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Exploring Gender Discrepancies in Qualifications in Public Service in Rwanda: Towards an Improved Equity

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Abstract
This study explored gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service and their implications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's public service. The specific objectives were to i**)** explore how gender disparity in qualifications manifests itself in Rwanda's public service, ii) identify the causes of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service, iii) identify the implications of gender disparities in qualifications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's Public Service and iv) propose the strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service. Descriptive Survey design was adopted. The target population was 81858 civil servants. Using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling, a sample of 96 respondents was selected. Research instruments were a questionnaire and interview guide. Content validity and credibility and internal consistency reliability were used ensure the quality of instruments. Data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The study found that (i) there is a remarkable underrepresentation of women in the public service particularly in the senior and middle levels. (ii) Women's dislike to compete for higher level positions is the main cause of gender disparities (89.7%). (iii) The main implications of gender disparity are unequal distribution of income (98.6%) and a scanty number of women in decision-making positions (83.8%). Awareness raising for women to get married after their higher education was the mainly suggested to minimize gender disparities in the Public Service (79.4%). The findings have enabled us to conclude that a gender disparity in qualifications still exist in Rwanda's public service and therefore deserves serious consideration to be alleviated. It was recommended that the Government of Rwanda adopt the policy of multiplier effect of female education and maximization of its affirmative action.
Keywords: Gender, gender discrepancies, Public Service, Rwanda

1. Introduction

Formal education is perceived as an avenue towards adequate human resource development and social transformation (Otieno, Bizimana & Ndayambaje, 2015). Likewise, human capital theories that refer to education levels or other credentials such knowledge, training, experience or skills of a person make him or her potentially valuable for an employer (Agboola, & Ofoegbu, 2010; Jacobs, 1995). However, it is a fact that the equality of chances between men and women to access jobs after obtainment of degrees remain elusive. Augusto (2005) mentions that even in light of heightened international awareness of gender issues, it is a disturbing reality that no country has yet managed to eliminate the gender gap in workplaces.

Women have been for a long time considered as incompetent workers. In this respect, Jacobs (1995) documents that women' entrance into specific occupations has for a long time suggested that less competent workers have begun to be hired or that the occupation is becoming deskilled. Cotter, Joan and Reeve (2000) and Massey (2007) view that even when factors such as education and experience have been taken into account, the male-female gap at workplaces remains higher. As such, qualification being occupational there is a continued existence of a gendered gap between men and women. This factor suggests that women's qualifications provide significant disadvantages towards the top of job hierarchies, which become worse as a person's career goes on, preventing women from advancing within their jobs or receiving promotions.

Qualification and other-job related factors enhance male-female gaps in workplaces. In this regard, Massey (2007) notices that qualification achievements and other job-relevant characteristics such as experience and education are still a barrier to women's employability even when other characteristics such as physical strength, customer preferences and abilities are controlled for. The inequality effects are more prevalent within higher-powered or higher income occupations, with fewer women holding these types of occupations. Massey (2007) goes on to say that there are limited chances of women for income raises and promotion or advancement to positions that are more prestigious or jobs. These artificial barriers prevent women from receiving job or job promotions or income raises, and the effects of the inequality increase over the course of a woman's career.

Being considered as less passionate and disadvantage in terms of access to education, women remain underrepresented in workplaces. For instance, Goldin (2006) reveals that many Malay Muslim communities believe that passion and desire carry derogatory connotations, especially when it is applied to humans. The Muslim Malays believe that women have less occupational passion than men and men have more logic. Zheng (2009) documents that in villages in China, women are often discouraged to seek education. Women's employment rates are still low and seem to have further declined in recent years, which translates into unequal

upward mobility at work.

Truly, gender considerations has a big impact on women's access to jobs. In this regards, a study in the United States has shown that when leaders at scientific research institutes were presented with otherwise identical job applications (a randomized double-blind designed with n=127) with either female or male names, faculty participants rated the male applicant as significantly more competent and hirable than the (identical) female applicant (Massey, 2007). These participants also selected a higher starting salary and offered more career mentoring to the male applicants. The tendency to be biased towards the male application was expressed by both male and female faculty staff (Massey, 2007).

Traditional gender roles also impede women's access to jobs. Moss-Racusina, Dovidiob, Brescollc, Grahama and Handelsmana (2012) view that despite the increase in women in the labor force since the mid-1900s, traditional gender roles are still prevalent in American society. Women are usually expected to put their educational and career goals on hold in order to raise children, while their husbands work, which gives evidence that women have retained the primary caregiver role within familial life despite contributions economically. Similarly, the Commonwealth of Australia (2017) reveals that women in Australia are described to be among the most educated women around the World but their participation in paid work remains comparatively low.

In developing countries, women are often limited to certain occupations and are largely excluded from management positions in the formal sector. In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, 80 percent of all jobs, women are in the informal work sector (Department For International Development, 2008). According to Blaustein (2008), despite the valiant efforts of many government officials, international and local non-governmental organizations and women's advocates, in many areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, women do not yet enjoy equal status with men, and full women's empowerment is still a dream. Only 25 percent of women are employed in the formal sector, in comparison with 74 percent of men.

