

Gender Disparities in Leadership: Societal Perceptions, Women's Capabilities and UASU'S Stand

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Abstract

This study attempted to: investigate the criteria used in electing individuals to leadership positions within UASU, find out women's capabilities in performing leadership roles in trade unions, identify societal perceptions towards women and leadership roles in the public realm and find out what efforts UASU is making towards enhancing integration and participation of women in the union's activities. A descriptive survey method was used. A total of 200 respondents drawn from Kenyan public universities took part in the study. The sample comprised of 169 male university academic staff, 31 female university academic staff selected using equal proportionate stratified sampling design. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting members of the UASU executive committee. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedule. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in data Analyses. To test whether there was any difference between the university male and female teaching staff responses regarding moods, commitment, acceptability and efficiency, a One Way Analysis of Variance was chosen in order to prove or disprove the Patriarchy Theory. The study revealed that: women are viewed as equally efficient and even more committed compared to their male counterparts; the widespread view and opinion is that they are moody; a majority view women as not being ambitious; 33% of the respondents feel that women in leadership positions face stiffer challenges as opposed to their male counterparts and that 62.5% of the respondents are of the opinion that women in decision-making committees are given equal hearing and participation opportunities by their male counterparts.

Keywords: equality; gender; leadership; leadership styles; perception; stereotyping.

INTRODUCTION

Trade union leadership today continues to reflect the origins of the labour movement in heavy industry, and as such is predominantly male. Even in Sweden, where women have reached "critical mass" in government and politics, women hold only 20 percent of executive posts in trade unions. Collective bargaining still tends to be gender-blind and therefore perpetuates women's disadvantages. Reasons as to why women shy away from participating in trade union membership and leadership include:

1. Entrenched union rules and structures are not conducive to women's participation and advancement to leadership positions.
2. Informal procedures in the unions for nominations or appointments rely on established male networks (ILO – ICFTU, 2000).

Unions are still not 'women-friendly' and the inclusion of gender perspectives in all trade union policies and programmes is far from being achieved (ICFTU, 1999). A major factor which has contributed to the under-representation of women in Africa is their traditionally-defined role. The status of women in Africa is assigned to them by the norms and customs of the society in which they live. African culture regarded women as wives and mothers. A woman who is neither of these is regarded as a failure

no matter what her achievements outside these two roles. The development of women therefore is intertwined with the inferior political, social and cultural positions in which they find themselves (Okeke, 2004).

With regard to decision-making, women feel, time and again, denied their right to full participation. It is therefore necessary to change the attitudes of both men and women towards the issue of gender equality and parity (ICTFU – Asia Pacific Regional Organisation, 2000). Unions must take steps to overcome the barriers to female participation and to ensure that women are visible and active in all aspects of union life; as members, activists and leaders. If trade unions are to champion gender equality in employment as a basic human and workers' right, they first have to show that equality is an integral part of their own internal policies and structures. Unions cannot be credible unless women are adequately represented and fully involved in all union structures and business. This study therefore sought to:

1. Investigate the criteria used in electing individuals to leadership positions within UASU.
2. Find out women's capabilities in performing leadership roles in trade unions.

3. Identify societal perceptions towards women and leadership roles in the public realm.
4. Find out what efforts UASU is making towards enhancing integration and participation of women in the union's activities.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Scholars can use the information from this study as a basis for further investigation and subsequent research on women's issues. The study will be useful to women's organizations and those organizations which deal with women's affairs in that it will enlighten them on the position of women within higher levels of management. As a result, they may be able to set up policies for the optimum benefit of women. In addition, the government and/or authorities may be provided with systematic evidence on the need for special policy measures to correct any gender imbalances that may come to light. The society in general will benefit because the study will create awareness of the constraints that affect women's full participation in development projects. This may result in bringing about the society's change in attitude towards women leaders.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Leadership

In the contingency theory of leadership, the success of the leader is a function of various contingencies in the form of subordinate, task and/or group variables. The effectiveness of a given pattern of a leader's behavior is contingent upon the demands imposed by the situation. This theory advocates for using different styles of leadership appropriate to the needs created by different organizational situations. Fiedler's theory is the earliest and most extensively researched. Fiedler's approach departs from trait and behavioral models by asserting that group performance is contingent on the leader's psychological orientation and on three contextual variables: group atmosphere, task structure and the leader's power position. The study's assumptions were that leaders prioritize between task-focus and people-focus and that relationships, power and task structure are the three key factors that drive effective style. Three factors are then identified about the leader, member and the task as follows:

1. *Leader-Member Relations*: The extent to which the leader has the support and loyalties of followers and relations with them are friendly and cooperative.
2. *Task structure*: The extent to which tasks are standardised, documented and controlled.
3. *Leader's Position-power*: The extent to which the leader has authority to assess follower performance and give reward or punishment.

High levels of these three factors give the most favourable situation: low levels, the least favourable. Relationship-motivated leaders are most effective in moderately favourable situations. Task-motivated leaders are most effective at either end of the scale. Fiedler suggests that it may be easier for leaders to change their situation to achieve effectiveness, rather than change their leadership style. The implication is that education and training help the leader (male or female) improve their capabilities and efficiency as well as enhancing the leader's confidence. This in turn improves their leader-member relations and enhances the leader's common power.

Legal Position of Women in Kenya

Women make up over 50% of Kenya's population but most of them are among the poor and illiterate in the country. Some are still affected by customs and traditions which contribute to their continued oppression. The constitution of Kenya accords all Kenyans (both men and women) the following rights and freedoms:

The Political Process: In the political process, women are significantly ignored in politics, policy making and implementation. As a result, no policies adopted to improve the lot of women will be easily prioritized.

Capacity to Marry: In Kenya, the age of maturity for both boys and girls is 18. Under customary law, once one has attained puberty, they can enter a contract of marriage. In some communities, the guardian can conclude a marriage contract on behalf of a child who is below the age of puberty. The resulting child marriages undermine education opportunities of affected girls and pose threats to the health of the same girls as well as their offspring.

Property Rights: Kenya's legal system has established the principle that spouses have equal rights in the ownership of property. Section 1 of the Married Women Property Act 1882 provides that a married woman is capable of acquiring, holding and disposing property. A married woman may sue or be sued in respect of her separate property. She can also carry on business separately from her husband. Though this position favors women, few women can access legal aid and may not be in a position to challenge discriminatory practices as and when they occur.

Rights to Inheritance: Under the Law of Succession Act (Laws of Kenya, Chapter 160), male and female children enjoy equal rights of inheritance. Widows and widowers are entitled to equal rights but once a widow gets remarried she can no longer lay claim to her late husband's immovable property. While this stands on paper, the reality on the ground is different. The prevailing (traditional) view is that married women should not inherit. If women are to fully participate in policy making and implementation, the impediments which prevent their participation must be eliminated. There is need for continued research

on women and law so that the constraints and practices that hinder women’s empowerment and advancement are exposed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A case study approach was adopted. Advantage include: it considers all pertinent aspects of a situation employing a group as a unit of study and intensively investigating it, gives clear insight into the phenomenon under study and draws attention to the role of each independent variable in relation to others.

Target Population

This study involved both male and female members of the University Academic Staff Union in all the public universities in Kenya: deans of faculties, heads of department, professors, senior lecturers, lecturers and assistant lecturers.

Sampling Design and Sampling Techniques

A representative sample of members of the university academic staff union within the study was drawn from the research population. An equal, proportionate stratified sampling design was used in selection of the study sample of academic staff so that men as well as women from all cadres of staff were represented. In a proportionate stratified sample, the populations of sampling units are divided into sub-groups, or strata, and a sample selected separately per stratum. For the sampling to be proportionate, the sampling fraction (or interval) must be identical in each stratum. Proportionate allocation is used for two reasons: to reduce standard errors for survey estimates and to ensure that samples sizes for strata are of their expected size. Sampling equal numbers from strata varying widely in size may be used to equate the statistical power of tests of differences between strata. Five public universities (Nairobi, Kenyatta, Egerton, Moi and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology) were included in this study.

