the assigned tasks responsibly for their survival and prosperity.

Key words: Male dominated career, Tanzania, Women, Military, Tanzania People's Defense Forces

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Introduction

Women are employed, integrated and survive in perceived male dominated careers such as law enforcement, military, professional sports, fire-fighting and top-level organizational positions (Jacob and Schain, 2009). Other fields where women are found include medical field, heavy truck drivers, electro-technology, Information Technology, automotive, construction, engineering to mention few. The origin of male dominated career can be traced from religious and cultural perspectives, which view women as assistants to men in nature; this nature leaves influence, control, power and decision making into the hands of men which automatically dominates women. This situation created lack of awareness to women as well as taking women career development for granted hence deprival of women status in the society which ultimately led to women marginalization (Batliwala & Friedman, 2010). Socio-economic, political and cultural demands forced women's active participation in career performance and excellence which later forged significant shifts into male dominated careers. The main reason to these shifts includes changes in social norms and custom perspectives on women's behaviors and their capability to enter, co-exist and perform in male dominated career employments (Gordon & Whelan-Beny, 2005; Batliwala & Friedman, 2010).

Women's survival in male dominated career, took a new pace following the rise of the United States (US) feminist movement in 1960s and 1970s which enforced changes in long-held outsets on femininity roles and the division of labor which accelerated the quota which indicated two percent of women joining the armed forces and restrictions in attaining high ranks to be removed (Goodall, 2013). In line with the USA feminist movements, many efforts have been done worldwide in empowering women and eradicating women discriminations such as the First Mexico World Conference on Women in 1975 which focused on women issues including equality and eliminating discriminations, also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 aiming at promoting equal rights for women and girls and Copenhagen Conference (1980) which aimed at assessing the progress and failures of 1975 Mexico Conference Plan of Actions. Another effort was in 1995, the Beijing 4th UN conference on women stressing on actions for equality, peace and women development including empowerment and participations such as decision-making process and access to power (United Nations 1995).

With the feminist movement, Africa also was not left behind, its proliferation impacted the continent and its countries and they actually did not aim to be antagonistic but to seek men's support and acceptance that also women can be integrated, survive and co-exist with men in any career (Chidam'odzi, 1994). In its reality, African feminists saw Africa in a much-deliberated system of male-dominated status quo hence joined hands to remove all hindrances towards equality and the impact was really seen. This is illustrated by Courter, Persson and Utas (2008) and Mazurana (2004) that mostly in 1970's women were integrated in male dominated careers and a good example is in the military whereby women participated as active fighters and as paramilitaries in countries like Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia,

Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Libya, Uganda, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Somalia, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia.

In the Tanzania People's Defense Forces (TPDF) women integration was noticed since 1972 and most of them were posted in administrative tasks though, and some of them have managed to make higher ranks (Kingazi, 2012). Women in the TPDF serve in the Army, Air force, Navy, National Service and others are deployed in peace and security missions in different departments and assigned different duties based on their capacities and qualifications and most of them have successful stories (TPDF, 2015). This ese paper discusses on how female soldiers manage to survive in TPDF.

Statement of the Problem

For more than forty years, there has been an increase of women participating in male dominated careers. Defence forces is among careers which are male dominant. In 1972, women in the TPDF were less than 1% which has increased to 15% (TPDF, 2015). This gradual increase, has an impact in women total number, in decision making positions and in top positions. However, there is one question that lingers in the society on how women manage to survive in male dominated careers and particularly in the defence forces. This study, intended to explore how women personnel in the TPDF survive.

Review of Related Literature

Women survival in male dominated career is closely connected with the Liberal feminism ideology as it was among the efforts which advocated on displacing male dominance ideology with the assumption that, women and men are really not different when it comes to performance hence a need to work out gender inequality. Samkange, (2015) argues that, both women and men deserve equal rights, education, equal treatment and equal work opportunities. With feminism, both sexes are encouraged to choose, join and train in any career of their interests and capability because job performance depends on the person her/himself and not the gender that's why women were encouraged to join the so perceived male dominated fields. Following feminism efforts, women have managed to join in male dominated careers such as engineering, construction and armed force and performed superb, however, there are different challenges in which women face towards their survival in male dominated careers (Bates 2014).

Looking at the working environment in male dominated careers, women experience indirect discrimination and disadvantages in relation to advantages as they are just taken for granted and incapables although at the same time; women (due to their scarcity and minority), enjoy to work in such environment as they are favored and given a priority (Solowie, 2014). In this situation therefore, women become more comfortable to work in such environment which enable them to be unique and more productive hence play a significant role.

