

UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH

GDO WORKSHOP, MOI UNIVERSITY

THEME

Interrogating Gender and Diversity in Research

Thursday 29th - Friday 30th July 2021
Sirikwa Hotel, Eldoret - Kenya

**Programme &
Book of Abstracts**



Prof Isaac Kosgey
Vice-Chancellor, Moi University



Prof. Dr. Peter Simatei
Director,
African Cluster Centre Moi University



Prof. T. Michael Mboya
Academic Coordinator,
African Cluster Centre Moi University.



Prof. Mary Wahome
Dean,
SASS, Moi University

Moi University African Cluster Centre - Profile

This workshop is just one of the many planned research activities of the Moi African Cluster Centre of Excellence in African studies for the year 2021. The Moi University African Cluster Centre (Moi-ACC) is housed in the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) of Moi University. The overriding objectives of the Moi University School of Arts and Social Sciences are to offer interdisciplinary teaching and research in the broad field of African studies and to act as the center where all other Africa-focused scholarship in Moi University coalesce. Within the context of these objectives, and building on the very strong tradition of exploring and interrogating diverse ways of knowing Africa that has developed in the School in the three and a half decades of its existence, the Moi-ACC is envisioned as a hub of outstanding inter-, multi- and transdisciplinary research and conversations that contribute to the greater understanding of Africa in ways that enable the addressing of significant issues affecting the continent. At Moi-ACC research is carried out under the following sections: Affiliations, Arts and Aesthetics, Mobilities, Moralities, Knowledges and Learning. The research projects that are currently on-going in these sections are: Regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa: An appraisal of the frameworks for interactive markets, effective governance and human rights protection; East African Asian Writing and the Emergence of a Diasporic Subjectivity; Framing Identities from Human Agency Mobility on the Kenya-Uganda Highway; Changing Life Projects: African Identities, Moralities and Wellbeing; Pots, Fire and Gourds: A (Re)presentation of African Knowledge Systems; and Mediated and Mediatization of Islamic Knowledge in Kenya: Educational Institutions, Media Technologies and Performative Aesthetics.

Prof. Dr. Peter Simatei

Director,

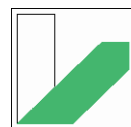
Moi African Cluster Centre.

Why Interrogate Gender and Diversity in Research?

Gender perspectives are an important aspect of diversity. Society is comprised of women and men with biological, social and cultural differences, and sound research must reflect this. Research generates knowledge that serves as the basis for social development, policy formulation and the development of services and products. It is crucial that this knowledge benefits all individuals in society, regardless of gender. Although gender affect every facet of society, their importance in academic research has been historically underappreciated and much research is still gender-blind or gender-biased. 'Gender blindness' often goes with neglecting other relevant social or experiential parameters. Recently, gender bias and inequalities have been increasingly addressed taking into account their intersection with other inequality grounds such as disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity. Intersectionality examines how power relations are intertwined and mutually constructing. When research fails to account for these factors, variables that contribute to outcomes can be neglected and studies may report erroneous conclusions, perpetuate knowledge gaps, create disparities or exacerbate existing inequality. Recognising and taking into account these differences is paramount in scientific knowledge creation as it ensures excellence and quality in outcomes, enhances sustainability by making research and innovation more responsive to social needs as well as developing new ideas and fostering innovation. This workshop, therefore, brings together researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds to interrogate how gender and diversity are envisioned in the academy, both in the research work and in the governance of the institutions. Researchers from the different Research Sections of Moi-ACC reflect on their engagement with gender and diversity in their projects through the relationalities of research methodologies and critical praxis using intersectional and critical diversity approaches.