Table 1: Sample Population

Institution	Male respondents	Female respondents
University of Nairobi	490	70
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	215	25
Kenyatta University	229	111
Egerton University	366	66
Moi University	356	32
Total	1656	304

Source: UASU (provisional)

A total of 200 lecturers (approximately 10 percent of the total population) were selected. 40 lecturers were selected from each of the public universities. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting members of the executive committee of UASU. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects participants based on preselected criteria. Typically,

judgmental or purposive sampling is used to study groups not well represented in the population. In this case the women in the UASU executive committee were interviewed.

Table 2: Sampling Frame

	Male	Female
University of Nairobi	35	5
Kenyatta University	36	4
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	27	13
Egerton University	34	6
Moi University	37	3
Total	169	31

Data Collection Instruments

A combination of various research instruments were used in this study for complementary purposes. These included: questionnaires; interviews and document analysis. Data collection instruments were developed from the reviewed literature obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The main survey instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of multiple choice questions and Likert-Type Scales containing statements of opinion pertaining to various factors affecting women’s progress at work. The questionnaire contained six major sections: Personal information; Cultural attitudes; Nature and structure of work in management; Low levels of education of women; Low levels of employment opportunities for women and Personality traits of women.

The following aspects were also examined: election of women to ‘managerial’ positions; delegation of ‘managerial duties’ to women and relevant ‘managerial’ training opportunities for women. If respondents agreed that the three dimensions of success mentioned above were available to women, this would be taken to mean that there were no obstacles to women’s progress and that they had access to leadership positions. A Likert-Type Scale measured the presence of these three dimensions. For example, if a respondent strongly agreed that cultural attitudes have hindered women’s election to ‘managerial positions’ it was taken to mean that leadership opportunities were not easily available to women. In order to overcome the limitations of the questionnaires, the researcher used an interview schedule. The interview was a face-to-face encounter, carried out among the union officials (union leaders and, in particular, the women in positions of leadership). Document analysis was also employed. This involved reviewing the contents of the target documents with the aim of adducing some relevant secondary data (Leedy, 1974). These included the daily newspapers, union publications, documents from the International Labour Organization and other relevant materials. The researcher also surfed the internet for the purpose of reviewing papers that may be posted on the internet from all around the world.

Reliability of Research Instruments

The split-half-reliability method was used to calculate the reliability of the research instruments. It is used to determine the internal consistency reliability co-efficiency. Since such procedures require only one administration of a test, certain sources of errors of measurement are eliminated, e.g. differences in testing conditions, which occur in establishing a test-retest reliability. It is especially appropriate when the test is long.

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire and interview schedule items, pilot testing was done in KNUT branch, Eldoret Municipality. In the process of pilot testing, the questionnaire was administered to 30 members of KNUT in Eldoret Municipality. The interview schedule was administered to KNUT members who hold leadership positions. The procedure used to determine the Split-Half-Reliability Co-efficient for the items were weighted for purposes of calculation. The test was divided into two comparable halves or sub-sets. The approach used to divide the test items was by including all-even items in the first half and all-odd items in the second half. According to Gay (1987) and Dennis (1987), the odd-even strategy is mostly used because the approach works well regardless of how a test is organized. Each respondent, consequently, had two sets of scores (X scores and Y scores). The first or the X scores were for the even items and the second or the Y scores for the odd items. Fifth, Pearson product moment formula will be used to correlate the two sets of scores. The formula is as follows:

$$1. \quad r = \frac{N \sum XY - \sum X \sum Y}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2] [N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where r = co-efficient of reliability
 N = total number of subjects
 X = rated value of one half
 Y = rated value of the other half
 Σ = Summation

The co-efficient obtained was then converted into an appropriate correlation for the entire test using the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula.

$$2. \quad r_{xx} = \frac{2 r_{nn}}{1 + r_{nn}}$$

Where: r_{xx} = reliability co-efficient of the original test
 r_{nn} = split-Half-Reliability co-efficient.

In this study, reliability co-efficient of 0.5 and above was accepted as a good measure of reliability.