Njiru (2013) argues that, there are various factors or challenges affecting women in male dominated career. Among these factors are socio- cultural perspectives, gender roles stereotypes, glass ceiling effects, organizational cultures and all these factors leads to sexual harassments, women discrimination and male chauvinism.

Bandura (1986), contemplates cognitive personal variables such as self-efficacy, competence, self- esteem and how they interact with other features in the existing environment towards one's career. In this sense, possessing these cognitive variables is one

thing, interacting these variables with personal's other aspects is another thing and the environment a person is living is also an important thing in shaping one's career choice, career maintenance and career development.

Bandura (1986) states self-efficacy, as a strong motivational force towards achieving a certain goal. This force is contributed by individual's belief in his/her capability and abilities to achieve the laid down goal and this needs intelligence, confidence, experience and enthusiasm. Air Tanzania (2019) describing the pilot's career, argues that it is true that the field worldwide is still dominated by males, and globally they are just around 5% women commercial pilots. In Tanzania, Air Tanzania has managed to include at least three women in its pilots' team. Actually, being a pilot does not come from the blue but self –efficacy, following the question in the www.airtanzania.co.tz as to why women make great pilots in the Air Tanzania magazine; Joanitha Bomani one of the Air Tanzania female pilots explains that it is cautious and attentive of women in nature which are also core pilot qualities. Stressing this another female pilot (Cecylia Gellejah) adds that being a pilot, goes down to dealing with a number of information as one needs to be good at multi-tasking; another aspect which women possess in nature.

Also, Gecas, (1991); Blaumeister and Vohs (2002) argue that self- efficacy is also enclosed with the experiences of having that ability to exercise control over one's environment. Most of career environments are male dominated and do not favor women thus hinder them from participating in different fields hence lacking experience which accelerates fear to dare integrating in those careers for instance the armed forces, engineers, pilots, heavy truck drivers and doctors. It is known that experience is gained from participating and seeing others performing, if one lacks such an opportunity, leads to lacking self-efficacy and its absence leads to women negligence from some careers as it is supported by Gaines (2017) that experiences determine one's career.

Gaines (2017) argues that, in male-dominated career, there is an image of seeing women incapable and incompetent which affects women in their career performance and development. This leads to women to receive low credits because of their gender, especially when performing the same task in the same environment. To encounter this illusion, women may have to work harder and smarter than their counterpart sex so as to be rated competent. This actually deprives women's efforts towards career development where there is male dominance. Most of men and the society would perceive women in women in male dominated career as 'cozy tools and not real performers.

Another personal cognitive variable is self-esteem as it is referred by Baumeister, (1998) as an individual's assessment towards his/her own true worth and it includes self-respect, self- confidence, morale and dignity. Women in male dominated career, needs self -esteem to value themselves and placing themselves at a certain value. It needs an understanding that no career a woman is incapable to perform in. For instance, in the military, as explained by Sigsworth, (2016), female security and peace keeping personnel have been deployed in conflict settings and have performed a positive role. Sigsworth, (2016) give examples of women who managed to participate in Maumau in Kenya as intelligence gatherers while others operated as full combatants and paramilitaries, and women are currently operating in peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, to mention few.

2.1 Theoretical Framework Underpinning the Study

The study was guided by Social Role theory. Eagly (1987) asserts that, social role theory is the conception that males and females are assigned different roles in society owing to their gender. In specific, family and work-related settings contributes to the distributions of roles well-defined on gender basis. Males and females are expected to have traits which primarily make them to perform different roles (Eagly & Karau, 1991). The roots of males' and females' social roles lies predominantly in humans' grown physical sex dissimilarities, explicitly males' size and strengths and females' reproductive undertakings of gestating and nurturing children (Wood & Eagly, 2009). These social roles, intermingle with a society's settings and culture leading to roles distribution by sex. Moreover, gender roles influence behaviors through a biosocial set of practices such as hormonal variations that regulates role performances, self-regulations to gender role standards, and social regulations to others' prospects about females and males. These are important factors in the women military performances. Likewise, psychological issues are also important in facilitating role performances among genders.

