Perceptions of gender differences at work in Tanzania: The case of Tanzania Public Service College

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, global initiatives have aimed to address gender balance and equality in workplaces, championed by organizations like the United Nations (UN). Despite progress, challenges persist, particularly in regions like Tanzania, where cultural norms and historical biases continue to influence workplace dynamics. This study was conducted at Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) in Dar es Salaam. It explores the influence of gender differences on organisational performance. The objectives were to explore differences in abilities between genders, examine behaviors impacting workplace performance, and identify attitudes towards work that affect organizational success. Employees from Tanzania Public Service College were used as the target population of this study, whereby 16 high-ranking employees were purposively selected as the representative sample. Human Capital Theory and Feminist Theory were used as theoretical frameworks to guide the study. Using a case study design, data were gathered through interviews with 16 high-ranking employees and a documentation review. Thematic analysis was used for data analysis, whereby themes found within the dataset were identified, organised, described, and reported. Findings revealed that while job qualifications and behaviors significantly influence performance, gender itself does not inherently determine ability or behavior. Rather, individual competencies and qualifications were found to be decisive factors. The study concludes that addressing gender biases and promoting merit-based evaluation criteria are crucial for enhancing workplace equity and organizational effectiveness. Major recommendations include: educating senior management on gender dynamics and conducting further research to deepen the understanding of factors influencing organizational performance beyond gender stereotypes. These measures are essential for fostering a more inclusive and productive organizational environment at TPSC and similar institutions globally.

Keywords: Attitudes, Behaviours, Gender Differences, Organizational Context, Perceptions

I. INTRODUCTION

The question of gender inequality has been an endless cry across the world. It has been experienced in terms of the allocated responsibilities, access to and control over resources, and decision-making opportunities. The call for gender parity creates equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for both men and women[1]. For the past decades, several initiatives have been employed to ensure that gender equality receives the special attention it deserves. Several interventions have been recommended and executed to eliminate gender differences at work (cf. Ogega *et al.*, 2020; Adeniyi *et al.*, 2024; Tricco *et al.*, 2024; Vujadinović et al., 2023, among others). For instance, Tricco *et al.* (2024) recommend legislation to overtly report salaries, mentorship, financial support, and impartial representation of both genders in committees as key interventions to achieve gender equality in the workplace. On the other hand, Adeniyi *et al.* (2024) maintain that in the United States, legislative measures, advocacy efforts, and cultural shifts are specific interventions that have made significant advancements toward gender equality. In line with Adeniyi *et al.* (2024), Vujadinović et al. (2023) support human rights law in both public and private contexts for gender equality. Adeniyi *et al.* (2024) stress that laws guiding gender equality should be continuously updated and strengthened to ensure the protection of women's rights in the workplace. These initiatives play a critical role in improving gender dynamics within organizations. The suggested interventions indicate that several efforts are being made towards achieving a more equitable and inclusive workforce worldwide.

The call for equal participation in the workplace is certainly motivated by the role played by women in facilitating community development (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015; Okafor *et al.*, 2011). Gender parity serves a fundamental role in fostering social and economic development in workplaces. The act of engaging women at work has resulted in positive outcomes. In the US, for example, companies that prioritize gender equality in leadership, implement

