

OPEN ACCESS



Journal of
African Studies and Development

July-September 2021
ISSN: 2141-2189
DOI: 10.5897/JASD
www.academicjournals.org



**ACADEMIC
JOURNALS**
expand your knowledge

About JASD

The Journal of African Studies and Development (JASD) is a peer reviewed open access journal. The journal is published quarterly and covers all areas of the subject such as African literatures, sociolinguistic topics of cultural interest, music, oral and written traditions etc.

Open Access Policy

Open Access is a publication model that enables the dissemination of research articles to the global community without any form of restriction. All articles published under open access can be accessed by anyone with internet connection.

The Journal of African Studies and Development is an Open Access journal. Abstracts and full texts of all articles published in this journal are freely accessible to everyone immediately after publication without any form of restriction.

Article License

All articles published by Journal of African Studies and Development are licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). This permits anyone to copy, redistribute, remix, transmit and adapt the work provided the original work and source is appropriately cited. Citation should include the article DOI. The article license is displayed on the abstract page the following statement:

This article is published under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Please refer to <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode> for details about [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Article Copyright

When an article is published in the journal, the author(s) of the article retain the copyright. Author(s) may republish the article as part of a book or other materials.

A copyright statement is displayed both on the abstract page and the full-text PDF of each article.

Example: Copyright ©2016 Author(s) retains the copyright of this article.

Self-Archiving Policy

JASD permits and encourage authors to archive any version of their article they find most suitable, including the published version on their institutional repository and any other suitable website.

Digital Archiving Policy

The Journal of African Studies and Development is committed to the long-term preservation of its content. All articles published by the journal are preserved by Portico. In addition, the journal encourages authors to archive the published version of their articles on their institutional repositories and as well as other appropriate websites.

<https://www.portico.org/publishers/ajournals/>

Metadata Harvesting

The Journal of African Studies and Development encourages metadata harvesting of all its content. The journal fully supports the Open Archives Initiative.

Memberships and Standards



Academic Journals strongly supports the Open Access initiative. Abstracts and full texts of all articles published by Academic Journals are freely accessible to everyone immediately after publication.



All articles published by Academic Journals are licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](#). This permits anyone to copy, redistribute, remix, transmit and adapt the work provided the original work and source is appropriately cited.



[Crossref](#) is an association of scholarly publishers that developed Digital Object Identification (DOI) system for the unique identification published materials. Academic Journals is a member of Crossref and uses the DOI system. All articles published by Academic Journals are issued DOI.

[Similarity Check](#) powered by iThenticate is an initiative started by CrossRef to help its members actively engage in efforts to prevent scholarly and professional plagiarism. Academic Journals is a member of Similarity Check.

[CrossRef Cited-by](#) Linking (formerly Forward Linking) is a service that allows you to discover how your publications are being cited and to incorporate that information into your online publication platform. Academic Journals is a member of [CrossRef Cited-by](#).



Academic Journals is a member of the [International Digital Publishing Forum \(IDPF\)](#). The IDPF is the global trade and standards organization dedicated to the development and promotion of electronic publishing and content consumption.

Contact

Editorial Office: iasd@academicjournals.org

Help Desk: helpdesk@academicjournals.org

Website: <https://academicjournals.org/journal/JASD>

Submit manuscript online <http://ms.academicjournals.org>

Academic Journals
73023 Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria
ICEA Building, 17th Floor,
Kenyatta Avenue, Nairobi, Kenya.

Editors

Dr. Charles K. Ayo
Covenant University
Ota,
Nigeria.

Dr. Jersone Tasso Moreira Silva
FUMEC University
Belo Horizonte, MG
Brazil.

Prof. Jephias Mapuva
Department of Geography
(Development Studies stream),
Bindura University of Science, Education,
Zimbabwe.

Editorial Board

Prof. David Owusu-Ansah

James Madison University
Harrisonburg, VA
USA.

Prof. Roger Tsafack Nanfosso

University of Yaounde II
Yaounde,
Cameroon.

Prof. Ratno Lukito

Faculty of Syariah and Law,
State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga
Yogyakarta
Yogyakarta,
Indonesia.

Dr. Michael Yanou

University of Buea
Buea,
Cameroon.

Dr. Teresa Kwiatkowska

Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana-
Iztapalapa
Iztapalapa,
Mexico.

Dr. Godswill Amechi Nnaji

Dept. of Family Medicine
College of Health Sciences
Nnamdi Azikiwe University
Nnewi,
Nigeria.

Dr. Alejandro Natal Martinez

El Colegio Mexiquense
Mexico.

Dr. Oyedunni Arulogun

Department of Health Promotion &
Education
Faculty of Public Health
College of Medicine
University of Ibadan
Nigeria.

Dr. Alfred Ndi

University of Yaounde I
Bamenda,
Cameroon.

Dr. Dunlop Ochieng

The Open University of Tanzania
Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania.

Dr. André Van Dokkum

African Studies Centre
Leiden,
The Netherlands.

Dr. Chris Denhere

University of Venda
Limpopo,
South Africa.

Dr. Eyo Mensah

Department of Linguistics and
Communication Studies
University of Calabar
Nigeria.

Dr. Mark Kleyman

Department of Philosophy
Ivanovo State University of Chemistry and
Technology
Ivanovo,
Russia.

Dr. Fortune Sibanda

Department of Philosophy and Religious
Studies
Great Zimbabwe University
Masvingo,
Zimbabwe.

Dr. Ismail Hussein Amzat

UCSI University
Cheras,
Malaysia.

Prof. Ionel Bostan

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University
Iasi,
Romania.

Editorial Board

Ass. Prof. Mirela Matei

Petroleum and Gas University
Ploiesti,
Romania.

Dr. Elisa Backer

Faculty of Business
Federation University Australia
Australia.

Dr. Stanley Mpofu

Centre for Continuing Education
National University of Science and
Technology
Zimbabwe.

Dr. Aliyu Mukhtar Katsina

Political Science International Islamic
University Malaysia (IIUM)
Malaysia.

Dr. Ahonaa Roy

Jindal School of Government and Public
Policy
Jindal Global University
India.

Dr. Akunna Oledinma

Cranfield School of Management
Cranfield,
UK.

Dr. Eugénio Almeida

Center for International Studies – CEI-IUL,
Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-
IUL),
Portugal.

Dr. Joseph Mukuni

School of Education,
Virginia Technology,
United States.

Dr. Enzo Loner

Sociology and Social Research,
Università degli Studi di Trento,
Italy.

Table of Content

Soft skills in developing economies: An African view on the hidden linkage between indigenous knowledge and business perspectives Helen Akolgo-Azupogo, Arthur Rubens and Roland Bardy	47
Women in nonfarm rural employment: implications on the social and economic empowerment of rural women in Uganda Esther Kantono, Kuluthum Nakalema and Elizabeth Namujogo	59

Review

Soft skills in developing economies: An African view on the hidden linkage between indigenous knowledge and business perspectives

Helen Akolgo-Azupogo¹, Arthur Rubens^{2*} and Roland Bardy³

¹Department of Planning and Land Administration, Faculty of Sustainable Development Studies, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana.

²Department of Management, Lutgert College of Business, Florida Gulf Coast University, United States.

