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Final dissertation

**ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF GENDER BASED DISPARITY IN LABOUR FORCE
PARTICIPATION ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN UGANDA.**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the impact of gender based disparity in labour force participation on women empowerment in Uganda. In doing so it set out to achieve the following objectives: i. To examine the main causes of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. ii. To evaluate the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in women empowerment in Uganda. iii. To determine possible mechanisms to address gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. The study was guided by the Liberal Feminist Theory, which has its roots in the 19th century first-wave feminism.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study because it will help the researcher to: i). explore the real narrative of gender disparity in labour force in Uganda ii). identify and describe the causes and effects of gender based disparity in labour force in Uganda. iii). offer analysis and evaluation of the possible solutions. Given the nature and the intricacies of the issue under investigation, the study adopted a qualitative approach in data collection. Accordingly, 25 Key Informants participated in providing field data for the study, while data was analyzed using the content analysis method.

The study found that gender disparity in labour force participation is preeminent in Uganda. Many Uganda women are employed as unpaid family workers, which suggests gender discrimination in occupation choices, but also to exploitation of women. The study also identified different factors that creates and sustain gender inequality and by extension perpetuating poverty in Uganda. These factors include cultural practices and orientation, illiteracy, to marriage and family challenges. Furthermore, the study found that gender disparity in labour force participation sustains poverty among households and has a negative impact on the economic growth and development of the country.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Available records show that Uganda has been sensitive about the existing gender disparity in the country. In 1986, the Ministry of Women in Development was established by the government of Uganda fundamentally to advance issues of women marginalization. The Ministry of Women in Development was renamed the Ministry of Gender and Community Development, and later, to the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development. Since its establishment as the Ministry of Women in Development, the ministry has undergone several institutional changes reducing it to only a department, and impair its visibility as the national machinery for bridging the gender gap between men and women (Nabacwa, 2001). Though one of the most underfunded ministries, it made positive progress in providing and building the national machinery for the advancement of women and gender equality. Two of the recorded accomplishments of the Ministry have been the launching of the National Gender Policy in 2004. The policy recognizes gender relations as a development concept in identifying and understanding the social roles and relations of women and men of all ages and how these impact on development (Nabacwa, 2001). The National Action Plan identifies four critical areas of concern for the government of Uganda. These are poverty, income generation and economic empowerment; reproductive health and rights; legal framework and decision making; and the girl child and education.

The 1995 national constitution provided for the equality of both genders and outlawed all practices that impinge on the rights of another person (Republic of Uganda, 1995). It recognizes that women subordination is a major cause of poverty, thus overcoming the subordinate status of women has become a major mantra of the government. Despite the aforesaid efforts of the

government, national laws need to be revised to ensure the adequate implementation of the constitutional provisions. More so, the Local Government Act stipulates that women must occupy 30percent of all positions of the Local Council structure, while people with disabilities occupy 20percent of these positions (Local Government Act 1996). Summarily, the above provision gives women a total of 40percent representation on these structures.

The development of a National Gender Policy (NGP) in 1997, and its revision in 2007, confirms the Government's commitment to take actions that will bring about more equal gender relations. The policy emphasizes that all government policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels should be consistent with the long-term goal of eliminating gender inequalities. In doing so, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and other Line Ministries were mandated to mainstream gender in all sectors. It sets priority areas of action at the National, Sectoral, District and Community levels with all levels of planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programs redressing gender imbalances and acting with a gender perspective. The definitive goal of this policy is to promote a society that is both informed and conscious of gender and development issues and concerns.

Apart from domestic policies and action plans, Uganda is a signatory to international instruments and action programmes for women empowerment such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Fourth World Conference on Women, known as the Beijing Declaration. Despite government efforts and strategic actions plans, gender disparity has continued to exist in different sectors and development indices in Uganda.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Uganda's commitment to gender equality cannot be underestimated. Article 32(1) of the 1995 constitution provides for affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups including women (Republic of Uganda Constitution, 1995). Uganda is also a signatory to a number of international and regional instruments which lay out a clear foundation for women's empowerment such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW, 1979), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The country has embraced different policies that aimed at bridging gender disparities in education, labour market and decision making. For example, Uganda adopted its Vision 2040 agenda in 2013 with the goal of transforming Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. Vision 2040 statement emphasizes gender equality as a cross-cutting enabler for socio-economic transformation of the country. Vision 2040 points out that in spite of progress in the political and decision making arena, other conditions sustaining gender inequality in Uganda remain salient, including: gender disparities in access and control over productive resources like land; limited share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sectors; sexual and gender-based violence; limited participation in household, community and national decision-making. Also, the National Development Plan II (NDP II, 2015-2020) prioritizes empowerment of women and gender equality as the foundation to inclusive growth and social development. It makes specific reference to sector-specific gender issues that relate to women's empowerment, which encompasses access to education and labour market among others.

Uganda has a population of about 37.7 million people, of which more than half are females, with about 51% of the total population. It is estimated that one in every four households (31%) are

headed by females. However, women constitute one of the most marginalized vulnerable groups in including children, ethnic minorities and persons with disability. The Global Gender Gap report of 2016, ranked Uganda 61 out of 144 countries in terms of addressing gender gap. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2018, unemployment in Uganda is 4.5, but highest among females at 19 per cent as against males at 8 per cent. Thus, gender inequality is one of the most significant identity based failings in Uganda, with women invariably more disadvantaged than men. Inequalities existing between men and women in Uganda affects the overall aspects of women's lives, particularly education attainment with an attendant impact on access to the labour market. The study therefore examines the causes of effects of gender based disparity in labour force in Uganda.

1.2 Objectives of the study

- i. To examine the main causes of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda
- ii. To evaluate the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in women empowerment in Uganda
- iii. To determine possible mechanisms to address gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by the Liberal Feminist Theory. The theory has its roots in the 19th century first-wave feminism and is primarily associated with Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1799). Liberal feminism focuses on women's suffrage and access to education and its main goal was to

achieve gender equality through political and legal reform within the framework of liberal democracy. Liberal feminism further asserts that gender inequality is created by lowering access for women and girls to civil rights and allocation of social resources such as education and employment (Giddens, 2001). This is attributed to the socially constructed ideology of patriarchy that perpetuates inequality between the two sexes. Liberal feminism is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality of men and women through political and legal reform, without altering the structure of society (Khattak, 2011) and centers on the core ideas of autonomy, universal rights, equal citizenship, and democracy (Tong, 2009). The theory was mainly concerned with gaining freedom through equality, diminishing men's domination over women (Marilley, 1996). As such, women should have the same rights as men, including the same educational as well as employment opportunities.

Wollstonecraft (1972) posited that most differences between sexes were either fabricated or inflated therefore inappropriate for determining rights and roles. For example, she argued that having different educational expectations for men and women was unjust and created less productive female citizens with artificial weak characters. Rather, she believed that both sexes have the capacity to reason; hence should both be educated to so as to benefit society. Similarly, Sultana (2012) viewed sex roles as a systemic subjugation of women, it places them in lower status and curtail their capacities. He added that there existed no clear-cut differences between both sexes to justify the same. Like Wollstonecraft, Mill believed that, patriarchy constraints women's moral development and self-fulfillment to pursue their own good. Liberal feminists contend that differences between women and men are not based on biology, which basically represents reproduction differences; instead women should have the same rights as men, including the same educational and employment opportunities. Arguably, the proposals of liberal feminism may be

difficult to implement in patriarchal societies, but to a certain degree, it has succeeded in showing that, although women are different from men, they are not inferior (Nienaber and Moraka, 2016).

From the review, it is evident that liberal feminists believe that women subordination is rooted in customary and legal factors. To raise the status of women therefore, legal and social policy changes, as opposed to challenging the existing social structures is required. Liberal feminism advocates for women's freedoms in a liberal democratic society, criticizing practices that deny women equal protection under the law.

Liberal feminism has been criticized for the rejection of sexual differences. Critics of liberal feminism contend that, by denying or ignoring the differences between the sexes, one cannot advocate for real sexual equality. Critics believe that men and women differ greatly and these differences cannot be ignored in pursuit for fair treatment. Gilligan (1982) for example, argues that women and men tend to respond differently to ethical dilemmas. In the same light, cultural feminists contend that men and women usually have a different approach to life. Liberal feminists like Groenhout (2002) however posit that women and men are more than the sum of their sexual natures. As such, he holds that, many differences between sexes are either a product of sexism or not sufficient to justify differential social roles. This theory is appropriate for the study since the study focus is to evaluate the causes and effects of gender based disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. The proposal of the theory will form the basis to evaluate the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in the development of Uganda and to determine possible mechanisms to address gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope refers to the boundaries within which a research study will be performed. Accordingly, the scope of the study is categorized into three: the geographical scope, time scope and content scope.

1.4.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Uganda, specifically, it focused on three cities in Uganda, comprising of Kampala in the Central region; Mbale in the Eastern region; Gulu in the Northern region and Mbarara in the Western Region. These cities were selected because they are the most economically viable cities in the different regions of Uganda

1.4.2 Time scope

This study covered a period of 20 years spanning from 2000 to 2020. The reason for adopting this time period is because it was during this period that the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) began and later succeeded by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of which both emphasized equal opportunity for genders as a pathway for development. It is therefore pertinent to examine how the government of Uganda has worked to ensure gender parity in the labour force since the declaration of MDGs up-to the current era of SDGs.

1.4.3 Content Scope

The study focused on the causes and effects of gender based disparity in labour force in Uganda. how formal and informal institutions, such as patriarchy, religion, family, marriage as well as social and cultural practices play a major role in perpetuating gender inequalities and specifically gender gaps in labour force participation in Uganda.

