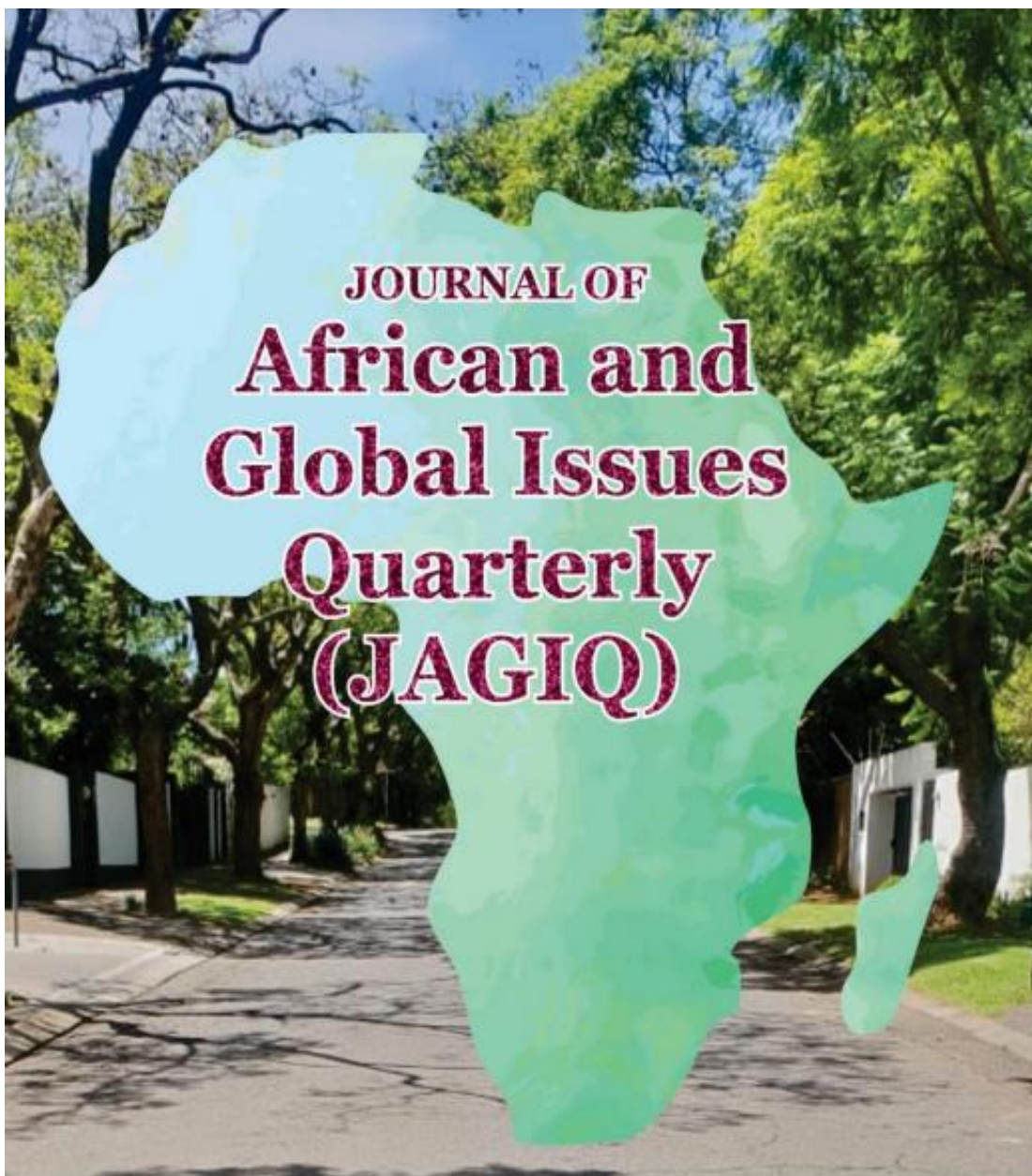




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EDITORIAL NOTE

This volume represents concerted calls within and outside Africa on the need for multidisciplinary collaboration and research output. Specifically, papers were drawn from all disciplines and research focuses, which has further increased the quality of research and collegial engagement. Hence, topics covered in this volume cut across the areas of economics, politics, security, ICT, indigenous knowledge, development studies, finance, trade, youth engagement, agriculture, democratization, and nation-building, among others.

For instance, Thizwilondi Josephine Mudau in *African Youths and the Promotion of Sustainable Development through the Lens of Indigenous Knowledge (IKS) in the 21st Century* employed qualitative desktop research methodology in synthesizing existing literature to argue that IKS represents a dynamic body of wisdom encompassing sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, and community resilience and offers proven, contextually grounded solutions to modern challenges like climate change and food insecurity. The analysis highlights youth-led initiatives across the continent that are revitalizing indigenous crops, integrating traditional ecological knowledge with climate adaptation strategies, and using digital platforms for cultural preservation. Mudau concluded that for Africa to achieve authentic and sustainable development, a concerted effort is needed to empower youth through inclusive education, supportive policy frameworks, and intergenerational dialogue, thereby transforming indigenous knowledge from a cultural heritage into a living toolkit for a resilient future.

Masila Joshua Masipa in *Beneficiaries of Corruption? An analysis of the function of South African banks in handling and making money from crime proceeds* adopted institutional theory and the political economy of corruption and a qualitative research design that combines semi-structured interviews with compliance officers, financial regulators, and civil society actors with document analysis of Zondo Commission and Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) reports, legal statutes, and policy papers in examining how, in spite of strict anti-money-laundering (AML) and anti-corruption laws, South African banks may profit from, handle, or ineffectively stop the flow of monies associated with corruption. Specifically, with an emphasis on whether banks directly or indirectly benefit from the proceeds of crime, Masipa investigated the relationship between financial institutions and illegal financial flows within the following objectives: (1) assess the regulatory framework that oversees AML compliance; (2) examine high-profile cases of corruption in which banks are implicated; (3) evaluate due diligence and institutional accountability; and (4) suggest changes to improve ethical banking governance.

Then Sipho Patrick Bhengu-Mancosa & Andrishah Beharry-Ramraj in *Advancing Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprise Growth through Digitalized Enterprise and Supplier Development in South Africa* examined the current state of Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) in South Africa, investigated the role of digitalization in enhancing ESD, identified the challenges and opportunities in digitalizing ESD, and provided recommendations for policymakers, corporates, and Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). A qualitative secondary data approach was employed, drawing on thematic analysis of existing literature, reports, and industry initiatives. For key findings, Bhengu-Mancosa & Beharry-Ramraj indicated that ESD adoption remains limited; digitalization (Mancosa) significantly enhances market access and supplier diversity; infrastructure and skills gaps persist; and strategic digital integration can unlock growth opportunities for SMMEs.

