

Gender Inequality and Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices in Jordanian Commercial Banks

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Abstract

This research aims at investigating the inequality practices against women in Jordanian commercial banking sector. To reach this objective, the research studied both HRP and inequalities faced women. The questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data. The HRP used as independent variable, while the inequalities resulted used as dependent variable. Simple random sample was selected of female bankers. The results showed that inequality practices existed in banking workplace. These inequalities resulted from both, the HRP and managers' evaluation of women in baking sector. The results showed the inequality practices are source of minimizing women empowerment in banking sector.

Keywords: women inequality, training and development, performance appraisal, promotion, commercial banks, Jordan

1. Introduction

Gender inequality practiced in different part of the world (Ismail and Nakkache, 2015; Memon and Jena, 2017). Gender inequality found in different sectors (Parcheta et al., 2014). Inequality found in different sectors. These sectors include the health sector (Newman, 2014, Newman, 2010). Gender inequality was found to be practiced in human resources practices in developed countries (Gustafsson, 2018) and developing countries (Ismail and Nakkache, 2015).

Stamarski and Hing (2015) reported that inequality represented in all HR practices in organization. Inequality was recorded in different forms and shapes. Parcheta et al. (2013) reported inequality in pay and promotions. Newman (2014) reported inequality in women participation in leadership and governance of organizations. Also, the opportunities are unequal for males and females for position in an organization. Ogunrin et al. (2011) reported

inequality for training opportunities in organization. The opportunities given for women for training are less so their competition with the workplace decreases.

Stamarski and Hing (2015) reported that the environment of the organization plays a major role in gender equality. If the organization culture, HR policies are necessary to help establishing gender equality in one organization. Human resources departments in organizations were thinking to be included in creation of culture. Parcheta et al. (2013) reported that the organization management also included in this issue.

This paper will investigate gender inequality in banking sector in Jordan as developing country. The paper will concentrate on raising the directions that carry discrimination against women in this sector. This research will answer the questions: What are the kind of HRP that have gender inequality in baking sector? What are the categories of women according to demographic characteristics experience more inequality in banking sector?

2. Literature Review

Gender equality has been experienced since a long time. Discrimination was seen to be practiced in different life aspects. The calls raised to minimize discrimination and inequality in women life in general and in business (Parcheta, 2013). Gender discrimination was practiced in all parts of the world at era. Through the raise of the conventions of women's right, the discrimination started to decrease in some areas specially the developed countries, but it is still practiced widely in others and varied from area to another (Kossek and Buzzanell, 2018). Even though, this discrimination is still practiced in developed countries with less (Gustafsson, 2018).

One of the HRP that raise gender inequality and could be practiced widely is in the recruitment and selection stage (Ogunrin et al., 2011; Newman, 2014; Gustafsson, 2018). Organizations still prefer the assignment of men over women in different jobs. The stored inherited behavior and psychology of women did not change since along time. The believe that woman is not capable to fill some jobs is still existed up to date. In this regard, most of business owner prefer to assign men in jobs that require much travelling or quick decision-making (Ogunrin et al., 2011). In the recruitment and selection process, business owner believe that the limits the assigned women would reach is restricted, while the limits of job promotion for men is open and can reach the top management positions (Gustafsson, 2018).

The discrimination in the recruitment and selection stage and practice of gender inequality considered the start of a series of inequality practices. The other inequality practiced is for the type of jobs selected for women. Women selected always for jobs with low wages and traditional ones (Koosek and Buzzanell, 2018). Amaout et al. (2019) has reported that there is gaps among women and men wages in USA.

Many authors reported inequality in training and development (Olufemi et al., 2011; Sharma, 2016; Amaout et al., 2019). Newman (2010) reported that there is inequality in training among men and women. The justification for this inequality resulted of the low attempt of women to travel to receive training outside, also, the women movability in work is more than

men. These justifications consider that the organization prefer to give training for males. This inequality in training will qualify the males more and will give more opportunity to fill more advance positions in the organization. Capacity building is directed for males than females in organizations.

In the activities included in appraisal and evaluation, Stamarski and Hing (2015) showed that inequality can be practiced through the evaluation process. The evaluation process that will affect the compensations and rewards are expected to have inequality and to be biased. This may result of two sources. The first one if the manager may practice inequality or if the HR policies did not solve these inequalities through more justice evaluation process.

