

Gender Promotion Rates on Diplomatic Services of Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

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ABSTRACT; The study examined the effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic service of the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Kenya. The study followed a mixed methods approach and used the embedded mixed methods research design. The parent population was 310 subjects from which 175 elements were selected. These included Ministry's officials such as senior officials and policymakers, Human Resources Department officials, Gender Equality Officers, Diplomatic Staff and other support staff both male and female diplomatic staff at various levels. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires while interviews and document review were adopted for qualitative data collection. The study findings indicated a strong positive correlation between gender promotion rates and the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya, as reflected by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.907. This high correlation suggests that advancements in gender promotion rates are closely linked to improvements in the quality of diplomatic services offered by the Ministry. The statistical significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$) further confirms that this correlation is unlikely to be the result of random variation, thereby affirming the reliability of the relationship observed. A strong correlation indicates that nurturing a gender-inclusive environment, where promotions are fairly distributed among individuals regardless of gender, can significantly enhance the Ministry's diplomatic effectiveness. It was concluded that the low gender promotion in leadership positions minimized the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya. The study emphasized the need for the ministry to establish transparent and equitable promotion criteria that prioritize merit while considering gender equity

KEYWORDS : Gender Promotion rate to Leadership Positions, Diplomatic Services

I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, gender disparity in diplomatic services has been an issue since the inception of modern diplomacy. For centuries, diplomatic roles were predominantly occupied by men, reflecting broader societal norms that excluded women from leadership positions. Even after the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations (1961) formalized modern diplomatic practices, women were largely absent from high-ranking diplomatic posts (McCarthy, 2021). It was not until the late 20th century that countries like Sweden and Canada took active measures to promote gender parity in foreign services. Sweden, for instance, launched its feminist foreign policy in 2014, becoming a global advocate for gender equality in diplomacy (Government of Sweden, 2014). Despite these efforts, by 2022, women still held only about 25% of ambassadorial posts worldwide, indicating that gender disparity remains a significant challenge (UN Women, 2022). Countries such as Canada, which established policies to achieve gender parity in senior diplomatic roles, have seen an increase in women's representation, but many nations lag behind (Wright, 2023).

On the African continent, diplomatic services have also historically been dominated by men, reflecting the patriarchal structures prevalent in most African societies. In recent decades, the African Union (AU) has promoted gender equality as part of its development agenda, notably through the African Union strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment (2020–2030), which aims to increase women's representation in leadership positions, including in diplomacy (AU, 2020). Rwanda has been a regional leader in gender equality, achieving remarkable success in both government and diplomacy, with women holding over 60% of parliamentary seats and a growing presence in ambassadorial roles (Rwanda Governance Board, 2021).

In Kenya, the issue of gender disparity in diplomatic services has been a reflection of broader gender inequalities in public service. Since independence in 1963, Kenya's diplomatic roles were predominantly occupied by men, with women only starting to break into the sector in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Kamau, 2020). The promulgation of Kenya's 2010 Constitution marked a turning point by embedding gender equality in the public sector through the Two-Thirds Gender Rule, which mandates that no more than two-thirds of positions in public institutions be held by one gender (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

Nairobi, as Kenya's diplomatic hub, houses the headquarters of the ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs and is home to numerous embassies and international organizations. This makes it a focal point for gender parity in diplomatic services. While Nairobi has seen some progress, such as the appointment of Raychelle Omamo as foreign affairs minister in 2020, women remain underrepresented in senior diplomatic roles within the ministry (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). For instance, as of 2023, men still dominate ambassadorial appointments, with women making up less than one-third of Kenya's ambassadors stationed abroad (Nyaboke, 2023). Nairobi's status as a host city for international organizations, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), offers an opportunity for increased advocacy for gender parity. Global institutions based in Nairobi have played a role in promoting gender equality, but there remains a need for greater integration of women in top diplomatic positions within Kenya's ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs (Kiarie, 2023).

