

# Gender Recruitment and Retention Rates on Diplomatic Services of Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya

Stephen Ngala Muthoka<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Abeera Odetha Katuramu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Post Graduate Student, Kampala International University

<sup>2</sup>Senior Lecturer of International Relations & Diplomacy, Department of Political & Administrative Studies-Kampala International University, Kampala-Uganda.

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of gender recruitment and retention rates on diplomatic service of Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Kenya. The study followed a mixed methods approach and used the embedded mixed methods research design. The parent population was 310 subjects from which 175 elements were selected. These included Ministry's officials such as senior officials and policymakers, Human Resources Department officials, Gender Equality Officers, Diplomatic Staff and other support staff both male and female diplomatic staff at various levels. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires while interviews and document review were adopted for qualitative data collection. A strong, positive and significant correlation of diplomatic service. Confirmatory evidence was provided by qualitative findings in which the key informants mentioned that the low quality of the diplomatic services was associated with the low recruitment of women. These findings suggest that when women occupy leadership roles, the quality of diplomatic engagement improves. It was concluded that the low gender recruitment in leadership positions minimized the effectiveness of diplomatic services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya. The study recommended need for the government of Kenya to formulate and implement comprehensive strategies for enhancing gender parity in recruitment of staff diplomatic leadership positions so that the current loopholes caused by gender underrepresentation are ameliorated.

**Keywords :** Kenya, Gender, Diplomatic service, Recruitment, Women, Leadership

## INTRODUCTION

The study examined the interplay between gender equality and diplomatic services, contextualized on Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of Kenya. Ideally, in the provision of diplomatic service, gender plays a pivotal role. For efficient and effective service, gender equality is a key. Gender equality should therefore be a cornerstone of recruitment, promotion and representation in both domestic and international diplomatic roles. Governments, in alignment with international conventions such as the Beijing Declaration (1995) and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), should therefore be committed to ensuring that equal opportunities are provided to both men and women in leadership positions (UN Women, 2022). The need for equal opportunities is even higher in the leadership of the foreign affairs ministries, given their mandate to represent their countries at international forums where gender issues are a focal point of interest (UN Women, 2022).

Globally, there are gender disparities in diplomatic service (Kreft et al., 2022). Since the 1960s, the recruitment of women has lagged behind even in the developed countries (Niklasson & Towns, 2023). The challenge is age-old, dating back to the inception of modern diplomacy. For centuries, diplomatic roles were predominantly occupied by men, reflecting broader societal norms that excluded women from leadership positions. Even after the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) formalized modern diplomatic practices, a very small number of women were recruited in high-ranking diplomatic posts (McCarthy, 2021). It was not until the late

20<sup>th</sup> century that countries like Sweden and Canada took active measures to promote gender parity in foreign services. Sweden, for instance, launched its feminist foreign policy in 2014, becoming a global advocate for gender equality in diplomacy (Thompson & Clement, 2019). Despite these efforts, by 2022, women still held only about 25% of ambassadorial posts worldwide, indicating that gender disparity remains a significant challenge (UN Women, 2022). While countries such as Canada established policies to achieve gender parity in senior diplomatic roles, leading to a manifold increase in women's representation, many other developed nations are lagging behind (Wright, 2023). For instance, between 2014 and 2018, the representation of women in diplomatic service in the United States stood at 40%, in the European Union it was at 22% and for Germany, it was low at 14.5% (Schiemichen, 2019).

The situation on the African continent mirrors the gender inequities noted about the developed countries. For very many decades, the diplomatic service sector has been dominated by men (Bimha, 2024). This under representation is attributed to deeply entrenched patriarchal structures that are prevalent in most African societies (Nwafor & Amusen, 2022). Emulating the efforts made by the developed countries, the African Union (AU) has shown commitment to promote gender equality as part of its development agenda. This is contained in the African Union Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2020–2030) which relays the roadmap for increasing women's representation in leadership positions, including in diplomacy (AU, 2020). Rwanda is highly regarded as a white elephant regarding gender representation in diplomatic service with the country boasting of about 60% women representation in ambassadorial roles (Rwanda Governance Board, 2021). A higher representation is also noticeable in Lesotho at 50%. Following in importance, is South Africa and Botswana at 41.5% and 40% respectively (Chehab, 2024). Compared to the above, other African countries such as Kenya have very low levels of representation of women in diplomatic services.