Lere Amusan & Ebenezer O. Oni, in their study, *Disinvestment of Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in Developing Areas: An Assessment of Shoprite Disengagement in*

Nigeria, started by reflecting on why, at the global level, many MNCs have started to disengage from their host states. In a bid to respond to the possible reasons, Amusan & Oni pushed further into examining possible reasons that could explain why Shoprite, a large South African retailing company, disinvested from Nigeria after operating in the country for about 15 years, using secondary sources supported by primary data and personal observations. For them, the reasons range from political, economic, marketing, and legal to civil society attitudes towards their business. Employing the twin theories of neoliberalism and oligopoly that facilitate globalization, Amusan & Oni concluded that, aside from losing litigation to its erstwhile Nigerian business partners, competition from domestic and foreign retail companies contributed in no small measure to why Shoprite exited the Nigerian market.

In A sober teacher is a problem”: Unpacking Political Ideology and Emancipatory Struggles Within teacher unionism, Zwane Thembinkosi Trevor & Matsepe David adopted the grounded postcolonial theory in examining how teacher unions embody and deploy political stances and ideologies to promote the emancipation and freedom of education, as well as the broader communities they aim to serve. Clearly, Trevor and Matsepe employed a qualitative interpretivist approach to analyze data from narrative interviews with unionized educators, along with further examination of public union discussions. Key findings of their research indicated four interrelated themes: (1) political consciousness as both a threat to order and a driver of democratic emancipation; (2) teacher unions functioning as a counter-hegemonic force challenging neoliberal geopolitics and political norms; (3) the ideological repositioning of teacher unions as intellectual activists rather than compliant officials; and (4) tensions between political agency and professional identity.

Douglas Nyath in Rural Youth and the Future of Farming in Sub-Saharan Africa: Revisiting the Abandonment Debate explored whether rural youth are truly abandoning agriculture or are instead redefining their involvement through diversified livelihood strategies. It examines the socio-economic, institutional, and cultural factors influencing youth decisions and analyzes how emerging hybrid forms of engagement—such as agripreneurship and part-time farming—are reshaping rural economies. A systematic desktop synthesis of peer-reviewed literature (2000–2025) was conducted using databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. Nyaath observed that youth disengagement from agriculture is not uniform but context-specific, and the key determinants to such disengagement include land scarcity, education, labor market structures, gender norms, and limited access to finance and technology.

Then, in ***Equal Ideals, Unequal Realities: Gender Dynamics in the Workplace of an International Religious Non-governmental Organisation in Eswatini***, Thembumenzi Jomo Ntshalintshali & Innocent Simphiwe Nojiyeza examined attitudes, experiences, and organizational practices regarding gender roles, power dynamics, and inclusivity by drawing on in-depth interviews and focus groups with 20 employees from a range of departments and hierarchical levels. The results of their findings show that male participants, who were primarily ideologically devoted to gender equality, showed conflicted feelings about shifting power dynamics. Unconscious bias, policy implementation gaps, and organizational culture were equally identified as the primary obstacles to change. The results emphasize that in order to guarantee changes in gender equality, context-specific solutions are required that go beyond the adoption of policies.

In Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Environmental Conservation Ngugi’s Petals of Blood, Thabo Prince Zondo started by reflecting on members of the impoverished and socio-economically disadvantaged community who are distressed by incessant drought and who consult

a seer and offer sacrifices to seek solutions. Using this as a point of departure, Zondo explored how text gestures and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) address the real dilemmas faced by Africans following the extensive and cross-generational crises that accompany coloniality. In this, Zondo provided an ecocritical reading of the text, drawing on relevant postcolonial/decolonial ideas to illustrate the ways in which indigenous African epistemologies can indeed boost efforts at environmental conservation and poverty alleviation in rural communities today.

Also, **Rendani Tshifhumul** in *Exploring the Role of African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Healing Practices and Resilience During the COVID-19 pandemic in Thohoyandou*, presented a narrative inquiry into the experiences of individuals who survived COVID-19 without requiring hospitalization, based on in-depth interviews with three respondents. For Tshifhumul, among the identified practices were the inhalation of steam treated with stones and salt, as well as the application of various herbal concoctions, including *Tshiumbeumbe*, *Musese*, *Mufula Musudzungwane*, *Miora*, and *Mubomo*, guava leaves, and lemon grass tea, including a mixture that comprises onion, ginger, lemon, honey, and garlic. Therefore, Tshifhumul concludes that these findings not only shed light on the adaptive strategies employed by individuals in response to the pandemic but also underscore the significance of traditional healing practices in the context of contemporary health crises. Khulisile Judith Nkuna & Sikhumbuzo Sibuso Khoza, in their work, *Capturing Cultural Heritage: Exploring the Poetic Elements of Domesticated Animal Praise*, carried out an analytical analysis of the lyrical components found in the praises of Siswati domestic animals. Nkuna & Khoza observed that expressing gratitude to animals for their contributions to human life remains a significant goal of animal praise. Reflecting on case studies, they noted that the Nguni people view domestic animals as very close environmental companions, particularly for those who live in rural areas. Praise poetry's primary goal is to commemorate great men's accomplishments. However, the reverse is the case for the Swati people, who have a tradition of honoring non-human animals in their poetry, including the wild animals they encounter in their environs as well as the domestic livestock they raise.

Intaher M. Ambe, Ellsworth C. Jonathan, Phathutshedzo D. Lavhelani,* and David H. Selby, in their study, *Exploring the landscape of demand management practices in the public health sector in the Gauteng Province, South Africa: An Empirical Analysis*, employed secondary sources in determining what demand management practices are employed within Gauteng, South Africa, and public health sector institutions. Findings in their study revealed substantial obstacles in organizational structure, demand management techniques, budget, and alignment between demand planning and strategic goals, as well as supply chain management (SCM) rules, regulations, and specifications. They conclude that the paucity of demand management implementation in public sector organizations reveals a misalignment between strategic goals, demand management, and demand planning, resulting in a loss of value for public sector organizations.

Aderinsola E. Kayode, Shalini Sing, & Patricia P. Badenhorst's research, *ICT for Indigenous Knowledge Dissemination and Education in Africa: A Systematic Review*, conducted a systematic review of literature published between 2015 and 2025 to examine how ICT tools and platforms have been deployed to support indigenous knowledge dissemination and education in African contexts. The findings of their research indicated that ICT can enhance indigenous knowledge preservation, improve youth engagement, facilitate intergenerational learning, and broaden global visibility of African knowledge systems when implemented with community participation. However, challenges remain regarding digital

access, cultural sensitivity, intellectual property rights, and the sustainability of technology-driven initiatives.