³Bardy Consult, Germany.

Received 18 June, 2021; Accepted 11 August, 2021

Although, the soft skills theme has been covered from many angles, there remains a scarcity of research on the linkage between indigenous knowledge and advances of business in developing countries. In addition, there is a gap between the theoretical approaches to the soft skills theme and the practical realities that ask not only which capabilities job seekers need to have but also where to acquire them. While it has been acknowledged that this gap exists, there is a scarcity of research and reports on the topic, and it is often overlooked that, in developing countries, the medium skilled employees and the small scale entrepreneurs are those who need the most support in acquiring knowledge. This fact was highlighted during the COVID pandemic. This paper shows that the provision of soft skills can meet both the requirements and capabilities in developing countries if people are given the chance to learn and master both professional knowledge and soft skills. The authors exhibit a conceptual base and showcase a range of examples, mainly on Africa, where improvement of soft skills has not only helped individuals and businesses but entire sectors of the economy. In the opinion of the authors, a documental presentation with “life stories” often provides more benefit to the readers than an anonymous statistical analysis.

Key words: Soft skills, developing countries, entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation, education, employment.

INTRODUCTION

Soft skills cover a broad range of skills: communication, professionalism, reliability, work ethics, etc., that are essential for job success and for the performance of businesses. They are particularly important as our world increasingly becomes more technological and automated and the competition for jobs becomes more competitive worldwide.

These trends are further accelerated by the presence of reoccurring economic downturns and world changing events like Covid-19 pandemic (Comme et al., 2019). Although it is recognized that these trends impact growth and that new types of skills are needed for jobs in the “tech world” and to rebuild after the pandemic, soft skills development is sometimes not linked to these phenomena

*Corresponding author. E-mail: arubens@fgcu.edu.

and not fully nurtured. This perspective applies to both the developed and the developing world; thus, the authors are seeing more deficits in soft skills deployment in those places where they would potentially contribute the most to eradicate or at least alleviate poverty by improving the conditions for job opportunities (Omoniyi, 2013). Additionally, numerical analyses measuring the specific impact of soft skills on economic development are almost non-existent¹. However, what we do find in the literature are numerous studies that exhibit which skills are to be employed in which professional setting – like the public sector, the health sector, manufacturing, the service industry, and IT (Massaro et al., 2015). In the following, the paper will show how soft skills in developing countries adds clarity about which skills are really considered most necessary for reducing the exposed gap and improve business development in Africa.

However, one point of departure for studying the phenomenon of soft skills deployment in a developing country has been the notion that foreign investment not only transfers technical know-how and knowledge but also non-technical skills (Mirvis and Googins, 2018). The effect, whether produced by institutionalized procedures like employee training or through mere human contact, spreads beyond the immediate investment target through spillovers that enhance the capabilities of its suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders (Bardy et al., 2012). Moreover, what was brought in through the foreign venture into, an African business and social community will meet and mix with capabilities that these communities possess on their own. They are rooted in indigenous knowledge and indigenous management practices. There is an array of specifics of indigenous influence on management that per se, may produce a competitive advantage and have done so on even an international scale for quite a few African firms (Dia, 1996). Furthermore, substantial research has been published on this issue of “autochthonous management” (Zoogah, 2020; Zoogah et al., 2015) to which this paper cannot add new insight. Instead, it wishes to complement the findings of that research providing two other perspectives. One entails, the question whether an indigenous African background shapes the mindset regarding management skills, whether this mindset is preserved when Africans work abroad and if it may provide an advantage to them in their workplace. The other perspective is whether a good command of soft skills may present an advantage in an environment of technological change and in economic crises.

The “mindset perspective” has been researched by the authors of this paper in a study with African nationals who live, study and work in Germany (Bardy et al., 2017). The participants in this study were asked to give a ranking of management soft skills by the order of their impact on business performance. This was contrasted with the authors of this paper, in an extensive search through the

literature, only found one work that was published to that effect: Mamabolo et al. (2017) have performed a factor analysis which confirmed that social and interpersonal, personality and leadership skills form a cluster which impacts on business success.

Results of a similar survey performed with students of Latin American descent in a U.S. university and with a large European survey of migrants’ soft skills conducted with companies’ heads, personnel managers and business associations. The following Table shows the comparison. It shall also serve here to give a definition of the soft skills that help to improve business performance (Table 1).

The outcome of the study revealed that the African migrants appear to be quite aware of the specific soft skills that are derived from their cultural background, which ultimately might make them well equipped for better job opportunities when they actively apply them in their work environment.

The second perspective that will be dealt with before concluding this introductory section regards the challenge of technological change and the economic downturn that was caused by COVID-19 which both have had a strong effect on Africa. Even though the continent has some of the fastest growing economies in the world (African Development Bank, 2017), and advances in technology deployment are continuously made (Rotberg, 2020), its fullest potential is far from being realized which is often due to poor and sometimes failed government performance. Mistrust between African governments and their citizenry have become even more visible in the COVID-19 pandemic (Ojiagu et al., 2020). On the other hand, as technological advances place the main responsibility on individuals in the form of ‘upskilling’, some traits of indigenous African wisdom are quite helpful in coping with those challenges as will be shown later in the paper (Schlogl et al., 2021). On the other hand, many talented youths in Africa, with high level of soft skills, feel that they have no future in their home countries. They have become part of a new “AfricanDiaspora”, migrating to other countries for more opportunities. In order to forestall or at least slow this exodus, opportunities must be created in the home countries through the creation of local enterprise that promises favorable prospects for the future. The very large informal sectors in Africa’s economies may become a driving force in this effort, and it can also, at least in part, compensate the loss of jobs through closures of larger formal businesses in the COVID-19 crisis (Gumede et al., 2020). The effect of the informal sector/the household industries on local economic development can be largely enhanced by skills deployment, of which soft skills are a key force as they connect to the indigenous background of the people (Tripath and Singh, 2017). So, the process of developing soft skills and entrepreneurship capacity can become the foremost catalyst for many young Africans by improving their competency and their

Table 1. Comparative ranking of soft skills with greatest impact on business performance (Bardy et al., 2017).

Soft skills	U.S. Int. students	Africans in Germany	European employers
	Rank No.	Rank No.	Rank No.
Identifying work goals	10	2	5
Learning to learn	2	2	6
Adaptability and flexibility	6	3	8
Motivation	4	7	7
Recognizing/ applying work protocols	1	1	5
Values	2	1	n.a.
Respecting hierarchical levels and rules	4	4	4
Managing responsibilities	9	7	7
Time management	8	6	10
Managing the digital process	2	3	3
Communication skills	8	4	7
Managing the communication circle	2	6	6
Personal effectiveness and integrity	1	3	6
Team working	9	5	9
Service skills (understanding of others' needs)	1	6	n.a.
Leadership	10	1	4
Conflict management	2	5	6
Cross-cultural awareness	2	5	4
Decision making	5	3	6
Problem solving	4	3	8
Creativity and innovation	5	5	10
Critical and structured thinking	4	4	6

N.a: Not available

entrepreneurial spirit, and by bringing hope.