Problem Statement

In an ideal diplomatic service, gender equality would be the cornerstone of recruitment, promotion, and representation in both domestic and international diplomatic roles. Governments, in alignment with international conventions such as the Beijing Declaration (1995) and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), would ensure equal opportunities for men and women to occupy leadership positions in foreign affairs ministries and represent their countries at international forums (UN Women, 2022). Studies have shown that gender-balanced diplomatic teams tend to be more effective in addressing complex global issues such as peacekeeping, human rights, and sustainable development (UN Women, 2021). In Kenya's case, the continued dominance of men in the ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs limits the country's ability to fully represent its population on the global stage, especially on issues related to women's rights and gender equality (Kamau, 2022). Additionally, the failure to achieve gender parity contradicts Kenya's international obligations under conventions like CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), potentially harming its reputation in the international community (Thompson, 2023).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The study invoked Joan Acker's Theory of Gendered Organizations. Propounded in 1990, the theory holds that organizations are intrinsically gendered, implying that the structures, processes and practices within these organizations are influenced by gendered assumptions and power relations (Acker, 1990). According to this theory, organizations are sites that produce gender dynamics and the gender order (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Therefore, efforts should be made by management to ensure that a gender lens is used to capture the filter through which relational dynamics operate in organizations and the way these construct the psychological, cultural and social dimensions that shape the organization as a dynamic, relational and interdependent structure (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). This implies that characteristics commonly associated with men, such as assertiveness, decisiveness and competitiveness, are often more highly esteemed than those associated with women, such as empathy and collaboration (Marshall, 2011). The theory contends that gender inequality encompasses not only issues of representation but also the structure and valuation of work itself. For instance, roles deemed "feminine" such as caregiving or administrative tasks, are frequently undervalued in comparison to "masculine" roles involving decision-making and policy development. These principles inform the study's examination of how diplomatic positions within Kenya's Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs are organized and how this structure contributes to undermines parity in the promotion of men and women. The theory was adopted by the study to understand how the promotion methods within diplomatic service perpetuate gender inequalities and how these must have compromised service delivery.

Effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services of ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

The effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services has been a focal point of research and policy discussions in various countries, highlighting the significance of equitable promotion practices in enhancing the effectiveness of diplomatic missions. In Sweden, a country renowned for its commitment to gender equality, the foreign ministry has made notable progress in promoting women to leadership roles. By 2020, women occupied 60% of senior management positions within the ministry, reflecting a strong emphasis on gender parity in promotions (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). Studies have shown that this high rate of female representation in leadership contributes to more effective diplomatic engagements, as diverse leadership teams are better equipped to address complex global issues, such as climate change and gender equality (Sundström, 2021).

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has actively implemented policies to enhance gender promotion rates, resulting in significant improvements in women's representation at senior levels. As of 2021, women held approximately 50% of leadership roles within MFAT, thanks to targeted initiatives designed to support the career advancement of female diplomats (New Zealand Government, 2021). Research has indicated that organizations with equitable promotion practices are more likely to foster an inclusive work environment, which ultimately enhances diplomatic effectiveness. The inclusion of women in leadership positions has been linked to improved decision-making processes and the successful implementation of foreign policy initiatives, thereby strengthening New Zealand's international standing (Kenny & Hyslop, 2020).

In Rwanda, the government has taken significant strides in promoting gender equity within its foreign service. Following the 1994 genocide, Rwanda adopted policies aimed at ensuring women's representation in leadership roles across all sectors, including diplomacy. As of 2021, women made up over 50% of senior positions in the ministry of foreign Affairs (Government of Rwanda, 2021). The high promotion rates of women in Rwandan diplomacy have been associated with the country's effective diplomatic initiatives, particularly in advocating for gender equality and sustainable development on international platforms. Studies indicate that the increased presence of women in leadership roles contributes to a more inclusive approach to foreign policy, which benefits Rwanda's global engagements (Nduwayezu, 2020).

In contrast, Japan has faced challenges in promoting women within its diplomatic services, with only 12% of its ambassadors being female as of 2020 (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). This low promotion rate reflects ongoing cultural barriers and institutional norms that hinder women's advancement in the diplomatic field. Research suggests that the lack of female representation in leadership positions limits the Japanese government's ability to effectively address gender-related issues in foreign policy. Furthermore, organizations that fail to promote women may miss out on valuable perspectives that are essential for addressing contemporary global challenges, leading to less effective diplomatic outcomes (Yamamoto, 2021). The United Kingdom has recognized the importance of gender promotion rates in enhancing the effectiveness of its diplomatic services. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) set a target in 2020 to ensure that 40% of senior leadership roles are held by women by 2025 (Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, 2020). This commitment to promoting women within the FCDO has resulted in notable advancements, with women comprising 39% of senior positions as of 2021. Research indicates that increasing women's representation in leadership roles enhances diplomatic effectiveness, particularly in fostering collaborative relationships with other countries and international organizations (O'Neill, 2021).