In ***Donald Trump-Twitter Diplomatic Disruptions And Impact On The Post-World War II International Order.***, Ndivhoniswani Aaron Tshidzumba & Puseletso Nthate examine how President Donald Trump's unprecedented use of Twitter as a direct channel for foreign policy communication disrupted established diplomatic norms inherited from the post-World War II international order. Through content analysis of Trump's social media communications, examination of foreign policy outcomes, and comparative analysis with traditional diplomatic practices, Tshidzumba & Nthate demonstrated that Trump's social media presidency constituted a significant departure from institutional diplomacy and contributed to broader challenges facing the established international order. Further findings reveal that digital direct engagement by heads of state bypasses institutional constraints, undermines multilateral consensus-building, and creates new vulnerabilities in international relations.

Furthermore, in ***Determinants And Effect Of Small-Scale Livestock Production On Household Income In Malawi: Evidence From Fifth Integrated Household Survey***, Gladson Andrew Chipala, Christopher Chombo & Hannah Dunga examined the determinants and effects of small-scale livestock production on household income among farmers in Malawi, using cross-sectional data from the Fifth Integrated Household Survey (IHS5) with a sample of 8,795 households. Their key findings indicate that household size, access to credit, access to extension services, landholding size, distance to the market, and location in the Northern region significantly increase the likelihood of participation in livestock production. Notably, households engaged in livestock production earned, on average, an additional MWK 36,405.76 compared to non-producing households, demonstrating its important role in improving economic welfare.

In ***Navigating Artificial Intelligence Personalization and Consumer Privacy in Digital Marketing across South Africa and Global Contexts***, Suraksha Moothura and Andrishah Beharry-Ramraj critically examined how AI-driven hyper-personalization in digital marketing influences consumer privacy, with a specific focus on its ethical implications and regulatory challenges in South Africa in comparison to global standards using desktop literature review methodology. Moothura & Beharry—Ramraj observed that ethical concerns such as manipulation, algorithmic bias, and reduced consumer autonomy were found to be inadequately addressed in South Africa, where legal instruments like POPIA lack the specificity and enforcement capacity evident in global standards like the GDPR. Taleat, Bisiriyu Abiodun & Lukamba, Muhlya Tshombe's article, ***Energy Sustainability and Sustainable Development Agenda: The Role of Public-Private Partnership in South Africa***, investigated the role and effectiveness of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in South Africa's energy development towards sustainability using a qualitative desk research methodology to analyze secondary data from policy documents, scholarly literature, and government publications. For Abiodun & Tshombe, key findings demonstrate that PPPs have attracted a substantial amount of private investment and benefited the economy through job creation and community development. However, institutional and systemic barriers, e.g., Eskom monopoly, regulatory uncertainty, grid integration constraints, and institutionalized dependency on coal, impede the full implementation of PPPs in accelerating the energy transformation. Hence, they recommend policy stability, energy regulation reform, enhancing financial methods, and ensuring that social equity consideration is factored into PPP structures.

For Olukayode Idris Lasisi in ***The Governance–Development Nexus in Nigeria: A Conceptual Synthesis of Good Governance and Policy Discourse Theories***, a qualitative, conceptual, and

desk-based review approach was employed, relying on the literature, policy documents, and theoretical frameworks in reevaluating the governance development interface in Nigeria in terms of the role of institutional weaknesses, the inconsistency of policies, and discursive framing in the determination of sustainable development outcomes. Findings revealed that weak institutions, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, low accountability, and marginalization in policymaking processes bedeviled Nigeria's sustainable development, thereby distorting policy implementation and weakening effective service delivery. Lasisi concludes by calling for the need to strengthen institutions, improve transparency, guarantee policy sustainability, encourage civic participation, and apply digital governance solutions, which is essential to attaining sustainable development.

Eyitayo Francis Adanlawo & Mpho Chaka in *The Effect of Ethnicity And Politics on the Democratization of African Nations* examined the theoretical challenge that ethnicity poses to the African state and the challenges it poses for democratization on the continent. To guide the discourse, critical questions are raised: What kind of connection exists in Africa between politics and ethnicity? Under what conditions may ethnicity either support or undermine democracy? Can citizenship rights be reconciled with ethnicity? . Furthermore, Adanlawo & Chaka explored the evolution of ethnicity from the viewpoints of development communication and provided it with a psycho-social meaning. In their conclusion, Adanlawo & Chaka posited that, if ethnicity has an informative component, we should anticipate that voters' reliance on ethnic cues will decrease when certain forms of higher-quality information become available.

Lindokuhle Senamile Ntuli & Innocent Simphiwe Nojiyeza in *Does Resource Scarcity Constrain Rural Women's Entrepreneurial Performance in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa?*, examined whether resource scarcity significantly constrains the entrepreneurial performance of rural women in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa. Anchored in the Resource-Based View (RBV), the study adopts a quantitative research design using survey data collected from 273 rural women entrepreneurs across uMhlabuyalingana, Big5Hlabisa, and eJozini municipalities. **Ntuli & Nojiyeza** revealed statistically significant relationships between entrepreneurial performance and seven resource-based constraints: leadership skills, financial institutional barriers, entrepreneurial experience, regulatory constraints, access to financial resources, technological limitations, and limited training opportunities. Lastly, in *Transformative Governance Frontiers: Relational Public Administration for Smart City Inclusivity*, Melvin Diedericks examined the conceptualization of informal systems in the context of South African smart city initiatives. By repositioning informal systems as co-creators in urban governance, this study advocates for a paradigm shift from technocratic optimization to relational inclusion. This reframing aligns with South Africa's constitutional and developmental goals, enabling transformative governance and the effective localization of SDGs in sustainable cities.

It is expected that these works compiled in this volume will further enrich the discourse and provide policy options to individuals, governments, and countries, particularly in Africa.

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EQUAL IDEALS, UNEQUAL REALITIES: GENDER DYNAMICS IN THE WORKPLACE OF AN INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION IN ESWATINI

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Abstract

Gender equality and gender dynamics within an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) functioning in Eswatini are the subjects of this qualitative investigation. Embedded in the social construction of gender theory, which underpinned this study, the study examines attitudes, experiences, and organisational practices regarding gender roles, power dynamics, and inclusivity by drawing on in-depth interviews and focus groups with 20 employees from a range of departments and hierarchical levels. Despite official commitments to equality, thematic analysis showed enduring gender-based differences in leadership opportunities, decision-making influence, and work-life balance. In the form of gendered expectations, restricted access to mentorship, and under-representation in senior management positions, women participants identified subtle but persistent forms of exclusion. Male participants, who were primarily ideologically devoted to gender equality, showed conflicted feelings about shifting power dynamics. Unconscious bias, policy implementation gaps, and organisational culture were identified as the primary obstacles to change. The results emphasise that in order to guarantee changes in gender equality, context-specific solutions are required that go beyond the adoption of policies. In light of the results, the study ends with recommendations for gender-responsive leadership development, ongoing staff sensitisation, and accountability procedures to alter long-standing gender dynamics in INGOs in Eswatini and similar settings.