Constitutionally in Rwanda, women representation at all levels should be at least 30%. However, Tumwebaze (2012) notes that significant women representation in the highest decision-making organs is visible in Chamber of Deputies (56%), Permanent Secretaries (50%), Supreme Court judges (43%) and judges at Commercial High Courts at 43%, which constitutes a scanty number of governmental services. The lowest score was at women ambassadors who constitute 23.8%, while full ministers are 28.6% but the ministerial gap is covered by the number of state ministers, who are at 33.3%. The mayoral offices are also, according to the report, mainly occupied by men, at 90%. In education, the gender gaps show that in primary education men represent 50.1% of teachers while in secondary and higher education men are 70%. In health centres, women represent 58.6%, whereas men are 41.4%, which indicates that women only dominate in this area.

Although the achievements in women' promotion at workplaces, notes Tumwebaze (2012), there are many areas that still show gender imbalances. The statistics provide vital information on the status of women and men in the society and the gaps that exist in their day-to-day activities in the social, economic and political spheres. There was, therefore, a need to assess gender disparities in qualifications and their implications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's public service.

2. Statement of the problem

Rwandan traditional society and late post genocide Rwanda have been characterized for gender inequalities in different spheres of life including public sector service. The main reasons, as stipulated by the Ministry of Education (2008), were a long time education system characterized by disparities between boys and girls, where only a small fraction of girls attended secondary and tertiary education and where women were often discouraged to seek formal education and where girls were usually expected to put their educational and career goals on hold in order to raise children, while boys continued to go to school. Although the efforts achieved by Rwandan Government, Tumwebaze (2012) reveals, to promote women's participation in workplaces, some areas still show gender imbalances. However, different scholars including Momsen (2004) advocate that gender has proved to be strong agent of change in social economic development. Nevertheless, no one has sought to assess gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda particularly in public service and their implications on female promotion. Considering the above circumstance, the aim of this study was to examine gender disparity in qualifications in the public service in Rwanda.

3. Objectives of the study

3.1 General objective

The overall objective of the study was to explore the gender discrepancies in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service and their implications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's public service.

3.2 Specific objectives

- To explore how gender disparity in qualifications manifests itself in Rwanda's public service.

- To identify the causes of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service.
- To identify the implications of gender disparities in qualifications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's Public Service.
- To propose the strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service.

4. State of art review

4.1 Trends in gender differences

Gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male. Hence, gender dimension is a basic determinant of social relations and rights in households and rural communities. Together with class, ethnicity, and caste, gender determines to a great extent a person's opportunities, aspirations, perceptions, standards of living, access to resources, status in the community, self-perception, rights to resources, and behaviors (Seager, 1997).

Gender dimension extends to the treatment of men and women in the communities. Across the World, reveals Seager (1997), societies have been characterized by a systematic, unfavorable treatment of individuals based on their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources. Across the world, women are treated unequally and less value is placed on their lives because of their gender. Women's differential access to power and control of resources is central to this discrimination in all institutional spheres, i.e. the household, community, market, and State. Birdsall and Sabot (1991) stress that gender dimension touches the different treatment of men and women in the communities.

According to Jacobs (1995), there are natural differences between the sexes based on biological and anatomic factors, most notably differing reproductive roles. Biological differences include chromosomes, brain structure, and hormonal differences. There is a natural difference also in the relative physical strengths (on average) of the sexes. Woo (2005) shows that men are 8 times more likely to ask for a pay raise, claiming that pay inequality might be at least partly a result of innate behavior differences between the sexes.

4.2 Gender inequality in the workplace

Jacobs (1995) stipulates that jobs which are predominated by women offer lower wages than do jobs simply because of the presence of women within the occupation. As women enter an occupation, this reduces the amount of prestige associated with the job and men subsequently leave these occupations. Men are reluctant to enter female-dominated occupations because of this and similarly resist the entrance of women into male-dominated occupations.

As stated by Massey (2007), the gendered disparity can also be attributed in part to occupational segregation, where groups of people are distributed across occupations according to ascribed characteristics. Occupational gender segregation can be understood to contain two components or dimensions; horizontal segregation and vertical segregation. Massey (2007) goes on to say that with horizontal segregation, occupational sex segregation occurs as men and women are thought to possess different physical, emotional, and mental capabilities. These different capabilities make the genders vary in the types of jobs they are suited for. This can be specifically viewed with the gendered division between manual and non-manual labor. As for vertical segregation, explains Massey (2007), occupational sex segregation occurs as occupations are stratified according to the power, authority, income, and prestige associated with the occupation and women are excluded from holding such jobs.

