

Barriers on women participation in leadership positions in the military in Tanzania: a case of the Military Headquarters in Dar es Salaam

Bakari Kazinja

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This study examined factors hindering women in accessing leadership positions in the Tanzanian military. The Military Headquarters in Dar es Salaam was selected as a case study. The objective of this study was to identify factors limiting women's access to leadership positions in the Tanzanian military services. Simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents. Data were collected using a questionnaire, interview guide and documentary review. Data was analyzed quantitatively by using SPSS program in order to produce statistical data in frequency and percentage and presented in tables and figures. Qualitative data from key informants was analyzed using content analysis.

The findings of this study show that the majority of women in Tanzania's military services have been affected by socio-cultural factors as well as legal and institutional problems in accessing leadership positions. The factors include misconception of women's ability, gender roles stereotype that women are perceived to be attached to domestic work, less authoritative and irrationality in decision making. Legal and institutional factors include unfair military laws on recruitment of soldiers and promotion to leadership positions. The study results show that men were given a higher priority than women in recruitment and appointment to leadership positions. The study recommends the amendment of military laws guiding recruitment and appointment of leaders whereby, gender equity should be given a priority. It is also recommended that, a strong department of gender needs to be established at the military headquarters to help with mainstreaming of gender issues in the military as well as encouraging more women into further military training.