

Effect of Socio-Cultural Factors on Women's Participation in Leadership of Higher Education in Rwanda: A Case of Rwanda Polytechnics

Flavia Agirumubya¹
Jean de Dieu Amini Ngabonziza²

¹agirumufu@gmail.com
²aminingabonziza@yahoo.fr

¹<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-9335-3284>

²<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0248-6812>

¹Assistant Lecturer at Rwanda Polytechnique and MED Candidate at University of Kigali

²University of Rwanda

ABSTRACT

This study explored the effects of social cultural factors on women's participation level in leadership positions. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Data was collected using questionnaires. A sample of a total of 72 respondents was used in this study. These included 72 female teachers of 5 IPRCs in Rwanda. The data obtained through questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS. The findings showed that socio-cultural factors were affecting women in IPRCs and resulting in their underrepresentation in leadership positions in Polytechnic Institutions in Rwanda ($r=0.661$). In addition, this meant that the relationship between socio-cultural factors of women and their participation in Polytechnic Institutions in Rwanda was strong. The R-squared of 0.550 implied that a unit change in socio-cultural factors predicts 0.767 changes in the participation of women in Polytechnic Institutions in Rwanda. The F-value of 36.241 and the corresponding p-value ($p = 0.001$) which is less than 0.05 implied that socio-cultural factors affects the representation of women teaching in Polytechnic Institutions in Rwanda. The study concluded that family responsibilities regulated by socio-cultural norms, women involvement, various cultural aspects and religion have an influence on their participation in leadership. The study strongly recommended that all appropriate stakeholders should make a concerted effort to ensure that the different institutions of society (families, schools, universities, communities and the government) respect Rwandan women's rights. This request to meet their needs and requirements by means of laws, rules policies, economic empowerment, up-skilling, procedures, standards, daily practices and national forums on gender inequality. It also requires identifying and developing strategies for dealing with the existing gender issues and concerns in higher educational institutions in order to increase women's participation in leadership positions.

Keywords: Family Responsibilities, Leadership, Socio-Cultural Factors, Women's Academic Involvement, Women's Cultural Aspect

I. INTRODUCTION

Investing in girls' education and training has concrete social and economic benefits as it equips them for work and increases their lifetime earnings (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA], 2019). In Africa, education not only provides girls with social, economic and health benefits but their families as well. However, African girls and women continue to be disadvantaged in education and training. It is therefore not surprising that both the Millennium Development Goals (Goal 3) and the new UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development include goals on inclusive, quality and equitable education as well as promotion of gender equality and women empowerment (Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5). The African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 also calls for gender equality in all spheres of life, with an emphasis on women and girls' empowerment and protection against violence and discrimination. Investing in women and girls' education and training will ensure that these targets are achieved.

The Government of Rwanda has always recognised that "education is a fundamental human right and an essential tool to ensure that all Rwandan citizens – women and men, girls and boys – realize their full potential" (MINEDUC, 2018). Indeed, the country is widely viewed as one of the most progressive with regard to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, in 2016, girls' enrolment in primary and secondary schools surpassed that of boys standing at 97.4% for the former and 96.3% for the latter at primary level, and 30% for girls against 26.4% for boys at secondary level (MINEDUC, 2016). However, recent figures point to a slight decrease of 1.8% in girls' enrolment while boys decreased by 1% (MINEDUC, 2018). The decrease in the number of girls could

be attributed to the high rate of dropout observed in primary 6 at 8.6% and primary 2 at 6.6% around the same period. The Ministry of Education acknowledged the change in girls' numbers as an unachieved target (MINEDUC, 2018).

Girls' enrolment at secondary level for the period 2016 to 2018 was higher than that of boys in both public and government-aided schools but not in private schools (MINEDUC, 2018). Furthermore, the Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des ménages [EICV])² of 2016/2017 shows that girls' Net Attendance Rate (NAR) in secondary school stood at 25% compared to boys at 21% (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda [NISR], 2021). Despite these advances, female students' access to and participation in higher education remains limited; especially in public universities where they consistently represent only about a third of the student population. For example, at the University of Rwanda (UR), the only public and biggest university in the country, the proportion of female students fluctuated between 32 and 34% between 2012 and 2017 (UR, 2020). According to the NISR (2018), the proportion of females aged 16 and older attending various public tertiary institutions in rural and urban areas stood at 1.1- 1.5% from 2013 to 2016, compared to 1.7-2.0% for males (NISR, 2018). The situation is reversed in private higher learning institutions (HLIs) where female student representation is higher than that of males.