The theory reflects that sex dissimilarities and likenesses in behavior, reflects to beliefs largely exemplifies society's perceptions of males' and females' social roles in their society. Gender roles stereotypes, socio cultural perspectives, glass ceiling effects and organizational cultures are among limitations to women survival in these perceived male dominant careers. In its reality, these gender roles have been the root of male dominated careers such as engineering, heavy truck drivers, construction and military professions thus to the large extent, they are viewed as masculine and for that case therefore, women are perceived a weak masculinity who cannot perform in those fields. For example, military roles have been perceived as aggressive, brutal and killing in nature, which are contrary to women's nature. Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann (2000) assert that, physical dissimilarities between women and men, leads to the belief that, certain activities are more proficiently and competently done by one sex compared to the opposite sex depending on society's settings and cultures.

Linked to social roles therefore, there are certain prospects that are held towards individuals occupying a particular position or membership of a specific social category (Eagly et al., 2003). For instance, in the military settings, the roles are established from a consensual belief in societies of which qualities of females and males are largely founded on gender. Social role theory therefore, argues that females and males act and behaves slightly in a different way that influences on role performing in relations to others prospects (Eagly, 1987).

4.1 Objective

The objective of the study was to examine how women soldiers adapt and cope in the TPDF which is the male dominated career.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted in Dar es Salaam at the TPDF units such as the National Service Headquarters, Twalipo Camp and The Transport Unit. The total sample for this study was thirty respondents 16 females and 14 males) from senior officers, junior officers and soldiers which was divided into two groups; in-service and retired officers. Purposive and convenient sampling techniques were deployed to recruit the respondents. Purposive sampling was used

to recruit officers who were in the offices that hold key information in regards to the welfare of the staff. Convenient sampling was used to recruit any officer who was willing and available to participate in the study. This was conducted in the last quarter of 2018 and first half of 2019.

This study deployed descriptive design approach. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and FGDs and documentary reviews. Such approaches assisted the researchers to have a comprehensive understanding by grasping respondents' experiences, feelings and perceptions towards male dominated career. The researcher made a thorough review of secondary data which were related to the study which included research papers, seminar presentations, rules and regulations, and other documents from TPDF library. The reason for using secondary data in this study, was to supplement primary data that have been collected by the researchers.

The research observed all essential procedures to commence the research. Letter for research clearance was obtained from Mzumbe University introducing the researcher to the study area. The respondents were assured that the data will be used for academic purposes only (Cohen, 2006). Informed consent; the researcher assured informed consent by providing reasonable description of the research topic, purposes and objectives of the study (Kothari, 2004).

3.0 Discussion and Findings

3.1 Women working environment in the TPDF

The study revealed that, the working environments in the TPDF are relatively fair because working codes are not segregating women and those who abide to those rules, are doing fine. Most of interviewed respondents both women and men had almost similar views. One senior female officer (Officer 4) said this:

.... frankly speaking, the working environment is fair. It accommodates both sexes more or less equally. Remember the TPDF is gender neutral, that is why we normally have only officers and men (soldiers), this means both women and men. Everybody is provided with entitled rights according to the rank, and this doesn't ask the sex. To, women, issues like pregnancies, maternity and other related women conditions are considered. I do not see any direct women harassment or gender-based violence, perhaps there might be some discomforts but once detected, are acted upon on the spot.

The working environment is implicated by the nature of the TPDF, because it is operated under strict rules, regulations, orders which shapes discipline in everything that does not guarantee rooms for discriminations. This is well supported by the country constitution) article 12 (1 and 2) which believes in equality that all humans are equal and entitled to recognition and respect for his/ her dignity (URT (1977).

Working environment at TPDF is friendly to both men and women. Most respondents confirmed that, working environments was friendly for both men and women while few respondents disagreed. The level of consent indicated that most of the respondents agreed that working environments for both men and women personnel in the TPDF were friendly giving no chance for a notion of women marginalization in the Force.

From the respondents' narratives, it was clear that the traditional gender roles stereotypes which is common in the society was also reflected at TPDF workplace. From the TPDF women's experiences, the study also recognized that, the predominant social constructions about gender roles affected the women's performance and could reinforce biased work environment that disadvantaged TPDF women personnel, who work in such a male-dominated career.

Female officers would constrain themselves to acclimatize to male-related characters in their attempt to find their comfort in that profession. Sometimes, they would attempt to embrace male-like characteristics, such as foul languages and aggressive verbal and non-verbal behaviors in order to accommodate themselves better into that male-dominated work environments. These officers were said to moderate their feminine attributes while in workplace in their effort to avoid unwarranted sexual attention by her male colleagues. A participant (Participant 5) in one of the FGDs said:

.... I started with being very aggressive with them, stood up in meetings and told them straight what I like..., the way that they perceive you makes a lot difference, you need to look aggressive and a challenge them [if not] they will walk all over you, they are not going to listen to you...