In South Africa, the government has made significant efforts to improve gender promotion rates within the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). As of 2021, women held approximately 43% of senior leadership positions within DIRCO (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2021). These efforts have been linked to a more inclusive diplomatic culture that supports female diplomats in advancing their careers. Studies have shown that equitable promotion practices not only enhance women's representation but also contribute to improved diplomatic services, as diverse leadership teams bring a wider range of perspectives and approaches to international relations (Wang, 2019).

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized mixed methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data. An embedded mixed methods research design was adopted, given its advantage in allowing both data to be collected at the same time. The data were collected from a sample of 175 people selected from a population of 310 officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi Kenya. These included senior officials, policymakers, Human Resources officials, Gender Equality Officers, Diplomatic Staff and other support staff at junior, middle and senior levels. Both simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to derive the samples from the parent population (See Table 1).

Table 1: Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Category	Population	Sample	Sampling techniques
Senior officials and policymakers	16	12	Purposive sampling
Human Resources Department officials	10	9	Purposive sampling
Gender Equality Officers	8	6	Purposive sampling
Diplomatic Staff	19	15	Purposive sampling
Support staff	257	133	Random sampling
Total	310	175	

Source: Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs (2024)

Data type, sources and Instruments

Primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were collected using questionnaire and interviews. Secondary data were extracted and distilled from the Ministry's publications and electronic platforms. The questionnaires were tested for validity with five university experts, whose feedback was crucial for identifying deficiencies and refining the research instruments. The Content Validity Index (CVI) of the questionnaire was 0.9302. Reliability was ensured beginning with a pilot study on 10 staff of the Ministry. These were omitted from the consequent data collection. The results from the pilot test were subjected to Reliability Analysis in SPSS Version 27. The average Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (α) was 0.889. Both the CVI and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient values were above 0.7 suggesting that the questionnaire was both valid and reliable and so, meant the data met the minimum quality standards. For interview data, member-checking was conducted with the participants. The cross-cutting ideas extrapolated from the interview transcripts were qualified by the participants, implying quality. Also, transferability was ensured in reporting the results. Thick descriptions were used.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed at both a descriptive and inferential level, employing frequency counts, percentage distributions for profile variables, means and standard deviations to assess the opinions of respondents on the extent of gender recruitment to leadership positions in Diplomatic Services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi Kenya. At the inferential level, the Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) assessed whether gender recruitment in leadership positions was important in improving Diplomatic Services delivery outputs. Content analysis was applied for qualitative data, distilling it into more concise and meaningful points of view. The analysis focused on identifiable patterns and common themes, which ultimately led to the identification of overarching themes related to the study variables. These findings were then utilized to support the insights obtained from the questionnaires, aiding in the development of conclusions and recommendations.

IV. RESULT AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic features of the Respondents Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	58	53.7
Female	50	46.3
Age group		
<18 years	20	18.5
19-25	18	16.7
26-30	9	8.3
31-35	36	33.3
36+	25	23.1
Education Level		
Bachelor's Degree	69	63.9
Diploma	19	17.6
Certificate	5	4.6
Others	15	13.9

Source: Field Data (2024)

As shown in Table 2, there were more male (53.7%) than female (46.3%) participants. This result implies male dominance in Kenya's diplomatic service. Despite this dominance, the study results are comprehensive as they captured the views of different gender. In terms of age distribution, 20 respondents (18.5%) were below 18 years, 18 respondents (16.7%) fell in the 19-25 years category, 9 (8.3%) fell within the 26-30 age range, 36 (33.3%) are aged 31- 35, and 25 (23.1%) are 36 years and older. Most of the respondents belonged to the 31-35 age group and therefore, their perspectives and experiences might heavily influence the study outcomes regarding gender disparity and diplomatic services. Nonetheless, the findings reflect the views of the different age groups employed in

Diplomatic Service. Regarding level of education, majority of the respondents, 63.9% were degree holders at Bachelors' level followed by Diploma holders at 17.6 %. An insignificant number, 4.6% were certificate holders. Much as the majority of the respondents were holding a Bachelors' degree making them more influential in policy and decision-making matters, this study captured the views of other staff in lower administrative and leadership capacities in the Diplomatic Service thereby implying comprehensiveness of the findings.