1.5 Justification of the study

This section provides an insight into the category of people that will benefit from the study.

It is believed that the study will benefit the following category of people and institutions:

- i **The government of Uganda:** This study will provide the government of Uganda with a comprehensive policy framework for affirmative action on how to bridge existing gender gaps in the labour force.
- ii **Business Owners/ Employers of Labour:** The study findings may be used by business owners and employers of labour to design a comprehensive employment model for their organization that will ensure that women are given equal opportunity.
- iii **Future researchers:** The study will serve as a reference point for future researchers investigating gender based disparity in the labour force. Thus, it will add to the existing literature in gender based disparity in labour force.
- iv **Researcher:** The study has helped the researcher in improving her research skills. Also, it is a partial requirement for the researcher to be awarded a Master's degree.

1.5 Definition of key operational terms

- i. **Labour force participation:** This refers to an individual's' decision whether or not to participate in the labour force. The labour force comprises the employed or unemployed and excludes the economically inactive including men or women involved in household production. Labour force participation refers to the total number of people or individuals who are currently employed or in search of a job (OECD, 2019).

- ii. Gender disparity: This is the dichotomy in access to resources, status and well-being among gender, which often gives men advantage over women and are usually institutionalised through law, justice and social norms.
- iii. Gender Inequality: This refers to a legal, social and cultural situation in which sex and/or gender influence differences in access to rights and dignity for women and men, whereby gender determine access to or enjoyment of rights, as well as the assumption of stereotype and the assignment of social and cultural roles. Gender inequality is caused by illiteracy, lack of employment facilities, social customs, social altitude, beliefs and practices among others, which affect women status in all areas of life in society, whether public or private, in the family or the labour market, in economic or political life, in power and decision-making, as well as in social gender relations (European Commission, 2004).

1.6 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into five distinct chapters. Chapter one “General Introduction” presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, theoretical framework, justification of the study, definition of key operational terms and structure of the thesis.

Chapter two, “Methodology” explains the processes employed to collect and analyse data that was used to reach the study findings and conclusions. The methodology explains the research design, study population, sample size and sampling technique and data analysis method.

Chapter three, “Labour Force Participation and Gender Inequality in Uganda” evaluates the situation of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. It presents the state of the art in the area under investigation, by reviewing available empirical literature on gender disparity in labour force participation.

Chapter four, “Data Presentation and Analysis” presents and analyze data gathered from the field in line with the study objectives.

Chapter five, “Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation” discusses the findings of the study, generate conclusions from the findings and proffer recommendations on how the problems identified can be addressed.

CHAPTER TWO METHODOLOGY

2.0 Introduction

The chapter explains the processes and procedure through which the study was carried out, particularly how data was gathered and analysed to inform conclusions. The chapter encompasses aspects of methodology that include: the research design, study population, sample size and sampling procedure, sources of data, data collection instruments, data quality control, data analysis and ethical considerations.

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. A descriptive design narrates a story about a real life situation affecting people or groups and how the challenges are perceived and addressed (Zaidah, 2007). It provides a thorough and precise account of the facts of a situation using expert opinion and commentary to help the audience understand the underlying causes of the problem,

the hidden forces behind the solution, the possible approaches that could be used to address the solutions, lessons learned, connections to theories and tools relevant to the situation. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study because it will help the researcher to: i). explore the real narrative of gender disparity in labour force in Uganda ii). identify and describe the causes and effects of gender based disparity in labour force in Uganda. iii). offer analysis and evaluation of the possible solutions.

Given the nature and the intricacies of the issue under investigation, the study adopted a qualitative approach in data collection. Qualitative approach was preferred for the study because it gives the researcher the opportunity to elicit in-depth data from the key informants. Given the nature of the topic, qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for the study because it gives the researcher the opportunity to use her discretion to select the key informants based on their knowledge and experience of the issue under investigation. In this case, key informants with appropriate experience and knowledge of the issue under investigation were carefully selected by the researcher.

2.2 Study Population and Sample Size

According to Ugandan Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), the population of Uganda is about 42 Million. However, the study targeted the adult population of Uganda (above the age of 18 years), which is 22,285,035 (UBOS, 2020). Given the study is qualitative in nature, and in consideration of the recommendations of Creswell (1998), the study adopted a sample size of 25 key informants. The key informants were purposively selected by the researcher based on their experience and

knowledge of the subject under investigation. The key informants comprise of individuals from different background as can be seen from table 1 below.

Table 1
Categorization of Study Participants

S/N	Portfolio of Study Participants	Sample	Sampling Method
1	Officials of Civil Society Organizations	4	Purposive Sampling
2	Captains of Industry	5	Purposive Sampling
3	Officials of the Ministry of Gender Labour & Social Development	5	Purposive Sampling
4	Religious Leaders	2	Purposive Sampling
5	Media Practitioners	2	Purposive Sampling
6	Women representatives in Parliament	5	Purposive Sampling
7	Academics	2	Purposive Sampling
	TOTAL	25	

2.3 Sampling technique

Given that the study qualitative approach, purposive sampling method will be used to select the key informants. According to Symon and Cassell, (2012) purposive sampling ensure the selection of respondents who are most suitable in terms of knowledge to provide useful information to a particular study. Most importantly, it allows inclusion of a sample without bias, as selection criteria is principally premised on participant's knowledge of the issue under investigation.

2.4 Sources of data

Data consist of information sourced through review of literature that includes books, journal publication, dissertations, government white papers and gazettes, newspaper publication, working papers, monographs, as well as information from public memos and private diaries. Also, it consist of data collected from the key informants that were interviewed in the study

2.5 Data collection instrument

Since the study adopted qualitative research method, interview guide was utilized to elicit data from the study participants'/ key informants.

2.6 Interview guide

An interview guide carefully structured with open ended questions was used to elicit in-depth data from the key informants. The instrument was consciously designed to reflect questions that will satisfactorily achieve the study objectives. 25 key informants that include: officials of Civil Society Organizations, captains of industry, officials of the Ministry of Gender Labour & Social Development, religious leaders, media practitioners, women representatives in Parliament and academicians were interviewed to gather data used to inform the study findings and reach conclusions.

2.7 Data Quality Control

Since the study is qualitative, data quality control was ensured by giving the interview guide to 3 experts in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences. The experts examined whether the questions covered the main themes of the study and if they were reasonable enough to realize the study objectives. After evaluation of the instrument, the experts considered it reasonable enough to realize the study objective.

2.8 Data Analysis

The content analysis method was used to analyze the data gathered in the field. In line with Elo et.al., (2014) the process involved an assessment of the accuracy and uniformity of the data generated in the field and editing of the answers elicited from the respondents. Where necessary, the interview transcripts were meticulously edited to improve legibility, while efforts were made to ensure that the original narrative of the participants were maintained in their own words.

2.9 Ethical Consideration

In order to ensure that the study follows appropriate ethical standards, it adopted the following measures:

Informed consent: Prior to collecting data from the study participants, the key informants were duly informed of their right to participate in the study or not. Furthermore, they were informed of their right to withdraw their participation should they feel uncomfortable to continue at any point in the study. This was done to ensure that the participants were part of the study purely on voluntary basis.

Confidentiality and anonymity: The study participants were assured of the confidentiality of the information they provided. The research took time to explain to each key informant that any data they provided for the study shall be treated with utmost confidentiality. Also, they were assured that the information collected from them will be used solely for academic purpose. Furthermore, they were encouraged to use pseudonym if they are not comfortable to have their names published in the study. In so doing, their identities were kept anonymous and protected.

Acknowledgment: All sources of data, particularly secondary data used in the study were properly acknowledged in the list of references.

CHAPTER THREE

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN UGANDA

2.0 Introduction

The female labour force participation in sub-Saharan Africa is abysmally low and has fallen over the years (Ngoa & Song, 2021). The reasons for this are complex and involve a whole range of social and cultural dimensions. Gender inequality in labour force participation is not only a pressing moral and social issue but also a critical economic challenge. The reason being that women account for half the world's working-age population and failure to achieve their full economic potential will have an attendant negative impact on the global economy. Several studies have argued that closing the gender gap will accelerate development, hence all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlights issues of gender equality and ensuring that everybody are carried along in global development praxis. Specifically, Goal 5 and 10 emphasized gender

equality through the empowerment of women, and eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, as well as ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. SDG 10: emphasizes that states should ensure equal opportunity and reduced inequalities of outcome, including eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard. Thus, gender disparity in every spheres of life is considered inappropriate and should be reversed. The chapter explains the processes and procedure through which the study will be carried out, particularly how data will be gathered and analysed to reach conclusions. Also, it will review available empirical literature and identify gaps in the literature.

3.1 International Context of Women Empowerment

More than ever before, there is global consensus that the path to sustainable development must be built on a foundation of equality, inclusiveness and universal enjoyment of rights (UNFPA, 2017). Several studies have further indicated that closing the gender gap can accelerate development. In this regard, all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) address issues of gender equality and ensuring that nobody is left behind. Goal 5 and 10 are specific on gender equality and addressing inequalities. SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, calls for gender equality and empowerment, including but not limited to ending all forms of violence and discrimination against all women and girls, as well as ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. SDG 10: Reduced inequality within and among countries; ensures equal opportunity and reduced inequalities of outcome, including eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard (UNFPA, 2017). Thus, there is a growing consensus that promoting gender equality is strongly associated with economic development, reduced poverty and increased welfare

(Smith and Bettio, 2008; McLanahan and Kelly, 2006; UN Women, 2015; European Commission, 2012). Although there have been improvements, gender inequality is universal and remains an issue across key economic and social indicators such as education, health, employment, income and gender based violence. This thesis investigates the causes and effect of gender inequality in labour force, using Uganda as a case study.