[1] *Source*: UN Women Training Center glossary on definitions

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mentorship programs, and clearly address pay gaps have experienced constructive results, providing valuable insights. In Africa, gender equality has significantly contributed to economic development through fostering a more inclusive society (Adeniyi *et al.*, 2024). In Kenya, for example, Ogega *et al*. (2020) assert that the government implements gender policy through the constitution. They add that the authorization of treaties and conventions that demand the inclusion of all members of society in all sectors has certainly led to employee commitment towards their work. In certain communities, women have established themselves as leaders, and they have attained skills that have brought affirmative transformation to the public. Okafor *et al*. (2011) argue that women leaders play fundamental roles in launching and retaining important relations and networks in their communities. The International Labour Organization [ILO] championed women's rights in workplaces, and in the mid-20th Century, landmark conventions were adopted, including the Equal Remuneration Convention, establishing the right to equal pay, and the Discrimination Convention, which encompassed broader discrimination. Tanzania, as one of the UN members, also signed the Beijing Declaration, which aimed at taking deliberate measures to ensure the achievement of women's rights in the country through increasing their number at different levels of decision-making, such as Boards of Directors, Heads of Institutions, Commissioners, and National Delegations. By signing the declaration, Tanzania committed to promoting gender equality and empowering women in all sectors of society. The government of Tanzania has since implemented various policies and programs aimed at addressing gender disparities and enhancing women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles (Lihiru, 2024).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Gender differences have attracted the attention of different scholars across the world. Several studies have been conducted in response to the perception of gender differences in the workplace. The influence of gender differences seems to be consistent in many sections. For instance, Baguant (2021) shows the existence of gender differences in civil engineering in higher education; Momsen (2020) evaluated gender differences existing between men and women in agricultural sector; Garcıa-Gonzalez et al. (2019) studied men and women differences in their perception of gender bias in research institutions; Islahi and Nasrin (2019) focused on gender perspective to explore teacher's attitude towards information technology; and Åhslund and Boström (2018) indicate teachers' perceptions of gender differences in classroom. Although both men and women require equal rights in their workplaces, the results from several studies indicate that there is gender bias between men and women. For example, Momsen (2020) affirm that women frequently lose control over resources such as land and they lack access to exalted agricultural methods; Baguant (2021) asserts that when pursuing a degree of civil engineering in higher learning in Mauritius, female students are underrepresented; Hassan and Silong (2008) argue that top leadership and senior position in workplace indicate the presence of gender discrimination across communities. Adeniyi *et al*. (2024) state that both the USA and African countries have taken legal initiatives to make policies fostering gender equality at work. Nevertheless, the question of gender discrimination and the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles still exists. Despite all the efforts made in Tanzania, including equal pay for the same responsibilities, equal employment opportunities, and equal participation in politics, with the latter seeing the State being led by a female Head of State and a country boasting of an increased number of female judges and magistrates[2], there are still issues, including unequal representation in supervisory and leadership positions. As argued by Ogega et al. (2020), gender differences remain a subject of discussion in both public and private organizations. As a result, this study aimed to check if gender differences influence perceptions between women and men in the work context. Human Capital and Feminist Theories provide a gendered perspective on differences in employment and career opportunities among the different genders.

1.2 Research Objectives

i. The study examined how gender differences in abilities affected the performance of similar tasks in the workplace, shedding light on potential disparities or strengths unique to each gender.
ii. It analysed the behaviors of both genders and their direct impact on organizational dynamics, considering factors such as collaboration, communication, and leadership styles.
iii. The study identified and assessed the attitudes of both genders towards work and how these attitudes influenced organizational success, including motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment.

[2]By March of 2024 there were 35 Court of Appeal Judges, 13 being women making 37% of the total. High Court Judges were 105 and 38 being women equal to 36% of the total. Of the total 78 Deputy Registrars, 38 are women making 49% of the total; the number of Resident Magistrates is 1,126, and women among them are 559, equal to 50 per cent.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Human Capital Theory

The study explored gender differences and implications at Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) in Dar es Salaam through the lenses of various economic and psychological theories. Neoclassical economic theories propose that rational choice and self-interest drive employment decisions, suggesting that perceived productivity differences, often influenced by gender, affect hiring and compensation. However, these theories fall short in addressing gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, which can negatively impact organizational performance. Human Capital Theory posits that gender disparities in labor market participation and wages are due to differences in human capital investments, with men historically having more labor-relevant skills due to traditional societal roles. Yet, this theory also acknowledges that discrimination accounts for a significant portion of the employment and wage gaps that human capital differences alone cannot explain.

2.1.2 Feminist Theory

Feminist Theory provides a broader perspective, emphasizing the impact of societal norms, pre-market gender discrimination, and the unequal distribution of domestic labor on women's work lives and career opportunities (Bijami et al., 2013). This theory highlighted how cultural and institutional factors shape gender roles and influence employment outcomes, aligning with the study's objective to understand the multidimensional nature of gender differences in organizational performance. Social Identity Theory added a psychological dimension, explaining how group memberships and gender identities affect behavior and perceptions within the workplace. It suggested that in-group favoritism and gender biases can influence evaluations and promotions, highlighting the need for inclusive practices (Chaplin et al., 2008). Together, these theories underscore the complexity of gender dynamics in the workforce and the importance of addressing both economic and social factors to enhance organizational performance and promote gender equality.