3. Methodology

3.1 Problem Statement

Research Objectives. The objective of this research is to investigate the inequality practices of HR in Jordanian commercial banks. The research will record the HRP in four practices areas: training and development, organizational orientation and socialization, performance appraisal, and job promotion.

Research questions. What is the extent of inequality practiced by HR on women in commercial banking sector in Jordan? What is the effect of demographic characteristics on the inequality gap for females in commercial banks in Jordan?

Research hypothesis. To answer the questions of this research, the following hypothesis will be tested: There is no significant effect of human resources practices (training and development, performance appraisal, orientation and socialization, and promotion) on equality practices in commercial banks in Jordan.

Significance of the study. This study will explore the extent of inequality practiced in commercial banks against women and will find the practices that are more susceptible for inequality. This research will contribute in exploring the case of gender inequality in Jordan.

Study population and sampling. The population of the study included the females working in commercial banks in Jordan. The number of population composed of 7432 women working in commercial banks in Jordan forming 35.0% of the workforce in the commercial banks in Jordan. The percentage of banks employee in the capital Amman reaches 84.1% indicating that the majority are working in branches in Amman. The number of women employees in Amman reaches 6250 (Jordan Banking Society, 2019). This number considered the population of the study and used to select random sample. Using simple random sample calculator, the size of simple random sample is 362 women at confidence interval 5%. The number of recovered questionnaire was 312 with respondent rate 86.1%.

Variables and measurements. The study is concerned with the HRP that lead to inequality. In this regard, the study will include four major variables. These variables are: Training and development (T&D), performance appraisal (PA), organization orientations and socialization (OIS) and promotion (P) as independent variables while the dependent variable will be the inequality behavior inside the bank for T&D, PA, OIS, and P.

Table 1. Summary of items of independent and dependent variables

HRP	IV (practices)	DV (inequalities)
Training and development	Training programs designed for all employees	Selecting employees for training despite their gender
	evaluating the training needs annually	Training preparations take into consideration gender variations (Provide facilities meet females needs)
	training programs selected to improve employees promotion	Promotions' programs witness gender discrimination (Selection of males more than females)
	training evaluated regularly	Training evaluation consider gender (Underestimate female)
	training programs designed to allow competitiveness and success	Competiveness restricted to gender more than training
Organization orientation and socialization	Periodic meetings held to improve acquaintance among employees	Periodic meetings controlled by gender discrimination
	Organization encourages social relations among employees	Organization differentiate gender in social relations
	Organization provides welcoming environment to allow exchange ideas and opinions	Welcoming environment events are gender affected
	Expectations sessions to connect management with employees	Expectation session are gender affected
	Cultural training programs to improve acceptance of others	Cultural training programs are gender affected

HRP	IV (practices)	DV (inequalities)
Performance appraisal	The appraisal system is clear for employees	Appraisal for females is not fair in organization (Does not apply similar procedures used for males)
	Appraisal system encourages employee productivity	Appraisal system encourages female productivity (Females getting high appraisals)
	Appraisal systems used to determine promotion	Appraisal system is ignoring productivity for females to achieve the right promotion
	Appraisal system is decided by higher level without benchmark	The higher levels less appraise females
	Appraisal systems used to determine future training	Appraisal system routine for females (Use specific range of appraisal)
Promotion and incentives	Incentives based on position not performance	Females get the least incentives
	Promotion among levels depends on organization goals	Promotion of females depend on upper level decision
	Promotion system is clear for all employees	Promotion system depends on personal decisions for females
	Interference of HR in promotion is restricted	Interference of HR in female promotion is neglected
	Promotion and incentives established equally according to performance	Promotions and incentives differentiate according to gender

The relations between the independent variables (HR applied procedures) and the dependent variable (HR inequality behaves) is shown in Figure 1.