Keywords: *gender equality, workplace dynamics, qualitative research, organisational culture, gender roles, gender mainstreaming*

1. Introduction

Gender dynamics at the workplace are a global concern that are still prevailing, even though it has been argued that there has been significant progress. Both developed and developing nations have persisting gender dynamics and injustices. For instance, Hing et al., (2023) have argued that compared to men, twice as many American women report having encountered gender discrimination at work, and 94% of reported survivors of sexual harassment in Canada are women. In their programming and organisational culture, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) frequently portray themselves as promoting social justice, equality, and inclusion. Policies that state their intention to advance gender equality, prohibit discrimination, and foster inclusive leadership are frequently used to express these values. It does not follow, however, that an INGO's global commitments are reflected in practice and action within their operational frameworks in pursuit of these values. In fact, Lokot (2021) has pointed out that indeed INGOs in their numbers have taken it upon themselves to spearhead initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality, devoting substantial funds to integrate gender considerations into programs using the gender mainstreaming approach, but seemingly have given less considerations to resolving power dynamics and organisational culture in spite of their charitable goals. This article aims to explore some of the gendered dynamics in the workplace of a major international non-governmental organisation operating in Eswatini, a nation with progressive laws on gender equality but on the contrary reflect patriarchal cultural norms. This study, which is based on qualitative fieldwork and organisational analysis, focuses on how INGOs balance the global agendas of social justice, inclusive governance, and gender equality with the sociocultural realities of a

small nation like Eswatini, which is deeply entrenched in traditional gender roles and undergoing a slow socioeconomic transformation (World Bank, 2025) further purported by African Development Bank Group (2025) which presents that inequality (0.55 Gini coefficient in 2016), youth unemployment (56% in 2023), and poverty (58.9% in 2017) are all still high.

By highlighting gender in Eswatini, this study adds to discussions about mainstreaming gender equality, the transformation of long-standing organisations, and the degree to which global development norms and principles can be localised. It also highlights the extent to which INGOs implement the social justice ideals they publicly support in their workplaces and the potential implications for organisational accountability in the larger effort to achieve gender justice in development. This paper is sub-divided into 5 sections, namely, introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, findings, discussions and conclusion.

Literature review

Gender equality

Gender impartiality or equality is one contested notion that presents numerous dilemmas within different societies and cultures. This much contested and debated issue emanates from the premise that women have been historically excluded and disadvantaged from resources and social prestige in relation to and comparison to men. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2023, cited in Citaristi, 2022 and Morrell, 2024) purports that when it comes to gender equality, both men and women should be enjoying equal opportunities to realise their full human potential and also a human rights expectation for a meaningful and inclusive contribution to the social, economic,

cultural and political development. Strasbourg (2020) points out that equality entails the embracing and empowerment that enables participation and visibility for both male and females in the public and private sphere. Furthermore, gender equality is mostly concerned with the inclusion and the promotion of embracing and accepting the full participation of both men and women in society. Placing equal value in the differences and similarities of men and women and gender roles assigned to them is the level field for proponents of gender equality. This means that men and women become full and co-existing partners in the private and public spheres of life.

Gender equality in the workplace

Equality of gender is the foundation for sustained economic development and social justice. Equality has been linked to improved social cohesion and economic resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa (Fordjour et al., 2025; Shetty, 2021). Although many African countries have laws protecting women's rights, not much has been done to guarantee that these rights are upheld in the workplace. Eswatini, like its neighbours in the region, is still struggling with the lack of access to decision-making spaces, the pay gap, and the representation of women in leadership roles. Women's organisations throughout the region are prime examples of NGOs that have been better addressing programs with community needs in order to close such gaps (Jasor, 2016). Popenoe (2017) presents that economic rewards afforded to men and women are different for their work. In both the formal and informal employment, conditions have been and still are in favour of men than women. He further discusses that formal employment has been an exclusive domain or long time preserve for men to which it is common to find women being paid far less than their male counterparts (Popenoe, 2017). It is thus that workplace has for the longest time been a hostile place for women since there is multiple nature of inequalities of gender. According to

Stamarski and Song Hing (2015), place of work inequalities and segregation impacts adversely on prospects and income of women thus contributing to the stagnation and decreasing social and economic status. Ideas and beliefs about masculinity and femininity are manifested and reproduced through workplace cultures and become sites in the construction of gender.

Gender mainstreaming

An organised method for incorporating gender viewpoints into organisational and policy procedures is gender mainstreaming. In an effort to address structural issues which contributed to women marginalization and disempowerment relative to men in society, gender mainstreaming was conceptualized. The underpinning inception of gender mainstreaming was the fact that women's issues in the women and development paradigm did not deal with the marginalisation and disempowerment of women in society relative to men and that conceptualisation of moving away emanated from the Beijing Women's Conference (Levenstein, 2018, Cornwell, 2015, Buss, 1998). Maran (1996: 352) acknowledged that the Beijing Women's Conference focused on the structure of the economy, over and above "human rights, education, health, poverty, violence against women, armed conflict, decision making" and other gendered issues. It is a product of one of the United Nations organised conferences (Nairobi, 1985) in which according to Cornwell (2015) the work done in regard to gender had not done justice to the realities of intricacies of gender and power which are gendered dimensions. The importance and rationale of gender mainstreaming emanate from challenges and difficulties in advancing gender equality. To combat ingrained biases, it takes both specialised resources and a strong institutional commitment (Mehra & Gupta, 2006). NGOs are essential implementation partners for mainstreaming, which has become more integrated into national development

strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chingarande et al., 2020). Successful sectoral implementations, like those in mining and climate adaptation initiatives, demonstrate how mainstreaming can effectively address occupational segregation and promote inclusive participation when it is resourced and context-sensitive (Muthuri et al., 2022). The approach to mainstreaming argues that gender is placed at the centre of agencies' work and within the organisations themselves. The idea behind gender mainstreaming is to encourage within society the realisation of gender equality in which Walby (2019) highlights that the essence in this was to advance and enable the comprehensive policies and procedures of organisations, with the goal of being gender sensitive and aware to inform processes and outcomes that inform policy and practice. In these aspects, there are two broad presentations that are made; the gendered nature of the organization, and the gendered nature of the work, in which has been the focus.