Statistical discrimination is also cited as a cause for income disparities and gendered inequality in the workplace. Statistical discrimination indicates the likelihood of employers to deny women access to certain occupational tracks because women are more likely than men to leave their job or the labor force when they become married or pregnant (The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Women are instead given positions that dead-end or jobs that have very little mobility. For instance, in the Third World countries such as the Dominican Republic, female entrepreneurs are statistically more prone to failure in business. In the event of a business failure women often return to their domestic lifestyle despite the absence of income. On the other hand, men tend to search for other employment as the household is not a priority (The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

Employment opportunities are limited for women worldwide. Women continue to earn less than men in the labor market even when they have the same education and years of work experience as men. According to public information collected by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the global gender pay gap ranges from 3 percent to 51 percent with a global average of 17 percent (ITUC, 2009). In the early 2000s, women's weekly earnings as a fraction of male earnings were 79 percent in Ghana, 51 percent in Nigeria, 45 percent in Mozambique, and 23 percent in Burkina Faso (Arbache, Kolev & Filipiak, 2010). In addition to gender wage gap, women often face a glass ceiling when it comes to promotions, which leads to the lack of women in leadership positions at major companies (Wirth, 2004).

4.3. Methodology

This study opted for Descriptive Survey Design (Amin, 2005). The researcher collected data to answer the questions of the status of the subject of the study, which was assessment of gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's public service. In this regards, the researcher determined such things as major qualifications available in Rwanda's public service, factors underlying gender disparities in qualifications within Rwanda's Public Service notably the behavior of girls as compared to boys once they are in school, i.e. whether they tend to remain in school more or less than boys and the views of the civil servants about challenges towards gender equality promotion and the solutions to solve the situation.

The targeted population for this research involved Rwanda's public servants which is estimated at 81 858 according to the Civil Servants census of 2010. Several reasons motivated the choice of the study population. First, in order to know about the gender disparities in qualifications within Rwanda's Public Service, respondents from the public servants were the best indicated. Secondly, by approaching Public Servants, the manifestation of gender disparities in qualifications was captured in their respective institutions. Thirdly, Public Servants' views on the issue at hand provided better understanding of the genuine reality rather than relying on reports about gender assessment. The sample was calculated using a margin error of 5% and confidence level of 95%. The following formula, developed by Cochran (1963) for finite population collection proportion was used to determine how many people were needed to poll.

$$\mathrm{n} = \frac{no}{1 + \frac{(no-1)}{N}} \tag{1}$$

Where,

$$no = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2} \tag{2}$$

$$no = \frac{(1.96)^2 x\,(0.5) x (0.5)}{(0.1)^2} = 96 \tag{3}$$

z= normal distribution coefficient
p= probability of success
q= probability of failure
e= margin error
n_o= estimated sample size
n= sample size
N= Population size

$$\mathrm{n} = \frac{385}{1 + \frac{(385-1)}{81858}} = 96 \tag{4}$$

Hence the sample size of this study equals to 96 civil servants.

The sampling procedures used in this study were stratified random sampling and simple random sampling. These refer to probability sampling where the population is broken into different strata or subgroups based on one or more characteristics and then randomly selecting sample elements from each stratum of interest in the population. In this study, the population was broken into four strata namely: Ministries and State secretariats, Public institutions, Provinces plus Kigali City, Districts and Sectors. The stratified sample was determined on the basis of 10% of each Institution. Thereafter, a simple random sample was used to select the participants from the strata. The research required both primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained using survey questionnaire and interview. Secondary data was mainly sourced from the civil servants census carried out by the National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda (NISR) in 2010, administrative records from the Ministry of Public Service and Labor and the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Gender and Family, the Gender Monitoring Office and archival researches and reports from the Public Service Commission.

Content validity, credibility and internal consistency reliability were measures of quality assurance. Content validity (Amin, 2005) and credibility (Shenton, 2004) were used to ensure that the research instruments were measures of what they were supposed to measure. Internal consistency reliability (Amin, 2005) was the measure of the reliability of the questionnaires.

Frequencies and percentages were the data analysis tools. Along this study, the following charts were used for data presentation: Pie Charts, Bar Charts and Histograms.

6. Findings and Discussion

6.1 Manifestation of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service

6.1.1 Distribution of public servants by field of education/level of education/sex

A record review allowed us to come up with a situational picture about representativeness of both men and women in the public service, which gives good grounds to contend that Rwanda still has to put up with gender inequalities in the public service. The researcher looked into the distribution of men and women by fields of education and by institutions.

By sheer sense of numbers, there exist gender disparities in Rwanda's public service according to different fields of education. Table 1 depicts data about this issue.