A number of barriers may hinder female students from accessing higher education and these differ in different contexts. According to Nesaratnam et al. (2022), the reasons for exclusion from higher education are difficult to unpack as they are underscored by the complex dynamics of class, gender and race. Experiences are complex and relational and are located at the intersection of structure, culture and agency (Mirza, 2020). However, scholars have also observed that organisational or institutional, socio-cultural and individual factors contribute to underrepresentation of females in HLIs in terms of both staff and students (Osumba, 2021). Another key factor is whether the HLI is public or private. In the 2017/2018 academic year, female students in Rwandan private tertiary HLIs outnumbered their male counterparts (51.1% female, 48.9% male). However, in public institutions, the reverse was true, with female students at 31.5% compared to males at 68.5%. The two preceding academic years showed a similar trend (MINEDUC, 2018).

Rwanda has made tremendous achievements in improving access of both males and females all levels of education (Ngabonziza et al., 2019; Aikman, 2020). To this end, reforms and equity measures have been undertaken to promote gender equality within the Rwandan education system. However, while the proportion of female teachers is quite good at lower and secondary levels of education but it shrinks at tertiary educational ladder. In this perspective, enrollment, participation, retention and achievement rates of women are still lower at technical tertiary education levels compared to men. In fact, girls are more likely to enroll in courses related to social studies mostly available in private institutions rather than enrolling in science and technical related courses available in public universities and consequently females are under-represented in both academic and administration positions at tertiary levels of technical education (Odhiambo, 2021).

The importance of females accessing the same education as males is more important due to the implicit recognition of women as the greatest engine of economic growth if they are given opportunities as their male counterparts (World Bank, 2020). Rwanda recognizes women as fully participating members of society by law and as such each female is entitled to all the rights, responsibilities, and privileges in all sphere of life. In Rwanda, women have been granted equal chances in enrolling in any course and can therefore gain access to any career of their choice (Steady, 2019). In spite of guaranteeing equality in the constitution and removing legal barriers to equal participation of men and women, available statistics show that women have failed to participate equally with men in the technical oriented jobs (Centre for Gender Studies, 2017). Rwanda has greatly invested in TVET as a means for the achievement of the Vision 2020 of turning the country into a middle-income nation by 2020. Several policies have been designed and implemented for the same, the number of Vocation institutions increased and the quality of training continues to be improved. This research seeks to find out the effect of socio-cultural factors of women on their participation in leadership in higher education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Women's various discriminations and less participation in any sector of development is an agenda of every country. According to UN (1995) equality between men and women is a matter of human right and a condition for social justice, and basic pre-requisite for democracy, development, peace and good governance. In spite of this, we see a glaring inequality in all sectors particularly in developing nations like Rwanda. In the technical education sector, women are underrepresented for instance women teaching in Rwanda Polytechnic as a data collection survey on technical and vocational education and training in the republic of Rwanda conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2021 has shown, the number of females in academic was significantly low with only 73 females out of 780 men in all IPRCs. Thus, as the above facts indicate, the problem of underrepresentation of



women in teaching in IPRCs is a felt problem. It is this stark gap that was a motivation to pick up this topic. In view of the above points this study explored the socio-cultural factors behind this underrepresentation; it requires establishing the socio-cultural factors that cause the low number of women in IPRCs despite the many concerted efforts being made to link this difference. This study suggested further research for understanding the other factors behind that underrepresentation. Therefore, based on these facts and the scarcity of related research on the regions, the researcher believed that further researches are needed to identify the effect of socio-cultural factors of women on their participation in leadership in higher education and finally to come up with different measures that would help increase their representation in different positions in IPRCs.

1.2 Hypothesis of the study

The study sought to answer the following research hypotheses.

H₀₁: There is no effect between family responsibilities regulated by socio-cultural norms and women participation in leadership of Rwanda Polytechnic.