Accordingly, different international conventions and treaties including the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and a series of International Labour Organization conventions on gender equality supports women's economic empowerment. According to the UN Women, women's economic empowerment bridges gender gap and thus contributes significantly to advancing economic and sustainable development (UN Women, 2013). Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home, but they also remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. Gender discrimination means women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and constitute a small minority of those in senior positions. It curtails access to economic assets such as land and loans. It limits participation in shaping economic and social policies. And, because women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue economic opportunities, thus economic empowerment is a crucial and fundamental issue for women all over the world. Globally, the plight of women has attracted attention through adoption of international instruments and programmes of action aimed at committing governments to empower women in their countries. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing

Declaration and Platform for Action. However, there are various international legal instrument here the importance of WEE have been mentioned, but not necessarily the main focus of the instrument. CEDAW was adopted by the UN general assembly as the International Bill of Women Rights in 1979 and came into force in 1981. CEDAW stipulates that “the full and complete development of the country, world welfare and peace, require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields”. The convention offers the basis for comprehending equality between women and men by ensuring women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life as well as education, health and employment (Nabacwa, 2001). It affirms the reproductive rights of women, and targets culture and traditions as influential in shaping gender roles and family relations. Countries that have signed or ratified the convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. It essentially defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination (Nabacwa, 2001).The convention defines, discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the effect or purpose of impairing, nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field (Nabacwa,2001). By subscribing to the convention, member states thus, declared to undertake measures to conclude discrimination against women in all forms.

Similarly, in 1995, the fourth World Conference on women held in Beijing produced a document widely recognized as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This declaration centered on gender equality, development, peace, and constituted an agenda for the empowerment of women. The objective of the Beijing Declaration can be summarized to mean the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women that are essential for the empowerment

of women (Virreira, 2015). The Beijing +5 document emphasizes that it is the duty of states regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems to protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The platform also recognizes that women face full barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability (Nabacwa, 2001; Beijing Convention, 1995; CEDAW, 1979). In 2000, the Beijing Platform for Action was reviewed in New York and states recommitted themselves to the platform and made further commitments to ensure the realization of its goal that is gender equality, peace and development (Nabacwa, 2001). Despite the provisions of CEDEAW and the Beijing Declaration on the need for gender equality, the situation of women in the global economy, namely the labour market has not yet made significant advancements towards the achievement of a real equality with men (UN Women 2018).

2.4 The Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE)

The educational and radical perspective of women empowerment can be traced in three seasons: Women in Development (WID) and Women and Development (WAD) approaches of the 1970s and the gender and development (GAD) discourse of the 1980s. In contrast to the WID and WAD approach of the 1970s, which aimed at the inclusion of women in development projects and discourse, GAD looked into power dynamics in gender relations and social norms in particular contexts, and thus conducted a more in-depth analysis of underlying structural causes of women's subordination (the three approaches will be analyzed in a later section). Broader associations of the term are the capability approach (Sen, 2008) and the typology of participation (Agarwal, 2001). Like the term empowerment, there is neither a generally agreed nor a standard definition of women's economic empowerment (GSDRS, 2010). Different organizations, academic institutions, development agencies and research think tanks have conceptualized women's economic

empowerment in different ways, while focusing on some common key components. For example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation defines women economic empowerment within the larger framework of overall empowerment of women and girls Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2010). This framework, explains empowerment as the expansion of choice and strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so that women and girls have more personal control over their lives and futures. The definition offered Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation encompasses three elements: agency, institutional structures, and resources as key components of WEE. When combined with the lens of intersectionality, and accounting for the influence of male peers, this model serves as a multi-dimensional tool to understand the barriers to women empowerment, including their economic empowerment.

Other institutions have provided conceptualization of WEE from frameworks that look at the lack of women's economic empowerment as a standalone problem, and offer a prescriptive reference point to identifying enablers and barriers of women empowerment. For instance, the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) contends that a woman is economically empowered when "she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically, and the power to make and act on economic decisions" (Golla, Malhotra, Nanda and Mehra, 2011). The UK Department for International Development (DFID) defines women's economic empowerment as "the process whereby all women strengthen their voice and capacity to make and act on economic choices, expand their opportunities to fulfil their potential, and gain recognition for their contribution, paid and unpaid, in the households, at work, and wider society" (DFID, 2018).

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) conceptualizes women's economic empowerment as a process of achieving equal access and opportunity for women to control economic resources, and ensuring they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives (ODI, 2016).

Also, it identified six core elements that directly affect WEE. These include collective action, unpaid work, education and skill development, quality work, social protection, and access to property, assets and financial services. Additionally, the framework identifies four underlying factors that determine women's individual and collective experiences, which include the following elements: (i) gender norms and discriminatory social norms; (ii) labour market characteristics; (iii) legal regulatory and policy framework; and (iv) fiscal policy. Also, World Vision defines women's economic empowerment as promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. They further argue that WEE is a fundamental human right and a key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous world.

Besides development institutions, several scholars have also provided diverse definitions of women's economic empowerment. For example, Moyle et al. (2006) define women economic empowerment as the ability to generate income which promotes independent decision-making in spending income. Similarly, Kabeer (2012) states that women economic empowerment is about making markets work for women at the policy level; and empowering women to compete in these markets. Women economic empowerment can also be defined as increasing women's capacity to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways that recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth (OECD, 2012). Furthermore, women's economic empowerment can be defined as having access to and control over the means to a livelihood on a sustainable basis, and receiving the material benefits of this access and control (Mosedale, 2005). The definition of women economic empowerment goes beyond short-term goals of increasing women's access to income and but emphasizes long-term sustainable benefits, not only in terms of changes to laws and policies that constrain women's participation in and benefits from development, but also in

terms of power relationships at the household, community and market levels (Mosedale, 2005: 247).

It is equally important to note that though economic empowerment generally seek women's access to income and long-term sustainable benefits, the concept has diverse connotations and application in different countries. In the context of Zimbabwe, women's economic empowerment is considered as the "process which increases women's real power over economic decisions that influence their lives and priorities in society (Government of Zimbabwe, 2012). This can be achieved through equal access to and control over critical economic resources and opportunities, and the elimination of structural gender inequalities in the market, including a better sharing of unpaid care work (Tornqvist and Schmitz, 2009; Kabeer, 2012). This definition is significant, as it captures the situation of African women, who daily household care is not considered as part of economic contribution. Sharing of unpaid care work is a critical aspect of achieving economic empowerment, and accepting and adopting this fact in Africa will go a long way to empower women.

According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization women's economic empowerment happens when people are able to imagine the world's current economic arrangements differently (UNIDO, 2010). In this case, a woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and has the power to make and act on economic decisions (Malhotra and Schuler, 2005). Economic empowerment increases women's access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information (OECD, 2012). According to Rowlands (1997), there is need to incorporate women in a form of solidarity that brings about structural transformation at household, community, and macro-levels.

Permit me to add that Economic empowerment of women remains central in aiding a woman towards self-realization in social, political and cultural spheres, it bolsters women's autonomy and self-belief. Women's economic empowerment is a priority in promoting gender equality and women's rights. A proactive approach focusing on gender equality and women's economic empowerment is essential to reduce poverty. According to the World Bank, addressing gender inequalities with women's economic empowerment enhances productivity, improves development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative. Women represent about 40 percent of the global labour force, 43 percent of the world's agricultural labour force and more than half the world's university students. This implies that if women are economically empowered, productivity will thus be raised as their knowledge, skills and talents are used more fully. Besides, the World Bank notes that greater control over household resources by women can enhance countries' growth prospects by changing spending patterns in ways that benefit children. In fact, improvements in women's education and health have been linked to better outcomes for their children in countries such as Brazil, Nepal, Pakistan, and Senegal. Thus, women economic empowerment is a step toward proactive policy change and more representative decision-making.

2.5 Rationale for Economic Empowerment of Women

Different international conventions and treaties including the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and a series of International Labour Organization conventions on gender equality supports women's economic empowerment. According to the UN Women, women's economic empowerment bridges gender gap and thus contributes significantly to advancing economic and sustainable development (UN Women, 2013). Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender

equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home, but they also remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. Gender discrimination means women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and constitute a small minority of those in senior positions. It curtails access to economic assets such as land and loans. It limits participation in shaping economic and social policies. And, because women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue economic opportunities, thus economic empowerment is a crucial and fundamental issue for women all over the world. WEE, provided an opportunity for women to possess the self-worth, confidence and freedom to make choices concerning their private and professional preferences alike. In addition, it helps women realize and utilize the dormant capacity within them and also stimulate their confidence.

The achievement of women's economic empowerment is a global policy priority, based on its potential contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (Taylor and Perezniето, 2014). WEE contributes to poverty reduction, improvement of well-being and human development. The benefits for society and families are well established: Women's economic advancement has led to increased investments in children's education and health, and reduced household poverty (World Bank, 2012; 2013). Recent estimates suggest that gender parity overall has the potential to boost global gross domestic product (GDP) by between \$12 trillion and \$28 trillion between now and 2025 (Woetzel et al., 2015), and it has been shown that 'national economies lose out when a substantial part of the population cannot compete equitably or realize its full potential (Golla et al., 2011: 3).