2.2 Empirical Review

Many scholars have discussed the impacts of gender differences on organizations' performance (see e.g., Son Hing *et al*., 2023; Krishnan, 2020; Ogega et al., 2020; Cifre et al., 2015; Bijami et al., 2013). Ferrary and Deo (2022) found that women positively impact organizations when their numbers are similar to men's, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a critical mass of women for productive organizational outcomes. Ogega et al. (2020) contend that several positive and substantial impacts are really motivated by the implementation of gender policy in Kenya. These impacts are strongly associated with employee commitment, and they lead to high productivity, employee compatibility, and loyalty to work, lower costs, as well as high satisfaction with work and the organization. Bijami et al. (2013) highlighted gender differences in writing performance, suggesting that understanding students' characteristics can help tailor teaching methods for better educational outcomes. Son Hing *et al*. (2023) showed that institutional reforms promoting gender equality improved gender representation and equity, enhancing creativity and decision-making processes, and contributing to a more inclusive and satisfying work environment. Cifre et al. (2015) indicated that men scored higher in job feature perception than women.

2.2.1 Attitudes and Behaviors of both Genders and their Impact on Organizations

Men and women may share common features in terms of education qualifications, socio-economic status, and occupation (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015). However, men and women are positively and/or negatively perceived at work. Positive attitudes towards gender equality at work have been presented by different scholars around the world (see, e.g., Lihiru, 2024; Lahti, 2013; Elsaadani, 2012; Okafor et al., 2011). Adeniyi *et al*. (2024), for example, insist on gender parity as it helps in raising the social and economic development of the organization. Elsaadani (2012) conducted a study on teaching staff's attitude toward ICT. The results show that when it comes to the question of attitude towards ICT in Egyptian HEIs, there is no difference between males and females. As a consequence, gender is not a substantial factor when considering attitude toward ICT. He insists that the teaching staff's attitude toward ICT should not be related to their gender. A good number of scholars assert that gender diversity enhances an organization's ability to achieve its goals. Krishnan (2020) stresses the importance of gender diversity in management for incorporating a broad range of perspectives, fostering creativity, and boosting productivity. Baguant (2021) highlights that diverse viewpoints improve problem-solving, decision-making, and strategic effectiveness, creating a more inclusive and harmonious work environment. This inclusivity reduces biases, increases employee engagement, and fosters mutual respect, ultimately leading to sustainable organizational growth and success.

Different sources have also presented a negative attitude towards gender equality in the workplace. That is to say, some studies indicate that there is no need for gender equality at work, as one of the genders, specifically women, seems to have no significant contribution in their workplaces. For example, apart from presenting a positive attitude

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towards gender equality, Okafor and Akokuwebe (2015) concluded that in Nigeria, women have low participation in political leadership and decision-making. This type of conclusion certainly indicates a negative attitude towards women. Furthermore, Lahti (2013) indicates that many women lack the confidence to lead society. He adds that maternity leave, as an individual factor, has completely weakened women's career growth, as it makes them fail to balance work and family responsibilities. Negative perceptions towards gender equality have therefore retained a salary gap between men and women. Gender-based attitudes towards work significantly impact organizational success. Baguant (2021) claims that women and men approach problem-solving differently, with women adopting a collaborative perspective and men a more direct approach. This underscores the importance of empathetic communication in managing change, ensuring smoother transitions, and harnessing the full potential of a diverse workforce. Integrating these distinct attitudes can improve team dynamics, employee satisfaction, and overall organizational performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest city and economic hub, within the Ilala Municipal Council, at the Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC). This location was chosen for its accessibility to participants and gender diversity among employees, facilitating data collection and observation. The research employed a case study design to explore gender influence in the workplace, using qualitative approaches to collect and analyze data. The target population included TPSC employees in administration and management, and lecturers in administrative courses. A sample size of 16 high-ranking employees was selected using purposive sampling to gather insights on the influence of gender differences on organizational performance. The 16 selected occupied managerial positions and included Heads of Departments (HODs) and other senior officers in the organization who had subordinates under them. This method ensured participants had relevant knowledge and held high managerial positions, allowing for a balanced gender representation in the study.