H₀₂: There is no effect between women academic involvement and women participation in leadership of Rwanda Polytechnic

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design was employed because it guaranteed breadth of observation and also provide for the accurate descriptive analysis of characteristics of a sample which was used to make inferences about the effect of social cultural factors of women on their participation in leadership in higher learning institutions. The descriptive survey design was used to collect data using various instruments to describe the characteristics of the population under study. The study focused on 72 females teaching in 5 IPRCs. As the total population was small, the researcher used census technique that is why the total population became the sample size. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data for this study. The advantage of using this method of data collection is the affordability in gathering quantitative data. It makes it quick and easy to collect and administer the data collected. The questionnaire was designed to gather data from the women teaching in IPRCs. The collected data from the respondents were coded; organized, entered and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings were presented in simple descriptive statistics using some tables, bar charts and percentage to highlight the respondent’s perception. A Multiple Regression Model was used to analyse the relationship and establish which among the independent variables are related to the dependent variable

$$\text{Where: } Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu$$

Y = participation in the leadership

α = The Y intercept

X₁ = Family responsibility

X₂ = Women’s academic involvement

X₃ = Cultural aspects and religion

μ = error term

III. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Response Rate

From a sample of 72 female teachers of the IPRC that participated in the present study, 70 employees representing 97.2% of the respondents replied to the questionnaire and 2 employees representing 2.8% of the respondents did not reply to the questionnaire. Therefore, the study analyzed 70 questionnaires.

Table 1

Rate of response

Response rate	Frequency	Percentage
Replied	70	97.2
No reply	2	2.8
Total	72	100

3.1.2 Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of socio-cultural factors on women's participation in leadership of higher learning institutions in Rwanda. The study was guided by the following two objectives: to identify the effect of family responsibilities regulated by socio-culture norms on women participation in Rwanda Polytechnic and to determine the effect of women academic involvement on women participation in Rwanda Polytechnic. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics, such as computational of mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The analysed data was presented in the form of tables. Summary of the findings are presented based on the objectives of the study in the following subtopics.

3.1.2.1 Effect of Family Responsibilities of Women on Their Participation in Leadership

The objective one of the present study was to establish the effect of family responsibilities on women's participation in leadership in RP. To achieve this objective, the researcher asked a set of questions to female teachers related to their opinion rated by Likert Scale.

Table 2

Level of Agreement on Family Responsibilities of Women Regulated by Socio-Cultural Norms and Their Participation in Leadership

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Women are more likely to be restricted geographically by their partners' Profession, while that situation rarely occurs to men.	70	4.25	1.362
Women are supposed to produce children and do kitchen work	70	3.97	1.190
Family and personal obligations lead to exclusion of women from managerial positions in higher education	70	3.85	1.336
Higher educational institutions do not provide support for women with family responsibilities	70	4.97	1.481
Difficulties with balancing the demands of family and work are recurrent barrier to female advancement to leadership positions	70	2.00	1.275
Women still devote more time to childcare and domestic chores	70	4.48	1.292
Average Mean		3.92	

This section elicited information from the respondents about the effect of family responsibility regulated by socio-cultural norms on women participation in leadership in RP. Table 2 showed that the mean of the respondents (4.97) agreed that higher education institutions do not provide support to women with family responsibilities, (4.48) agreed that the women still devote more time to childcare and domestic chores, (4.25) agreed that Women are more likely to be restricted geographically by their partners' Profession, while that situation rarely occurs to men, (3.97) agreed that the women are supposed to produce children and do kitchen work and (3.85) agreed that the Family and personal obligations lead to exclusion of women from managerial positions in higher education while (2.00) disagreed that the Difficulties with balancing the demands of family and work are recurrent barrier to female advancement to leadership positions. So the mean score for the responses was (3.92), which indicates that most of the respondents agreed that the higher educational institutions do not provide support for women with family responsibilities.

3.1.2.2 Effect of Women's Academic Involvement on Their Participation in RP

The second objective of the present study was to examine the effect of women's academic involvement on their participation in Rwanda Polytechnic Institutions. This Objective data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative (using SPSS Version 20) method of data analysis. The data collected through questionnaires were presented in table with frequency distributions (N) and means.



Table 3
Women Academic Involvement on Their Participation in Leadership

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lack of women academic involvement causes women’s participation rate at senior leadership level to be very low	70	4.45	1.365
Women’s education is very low thus unable to have access to leadership positions in universities	70	4.34	1.511
Women need a lot of lobbying in order for them to get access to leadership positions in universities	70	2.21	1.424
Men can pursue careers in higher education leadership, but the same is often difficult for women	70	3.38	1.420
Female teachers fail to hold education leadership position, owing to their lack of sufficient professional qualifications.	70	3.88	1.371
Women have inadequate skills and knowledge that are vital to successful decision-making skills	70	3.27	1.294
Average Mean		3.59	