Kenya provides a striking example of an African countries with gross under representation of women in the diplomatic service. Women constitute only 31% of the staffing in diplomatic service (Chehab, 2024). This disparity is reflective of broader gender inequalities in public service (Kenyatta, 2023; UN Women, 2023). Since independence in 1963, Kenya's diplomatic roles were predominantly occupied by men, with women only starting to break into the sector in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Kamau, 2020). Kenya, being a signatory to many international agreements, is expected to have implemented policies that provide for equal representation of both genders in its diplomatic services. The promulgation of Kenya's 2010 Constitution marked a turning point by embedding gender equality in the public sector through the Two-Thirds Gender Rule, which mandates that no more than two-thirds of positions in public institutions should be held by one gender (Government of Kenya, 2010). This commitment has been bolstered by Civil society organizations which have continued to push for more inclusive policies, citing the need for a more balanced gender representation in diplomatic decision-making (Wanjiru, 2023). This scenario highlights possible deficiency in the quality of diplomatic service in Kenya's Ministry of Foreign and Diplomatic Affairs, hence, need for the study.

## **Problem Statement**

Recent records have shown that in Kenya, men still dominate ambassadorial appointments in Kenya (Omondi, 2022; Nyaboke, 2023). The women make up less than one-third of Kenya's ambassadors. For instance, of the 52 Kenyan ambassadors and high commissioners stationed in different portfolios across the world, only 11 are women, reflecting a stark gender imbalance (Ngugi, 2021). Although efforts have been taken to correct this imbalance, the recruitment of women is progressing at a snail's pace (Odhiambo, 2022). The limited recruitment of women to Kenya's diplomatic services must compromised the quality of service delivery in Kenya's diplomatic missions notably on issues that are focusing on gender. The inequality must have weakened the quality of Kenya's diplomatic negotiations and international engagements. Therefore, investigating the effect of low recruitment of women in leadership positions on Kenya's Diplomatic Services was necessary for purposes of proposing restorative measures for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the diplomatic service.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The study invoked Joan Acker's Theory of Gendered Organizations. Propounded in 1990, the theory holds that organizations are intrinsically gendered, implying that the structures, processes and practices within these

organizations are influenced by gendered assumptions and power relations (Acker, 1990). According to this theory, organizations are sites that (re) produce gender dynamics and the gender order (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Therefore, efforts should be made by management to ensure that a gender lens is used to capture the filter through which relational dynamics operate in organizations and the way these (re) construct the psychological, cultural and social dimensions that shape the organization as a dynamic, relational and interdependent structure (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Acker's theory is premised on the assumption that organizations are not neutral entities but are instead, influenced by societal norms and values that typically favor masculinity. This implies that characteristics commonly associated with men, such as assertiveness, decisiveness and competitiveness, are often more highly esteemed than those associated with women, such as empathy and collaboration (Marshall, 2011). The theory contends that gender inequality encompasses not only issues of representation but also the structure and valuation of work itself. For instance, roles deemed "feminine" such as caregiving or administrative tasks, are frequently undervalued in comparison to "masculine" roles involving decision-making and policy development. These principles inform the study's examination of how diplomatic positions within Kenya's Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs are organized and how this structure contributes to undermines parity in the recruitment of men and women. The theory was adopted by the study to understand how the recruitment methods within diplomatic service perpetuate gender inequalities and how these must have compromised service delivery.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender parity in diplomatic service posts innumerable dividends (Chehab, 2024; Kreft *et al.*, 2022). Studies indicate that diverse teams are more effective in problem-solving and decision-making, thus enhancing the overall performance of Canada's diplomatic efforts (Smith & Hiebert, 2021). Evidentially, parity is important because it enables women to bring a unique perspective to international spaces such as conflict prevention, negotiation, and community rebuilding (Anoussa, 2025). This position reinforces the ideality of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2023) that participation of women, on equal terms with men and at all levels of decision-making, is essential to the achievement of sustainable development, peace and democracy. To reap the said dividends, different countries have undertaken initiatives to increase gender parity by recruiting more women. Canada's case for example shows that the government has actively implemented initiatives aimed at improving gender recruitment within the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). As of 2020, women comprised approximately 50% of new recruits, reflecting the government's commitment to gender parity (Government of Canada, 2020). This focus on gender recruitment has resulted in a more diverse diplomatic workforce, which has positively influenced Canada's ability to engage in a wide range of global issues, including climate change and human rights.