Gendered Issues in the Workplace

Gendered workplace experiences are still shaped by structural and cultural barriers, even in the face of policy advancements. These consist of unequal pay, occupational segregation, a lack of representation in decision-making, and harassment at work (Akinwale, 2023). These difficulties are made worse in Eswatini's NGO sector by the lack of funding for programming tailored to a particular gender and the impact of conventional gender norms on organisational cultures. Newton (2016) highlights how attrition and a lack of career advancement result from workplace policies that frequently ignore women's practical needs, such as flexible scheduling and parental leave. Despite their relative success in implementing gender-sensitive practices, international NGOs continue to face accountability gaps and donor constraints (Bryan et al., 2018). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2023), about 396,163 people made

up Eswatini's labour force as of 2022, with 187,385 women and 208,778 men. In 2022, women made up 47.3% of the workforce, which represents a slight improvement over earlier decades. Female labour force participation, or the proportion of women over 15 who work, was 45.62% in 2021, a slight decrease from its peak of 47.29% in 2019. Women's employment-to-population ratio: In 2021, 32.85% of working-age women were employed, which is less than the peak of 35.67% in 2019 (ILO, 2023). The systematically inferior position of women inside the household with many societies has manifested itself in the public and occupational domain. Women have been an underutilized resource in fostering equitable participation in decision-making, undermining their economic independence.

Gender in development organisations

Since the times of women and development initiatives towards aid and development were agreed to and when the United Nations organised Women Conference in the 1970s, gender practice has been a throne in non-governmental organisations, bilateral and multilateral organisations (Kilby and Crawford, 2015). Since the adoption of landmark agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 and the 1995 Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, Kilby and Olivieri (2018) asserts that commitments were made by bilateral, multilateral, and non-governmental organisations to see to it that gender policies which tackle the persisting gender inequalities are developed. In this light and to measure the progress and significance of the commitment, it was discovered in a review of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) bilateral donors that there is a vacuum in implementation as per the commitment in the policy environment since there is limited funding in gender programmes that addresses the marginalisation of women (van Reisen and

Ussar, 2015). Development organisations have found it difficult to uphold and advance operational changes with respect to dynamics of power amongst men and women to the point that Hijab and Lewis (2015) insist that institutions and individuals have found it to be challenging and contentious as it is innately a political process.

Theoretical framework: Social construction of gender

In underpinning this research undertaking, a useful theoretical framework for comprehending how gender inequality and discrimination appear in work settings is the social construction of gender, especially in organisations that are influenced by both local cultural norms and international institutional logics. The social constructionist paradigm reveals how gender roles are socially constructed, reproduced, and legitimised through cultural, religious, and organisational activities in Eswatini, where patriarchal traditions still impact gender interactions. The social constructionist viewpoint, which has its roots in sociological and feminist theory, holds that gender is socially constructed and reproduced through interactions, conventions, institutional practices, and power dynamics rather than being biologically predetermined (West and Zimmerman 1987). It argues that people "do gender" by acting in ways that conform to socially mandated standards of what it means to be a man or a woman. Social institutions that jointly uphold gendered hierarchies and roles, such as the media, the family, the workplace, and the educational system, influence and reinforce these gender performances (Ridgeway and Correll 2004).

The examination of an international religious non-governmental organisation (NGO) operating in Eswatini using this approach provides valuable insights into

how gender dynamics, culture, and faith intersect in the workplace. This is because of the fact that like in many patriarchal nations, Eswatini's workplace continues to mirror gender conventions and larger social relations. Women still confront structural obstacles to leadership and advancement, especially in the public sector, corporate settings, and technical domains, according to the National Gender Policy (2023). Furthermore, it is impossible to comprehend Eswatini's gender dynamics in the workplace without considering how early socialisation processes shape expectations for men and women. According to traditional conventions, women are linked to nurturing, caregiving, and subservience, whereas men are typically positioned as decision-makers and providers. These social scripts impact occupational segregation and labour force participation by forming people's self-concept and professional goals. Men predominate in management and technical occupations, whereas women are over-represented in lower-paying, informal, or administrative roles (Eswatini Central Statistical Office 2021). By using a social constructionist perspective, workplace inequalities may be placed within the larger fight against gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, which includes sexual harassment, which are both products of the same patriarchal social structure which enforces the socialisation of gender, and subsequently expected gender roles. Thus, it is possible to view workplace harassment, unequal compensation, and restricted leadership possibilities as institutional manifestations of women's power dynamics that the social constructionist perspective brings to our attention.

The social construction of gender clarifies how these differences are expressions of deeply ingrained structural and cultural processes that favour masculine identities and devalue feminine traits, rather than being the product of personal prejudice.

Particularly relevant to the Eswatini context is Acker's (1990) idea of the "gendered organisation," which shows how job descriptions, advancement routes, and workplace cultures are frequently built around male-centred presumptions of competence and authority, limiting or marginalising women's contributions. The social construction of gender describes how organisational structures, policies, and practices that appear to be neutral can reinforce systemic inequities in the workplace. For example, gendered presumptions frequently impact ideas of competency, leadership behaviour requirements, and the allocation of labour. These presumptions lead to occupational segregation, salary inequities, and restricted professional advancement for women by positioning males as more capable leaders and women as more suited for supportive or caring jobs (Acker 1990). By showing how corporate hierarchies, job evaluations, and incentive systems are subtly built around masculine ideals, Joan Acker's notion of the "gendered organisation" expands on this viewpoint and frequently obscures or undervalues the contributions of women. From a social constructionist perspective, gender disparity in the workplace is ingrained in organisations' structural logic rather than reflecting personal prejudice. Through hiring procedures, mentorship programs, promotion standards, and even unofficial networks that favour one gender over another, these organisations sustain gendered power dynamics (Ridgeway and Correll 2004). The double bind, for instance, is the idea that assertiveness is a good leadership quality that is frequently praised in men but punished in women (Eagly and Karau 2002). These relationships show how gender's social connotations impact professional identities and determine how opportunities and resources are distributed.

Additionally, the framework offers a foundation for investigating intersectionality, which is the way that

gender interacts with other social categories like age, sexual orientation, race, and class to create unique experiences at work. Women's experiences are not uniform, as Crenshaw (1991) highlights; gender inequality combines with other types of marginalisation to produce a variety of interconnected kinds of adversity. A nuanced examination of how gender is relational and context-dependent, influenced by particular social, economic, and cultural contexts, is thus made possible by the social constructionist approach. Crucially, by using the social construction of gender in workplace research, academics and professionals may examine the cultural scripts that perpetuate inequality and go beyond superficial efforts to promote gender parity. Interventions to combat discriminatory practices and advance transformational gender mainstreaming can be more successfully created by having a better grasp of how gender norms are created and perpetuated in organisational settings.

Applying this paradigm to investigate workplace inequalities in international religious NGOs in Eswatini sheds light on the ways in which gender relations are shaped by the interaction of religion, culture, and organisational practice. To go past tokenistic gender representation and towards transformative equality that questions the patriarchal foundations of both local and institutional systems, it emphasises the necessity of structural, cultural, and ideological change. It aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 5, which aims to "empower all women and girls and achieve gender equality." The paradigm emphasises the significance of transformative methods to gender mainstreaming, those that question and rebuild the institutional structures, attitudes, and social norms that underlie inequality by presenting gender as a social construct rather than a biological truth.