Prof. Catherine Kiprop

GDO- Moi University African Cluster Centre



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MOI UNIVERSITY ACC Gender and Diversity Office

Workshop Theme: Interrogating Gender and Diversity in Research
Date: 29th-30th July, 2021
Venue: Sirikwa Hotel

PROGRAMME

DAY 1 THURSDAY 29/07/2021

08:00 – 08:30	Registration	
	Session 1 Chair: Prof. Catherine Kiprop	
08:30 – 09:10	Introduction Why Interrogate Gender and Diversity in Research?	Prof. Catherine Kiprop Gender and Diversity Officer Moi–ACC
09:10 – 09:20	Remarks	Prof. Tom Mboya Academic Coordinator Moi–ACC
09:20 – 09:30	Remarks	Prof. Mary Wahome Dean, School of Arts and Social Sciences Moi University
09:30 – 09:40	Remarks	Prof. Peter Simatei Director Moi–ACC
09:40 – 10:00	Official Opening	Prof. Isaac S. Kosgey Vice Chancellor Moi University
10:10 – 10:15	Health Break	
	Session 2 Chair: Dr. Mark Mosol Kandagor	
10:15 – 10:55	Keynote Address 1 Interrogating Gender in Research: Some Reflections	Prof. Jane Kerubo Nairobi

11:00 – 11:20	Session 3 Chair: Dr. Prisca Tanui	
	Multiple Personhoods and Moralities of Gendered Politics in Kenya	Dr. Bramwel Matui Moi University
11:20 – 11:40	Gender and Diversity in Performance Research: Reflections from Qualitative analysis of the Work of Lady Maureen	Dr. Joseph Basil Okong'o Moi University
11:40 – 12:00	A psychological appraisal of 'zoom-fatigue': Implications for agency in optimal research participation	Prof. Rose Rutto-Korir
12:00 – 12:15	Q & A	
12:20 – 13:00	Session 4 Chair: Dr. Scholastica Adeli	
	Keynote Address 2	Dr. Rubai Mandela Kenyatta University
13:00 – 14:00	Linking Gender to Research: An Exploration of Experiences, Challenges and Best Practices in Africa	
	LUNCH	
14:00 – 14:40	Session 5 Chair: Dr. Scholastica Adeli	
	Keynote Address 3 Gender and Diversity in Research	Prof. Miriam Mwita University of Eastern Africa – Baraton
14:45 – 16:00	Session 6 Chair: Prof. Catherine Kiprop	
	Africa Multiple Gender and Diversity Officers' Panel Gender and Diversity in Different Academic Contexts	Dr. Christine Vogt-William Bayreuth University Dr. Thando Njovane Rhodes University Dr. Everline Sawadogo Compaore Université Joseph Ki-Zerbo Prof. Catherine Kiprop Moi University Elnathan John (Discussant)
16:00 – 16:25	Health Break	
DAY 2 FRIDAY 30/07/2021		
09:00 – 9:40	Session 7 Chair: Dr. Mary Sambu	
	Keynote Address 4 Disaster Patriarchy or Invisible Lives! Gender, the Covid 19 Pandemic and Policy Research in Africa, A Research and Policy Opportunity	Dr. Damaris Parsitau Egerton University

9:40 – 10:00	Gender Perspective and Mainstreaming in Policy Frameworks and Decision Making in the East African Community (EAC)	Dr. Paul Abiero Opondo Moi University
10:00 – 10:15	Health break	
	Session 8 Chair: Dr. Prisca Tanui	
10:15 – 10:35	Empirical Knowledge on Gendered Practices and Norms: Knowledges Research Project	Dr. Justine Sikuku Moi University
10:35 – 10:55	Relationship Between Gender and Academic Performance Among Medical Students in Kenya	Dr. Priscah Mosol Moi University
10:55 – 11:15	The role of Islamic Feminism in the study of Gender	
11:15 – 11:35	Gender, Disability and Intersectionality	Dr. Mary Sambu Moi University
11:35 – 12:00	Q & A	
	Session 9 Chair: Dr. Mark Mosol Kandagor	
12:05 – 12:45	Keynote Address 5 A précis of legal and policy framework for gender and diversity and their integration in research in Kenya.	Dr. Ruth Aura Egerton University
12:45 – 14:00	LUNCH	
	Session 10 Chair: Wilberforce Kutol	
14:00 – 14:40	Keynote Address 6 Academic Housewives: Women, Research and the Kenyan Academy	Dr. Wandia Njoya Daystar University
	Session 11 Chair: Prof. Catherine Kiprop	
14:45 – 16:00	Plenary – way forward Closing Remarks	All Participants
16:00 – 16:25	Health Break	