Table 1: Distribution of public servants by field of education/level of education/sex

Field of study	A2		A1		A0		Master's		PhD	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery	340	657	82	285	52	222	5	41	2	11
Architecture, building	13	139	0	11	1	6	3	7	0	0
Arts	103	192	33	83	121	312	1	13	0	4
Business and Administration	1,421	1,302	464	521	1,402	2,224	84	254	2	16
Computing	72	59	43	75	87	288	14	55	2	6
Engineering and Engineering trades	62	674	24	187	50	457	10	56	2	12
Environmental protection	5	15	57	145	40	148	14	45	1	7
Health	4,487	2,097	882	777	226	549	26	76	28	90
Humanities	2,247	3,325	70	251	288	861	34	111	8	43
Journalism and information	1	2	62	32	26	46	0	6	0	2
Law	101	159	65	103	523	846	18	46	0	2
Life sciences	716	1,294	27	121	116	463	19	39	5	26
Manufacturing and processing	317	287	33	58	9	14	8	8	1	6
Mathematics and statistics	338	1,094	20	96	46	254	4	27	2	11
Personal services	781	126	236	29	14	7	1	2	0	0
Physical sciences	54	180	12	45	12	126	2	17	1	12
Security services	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Social and behavioral science	146	37	137	107	269	240	7	7	0	2
Social services	586	125	86	65	225	200	3	9	0	1
Teacher training and education science	16,841	15,317	116	333	455	1,347	14	40	1	7
Transport services	0	24	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0
Veterinary	168	424	35	122	4	43	5	11	0	14
Not known or unspecified	67	140	10	7	2	6	3	5	0	0
TOTAL	**28,866**	**27,669**	**2,394**	**3,453**	**3,969**	**8,661**	**276**	**877**	**55**	**272**

Source: NISR (2010)

Table 1 substantiates that females dominate in teacher training, education science and health but only A2 level, which is low paying level. Females dominate also in social and behavioral science. The same Table reveals that the composition and distribution of qualifications in Rwanda's civil service disaggregated by gender. Overall, Bachelor's Degrees are the majority constituting about 47% of the qualifications in Rwanda's civil service; A2 qualifications come second with a substantial percentage of about 32% , advanced diplomas come third at about 10% of the qualifications, while masters degrees come 4th at 5.6% of all the qualification in Rwanda's civil service. Three main issues ought to be addressed in Rwanda's civil service. The low number of Master's and PhD Degrees in Rwanda's civil service is a concern, which has to be addressed if Rwanda is to attain the necessary capacity required to achieve its ambitious goals in vision 2020. Model countries like Singapore developed a minimum threshold of Master's and PhD Degrees through not only the sustained training efforts of its citizens abroad but also ensuring that they kept their best human assets after training. One of the challenges to Rwanda's civil service is the ability to keep their human resource especially after training abroad. Most of the Master's and PhD holders find it less attractive to continue working for government and usually opt for the private sector. This implies that remuneration is a critical factor.

The substantial 18% of the civil service with simply A2 qualifications indicates a substantially low level of specialization in terms of skills in the civil service. A2 graduates are not specialized meaning that further training is need to upgrade the skills of both A2 leavers in the civil service.

6.1. 2. Distribution of public servants by institution

Herein, a distribution of men and women in public institutions was made. The sheer sense from numbers is that men dominate the service in public institutions. Table 2 substantiates this distribution.

Table 2: Distribution of public servants by institution/level of education/sex

Institution	A2		A1		A0		Master's		PhD	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Ministries/High Government Institutions	102	108	133	74	516	760	41	135	1	8
Provinces	1	3	5	3	16	59	3	5	0	0
Districts	730	816	84	176	338	973	3	9	0	1
Sectors	1,100	1,710	107	247	270	702	1	1	0	0
Primary education	13,016	12,722	77	164	138	317	1	4	0	0
Combined education	5,618	5,791	164	477	323	803	0	1	0	0
Secondary education	1,487	2,120	160	766	443	1,656	6	20	0	1
Higher education	73	99	151	103	212	514	79	301	19	133
Health centers	3,896	2,134	248	270	106	89	1	1	3	5
Hospitals	2,179	966	806	647	240	504	22	50	16	68
Agency/Commissions/Public institutions	642	1,171	439	492	1.317	2,193	111	333	16	55
Projects	22	29	20	34	50	91	8	17	0	1
TOTAL	**28,866**	**27,669**	**2,394**	**3,453**	**3,969**	**8,661**	**276**	**877**	**55**	**272**

Source: NISR (2010)

As the level of schooling increases, the representation of girls decreases faster. Females dominate health centers and hospitals mostly A2 and A1 levels. Looking at the top level qualifications in Table 2 we can see that big differences occur among men and women in Rwanda's civil service. Despite the fact that the 4473 bachelors' degree holders constitute 47%, which is the majority of the total qualifications in Rwanda's civil service, 31.36% of the available Bachelor's Degrees are held by women while 68.64% of the available Bachelor's Degrees are held by men. This indicates a big gap in achieving gender equality by qualifications in Rwanda's civil service. In addition, the percentage of women holding bachelor's degrees as a percentage of the total civil servants is 15%, which is quite low. Although the percentage of women in the lower qualifications of A2 and Advanced Diploma (A1) increases to about 42 and 45 percent respectively, it is still lower than the proportion of men in these respective categories which stands at 58 and 54 percent respectively. The gender disparities widen further when it comes to Higher Degrees like the Master's and PhDs. Of the 38 PhDs in Rwanda's civil service, only 5 i.e. 13% are held by women while men hold the rest i.e. 33 (87%); Of the 511 Master's Degrees in Rwanda's civil service only 132 (25.83%) are held by women with the men holding 397 i.e. 74.17%. Moss-Racusina et al (2012) also found that women are usually expected to put their educational and career goals on hold in order to raise children, while their husbands work, which gives evidence that women have retained the primary caregiver role within familial life despite contributions economically.