In Australia, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has prioritized gender recruitment as part of its commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of its diplomatic services. The Australian government has introduced targeted programs designed to support women's career advancement within the diplomatic sphere. As of 2021, women's representation in senior roles within DFAT reached 53%, showcasing the success of these initiatives (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2021). In Rwanda, the government's commitment to gender equality has had a profound impact on recruitment within its foreign service. Following the genocide in 1994, Rwanda adopted progressive gender policies that emphasized women's participation in all sectors, including diplomacy. As of 2021, women constituted approximately 61% of the parliamentary seats, reflecting the government's commitment to gender inclusivity (World Economic Forum, 2021). These policies have translated into effective recruitment strategies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, resulting in a significant increase in the number of women in diplomatic roles. This representation has been linked to Rwanda's effective diplomatic engagements, particularly in advocating for women's rights and sustainable development on international platforms. Studies indicate that the high retention rates of women in Rwandan diplomatic services contribute to more comprehensive and inclusive policy-making, benefiting the country's global standing (Bugingo & Irechukwu, 2023).

Conversely, in Japan, the gender recruitment within its diplomatic service reflects ongoing challenges. Japan has struggled to recruit women in diplomatic roles, with only 6% of ambassadors being women as of 2020 (Japan Times, 2020). This disparity is attributed to a lack of supportive policies and cultural norms that often

prioritize male leadership. The consequences of this gender imbalance are evident in Japan's diplomatic engagements, which have often been criticized for lacking a comprehensive approach to global challenges, particularly those affecting women and marginalized communities (Miyazaki, 2021). In the United Kingdom, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has made significant strides in improving gender recruitment within its diplomatic services. In 2020, the UK government set a target to ensure that 40% of leadership roles in the FCDO are occupied by women by 2025 (Loft et al., 2025). This commitment to gender inclusivity has led to targeted recruitment efforts aimed at attracting women candidates. As a result, the FCDO has reported improvements in retention rates for women, contributing to a more balanced representation in diplomatic roles. Studies have shown that organizations that prioritize gender equity are more likely to engage in effective diplomacy, as diverse leadership brings varied perspectives and innovative solutions to complex global issues (Dwyer et al., 2003).

Respective efforts are noticeable on the African continent. In Lesotho, South Africa, and Botswana, the governments have implemented policies aimed at improving gender recruitment within diplomatic service (Chehab, 2024). As of 2024, women held 50%, 41.5% and 40% of senior positions in diplomatic service (Chehab, 2024). These efforts have been instrumental in creating a more diverse diplomatic workforce that reflects the country's commitment to gender equality. Research suggests that the integration of women into leadership roles enhances the effectiveness of diplomatic services, particularly in addressing human rights issues and promoting gender equality on international platforms. However, while outstanding benefits have accrued to the named countries, the situations is appalling in several African countries, where the recruitment of women to diplomatic service is minimal.

The foregoing debates have shown that when there is gender parity in recruitment and consequently, representation in the diplomatic service, substantial positive effects on the quality of service is realized. Despite this, there is paucity of research about the impact of low gender recruitment on diplomatic service. The specific impacts have not been documented and therefore, little is known about this linkage in the context of Kenya. To fill this void, the study adopted a mixed methods research approach as discussed in the next section.

## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized mixed methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data. An embedded mixed methods research design was adopted, given its advantage in allowing both data to be collected at the same time. The data were collected from a sample of 175 people selected from a population of 310 officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi Kenya. These included senior officials, policymakers, Human Resources officials, Gender Equality Officers, Diplomatic Staff and other support staff at junior, middle and senior levels. Both simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to derive the samples from the parent population (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

Category	Population	Sample	Sampling techniques
Senior officials and policymakers	16	12	Purposive sampling
Human Resources Department officials	10	9	Purposive sampling
Gender Equality Officers	8	6	Purposive sampling
Diplomatic Staff	19	15	Purposive sampling
Support staff	257	133	Random sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>175</b>	