Dr. Ruth Aura

Egerton University

A Précis of Legal and Policy Framework for Gender and Diversity and their Integration in Research in Kenya

Research is an important component in development initiatives or activities. The importance comes to the fore as it is through research one can generate new knowledge and challenge the dominant paradigm for purposes of transformation. It is no doubt that gender and diversity becomes imperative in research. Gender equality is a key factor for human development and greater realization of human rights. Diversity requires inclusion a key facet of human rights based approaches to development. Notable is the under representation of women's voices in research not only as active participants but also at senior management level in most institutions. Yet the research that is undertaken is meant to serve the needs of all women, men, children, marginalized and vulnerable to spur development of a country. If such population is left out then the research results may be skewed and not effectively serve the purpose for which it was set. Research that embraces gender and diversity is likely to bring out the often unseen but important elements of issues that are seldom in a traditional research that is male dominated or excludes the insignificant others. This paper presents the legal and policy frameworks in Kenya that promote gender and diversity in research. The importance of gender and diversity is articulated in the Kenyan constitution as well other legal and policy frameworks. The frameworks call for equality in all spheres and ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies through affirmative action such as the two thirds gender rule as stipulated in the constitution. Gender considerations and inclusivity is now paramount in all activities that both state and private institutions must adhere to at planning and implementations stages. The same principles should be reflected in academia and research. Universities

being institutions that generate knowledge through research must adopt strategies that are inclusive and mainstream gender as ordained in the Constitution, Acts of Parliament and policies in all their for better results. This paper will also interrogate the extent to which gender and diversity have been implemented in research in tandem with the legislative and policy frameworks. It will also proffer recommendations on the strategies/approaches that can be adopted to effectively integrate gender and diversity in research in academia.

Prof. Jane Kerubo-PhD

University of Nairobi

Interrogating Gender in Research: Some Reflections

Research plays an important role in society. As researchers in African Studies there is need to reflect on our own research practice. We are in the business of reconfiguring African studies. It is not possible to do this without encountering and dialoguing with the different perspectives in the African society. The people we research on and with are products of hierarchies, situations, relationalities and cultural contexts which create multiple meanings which in turn affect the knowledge we generate as researchers. Reflexivity during the research process helps us to be aware of the different perspectives. This paper focuses on interrogating gender during our research process. The paper aims at sensitising participants/researchers in African studies about conducting gender sensitive research. The term 'gender' refers to the social construction of female and male identity. It can be defined as 'more than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued, used and relied upon to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. The significance of this is that the lives and experiences of women and men, including their experience of the legal system, occur within complex sets of differing social and cultural expectations. The paper starts with clarifying concepts and moves on to provide a general introduction to gender sensitive research methods. Some of the challenges of conducting gender sensitive research are discussed. A gender analysis matrix is presented that allows for the detection of gender bias throughout all the phases of the implementation of a programme/project. Some suggestions are given on how to overcome gender bias throughout the research process through: relevance checking, literature search, formulation of research questions and hypotheses, research methods and sample, data analysis and interpretation, reporting, and conclusions and recommendations

Dr. Rubai Mandela

Kenyatta University & Co-Chairperson - (WERK)

Linking Gender to Research: An Exploration of Experiences, Challenges and Best Practices in Africa