Table 2 shows the dire need of Master's Degree holders at senior positions within local government units. The local government picture is a lot worse than that of the central government in terms of Master's Degree holders. While only 26(1%) of the professional civil servants at local government institutions hold a Master's Degree. Despite the few Master's Degree in local government a good number of senior staff at local government hold a bachelor degree.

Remarkably, there is not only need to step up training of the Rwandan civil service more so at Master's and PhD level but also taking more affirmative action to increase the number of women training at Higher Degrees, Master's and PhD levels in order to address the wide gender disparities in qualifications that exist in Rwanda's civil service. Women's low share in Rwanda's public service is indicative of their low education status. Looking at PhD degree holders, universities and research institutes dominate with 80.69% of them, a result which is not surprising given the high level skill required for doing research and lecturing at universities.

A similar trend is observed with the Master's Degree holders where universities and research institutes dominate with about 39.53% of the degree holders. Central government and government parastatals closely tie at 26.22% and 29.16% leaving a behind local governments which lag at just 5.09 % of employing Master's Degree holders. There is a need to attrract more Master's Degree holders into local government agencies. The distribution of Bachelor's Degree holders in the civil service is dominated by local government institutions which, constitute 47.70% of the degree holders with 2123 civil servants. Government parastatals follow local government with about 28.7% of the degree holders while universities and central government institutions tie at about 13.5 % of the graduates in the civil service. This implies that while local government institutions rank high with graduates, they need to increase their efforts in attracting civil servants with advanced Master's Degrees.

An analysis of the lower qualifications in Table 4 shows that local government institutions and universities dominate A1 civil servant holders by 40 and 32 percent respectively. In addition local government still dominate the lower qualification by over 80% indicating further need for skill upgrading in the local government units of Rwanda's civil service.

6.2 Causes of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service

Were presented under this section are the causes of gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's public service. The Figure 1 summarizes the causes in question.

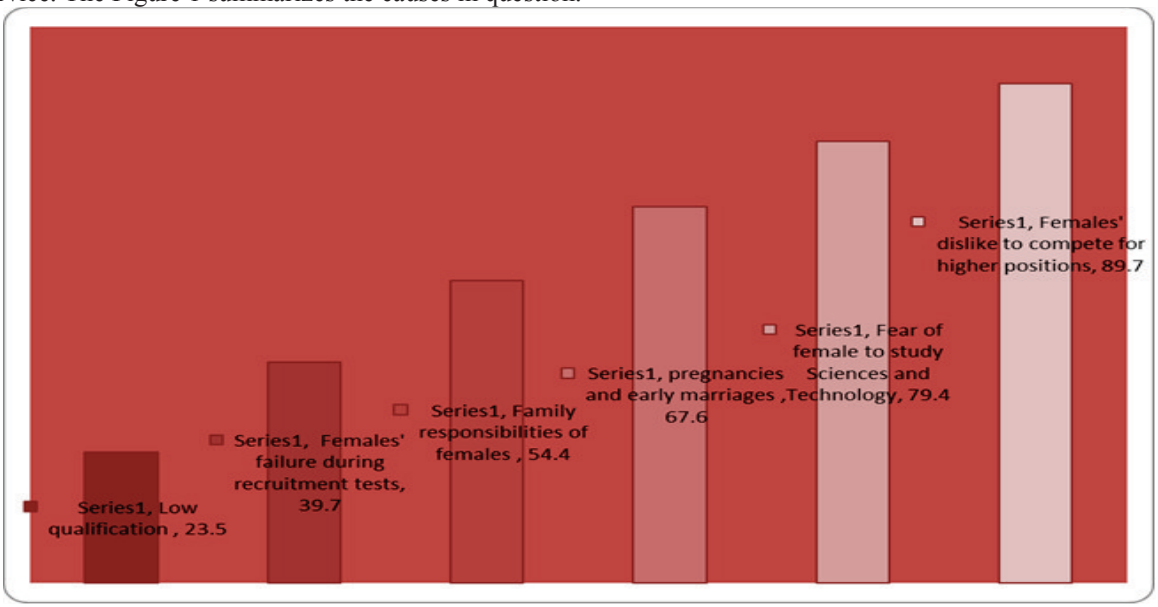

Figure 1: Causes of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service Source: Source: Primary data