This second objective of the study indicated respondent’s opinions on the Influence of women academic involvement on their participation in leadership in RP. Table 3 showed that the mean of respondents (4.45) agreed that the Lack of women academic involvement causes women’s participation rate at senior leadership level to be very low, (4.34) agreed that the women’s education is very low thus unable to have access to leadership positions in universities, (3.88) agreed that the female teachers fail to hold education leadership positions, owing to their lack of sufficient professional qualifications, (3.38) agreed that Men can pursue careers in higher education leadership, but the same is often difficult for women,(3.27) agreed that Women have inadequate skills and knowledge that are vital to successful decision-making skills while (2.60) disagreed that women need a lot of lobbying in order for them to get access to leadership positions in universities. So, the average score for the responses was (3.59) which indicated that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that the Lack of women academic involvement causes women’s participation rate at senior leadership level to be very low.

3.1.3 Inferential Statistics
3.1.3.1 Correlation analysis

In this section, Pearson correlation is used to examine the relationship between the independent variables (IV) and the dependent variable (DV). The results of the correlations between the independent variables and the dependent variables are summarized and presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Relationship between Independent and Dependent Variables

		Family Responsibilities	Women Academic Involvement	Cultural Aspects And Religion	Participation In Leadership
Family Responsibilities	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	70			
Women academic involvement	Pearson Correlation	-.171	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.130			
	N	70	70		
Cultural aspects and religion	Pearson Correlation	-.201	.034	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.074	.765		
	N	70	70	70	
Participation In Leadership	Pearson Correlation	-.328**	.661**	.382**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.000	
	N	70	70	70	70

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

Table 4 indicates the relationship between independent and dependent variable. Pearson correlation analysis findings were presented in table 4.8. The correlation existing between participation in leadership and all the independent variables; family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion were



strong and positive and negative for some (-0.328, 0.661 and 0.382 respectively) significant at the 0.01 level. All the predictor variable; family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion were satisfactory with a significant level of 0.000 each.

3.1.3.2 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was also carried out to test to assess the effect of socio-cultural factors on participation in leadership. The results of the regression are shown in the following tables

Table 5

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.767 ^a	.589	.572	.64306

a. Predictors: (Constant), family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion

Table 5 above indicates the model summary and gives the value for multiple R, and the adjusted R is 0.767^a whereas R square is 0.589. This shows that the predictor of socio-cultural factors of women (family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion) is constant. This is frequently used to describe the goodness of fit or the amount variance explained by a given set of predictor variables and its value is 57 % of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by independent variables in the model. The results are shown in table 6.

Table 6

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	44.960	3	14.987	36.241	.000 ^b
	Residual	31.428	76	.414		
	Total	76.387	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Participation in Leadership
 b. Predictors: (Constant), family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion

Table 6 presented ANOVA statistics which indicates that the overall model was statistically significant. Probability (p) value of 0.000 supported this. The results of F test on 0.01 important level was F-estimate>-table, F-table, F estimate=36.241 and P is .000b which is <0.05. As such, the model was meaningful at 1% important level. The reported p was significant in this study because it was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level. These results indicate that family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion: independent variables are good predictors of participation in Leadership

Table 7

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.186	.309		3.841	.000
	Family responsibility	-.248	.122	-.155	-2.036	.045
	Women academic involvement	.460	.055	.623	8.345	.000
	Cultural aspects and religion	.333	.076	.330	4.390	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Participation in Leadership

Table 7 above indicates that Kernel of regression analysis in which $Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \mu$ The social cultural factors of women with three sub variables that are family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion are constant and it has unstandardized coefficients B equal to 3.186 when is constant. The Std error is 0.309. Thus, according to Kernel formula, the social cultural factors of women three variables that are family responsibility, women academic involvement and cultural aspects and religion equal to: $Y = 1.186 - 0.248X_1 + 0.460X_2 + 0.333X_3 + \epsilon$ is effective and efficiency of decision making which is dependent variables.



The findings through regression results indicated that the independent variable which is social cultural factors of women have significant positive effect in leadership participation. These findings support research objectives. These findings are consistent with the findings of Momanyi (2013) who found that there was little data on the levels and quality of employment undertaken by females who had access to higher education. He further observed that women form a small number of academicians at university although recognizable achievements have been recorded in the arts faculties. Graduate women lack options in employment, promotions and upward mobility because of discrimination and their roles as housewives. This situation needs a change both in the cultural attitude and sex stereotyping of jobs so as to improve women representation in educational management.

3.1.4 Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis testing is used to examine a regression analysis test. Regression test was used to examine the effect of independent variable on dependent variable. The hypothesis testing was performed by using SPSS tool and the result is as presented in Table 9.