This paper contextualizes gender and diversity in the various stages of research. With the understanding that neither men nor women can be lumped together in a single category in the course of being studied, factors such as age, social class, socio-economic status, race, religion and presence of disabilities that singly or collectively interact with gender to produce different results are put into consideration. At the center of the discussion is the argument that gender and diversity ought to form part of the entire research framework rather than coming in as an afterthought or emergency measure to address donor requirements. With reference to the Kenyan legal and policy framework, a reflection on the presence and involvement of various categories of men and women in research as PIs, researchers and sources of information is done. This is in consideration of the huge benefits of women involvement in science and knowledge creation in generating relevant answers to questions in all spheres of life, as well as interventions and innovations that work. The experiences, challenges and misconceptions that come with inclusion or non-inclusion of women in research will be explored with reference to studies carried out by Women Educational Researchers of Kenya (WERK), where the author of this paper was involved. They include *Wasichana Wote Wasome* which translates to 'let all girls learn', a long term Girl Education Challenge (GEC) Project and Value Based Education (VBE), a nationwide study done in 2015 that partly informed the introduction of the Competency Based Curriculum in Kenya, as well the author's own research works in Kenyan marginalized communities and refugee camps. Examples will be carefully selected to

touch on morality, mobility, knowledge acquisition and learning, among other current research areas of the “African Multiple” Project. The critical question of whether women and girl child inclusion and empowerment would translate to exclusion and disempowerment of boys and men will be discussed. Consequently, it is hoped that this paper will provoke further reflection, debate and discussion of best research practices and strategies that promote smooth gender mainstreaming in the context of the African society.

Dr Bramwel Matui

Moi University

Multiple Personhoods and Moralities of Gendered Politics in Kenya

Gender studies in colonial and post-colonial Kenya has often presented the hierarchical structure of male and females in politics and socio-economic status- with female insubordination as a reverberating theme. However little has been done to locate this debate in multiple- or at least two- conceptions of personhood and the accompanying moral positions of such gendered politics qua as insubordination of women. This paper puts such gendered debate in recent personhood debates in African philosophy as they relate to implicit moral positions. The paper concludes that gendered politics is embedded in pluralistic moralities because of the co-existence of western and African practices of personhood. Such conclusion rhymes with African ontology that recognizes plural presences- which is a common theme in African studies.

Keywords: *Personhood, morality, and gendered politics*

Mosol Priscah¹ and Obwoye Ronald O²

¹Moi University; ²Egerton University

Relationship between Gender and Academic Performance among Medical Students in Kenya

Education in medical schools plays an influential role in guiding students to reach their future roles with high clinical skills and to use them to support the health and well-being of those in health care facilities and community. Medical schools in Kenya are challenged to create academic environments that stimulate students to improve their study progress and wellbeing irrespective of their gender. The selection of candidates to the medical schools is regulated by a national admission policy that spells out the criteria for admission. The desired characteristics need to be addressed in the admission process. Identification of this as future performance predictors at the admissions process will lead to selection of applicants who upon graduation will practice effectively. The study aimed to compare the relationship between Medical Student's gender and their performance in preclinical and clinical levels at Medical schools of Egerton University (EU) and Moi University (MU). The study utilized ex post facto research design for Retrospective Record Review (3R) of medical students of academic year 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 as cohort classes at medical schools in Egerton University and Moi University. The study population was public universities' Medical students (MBChB) who had been examined at both preclinical and clinical course levels. Data sheet document was used to capture data from academic records offices. Results indicated that majority of the students on admission in both medical schools were aged between 17-20 years; 84% (150) and 86% [80] for Moi University and Egerton University respectively. Gender composition was overall 95 (35%) female and 117(65%) male. Male students in Moi University were 116, (65%) while in Egerton University they were 66%. The KCSE grades with majority at admission were; grade A (62%) and grade A-(minus)

(25%). The female students were fewer in all grades. Gender did not have an influence on students' performance in preclinical courses at MU ($p = 0.949$) and EU ($p = 0.629$), but significantly influenced clinical courses performance at MU ($p = 0.001$). However, it did not have an influence on performance at clinical courses at EU ($p = 0.819$). The study concluded that gender did not predict students' performance in preclinical courses at MU, EU and clinical courses at EU, though it predicts clinical courses performance at MU medical school. The study recommends provision of equal opportunities for all gender during admission of Medical students to universities in Kenya.