Challenging situation experienced by women in the TPDF as a historically male-dominated field, such challenges were associated to women's physical and biological constructs. Physical related difficulties appeared to be women's experience with regards to a labor-intensive nature of TPDF works. Inadequate physical strength was said to increase emotional tension of the women personnel working in that male-dominated career. For example, one cannot ignore health and biologically related concerns including women's monthly menstrual cycles which could somewhat accompanied with periodic body pain and women personnel absence from work or inefficiency for some days, all of which had some negative effects and could also restrain the development of women careers in the TPDF. The findings concur to Bobbit-Zeher, (2011) who says that the demanding nature of labor-intensive work, along with working in perpetually gender-hostile environments may trigger physical and mental stress. Women in general, are more emotional fatigue and physical exhaustion than men did as studied and proved across eight different occupational groups.

3.2 Gender equality in the TPDF

On gender equality and equity issues, it was revealed that there were equal treatments in of both men and women personnel in the TPDF as none of the gender was more favoured than the other. TPDF gives equal opportunities to both men and women in accordance to their qualifications and performances. The laws and regulations governing the TPDF such as Administrative Volume, Disciplinary Volume and Finance Volume were in practice to ensure that biases were not entertained and chances were distributed equally to both men and women accordingly. This was affirmed by all interviewed officers.

One of the interviewees (Interviewee 6) had this to say:

The TPDF is run by its governing rule and regulations, working orders are not segregating particularly to those who are ready to abide to the existing regulations. I believe that the TPDF has neutral rules and regulations for all personnel regardless of sex, TPDF personnel clearly know that failure to abide the regulations, they are liable to serve disciplinary measures. It is fact that getting enrolled and remaining in the force and receive all necessary benefits including the terminal benefits are all equally provided.

It was also found that, on equity bases, women had additional policies for example the TPDF Women Policy which among important issues, it observes women's rights and other issues like maternity leaves as well as breast-feeding related to their roles as wives, mothers and family care takers. The policy is sensitive in dealing with women's special issues and it also accepts men as friendly counterparts.

The Seminar Presentation, (2015) about the Country brief supports these findings as it provides that, women serve in different departments and assigned duties based on their capabilities, women have managed to access senior appointments in the TPDF and also are participating in peace keeping operations as equally their counterparts.

3.3 The performance of women in the TPDF

There was no evident difference in performance between the two personnel groups, the findings further demonstrated that, the level of women performance in TPDF was promising as respondents indicated that women personnel were able to demonstrate outstanding performances equally to or even better than men when they were assigned duties. Women were able to tolerate hard situations by abiding to directives. However, some respondents revealed that, despite women good performers, some of women showed laziness and frangible behaviors when undertaking assigned tasks. One female respondent (Female Respondent 8) was quoted during an interview as she said:

... In employment, what matters is diligence and personal ability to perform a particular task. I see women performing in almost every area except I have not yet seen them in certain fields like commandos, artillery and armor. Some women perform much better when given assignments, they real show best performances which is equally to what men do or even superb than men

3.4 Challenges of women survival in the TPDF

The study came out with a number of findings pertaining to the limitations of women development in the TPDF. The following limitations were found:

3.4.1 Biological constructs

It was found that women had been limited primarily due to their biological constructs where they were said to differ with men when they were assigned role to perform because of their physical attributes, women could not work for long periods and had less endurance than men. Data obtained from the TPDF seminar presentations in 2015, observed that the TPDF has neither woman in commando, in armor element nor in artillery. The underlying reason for absence of women in such position was said to be nature of the fields which demand muscular characters with ability to stand bangs; these were the features that women were said

to be lacking. To evidence the study findings, during FGD one of the respondents (Respondent 3) said:

It is a fact that physiologically, women are different from men, talking about perseverance in difficult situations and environments. This is partly because, of the exigency of those fields. They real demand muscles and that chests to stand bumps like artillery bombs. Even women themselves, do not like those fields...

Although Olah, Richter and Kotowska, (2014) argue that there are no more gender roles limits due to contemporary socio-economic demands which have shifted gender roles whereby everybody may perform in any career, there are some tasks in militaries which are still questionable due to biological make ups of women. However, the Career Development policy for officers and men does not differentiate female and male tasks, it is gender neutral leaving rooms for both genders' opportunities in selection and developing their careers.