Reliability Analysis - Scale (split)

Reliability Coefficients
 N of Cases = 10.0 N of Items = 2
 Correlation between forms = .6249 Equal-length
 Spearman-Brown = .7692
 Guttman Split-half = .7627 Unequal-length
 Spearman-Brown = .7692

1 Items in part 1 1 Items in part 2
 Alpha for part 1 = 1.0000 Alpha for part 2 = 1.0000

Administration of Research Instruments

First, the researcher requested for a research permit from the office of the president to conduct research. This was done to give the study a legal status. The researcher delivered a covering letter requesting the respondents to participate in the study plus the questionnaires to all the selected respondents. The questionnaires were responded to and collected immediately. Completed questionnaires were checked by the researcher to find out whether they were fully and appropriately responded to.

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Data collected was analysed by the use of mean scores, percentages and tables in order to test whether there was any correlation between the men’s and women’s responses. To test whether there was any difference between the university male and female teaching staff regarding moods, commitment, acceptability and efficiency, a One Way ANOVA was used. ANOVA was chosen in order to prove or disprove the Patriarchy Theory.

RESULTS

Criteria Used in Selecting Leaders within the Trade Union Movement

Reasons advanced as to why women do not join trade unionism leadership include: the male-dominated culture or activities of the union or the hostile reactions from male members discourage women from joining and that women are said to lack confidence to join unions or to aspire to leadership positions (ILO-ICFTU, 2000).

Table 3: Criteria for Selecting UASU Leaders

	Response	Percentage
Women who secure leadership positions have to be twice as good at the interviews	SA	20%
	A	13%
	U	-
	D	46%
	SD	20%

The responses to this question suggest that 33% of the respondents feel that women in leadership positions face stiffer challenges as opposed to their male counterparts. As such, women may lack confidence to join unions or to aspire to leadership positions. To test whether there was any difference between the university male and female teaching staff regarding the criteria used in the selection of leaders within the trade union movement, the following hypothesis was tested: *There is no significant difference between male staff responses and female staff responses with regard to the criteria used to select UASU leaders.*

For qualification, $F(1, 14) = 10.348, p = 0.007$

At the 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance, this value was found to be significant. Thus suggesting there is a statistically significant difference between male and female staff regarding the stated variables.

Women's capabilities in performing leadership roles in trade unions

Access to Employment

Employment is a major avenue for increasing incomes and consequently economic wellbeing. It is the primary asset at the disposal of the poor and hence main transmission mechanism through which the poor, both men and women can benefit from growth.

Table 4: Wage Employment by Industry and Sex

Industry	Male		Female		Total		Female % 2006
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	
Agriculture & Forestry	246.1	248.8	81.3	85.8	327.4	334.6	26%
Mining & Quarrying	4.5	4.7	1.2	1.3	5.7	6	22%
Manufacturing	204.3	208.1	48.2	45.7	252.5	253.8	18%
Electricity & Water	16.7	15.9	3.6	3.6	20.3	19.5	18%
Building & Construction	73.2	74.6	5	5.3	78.2	79.9	7%
Trade, Restaurants & Hotels	128.6	134.5	47.1	51.4	175.7	185.9	28%
Transport & Communication	91.6	105.1	23.3	27.8	114.9	132.9	21%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, & Business Services	64.7	66.2	22.6	24.2	87.3	90.4	27%
Public Administration	87.1	84.6	56.2	52.7	143.3	137.3	38%
Education Services	185.7	188.7	152.7	152.4	338.4	341.1	45%
Domestic Services	58.5	60.9	42	42.4	100.5	103.3	41%
Other Services	99.8	104.1	68.8	69.6	168.6	173.7	40%
Total	1260.	1296.	552	562.2	1812.8	1858.	30%

Source: Government of Kenya, 2007.

Female workers constitute 30% of the overall wage employment and they have the highest representation in educational services employment (45%). Women are also the least represented in such sectors as building and construction (7%), manufacturing (18%), electricity and water (18%). The low participation of women in productive employment activities in major sectors can be attributed to factors that curtail women's mobility in economic domain and conflicting role mainly domestic and reproductive responsibilities and constraining nature of occupations where domestic responsibilities cannot be easily combined with economic activity. Another constraining factor could be limited access to required skills, especially during the undertaking of education and training programmes. Unfounded beliefs about women's aptitudes, skills, dispositions, and reproductive responsibilities could also work to

hinder women participation in some production sectors.