In statistics significance testing the p-value indicates the level of relation of the independent variable to the dependent variable. If the significance number found is less than the critical value also known as the probability value (p) which is statistically set at 0.05, then the conclusion would be that the model is significant in explaining the relationship; else the model would be regarded as non-significant.

Table 8
Summary of Hypotheses

S/N	Hypothesis	Rule	P-Value	Comment
1	H ₀₁ : There is no effect of family responsibilities of women on their participation in RP	Reject H ₀ if p value <0.05	p<0.05	Family responsibilities of women affects their participation to high learning institutions in RP
2	H ₀₂ : There is no effect of women academic involvement on in their participation in RP	Reject H ₀ if p value <0.05	p<0.05	Women academic involvement on in their participation affects high learning institutions in RP

The Table above indicates the summary results of hypothesis. The regression R value obtained, in which r = 0.767^a (see Table 4.9) represented the correlation coefficient of the model whose order value > 0. This illustrates that the incorporation of many variables improved the model when analyzing the effect of socio-cultural factors of women on participation in leadership in high learning institutions. The adjusted r² value of, r = 0.589, also indicates that the multiple linear regression model could explain for approximately 57% of the variations in participation in leadership. This indicates that the socio-cultural factors of women have a great effect on participation in leadership. To identify the independent variables that were mostly responsible for effective devolution in the area, the beta value was used.

Therefore, the researchers can conclude by saying that the research hypotheses including: “H₀₁: There is no effect between family responsibility and women participation to high education in Rwanda Polytechnic, H₀₂: There is no effect between women academic involvement on women participation to high education in Rwanda Polytechnic and H₀₃: There is no effect between cultural aspects and religion and women participation to higher education in Rwanda Polytechnic, all were tested; verified and then they were rejected referring to the statistical (regression analysis) findings and then according to the research, the correlation of 57% categorized as positive and very high correlation; this leads to confirm that there is significant relationship between socio-cultural factors of women and participation in leadership in RP.

3.2 Discussions

The study findings revealed that Family responsibilities of women affects participation in leadership when women are more likely to be restricted geographically by their partners while that situation rarely occurs to men, when women are supposed to produce children and do kitchen work, when family and personal obligations lead to exclusion of women from managerial positions in higher education, when higher educational institutions do not provide support for women with family responsibilities and these difficulties with balancing the demands of family and work are recurrent barrier to female advancement to leadership positions women still devote more time to childcare and domestic chores.

These findings are relevant with Omotosso (2022) unpaid caregiving responsibilities not only take up a significant amount of rural women's time, but also reduce their employment opportunities and income. Thus, family care arrangements have a direct impact on gender equality, rural women's development, and household economic levels.

Besides, the study findings also showed that women academic involvement affects their participation in RP when lack of women academic involvement causes women's participation rate at senior leadership level to be very low, when Women's education is very low thus unable to have access to leadership positions in universities, when Women need a lot of lobbying in order for them to get access to leadership positions in universities. Besides, Men can pursue careers in higher education leadership, but the same is often difficult for women as they to hold education leadership position, owing to their lack of sufficient professional qualifications. Lastly the findings also indicated that women have inadequate skills and knowledge that are vital to successful decision-making skills.

These findings are supported by as earlier studies (Harris, 2019; Potpourri & Perumal, 2019; Casad et al., 2021) which have focused attention on gender disparity in leadership positions among academia in citadel of learning. There have been quantitative, qualitative, mixed studies and systematic reviews on gender inequality. For instance, Cased et al. (2021) found that academic climate for women is chilly laced with bias and harassment. Similarly, women are usually multitasked and overburdened as they function as caregivers shouldering increased domestic works plus their assignments in their places of work but not well represented in leadership positions (Evans & Pfizer, 2021). A systematic review on the kind of intervention programmes that can be embarked upon to support female in academic medicine is also a significant reference.

IV. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

This study concluded that socio-cultural factors affect women participation in higher learning institutions. It has rejected the three research hypotheses including: “ H_{01} : There is no effect between family responsibility and women participation to high education in Rwanda Polytechnic, H_{02} : There is no effect between women academic involvement on women participation to high education in Rwanda Polytechnic and H_{03} : There is no effect between cultural aspects and religion and women participation to higher education in Rwanda Polytechnic”.