Source: Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs (2024)

Primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were collected using questionnaire and interviews. Secondary data were extracted and distilled from the Ministry's publications and electronic platforms. The

questionnaires was tested for validity with five university experts, whose feedback was crucial for identifying deficiencies and refining the research instruments. The Content Validity Index (CVI) of the questionnaire was 0.9302. Reliability was ensured beginning with a pilot study on 10 staff of the Ministry. These were omitted from the consequent data collection. The results from the pilot test were subjected to Reliability Analysis in SPSS Version 27. The average Cronbach Alpha Coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) was 0.889. Both the CVI and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient values were above 0.7 suggesting that the questionnaire was both valid and reliable and so, meant the data met the minimum quality standards. For interview data, member-checking was conducted with the participants. The cross-cutting ideas extrapolated from the interview transcripts were qualified by the participants, implying quality. Also, transferability was ensured in reporting the results. Thick descriptions were used.

The quantitative data was analyzed at both a descriptive and inferential level, employing frequency counts, percentage distributions for profile variables, means and standard deviations to assess the opinions of respondents on the extent of gender recruitment to leadership positions in Diplomatic Services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi Kenya. At the inferential level, the Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) assessed whether gender recruitment in leadership positions was important in improving Diplomatic Services delivery outputs. Content analysis was applied for qualitative data, distilling it into more concise and meaningful points of view. The analysis focused on identifiable patterns and common themes, which ultimately led to the identification of overarching themes related to the study variables. These findings were then utilized to support the insights obtained from the questionnaires, aiding in the development of conclusions and recommendations.

## RESULTS

### Demographic features of the Respondents

**Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents**

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	58	53.7
Female	50	46.3
<b>Age group</b>		
<18 years	20	18.5
19-25	18	16.7
26-30	9	8.3
31-35	36	33.3
36+	25	23.1
<b>Education Level</b>		
Bachelor's Degree	69	63.9
Diploma	19	17.6
Certificate	5	4.6
Others	15	13.9

Source: Field Data (2024)

As shown in Table 2, there were more male (53.7%) than female (46.3%) participants. This result implies male dominance in Kenya's diplomatic service. Despite this dominance, the study results are comprehensive as they

captured the views of different gender. In terms of age distribution, 20 respondents (18.5%) were below 18 years, 18 respondents (16.7%) fell in the 19-25 years category, 9 (8.3%) fell within the 26-30 age range, 36 (33.3%) are aged 31-35, and 25 (23.1%) are 36 years and older. Most of the respondents belonged to the 31–35 age group and therefore, their perspectives and experiences might heavily influenced the study outcomes regarding gender disparity and diplomatic services. Nonetheless, the findings reflect the views of the different age groups employed in Diplomatic Service. Regarding level of education, majority of the respondents, 63.9% were degree holders at Bachelors' level followed by Diploma holders at 17.6 %. An insignificant number, 4.6% were certificate holders. Much as the majority of the respondents were holding a Bachelors' degree making them more influential in policy and decision-making matters, this study captured the views of other staff in lower administrative and leadership capacities in the Diplomatic Service thereby implying comprehensiveness of the findings.

## Descriptives

**Table 3: Effect of gender recruitment and retention rates on diplomatic services**

Items	Mean	SD	Rank
Recruitment practices lack a strong focus on gender equality.	4.78	0.50	1
The Ministry has initiatives to attract more female applicants.	4.27	0.53	2
Retention rates for female staff are lower compared to their male counterparts.	4.12	0.60	3
Work-life balance policies significantly impact retention of female employees.	4.10	0.64	4
Exit interviews reveal common challenges faced by departing female staff.	4.06	0.74	5
Gender-sensitive recruitment training is offered to hiring managers.	3.91	1.07	6
Networking opportunities are provided to support women's career growth.	3.75	1.50	7
Female staff report feelings of isolation in predominantly male teams.	3.55	1.52	8
Flexible working arrangements contribute to higher retention rates.	3.54	1.61	9
Increased awareness of gender issues is crucial for effective recruitment strategies.	3.47	1.64	10
<b>Average Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>1.04</b>	