REFLECTING ON SPECIFIC CONTEXTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING IN DEVELOPING ECONOMIES

As with any other issue that relates to development, learning soft skills requires specific competencies to address local realities of distinct regions and countries (Alon and McIntyre, 2004). *Development* is a term which is often applied with an over-emphasis on the economic sphere. Karl Polanyi's statement was that, the economy is essentially embedded in society (Stanfield, 1986) depicts the structures of developed countries, while in developing countries the traditional and indigenous culture is entrenched within the society with the economy being surrounded by these traditional forces and not embedded within (Onda, 2001). Also, societies in emerging economies are frequently going through various processes of transformation, and their economic and intellectual base is still too fragile for outright attempts to maximizing productivity. Soft skills training can strengthen that base when it is grounded in a wider societal context. In the African environment this context includes the notion that businesses and government officials need to deal with chiefs of (remote)

tribal communities, with representatives from religious communities and some inter-regional power groups. So, in training soft skills, best results are achieved when sociological and philosophical elements are engrained that combine the social, the economic and the ethical content of what is taught with indigenous traditions – and vice versa. The concept must also reach out to the vast number of people who operate in varied cottage industries in the informal economic sector. In many African states, the informal sector ranges from 50% of employment in Ethiopia to up to 90% in Tanzania (Henderson, 1999). In addition, many of the people who work in the informal sector may possess the qualities that can be associated with softskills.

SOFT SKILLS EMBEDDED IN INDIGENOUS TRADITION

The concept of soft skills is compatible with many of the principles which African societal interaction is founded. A fundamental principle is that of balance – the balance between mind and body; between different dimensions of individual bodily functioning and need; between individual and community, individual community and environment; and individual and the universe (Bodeker, 2010). These practices and beliefs highlight the populace's sense of

ethics where many people have a deep sense of right and wrong, and any breach of this code is considered evil: “for it is an injury or destruction to the accepted social order and peace” (Mbiti, 1969:205).

“As in all societies of the world, social order and peace are recognized by African people as essential and sacred; where the sense of life is so deep, it is inevitable that the solidarity (and stability) of the community must be maintained, otherwise there is disintegration and destruction” (Mbiti, 1969:205). Compliance to the rules of social order is required in all levels of society. In Nigeria for example the traditional Ibo society enforces conformity by “*omenala*” (customs). Culturally speaking, *Omenala* is the means by which the values of the society and the process of socialization are continued from one generation, so every member of the society will know what to expect from his neighbor and what to give to them (Ilogu, 1974:23).

The African tradition of bottom-up decision-making and development of common ideas stems from the quest for harmony and balance. In Botswana, for example, the ‘*Kgotla*’ is the central decision-making agency of a village and serves as the village’s administrative and judicial center. It is presided over by the local chief, and all adult community members are expected to attend to discuss public affairs (Silitshena, 1992). The Zulu and Xhosa, as well as the Swazi use ‘*Indaba*’ or ‘*Indzaba*’ - which means ‘business’, or ‘matter’ (Newenham-Kahindi, 2009), for bringing people together to resolve problems that affect the village, where everyone has a voice, and a common resolution is sought. Another concept is *Kanju*, a term that describes a specific creativity born from African difficulty. *Kanju* is “the rule-bending ethos that makes it possible to get things done, even when obstacles stand in their way, like crumbling infrastructure, corrupt bureaucracy and tightfisted banks who might be unwilling to make loans to people without political connections” (Olopade, 2015:20). Other indigenous concepts are *Ubuntu* from Zimbabwe (*Hunhu/Kuntu/Munhu* in other African languages), which refers to “the ability to overpowering urges in one’s own physical being” (Chivaura, 2007:232), and *shemsw*, the ancient traditional principle from the Nile Valley which denominates organized action, based on an equal or companionate companionship (Zoogah et al., 2020). The emphasis of both is on coexistence, built on harmony, peace and justice – the “African way to connect with people” (Newenham-Kahindi, 2009:90). This, in the words of modern African women’s rights activists means to secure trust and a “level playing field” (Elbeshbishi, 2018).

SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS FOR AFRICA

Africa is a continent of “the young” - 19 of the world’s 20 youngest countries are located in Africa (Myers, 2019),

and it produces one of the fastest-growing labor forces. However, the continent has one of the lowest levels of human capital, especially with respect to access to quality education, stunting, and maternal and child mortality (World Bank, 2019) which ultimately results in an ill-equipped workforce. Between 2017 and 2030, the labor supply in Africa will increase by an estimated 198 million, with 11 million young women and men expected to enter the labor market each year for the next decade (Choi et al., 2020:65). But this workforce will generally remain in poverty unless the qualification level can be raised. In contrast, on the more positive side, family ties are very strong throughout Africa which are often much stronger than what might be seen in other parts of the world. It is these ties that bind families together and where many Africans learn skills from parents and grandparents; these skills are often cognitive and emotional which are the essence of soft skills (Figure 1).

Yet, a limitation is that many parents and grandparents, as well as other family members often do not possess literacy skills and hence cannot transfer these skills to the youth. This is especially true for rural women with vulnerable backgrounds. They may have soft skills like confidence and the ability to develop personal strengths which can help them to build a business but overcoming the lack of basic literacy to further success can be a challenge (Gavigan et al., 2020). In pursuit of acquiring these skills, equipping illiterate adults with basic communication skills is one priority in adult learning and education (ALE) programs in Africa. ALE programs remain a major priority of most countries in much of Africa, but especially in the sub-Saharan region where 26 countries in this region have laws, regulations, or other public policy initiatives that primarily focus on supporting adult literacy (UIL, 2013). In a study conducted by Dekker et al. (2018) for INCLUDE, an international knowledge platform on inclusive development policies (<https://includeplatform.net>), there is an emphasis on context in the type of skills needed whether they come from rural or urban environments. But, irrespective of context, the study found that in both of these environments (rural or urban) the young need entrepreneurial skills to successfully start and grow a new business, a farm or non-profit venture (Dekker et al., 2018).

In Africa, the concept of “entrepreneurship” starts at the family level. In a well-managed family unit, where scarcity often rules, prioritization is essential. In such family settings, the young will acquire early on what Peter Drucker has called “the ability to recognize changing trends and respond to these as opportunities” (Drucker, 1985:12). One of the major factors that contribute to soft skills development in Africa is enabling young people to react accordingly when they see trends in the current economic and technological courses. While business schools provide economic knowledge, entrepreneurs need skills that allow individuals to adapt to changing,