Keywords: *Gender, Performance, Medical Students*

Dr. Mwanakombo Mohamed

Moi University

The Role of Islamic Feminism in the Study of Gender

Islamic feminism is a relatively new field of study, arising with the intersectional debates of the various experiences women face in feminist struggles, in social, economic and personal endeavors. It reflects the ways in which women seek gender justice in an Islamic context. (Robb, 2021) Gender studies is an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to analyzing gender identity and gendered representation. It includes women's studies, men's studies and queer studies. This paper seeks to employ the use of Islamic feminism in the study of gender. Citing studies done on Swahili poetry, this paper evaluates the role of Islamic feminism in the study of gender amongst the Swahili. The objective is to elucidate Islamic feminism, the tenets of Islamic feminism and how these, have given Muslim women a voice to negotiate their stance in Islamic knowledge production.

Keywords: *Islamic feminism, gender studies, equity, justice*

Prof. Miriam Bageni Mwita

University of Eastern Africa Baraton

Gender and Diversity in Research

Since institutionalization of gender studies, research and advocacy have yielded a broad interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary focus. In this light, gender is understood as a socially constructed and is culturally defined roles, responsibilities and entitlements assigned to people based on their sex and birth in a given setting along with power relations between and among groups. Gender thus, through its many concepts looks into fairness in society. Gender research seeks to emphasize and advocate for fairness in social, political, economic, educational, leadership and management to mention a few. In this paper, we contend that these contexts on their own mean nothing until when people, that is men and women come into play. While men and women are different biologically, they are human beings who vary in their perceptions and worldview depending on cultural, environment and educational background. Thus, any gender study or research stands a better chance of bringing about the intended progress within societies being researched if diversity is factored in. We therefore propose that diversity be understood properly and be integrated in research for gender studies. This could be the best formidable way to have a breakthrough for the good of men and women in society. The researchers in gender studies will have to come up with a framework endorsing diversity as an element that cannot be downplayed. It could be one of the best methods of attaining and sustain gender harmony in society. Where equity and fairness abound, development is easily realized.

Keywords: *Gender, Integration, Diversity, Research, Advocacy, Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary.*

Dr Joseph Basil Okong'o

Moi University

Gender and Diversity in Performance Research: Reflections from Qualitative Analysis of the Work of Lady Maureen

This paper reflects on an ongoing study of the work and experiences of female musicians in *Ohangla*, a popular music genre in the Luo community of Kenya. The focus in this case is on the songs of the late Maureen Achieng whose stage name was 'Lady Maureen.' Referred to by her fans as the “Queen of *Ohangla*” she effectively created and maintained a presence in a music industry dominated by male musicians. While my study is concerned with Lady Maureen's art and 'politics' with the aim of establishing the significant strategies that she employed as well as the elements that enabled her to rise to prominence as a female artist in the industry, this paper examines the significant aspects regarding the intersection of gender studies and research in the performing arts, drawn from field and library experience during the course of this study.

Dr. Damaris Parsitau

Egerton University

Disaster Patriarchy or Invisible Lives! Gender, the Covid 19 Pandemic and Policy Research in Africa, A Research and Policy Opportunity