Descriptives

1) Table 4. 2: Responses on the effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services of ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

Items	MEAN	STD	RANK
Promotion rates for women lag behind those of men in the ministry.	3.54	1.43	1
Transparent criteria for promotions are lacking.	3.44	1.44	2
Female employees report fewer opportunities for advancement compared to males.	3.32	1.46	3
Professional development programs are available but underutilized by women.	3.26	1.53	4
Gender biases impact the evaluation process for promotions.	3.18	1.63	5
Successful female role models are vital for encouraging promotions.	2.98	1.74	6
Women are often overlooked for senior roles despite qualifications.	2.86	1.83	7
The ministry aims to implement mentorship programs to aid promotions.	2.77	1.19	8
Regular audits of promotion practices are needed to ensure fairness.	2.67	1.09	9
Initiatives to address gender disparities in promotions are in development.	2.53	1.12	10
Average Mean & SD	3.06	1.45	

Source: Primary data (2025)

Legend

Mean Range	Response	Interpretation
3.26 - 4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Satisfactory
2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Satisfactory
1.76 - 2.50	Disagree	Unsatisfactory
2) 1.00 - 1.75	3) Strongly Disagree	4) Very Unsatisfactory

Table 4.7 provides an insightful overview of respondents' perspectives on the effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services of ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya. The table includes mean scores, standard deviations (SD), and ranks assigned based on mean values for each item.

The mean score of 3.54 for the statement "promotion rates for women lag behind those of men in the ministry" indicates a general agreement among participants that there is a gender disparity in promotion rates. The high standard deviation of 1.43 suggests a significant variability in responses, implying that while many recognize the lag in women's promotion rates, others may have differing views on the extent of this issue. This highlights the necessity for the ministry to investigate and address the barriers preventing equitable promotion opportunities for female employees.

With a mean score of 3.44, the statement "transparent criteria for promotions are lacking" reflects a moderate level of concern regarding the clarity and transparency of promotion criteria. The standard deviation of 1.44 indicates substantial variability in responses, suggesting that while some participants perceive a lack of transparency, others may feel that the criteria are adequately communicated. This underscores the importance of establishing clear and transparent promotion processes to foster trust and fairness within the ministry.

The mean score of 3.32 for the statement "female employees report fewer opportunities for advancement compared to males" suggests a notable perception of limited advancement opportunities for women. The standard deviation of 1.46 indicates considerable variability in responses, pointing to the need for the ministry to actively explore and address the perceived disparities in advancement opportunities between genders to ensure a more equitable workplace.

With a mean score of 3.26, the statement "Professional development programs are available but underutilized by women" indicates that while there are development opportunities, they may not be fully utilized by female staff. The standard deviation of 1.53 suggests varying opinions on the accessibility and effectiveness of these programs. This finding emphasizes the need for the ministry to promote and encourage participation in professional development initiatives among female employees to enhance their career growth.

The mean score of 3.18 for the statement "gender biases impact the evaluation process for promotions" suggests a recognition that biases may play a role in promotion evaluations. The high standard deviation of 1.63 indicates significant variability in responses, implying differing experiences regarding bias in promotion assessments. This highlights the importance of addressing gender biases in the evaluation process to ensure that promotions are awarded based on merit and qualifications.

The mean score of 2.98 for the statement "successful female role models are vital for encouraging promotions" reflects a general acknowledgment of the importance of role models in promoting female advancement. The standard deviation of 1.74 suggests considerable disagreement among participants, indicating that while some see value in having female role models, others may not prioritize this aspect. This points to the potential benefits of enhancing visibility and support for successful female leaders within the ministry. With a mean score of 2.86, the statement "women are often overlooked for senior roles despite qualifications" suggests a recognition of the challenges women face in securing senior positions. The high standard deviation of 1.83 indicates significant variability in opinions regarding the prevalence of this issue, highlighting the need for the ministry to evaluate its hiring and promotion practices to ensure that qualified women are not overlooked for leadership roles.