The SDGs contain a range of targets relating to gender equality and women's empowerment, in its goal number one, yet there is no automatic 'win-win' between wider development outcomes and gender equality (Duflo, 2012). According to O'Neil et al., (2014), though there seem to be a slow process in actualizing WEE, it is worthwhile to recognize that it is a wholistic process that entail personal and social change, taking place over interlinked and mutually reinforcing psychological, political, social and economic domains, and through which women individually and collectively gain power, meaningful choices and control over their lives. Cornwall and Edwards (2016) added that WEE is not a linear, uncontested process but instead a journey characterized by negotiation and compromise, and uncertain outcomes in some domains. Thus, in as much it is considered by many governments and in many conventions and sustainable goals as a step in the direct direction, its realization may entail a slow but gradual process.

The concept of WEE though very famous, has had some challenges, particularly on its conceptualization. Till present, there is no universally agreed definition of women's economic empowerment, rather women's ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions is core to the understanding of a number of development institutions (Golla et al., 2011). The difficulty is determining a general conceptualization of WEE gives room for different interpretation, which affects the entire concept. Some school of thought (OECD, 2012a) emphasizes the need to examine the terms on which poor women enter the labour market, the way women's contributions are valued and women's ability to negotiate a fairer deal for themselves, including in relation to the benefits of growth.

Buvinic and Furst-Nichols, (2014) on their part argues that despite whatever conceptualization that is attached to WEE, no single intervention can address all its aspects and no single strategy will be effective for all women. The challenge, therefore, is to identify key entry

points where a range of ‘enablers’ or ‘building blocks’ could have a pivotal, positive effect, recognizing that interventions will necessarily differ between countries and between different groups of women, and in terms of the time needed for them to take hold. According to UN Report (2018), Women’s economic empowerment is central to realizing women’s rights and gender equality, economic empowerment of women includes women’s ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, access to decent work, control over their own time, lives and bodies; and increased voice, agency and meaningful participation in economic decision-making from the household to international institutions.

The UN Report (2018) notes that, empowering women in the economy and closing gender gaps in the world of work are key to achieving the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. It puts emphasis on Goal 5, to achieve gender equality, and Goal 8, to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all; also Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on food security, Goal 3 on ensuring health and Goal 10 on reducing inequalities. According to International Monetary Fund (2018), women’s economic empowerment enhances productivity, economic diversification and reduces income inequality. Although by comparison, increasing female employment rates in OECD countries could boost GDP by over USD 6 trillion, (Work Index 2018). Thus, in as much as WEE will translate to economic growth, it does not mean that economic growth is evidence of realization of WEE. In some cases, countries achieve growth even when there is obvious gender disparity. Nonetheless, studies reveal that gender gaps cost the economy approximately 15 percent of GDP (Cuberes & Teignier, 2016).

Do and Kurimoto (2012) argue that WEE improves the health and well-being of women and by extension saves cost to the economy. They contend that there is a higher likelihood for an economically empowered woman to bear less children by using contraceptives. In this case, having

fewer children gives the women an opportunity to engage in economic activities that will provide her with the resources needed to train her kids in education. This process reduces illiteracy, breaks the circle of poverty and bridges gender inequalities. Thus, economic empowerment of women is also critical for human development. There is now a well-established body of evidence to suggest that women's economic empowerment, their access to and control over valued resources, has strong positive implications for the well-being of the family, including their own and their children's well-being. It increases the chances that they will seek family planning and reproductive health services, ensure the survival, health, nutrition and education of their children and, in certain contexts, reduce gender inequalities in household resource allocation. The economic empowerment of women thus contributes to the development of human capital and human capabilities, including their own (Kabeer, 2009). The economic empowerment of women is thus a matter of human rights and social justice (Kabeer, 2009).

The economic empowerment of women supports poverty reduction. While early generalizations in the gender and development literature that female-headed households are always necessarily the 'poorest of the poor' has been challenged by subsequent studies, these studies have also served to establish that households that rely solely or primarily on female earnings (i.e. female-maintained households) tend to be over-represented at the lower end of the income distribution. This is not surprising. If women have lower levels of education and skills, if they face discrimination in markets for the sale of their goods, services and labour, as well as their access to assets, technology and financial services, their efforts to earn a living for themselves and their dependents are likely to be rewarded more unfavorably than those of men with equivalent characteristics. Conversely, lower income households with male or joint headship are very generally able to rely on women's earnings to keep their households above the poverty line or to

prevent from declining into poverty in times of crisis. Investing in women's economic resources helps poor households to divert crisis and increases their chances of moving out of poverty (kabeer, 2009).

In conclusion, the literature shows that women's economic empowerment makes sense if they participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes. It further shows that these processes should recognize their contributions, respect their dignity and facilitate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. It therefore brings about a more balanced process of growth. However, this cannot be achieved merely by increasing women's access to resources. However, the study focusses mainly on forms of economic empowerment in terms of access to and control over land, labour force participation, and entrepreneurship, which represents a substantive expansion of women's life options and their success capacity. The study believes that women could be key players in global development. Obviously, national economies lose out when a substantial segments of the population cannot compete for jobs. Gender equality therefore can enhance economic efficiency and improve other development outcomes by removing barriers that prevent women from having the same access as men to human resource endowments, rights, and economic opportunities. If women are given equal opportunity, it will allow them to emerge as social and economic actors, influencing and shaping more inclusive policies, and facilitate more investment in their children's education, health, and overall well-being. Also, if income inequality is removed across gender lines, it will help decrease poverty through the generations.

3.2 Perspective on Gender Inequality in Uganda

Gender inequality is obvious in Uganda and this phenomenon is facilitated by different factors that include policies, programs, religious and cultural practices which prevents the empowerment of women socially, economically, politically and psychologically. According to

Mammen and Paxson (2000), men have achieved more than women in the different sectors such as education and health sectors and this is because both conventional and traditional practices that have limited women from aspiring higher in life. For example, customary practices have contributed to high rate of illiteracy in women in the developing countries as they prevent women from attaining education (WHO 2007). Many communities for instance the Massai in Kenya and Karamonjang in Uganda have an ongoing practice of early marriage through their customary laws and therefore they end up removing their girls from schools because they value the wealth they will earn from marring off their girls than educating them (UN, 2001).

Despite the fact that Uganda has embraced affirmative action policies to bridge gender disparity, the girl child still lacks equal education opportunities as the boy child and in most cases though enrolled the girl child is forced out of school because of customary laws (Fennell and Arnot 2007). According to the report compiled by UN Millennium Project (2005), in developing countries, boys who seek primary education and managed to complete this basic education are approximately two third more than the girls. Curran et al. (2006), explains that the increased rate of poverty in Sub- Saharan African communities has resulted to the male being given opportunity to attain education to the disadvantage of female because of limited resources. Despite recorded increment in school enrolment, girls in Uganda still do not have the same enrollment in schools as boys. Available statistics shows that 22% of women have no education at all compared to 12% of men. Education of girls is considered the most efficient tool to empower women, improve their access to the labour force and create overall development for the nation. When women are educated, their independence and job opportunities are enhanced and they can contribute financially to their own households as well as to the development of their countries.

Today, the key drivers of Uganda 's economy are services 68.1 per cent, industry 16.8 per cent and agriculture 15.3 per cent (UBOS, 2019), but the majority of Ugandan women only participate in the agricultural sector. The participation of women in the labour force, other than in the agricultural sector where they participate as peasants is still low. In Uganda, women in the labour market mostly occupy low-grade positions. Uganda's population comprised of about 52 per cent female; yet the elected MPs who are women in the present 11th parliamentary are only 161, while men are 338, this is more-than 50% margin in favour of men. This points to a clear disadvantaged position of women in Uganda.

Uganda adopted and aligned to the Global Agenda 2030 Sustainable development goals. Uganda's Vision 2040 statement prioritizes gender equality as a cross-cutting enabler for socio-economic transformation, highlighting the progress made in the legal and policy arena, in political representation, and in lowering gaps in education. The National Development Plan II (NDP II, 2015-2020) prioritizes the empowerment of women and gender equality as a means to inclusive growth and social development. It makes specific reference to sector-specific gender issues that relate to women's empowerment and access to sexual reproductive health information and services.

According to the Global Gender Gap 2016, Uganda ranks 61 overall position out 144 countries in terms of addressing the gender gap (UNFPA, 2017) . Vision 2040 points out that in spite of progress in the political and decision making arena, other conditions sustaining gender inequality in Uganda remain salient, including: gender disparities in access and control over productive resources like land; limited share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sectors; sexual and gender-based violence; limited participation in household, community and national decision-making.

Gender inequality is one of the most significant identity based failings, with women invariably more marginalized than men. Women are marginalized in aspects of access to and control over productive resources, education and health services, decision making platforms, and political representation. Socio-cultural norms and harmful traditional practices including gender based violence, female genital mutilation, teenage pregnancy, child and forced marriage, among others, perpetuate gender inequality. The high social tolerance of gender based violence, with inequality between men and women accepted as a normal undermines efforts towards gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender disparity is evident in many sectors such as education, employment, to mention but a few. Gender disparity affects job opportunities, property rights, access to health and political participation, especially for women who are underrepresented. The pattern of social history that disempowers women and girls produces a cycle of undervaluing them, providing only peripheral access to healthcare and schooling, thus less opportunities to take on high level jobs or training, which in turn exacerbates the issue of low political participation and marginal social rights.

3.3. Women Participation in the Labour Market, Wages and Economic Status

Majority of women are engaged in agricultural production, yet only 27% of registered land is owned by women. The labour sector in Uganda offers limited sustainable economic opportunity for a majority of women since many are dependent on sustainable agriculture, with limited access to land. About 75% female headed households depend on agriculture, compared to 81.2% that are male headed (UNPFA.2017). Nationally, the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is 52% and Employment to Population Ratio (EPR) is 48%. The LFPR was higher for males (60%) than females (46%). Similarly, the Employment to Population Ratio is higher for males (56%) than females (40%). The national unemployment rate is 9%. Nationally, only 38% of persons in

employment are in paid employment with a higher proportion of males (46%) compared to females (28%) (UNPFA.2017).

