

# The IGERD Brief



Volume 1

Issue 1

**Sharing Minds, Changing Lives**
**June 2008**

## Gender Issues at Moi University

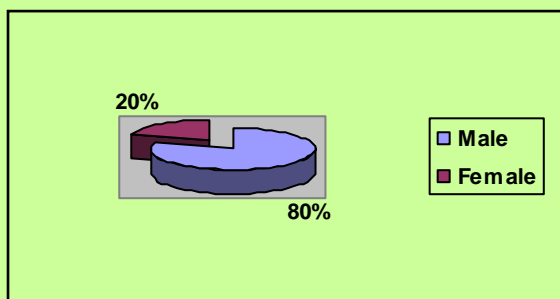
### The Baseline Survey with Teaching Staff

IGERD conducted a baseline survey with the aim of finding out what the gender issues are at MU as identified by students, teaching and non-teaching staff. The survey was carried out by IGERD Board and MU-VLIR-UOS-Gender Equity Project Team in five campuses of MU namely: Main Campus, Annex, Eldoret West, Chepkoilel and Town Campus. Several methods were used to generate data. In this brief we have highlighted only the information generated from teaching and non-teaching staff through questionnaires. Out of 250 questionnaires that were issued, 143 were returned, 32% were from women and 68% from men. IGERD has generated useful information but for the purpose of this brief, we are going to only give highlights of a few of the issues. A full report is available.

### Gender disparity in Administrative positions

The study revealed that **only 20%** of the incumbent heads of teaching units are women

**Fig. 1 Current Heads of Teaching Departments by Gender**



### Work environment, job security and workload

Work environment for teaching staff at Moi University was rated as generally safe by majority (74%) of the respondents. In addition, 71% of the respondents expressed that they have job security and that their **teaching load was reasonable** (56%). On University Management and Staff morale, 53% agreed that they were encouraged to act on their own initiative. The Management however needs to improve by seeking opinion from staff from time to time during a decision making process.

### Good governance, rewards and team work

Sixty three percent (63%) disagreed with the statement that “*management does seek opinion in the decision making process*”. **‘Creativity is not rewarded at MU’** according to 52% of the women respondents and 62% of the men. This is an issue that University Management needs to address (see Fig. 2).

MU in its mission statement aims at “**creating conducive work and learning environment**”. Core value No. 2 is

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# Moi University Non-Teaching Staff: The Baseline Survey Results

Out of the 143 questionnaires that were returned by staff, 72 came from Non-Teaching Staff. Thirty-two were women and 40 were men. Others participated in FGDs and interviews. This was an effort to explore the kind of gender issues MU staff live with. This brief will only dwell on issues expressed through the questionnaires. Most of the question items required the respondents to 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Disagree', and 'Strongly Disagree' or indicate 'Undecided'. During data analysis stage, the items were merged into AGREE, DISAGREE and UNDECIDED and tabulated by gender.

## Recognition at Moi University

On 'recognition by MU for work well done', majority of the respondents disagreed (67% men, 60% women – Fig. 4). 'Creativity is rewarded at MU' statement received similar responses with 75% men and 71% women disagreeing (Fig. 5).

## Relationship with supervisor

There were 18 statements that explored respondents' opinion of his/her immediate supervisor and point at the power relations and corporate culture at MU generally. Out of 72 respondents, 58% agreed with the statement '*my supervisor treats me fairly and with respect*'; 28% disagreed whereas 14% were undecided. Majority of the respondents (54%) disagreed with the statement, '*my supervisor uses civil language*'. Two statements asked about preference of supervisors by gender. On '*I prefer female supervisor*', 33% agreed but 51% disagreed. Analysis of the results by gender show that 40% of the men and 36% of the women disagreed with the statement; and 40% of the men and 30% of the women were undecided. The result showed that women respondents have preference for female supervisors. It also shows that men respondents were noncommittal or indecisive (Fig 6).

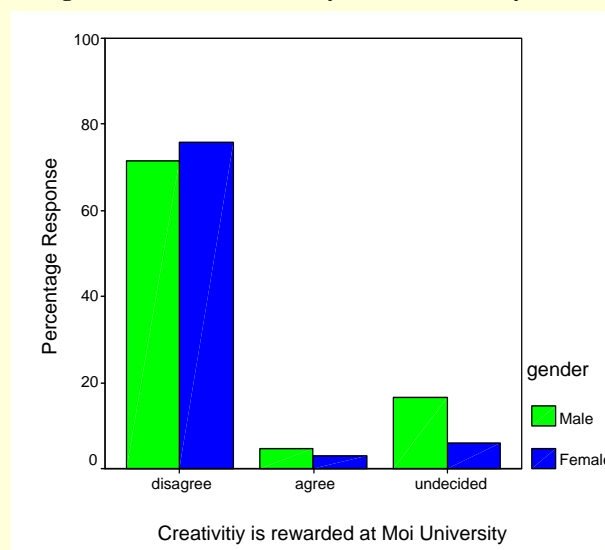
Most of the respondents (64%) disagreed with the statement that reads -'**I prefer a male supervisor**'; 30% of those who disagreed were men and 37% were females (Fig 7).