The mean score of 2.77 for the statement "The Ministry aims to implement mentorship programs to aid promotions" indicates a somewhat positive view of the ministry's intentions regarding mentorship. However, the standard deviation of 1.19 suggests less variability in responses, reflecting a degree of agreement that mentorship is a valuable tool for promoting women's advancement. This finding underscores the importance of implementing effective mentorship initiatives to support female employees in their career progression. The mean score of 2.67 for the statement "Regular audits of promotion practices are needed to ensure fairness" suggests a moderate recognition of the need for audits. The standard deviation of 1.09 indicates relatively low variability in responses, implying a general agreement that regular evaluations of promotion practices could enhance fairness and accountability. This highlights the necessity for the Ministry to commit to regular audits to ensure equitable promotion processes.

Finally, the mean score of 2.53 for the statement "Initiatives to address gender disparities in promotions are in development" reflects a relatively low level of confidence in the ministry's current initiatives to tackle gender disparities in promotions. The standard deviation of 1.12 suggests moderate variability in responses, indicating that while some see potential for development, others may be less optimistic about the progress being made. This underscores the need for the ministry to prioritize and expedite the implementation of initiatives aimed at reducing gender disparities in promotions.

The overall average mean of 3.06 across all items indicates a moderate level of agreement regarding the effects of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services. The average standard deviation of 1.45 suggests a high level of variability in responses, reflecting diverse experiences and perspectives among participants. This calls for the ministry to engage in comprehensive discussions with its employees to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges related to promotion rates, thereby enabling the development of targeted strategies that promote gender equity and enhance the overall effectiveness of diplomatic services.

The correlation between gender promotion rates and diplomatic services of ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

Correlations			
		Gender Promotion Rates	Diplomatic Services
Gender Promotion Rates	Pearson Correlation	1	.907**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	108	108
Diplomatic Services	Pearson Correlation	.907**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	108	108

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4.10 reveals a strong positive correlation between gender promotion rates and the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya, as indicated by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.907. This high correlation suggests that improvements in gender promotion rates are closely associated with enhancements in the quality of diplomatic services provided by the ministry. The statistical significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$) confirms that this correlation is not likely due to random variation, affirming the reliability of the relationship observed. With a sample size of $N = 108$, the data supports a robust analysis of the interplay between these two variables. The implications of this finding are noteworthy. A strong correlation implies that fostering a gender-inclusive environment, where promotions are equitably awarded to individuals regardless of gender, can significantly enhance the ministry's diplomatic effectiveness. The strong positive correlation between gender promotion rates and diplomatic service

effectiveness aligns closely with Joan Acker's Theory of Gendered Organizations, which emphasizes that organizational structures and processes are inherently gendered and often perpetuate inequality through promotion and career advancement practices. Acker's theory suggests that when organizations actively work to dismantle gendered barriers in promotion systems, they not only foster fairness but also unlock the benefits of diverse leadership. The finding that higher rates of gender-equitable promotions correspond with enhanced diplomatic performance supports this theoretical perspective by illustrating how transforming promotion practices can challenge traditional gender norms embedded within the ministry. By promoting women into leadership positions, the ministry disrupts longstanding patterns of male dominance and leverages the unique skills and viewpoints women bring, which can lead to more innovative, inclusive, and effective diplomacy. This underscores the need for the ministry to implement deliberate gender-responsive promotion policies as a strategic approach to improving institutional effectiveness, consistent with Acker's call for structural change to address gender inequalities within organizations.

Interview results

The interview proceedings included in this write up is a sample of the responses from the respondents who responded to the interview guide.