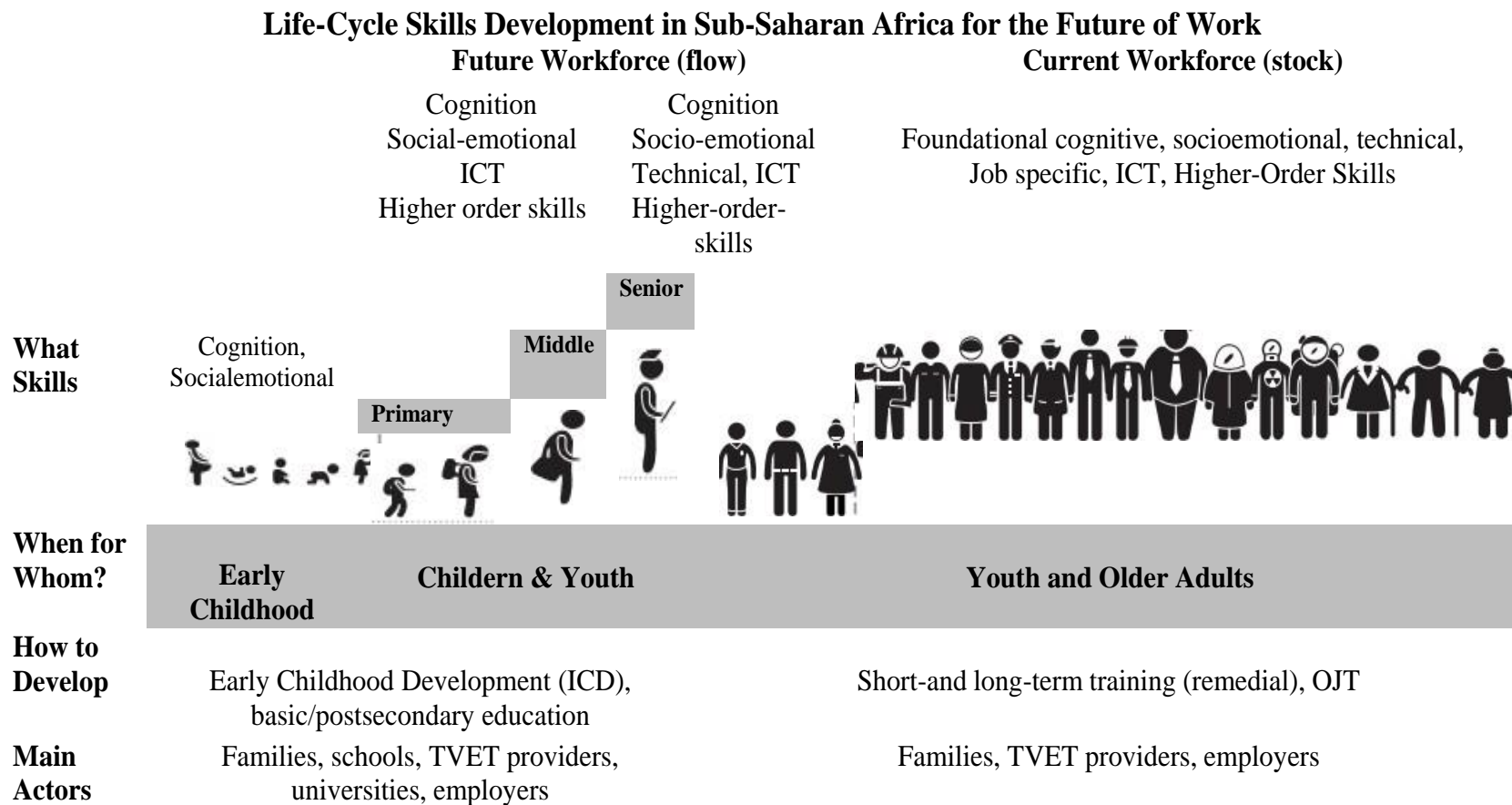


Figure 1. Life-cycle skills development in Sub-Saharan Africa for the future of work. ICT=information and communication technology; OJT=On the Job training, TVET=technical/vocational education/training
 Source: Adapted from Arias et al. (2019).

uncertain environments. Although, there is no shortage of entrepreneurial spirit in Africa, aspiring entrepreneurs further need to gain skills that help them overcome weaknesses in the policy environment (Bello, 2019) and to navigate bureaucratic barriers. Negotiation skills will help here, as will effective communication and planning skills. In the institutional environment of

African government agencies, communication, that is persistent dialogue and building trust in relationships, are needed to overcome the ever-present bias towards corruptive practices and other long established yet often outdated government policies.

Building entrepreneurs is one area for applying soft skills development concepts, but there are

more sectors where innovative skills and capacity building are needed. Templates must be developed to bring soft skills to teachers, scientific personnel, healthcare officials and government officials. Frequently, many of these individuals have not had the opportunity for self-development or were not allowed to freely exercise independent decision-making. But in their professional life

these individuals are exposed to diverse public and private interest groups whose representatives are skilled at communicating their objectives. Hence, they must learn to interact fluidly and dynamically. In addition, they must respond to situations that require skills like emotional intelligence, empathy, active listening, problem solving, creative thinking and the ability to solve conflict. Teachers and government officials, in particular, need to have these intuitive skills. With teachers for example, this includes the ability to observe quickly and sharply and respond to the mixed group of individuals and variant situations in the classroom. The pertinent skill of elocution may often come from what an individual has learned within the family group where the elders speak out frankly in any occasion (Bhatnagar, 2011). Similarly, government officials are often tasked with working in mixed teams together with representatives of the tribal leadership. If there is mutual understanding (built, again on empathy, active listening and creative thinking that both sides should have learned when observing family tradition), the outcomes will be rewarding for all. This has been called the “*chieftaincy paradox*”: Empowering unelected traditional leaders often improves the responsiveness of democratic governments” (Baldwin, 2016:5).

In some cases, collaboration that starts on the local level can even shape the overall political landscape. In a case from Liberia, international peacekeeping missions succeeded in building cross-sector teams of civil society organizations and government representatives. The public authorities which had not been found trustworthy by the people of Liberia regained acceptance and were therefore able to gain undisputed ownership of the election process in 2005 and 2008 (Pietz and Carlowitz, 2011).

The concepts on which a foremost focus should be given are those that refer to the groups which suffer from notable gaps in the dominion of soft skills and where this gap prevents effective performance: teachers, scientific personnel, and government officials. The three sectors bear similarities with regard to the interaction between tribal tradition and the official institutions. Other than in the private sector, this interplay is very often not employed to advance communal solutions (Bardy et al., 2018). However, since all businesses are embedded in a societal environment, there is a huge potential for cross-fertilization of ideas and practices among these three sectors. It is this potential which seems to be the most promising for Africa.

FROM CONCEPTS TO PRACTICE

African people often stay connected to indigenous wisdom when entering formal training (Morrison, 2018). Upholding the societal nexus can contribute to maintaining a balance between the cultural, the political,

and the racial spheres. Therefore, developmental plans which make use of this nexus can stimulate enterprising African youth, strengthen the self-reliance of young people and promote a cognitive shift to perceive new environments (Arogundade, 2011).

Developing a stronger enterprising attitude could also motivate young persons to move out from the informal sector and establish registered firms because they will understand that such firms create the foundation for sustained employment creation (Osuagwu, 2002). But this must be complemented by a number of legislative and social actions such as access to credit and social protection services for the families of the self-employed, and, most importantly, restoring trust in people who are in positions of privilege and power (Marinescu and Valimăreanu, 2019).