Data collection methods included interviews and documentation review. Interviews were conducted with various departmental heads and lecturers, utilizing both face-to-face and telephone formats to accommodate participants' schedules. Documentation involved reviewing policy manuals, organizational reports, and records to understand gender dynamics. Thematic analysis was used to identify and organize themes within the data, ensuring a detailed and comprehensive understanding of how gender differences affect organizational performance and employee attitudes. The study faced some limitations. Firstly, its use of a case study approach restricts generalizability. Secondly, the purposive sampling technique limited the ability to disclose participant identities, using codes instead of names, which may have affected transparency. Lastly, the qualitative method relied on personal views and experiences from interviews, which may not represent universal realities across all staff. Despite these limitations, the research could potentially overcome them by emphasizing the unique insights gained from TPSC's specific context, offering valuable qualitative depth that complements broader quantitative studies in organizational behavior and gender dynamics.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Participants Characteristics

The study included participants from senior levels of the organization, and it involved all departments, ages, genders, academic qualifications, experience, and different higher roles without bias, as shown in Table 1. The gender of participants was equally distributed, with eight male and eight female participants. The participants' ages ranged from thirty-seven to sixty-three years. Three participants were in their sixties, six participants were in their forties, and seven participants were in their thirties. The fact that the study included people from different groups of age groups showed that it was unbiased in terms of age differences, and this might also indicate that TPSC respects qualifications over age.

Table 1

Participants' characteristics

Participants	Age	Gender	Position	Experience	Academic qualification
Part: A	40	F	HRO	11 yrs	Bachelor
Part: B	37	M	M.O. P	7 yrs	Masters
Part: C	45	F	H.O.D. of PALM	12 yrs	Masters
Part: D	38	M	Registrar	8 yrs	Masters
Part: E	45	M	Senior system admin	13 yrs	Masters
Part: F	39	M	Campus Manager	10 yrs	PHD
Part: G	63	F	Senior library officer	24 yrs	Diploma
Part: H	61	M	Senior marketing and information officer	60 yrs	Masters
Part: I	38	F	Senior Admission Officer	13 yrs	Masters
Part: J	33	F	Senior Record Management	7 yrs	Bachelor

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Part: K	43	F	Senior office secretary	9 yrs	Diploma
Part: L	34	F	Senior Campus Accountant	8 yrs	Bachelor
Part: M	62	M	H.O.D. Secretarial studies	32 yrs	Masters
Part: N	44	F	HOD	12 yrs	Masters
Part: O	40	M	M.O.P. in short courses	9 yrs	Masters
Part: Q	35	M	H.O.D (Records)	13 yrs	Masters

The researcher found that the difference in the ages of participants also had a significant influence on the type of information obtained. The age of participants ranged from the 30s to 60's. Participants who were aged 60 and above seemed to have a much wider or broader view of how these two genders differ in relation to the work environment context in the organization. The years of work experience of participants provided some insights that are valuable. Some participants with many years of working experience offered that, at the beginning of their career, they found it hard to work with a person of a different gender; participants with few years of working experience claimed to find it hard to work with the other gender. This was traced to occur mostly in those participants who had a few years of working experience.

4.1.1 Exploring the Differences in Abilities that both Genders have in Performing Similar Tasks

This was the first objective of the study. In this area, the researcher was eager to know if there were any differences in the capacity and ability between men and women in performing their daily activities in the workplace. The first objective of this study was to explore potential differences in abilities between genders in performing similar tasks in the workplace. The researcher aimed to understand whether men and women have different capacities and skills when engaging in daily work activities. The study involved issues or factors that could determine and better explain the abilities of people in the workplace. These included work qualifications, educational levels, power in decision-making, and social stability and reliability.

Job Qualifications: Within this area, the participants expressed that when talking about abilities at work, you are directly touching on the issue of job qualifications. Several participants emphasized that qualifications are a fundamental basis for evaluating an individual's abilities. This perspective underscores the belief that job performance and capabilities are intrinsically linked to one's qualifications, such as educational background, professional training, and relevant experience, rather than any inherent physical or gender-related differences. One female participant said qualifications are the basis of comparing one's abilities with others:

> *"When I am at work and asked to talk about one's abilities of performing, I don't waste a lot of energy trying to look what he or she can do I just go direct to the persons CV and trace if they have the required qualities that are needed for accomplishing their given task so I see that both men and women have the same abilities it only depends on if he/she is qualified to go for the work."* (Participant A; 18th February, 2025)