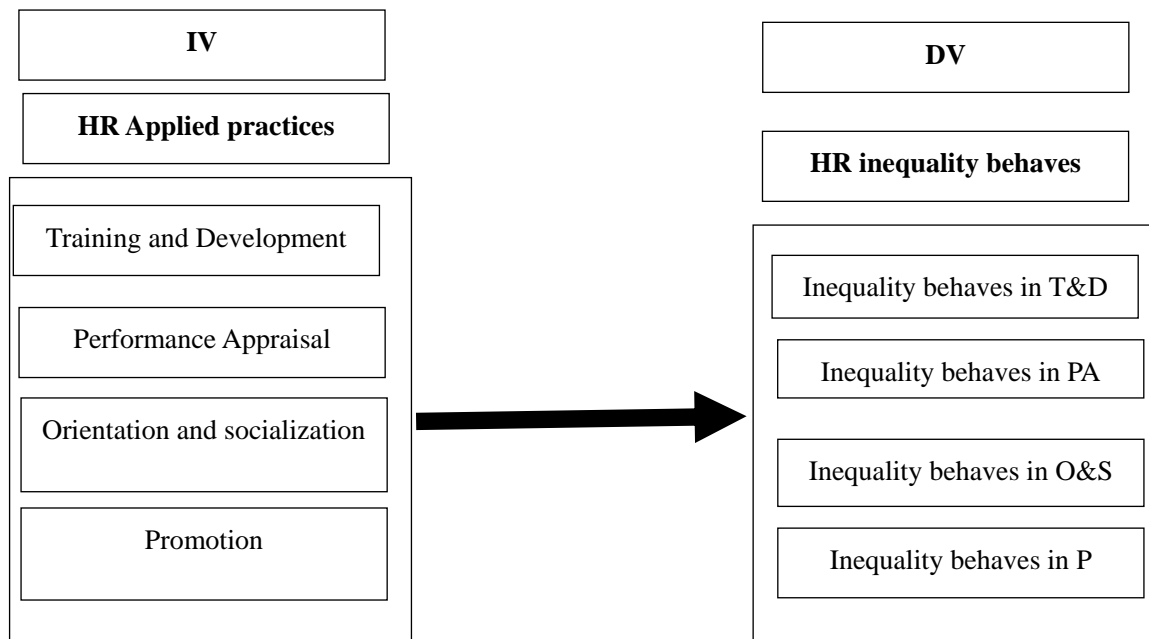


Figure 1. Research model

Data collection tools. Questionnaire designed for data collection. The questionnaire included three parts. The first part designed to collect the demographic data of banks women employees. The demographic characteristics are: educational level, position level, experience in banking, and position experience. The second part of the questionnaire designed to collect information about the IV variables. Likert's five scale used to evaluate the items of the different variables. The IV part included items that measure the inequality behaves in commercial banks. Likert scale used to measure these items. Some interviews were executed with women employees including the promotions, encourage and future of women jobs in banking sector.

3.2 Validity and Reliability

Validity. To measure the validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire distributed on 15 women bank employees outside the sample. The notes and feedback about the questionnaire collected. The language and research notes collected on the questionnaire before its final distribution.

Reliability. To measure the reliability of this questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha used. The results in Table 1 show that the value of Cronbach's alpha was more than 0.6 for all variables of the study, which makes it reliable.

Table 2. Reliability results using Cronbach's alpha

Variable	Value
Training and development	0.83
Performance appraisal	0.91
Orientation and socialization	0.74
Promotion	0.68
Inequality behaves	0.82

4. Results

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Most of women met were occupied usual positions (82.4%). Only (17.0%) occupied intermediate management levels, while (0.6%) occupied top management positions. The majority of the sample had bachelor degrees (91.0%), while the rest had graduate studies (9%). The dominant experience of women ranged from 1 to 10 years within the current position. This indicates that women promotion is limited in these organizations. The experience of women in banking in general distributed over the all categories. This indicates that women movability among banks is high (Table 3).

Table 3. Descriptive characteristics of the sample

Character		Frequency	percentage
Position level	Common level	257	82.4
	Intermediate management	53	17.0
	Top management	2	0.6
	Total	312	100.0
Education level	Bachelor	284	91.0
	Graduate studies	28	9.0
	Total	312	100.0
Experience, at the current position	Less than 5 Years	151	48.4
	From 5 to less than 10 Years	123	39.4
	From 10 to less than 15 Years	28	9.0
	Over 15 Years	10	3.2
	Total	312	100.0
Banking experience	Less than 5 Years	108	34.6
	From 5 to less than 10 Years	89	28.5
	From 10 to less than 15 Years	65	20.8
	Over 15 Years	50	16.0
	Total	312	100.0