3.4.2 Socio-cultural perspectives

The study also found that women had been perceived as intruders in the defense forces career, according to respondents, socio-cultural perspective of the community interpreted the existence of women in the defense forces as interfering men's careers and it is taken as not their right way. Most respondents said that socio-cultural perspectives had affected the progress and survival of women in the TPDF. Respondents insisted that, society perceive the career as belong to men by associating activities involved and the required masculine personalities which women are not considered to possess.

The findings further revealed that, male TPDF personnel yet seemed to have integrated community's negative perceptions about women's competence in undertaking the tasks assigned or when assuming the responsibilities in accordance with positions they held. This appeared to have resulted into the gradual development of women's lack of self-confidence. Respondents indicated that, the process of cultivating and retaining confidence remained to be a consistent challenge for the TPDF women personnel because sometimes male colleagues undermined women's capabilities as they continued embrace the same male-dominance perceptions over female incompetence in the fields perceived to be men's careers. The respondent from one of the FGDs (Respondent 2) observed that:

..... you know the problem does not start here; it is far from our families. Actually, parents are not so much happy when a child girl shows interests to join armed forces. The society has been affected by this perspective, believing that, women are supposed to engage in soft jobs, so even when females join these careers, they are perceived the same, which affect task allocations and deployments. Imagine, from our grassroots, we believe orders and decision making comes from men.....to change this, there is still a long way to go.

These findings concur with Barrett (1999) in *"The Organizational Construction of Hegemonic Masculinity"* who point out that, in most male dominated professions including the military, women personnel are evaluated more poorly in situations that appear to be involving complex problem solving. In these situations, male counterparts are skeptical

regarding women's expertise and discredit expert women's opinions and give their fellow women the benefit of the doubt.

3.4.3 Gender roles stereotypes

This was also another limitation found to limit women's career advancement in the TPDF as they were regarded incapable of managing and leading some duties such as commands, operating tasks and sustaining artillery bangs. Respondents showed that, there were noticeable differences between men and women in terms of managing operations in the TPDF. The study also found that even among women, the stereotype is real as some of them accorded that they were not in a position to lead some serious operations at the same level to men, this was also cultivated by the inferiority complex existed in women themselves. One of the senior retired female officers (Senior Female Officer 9) says:

These attitudes of dividing and assigning works per gender from our families have a great impact towards career selection. A girl child is raised and imparted the belief that she is weak as compared to a boy child and cannot decide or do something perfect in absence of a man which affect their confidence, ability to dare and decide, ultimately affect many women are affected with inferiority complex.....and everybody sees the situation is alright.

From these findings, the study sees that, acceptance of women into this male-dominated career (TPDF), appeared to be on the condition that they adhere to their assigned roles and stereotypes. Culturally assigned roles illogically appeared to be used as a little bit biased against women in the TPDF but also as a means of ensuring that domination of men remained sustainable. Moreover, even the minority status of women in this male-dominated career, amplified that in spite of their presence, women were still struggling for career success within the same environment where ironic discriminatory of men personnel had not precisely found a proper addressing.

3.4.5 Sexual harassments

The other limitation for women survival in the TPDF revealed by the study was indirect sexual harassments. Respondents indicated that, some males indirectly demonstrated hyper-masculine personalities hidden from the surveilling eyes of the TPDF supervisors. With such environments, where women personnel in the TPDF were outliers and regarded as fractions of the workforce or partially isolated, which could eventually be perceived as sexual harassment among women personnel. Data from the study area indicated that a great number of the respondents agreed that indirect sexual harassments existed in the TPDF although whenever noticed, are acted upon on the spot.

The study had revealed that, sexual harassment in the TPDF was not often about sex at all, but women would rather experience gender harassment put downs, sexist or vulgar comments, indirect sexual harassments were said to be designed in equivocal settings that were not easily recognizable by TPDF management, which in general resulted into women personnel's unwelcome feel, or find themselves unfit to certain positions and responsibilities within TPDF.

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As connected to sexual harassment, information from the study area indicated that, women personnel in the TPDF sometimes experienced ironic baptism of names not belonged to them from the male colleagues, this would occur as female employees were called nicknames or treated inappropriately based upon their gender. One female participant (Participant 3) in FGD said:

...I think some males think women are their cozy tools and not real performers, you find them trying to force affairs, but they are very few not all, we actually face them, we do not fear them, caring for our dignity, we tell them the truth and they understand, for those who doesn't understand and continue disturbing, when reported, are seriously acted upon on the spot.

