

UNRAVELING THE DISCREPANCY: GENDER DISPARITIES IN STEM AT AFRICAN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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Objectives: Several factors can influence grant success among scholars. This study was conducted to determine if grant success is influenced by discipline, employment status, and role at work among Africans.

Methods: ASFI sent out an ongoing online questionnaire to African scientific networks.

Results: Of the 170 respondents, 84.1% were full-time employees with majority having teaching (46%) as their primary role at work and medical/health sciences (46%) as their main discipline. Only 52.4% of participants had ever applied for a grant, with 46.1% of the applicants ever winning a grant. Among those that had ever applied for a grant, grant success by discipline ranged from 40% for scholars from the arts, humanities, and social sciences to 47.4% for scholars from agricultural, life and biological sciences, although not significantly different. Also, grant success did not significantly differ by employment status ($p=0.210$): between full-time (48.1%) and part-time scholars (25%); nor by role at work ($p=0.285$): administration (33.3%), teaching (40.8%), clinicals (57.1%), and research (61.9%). In adjusted logistic regression analyses, full-time employees (AOR = 3.51, 95% CI = 0.45-27.17) were non-significantly more likely to win a grant than part-time employees; compared to scholars from the agricultural, life and biological sciences, those from other disciplines were non-significantly more likely to win a grant; and compared to administrators, except for clinicians, teachers and researchers were non-significantly more likely to win a grant.

Conclusion: African scholars' employment status, disciplines, and current role at work appear not to contribute to their grant application success. However, the small sample size of the survey might be a limitation to the validity of this inference. A larger sample is required to clarify these results.

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