With respet to the causes of gender disparities in Rwanda's public service, 9.37% of the respondents argue that a lot of women are outwitted by men because they lack adequate skills when it comes to competition for job. Twelve and half percent contend that the number of women who fail tests during recuitment is far beyond that of men. Fourteen and a half percents affirm that the number of women who hold higher degree is far below that of men. Fifteen point sixty-two revels that women do not like to work far from their homes like in grassroot levels. Ten point four one say that women do not like to compete for higher level positions because of duties which are supposed to be discharged at these levels, which cannot be sweeze into their households duties. Goldin (2006) also documented that women have less occupational passion than men. It sounds that there is need for women to feel confident and courageous to compete for higher level positions as men. Theses finding are in consent with what was raised by Augusto (2005) that even in light of heightened international awareness of gender issues, no country has yet managed to eliminate the gender gap in workplaces. Similarly, the Commonwealth of Australia (2017) revealed that women in Australia are described to be among the most educated women around the World but their participation in paid work remains comparatively low.

Fiteen point fifty-one value founding their households more than studying to higher levels while 45.75% argue that households duties prevent women from pursuing their studies up to higher levels, which would offer them chance to get the same positions as men.

This is corroborated by the information given by the interviewees that between 2005 and 2010 the number of educated women was far below the number of women. Women only outnumber men in the fields like secretariat and management, which influences the positions they occupy. According to the data, women and men are equally represented at primary education level but the number of women goes decreasing starting with secondary level, which originates the small the number of women who enter the work market compared to men. There is also lack of role model for women.

6.3 Implications of gender disparities in qualifications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's Public Service

This section presents the implications of gender disparities in qualifications in terms women's access to jobs in Rwanda's Public Service at low and decision-making levels. Figure 2, Tables 3 and 4 summarize these distributions.

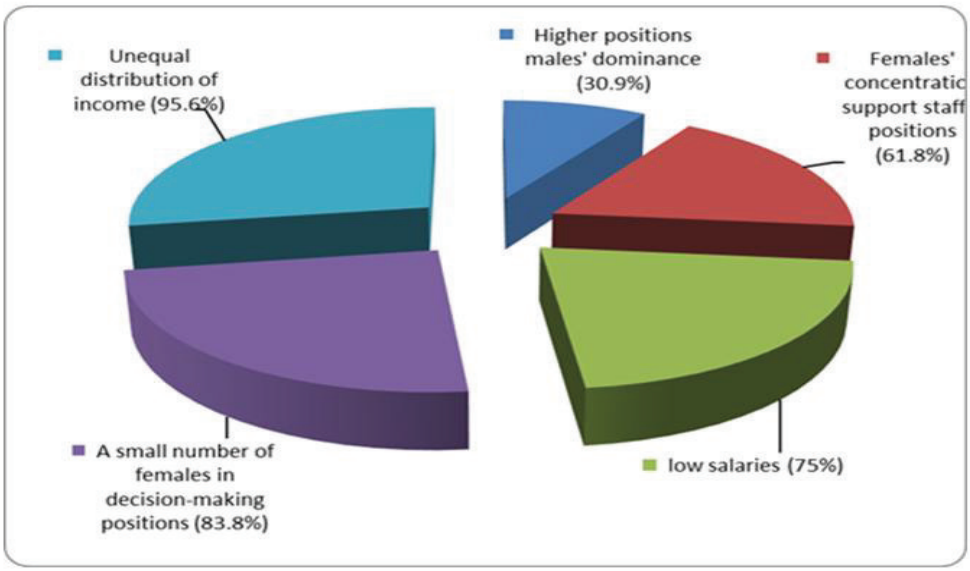

Figure 2: Implications of gender disparities in qualifications on women's access to jobs at low and decision-making levels in Rwanda's Public Service

Source: Primary data

It was revealed that women occupy lower positions, little salary, lack of allowances in the time when men who dominate higher positions obtain allowances according to their positions, which always enhances women's dependence on men and poverty for women. In long run, this has an impact on the welfare of the family and children's education and lack of self-confidence while they should be empowered as agents of change in social economic development (Momsen, 2004). Women have very many household related duties to discharge and are attempted by men because of poverty.

During the recruitment process there is no analysis to ascertain whether the policy of gender equality is respected. There is persistence that makes it that women field much comfortable in certain domains than others hence they play big roles in nursing and teaching domains.

Interviewees substantiated that there are inequalities in certain positions even though there are no big disparities between men and women in some other positions. Men are highly represented in the positions which do not require competition. For the positions which require competition, men apply in a great number compared to women. Women are not highly represented in the decision -making positions. Women are highly represented in the positions of administrative assistants. Zheng (2009) also found that women's employment rates are still low and seem to have further declined in recent years, which translates into unequal upward mobility at work while Blaustein (2008) found that in many areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, women do not yet enjoy equal status with men, and full women's empowerment is still a dream.

The reviewed records from Gender Monitoring Office (2010) back up what was unveiled by informants that men overwhelmingly dominate in higher positions. Women are simply greatly represented in lower positions like support staff, as recorded in Table 3.