Research methodology

Research approach: Qualitative research approach

The qualitative approach was chosen for this study because its definition with its nature of extensive choice of methodologies is relevant to workplace gender issues (Lichtman, 2010). It belongs to interdisciplinary and intellectual traditions that have contributed to the development of the interviews and focus group discussions, which is not a single collection of methods or ideologies (Mason, 2002). According to Holliday (2007), it offers a comprehensive perspective on human affairs and behaviour that is insufficient to rely solely on quantitative surveys and statistics. In this study, data collection involved in-depth interviews which unpacked a thorough and in-depth investigation of social constructions of gender in Eswatini (Patton, 2002). According to Patton (2002), qualitative approaches offer in-depth details about a significantly smaller number of individuals (20) and situations.

Research design: Case study

A case study of an INGO as purported by Miles and Huberman (2021) is a phenomenon that takes place in a limited setting. According to Yin (2018), case study research is frequently used when participant behaviour cannot be directly controlled, context is crucial, or it is unclear where the context of the study ends. Additionally, Otley and Berry (1994), points out that case studies can serve a variety of purposes, but their primary function appears to be exploration. They asserted that a more comprehensive approach can be offered by case-based methods. The case study method also identifies the comprehensive and significant features of actual events, according to Ryan et al. (1992) and Yin (2009). In utilising the case study design approach in this study where the researchers sought for a holistic orientation, with the aim of emphasising the comprehensive analysis of the

phenomenon under investigation with the aim of preventing the disentanglement of elements from the broader context, which may be connected (Chowdhury and Shil, 2021). This was possible through reflecting and revising the meanings of what is happening through spending a significant amount of time on-site and directly involved in the international non-governmental organisation case's operations and activities.

Participant recruitment

As part of a population, a sample according to Giddens (2009) it must be representative in that the population should be represented in the group of individuals studied. Thus, for the purpose of the research, the sample size was twenty (20) employees of an INGO who are of local nationals, both female and male. Qualitative research emphasises on quality of data and not the quantity of participants. "... the objective is not to maximise numbers but to become "saturated" with information on the topic" (Pagdett, 1988:52).

Non-probability sampling technique was employed which according to Straits and Singleton (2011) discusses procedures aligned to the selection of cases as compared to or outside accidental selection. Convenience sampling was utilized to which Babbie and Mouton (2001: 149) noted "that the advantage of this type of sampling is that it satisfies the needs of the researcher, but the disadvantage is that it may not represent any meaningful population". For the purpose of this study, the researchers identified and utilised convenience sampling to be relevant for the study. Loosely translated and motivated by the likelihood of a high response rate, this method means that there is a group of research participants that are conveniently available when the researcher seeks to gather information and identified them, but it can be argued to be less representative.

Data collection and analysis

In collecting data for this study, techniques for gathering primary research data were employed. These involved one-to-one interviews and observations. A voice recorder was used to capture the conversational flow of the interviews. The interviews adhered to Mason's (2012) definition of interactional dialogue in a somewhat casual topic-centered conversation style. Secondary data through documentary review was continuously gathered during the study, and interviews lasted between 60 to 80 minutes. Narrative data in full text was the final product. All the interviews were painstakingly transcribed and subjected to theme coding analysis. The process of finding, examining, and summarising patterns (themes) in data is known as thematic analysis. It is sparsely structured and provides a detailed description of the extensive collection of data (Braun and Wilkinson, 2013). Reluctances, incorrect begins, dashed speech cut-offs, commas for continuous intonation, inverted commas for reported speech, and three stops (...) for an editing transcript are all included in the transcription. Most of the transcription and translation was done using Microsoft Office. Only the researchers had access to the password-protected folders containing the data. Participants were asked for their consent before data was used in publications.

Ethical considerations

Ethical conduct in research refers to the way in which a decision for acting and analysing issues is followed (Kasikazi, 2015). In preparation for in-depth interviews, research participants were introduced to the researchers and the purpose of the study being undertaken. The researchers took it upon themselves to inform participants that taking part in the study was voluntary and they could at any point withdraw if they feel the need to or become uncomfortable with being interviewed or with the interview questions. In deciding whether research participants take part in a research study it

is imperative to uphold and adhere to ethical procedures when seeking informed consent by assuring anonymity and confidentiality before committing themselves to be part of the study. An oversight in protecting and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality could compromise the safety of the participants as sensitive information could be tied up to their identity. In making sure such was not the case in this research, each participant in protecting their identities was assigned a pseudonym. Even though the researchers knew the identities of participants, such information is anonymised when presenting the data. Additionally, it must be noted that ethics were prioritised given that this study is based on fieldwork research which went through the ethics committee of the university. The name of the INGO is not provided in this paper to protect the identity of the participants and the leadership of the INGO.

Measures of trustworthiness

In undertaking research, particularly qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (2006), advocates that researchers should think about four factors to investigate in their quest for credibility. The researchers took it upon themselves to ensure the credibility of the data through triangulating data sources, being cognizant of their positionality as males from two socio-cultural different context (Eswatini and South Africa) and incorporating non-verbal communication from participants instead of full and sole reliance on listening to the recordings. This is because both men and women have different gendered workplace experiences.

Credibility

Credibility is defined as the qualitative researcher's belief in the validity of the research study findings (Olivia, 2016). Such offers clarification and replies on the veracity and accuracy of findings. Credibility is ensured by following a suitable and transparent research protocol,

using triangulation, and getting to know research sites and participants (Lincoln and Guba, 2006). Prior to data collection, the researchers visited the study locations to observe, establish a rapport with, and form a trusting connection with the staff of the international non-governmental organisation under examination to obtain a comprehensive grasp of the perspectives of the research participants. Essentially, this guaranteed that participant replies to informed research conclusions free from factors that could have influenced the researchers' prejudice.

Transferability

The researchers used a rich narrative to ensure that the findings are applicable in all circumstances and places. Transferability depends on establishing the background information, giving a clear description of the study investigation, and enabling comparisons (Lincoln and Guba, 2006). To ensure transferability, the researchers thoroughly explained each step of the research process.

Dependability

Oliver (2016) defines and explains dependability by stating that a study conducted by additional researchers should yield results that are in line with the original investigation. Data gathering techniques, such as interviews, fieldwork notes, and documents, were continuously evaluated to gauge the consistency of the study's findings. The goal of an analytical check was to make sure that the results of the research study were repeatable and consistent. By doing this, the researchers were able to provide the reader with the genuine reflections and authenticity of the study, giving them the opportunity to assess the reliability and honesty of the results based on a variety of data sources and in-depth investigation.