Coupling the development of soft skills with building a public entrepreneurial mindset is a positive move to promote economic activity since it provides individuals with an ability to conceive innovative ideas and the ability to convert those ideas into improving their workplace schemes into profit making ventures (Omolayo, 2006). As said earlier, entrepreneurial spirit is often engrained in what young people in Africa learn from their elders. So, the strong tribal structures and culture that are found throughout the African continent are rather an encouragement than a hindrance for job innovation. What needs to be respected in job training and execution is the nexus to tribal culture. For example, when confronting agricultural engineers with the techniques of improved distribution and usage of pesticides in Ghana, no sampling and no trials could be conducted in the field without the direct intervention of traditional land priests, the “*tindaana*” (Kwakye et al., 2019). Skills deployment, thus, becomes more effective when it takes account of the distinct social environment in which it is implemented. This can be provided by the multitude of institutions outside the educational system like business associations, civil society organizations, churches and other religious institutions. It is this intertwinement of the public and the private sector that constitutes both the challenge and the chance for making businesses, government entities and above all young people aware of the rich heritage with which their culture bestows on them. For the young, transferring this into their professional undertakings would just be one additional step since they will have seen many (good) examples of tribal leadership at home. Also, as the tribal system has shaped an edifice of special skills and knowledge, any learner should be able to build accurate judgment for the know-how that is transferred from Western countries to Africa. If Africans develop sufficient self-confidence to that regard, they will be able to merge their own skills with those imported skills and knowledge (Akolgo-Azupogo et al., 2021).

Deploying what has been learned in a tribal home can be beneficial, for example, when linking technical skills in

information technology (IT) with soft skills: A report from Zambia ranks persistence, networking and self-confidence as the most important soft skills over planning and communication (Kambone, 2017). Beyond IT, it is motivational skills, namely personal initiative, proactiveness, goal setting, planning, innovation and overcoming obstacles that count for personal and business success. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are the most visible effects as seen in a study done by McKenzie and Woodruff (2014) on training of business management in small and medium enterprises of Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Tunisia. Comparable results were shown in a study in Liberia (Dammert and Nansamba, 2019). In a related study, it was found that both IT and soft skills improve professionalization in motorcycle taxi services (a vital business that can be found throughout Africa) (Inoue, 2019). Specifically, the study found that when drivers learn to connect to IT platforms offering their service, they almost automatically require/acquire soft skills connected to the use of those platforms: “problem solving, communication, teamwork, self-management, time management, interpersonal connection, ability to learn proactively, emotional intelligence, leadership, and planning and organizing, among others”(Inoue, 2019:16).

The awareness for soft skills has grown in many business areas throughout Africa. For instance, in the creative economy, which is an important source of income for the informal sector and the self-employed (Snowball et al., 2017), a combination of specific artistic skills can help to commercialize creative ideas and toraise competencies related to the use and adaptation of IT, management, entrepreneurship marketing, financial and planning skills and problem solving and interpersonal skills (Ansah and White, 2014).

In African agriculture, capacity building initiatives have been recognizing the shifts in paradigms and the ongoing transformation within the area for some time. A specific field where this is found is the livestock sector where soft skills are increasingly geared towards outcomes. These outcomes depend on the performance levels of the various actors in the system, i.e., individuals, family networks and formal organizations (el Ibrahim, 2007). One aspect here is seen with returning migrants: Their employment opportunities in agriculture significantly improve when they receive training support that also incentivizes what they have inherited from their ancestors. A recent study shows that this applies to a large number of the 35,000 plus Gambians (adults and children) who had entered Europe by varied types of ‘irregular migration’ but who later returned between 2014 and 2018 (Ceessay, 2020; Altrogge and Zanker, 2019; Pécoud, 2018).

Also with agriculture, the efforts in many African countries to mitigate the impact of climate change depend on the rural communities’ ability and willingness to acquire and implement soft skills. A study on the

Bukavu region in the Democratic Republic of Congo lists those skills that help communities respond to climate change: (a) jointly identify problems and opportunities; (b) discuss and negotiate desired future states; and (c) perceive and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities (Bele et al., 2014). There is a connection of this to the need of equipping farmers with access to timely and accurate information about prices, markets, trade opportunities and production methods. In a study from Uganda, it was found that the type of skills which is needed for the managers of the cooperatives and the coordinators of the farmer groups was the need to communicate effectively, plan in advance and network with diverse stakeholders. The study emphasized that, with these skills, a large number of participants will be able to use a direct nexus between the farmers and the commodity exchanges, with a substantial effect on the economic situation of the rural enterprises (de Jager, 2007). A similar two-level effect of introducing soft skills practices was reported from the Zanyokwe Irrigation Scheme (ZIS) in South Africa’s Eastern Cape Province (Tshuma and Monde, 2012).

In the health sector, professionals are often asked to combine their training in specialist skills with “pedagogical dimensions” and to align capacity building procedures with learning about recognizing the situational (Carvalho et al., 2019). Pedagogy is certainly needed to both prepare individuals for a service in healthcare facilities and to make this service attractive. If applied outside the urban environment, this potential can benefit development in rural communities and the families of the respective trainees; it would encourage them to remain in their jobs, thus providing regular health services where such services are underdeveloped (<https://>; Gumede et al., 2020). Another approach to increase the skill set of healthcare providers involves business incubators and the process of incubating new businesses. For example, the U.K. based Acorn Medical Centre launched a virtual new venture in South Africa where they identified entrepreneurs with promising health-related technologies that had growth potential and provided them with varied support during their early stage of development, with a focus on soft skills and a strong emphasis on the importance of social impact (Chakma et al., 2010).

The need for soft skills training in the continent is present across industries. In the South African logistics, when students with tertiary degrees and professional certificates were taught the ‘hard’ skills for day-to-day supply chain work without relation to ‘soft’ skills and practical exposure, the outcome was found to be “poor” (State of Logistics Survey, 2014:83). Similarly, the hospitality industry in Ghana has noticed that graduates do not meet the expectations from employers because their training does not recognize that soft skills, behavioral skills and generic attributes are the core competencies needed (Comme et al., 2019). A study from South Africa concludes that it is worthwhile to enrich

job training with content that connects to their rural backgrounds: “No matter how challenging it is to recruit immigrants in the hospitality industry, they remain an attractive option for their hospitable attitudes and overt eagerness to remain in what they consider to be greener pastures” (Iwu et al., 2019, p).

EXPLICIT RECOMMENDATIONS

In Africa, and in particular in many Sub-Saharan countries, the general education system has been heavily criticized for being overly academic, theoretical and exam-oriented such that many of those who leave the system early, from primary and secondary schools, do not possess the skills to be employed or create a venture that could support them and their families (Kanyandago, 2010). These early leavers, as they are often called, would potentially be a primary sector of the population to benefit from soft skills training. In Ghana, for example, the programs overseen by the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) specifically include entrepreneurial and other soft skills training in their curricula. With this training, graduates can support the early leavers (Boateng, 2012). In Nigeria, the government has launched micro-systems of apposite infrastructure comprised of polytechnic and vocational schools, training institutions, and apprenticeship centers. These are planned around the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), National Poverty Alleviation program (NAPAP), and Rural Infrastructural Development Scheme (RIDS) which together represent a comprehensive poverty and unemployment reduction project (Dum and Nwafor, 2019). But it is acknowledged anywhere that the best results are attained through a mix of private and public training schemes, where non-governmental organizations step in. This is seen, for example, in the Upper East of Ghana where two private institutions have started programs: the Millar Institute for Transdisciplinary and Development Studies and Regentropfen College of Applied Sciences. These institutions’ objectives go beyond formal education in classes where one of their key function is community outreach (which per se entails access to indigenous knowledge), and this can ultimately be used to prepare higher-level university-industry collaboration.