Enterprise Ownership

Although women operate 54% of the total enterprises in the country, they dominate the wholesale and retail, rural manufacturing and urban agriculture sectors alone. Men are well represented in such sectors as urban manufacturing (71%), transport (73%), financial services (80%) and social services (69%). The proportion of men's representation is even higher in urban areas. For instance, 99% and 91% of persons operating construction and transport enterprises, respectively, in urban areas are men. Like in other parts of the continent, women in Kenya face the challenge of balancing between work and family responsibilities. Consequently, some of these enterprises may be being viewed as masculine. It is also essential that women be equally supported to effectively participate in major production sectors through improved access to land, financial services, education and skills empowerment.

Financial Services

Access to financial services is critical for the economic empowerment of any population and it varies across gender. This includes levels of savings, access to credit, insurance services and remittances. According to the recent study on Financial Sector Deepening (2007) in Kenya, more women (51.1%) tend to save compared to their male counterparts (48.9%). The proportion of the population currently accessing credit facility reflects an equal gender split. In 2005/6, about 50.1% of the population that had access to credit services were male and 49.9% were female. However, a small margin, only 47.1% of female population had ever had a loan and/or credit facility. About 13.5% of credit users had no formal education. About 12.9% of those with no education had ever had access to credit and had ever accessed credit services respectively. The low access to land and lack of collateral constrain access to business credit. According to World Bank (2004), only 1% of land titles are held by women while 5-6% is held jointly.

Even though almost 50% of women in Kenya currently access credit, most of these are from informal savings mechanisms and micro-finance institutions. However, most of these institutions are located in urban areas. Many women lack training in financial management and entrepreneurship skills. Women also lack benefit from international trade as most businesses are small and informal. Women's enterprises also lack network systems because very few business associations in Kenya target women. Another factor limiting women's access to credit is the fact that traditional practices governing land and livestock ownership as well as access and control over land favour men compared to women. This

disadvantages women in accessing credit especially where collateral is required.

Women in the Public Sector

Since the end of the Second World War, 28 women have been elected as heads of State or Government. Only Norway and Sweden have, so far, achieved gender equality at the cabinet level. For parliaments, the record world average of women's representation was reached in 1988 when women representatives accounted for 14.8 percent of all parliamentarians. In 1995, this dropped to 11.3 percent. The current world average of 11.7 percent still indicates a situation in which women are regarded at best as a "special-interest group" rather than half of humankind.

In Kenya, a comparison between 2003 and 2006 indicates that the number of female ministers declined from 3 to 2 against a total of 32; even if the number of women Assistant Ministers increased from 4 to 6, which still is a mere 13% compared to male representation. In other public service representations, such as at the level of provincial administrations, women were not represented at all by January 2006 while, at the District Commissioner's administrative unit, the number of women actually reduced from 3 in 2003 to 2 in 2006 representing a mere 2.8%.

However, despite the fact that females constitute 51% of the population, they constituted 8% of Members in National Assembly during the 9th parliament; 6% of Ministers; 13% of Assistant Ministers; 3% of District Commissioners; 20% of District Officers; 13% of Councillors and 21% of Deputy Secretaries. There are limited public support systems targeting women political empowerment. Most Kenya cultures regard the place of a woman as being in the kitchen and raising children as part of the reproductive role. This kind of socialization makes it hard for a man to accept the idea of sharing the same platform with a woman. As a result, women are locked out of political representation and participation in decision making forums. Women who join politics in such cultures are considered to be breaking the rules that govern gender roles.

In addition, the political campaigning exercise is very expensive. While men can mobilize financial resources through the sale of property such as land, women are constrained because property ownership in most communities is dominated by men. Cultural beliefs and attitudes also determine the voting pattern in Kenya. For example, in the 2007 general election, only 15 women were elected out of the 269 who won nomination tickets. Violence and insults often accompany political campaigns. This discourages women who would otherwise vie for leadership posts due to fear and a feeling of inadequacy. The physical and psychological abuse can be viewed as demeaning

and bringing the integrity of women to question so that male opponents have an advantage over them.

Perception by Society of Women and Leadership Roles in the Public Realm

One of the reasons advanced as to why women do not participate in union membership and leadership is that stereotyped ideas persist about women's abilities, preferences and roles (ILO – ICFTU Survey, 2000). Therefore the first research question sought to test the perception by society of women and leadership roles in the public realm. The findings of this research question revealed that 42.9 percent of the respondents agreed that the female colleagues are more efficient, 42.9 percent of the respondents disagreed that the female colleagues are more efficient while 14.3 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed that the female colleagues were more efficient.