Across every sphere of life, the novel Covid 19 pandemic has had and continuous to have devastating impacts on all people globally but especially women and girls in developing countries. First, the Covid 19 has massively disrupted women's lives in every area of their lives, and has threatened to wipe out and unravel decades of progress towards women rights and gender equality in Africa. While Africa has not seen high numbers of fatalities as earlier projected, its impact on women and girls is nonetheless devastating. African women and girls continue to bear the brunt of this unprecedented pandemic that has not only further exacerbated already existing gender inequalities for millions of these vulnerable constituencies but also one that has laid bare serious fault lines in respect of gender equality, education, research and policy gaps among many others. This paper examines the impact of Covid 19 on women and girls and suggests that the pandemic provides African policy makers, governments, researchers, academics and all other stakeholders with opportunities not just for reflection but also for policy and evidenced based research to document how pandemics impact the lives of women and girls and formulate more inclusive and human policies and interventions that cushion these groups. The paper is based on my ongoing policy research on the impact of the pandemic on women and girls in Africa, Kenya in particular. In this paper, I advance new theoretical models titled 'disaster patriarchy' to try to make sense on why Covid 19 kills more men than women while women and girls bare the biggest brunt of the pandemic. Similarly, I make research and policy recommendations on the impact of sex disaggregated data, the missing link in gendered research and how it could inform better interventions in future pandemics.

Prof. Rose Ruto-Korir

Moi University

A Psychological Appraisal of 'Zoom-fatigue': Implications for Agency in Optimal Research Participation

Virtual research environments, including the use of zoom for virtual collaboration academic transactions, have become the current and a welcome addendum to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), that was already happening before the Covid-19 pandemic. The 4IR had begun to revolutionise human experiences because of 'the staggering confluence of emerging technology breakthroughs, covering wide-ranging fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, the internet of things (IoT), autonomous vehicles, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, materials science, energy storage and quantum computing, to name a few' (Schwab, 2016, p. 7). These 4IR innovations have altered how people work, and relate, without foresight on how the digital transformations from the 4IR will unravel to alter human experiences. Yet, the Covid-19 pandemic coping strategies using social media, and a renewed focus on web-conferencing tools, hitherto taken for granted, provide a glimpse on some possibilities of the futures of technology. Virtual meetings infiltrated every aspect of our lives. To survive the isolation, people started to use web-conferencing in lieu of physical meetings for unlimited social and formal engagements. Corporates as well as individuals working from home (WFH) as the new normal kicked in used many web conferencing applications such as Zoom, Teams, Big Blue Button, Voov, Google Meet among others. Paradoxically, on the surface, life appeared simple, yet layers of complexity emerge. For example, due to Zoom's popularity among users, the concept 'Zoom-fatigue' emerged into the psychology of online transactions, because behind this façade of successful business transactions across unlimited platforms, was surreptitiously brewing a mental health challenge, now called 'Zoom-fatigue', a reference not only limited to Zoom, but to the general fatigue related to any virtual

transactions such as organisational meetings, trainings, conferences, and intense synchronous learning. This paper examines the concept of 'Zoom-Fatigue' within the frame of research engagement and the role of agentic awareness in these transactions.

Keywords: *Psychological effects, zoom-fatigue, virtual research environments, agency*

Dr. Mary Sambu

Moi University

Gender, Disability and Intersectionality

The intersection of gender and disability has received increasing attention over recent years, from international institutions, national governments, NGOs, academics and activists. Gender and disability are only two elements of intersectional and multi-discrimination; they both interact with other factors like age, income, type of impairment, and concern all areas of life. Persons with disabilities are subject to discrimination because of their disabilities, women with disabilities are at a further disadvantage because of the combined discrimination based on gender and disability. The field of disability has not yet recognized the combined discrimination of gender and disability experienced by women who have disabilities, and policies and practices in the field have not been designed to meet the specific needs of women with disabilities. This paper examines the lives of women with disabilities and explores the effects of this double discrimination. It demonstrates how women with disabilities have been neglected by the disability field and the feminist movement alike and reviews the existing literature. The paper also examines the major areas of life and how women with disabilities fare within these areas, compared to men with disabilities and women without disabilities.