For combining private and public training schemes, wide-ranging cross-sector collaboration is needed from the onset. The list below shows a sampling of programs with an inter-regional perspective that have been developed to that effect:

1. The African Development Forum’s initiative on investing in “*Skills for productivity, inclusivity, and adaptability*” (Arias et al., 2019). Three policy goals are given: (a) accelerate overall productivity growth, (b) promote economic inclusion and (c) ensure the

adaptability of the workforce in the 21st century. The framework connects all three policies to soft skills enhancement explicitly and emphasizes their importance for resilience and build-up, with special reference to the World Bank’s Atlas for Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity (<https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/atlas-social-protection-indicators-resilience-and-equity>).

2. The International Development Coordinating Group’s (IDCG) set of “*Interventions improve the labor market outcomes of youth*” (IDCG, 2017). IDCG is a multidisciplinary network of researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and funders committed to evidence-informed policies. The study’s evidence base covers 107 Interventions in 31 countries, including 55 using skills training (where soft skills are the main attention), 15 with entrepreneurship promotion and 21 using subsidized employment. Interestingly, the analysis reveals bigger program effects in low and middle income countries than in high-income countries

3. Resilience is the main topic of programs for “*Fostering technology and soft skills to bolster resistance to crises*” which addresses issues across socio-economic systems in all Africa as reported in a study released by the Indian Institute of Economic Affairs (Jain and Sasiprabhu, 2020). While the focus is laid, primarily, on the response to CoVID-19, the perspective is on the long-range effects as well. It exhibits the cross-continental strategy of the African Union which promotes skills training by championing cooperation, collaboration, coordination and communication between its 54 member’s states.

4. Final in this short catalogue is the “*Programs for women economic-empowerment*” of which the most comprehensive ones have been established in West Africa (Buvinic et al., 2020). The programs provide support and training, among others, in agriculture and off-farm work linked to agriculture, for women working in household enterprises and micro-commerce and for adolescent girls. Almost all of them are donor-related and receive funding from the World Bank, The African Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Also, there are various forms of knowledge and skills transfer from local business firms and through regional initiatives like “Trickle Up” (<https://trickleup.org>) which combines \$100 seed capital grants with teaching how to work together and knowledge sharing.

The focus on women has become even more important with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the virus has affected a large segment of the population, it is women who have been largely impacted since many are working in jobs that traditionally employ women and that meet the public, thus, carrying a high risk of exposure: health, education, and retail (van Barneveld et al., 2020). The slight progresses that have been made in

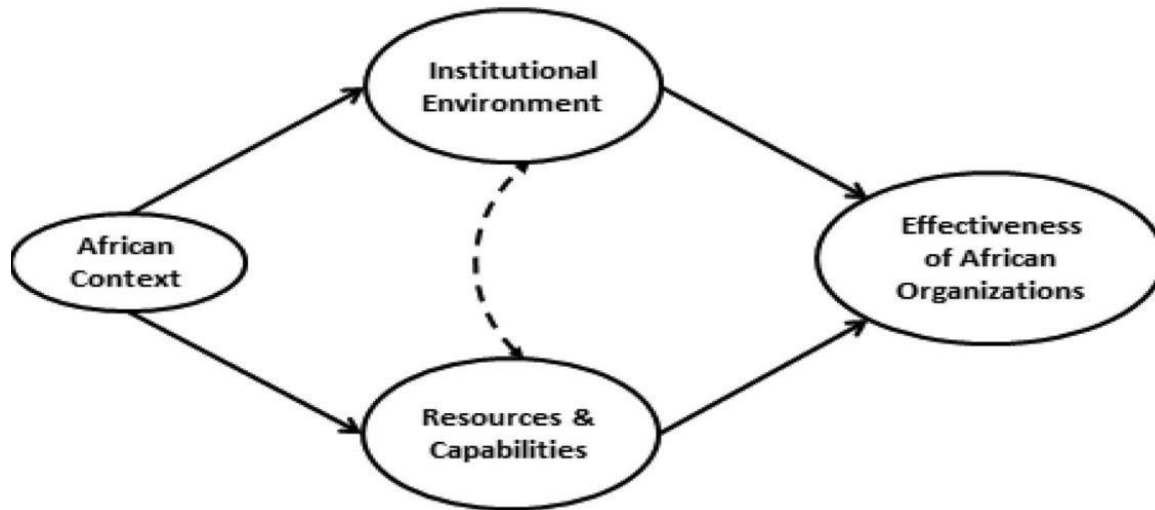


Figure 2. A conceptual model of institutional and resource dynamics behind organizational effectiveness in Africa (Source: Zoogah et al., 2015:10).

transitioning women out of agriculture through job creation/placement interventions, like, e.g., increase in low-income person's decision-making power and subjective wellbeing through new employment in Senegal's horticultural export industry (Van den Broeck et al., 2017), are threatened by the crisis. But if overcome, developments of this type will also be pivotal to mitigate risks of poverty and food insecurity, for instance, in a future recession.

There is, in all, a positive implication in the pandemic: Youth in Sub Saharan Africa can play an important role as they have the skills for being central in spreading and promoting information regarding Covid-19 and the measures to prevent it (Honwana and Honwana, 2020). In addition, the mindset and skills learned post pandemic can not only promote a stronger societal cohesion in their community, but also be used by young people to support the needy, the vulnerable, and the many precarious workers in essential sectors in the informal economy. The crisis can potentially act as an impetus to strengthen societal relationships and bring collective benefit.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Soft skills development, implementation and practice in Africa must be conjoined with the Africans' indigenous values and ethics, traditional ways of teaching and learning, of tutelage and apprenticeship. The epistemology which modern sociology uses in that context is reflective practice and appreciative enquiry. In Africa this is deeply rooted in the history and culture which societies have used to communicate and interact. Awareness of this enhances skills training. Development economics, at least when taught too independently, and

development support from the outside, when too narrowly focused on visible outcomes, have yet to grasp this complex intertwinement. For a discussion of this appeal, the authors wish to use a conceptual model exhibited in Zoogah et al. (2015) and which underlines the importance of contextual factors for organizational effectiveness (Figure 2).

As shown here, the African context influences both the institutional environment (which includes the interaction between tribal tradition and the official institutions as mentioned in our text above) and the capabilities. Many of these capabilities are embedded in the traditional characteristics of African life as exhibited in Table 2.

These characteristics impact all spheres of life, with soft skills being just one of them, but one that influences the chances of economic progress and survival. It relates to performance not only within the professional environments but within all coping with challenges, whether from new technologies, or from an economic or a health crisis. For a better understanding of this nexus, scholars and practitioners from inside and outside Africa should establish and continue inter-cultural learning on this topic. Then they will reach all the objectives of soft skills deployment. And only then will soft skills development move beyond the issues of growth and employment opportunities where it cannot get a foothold otherwise. But when administered appropriately, it will provide the means to redress inequality in its various demeanors and contribute to preparedness for changes in society.

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interests.

Table 2. Characteristics of African tradition.

Characteristics of African tradition
Dominance of the rural sector
Subsistence economies
Capital Economic Social
Autarky
Kinship and interpersonal networks
Local development of technology
Communal and intergenerational transfers of wisdom
High illiteracy rates
Chieftaincy
Tribal councils
Collectivistic and tribal identity
Strong tribe and family coherence

Source: Adapted from Zoogah and Beugré, 2012:35.