**Source:** Field data (2024)

Key for mean: 1.00-2.49= Disagreed; 2.5-3.49= Neutral, 3.5-5.00=Agreed

As shown in Table 3, the mean score of 4.78 was obtained under the statement "Recruitment practices lack a strong focus on gender equality." This implied that majority of the respondents consented to the statement leading to gender inequality in the Diplomatic Service. Further, on the statement "The Ministry has initiatives to attract more female applicants", the majority of the respondents (Mean= 4.27) agreed that Ministry had not taken significant steps to encourage female applicants for posts advertised in the Diplomatic Service. The standard deviation of 0.53 shows a relatively low variability in responses, suggesting that most participants acknowledge the Ministry's efforts. However, there may still be room for improvement in these initiatives to ensure they are more effective in attracting female talent.

The mean score of 4.12 obtained under the statement "Retention rates for female staff are lower compared to their male counterparts" implies that majority of the respondents acknowledged that gender disparity in retention rates. The standard deviation of 0.60 indicates a moderate level of consensus on this issue. This highlights the importance of addressing the factors contributing to lower retention rates of female employees by creating a more equitable work environment. Further, the mean score of 4.10, under the statement "Work-life balance policies significantly impact retention of female employees" reflects a strong agreement that these policies play a crucial role in retaining female staff. The standard deviation of 0.64 suggests some variability in

responses, indicating that while many recognize the importance of work-life balance, others may have differing opinions on its impact. This finding emphasizes the need for the Ministry to enhance its work-life balance policies for better support female employees.

The mean score of 4.06 for the statement "Exit interviews reveal common challenges faced by departing female staff" indicates a general belief that exit interviews provide valuable insights into the challenges that female employees encounter. The standard deviation of 0.74 shows moderate variability in responses, suggesting that while many participants see value in exit interviews, there may be differences in perceptions of how effectively this information is utilized. This highlights the need for the Ministry to analyze and address the issues raised during exit interviews to improve retention rates.

With a mean score of 3.91, the statement "Gender-sensitive recruitment training is offered to hiring managers" reflects a somewhat positive perception of the training available for hiring managers. However, the higher standard deviation of 1.07 suggests considerable variability in opinions regarding the effectiveness and reach of such training programs. This indicates a need for the Ministry to enhance the training provided to ensure that all hiring managers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to promote gender-sensitive recruitment.

The mean score of 3.75 for the statement "Networking opportunities are provided to support women's career growth" suggests that there is some agreement that networking opportunities exist for women within the Ministry. However, the higher standard deviation of 1.50 indicates significant variability in responses, implying that the availability and effectiveness of these opportunities may vary widely among participants. This calls for the Ministry to expand and strengthen networking initiatives to better support women in their career development.

The mean score of 3.55 for the statement "Female staff report feelings of isolation in predominantly male teams" indicates that some participants acknowledge that women may feel isolated in male-dominated work environments. The standard deviation of 1.52 suggests considerable variability in experiences, pointing to a need for the Ministry to foster a more inclusive culture that actively addresses issues of isolation and promotes collaboration among team members.

With a mean score of 3.54, the statement "Flexible working arrangements contribute to higher retention rates" reflects a recognition of the positive impact that flexible work options can have on employee retention. The standard deviation of 1.61 indicates significant variability in responses, suggesting differing opinions on the effectiveness of flexible arrangements. This finding underscores the need for the Ministry to evaluate and potentially expand flexible working options to enhance retention rates, particularly for female staff.

Finally, the mean score of 3.47 for the statement "Increased awareness of gender issues is crucial for effective recruitment strategies" indicates split opinion among the respondents regarding the importance of understanding gender issues in recruitment practices. The high standard deviation of 1.64 suggests considerable disagreement among participants, highlighting that while some may see the need for increased awareness, others may not fully recognize its significance. This underscores the necessity for the Ministry to prioritize gender awareness training as part of its recruitment strategy.

The overall average mean of 3.96 across all items reflects a moderate level of agreement regarding the effects of gender recruitment on diplomatic services. The average standard deviation of 1.04 indicates a moderate level of variability in responses, suggesting that while there is general consensus on certain issues, there are diverse experiences and perspectives among participants. This calls for the Ministry to actively engage with its staff to better understand their experiences related to recruitment and retention, thereby allowing it to develop targeted strategies that promote gender equity and improve overall diplomatic effectiveness.