Conformability

To overcome their prejudices and portray the study as an authentic outcome of the

investigation, the researchers used and included firsthand statements from research participants in their final research documents. According to the research study's findings, sustaining and engaging in such an act demonstrates a certain amount of neutrality, which translates into conformability (Oliver, 2016). This refers to the notion that the study is informed by the research participants' responses rather than the researchers' own biases. This prevents the researcher's bias from skewing a narrative by influencing how something is interpreted.

Findings and discussions

Gender equality at the International Non-governmental Organisation

The superiority because of the domination of males has been considered and accepted as a norm and to be natural in everyday life and of at all social spheres. Regardless of the idea and reality that many females have entered the workplace, women are still paid relatively lower than men. Gupta (2017) observed that in human history there has never been a world in which both males and females perform identical tasks and functions. This implies that there has not been a society that ranks them equally, and thus none has treated them equally. Accordingly, therefore, a hierarchy base on biological features and assigned roles based on the features one is born with cannot be evaded as it is engrained in the different types of societies irrespective of their levels of their advancements in technology or social structures.

Regarding benefits and grade, it was gathered that in some cases the benefits do not accrue to the grade of an employee. For instance, there are accountants who are driving company cars home while others do not even have the authority to drive company cars. Participants consistently acknowledged that the organisation articulates a strong commitment to gender equality through mission statements, code of conducts, and donor aligned

frameworks. During the interviews, it transpired that there is a level of favouritism that exists within the organization. When **Thulani** was interviewed about whether benefits should be linked with grade, he argued;

“In theory that is supposed to be the case but in practice the opposite happens, some people are able to get things that others in the similar grade have been deprived of”. [Thulani]

As a result of personal attributes and not individual performance, Lips (2014, 2018) presents that the embodiment of discriminating and treating people unequally is witness and manifests, which in most cases is not witnessed by the majority who are discriminated. She continues to argue that many modern jobs were created when most workers were males. To some extent the childbearing function of women has made them to be at a disadvantage in most workplaces. For this and other reasons, employers have tended to prefer to hire males who would not require breaks such as maternity leave. As a measure to determine adherence to the labour laws of the country, female employees are afforded maternity requirements to find their feet and rest after birth, but in as far as paternity benefits for male employees, the participants did not highlight any assigned paternity leave to male employees. From a social constructionist perspective, the issues of policy-practice gaps, gendered role expectations, and the religious-cultural framing illustrate how organisational culture reproduces broader societal gender scripts, normalising unequal distributions of authority even within an equality-oriented discourse. As arguments advanced by Lips (2014, 2018) and supported by the research findings are amplified by Austin-Lucas (2021) who reveals that since they are unaware that workplace policies have a direct impact on the quality of their personal and professional lived experiences in relation to healthcare, education, socioeconomic status, and

political participation, women employees of NGOs fight policies that address gender equality and equity on behalf of other women.

Sexual harassment

It can be argued that because of prevalent power imbalances in society, sexual harassment thrives. Authority derived from positions held by individuals breed an environment of sexual harassment and it is most common and witnessed when it comes to men who harass women who happen to be subordinates. Even though it is mainly common for men to sexually invoke women, there is evidence of women that also sexually harass men. Sexual harassment is endemic at work and accordingly, the ILO (2023) argued that employees overlooked and are blind to the idea of how power and hierarchy structures influence instances of sexual harassment but rather tend to focus and put the fault to a minority “bad apples” that conduct themselves inappropriately. Workplaces are highly sexualized; harassment can take the form of abusive language towards the opposite sex, and women are the most vulnerable. Also, it can go to the extent of touching them on places they do not want to be touched on. As such, ILO (2023) asserts that such unfortunate situation is that some employers condone these acts, and thus they are complicit in sexual harassment.

It was gathered that there has been one gender seminar organized by the International Non-governmental organisation in Eswatini, which on its own cannot change the perceptions that both men and women have. In an interview with **Dumazile**, she said the following;

“It is challenging being a single woman at the workplace as the men constantly refer to me as their wife and some hold me in a somehow uncomfortable way even though they think of it as an innocent and casual interaction amongst colleagues”. [Dumazile]

Due to gender misconceptions, many female employees have not reported issues of sexual harassment. This could be attributed to the fact that there is a greater need in raising awareness of how accounts of sexual harassment manifest itself from overt incidents to subtle forms of gender-based discomfort. The researchers discovered that some employees were not aware that an act of sexual harassment is being committed against them. This was seen in the way they recalled acts done to them by fellow colleagues of the opposite sex. Some female participants told the researchers that they had been pushed towards a wall so that the male's private parts touched them. Other males are said to pass sexual remarks especially about the ladies' backsides. Through the social construction of gender lens, sexual harassment is understood not solely as individual misconduct but as embedded in gender power relations and norms that shape perceptions of legitimacy, credibility, and silence. In extreme cases, some males literally touch the ladies' backsides. It was reassuring though that some of the female participants interviewed understood what sexual harassment as **Thabisile** shyly covering her mouth and giggling when asked about sexual harassment responded that;

***"Sexual harassment is any act a colleague or boss can do to me that makes me uncomfortable, it could be a wink or even inappropriate touching, unwelcome gestures, feminine jokes, dirty jokes of sexual nature."**[Thabisile]*

In addition to the awareness highlighted by Thabisile, another participant **Batfobile** responded in relation to sexual harassment that;

***"It is common when you work with males and they become touchy to you as a female but it also happens the other way round, a female touching a male."** [Batfobile]*

The endemic nature of sexual harassment as attributed by the International Labour

Organization is perpetuated by lack of support and reporting systems work environments find themselves having. For instance, **Nolwazi** responded that;

***"It is difficult to report any sinister gesture around here since we are all seen and encouraged to interact as brothers and sisters in the Lord, so any uncomfortable gesture made towards me being single could be tossed aside as innocent and misinterpreted. Also being single works to our disadvantage as we are encouraged to get married lest we fall into temptation, so we should welcome being approached by men who are also single for possible courtship"**. [Nolwazi]*

Such research findings and revelations cement and concurs with findings presented by Eswatini Economic Policy and Analysis Research (EEPAP, (2018) that the lack of confidence in management's responsiveness within employees in the workplace coupled with the lack and unclear systems of reporting instances of sexual harassment among non-governmental organisations employees has perpetuated a pervasive acceptance of sexual harassment as a norm. Lack of a proper reporting system or rather a gender sensitive structure has resulted in such cases not being reported. Strangely, there was also a case of a male who was being harassed by his manageress, and this resulted in him being moved to another Area Development Programme (ADP).