Table 3: Dominance of men in decision-making positions

Designation	**2009**					**2010**				
	Number			**%**		**Number**			**%**	
	Female	**Male**	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**
Permanent Secretaries	8	13	21	38.1	61.9	8	15	23	34.8	65.2
Director Generals	6	16	22	26.3	73.7	5	35	40	12.1	87.5
Directors of units (Ministries)	45	132	177	25.4	74.6	34	78	112	30.4	69.6
Directors of Units (All institutions)						148	420	568	26.1	73.9
Experts or professionals						290	562	852	34.0	66.0
Technicians						69	104	173	39.9	60.1
Support staff						185	119	304	60.9	39.1

Source: Gender Monitoring Office (2010)

Table 3 demonstrates the gender inequalities in Rwanda's civil service. The main observation is that despite

the high women representation in Rwanda's Parliament, women are still under represented at senior and middle level positions within the civil service. This calls for further affirmative action to integrate more women at these positions. The general trend in all the three Tables is that the proportion of women is very low at high level positions.

Men dominate overall, decision-making positions, women dominate in the support positions (20.80%), 11.45% say that low salary is a contributing factor whereas 21.87% substantiate that a scanty number of women occupy decision-making positions. Worthwhile, men and women are unequally distributed at the district level. Table 4 depicted this underrepresentation.

Table 4: Distribution of public servants by gender and institution

District	Type of institutions								Total
	Ministries and government institutions		Education		Health		Decentralized entities		
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Nyarugenge	1,188	2,134	571	411	840	322	150	154	5,770
Gasabo	1,302	1,846	761	648	541	266	104	133	5,601
Kicukiro	330	578	487	410	360	160	76	118	2,519
Nyanza	40	86	718	723	217	152	71	128	2,135
Gisagara	11	21	691	724	279	166	98	146	2,136
Nyaruguru	7	21	703	765	166	150	97	150	2,099
Huye	146	294	1,019	1,229	402	263	108	121	3,582
Nyamagabe	34	172	822	948	218	162	72	161	2,589
Ruhango	31	38	820	727	200	111	103	168	2,298
Muhanga	67	92	966	690	350	232	89	93	2,539
Kamonyi	18	14	971	628	269	135	58	126	2,219
Karongi	28	81	851	939	290	237	66	205	2,697
Rutsiro	4	14	615	950	202	196	56	173	2,210
Rubavu	58	172	603	1,038	233	171	93	203	2,571
Nyabihu	8	11	587	1,125	196	211	117	182	2,437
Ngororero	6	24	744	1,041	216	191	125	185	2,534
Rusizi	27	147	957	991	204	209	128	181	2,844
Nyamasheke	15	41	1,081	1,071	277	234	98	167	2,984
Rulindo	5	33	667	829	244	175	103	231	2,287
Gakenke	5	25	808	943	340	313	150	202	2,786
Musanze	88	296	903	1,263	282	247	99	176	3,354
Burera	7	41	648	1,158	220	206	125	237	2.642
Gicumbi	44	90	781	1,094	255	218	120	238	2,840
Rwamagana	30	108	695	652	276	175	68	108	2,107
Nyagatare	19	89	542	1,231	248	260	51	136	2,576
Gatsibo	8	16	749	1,177	307	242	41	122	2,662
Kayonza	7	25	567	835	293	279	52	121	2,179
Kirehe	5	24	519	840	255	236	86	202	2,167
Ngoma	40	84	655	782	227	198	80	164	2,230
Bugesera	30	66	616	839	259	191	69	154	2,224
Total	**3,608**	**6,680**	**22,217**	**26,701**	**8,666**	**6,308**	**2,753**	**4,925**	**81,858**

Source: NISR (2010)

The analysis of the gender balance shows a completely altered picture. The majority of the gender-balanced institutions are government line ministries, urban districts and government parastatals mainly located in Kigali, who employ a proportion of women of 50% and above. This implies that the problem of integrating women into the civil service may be worse at district level. One of the explanations could be the lack of qualifications among most rural women while the other could be the unattractiveness of working in the districts most of which are rural, for the qualified women. This is in agreement with what was revealed by our interviewee that women prefer to stop working when it comes to working in remote areas or simply far from their homes.

Rwanda has made good progress in educating the girl child at primary and secondary school levels. However, given the low proportion of women in the civil service, a trend that cuts across different types of government institutions, there is still scope for affirmative action and gender multiplier effect for both civil service and education. More emphasis should be placed on increasing access to tertiary education for rural women.

6.4 Strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service

Under this section, strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in the public service were discussed. The researcher started with what was revealed through the administered questionnaire then interview guide. A summary of these strategies presented also provided based on the Figure 3.