The findings concur with Whitehead (2001) in *"A Seductive Ontology, Gender Work and Organization"* who stipulates that, disparate treatment or sexual harassment in male dominated fields creates women's tension in their workplaces.

The glass-front door

This was also another limitation found to hamper the development of women career in the TPDF, respondents indicated that there was a belief that women would not be able to advance further with their careers because of their gender roles and responsibilities. The study found more respondents agreed that glass front door limited the development of women in the TPDF. With this effect, the society regard women in male dominated careers as incapable of assuming their roles by their own that, their performance and accomplishment of assignments assigned to them would regularly rely upon the presence of male personnel to offer them support. Generally, it was clear that the glowing belief that women could not undertake and accomplish tasks assigned on their own was the concern towards women career development in the TPDF that gave hard ways for women to find their career destinies in the eyes of males who assumed to belong to the TPDF as male-dominated field. One of retired senior female officer (Senior Female Officer 3) said:

In-fact, the society is still facing this glass front door, roles have been and are still distributed gender wise and we see no problem, for example, many men do not know how to cook, how to wash dishes and even their own clothes...we believe they are females' roles and we are okay with it. What do you expect when this type of a man deals with enabling women and gender mainstreaming into a male dominated career like this?

The finding concurs with Simpson (2004) in *Gender Mix and Organizational Fit* as he indicates that, while women are achieving more educationally and participating more in the labor markets than ever before, there is a widespread perception among the public that full equality between men and women remains an abstract goal. Simpson (2004) maintains that, only four-in-ten Americans say that male dominated organizations generally treat men and women equally. Attitudes have changed considerably in this regard over the past twenty years even so, a sizable minority of adults still say that society favors men over women, down from.

3.4.6 The glass-ceiling effect

This effect was found to exist in the TPDF as one of the barriers towards women's career advancement. The study found that, women in the TPDF were obstructed by this effect and thus hindered women's promotions to top ranks in the force. Respondents indicated that, it is the unnoticeable phenomenon but really exceled as invisible hindrance towards women career development. It was revealed that, the community does not give rooms for women in this male dominated career to reach top positions in spite of possessing appropriate qualifications, the study found that, there was a lack of trust among TPDF personnel particularly men that women were capable of holding and leading top positions in the force. With this effect, women still found hard ways and struggles to cling to the higher and strategic positions. The narrative from a male respondent (Respondent 11), indicated that, the development of career and survival of women in TPDF was somewhat discouraged by lack of sufficient support from male personnel as they perceived women's incapability in from of them as he says:

It is true that we lack women at the top, very few have managed. You know what? Some men are real not comfortable to see women at the top commanding and directing them, it is like offending manhood...also, some women do not trust their fellow women, yet women themselves do not believe their capabilities, they are affected by inferiority complex. We need to move from here.

The findings coincide with Hearn (1994) in his work "*Changing Men and Changing Management*" as he indicates that, problem of the glass ceiling effect remains a challenging factor for women not only in professions that are historical male-dominated, but those organizations whose top positions have been held by men. Hearn (ibid) maintains that, women are no longer shunted into a completely different career track, instead, they find themselves almost, but not quite reaching the top ranks as many top male executives enjoy the status quo and relish their position of power and have personal biases against women who try to intrude on what they see as their territory.

3.5 Women personnel survival in TPDF through cognitive personal variables

Women survival in male dominated career through cognitive personal variables was also explored, the aim of exploring this objective was to reveal how cognitive variables such as competence, self –esteem and self-efficacy necessitated the survival of women in male dominated career.

3.5.1 Competence

It was revealed that the situation of women in the TPDF was built up through women's sense of competence experienced at their assigned tasks and through skills developed by women working in this male dominated career, which appeared to be associated with the skills and knowledge needed to work in the profession. However, apart from possessing these attributes, the study found that women were ironically considered lowly valued and unappreciated by their counterparts TPDF male personnel.

The study also found that women in the TPDF have been developing basing on their credentials, as a woman personnel possesses appropriate credentials, the advancement and

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survival chances in the force were also much higher. Respondents indicated that, women in TPDF survived their career due to their possession in terms of qualifications, knowledge and intelligence. Moreover, it was revealed that some women appeared more competent than men. Most respondents agreed that the survival of women in male dominated career with particular reference of TPDF was through personal variables including qualifications, intelligence, and physical fitness. During interview one of the respondents (Respondent 13) said:

Women have proved their capability and competence, and should no longer be taken for granted... the TPDF currently have women pilots and marine eaptains and are doing a good job. There are Commanding officers, who have made successful stories, staff officers and directors and their competence have no query. Also, the best student in the Command and Staff Course of this year (2019) is a woman....