Young women have more difficulties finding paid work than young men. Hence, youth unemployment rate stands at 7.0% for females compared to 6.1% for males (UNPFA.2017). This gender difference has been attributed to the difficult transition to working life; limited access to information channels and job search mechanisms; lower pay in the informal economy; unprotected low-skill jobs as well as lack of access to training, social protection and other resources; making young women comparatively more vulnerable than young men to poverty and sexual exploitation. Although the economic activity rate for adult men relative to women is almost the same (78.9% for women and 81.5% for men), social norms still reinforce discrimination in access and control over productive assets, particularly land and financial capital (UNPFA.2017).

Education is one of the key gender empowerment indices, as well as one of the key pillars to accelerate harnessing of the demographic dividend. The education sector in Uganda, through various policies promotes equal opportunities i.e. Universal Primary Education, Universal Secondary Education and Uganda Post Primary Education and Training, giving women extra one and half (1.5) points for public university entrance (affirmative action), and Girl Child Education initiatives. With these guidelines and policies in place, Uganda has seen high levels of school enrolment of 96% with equal enrolment of boys and girls i.e. an increase from about 7 million pupils in 1999/2000 to about 11 million in 2012/2013, through there was a slight drop to 9.4 million in 2016/17. There has been no big difference between the male and female primary school enrolment.

3.4 The Role of Education in Women Labour Force Participation

Estimates of women in the labor force and employment are generally lower than those of men and are not comparable internationally, reflecting that demographic, social, legal, and cultural trends and norms whereby there are concerns as to whether women's activities are regarded as economic. In many low-income countries women often work on farms or in other family enterprises without pay, and others work in or near their homes, affording them the opportunity to mix work and family activities during the day. In many high-income economies, women have been increasingly acquiring higher education that has led to better opportunity in the labour market, offering them better wages and longer-term careers rather than lower-skilled shorter-term jobs. However, access to good- paying jobs for women remains unequal in many occupations and countries around the world. Labor force statistics around the world indicates that education plays the most significant role in women access to the labour market (ILO, 2000; Cazes and Verick, 2013; Yakubu; 2010). Accordingly, the next section shall examine the role of education in gaining access to labour force.

Labour force participation rate represents a country's available work force measured by the percentage of working age population (15 and more), that is either employed or actively looking for employment (Boateng et.al.2013). Labour force participation rate refers to the total number of people who are currently employed or in search of a job (OECD, 2014). The proportion of the working age population who are either employed or unemployed is a measure of labour force participation rate (Boateng et al, 2013). Basically, people who are not looking for a job such as full-time students, homemakers (housewives) and seniors above the age of 64 are not considered part of labour force participation. Thus, people who are not interested in working or getting some sort of employment are not included in the participation rate. Therefore, to participate in the labour force is to actively engage in the labour market through working or looking for employment.

Globally, women register lower participation rates in the labour market than men. For example, while women represent around 49 percent of the global population, their participation in the labour force is very low (World Bank Gender Statistics, 2016; UN, 2018). Even with a significant increase in women's labour force participation in the last century, the global labour force participation for women was by 27 percent lower than men's in 2018 (Sivakumar and Sharma, 2019). This is echoed by the UN Women Report (2018) that, women in most countries earn less than men, with an estimated gender wage gap of 23 per cent). By implication, women earn 77 per cent of what men earn worldwide. This is further supported by the fact that, women in OECD countries had a lower average female labour force participation rate (50.9 percent) than men (70 percent) in 2014 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016). In African there is also a clear difference in wage variation among genders. For example, occupations such as teaching and general office work, which are mostly dominated by females shows the lowest differentials in wages, compared to male dominated professions, like engineering (ILO, 2010). In Uganda, even with the existence of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act which promotes gender equality and women's empowerment, less women in the working age bracket (75 percent) compared to men (82 percent) were working in 2017 (UNHS, 2016/17). In line with this, women's unemployment rate (14.4 percent) was more than double that of men (6.2 percent). This review seems to imply that globally, women face higher unemployment occurrences than men. Work - related segregation happens in most countries and women's participation in the labour market seems to be restricted to low-skilled and lower paying jobs. This could partly explain why women continue to earn less than men. This trend however could undermine women's economic empowerment variously. This argument warrants an examination into the factors for lower involvement of women in the labour market.

The role of education in labour market dynamics cannot be ignored. Education is the major determinant of labour market outcomes (ILO, 2000). Evidence on the positive relationship between women's education and labour force participation is abundant (Aslam, Bari and Kingdon, 2012; Aslam, De, Kingdon and Kumar, 2010). Education attainment is a key determinant of labour market outcomes in most countries (ILO, 2000; Cazes and Verick, 2013; Yakubu, 2010) and is often associated with future employment (Greenstone, et al., 2012). For example, more schooling among older men in the United States led to increased labour force participation in the recent past (Blau and Goodstein, 2010). Additionally, 95 percent of students in America relate education attainment with job acquisition (The Lumina Foundation and Gallup poll, 2014). While Astin et al. (2011) reveals the majority of university students expect their academic institutions to prepare them for employment. Nonetheless, approximately 50 percent of college graduates are unemployed (Selingo, 2016). From a different but related viewpoint, female education, especially at the secondary and post-secondary levels reduces fertility and increases their likelihood of being engaged in the labour market (Bbaale, 2008). In Turkey, female level of education strongly influenced female labour force participation (Tansel, 2002). These views are in line with Nasir and Nazli (2000), that an additional year of education increases returns for wage earners by 7 percent. Similarly, rapid growth in female labour force participation rate within the Asian Tigers (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan) is attributed to higher female education levels in relation to other developing economies (ILO, 2008). These authors seem to imply that education is associated with better prospects for job acquisition and participation in the labour market. This could be that education and skills enhance access to more lucrative occupations and higher earnings. However, there exist other factors other than education that affects participation in the

labour market especially when one considers Selingo (2016) revelation that many graduates are unemployed.

Although education is a significant determinant of labour force participation, other factors may inform participation in the labour market. Culture greatly influences female labour force participation rates. Cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes have continued to shape female labour supply (Fernandez, 2013). Gendered differences in laws affect women's participation in the labour market. For example, over 2.7 billion women are legitimately restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men the world over (World Bank, 2018). Also, of the 189 economies assessed in 2018, 104 still had laws prohibiting women from working in specific jobs; 59 had no laws on sexual harassment in the workplace, while in 18 economies, husbands could legally stop their wives from working (World Bank, 2018).

3.5 Cultural Factors that Cause Gender Inequality

Culture influenced inequalities is the actual differences in the treatment, public recognition or status of different groups' in the society. Also, it deals with the allocation of gender roles with respect to cultural norms, practices, symbols and customs. The section examines different cultural factors that influences gender inequality.

3.5.1. Patrilocality: Many cultures practice patrilocality, in which a married couple lives near or with the husband's parents. When a woman gets married, she essentially ceases to be a member of her birth family and joins her husband's family. Under this system, parents potentially reap more of the returns to investments in a son's health and education because he will remain a part of their family, whereas a daughter will physically and financially leave the household upon marriage. Coresidence of adult sons and elderly parents is much more common in Sub-Saharan

Africa including Uganda, Asia, and the Middle East (Ebenstein 2014). In Uganda, this practice has become an issue that discourages parents from given the desired empowerment to their daughters in terms of spending on their education and supporting them financially to start a business.

The northern region of Uganda has a stronger patrilocal (and patrilineal) system than the south, which is one explanation for why gender inequality is more pronounced in the north (Dyson & Moore 1983). According to Chakraborty & Kim (2010) the sex ratio was less male-skewed in the south, a pattern that continues to hold today. More generally, Ebenstein (2014) shows that the male to female sex ratio is positively correlated with the rate of coresidence between adult sons and their parents both across and within countries. If parents fully internalized their daughters' returns to nutrition, health care, and schooling, then patrilocality would not necessarily cause gender gaps in these inputs. In practice, however, the longer duration that parents coreside and pool financial resources with their sons seems to cause them to invest disproportionately in sons. For example, parents are more likely to invest in sons' education or business startup than for their daughter. The financial mindset about investing in daughters is encapsulated in an often-quoted saying that "raising a daughter is like watering your neighbors' garden."

3.5.2. Old-Age Support from Sons: Closely linked to patrilocality is that sons traditionally provide old-age support for their parents in societies such as China and India. Ebenstein and Leung (2010) investigate this old-age support norm as a reason for the desire to have sons in China. When the Chinese government instituted a rural old-age pension program, parents now had a better substitute for old-age support from sons, and thus their desire to have a son should have abated. In essence, sons are considered an old age/ retirement insurance for parents and therefore they tend to spend more on empowering their sons compared to their daughters. It was observed that in China, households without sons are more likely to participate in the

government pension program for the elderly. With the rollout of the pension program, the cultural norm that sons, not daughters, support parents did not change, but its implications for the desire to have a son and the skewed sex ratio did change. When a formal institution for retirement savings arose, the informal method of relying on sons became less important, and therefore this force driving son preference became less relevant.

3.5.3. Dowry System: Dowry is a payment that a bride's parents make to the couple at the time of marriage. According to Boserup (1990), dowry systems emerged mainly in societies where women played a lesser role. Dowry has disappeared in many societies, notably in Europe, but it has persisted in, for example, Africa and South Asia. In fact, over the past several decades, the prevalence of dowry has increased in Uganda, and the real value of dowry payments has risen considerably (Anderson, 2007). In addition, the property rights to dowry as practiced today differ from those seen historically in Europe. In ancient Rome and medieval Western Europe, the bride held the rights to the dowry; it was her premortem inheritance from her parents (Anderson 2007). In this formulation, the dowry system was intended to improve the financial well-being of females. However, in societies where dowry is used today, the parents of the bride typically controls the dowry. Dowry is thus a financial benefit to the parents of the bride and motivation to give their daughters out in marriage even at an early age.