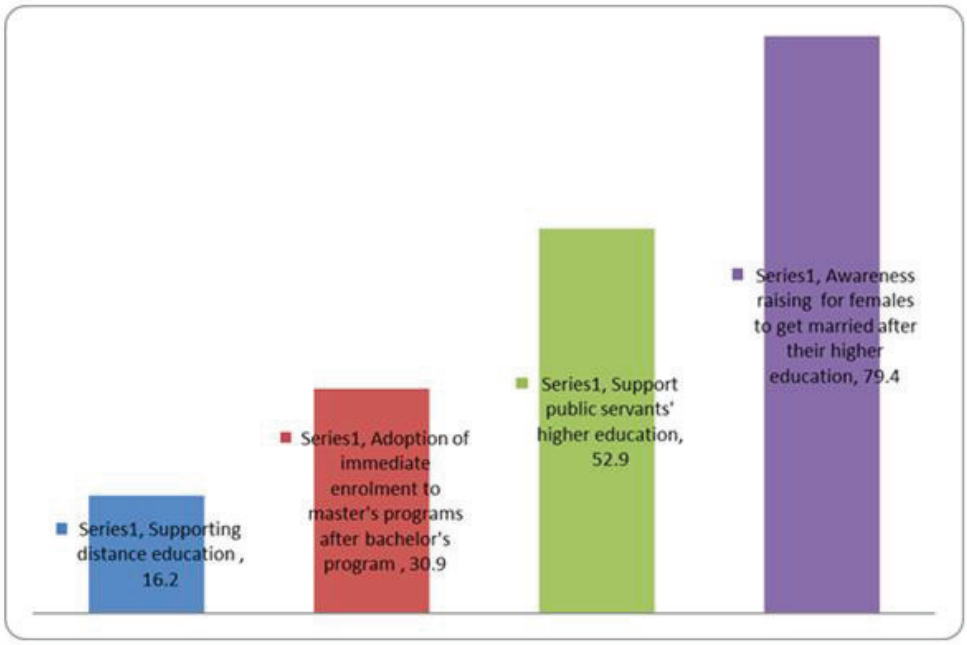

Figure 3: Strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's public service
Source: Primary data

As depicted on Figure 3 strategies to eradicate if not mitigate the disparities in representativeness between men and women in the public service include supporting distance education in order to help workers in public service to continue their studies easily, adoption of immediate Master's programs to help those who finished Bachelor's Degree to continue the studies with nonstop, to help females who work in public services to continue their studies, changing the females' minds by doing their marriage after their studies, etc.

Data from our interviewees reveal that the strategies to minimize disparities include among other things to focus on future generations, enabling women to pursue all the fields, awareness and allow them to building self-confidence in themselves, initiating them to public talk, gender assessment at institutional level and men's participation in childcare. Available opportunities include awareness raising, policies that encourage girls' education, in national gender policies, one cow one family to fight against poverty, vision Umurenge program, assistance to the survivor of the genocide, supporting organisms for girls, Imbuto Foundation, multiplier effect of female education, increasing girls' schools and school feeding programs, focus on the youth and reconsideration of social value that a well-off household depends on the education of the woman.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

The first objective of this study was to explore how gender disparity in qualifications manifests itself in Rwanda's public service. Data from the study reveal that although the Rwanda's incredible strides in expanding education and promoting girls' education, there are still inequalities in terms of education attainment specifically when it comes to higher levels of qualifications. There are still shortfalls in access and completion of women to higher levels of education compared to men. Rwanda has made good progress in educating the girl child at primary and secondary school levels. However, there is still need for affirmative action for both girls' higher education access and service for recruitment and education for women. There is need to emphasize rural women's access to tertiary education.

The second objective was to identify the causes of gender disparity in qualifications in Rwanda's public service. In this respect, it was concluded female dislike to compete for higher position is the major cause for female underrepresentation

The third objective was to identify the implications of gender disparities in qualifications on women's access to jobs at low and decision making levels in Rwanda's Public Service. The research concluded that women underrepresentation remains high the public service particularly in the senior and middle level given the current qualification situation of women.

The forth objective was to suggest the strategies to minimize gender disparities in qualifications in Rwanda's Public Service. It was mainly concluded that awareness raising is needed for women students to get

married after completing their higher level of education. The Government of Rwanda should therefore adopt the policy of multiplier effect of female education when it comes to higher education admission to yield a higher rate of access and completion for women as a similar increase as for men, attendance, attainment, and completion as well as in improvements in the status of women within families, local community, and the political arena. The Government of Rwanda should maximize its affirmative action by adequately investing in girls' education to facilitate the achievement of not only primary and secondary levels but also the most other level of education (tertiary) and increase the probability that access and completion will be sustained. It is advisable to the Government of Rwanda to promote women adults' skills that they need to lead their productive lives. The policy of gender multiplier should not only be reflected in the political and higher level of decision-making. It should also be reflected in lower levels such as support or technical staff to address the far low representation of women compared to men. The Government of Rwanda should support women working in education and heath areas to upgrade their levels seen that women are most represented in these areas but with lower education levels (A2). Future researcher could replicate this study and investigate the gender disparities in qualification in Rwanda's non-governmental institutions. Comparisons could then be made to determine whether the differences exist regarding gender disparities in qualifications in the public service and non-governmental institutions.

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