REFERENCES

- African Development Bank: African Economic Outlook (2017). Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: African Development Bank Group.
- Akolgo-Azupogo H, Bardy R, Rubens A (2021). Applying land governance knowledge in Northern Ghana: A case study on creating communities of practice between tribal leaders and government. *Land Use Policy* 107:105493.
- Alon IJ, McIntyre J (eds.) (2004). *Business Education and Emerging Market Economies*. Norwell, Massachusetts: Palgrave.
- Altrogge J, Zanker F (2019). *The Political Economy of Migration Governance in the Gambia*. Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg. Available at: https://www.arnold-bergstraesser.de/sites/default/files/field/pubdownload/medamgambiar_eport_altrogge_zanker.pdf
- Ansah K, White E (2014). *Understanding Creative Industries: their definitions, models, measurements and drivers*. Culture and Creative Industry Workshop 19 August 2014. Accra, Ghana: British Council. Available at: <http://www.Artsghana.org>.
- Arias O, Evans DK, Santos I (2019). *The skills balancing act in Sub-Saharan Africa: Investing in skills for productivity, inclusivity, and adaptability*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- Arogundade BB (2011). Entrepreneurship Education: An Imperative for Sustainable Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 2(1):26-29.
- Baldwin K (2016). *The paradox of traditional chiefs in democratic Africa*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bardy R, Drew S, Kennedy TF (2012). Foreign investment and ethics: How to contribute to social responsibility by doing business in less-developed countries. *Journal of Business Ethics* 106(3):267-282.
- Bardy R, Rubens A, Akolgo-Azupogo H (2018). Combining indigenous wisdom and academic knowledge to build sustainable future: An example from rural Africa. *Journal of African Studies and Development* 10(2):8-18.
- Bardy R, Rubens A, Eberle P (2017). Soft Skills and Job Opportunities of Migrants: Systemic Relationships in the Labor Market. *Business Ethics and Leadership* 1(4):5-21.
- Bele MY, Sonwa DJ, Tiani AM (2014). Local communities' vulnerability to climate change and adaptation strategies in Bukavu in DR Congo. *The Journal of Environment and Development* 23(3):331-357.
- Bello HS (2019). Female Entrepreneurship in the African Fashion Industry. In: Moreno-Gavara, C., Jiménez-Zarco (eds.), *A Review of Its Determinants and Characteristics: Sustainable Fashion*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, pp. 99-113.
- Bhatnagar N (2011). *Effective communication and soft skills*. New Delhi, India: Pearson Education India.
- Boateng C (2012). *Restructuring Vocational and Technical Education in Ghana: The Role of Leadership Development*. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2(4):108-114.
- Bodeker G (2010). Traditional knowledge and health. Subramanian, S. M., and Pisupati, B.(eds.), *Traditional knowledge in policy and practice: Approaches to development and human well-being*.
- Buvinic M, O'Donnell M, Bourgault S (2020). *Women's Economic Empowerment in West Africa: Towards a Practical Research Agenda*. Center for Global Development (CGD) Working Paper # 557. Washington, D.C.
- Carvalho A, Ferrinho P, Craveiro I (2019). Towards post-colonial capacity-building methodologies – some remarks on the experiences of health researchers from Mozambique and Angola. *Ciência e Saúde Coletiva* 24:1617-1626.
- Ceesay EK (2020). Employment in agriculture, migration, bilateral aids, economic growth and remittance: Evidence from the Gambia. *Economics, Management and Sustainability* 5(1):48-67.
- Chakma J, Masum H, Singer PA (2010). Can incubators work in Africa? Acorn Technologies and the entrepreneur-centric model. *BMC International Health and Human Rights* 10(Suppl 1):S1-S7.
- Chivaura VG (2007). Hunhu/Ubuntu: A sustainable approach to endogenous development, bio-cultural diversity and protection of the environment in Africa". In: Haverkort, B. and Rist, S. (eds), *Endogenous development and bio-cultural diversity: the interplay between worldviews, globalization and locality*. *Compas Series on Worldviews and Sciences* (No. 6). pp. 229-240.
- Choi J, Dutz MA, Usman Z (eds.) (2020). *The Future of Work in Africa: Harnessing the Potential of Digital Technologies for All*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.
- Comme V, Desere K, Hatting J (2019). Matching the Competencies of Hospitality Graduates with the Expectations from the Hospitality Industry in Ghana: A Case Study. *Proceedings of the European Conference on Education 2019*. London, U.K. Available at: http://papers.iafor.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/ece2019/ECE2019_51717.pdf.
- Dammert A, Nansamba A (2019). *Skills Training and Business Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Liberia*. Partnership for Economic Policy Working Paper. New Haven, CT: Innovations for Poverty Action. Available at: <https://www.poverty-action.org>
- de Jager A (2007). *The Rural Information System of the Uganda Commodity Exchange*. The Hague, Netherlands: International Institute for Communication and Development.
- Dekker M, Simbanegavi W, Hollander S, Miroro O (2018). Boosting productive employment in Africa: what works and why. *INCLUDE Synthesis Report Series*. Available at: <http://includeplatform.net/downloads/synthesis-productive-employment>.
- Dia M (1996). *Africa's management in the 1990s and beyond*. Washington, DC: WorldBank.