The study found that, the promotions and task assignments in the TPDF regardless of the gender, would not depend on whether the top supervisors liked it or not, or if the organization was doing well or not, what they believed to be correct was that, the development women's career in that male-dominated job was to be enhanced by their levels of competence, ability to handle different challenges and their performance consistence. One of the focus group participants (Participant 12) says:

...the possibility for growth, for me is very clear. Yes, I can become a senior commander or staff some days and leading top positions, I may not necessarily need the backing and the approval of everyone, my qualifications will talk...

This study finding concur with Sigsworth, Spinelli-De-Sa, Lemos and Cavazotte, (2017) who maintain that, for women to survive in male dominated careers, they need to possess necessary cognitive variables most of all, competence. Indeed, being competent, nobody will question about ones' gender because competence builds trust.

4.5.2 Self esteem

The question of self-esteem was an important attribute towards women's survival and career development in the TPDF these included women's individual self-evaluations of their own worth, and their belief about their abilities to performance. The study found that women in TPDF were able to understand their values and belief that they possessed equal abilities similar to men personnel. It was further revealed that the survival of women in the TPDF was supported by the abilities of women to understand their values, getting focused towards their careers, eagerness to utilize career advancement opportunities available such as attending short and long trainings to develop their knowledge and competences.

It was significant for career success experiences gained as they continued working in the TPDF driven by their cognitive personal variables that motivated these women to remain in this male-dominated occupation. The successes that women personnel in TPDF could narrowly refer to, were taken as sources of encouragement that inspired them that it was worth to remain in this profession. Moreover, narratives from some of the women had made monumental steps and pioneered the way for other females who came after them. One participant (Participant 14) from one of FGDs said;

.... Career successes included recognition from male colleagues who may even nominate a woman as their position of authority, I wish all my workmates would be coming to me and say how can we do this? with regular appreciations from the colleagues or the organization, then our career success experiences as women here would not have to be a big deal to achieve....”

These findings resemble Kanter (1977) in her work “*Men and Women of the Corporation*” who designates that, self-esteemed female have the chances of working longer and surviving in many males dominated jobs, the variable is also in charge for work consistency and development of such career.

4.5.3 Self-efficacy

The question of self-efficacy was one of the areas that contributed to the performance of women in the TPDF, the study revealed that most of the women personnel in the TPDF had a sense of belief that they were capable of progressing their careers within this male-dominated profession (TPDF) as they develop self-efficacy, women as personnel in the TPDF were said to be able to develop ability and confidence in managing their tasks irrespective of their gender. Data from the study area indicated that most of the respondents affirmed that women self-efficacy was real in the TPDF. Respondents indicated that, though women existed in such male-dominated field but they were able to develop a belief that they were capable of successful managing the assigned role without seeking assistance from males.

The study disclosed that the primary source of self-efficacy confidence was derived from several drivers, which included the development of confidence from within TPDF women personnel themselves. Secondly women personnel gained from somewhat influence of people they worked with, and also self-efficacy was developed from the influence of education qualifications which all together gave more confidence in the performance of assigned roles. Women in the TPDF were revealed to have developed self-efficacy as the result of experiences associated with regular carrying out of work that is complex and challenging, which demanded a high level of intellectual capacity, involving risk and stress. These helped women in this male-dominated profession towards development of self-efficacy.

One of the senior male officers (Senior Female Officer 7) in the TPDF was quoted during an interview saying;

.... Women have that ability to succeed when given tasks, we see them presenting big and strategic issues, we see how they approach challenges and making sound decisions...they can. What they need, is to be given opportunities.

However, the development of TPDF women's self-efficacy in the defense force was also found to be challenging, it was never an easy thing that all women could demonstrate it simply. Respondent indicated that, it had to live within ones' dedication and eager to achieve it and was never anyone's ability to achieve it. The study revealed that, even women personnel in the TPDF admitted that a more dedication and even sacrifices were required to develop and achieve self-efficacy. The study quoted a female junior officer (Female Junior Officer 2) participant in a focus group discussion as she says:

I have always tried to invest in what I'm good at. Because it was a very male orientated profession, the men act differently to the women, to be a woman here naturally differentiates you somewhat in terms of your skills and other credentials. I, for example, like to work with people, I like to have a team. I like a whole lot of things that many people do not like and perhaps do not know how to do exactly. I have also managed to put myself forward and do a good job in things that for others were not so clear. I have managed to find my differentials and I can see greenlights in my sight.