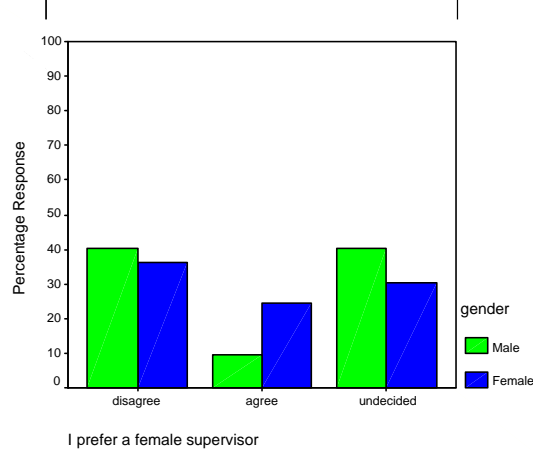
**SHARING MINDS: Participants exchange ideas at an IGERD workshop aimed at promoting equality among Moi University staff**

**Fig. 4: Recognition at Moi University (NTS)**

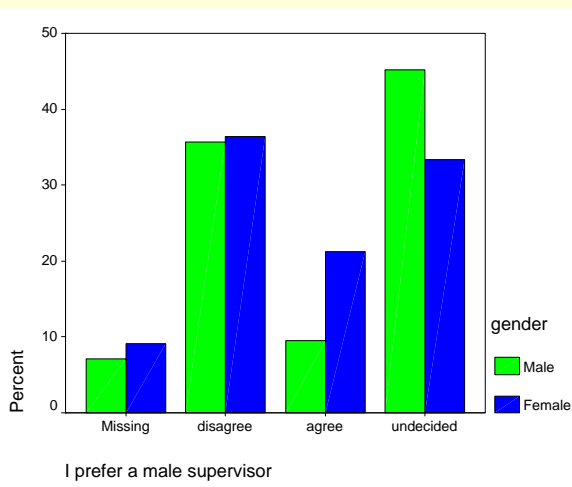
**Fig. 5: Reward for Creativity at Moi University (NTS)**



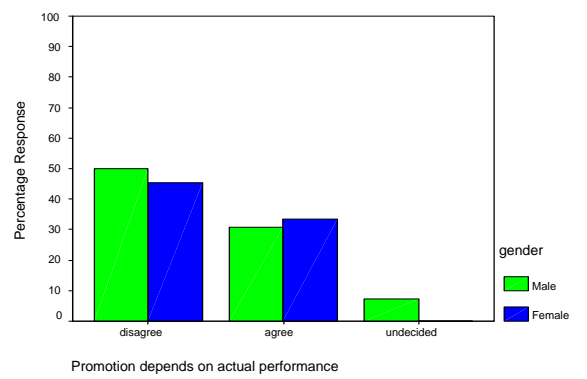
**Fig. 6: Preference of Female Supervisor (NTS)**



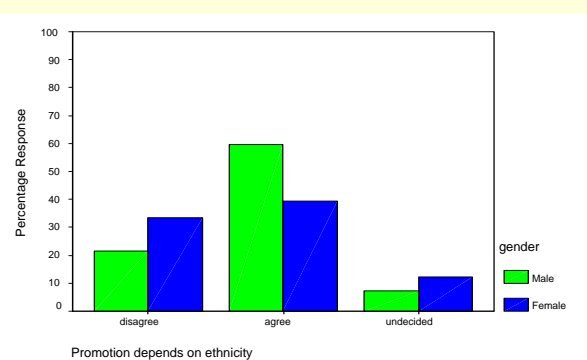
**Fig. 7 Preference of Male Supervisor (NTS)**



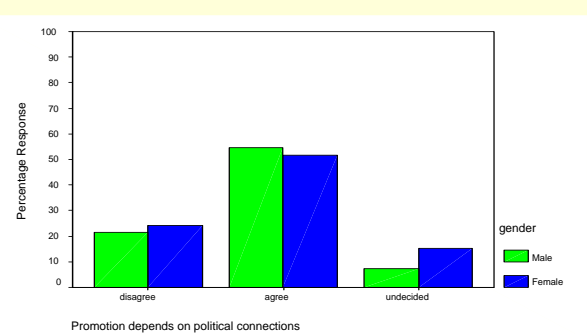
**Fig. 8: Promotion Depends on Actual Performance**