Emphasis should be made on reducing the desire for dowry by parents and kinsmen, while strengthening investments on girls. In principle, parents could recoup their investment in their daughter's education and other forms of empowerment in the form of lower dowry demands or a higher-quality son-in-law. However, this idealized market solution in which parents invest in their daughter's human capital and the groom later compensates them for the investment does not seem to work in practice, perhaps because investments are not fully observable by the groom. In

addition, parents have reason to care more about the quality of their daughters-in-law than their sons-in-law because daughters-in-law will live with them under patrilocality and raise their heirs under patrilineality. Besides reducing human capital investments, the dowry system also results in newly married women sometimes being victims of violence as they are perceived by the husband as one of his property, which can be treated anyhow, including the use of violence (Bloch & Rao 2002).

3.5.4. Patrilineality: In a patrilineal system, names and property pass to the next generation through male descendants. This system puts sons on a higher footing than daughters, and the specific feature of land inheritance is especially likely to have effects on gender gaps. For example, in India, because widows traditionally do not inherit their husbands' ancestral property, they rely on their sons as their conduit for holding onto the family property and maintaining their standard of living in widowhood. This consideration might be one reason that the desire to have sons is often not appreciably different between women and men.

Under the Hindu Succession Act of 1956, sons shared the right to inherit ancestral property in India. In the 1980s and 1990s, the law was amended in four states to make daughters' status equal to that of sons. Deininger et al. (2013) analyze, 8% of daughters whose fathers died before the reforms inherited land; the proportion increased to 16% among those whose fathers died after the reforms. (Approximately 70% of fathers owned land; the fraction of sons who inherited land remained steady at 70% before and after the reforms.) As a result of the law changes, women's age of marriage rose, consistent with their having more bargaining power within the family and financial independence (Deininger et al. 2013). The reforms also increased girls' schooling, presumably because their mothers were more empowered in the household or because education and asset ownership are complements (Deininger et al. 2013, Roy 2013). However, the legal

reforms also seem to have had some negative consequences for women. Anderson and Genicot (2014) find that reforms led to a rise in suicides, which they conjecture is a result of a backlash effect in which the increase in female bargaining power sparked marital conflict.

3.5.5. Role of Sons in Religious Rituals: In certain belief systems, such as Confucianism in China and Hinduism in India, sons play a special role. Confucianism encourages the patrilineal and patrilocal system in place in China, Vietnam, and elsewhere. But another part of the special role of sons is in rituals. Ancestor worship within Confucianism involves rituals in which a son plays an essential part. Similarly, son preference is mentioned in the Vedas, the ancient Hindu texts. In addition, in Hindu societies, it is supposed to be a son who lights a deceased person's funeral pyre and brings him or her salvation. Hindu kinship norms are adhered to more strictly among upper castes than lower castes (Mandelbaum 1990), and in their analysis of the 1901 Indian Census, Chakraborty and Kim (2010) find a more skewed sex ratio for upper castes than for lower castes.

The funeral-pyre underpinning of son preference specifically generates a strong desire for one son, with other sons perhaps serving as insurance in case the first son predeceases his parents. Other reasons for son preference, such as wanting someone to carry on the family name or widows wanting to retain family land, also make the first son especially valuable. Consistent with this idea, Jayachandran (2014) finds that parents in Sub-Saharan Africa often desire to have a son and, once they have one they care less of the gender of the forthcoming children.

3.5.6. Desire to Protect Female Safety and “Purity”: Concern for women's and girls' safety and “purity” constrains their physical mobility in many developing countries. It is difficult to say how much of the limited mobility is out of genuine concern for women's welfare, aimed at protecting them from harassment and sexual violence, and how much is simply a way to stifle

female autonomy. In a cross-country study of mate preferences, men put more weight on their spouse's sexual inexperience at marriage than on physical appearance in India, China, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Iran, whereas the opposite prioritization was seen in each of the 24 European, North American, South American, and sub-Saharan African countries studied (Buss, 1999). Restrictions on female mobility often seem largely aimed at keeping unmarried women chaste and married women faithful. In any case, they are a proximate cause of reduced female schooling and career opportunities.

One reason parents cite for not educating their daughters is the distance to school. Burde and Linden (2013) evaluate a school-building initiative in Afghanistan and find that having a school located within one's village matters much more for girls' enrollment; a village school essentially closes the otherwise-large gender gap in enrollment. Muralidharan and Prakash (2013) show that a program that gave girls bicycles to travel to school in India similarly had a sizable impact on girls' school participation. These results suggest that better infrastructure, which comes with economic development, could offset some of the effect that social constraints on girls' mobility have on their education.

Besides distance to school, parents might also want their daughters segregated from male peers or teachers. Kim et al. (1999) evaluate a program in the Pakistani city of Quetta that subsidized the creation of neighborhood private schools in part to meet parents' demand for single-sex schools for their daughters. Similarly, the construction of sex-segregated school latrines boosted adolescent girls' enrollment in India (Adukia, 2014). The construction of "girl-friendly" schools, the schools were equipped with sex-segregated latrines, also improved school attendance and academic achievement in rural Burkina Faso (Kazianga et al., 2013).

In a setting in which genders are socially segregated, the benefits of having a same-gender teacher might be especially large. Muralidharan and Sheth (2013) find large same-gender effects on test scores for both boys and girls in India. But girls lose out on the same-gender benefit as they progress because there are fewer female teachers at higher grades; the gender mismatch can explain 10–20% of the negative trend in girls' test scores as they progress to higher grades. Another consideration is that parents feel pressure to marry off their daughters early in societies where female chastity is prized by men, which leads to early school dropout. Field and Ambrus (2008) estimate that, in Bangladesh, for every year an adolescent girl's marriage is delayed, she completes an additional 0.22 years of schooling.

The risks associated with female mobility, both objective risk and socially constructed risk to family honor might also explain the very low female labour force participation in some countries such as India, the Middle East, and North Africa. One of the tenets of the Hindu caste system is that women should be protected from "pollution," which includes men outside their families. Disallowing women from working outside the home is one way of maintaining their purity (Chen 1995). Because these restrictions apply more stringently to upper-caste women in India, lower-caste women often have more professional flexibility and autonomy (Field et al., 2014; Luke and Munshi 2011).

Female seclusion (purdah) is also an important tenet of Islam, and Muslim women resemble Hindu women in their low labor force participation and low self-reported freedom of choice. A notable contrast is that many of the norms that underlie Hindu parents' desire for sons, such as dowry and bequests only to sons, are weaker or nonexistent among Muslims. Correspondingly, within India, the sex ratio at birth and child survival exhibit less pro-male bias among Muslims than among Hindus (Borooah and Iyer 2005).

3.6 Causes of Gender Disparity in Labour Force Participation

Despite the considerable efforts that have been made towards bridging the gender inequality in the world of work, certain factors seem to be preventing it from accelerating. According to the International Labour Organization (2017), globally, women are substantially less likely than men to participate in the labour market, and even when they get into the labour force, they are also less likely to find desired jobs than men. Indeed, women's access to quality employment opportunities remains restricted. Besides, women are more likely to work longer hours than men when you take into account their roles in both paid and unpaid. Moreover, when in paid employment, on average, women work fewer hours for pay or profit either because they opt to work part-time or because part-time work is the only option available to them (ILO, 2017).

The gender gaps in the labour force continue to persist despite the preference of most women worldwide to work in a paid job. These gaps indicate that women's choices are constrained by a number of factors. Using data from the 2016 ILO-Gallup survey and the World Employment and Social Outlook Trends for Women 2017, it shows that personal preferences, socio-economic constraints, and gender role conformity were driving gender gaps in the labour market. The analysis by ILO, covering 142 countries and territories, found the following factors as contributing to gender gaps in labour force:

- i **Marriage:** The study found that having a spouse or partner reduces the probability for women to participate in the labour market in emerging, developed and the Arab States and Northern African (ASNA) countries. In developing countries, however, the effect is gradually being reversed: today marriage is having a positive effect on participation. This latter finding highlights the economic necessity to work, despite partnership status, in developing countries.

- ii **Child bearing and care:** Globally, the lack of affordable care for children or family members affects women's participation negatively. ILO (2017) study shows that in ASNA countries, child bearing and care decreases the probability to participate in labour force in developing countries and in developed countries. Having children, however, has a small negative effect on women's labour force participation but it is not significant; in fact, in developed countries, there is a small positive effect
- iii **Religion:** Religions embody a complex system of values that extends to gender roles. ILO (2017) study found that in developing countries, the probability of women to participate in the labour force is substantially reduced by religion, a proxy indicator for more restrictive gender role conformity. In developed and emerging countries, the results are mixed: in some cases, the effect is positive, in others negative.
- iv **Transportation system:** ILO (2017) study also found that limited access to safe transportation is among the greatest challenge to labour force participation that women face in developing countries, reducing their participation probability

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which deals specifically with the causes and effects of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. The chapter presents the finding of the study in line with the study objectives, which are as follows: i. To examine the main causes of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda; ii. To evaluate the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in the development of Uganda; iii. To determine possible mechanisms to address gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda.