4.2 Women Attitudes for HRP

The results showed that the highest agreement for the applied procedures by the HR was for T&D (mean: 3.74;st.d:0.69). The mean value indicates that the satisfaction of the application of the practices in T&D is not high among the females of the sample. The second highest evaluation of practices was for O&ISP with mean 3.65. Also, the results indicate that females agreements on these procedures are not high in the organization. The third agreement of the list was for performance appraisal with mean 3.46 indicating that the appraisal procedures are not applied completely according to females' point of views. The least agreement was for the application of promotion procedures inside the organization. The previous results reflect that females are not highly satisfied that the bank applied all the previous HR procedures completely.

Table 4. The attitudes of employees for HRP in banks

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Training and development programs	3.71	0.69
Organization orientation and socialization procedures	3.65	0.65
Performance appraisal procedures	3.46	0.69
Promotion procedures	3.12	0.93
HRP	3.48	0.63

4.3 Women's Attitudes for Inequality Behaves

The results of women's attitudes for the inequality practices in banks is shown in Table 5. The results showed that the inequality practices were high among females in banking. The high inequality practices was for T&D. Also, the females indicated that the inequalities of OI&SP are high with mean 4.18. The least evaluation of inequalities was for promotion practices with mean 4.06. The mean for all inequalities was high (4.12) indicating that this practice is high in banking sector.

Table 5. The attitudes of employees for inequality behaves in banks

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
T&D inequalities	4.22	0.49
OI&SP inequalities	4.18	0.4
PA inequalities	4.01	0.45
P inequalities	4.06	0.41
Total	4.12	0.32

4.4 The Effect of HRP on Inequalities Practices in Banking Sector

The results showed that the HRP affect the inequality among females in banking sector. The highest effect was seen for the promotion. This reflects that the high inequality is coming in the promotion process in banking sector. The second evaluation to affect inequality was the inequality of PA. The fourth effect was found for OI&SP and T&D on female inequalities.

Table 6. The multivariate analysis of HRP on gender inequalities

The dimension	β	T	Sig	R	R ²	F	Sig.
T&D	0.08	0.58	0.56	0.61	0.37	14.18	0.00
OI&SP	0.16	1.37	0.18				
PA	0.35	3.35	0.00				
Promotion	0.40	4.18	0.00				

5. Discussion

The aim of this research is investigating the HRP of inequality in banking sector. The research viewed wide range of female employees in banking sector. The results showed that most of studied females occupy common employees' levels. Small percentage of female employees had position in the intermediate and top management levels. This gives reflects the gender inequality of position filling in banking sector. The education level of females' employees qualified them to get high levels. The experience of females' employees is high enough to enable them to be in good positions. This reflect the inequality in workplace in banking sector. Similar reasons explained by Parcheta et al. (2013).

The HRP take into consideration the application of original HR procedures in banking sector with certain extent according to females' point of view. The banking HR seems to underestimate some of these procedures. The least application of HRP recorded for the promotion procedures. This resulted of the successive point of view taken in these promotions. The promotion evaluation is susceptible for mangers' evaluation directly. Newman (2014) reported that the workforce structure can be a reason of inequality. Also, the performance appraisal procedures applied are susceptible for the managers' point of view directly.

The results showed that inequality practiced in all HR activities. The higher inequality practices shown in promotion and performance appraisal. These results justified through the direct assessment of managers in workspace. Also, the results showed that T&D practices are susceptible for inequalities. This is resulted because the T&D practices are not a result of employees needs but it is nomination of direct managers for training suggested by the management. Newman (2014) reported that T&D could be biased for males in workplace

more than females. Moreover, Parcheta et al. (2013) reported that the nature of females could be the source of inequalities in workplace.

6. Conclusions

The previous results showed that many inequality practices found in banking sector. These inequality practices include the selection of females for training and development. Also, the results showed the inequality is practiced in OI&SP. The inequality practices in PA and P are resulted of the direction managers evaluation, which underestimate the females' rights for promotion. This conclusion was supported by the interviews performed with some female bank employees.

7. Future Research

The future research of female inequality should study the females' attitudes to take advanced positions in banking sector. Moreover, the nature of female should be considered in evaluating the inequality in banking sector.

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