**Fig. 9: Promotion Depends on Ethnicity (NTS)**



**Fig. 10: Promotion Depends on Political Connections**



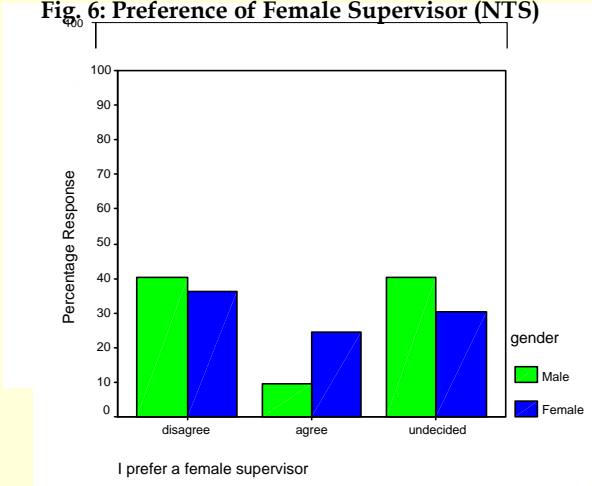
## Promotion at Moi University

Respondents were required to indicate what is the *most important element* during **recruitment and promotion at Moi University**, *second most important*, and *least important* from a choice of 12. Ethnicity was rated as the *most important element* (53%), actual performance (45%) and professional network (40%) respectively. The responses to the 'agree', 'disagree' or 'undecided' statements indicate that majority of the respondents from the non-teaching staff do not believe promotion is based on actual performance (Fig. 8 & 9). These beliefs if entrenched could contribute to low morale and consequently poor performance.

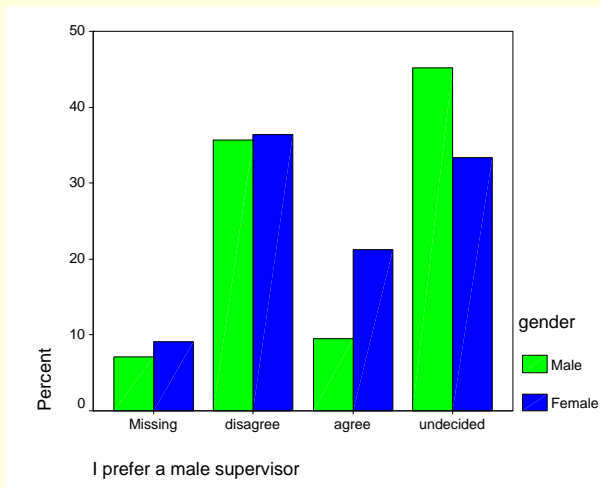
## Conclusions

1. **Recognition for exemplary work.** There is need for MU to establish a mechanism for recognizing non-teaching staff who are exemplary in their work. The criterion should be developed using participatory approaches (consultation).
2. **Promotion criteria.** Non-teaching staff expressed that the criteria for promotions is not clear. Majority do not believe people are promoted on merit.
3. Establishing a mechanism for recognizing exemplary work and creating awareness on promotion criteria will raise staff morale and productivity.

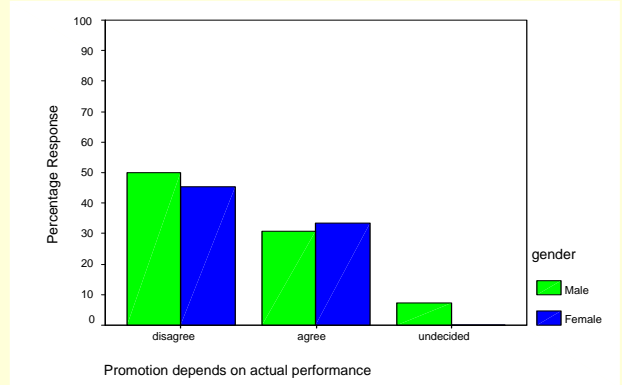
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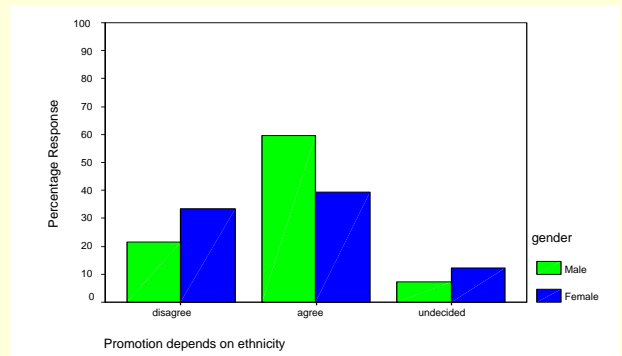
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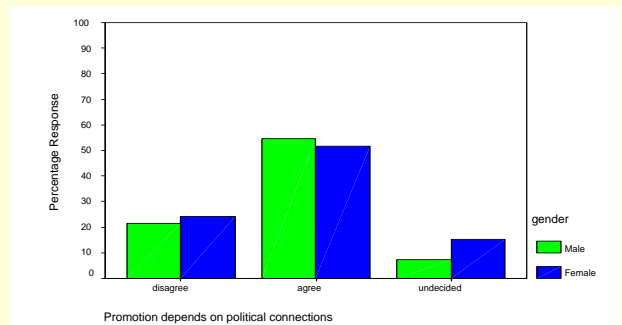
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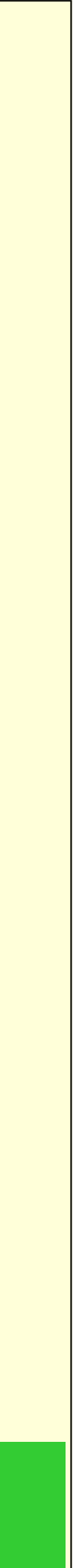