4.1 Participation Rate

The study sampled 25 key informants who participated in the study. The key informants comprised of: Officials of Civil Society Organizations, Captains of Industry, Officials of the Ministry of Gender Labour & Social Development, Religious Leaders, Media Practitioners, Women representatives in Parliament, and Academicians

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents. The demographic profile was collected through preliminary questions that were posed to the study participants at the beginning of the interview. Each key informant was asked about their age, level of education, marital status, work experience among other issues. Also, the research took note of the gender of the participants, which was presented as part of the demographic profile.

Table 2*Representation of the Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Scale	Sex /Gender		Age bracket		Marital status		Qualification			Work experience	
	F	M	<30 years	31>	M	NM	<Dip.	DG.	PG	<10	11>
Frequency	15	10	8	17	20	05	02	14	09	09	16
Percentage	60	40	32	68	80	20	8	56	36	36	64
Total	25		25		25		25			25	
TFQS	100%		100%		100%		100%			100%	
TPS											

*Source: field survey (2021)***Key:**

F Female

M Males

<30 Respondents bellow the age of 30

31> Respondents above the age of 31

<10 Respondent with less than 10 years' work experience

11>	Respondent with mor than 11 years' work experience
M	Marrieds
NM	Not Married
<Dip.	Qualifications below Diploma and Diploma
DG.	Degree qualifications
PG	Postgraduate Degree qualifications
TFQ	Total Frequency Summation
TPS	Total Percentage Summation

4.2.1 The Sex/ Gender of Respondents

Table 2 above reveals that out of the 25 key informants that participated in the study, 15 were females and 10 males, giving a ratio of 60% to 40% respectively. This implies that most of the respondents'/ key informants were females compared to males.

4.2.2 The Age bracket

The age of the respondents was generally categorised into those less or equal to 30 years and those above the age of 31 years. The study established that, out of the 25 participants, 8 were either 30 years old or less which is an equivalent of 32%, while 17 were above 31 years or equivalent of 68%. Given that the constitution of Uganda defines a youth as someone between the age of 18 and 30, it then shows that majority of the study participants were not youths.

4.2.3 Marital Status

The study also considered the marital status of the participants. It was revealed 20 out of the 25 participants were married, which represents 80% of the study participants. Also, it was observed that 5 of the participants constituting 20% were not married.

4.2.4 Academic Qualifications

The study as well paused an inquiry into the academic qualifications of the 25 key informants. Academic qualification was measured under three categories: Those holding a diploma or a qualification that is less than a diploma, those with a degree and those with a postgraduate degree. It was found that 02 participants or 8% has a diploma or qualification less than a diploma. Then, 14 participants or 56% had a degree, while 09 participants or 36% holds a postgraduate degree. In essence, majority of the study participants holds a degree certificate, seconded by those with a postgraduate degree.

4.2.5 Work experience

From the table 4.1, 44.5% of the respondents had experience of a period less than 15 years, whereas, 55.5% had experience 16 years and more. In this case, the fact that, there are more experienced people dealing with children in conflict with the law, chances are high that, the data collected is reliable and can be considered for data analysis

4.3 Objective-based Analyses

This section will present the analysis of the data elicited from the key informants. The analysis will be chronologically presented following the study objectives.

4.3.1: To examine the main causes of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda

The first objective of the study was to examine the major causes of gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda. Consequently, the following questions were asked the key informants

Item 1: Do you agree that there is gap between male and female participation in the labour force in Uganda?

Yes, I agree and also it has been stated in the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics (UBOs) reports. This is an issue that is common in many East African countries and even in Africa as a whole (KI01, Kampala, November 08, 2021).

That is a very obvious fact. I worked in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the disparity in labour force participation was one of the cardinal issues that we tried so hard to address. Not only that there is gender disparity in labour force participation, but the phenomenon was getting normalized (KI03, Kampala, November 10, 2021).

Gender inequality is a norm in Uganda, it is not only seen in the labour force alone, but in all facets of Uganda. Women are usually not given same opportunities as men in the labour force. In Uganda, some jobs are considered to be masculine and therefore reserved for men, unfortunately there are no jobs that are exclusive for women, which creates a gap in labour force participation normalized (KI04, Kampala, November 12, 2021).

The above are some of the excerpts from the interview. Generally, the respondents were in agreement that there is a gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda. Men are at advantage in access to the labour force, which has a negative impact on women empowerment. The fact that all the key informants confirmed that there is a gender imbalance in labour force participation speaks volume of the situation of women in Uganda and the possibility of realizing the SDGs, which emphasized women empowerment as a key element of development.

Item 2: In your opinion, what are the major causes of gender gap in the labour force in Uganda?

Among the causes of gender gap in Uganda labour force is cultural systems. In many parts of Uganda, particularly in the North, women are not allowed to work in the formal sector. When a woman is married she has to stay at home and work in farm and not to

seek for work outside home where she will be paid salary. This issue is very disturbing and will always play a negative role in women participation in the labour force. When a whole community frown at a women seeking for a formal job, how then do you intend to achieve gender balance in labour force participation? We have a big work to do in order to bridge the gap. With the impact of COVID-19, where many companies are affected, it will increase the gap, as these companies are laying off staffs and in most cases women (KI03, Kampala, November 10, 2021).

The above response suggest that culture is one of the major factors that is affecting women's participation in labour force in Uganda. Given that Uganda is a patriarchal society where men are considered to be superior to women, one can easily see why the cultural systems discourage women from entering the formal job market. It mostly believed that women should stay at home and take care of household chores, work domestically in the farm, while the men go out to earn a living for the family.

Similarly, another key informant had this to say:

In Uganda, some societies do not encourage women to work in formal sectors as they consider it as an avenue for them to be unfaithful to their marriage. Also, some societies believe that when a woman works in formal sector and earn good money they will not be loyal or submissive to their husbands. To these communities' loyalty in marriage is more important than working in a formal job and therefore they discourage their wives and daughters from seeking formal employment (KI06, Kampala, November 13, 2021).

Similarly, to the former response, the above response suggests that women are discouraged from participating in formal employment due to cultural perceptions. In some cultures, in Uganda, it is believed that when a woman goes to work outside of her home, it increases the tendency of her being unfaithful to her marriage. The assumption is that working in formal sector outside of home

gives women the chance to mingle with men other than their family members and such can lead to inappropriate relationships. In as much as this assumption is never supported by any evidence or facts, however such believes is held by some societies in Uganda, consequently they discourage women from seeking formal employment.

When asked the same questions, another key informant provided the following response:

There are different factors responsible for gender gap in labour force in Uganda. In my opinion, it is difficult to zero it down to a particular factor. For me marriage and illiteracy are top on the list. In order to get a job in the formal sector, one needs to be educated, though some jobs do not require a high level of education but basic education is a requirement. The government has been trying in improving women education in Uganda, the fact remains that women particularly in rural villages are not educated. Illiteracy is even higher among the elderly population, which creates a gap in gender participation in labour force. Apart from illiteracy, marriage is another challenge. Though the limitations premised on marriage is not applicable to all women in Uganda, but in most cases, men don't really want their wives to work outside of home. They prefer them to stay home and take care of children and family chores. Also, religion plays as role. Many of my Muslim friends don't support their wives to work, they prefer them to be home (KI12, Kampala, November 16, 2021).

Apart from culture and traditional believes, it was also observed that marriage and illiteracy is among the major factors limiting women participation in labour force in Uganda. From the transcript presented above, the key informants heightened that lack of adequate and/ or formal education is among the main reasons fueling gender gap in labour force participation. Although statistics from Ugandan Bureau of Statistics shows that the gender gap in literacy level in Uganda is closing, it also shows that there is wider gap in gender participation in labour force. Obviously, participation in the formal sector requires some level pf education attainment and therefore, if more men are educated than women, then there is the possibility that more men will be employed. In

this case, given that the gender ratio in population shows that the population of women is higher than men, to achieve gender balance in labour force participation, more women should have education than the men. In this case, there is need to emphasize on women education as a means to gain formal education and bridge the gap in labour force participation.

Item 3: Do you think that it is important and possible to bridge gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda?

I completely agree that it is important to close the gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda. The world has moved on and therefore Uganda should not lag behind. All international development agencies emphasize gender parity as a force of development, and since Uganda is aspiring for development it should not be left out. Also, I believe that it is possible to bridge the gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda. This can be possible by taking some proactive measures. Already, the government has adopted affirmative action in support of gender parity, however more effects need to be invested in social orientation. Societies need to be sensitized on the need to allow women to get an education and participate in the formal employment sector (KI13, Moroto, January 16, 2022).

From the response above, the key informant was of the opinion that bridging gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda is important and also possible. To KI, Uganda needs to catch up with where the world is moving, which emphasizes women empowerment. For Uganda to attain development status, it needs to empower its women and giving them more access to formal employment is pertinent to achieving the desired development in the country. On the mechanisms to empower women, the key informants suggested sensitizing members of the society, particularly those in the rural areas of the benefits of encouraging women to participate in the labour force. In the respondent's view, sensitization will provide a form of reorientation to the long held beliefs of some members of the society that women are not supposed to work outside of home.

When as the same question asked to another key informant, the following answer was elicited:

I will say that it is important because it will help in the empowerment of women and realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. Here in Uganda, it will help to reshape our society in a way that women will assume responsibility like men and also have a fair share of wealth ownership. Bridging gender gap in labour force participation is possible through education. Both men and women in Uganda needs education on the need for women to be empowered. Rural and urban societies should be conscientized on the benefits of women being empowered by having education and access to labour force. To me education remain the main factors that can guarantee women access to labour force. In this case the government should do more, maybe there could be specialized scholarship program for women or reduced tuition fee scheme for women in tertiary institutions. This will motivate more women to attain a higher level of education and increase women's access to the labour force (KI15, Moroto, January18, 2022).