The researcher also found that there are no physical or tangible qualities that can differentiate the abilities between men and women while at work that might favour one gender over the other, as participant C said: *"What a man can do, a woman can also do; there is no gender that is physically more powerful than another".* Another participant elaborated on this further:

> *"I have never observed or meet my female workers failing to do something within the office that needs physical qualities of a man maybe it's because of the nature of our work place but otherwise it has never been revealed to me if I have to acquire only women in a certain sector in my office because men cannot accomplish a particular task nothing like that, all genders have the same capacity of work in our organization."* (Participant B; 18th February, 2025)

Participants observed that few top managers in public institutions are women due to differences in abilities under the umbrella of qualifications. Participant M said:

> *"As we look for potential workers to fill higher vacancies in the workplace, we find that women, a lot of women, have the potential of getting the positions, but we fail to place them because these positions have qualification requirements that male workers mostly have, and there are fewer women who have those qualifications. This makes it hard for women to get these higher positions. Women never get time to attain those requirements as they have home tasks and official tasks on their shoulders."* (Participant M; 20th February, 2025)
>
> *"There are more men in high-level occupations than women simply because some selected females don't have the required job qualifications, as they choose lower levels of studies and avoid hard subjects. When it comes to experts, women never come out because their chosen fields of study do not support them in holding the positions."* (Participant H; 19th February, 2025)

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> *"You cannot precisely say if someone is better than the other without checking some valid standards like academic qualifications; thus, when proof like that is presented, you can now judge that someone with a bachelor's degree cannot perform with the same capability as someone who has an ordinary diploma"* (Participant K; 20th February, 2025)
>
> *"Just focus on this institution, the campus manager is a man, it's not that women cannot hold such a position, but it's because within this area there are no women officers with a PhD level of education, and a PhD holder was one of the academic qualifications that were needed to be promoted to the position."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)
>
> *"The education level of an employee matters more than gender; therefore, I see gender differences have nothing to do with the way an employee performs, but it all depends on what the person can do with their qualifications, education levels, and not gender."* (Participant E; 19th February, 2025)

Decision making: The researcher found this theme emerging around three different participants who had a view that the capacity for decision-making differs between the genders. Participant E remarked that: *"The ability of men is better as they decide within the organization faster and consistently more than women."* A female participant further added that:

> *"We women do take way more time in decision-making, while male workers do make rapid decisions, and they might sometimes not even follow the set procedures for making decisions. It is sometimes a good thing, but it sometimes turns out to be bad when consultations are not previously made. Most of the time, women in our organization do make a move on decision-making after they have done some brief consultations. We can maybe say that women are kind of slow in the decision-making process."* (Participant L; 20th February, 2025)

Another male participant expressed within this theme that:

> "*I feel very comfortable when giving an ambiguous task to a male worker rather than a female one because male workers tend to make decisions on how to deal with all the ambiguities; they can make decisions on their own without coming back again to me."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)

He then added that:

> *"For female employees, as soon as you give them an ambiguous task, you will just have to expect them to come back twice or thrice for more clarifications or to ask you if they can make a certain move on the work given to them, while men will come to you with the work done."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)

Availability at work

On natural, God-given abilities, the researcher observed some slight differences in perception on the key issues investigated between the genders. Participant F made the observation that:

> *"In our college, the one thing that makes a difference between the genders' performances in our workplace is the fact that men are always ok and rarely sick, making them always active and able to perform their duties every day."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)

Another answered the researchers that:

> *"Our girls and mothers might have a great performance with no difference at all with men, but when it comes at the time where natural issues like pregnancies there is no way that the female employee might continually perform her task with the same energy as before their performance will actually fall due to the natural reasons like pregnancies and taking care of the babies and leaving earlier in the day for breast feeding."* (Participant O; 20th February, 2025)

And he again added to the theme by saying that:

> *"Many organisations get a hard time to deal with this as you find your employee isn't available due to pregnancy issues and they're a lot of activities that were to be done by that female worker, as a manager you'll have to look for another person to perform the activity and pay them while at the same time you're supposed pay the lady on the maternity leave this is the most challenging issues affecting TPSC."* (Participant O; 20th February, 2025)

This section reveals that differences in workplace performance between genders are primarily influenced by factors such as job qualifications, educational levels, and decision-making processes, rather than inherent gender-based abilities. Participants highlighted that qualifications, rather than gender, determine one's suitability for higher positions, with women often facing barriers due to educational disparities and societal expectations. Decision-making styles were noted to vary, with perceptions of men making faster decisions contrasted against women's more consultative approach. Natural factors like pregnancy were recognized as impacting performance temporarily, though these were seen as personal rather than gender-related limitations. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of equal opportunity in education and qualifications to mitigate gender disparities in workplace abilities and opportunities.