4.2 Recommendations

Thus it recommends that all were tested; verified and then they were rejected referring to the statistical (regression analysis) findings and then according to the research, the correlation of 0.589 categorized as positive and very high correlation; this leads to confirm that there is significant relationship between socio-cultural of women and their participation in leadership in higher learning institutions that all appropriate stakeholders should make a concerted effort to ensure that the different institutions of society (the family, the school, the university, the community and the government) respect Rwandan women's rights and meet their needs and requirements by means of laws, rules policies, economic empowerment, up-skilling, procedures, standards, daily practices and national forums on gender inequality to identify and develop strategies for dealing with the existing gender issues and concerns in higher educational institutions in order to increase women's participation in leadership positions. In addition, every endeavor should be made to cause a change in women's traditional role in society by raising peoples 'awareness of the existing gender imbalance in the leadership of organizations to make them very conscious of the negative stereotyping, gender discrimination and hegemonic control of men over women in formal and non-formal institutions with intent to urge employers in particular to take a meritocratic approach with men and women when recruiting and selecting candidates for jobs. Lastly, women themselves should struggle for greater autonomy in their lives and strive to free themselves from the traditional opinions or ways of behaving that limit in what they think or do in order for them to get better access to high places in organizations.

REFERENCES

- Aikman, S., & Unterhalter, E. (Eds). (2020). *Practicing gender equality in education*. Oxford: Oxfam GB.
- Casad, B. J., Franks, J. E., Garasky, C. E., Kittleman, M. M., Roesler, A. C., Hall, D. Y., & Petzel, Z. W. (2021). Centre for Gender Studies. (2017). *Understanding the Causes of Low Female Enrolment at the University of Rwanda*. University of Rwanda. Kigali: Centre for Gender Studies.
- Evans, A. B., & Pfister, G. U. (2021). Women in sports leadership: A systematic narrative review. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 56(3), 317 -342.

- Gender inequality in academia: Problems and solutions for women faculty in STEM. *Journal of Neuroscience Research*, 99(1), 13 -23
- Harris, B. (2019). *Women in Leadership: A Qualitative Review of challenges, experiences, and strategies in Addressing Gender Bias* (Dissertation, UT School of Public Health Dissertations).
- MINEDUC. (2003). *Education Sector Policy*. Kigali.
- MINEDUC. (2013). *Education Sector Strategic Plan (2013-2017)*. MINEDUC, Kigali.
- MINEDUC. (2016). *2015 Education Statistical Year Book*. <http://www.mineduc.gov.rw/>
- Mirza, H.S. (2020). Decolonizing Higher Education: Black Feminism and the Intersectionality of Race and Gender. *Journal of Feminist Scholarship*, 7(Fall), 1-12.
- Nesaratnam, S., Mamba, T.N., & Singh, J.S.K. (2022). A Study on the Gender Digital Divide: Overcoming the Under-Representation of South African Women in IT Sector. *Business Management and Strategy*, 9(2), 151-168.
- Ngabonziza, A.J., Sibomana, E., Niyibizi, E., & Ndayambaje, I. (2019). Gender Identity Construction Through Traditional and Modern Lenses: Rwandan Narratives and MDGs Perspectives. *Studies in Media and Communication*, 7 (1), 95-102. <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v7i1.4347>
- NISR. (2018). *The 5th EICV5 2016/2017: Education Thematic Report*. Kigali: National Institute of Statistics Rwanda.
- Odhiambo, G. (2020). Women and Higher Education Leadership in Kenya: A Critical Analysis. *J. Higher Edu. Pol. Manag.*, 33 (6), 667–678.
- Omotoso, S. A. (2022). Barriers to middle -level academic leadership for female academics in Nigerian higher education. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, 18(2), 77 -98.
- Osumba, B.A. (2021). Representation of Women in Top Educational Management Leadership Positions in Kenya. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 31, 57-68.
- Potokri, O. C., & Perumal, J. (2019). Offerings of women in the transformation of African higher education: A retrospective overview. *Education and Urban Society*, 51(6), 804 -821.
- Republic of Rwanda. (2019). *Beijing +25 Rwanda Country Report*. Gender Monitoring Office
- Steady, F. C. (2019). *Women and Leadership in West Africa: Mothering the Nation and Humanizing the State*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan
- UNECA. (2019). *Africa Gender Index Report*. UNECA.
- University of Rwanda. (2018). *Undergraduate programmes offered at the University of Rwanda with respective fees for academic year 2018-2019*. Kigali.
- World Bank. (2020). *Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development*. World Bank.