When it came to acceptability, 12.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the female colleagues are less accepted, 12.5 percent of the respondents agreed that the female colleagues are less accepted, 50 percent of the respondents were undecided that the female colleagues are less accepted, 12.5 percent disagreed that the female colleagues are less accepted while 12.5 percent strongly disagreed that the female colleagues are less accepted. When it came to commitment, 12.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the female colleagues are less committed, 12.5 percent of the respondents agreed that their female colleagues are less committed, 50 percent of the respondents disagreed that their female colleagues are less committed while 25 percent strongly disagreed that their female colleagues are less committed. With regard to moodiness, 62.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that their female colleagues were more moody, 25 percent of the respondents were undecided as to whether the female colleagues were more moody while 12.5 percent of the respondents disagreed that their female colleagues were more moody.

Table 5: Perception of Women in Leadership Positions

Female colleagues are:	Percent				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
a) More efficient		42.9		42.9	14.3
b) Less accepted	12.5	12.5	50.0	12.5	12.5
c) Less committed	12.5	12.5		50.0	25.0
d) More moody	62.5		25.0	12.5	

Women are viewed as equally efficient and even more committed. The widespread view and opinion is that they are moody. Such stereotyped ideas that persist about women and their abilities, preferences and roles may serve as a barrier to women's participation in union membership and leadership. To test whether there was any difference between the university male and female teaching staff regarding

moods, commitment, acceptability and efficiency, the following hypothesis was tested: *There is no significant difference between the perception by male staff and female staff of women in leadership positions.*

Results show that:

- (i) For moods, $F(1,15) = 0.003, p = 0.960$
- (ii) For commitment, $F(1, 16) = 1.429 = 0.249$
- (iii) For acceptability, $F(1, 16) = 7.538 = 0.014$

At the 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance, none of the values was significant. Thus, there is no evidence to suggest that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female staff regarding stated variables.

Measures Put in Place to Improve Women's Participation in Trade Union Leadership

One of the major reasons advanced as to why women do not participate in trade union membership and leadership is that women do not understand or appreciate how unions can benefit them. Unions are also deemed to be insensitive to the needs of women workers. Therefore, the fifth research question sought to find out what action the union was taking to improve women's participation in trade union leadership. 62.5% of the respondents are of the opinion that women in decision-making committees are given equal hearing and participation opportunities by their male counterparts. To test whether there was any difference between the university male and female teaching staff regarding the efforts made by the union to improve participation and leadership by women within the trade union movement, the hypothesis tested was: *There is no significant difference between male staff and female staff responses regarding the measures in place to improve women's participation in trade unionism leadership.*

DISCUSSION

Implications and Policy Recommendations

In order that women come to unions, unions must be credible and welcoming to them. In recognition that women may have particular, unique, needs and priorities, unions need to adopt measures to recruit female members. Messages that women identify with and are motivated by should be formulated and successes of the unions in dealing with gender equality and women's issues should be widely publicized. It is important to provide women opportunities to express their particular needs, concerns, priorities or constraints and allow them to do so in contexts where they feel comfortable and confident. Opportunities and fora such as discussion groups, study circles, seminars and conferences where women can freely and confidently express their opinions are vital. Unions are only credible to potential women members if women are visible inside and outside of the unions. Women should be

represented at all levels and in all structures of the union, especially at the highest decision-making bodies, through affirmative action measures, proportionality policies, quotas, targets, reserved or additional seats. Again, women should be represented and active in negotiating teams. A general policy statement on gender equality, an equality plan and specific goals and targets for women's representation at different levels of the union structure, should be formulated. Set goals should be monitored and evaluated upon implementation.

CONCLUSION

On top of the issue of integration and participation of women in trade union activities, unions should develop creative and persuasive strategies to make unions more attractive, purposeful and sensitive to women workers. This way, women will build a sense of belonging, togetherness and sharing and identify with the union. Thus, unions can grow into democratic institutions and move towards an equal society.

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