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4.1.2 Discovering Behaviors of Both Genders While at Work has a Direct Impact on the Organization

This was the second objective of the study. Under this objective, the researcher wanted to know the behaviors that men and women possess and how those behaviors have an influence on the way the institution performs. Under this area, the researcher collected the answers from the participants concerning various behaviors from men and women that are seen to affect the institution in a negative way, and those that have positive effects. Various themes emerged in this area where participants talked about behaviors like sexual harassment, rumours, and dressing styles, teamwork work and reliability.

Sexual harassment: Within this theme, almost all of the participants observed that this behavior is male-gendered. *One participant noted that*: *"In this organization, if you're talking about sexual harassment, then you are directly talking about men."* Another one was recorded saying that:

> *Throughout all my working years, I have never met with a sexual harassment case that had a female worker as the sexual harasser. It's always men and men every day, although I hear that even women do harass male employees in some organizations, but in the case of our organization, men are the sole owners of this bad behavior."* (Participant H; 19th February, 2025)

Some participants had an opposite view that sexual harassment is faced by all genders:

> *"As I said earlier, when talking about behavior, you talk about something very personal because behavior depends on how an individual acts. I cannot blame men alone in this matter because, as a manager, I see even male workers going through treatments; if done to women, they would have been termed harassment already, but men do not speak."* (Participant N; 20th February, 2025)

Another person also contributed the same view that:

> *"A specific gender has nothing to do with a specific habit or behaviour; all genders can acquire this type of behaviour."* (Participant Q; 20th February, 2025)

Dressing styles: This was one of the themes that the researcher found to be recurring from both male and female participants, both agreeing that women have the most problems when it comes to the issues of the way they dress. One female Participant (K) said that:

> *"In reality, the way women dress in the workplace has a very big influence on the way male workers perform within this institution; some men do have a troubled time working around the female gender if the dressing isn't okay at all."*

Showing that this issue was a real negative issue that affected a lot of spheres, one participant elaborated that:

> *"The way women were dressing in our organisation was not only affecting their fellow workers within the institutions, but this went further affecting even our clients who are the students in the college, painting a bad image of our organisation because clients were also complaining about that."* (Participant M; 20th February, 2025)

One of the male seniors within the organisation showed how the situation was handled in their organisation, as he explained that:

> *"Dressing styles were a problem for most of our workers, especially women, and this brought many negative impacts that we had never witnessed before in our institutions, where the cases of sexual harassment kept on increasing while the performance of some workers fell."* (Participant D; 18th February, 2025)

He then added that the institution had to make some changes to save its image. He expressed that:

> *"Due to the dressing problems that workers and clients were always complaining we had to set rules that will make one eligible to enter inside the institution this was not to workers alone but even the clients, thus it was agreed that without long dresses for women workers and client no one will be allowed to enter within the institutions premises and that has helped us avoid a lot of factors that used to hinder a smooth performance within the college."* (Participant D; 18th February, 2025)

Workplace rumours*:* Several participants from different levels expressed the presence of this behaviour of rumour-mongering in the institution. One participant commented that:

> *"Unofficial information in the workplace is one of the behaviours that I hate the most among my female employees. Rumour-mongering behaviour is frequently seen in women having conversations that are not part of the organisation, and this can seriously affect the workplace's mission."* (Participant O; 20th February, 2025)

The researcher observed from the interviewed participants that this type of behaviour affects working morale, as a certain participant expressed his view on a real experience:

> *"I had a very reliable secretary back in time; she was one of the best workers under my supervision. After certain rumours about her from her fellow workers, she started performing poorly and was eager to get a transfer out of the uncomfortable environment of rumours; she was finally transferred to our campus in Singida."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)