Training opportunities within the organisation

The international non-governmental organisation provides scholarships to its staff members but mostly it is those in leadership positions. Two female participants alluded to the domestication of women and prioritising family responsibilities over self-development trainings that the organisation offers as a barrier that continuously hindered career progression that could have been influenced by the available training

opportunities that were offered to them. Speaking to **Makhosazane** who shrugged her shoulders and responded with a discouraged voice said;

“I think sometimes working for a Christian principled organization is a gender setback for progress to married females since training opportunities are favourable to single employees since married women need to submit a consent permission form from their husbands alongside their applications for training opportunities outside the country, even though the organization encourages all its employees for career development opportunities”. [Makhosazane]

Female employees at the international non-governmental organisation who had not engaged in taking up training opportunities alluded to the commitment to domestic responsibilities as a hindrance in taking up training opportunities which are normally tenable abroad and thus, they find it difficult in taking training opportunities leaving behind their families. This is a manifestation of the multiple roles of women, including those of breadwinner and caretaker in the household. It is unfortunate however that women within the organization in a bid to counter the gap and prevailing situation that hinders their self-development find options in distance learning and the organization however does not provide the financial assistance towards the costs of study which is a barrier for women to access better promotion opportunities and advancement within the organization and as such continuously being disadvantaged as compared to men. The argument is attributed to the fact that career progression is linked to self-development and academic qualification as three (3) participants presented that academic qualifications were essential to their growth. In their words, **Tholakele** said;

“In order to move up the ladder from where you started to the next level, one needs to

constantly upgrade herself and polish up qualifications”. [Tholakele]

In addition, another **Phumlani** highlighted and presented that;

“Any newly acquired skills and qualifications in my post-employment has contributed to my growth in the organization”. [Phumlani]

The importance of academic credentials in occupation progression was observed by participants as a significant influence, even though one participant highlighted acquiring and advancing in academic credentials did not make a difference in her case since she remained stagnant and was not recognised according to her new qualification that upgraded her knowledge and skills. But for other female participants who are married, academic progression was the prerogative of their husbands as to whether they allow them to continue with their studies which was a deterrence to their motivation and aspiration for career progression.

Since time immemorial, domestic duties which include child rearing, have been delegated to women. On the other hand, men as presented by social construction of gender theory as a tool to unpack gender in the workplace are at an advantage with the overlapping systems of disadvantage as they are the active social and economic force in society expected to make sure that the family is taken care of and protects its member in order to safeguard a reservoir of labour force. This in the workplace therefore reinforces the narrative that gender inequality supersedes individual bias and made to be a norm of institutionalising a gendered belief system. The noted primitive arrangement based on patriarchy which is largely traditionally influenced and has brought to light an invigorating debate with the emergence of women taking up the roles of being breadwinners because they are also entering into the workforce. Arguably, with respect to the changing role that women are

assuming and thus nullifying traditional and entrenched views of gender norms and the family roles, not much has radically changed.

There is a perception with respect to men and women regarding the commitment to their jobs that men are more committed compared to women when it comes to their jobs. The reason for such perception is attributed to the fact that women in many instances have always placed their families ahead of career progression. Such observations are presented by Shaw et al, (2018) in which they argue that women find themselves overlooked for promotions because they devote more time to family responsibilities unlike men who can commit their time and focus on their careers. As such, it was discovered that the board meetings normally take place after working hours. The problem with this arrangement is that the women must rush home to do their domestic chores of cooking and in the process, men are left on their own to make decisions that affect both males and females. In this case, at the decision-making echelons it is evident that the interests of female employees and their needs are not expressed. The end result will be unfriendly and unfavourable decisions which are binding to all employees. It is crucial for female employees to be involved when it comes to decision-making process at all levels because decisions can have an affirmative or harmful impact on them. The responsibility is upon the management to allow flexibility in the scheduling of meetings. In an emotional tone, **Lungile** recalled an instance at work and narrated that;

“I was once told by my supervisor to decide whether to commit on my work or family when I had requested flexibility in my working schedule and meetings particularly since I was from maternity leave and trying to adjust back to my work routine, moreover with the challenges of domestic and childcare help back at home. Surprisingly, my supervisor is female who happens to be married, but I had thought

she would have sympathy on me with regards to my family life and work schedule”. [Lungile]

As already noted, there is a gap and lack of support because of inadequate structures and services that women lack access to for them to be able to harmonise and have a healthy work-life balance because of the delegated childcare roles they must fulfil. The issue of prevailing inconsistencies in respect to recruitment, placement, and remuneration adds on to the predicaments that female employees are confronted with. Awkward working conditions and working hours plus the challenge of securing affordable accommodation near the workplace mounts and adds more to the difficulties as married female participants had limited choice in seeking accommodation away from their families as compared to their male counterparts who easily sought for accommodation near workplace for convenience. **Cebisa** concurred with sentiments of work and family conflicts by sharing his experiences in that;

“Work schedules can be so hectic and cause a drift to one’s personal life. For instance, my wife once alleged that I was cheating on her as I was constantly on the road, coming in late and leaving home very early. To make matters worse, we were expecting our second child and that made the situation bitter sweet since she thought I was avoiding her as she was no longer attractive”. [Cebisa]

Within the international non-government organisation, the situation is such that there is also too much travelling involved. Bearing in mind that the organization also employs married people who in most cases must travel, this greatly impacts on the families of the personnel involved. It transpired that some employees can be out of the country for weeks or even months. Most of those who seem concerned were the female employees who must leave young children alone. As such, the organization must review its travelling

policies to be friendlier to those with families, moreover because it encourages and prioritize recruitment based on marital status and religion which have a strong bearing on gender socialization amongst other things. Social construction theory highlights how opportunity structures are shaped by sharing meanings about gender, where competence and potential are filtered through gendered expectations rather than objective criteria. This may be the reason that training and development opportunities revealed gendered disparities in access, selection, and perceived suitability.

Conclusion

In analysing gender equality from perspectives that differs, workplace environments and organisations including countries use diverse models. It has been argued beyond reasonable doubt by international organisations in pursuit for human rights realisation that gender equality is one that should be enjoyed by all. It is more so articulated by international world organisations that gender equality is a vehicle employed in empowering women for the purposes of advancing meaningful social and human development (UNDP,

2016). The declaration of the SDGs has amassed enormous support and commitments from different nations to advance the development agenda and achieve gender equality as a pillar of development especially since gender equality is a stand-alone in SDG 5. It has been observed that many countries have made giant steps in advancing equality at a global level, but such is not the case in Africa especially Sub-Saharan countries with reference to Eswatini as they are lagging behind. This then undermines meaningful and inclusive development and progress given that development cannot be conceptualised outside gender equality.

This implies that there has not been a society which ranks them equally, and thus none has treated them equally. It is not true that women are happy in the present arrangement, great women do not accept or like the present arrangement, but the problem here is the person complaining is put under the judgment of the individual inflicting the punishment. Thus, women need to be liberated because they hold families and communities together and gender equality often result in the entire community and country benefitting.

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