Response 1. *One of the interviewed ministry's HR officials noted, "the human resources department tracks gender representation in leadership positions through regular audits of our workforce demographics and by analyzing promotion and recruitment data."* [PRI, 2025]

Response 2. *Most of the interviewed ministry's HR officials said, "several barriers hinder women's promotion, including unconscious bias in performance evaluations and a lack of mentorship opportunities. These factors contribute to a slower advancement for women compared to their male counterparts."* [PRII, 2025]

Response 3. *Another interviewed diplomatic staff said, "in my experience, I have faced challenges related to promotion, especially in being considered for senior roles despite having the qualifications. However, I have also seen some success stories where women have effectively advocated for themselves and advanced in their careers."* [PRII, 2025]

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Effect of gender promotion rates on diplomatic services of ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

The study findings also indicated a strong positive correlation between gender promotion rates and the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya, as reflected by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.907. This high correlation suggests that advancements in gender promotion rates are closely linked to improvements in the quality of diplomatic services offered by the Ministry. The statistical significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$) further confirms that this correlation is unlikely to be the result of random variation, thereby affirming the reliability of the relationship observed. A strong correlation indicates that nurturing a gender-inclusive environment, where promotions are fairly distributed among individuals regardless of gender, can significantly enhance the Ministry's diplomatic effectiveness. Elevating qualified women within the ranks could introduce a wider range of perspectives and strategies in diplomatic negotiations, ultimately improving the Ministry's performance in international engagements. This is in line New Zealand Government, 2021 who noted that in New Zealand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has actively implemented policies to enhance gender promotion rates, resulting in significant improvements in women's representation at senior levels. As of 2021, women held approximately 50% of leadership roles within MFAT, thanks to targeted initiatives designed to support the career advancement of female diplomats. Research has indicated that organizations with equitable promotion practices are more likely to foster an inclusive work environment, which ultimately enhances diplomatic effectiveness. The inclusion of women in leadership positions has been linked to improved decision-making processes and the successful implementation of foreign policy initiatives, thereby strengthening New Zealand's international standing.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that gender promotion rates significantly impact the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs. It was concluded that equitable promotion practices are essential for ensuring that both men and women have equal opportunities for advancement. Promoting women to leadership positions is particularly important, as it fosters a more inclusive and representative environment that enhances decision-making and diplomatic negotiations. By implementing transparent and fair promotion criteria, the Ministry can harness the diverse experiences and insights of its workforce, leading to improved outcomes in diplomatic relations. Therefore, the Ministry should focus on developing and enforcing policies that promote gender equity in promotions, which will ultimately enhance its diplomatic effectiveness and performance on the international stage.

Recommendation

The study emphasized the need for the ministry to establish transparent and equitable promotion criteria that prioritize merit while considering gender equity. It was recommended that regular reviews of promotion processes be conducted to identify and eliminate any biases that may hinder women's advancement. Training programs should be developed to educate all staff about the importance of gender equity in promotions, fostering a culture that values diverse contributions. Furthermore, the Ministry should celebrate and highlight the achievements of female employees to encourage others and demonstrate the organization's commitment to gender equity. By implementing these recommendations, the Ministry can enhance its promotional practices and, in turn, improve the effectiveness of its diplomatic services.

Contribution to the existing Knowledge

This study makes significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge regarding gender dynamics within the diplomatic services of Kenya's Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs. First, it provides empirical evidence linking gender representation in leadership positions to the effectiveness of diplomatic services. This relationship underscores the importance of diverse leadership and highlights how gender-inclusive decision-making can enhance policy formulation and implementation. Second, the research contributes to the understanding of gender recruitment and retention rates, emphasizing that effective recruitment strategies and supportive work environments are vital for building a diverse workforce. The findings reveal that improving gender equity in recruitment and retention is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for enhancing the quality of diplomatic services. Third, the study highlights the crucial role of gender promotion rates in fostering an equitable workplace. By identifying barriers to women's advancement and promoting transparent promotion processes, the research provides insights into how gender equality can be integrated into organizational structures. This contribution is particularly relevant for policymakers and organizational leaders seeking to implement effective gender equity initiatives. Finally, this study enriches the discourse on gender and diplomacy by offering practical recommendations that can be applied within the Ministry and similar organizations. By focusing on the interplay between gender representation, recruitment, retention, and promotion, this research lays a foundation for future studies aimed at further exploring gender equity in public service and its implications for effective governance and diplomacy.

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