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The researchers also investigated the behaviours that were helpful to the institution and were seen not to relate to one gender alone. Quoting the words of participant D, that:

> *"I don't think that there's a behaviour based on one gender that is necessary for the success of the institution because all genders can perform well."* (Participant D; 18th February, 2025)

Teamwork spirit: Participants on this theme were unbiased, saying that group work and the spirit are found in all genders. Beginning with participant E, who observed that:

> *"The spirit of togetherness and cooperation is probably around all genders at work. Yeah, indeed, some people like doing things on their own, but those kinds of people are not necessarily men or women; they can emerge from any gender group, of any gender, so this issue is not single-sided."* (Participant E; 18th February, 2025)

It was also seen that this kind of behaviour makes inroads into the boundaries between the genders, making all the workers feel equal as they work together. On that, a senior officer observed:

> *"All tasks that are given to employees in a form of group, even if the task is hard, I always tell them it is workable, and after some time, you find the people you gave the task working in a team spirit, despite gender or any other differences."* (Participant C; 18th February, 2025)
>
> A Female participant added a point that: *"A cooperative working spirit is a behaviour found inside people which cannot be seen until you spark a light through a task to be accomplished by many; that is when you'll be able to see this behaviour."* (Participant G; 19th February, 2025)

Reliability: Reliability at work was looked into, and some participants expressed that the male gender at work is more reliable than the other gender.

A participant expressed this theme:

> *"I am not being gender biased here but you just have to get my point cause I have seen this among the people under my authority, men workers are the most reliable workers that I have, you can delegate a work to a male worker and they will handle it as if it's their own some even go extra miles to work overtime for a work, this is not the same to women in my organisation when a female employee stays over time it's just because she needs money but the male servants stay over time for real issues."* (Participant H; 19th February, 2025)

It was again expressed by a participant who said that:

> *"Their women, who are also reliable but not reliable to the extent of reaching men, because men are capable of being at the office until late at night, but it's hard for women to be accountable to that extent for the organisation, as women are hindered with some other family issues of their own."* (Participant C; 18th February, 2025)

It was further elaborated by another participant on the issues that could be reasons for women not being termed as reliable, which are:

> *"Female gender is believed to play a very significant role at home or in their families those roles are the ones that hinder women to be to regarded reliable in their office places in the evening they need to start thinking on what to do at home while men do their official works with no disturbance as they act as providers alone so they take care of their official careers than women although the world is now changing."* (Participant F; 19th February, 2025)

One male participant went against the others, saying that:

> *"When women get a chance to be free and concentrate on their office career, they are the most reliable creatures at the workplace you'll ever want to see because I have seen women who are so dedicated to their work, although they are few in number, but their commitment is above the level."* (Participant D; 18th February, 2025)

Orderliness: Orderliness was investigated to see if differences between the genders can be observed. Female workers were seen to be more organised than the other gender. A participant commented on this, saying:

> *"One thing with female workers, when you give them different tasks to complete, they know how to arrange and organise their work in a presentable manner that is more attractive than men; this doesn't mean that men can't do that, but I see this as an automatic thing to women."* (Participant J; 19th February, 2025)

This factor was also found to be useful to the clients of the institution, as Participant E explained:

> *"Our organisation deals with students, as you know; this is a publicly owned college. Most of those students are seen to perform well in the studies that are taught by women rather than those taught by male lecturers, and they say it's because the female workers have their teachings and notes in an orderly manner that makes it easy for them to understand."* (Participant E; 18th February, 2025)

Calmness: On calmness, the researchers found that during work completion, men perform their activities with greater calmness than women as women. Talking within the theme, a participant informed that:

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> *"With the male workers, operations are done in a great calmness; they don't have the panicking issues like women, even when the environment is somehow unfriendly, they do still manage to act calm."* (Participant B; 18th February, 2025)

A similar expression was also given by participant F:

> *"Women's ability to stay calm in our institution is very low; most of the time they get carried away by the activities that they are engaged in, or they get easily swept away when unpredictable events occur; they lose focus, but this is not the same because they are relatively calmer."* (Participant L; 20th February, 2025)

Analytical/consciousness of detail: Another issue examined is analytical behaviour. Participants see women as more analytical during the performance of their work. In this theme, participants had this to say:

> *"The curiosity in ladies in our institution is too much to the point that you get annoyed, but what's good is that the curiosity to know what they should do and what not to do makes them accomplish their work in the desired procedures, although they are mostly stubborn when they need to know something."* (Participant K; 20th February, 2025)

Another senior officer in the institution told the researcher that:

> *"The issue of being very communicative is what makes the female gender in our institution more analytical, as they like to know everything before doing a task. If it's a case to solve, they will ask and ask until they are satisfied, and then decisions on how to solve the issue will be taken."* (Participant L; 20th February, 2025)

In a few words, this participant described well how analytical women are by saying:

> *"These people are too stubborn and ask lots of questions instead of just doing what is given to them."* (Participant M; 20th February, 2025)

Based on the scholar's objective of exploring gender differences in task performance, participants emphasized that job qualifications rather than inherent gender-based abilities were crucial. Women face barriers like educational disparities affecting career advancement, aligning with Alawi and Al Mubarak's (2019) insights on structural inequalities in organizations. Furthermore, the findings refute assumptions from theories like human capital theory, highlighting that gender does not significantly impact workplace context. While men may show slight advantages in physically demanding tasks, women demonstrate similar competencies overall. Decision-making speed was noted as a slight area of difference, with men generally being faster and more consistent. Generally, the study underscores that individual competency and qualification, rather than gender, determine task performance, aligning with neoclassical theories and supporting a merit-based evaluation approach in workplaces.

Conversely, positive behaviors like teamwork and reliability were identified as enhancing organizational success irrespective of gender. Both men and women exhibited these behaviors, with men often recognized for reliability and women for their cooperative spirit and teamwork. Teamwork was particularly noted for breaking down gender barriers and fostering a collaborative environment where contributions were valued equally. This aligns with studies by Kuhn and Villeval (2013), emphasizing women's tendency towards cooperation and its positive impact on team performance. Overall, the study highlighted that while certain negative behaviors may be more associated with one gender, positive behaviors crucial for organizational success are exhibited by both men and women. It emphasized the need for organizations to promote a culture of respect and professionalism to mitigate negative behaviors and enhance positive ones. By fostering an environment that values teamwork and reliability, organizations can create conditions where all employees, regardless of gender, can thrive and contribute effectively to organizational goals.

The study explored gender differences in work attitudes, revealing distinct patterns in behaviors such as calmness, orderliness, and an analytical approach. Men were noted for their composure and ability to remain focused under pressure, qualities perceived as beneficial in managing challenging work situations. In contrast, women tended to exhibit higher levels of anxiety at work, which aligns with previous research highlighting gender disparities in stress responses (Chaplin *et al*., 2008). Women were also recognized for their superior orderliness in task management, systematically organizing work tasks and presenting them in structured ways that were well-received by colleagues and clients alike. The study highlighted the diversity in work attitudes between men and women, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and leveraging these differences for organizational effectiveness. While men were noted for their calm demeanor and women for their analytical rigor and organizational skills, both genders contributed positively to workplace dynamics in distinct ways. The findings underscore the need for workplaces to accommodate and support these varied approaches, fostering environments where both genders can thrive and contribute effectively to organizational goals. All in all, despite critical issues uncovered, some of the respondents made remarks that seem aggressively biased against the female gender; for example, the issues of reliability, indicating a superficial understanding of issues attributed to biased ideas, giving undue credit to men in a male-dominated society.

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V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study was conducted at Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) in Dar es Salaam and employed a case study design. Data were gathered through interviews with 16 high-ranking employees. The study highlighted that behaviors significantly influence organizational dynamics for both men and women. Negative behaviors such as sexual harassment, workplace rumors, and inappropriate dressing were identified as detrimental to organizational cohesion and productivity. Men were noted for their calm demeanor and women for their analytical rigor and organizational skills; they both contribute positively to workplace dynamics, though differently.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed. Senior management must undergo educational programs regarding how gender influences workplace dynamics. This awareness can help mitigate inaccurate perceptions of gender-based performance disparities. Managers are also advised to shift away from using gender or personality as primary indicators of performance. Instead, emphasis should be placed on behaviors and qualifications, which have been demonstrated as more reliable predictors of effective workplace performance. Implementing these recommendations can foster a more equitable and effective organizational environment in Tanzanian institutions.

Declaration of Interest

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