The above response shows that the key informant is in agreement with the former that bridging gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda is important and possible. To the KI, bridging the gap will help the country to achieve the SDGs, which basically emphasized women empowerment as a part towards development. The KI, also believe that to achieve gender parity in labour force, women education must be given attention by the government. He suggested that the government should consider implementing a scholarship program for women, where it will offer partial or full tuition wavier for women in tertiary institutions, as a way to motivate more women to attain higher level of education.

Yes, it is very important and also possible. It is important because it will help our women to be industrious and stop depending on men. In that case, it will relief the men of some financial burden as two sources of income will definitely be better than one. It is possible to achieve gender balance by creating more employment opportunities for women. Also, bridging the gender disparity in pay gaps and the gender ratio in

management positions will be a form of motivation for women to strive to join the labour force (KI09, Kampala, December 20, 2021).

The above KI, also was of the view that it is important and possible to address gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda. To the KI, giving more women the opportunity to gain access into the labour force will empower women and reduce their dependence on men. On how to address the gender gap in labour force participation, the KI suggested that women should be given more opportunities in the formal section. In this case, government and employers of labour should prioritize gender balance in their recruitment policies.

4.3.2: To evaluate the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in women empowerment in Uganda

The second objective of the study examined the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation in women empowerment in Uganda. In doing so, the following questions were asked to the key informants

Item 1: In your opinion, how does gender gap in labour force participation affects women empowerment in Uganda?

The primary impact of gender gap in in labour force participation is that it impoverishes women. When you check in Uganda, you will found out that more women are poor. This is because they are not working to earn money, but working domestically for the survival of the family. Poverty, has therefore become the reward for women not participating in the labour force (KI13, Moroto, January16, 2022).

From the above response from one of the key informant, one can deduce that gender gap in labour force participation is associated with poverty. The fact that women work at home taking care of home chores, they are unable to earn money and therefore remain poor. The above response may serve as an explanation to why there is gender gap in wealth ownership in Uganda.

Gender gap in labour force participation disempowers women and make them to be economically and socially weak. They are economically weak because they are financially disadvantaged and socially weak because they don't have the social status to commend and influence social narratives as a result of being financially disadvantaged. The implication thus is that women are constrained in the households without full participation in the public spheres where decisions are made (KI09, Kampala, December 20, 2021).

The above response indicates that women are financially and socially disadvantaged by not participating like their male counterparts in the labour force. The gap in labour force participation therefore puts women as disadvantage position in terms of wealth ownership, which gives access to social influence.

Yes, I am of the opinion that it has a negative impact on women empowerment. Take for instance, we aspire high in life when we see others around us succeeding in their aspirations. Less women in the labour force will certainly demoralize younger women from aspiring higher. It may limit their desire to attain higher level of education and therefore limit their success rate in life. When you put all these together you will see that gender gap in labour force participation has a negative impact on women empowerment in Uganda (KI03, Kampala, November 10, 2021).

From the response above, the key informants are of the view that gender gap in labour force participation has a negative impact on women empowerment in Uganda. In the KI's view, gender gap in labour force participation demoralizes younger women to aspire high in life and therefore affects the global desire for women empowerment in all facets of life.

4.3.3: To determine possible mechanisms to address gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda

The third objective of the study was to ascertain possible way through which gender disparity in labour force participation in Uganda can be addressed. Based on that, the key informants were asked the following question and their answers presented below.

Item 1: Given that gender mainstreaming is one of the SDGs, how do thing that the gender gap in labour force participation can be effectively addressed?

I will say that women can be empowered through different ways such as provision of education, business capital and training in skills acquisition. If the government can offer women in Uganda free education of half tuition for higher education, then it will increase the desire and motivation for women to attain higher education and gain quality employment. Similarly, providing them with startup capital is also another way that they can be empowered. Women usually don't have collateral in the form of land to get a loan from the bank, therefore they are not able to raise needed capital to start up a business (KI09, Kampala, December 20, 2021).

From the response above, the key informant views education, business capital and training in skills acquisition as the major factors that can influence women empowerment in Uganda. To the KI, if women can get a higher level of education, they will be able to secure a good job. Also, they can be empowered to venture into business through the provision of business startup capital. In this case, higher education is believed to be associated with higher job opportunities, while startup capital will provide opportunity for gainful self-employment to women.

Uganda women can be empowered through business support initiative which will offer then business training and startup funds. What I believe is that women particularly, those in the rural villages will be able to start their own business and compete effectively with their male counterpart and thus become empowered (KI13, Moroto, January16, 2022).

The key informant that provided the information above believes that providing startup capital will help empower Uganda women, however he added that training, perhaps on business management as well as finance management could help in running a successful business. In this case, the KI perceives combination of business training and startup capital as they key to women empowerment.

To empower women in Uganda, one of the things we need is to encourage them to get a better education. With education women can do much, they can compete with others outside the shores of Uganda and even Africa. In my view, education remains the key to women empowerment (KI03, Kampala, November 10, 2021).

The above response suggest that the KI believes that education is the key to women empowerment in Uganda, as it gives them competitive advantage at both local and international levels. The position echoes the argument that education equips women with more skills and knowledge, thus qualifying them for better job opportunities. Besides, it decreases societal gender stereotypes, which promotes the acceptance of women in higher-earning and decision-making positions.

Overall, data gathered from the 25 key informants that were interviewed complimented the data from the literature. The key informants were selected based on their experiences and deep understanding of the main variable investigated by the study. The transcript presented above are some of the excerpts from the interviews. Generally, the key informants provided answers that were very similar or confirmatory of the position of one another in all the questions that were posed to them. Accordingly, the excerpts presented above are a representation of the general view of the key informants, even though they were presented as individual opinion. The excerpts represent the average opinion of the key informants and consequently the study findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study sets out to examine the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation on women empowerment in Uganda. The data in the literature concludes that gender disparity in labour force participation is preeminent in Uganda. Many Uganda women are employed as unpaid family workers, which suggests gender discrimination in occupation choices, but also to exploitation of women. The fact that many women in Uganda are not gainfully employed has a negative impact on household welfare as well as overall national productivity. At household level, it increases and sustains poverty, while at national level it stalls economic growth and development. Apart from many Ugandan women not being gainfully employed, those that are employed are discriminated against with regard to pay, particularly in the private sector. After accounting for education attainment, age, post schooling experience, and sector of employment, women consistently earn much less than men. The implication for the persistence of discrimination in gender pay is the risk of discouraging women from attaining higher education. In this case, the consideration will be that if quality education will not be rewarded due to gender discrimination, what the point pursuing it.

The study also identified different factors that creates and sustain gender inequality and by extension perpetuating poverty in Uganda. The systemic nature of women's economic inequality is evident in widespread structures, ranging from cultural practices and orientation, illiteracy, to marriage and family challenges. The factors identified in the study make it clear that the various factors holding women back and keeping them vulnerable are mutually reinforcing; taken together, they form a wall against women empowerment, thus making impoverishment of women glaring to public discourse. The Ugandan economy continues to be compromised by a structural inequity

that directly affects women, causing great harm especially to the poorest. Thus, the government of Uganda can no longer treat gender inequality as a symptom of poverty that can be addressed through policy initiatives, rather it must begin to initiate pragmatic and practical implementation of corrective measures to address the significant underlying causes.

5.2 Recommendations

While it is not easy to achieve gender equity, it is also not an impossible task to realize. The following steps can be taken to address it.

- i The first step can be through the use of cultural reorientation. As from found in the study that cultural orientation possesses one of the major challenges to women participation in labour force, therefore to address that factor there is need to emphasize cultural reorientation. If Uganda can manage to do away with negative cultural orientations about women participation in formal employment, it will be moving one step closer to achieving gender equity. However, the men can offer a lot of resistance when it comes to cultural reorientation thus, they need to be engaged in this particular reform.
- ii It was also observed that illiteracy is another factor that affects women participation in labour force. Therefore, motivating women and providing then incentive for education will be a progressive approach. In this case, women can be given full or half scholarship to attend higher education. On completion of higher education, they should be gainfully employed or provided capital to start a business. In this case, if they cannot be employed, they should be supported to be gainfully employed by becoming entrepreneurs.
- iii Furthermore, given the very low proportion of women in paid employment, the government of Uganda has to ensure that women are paid wages similar to men for the same work done. This calls for better enforcement of existing anti-discrimination laws, and ensuring that

appropriate punishment is administered when they are violated. In addition, the government has to take active role in promoting female employment. For instance, the government can promulgate a preferential tax policy for private companies if they employ more women and at the same time promote equal wages for both men and women.

- iv Also, the severe constraints on women's time due to child care calls for provision of day care facilities close to women's work places. The private sector could be encouraged to provide close-by day care facilities, either at full cost or subsidized for female employees. This will encourage more women to participate in the formal sector instead of being caregivers to their babies at home.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Irene koriang I am a Master's degree student of Universita Degli Studi Di Padova, Italy. Writing a research thesis is part of the requirements for the award of a Master's Degree in Human rights and multilevel governance Therefore, I am conducting a study on *the impact of gender disparity in labour force participation on women empowerment in Uganda*. I am kindly requesting for your consent and time to participate in an interview for the purpose of collecting data for the study. Be assured that your answers will be held confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

- i Do you agree that there is gap between male and female participation in the labour force in Uganda?
- ii In your opinion, what are the major causes of gender gap in the labour force in Uganda?
- iii Do you think that it is important and possible to bridge gender gap in labour force participation in Uganda?
- iv In your opinion, how does gender gap in labour force participation affects women empowerment in Uganda?
- v Given that gender mainstreaming is one of the SDGs, how do thing that the gender gap in labour force participation can be effectively addressed?