It was interesting to note that the majority of the respondents believed that work in TPDF offered the chance for women professional career advancement, and that success in this sense depended primarily on them and on their efforts. This was noted to have helped reinforcing the sense of self-efficacy among women personnel in the TPDF. The findings resemble Budig (2002) in his research work "*Male Advantage and the Gender Composition of Jobs*" who indicates that self-efficacy has been shown to be high in successful women, the belief in their self-efficacy was a factor that was found to enhance their career success

Looking at situation of women in the TPDF, the general working environment was found to be fair to both women and men and most of women in the organization, are enjoying their stay because most of their physical and biological attributes are accommodated in logistics, trainings, task allocations and organizational routine and operational activities. There are good signs of gender equality efforts in the TPDF behind the reason that, every opportunity such as recruitment, training, promotions and appointments are proportional and on equity bases although women are still few at the top and in decision making. Women performance in comparison to their counterparts, they are more or less the same, one's achievements depend on personal efforts.

However, physical and health related challenges, social cultural perspectives, gender roles stereotypes, glass ceiling, sexual harassment, and lack of organization support were found to be the main limitations to women survival in the TPDF. The masculinity nature of the organization as well was found to be among causes to women limitations because some of its roles really need muscles and favors men over women for example sustaining the artillery bangs.

Conclusion

Findings of the study in the first objective unfolded that the general situation of women in the TPDF in terms of their working environment, gender equality and women's performance is fairly good and accommodates both genders accordingly. Also, there is no obvious gender discrimination since rules, laws and regulations are gender neutral and every opportunity is at a disposal of everybody in equity bases. This affirms that that there is no longer any good reason for women to lag behind men instead believe in themselves, avoid unnecessary excuses, perform the assigned tasks responsibly for their survival and prosperity. Yes, it is the fact beyond doubt that there are some limitations as observed in the findings and there are also some women specialties in regard with their biological make ups like menstrual periods, pregnancies, childbirths, and breastfeeding all of which must not be ignored as barriers for TPDF women their performances and excellence. Every person in the TPDF regardless of his/ her gender, is judged as per those variables for example recruitment, training, and career development, promotion and appointments. Really, women with these variables have never

been left behind, a good example is those who managed to reach at higher ranks and higher positions, others have managed to attend higher and strategic courses and some have been representing a nation in the international arena. Cognitive personal variables are important for women to possess for their survival in the TPDF and in any career which is male dominant.

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, this study has made some recommendations to different actors.

5.6.1 To the Government

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Gender, Children and Elders, should make motivational efforts to educate the society from the grassroots to fade away social cultural perspectives against women's capability because gender roles stereotypes have nothing to do with personal capabilities. The society should know that all duties should be at the disposal of every gender from their early ages which will accelerate them to choose any career provided they able to. The ministry should also make efforts to encourage women to join those perceived male dominated careers, this will help to transform the society from these outdated stereotypes and perspectives towards career selections.

Also, the government, non-Governmental institutions and establishments where recruited women are posted and work in, are supposed to be empowered to be primary and principal implementers so that; laws, regulations and policies governing women's welfare receive serious execution. This includes noticeable gender initiatives that embrace strong, visible and effective strategies geared towards accommodating women's physical needs, and institutional management gender practices in order to create female-integrated work environments and to provide appropriate women's emotional supports.

5.6.2 To the TPDF Policy and Decision makers

Women are as capable as men especially in the contemporary era of advanced science and technology. Most of current warfare, do not require much muscular and physical attributes but the cognitive parts (brains). Women should therefore be looked at their worth and what they would bring for organizational excellence. Opportunities should be open equally to both women and men.

5.6.3 To Women themselves

They need to have self-awareness, self-confidence and believe in their capabilities to and be ready to perform any task in any environment accordingly. This implies that, actions should be ahead of femininity by ensuring they work hard and avoiding rooms of excuses by going for trainings for their career developments and performing well to ensure they possess all needed organizational qualifications. Women should also understand that, their dignity and consciousness are the important worth of which every woman should have. To enjoy their stay in this male dominated organization, they ensure they possess those cognitive personal variables and these should not work only in the TPDF but also other male dominated careers.

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