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## Conclusions

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2. **Promotion criteria.** Non-teaching staff expressed that the criteria for promotions is not clear. Majority do not believe people are promoted on merit.
3. Establishing a mechanism for recognizing exemplary work and creating awareness on promotion criteria will raise staff morale and productivity.



about “fostering teamwork, collaboration, creativity and innovation, effective communication, tolerance, perseverance, and a culture of peace.” The survey revealed that a number of staff place more value in individual success than team work. But it is important to note that most respondents (73%) said that they ‘assist others without instruction to do so from higher authority’.

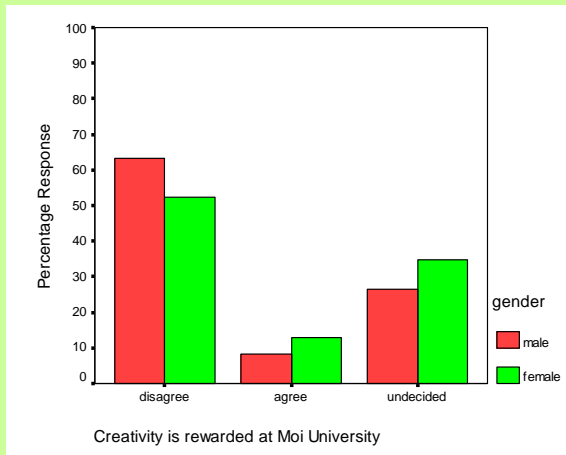


Fig. 2: Reward for Creativity at Moi University

## Equal opportunities and promotion criteria

On **work relations** at MU, the respondents stated that **men and women are not treated equally in teaching departments** (see Fig. 3). On another item, there was agreement that ‘the competency of men and women is assessed equally’ (60%). In addition, 58% of the respondents agreed that **‘having more women in committees will have a positive impact’** on the careers and opportunities of women at MU. However, 25% were undecided and 21% disagreed with the statement. Response to the statement: **“men are more often than women with similar expertise asked to participate in committees”** reveals some of the weak points of the system. Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, 26% were undecided and 24% disagreed. The few women in the teaching staff category who hold an office e.g. HOD, in MU have previously served in certain committees which placed them in the limelight. Thus committees should be gender balanced.

Out of 67 respondents from the teaching staff, 58% were of the opinion that **promotions at MU** are mainly dependent on political connections and on professional networks (53%). Sixty six percent (66%) disagreed that promotions are based on marital relations and sexual favors (64%).

## Leadership in Academic Departments

There were statements that pointed to how respondents perceive their immediate supervisors i.e. heads of departments or their relationships with them. The **‘my supervisor treats me fairly and with respect’** revealed that 76% of the respondents have a positive work relations with their heads of departments whereas 9% disagreed with the statement. **‘I have been sexually harassed by my supervisor’** statement raises concerns because 25% agreed with the statement and 9% were noncommittal.

## General observations and conclusions

Teaching staff rated MU as a safe work environment, where majority experienced job security and have a manageable workload. However, data shows that MU needs to improve on issues of good governance, institutionalize a reward system, and encourage team work as well as participatory approach in the decision making processes. These areas will contribute to a desirable institutional culture that could consequently enhance gender equity.

Policy on equal opportunities needs to be developed and be in line with the government gender policy given that only 20% of heads of teaching departments are women. For most women in the academia, being a HOD is the first step to leadership in higher education. There is need therefore to have more women in committees of Senate as an induction step towards leadership positions. Promotion criteria for teaching staff in MU are not clear among the staff though it seems clear on paper. There is a belief that a number of staff are promoted because of political connections. Leadership in teaching departments is perceived positively. However, a small but significant number reported that they have been sexually harassed by their immediate supervisors at some point.

Fig. 3 Equality in academic departments