## Interview results

The quantitative findings were corroborated by views from the key informants. The Ministry's Senior Official revealed that gender representation directly impacts the effectiveness of diplomatic services. She intimated

further that when there is diverse leadership, there is generation of a broad range of perspectives which enhances decision-making and foster more effective negotiations [Key Informant A, 2024]. This position was echoed by the Ministry's HR official who revealed that gender parity was very important in the provision of Diplomatic Services. However, despite this imperative, the official decried the inequities in the recruitment processes and revealed that the gender-sensitive job descriptions and outreach efforts never merited and yet they are important for attracting the female candidates [Key Informant B, 2024]. More light about limited opportunities for women on recruitment was shed by a Gender Equality Officer who noted " much as the factors contributing to the recruitment of women into diplomatic roles includes outreach initiatives and mentorship programs that would encourage young women to consider careers in diplomacy are important, these have not been embraced by the recruitment policies and programmes in the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs." [Key Informant C, 2024]

## Inferential results

The outset of the study was to establish the relationship between gender recruitment and diplomatic service in the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs. The correlation results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Correlation between Gender Recruitment and Diplomatic Services in the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Kenya**

		Gender Recruitment	Diplomatic Services
Gender Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	1	.930**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	108	108
Diplomatic Services	Pearson Correlation	.930**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	108	108

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 4, a strong positive and significant relationship was established between gender recruitment and the quality of diplomatic services within the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in Nairobi, Kenya ( $r=.930^{**}$ ,  $p=.000<0.01$ ). This result implies that improvements in the gender recruitment have potential for improving the quality of Diplomatic Services by a greater margin. In essence therefore, the more effective the gender recruitment strategies are, the greater will be the level of improvement in the quality of diplomatic service as the shortfalls in the gender-related issues that are currently plaguing the function are minimized.

## DISCUSSION

The high degree of relationship established by this study is suggestive that gender parity in recruitment of staff to manage or handle diplomatic service duties is matter of urgency that should be prioritized by the government of Kenya. The need is greater because the government of Kenya cannot stand to lose the windfall benefits that accrue to a state when it has prioritized gender parity in her Diplomatic Service. This assertion is vindicated by previous studies (such as Anoussa, 2025; Bihma, 2024; Lara, 2024; Warsi, 2020) which have shown that gender parity or near-to-gender parity in staffing Diplomatic Service improves the quality of service. Anoussa (2025) argues that when there is gender parity, odds of improved service quality are higher. In relation, Bimha (2024) concedes that when there is increased representation of women in Diplomatic Service, the conduct of institutions improves as there is a considerable transformation in the policies. More that, Bimha (2024) acknowledged that the inclusion of many women in diplomatic missions reforms the male dominated nature of international relations by among others, creating spaces where shades of opinion relating



to women issues can be addressed. Lara (2024) reinforces the above idea by arguing that women are more likely than their male counterparts to introduce foreign policy legislation that targets action toward women and girls, which implies that their under representation leads to implementation of gender-blind policies. The low recruitment of women in diplomatic missions suffocates gender issues in diplomatic missions, consequently undermining service quality (Warsi, 2020).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Gender recruitment has considerable effect on the quality of diplomatic services. Effective recruitment strategies that ensure a diverse workforce, combined with strong retention practices, provide a corrective response. It was concluded that a workforce that reflects gender parity contributes to better problem-solving and creativity, which are essential in addressing complex diplomatic challenges. Furthermore, creating an inclusive work environment that values and supports all employees will not only improve job satisfaction but also enhance the Ministry's performance in diplomatic engagements. Thus, the Ministry should prioritize initiatives aimed at improving gender equity in recruitment and retention to bolster its effectiveness in diplomatic service delivery. It was recommended that the Ministry should prioritize the development and implementation of gender-sensitive recruitment and retention strategies. This includes conducting regular assessments of recruitment practices to ensure they are equitable and inclusive. Also, there is need for the Ministry to create an environment that supports work-life balance, offering flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies that appeal to both male and female employees. By focusing on these areas, the Ministry can build a more diverse and stable workforce, which is crucial for enhancing the quality of diplomatic services.

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