Keywords: *Gender, Disability, Discrimination, Impairment, Intersectionality*

Dr. Justine Sikuku

Moi University

Empirical Knowledge on Gendered Practices and Norms: Knowledges Research Project

In many communities within Africa and beyond, cultural practices, heritage and instruments are vehicles of cultural wisdom. Therein, lies invaluable knowledge about varied aspects of a community. Part of this knowledge is the instantiation of gender practices and norms. This presentation interrogates how the RS Knowledges research project entitled 'Pots, Fire and Gourds: A (Re)presentation of Cultural knowledge Systems Among the Bukusu, Iteso, Sabaot and Yoruba' manifests cultural knowledge on gender practices in the target communities. Incidentally, Pots, fire and gourds play different roles which may both be direct or symbolic, and sometimes physical or spiritual. Using documentation, observation and interviews, the project targets collections of community folklore on pots, fire and gourds, and an inventory of related names as manifested in birth and death ceremonies, marriage, and transitional rites and associated rituals. Each of the objects will be analyzed for cultural information using Fleming's (1974) model of artifact study. The names will be subjected to a linguistic stylistic analysis (Crystal and Dereck 1969) in order to derive cultural meaning associations with implications on gender practices and norms. Among the Bukusu, for example, pots, fire and gourds display amazing variation in the naming patterns. The unmarked term for pot is *enyuungu*, while *esoongo* is a water pot. These nouns belong to Bantu noun class pair 9/10 marked by the prefixes *e-/chi-* associated with curved, rounded, contoured and attached things (Leakey 1959; Sharman 1960; Creider 1975, Sikuku 2011). Among the Iteso, there is a tripartite noun gender distinction where nouns are masculine, feminine or neuter corresponding to the prefixes *e-*, *a-* and *-i* respectively (Hilders 1957). This is relevant in the pot, fire and gourd terminology in which the basic terms for pot, fire and gourd are masculine while related processes and elements are feminine.

Dr. Wandia Njoya

Daystar University

Academic Housewives: Women, Research and the Kenyan Academy

Despite the rising number of women in key academic positions, the university in Kenya remains a highly patriarchal space. This reality contributes to high levels of abuse and intellectual mediocrity in both the university and the public sphere. However, scholarship on gender in Kenyan higher education has remained focused on the numbers of women in academia and specifically in academic leadership, and on how domestic roles affect women as academic laborers and managers. This focus has undermined the articulation of the lived experience of women in the Kenyan academy and its implication for knowledge production. A closer look at how women fare in the university, be they faculty or students, reveals an academic infrastructure of cruelty and discrimination, facilitated both by the universities and by education policy. While sounding neutral, institutional demands, regulation and bureaucracy are extremely gendered, and women academics do much of the institutional maintenance work, many times at their personal cost. However, these issues are not visible in the research. Instead, one finds a dominance of quantitative data about women employed as faculty or in leadership positions in the universities. This paper therefore argues that scholars, regardless of gender, must see the plight of women in the academy not as an end in itself, but as a litmus test of the health of the university. The paper calls for the need to increase qualitative data and theoretical engagement on gender issues, as part of the health of both the academy and also of knowledge production in Kenya.

Dr. Paul Abiero Opondo

Moi University

Does Gender Matter in Policy Decisions? The Downgrading of the Status of Women in Major Policy Frameworks and Gender Mainstreaming in the East African Community Working Documents (EAC)

Does gender matter in policy documents and implementation in EAC? Using feminist theory, we examine the place of gender mainstreaming in policy documents and frameworks. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve equality between women and men. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation. It is concerned with the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination. Although numbers are important, it is pertinent to also consider how gender relates to the content of policy measures in the EAC, to gain a better understanding of how women and men would benefit from them. A gender responsive policy ensures that the needs of all citizens, women and men, are equally addressed. Addressing the issue of representation means looking at the representation of women and men as policy beneficiaries, as well as their representation in the labour force and in the decision-making processes. Traditionally, government policy and legislation in Africa, have been viewed as gender-neutral instruments, on the assumption that a public policy benefits all members of the public equally.

Keywords: *Gender, gender mainstreaming, Feminist theories, Gender theories, the East African Community*

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