- Drucker PF (1985). *Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Practice and Principles*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- Dum ABN, Nwafor BC (2019). The Leadership of Enterprise Education on Poverty Alleviation and Unemployment in Africa. *Business Ethics and Leadership* 3(4):28-33.
- el Ibrahim MH (2007). *Live-stock sector training needs assessment report for East and Central Africa*. Nairobi, Kenya: International Livestock Research Institute.
- Elbeshbishi A (2018). Trade liberalisation and women's employment in Africa: Towards a level playing field. In: Kanengoni, A.D. (ed.) *The future of work for women in Africa*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa pp. 49-54.
- Gavigan S, Ciprikis K, Cooney T (2020). The impact of entrepreneurship training on self-employment of rural female entrepreneurs in Uganda. *Small Enterprise Research* 27(2):180-194.
- Gumede DM, Taylor M, Kvalsvig J (2020). An Innovative Strategy to address shortages of healthcare personnel in South Africa. *Research Square* Preprint. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-25052/v2>.
- Henderson H (1999). *Beyond Globalization: Shaping a Sustainable Global Economy*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Honwana A, Honwana N (2020). *How are the youth stepping up to CoVID-19 in Africa?* London, UK: London School of Economics (LSE) Firoz Lalji Center for Africa.
- IDCG (International Development Coordinating Group) (2017). *Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth*. Berlin, Germany: Humboldt University, and Geneva, Switzerland: International Labor Organization
- Ilogu EC (1974). *Christianity and Igbo culture*. New York, NY: Nok Publishers.
- Inoue N (2019). *Digital economy and development: an empirical study on motorcycle driver jobs in Uganda*. IDE Discussion Paper No. 753. London, UK: Institute of Developing Economies (IDE) and, Japan External Trade Organization.
- Iwu CG, Bayari LSO, Jaiyeola A (2019). Exploring the [un] likelihood of successful integration of skilled and unskilled immigrants into the hospitality industry. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8(3):201-213.
- Jain S, Sasiprabhu S (2020). Tech to the rescue: How to make Africa's digital transformation work for resilience. In: Jain, S., Chadha, M., Owino, K., and Mutua, J. (eds.), *The Day After Tomorrow. Africa's Battle with CoVID-19 and the Road Ahead*. New Delhi, India: Observer Research Foundation pp. 98-148.
- Kambone MI (2017). The impact of small and medium enterprises in achieving sustainable development growth in Zambia. *The International Journal of Multi- Disciplinary Research Platform*. Paper ID: CFP/364/2017.
- Kanyandago P (2010). Revaluing the African endogenous education system for community-based learning: an approach to early school leaving. In: Zeelen, J., van der Linden, J., Nampota, D., Ngabirano, M. (eds.), *The Burden of Educational Exclusion: Understanding and Challenging Early School Leaving in Africa*. Rotterdam/Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers, pp. 99-113.
- Kwakye MO, Mengistie B, Ofosu-Anim J, Nuer ATK, van den Brink PJ (2019). Pesticide registration, distribution and use practices in Ghana. *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 21(6):2667-2691.
- Mamabolo MA, Kerrin M, Kele T (2017). Entrepreneurship management skills requirements in an emerging economy: A South African outlook. *The Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management* 9(1):1-10.
- Marinescu C, Valimăreanu I (2019). The main currents (schools) of thought about the informal economy. *Revista de Management Comparat International* 20(3):312-316.
- Massaro M, Bardy R, Garlatti A (2015). A Soft Skill Training Model for Executive Education. In: Lepeley, M.T., Kimakowitz, E. von, and Bardy, eds. *Human Centered Management in Executive Education: Global Imperatives, Innovation and New Directions*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 222-241.
- Mbiti JS (1969). *African religions and philosophy*. London, UK: Heinemann.
- McKenzie D, Woodruff C (2014). *What Were We Learning from Business Training and Entrepreneurship m Evaluations around the Developing World?* The World Bank Research Observer 29(1):48-82.
- Mirvis P, Googins B (2018). Catalyzing social entrepreneurship in Africa: Roles for western universities, NGOs and corporations. *Africa Journal of Management* 4(1):57-83.
- Morrison SA (2018). Reframing Westernized culture: insights from a Critical Friends Group on Eco-Justice Education. *Environmental Education Research* 24(1):111-128.
- Myers J (2019). 19 of the World's 20 youngest countries are in Africa. *World Economic Forum*. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/08/youngest-populations-africa/>
- Newenham-Kahindi A (2009). The Transfer of Ubuntu and Indaba Business Models Abroad: A Case of South African Multinational Banks and Telecommunication Services in Tanzania. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management* 9(1):87-108.
- Ojiagu NC, Nzewi HN, Arachie AE (2020). Accountability and transparency in nation building: a covid-19 experience in sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research* 7(1):23-33.
- Olopede D (2015). *The Bright Continent Breaking Rules and Making Change in Modern Africa*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Omolayo B (2006). Entrepreneurship in Theory and Practice. In: Omotosho, A., T.K.O. Aluko, O.I. Wale Awe, O.I., and Adaramola, M.S. (eds). *Introduction to Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria*. Lagos, Nigeria: University of Ado-Ekiti Press. pp. 126-137.
- Omoniyi MBI (2013). The Role of Education in Poverty Alleviation and Economic Development: a theoretical perspective and counselling implications. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 15(II):176-185.
- Onda M (2001). *Social Development in Asia: From the Viewpoint of Development Sociology*. Ryutsu Keizai Daigaku Shakaigakubu Ronso 11(2):27-50.
- Osugwu L (2002). Entrepreneurship in a Developing Economy: Empirical evidence from Nigeria Business Organizations. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship* 6(1):19-32.
- Pécoud A (2018). What do we know about the International Organization for Migration? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44(10):1621-1638.
- Pietz T, Carlowitz LV (2011). *Ownership in practice: lessons from Liberia and Kosovo*. German Foundation for Peace, Research Report No. 29. Osnabrück, Germany: Deutsche Stiftung Friedensforschung. Available at: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-371471>.
- Rotberg RI (2020). *Things Come Together: Africans Achieving Greatness in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Oxford University Press/Oxford Scholarship Online.
- Schlogl L, Weiss E, Prainsack B (2021). Constructing the 'Future of Work': An analysis of the policy discourse. *New Technology, Work and Employment* 2021. Published online 23 June.
- Silitshena RMK (1992). *Botswana: a physical, social and economic geography*. Gaborone, Botswana: Longman.
- Snowball J, Collins A, Tarentaal D (2017). Transformation and job creation in the cultural and creative industries in South Africa. *Cultural trends* 26(4):295-309.
- Stanfield JR (1986). *The economic thought of Karl Polanyi: Lives and livelihood*. Berlin, Germany: Springer.
- State of Logistics Survey (2014): 10th annual State of Logistics Survey for South Africa Pretoria, South Africa: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.
- Tripath P, Singh N (2017). Promoting Rural Entrepreneurship through Skill Development for Decent Livelihood: A Review. *International Journal of Current Research and Review* 9(15):21-25.
- Tshuma MC, Monde N (2012). A socio-economic impact assessment of a project to identify and implement best management practices at the Zanyokwe Irrigation Scheme affarm level. *Water SA* 38(5):783-792.
- UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) (2013). *Second Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: Rethinking Literacy*. Hamburg, Germany: UIL.
- Van Barneveld K, Quinlan M, Kriesler P, Junor, A, Baum F, Chowdhury A, Friel S (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons on building more equal and sustainable societies. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review* 31(2):133-157.
- Van den Broeck G, Swinnen J, Maertens M (2017). *Global value chains,*

- large-scale farming, and poverty: Long-term effects in Senegal. *Food Policy* 66(1):97-107.
- World Bank (2019). *World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Zoogah D, Peng MW, Woldu H (2015). Institutions, resources, and organizational effectiveness in Africa. *Academy of Management Perspectives* 29(1):7-31.
- Zoogah D (2020b). Companionate leadership: A shemswian perspective. *African Journal of Management* 6(3):214-247.
- Zoogah D, Beugré C (2012). *Managing organizational behavior in the African context*. New York: Routledge.
- Zoogah D, Gomes E, Cunha MP (2020). Autochthonous management knowledge/knowledge management in Africa. *Journal of Knowledge Management* 24(6):1493-1512.

Full Length Research Paper

Women in nonfarm rural employment: implications on the social and economic empowerment of rural women in Uganda

Esther Kantono^{1*}, Kuluthum Nakalema² and Elizabeth Namujogo³

¹Department of International Development and Cooperation, Graduate School of International Studies, Ajou University, Republic of Korea.

²Action for Inclusion, Uganda.

³World Vision Uganda.

Received 28 July, 2021; Accepted 14 September, 2021

Nonfarm employment is an increasing form of employment in rural areas in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is partly because many of the workers in developing countries especially in Sub-Saharan Africa are self-employed workers. Most women in Uganda do not own land since customary land ownership system deprives women of owning land. This has pushed women to nonfarm employment in urban areas, semi-rural, and rural areas. This paper explored the implications of nonfarm rural employment on the social and economic empowerment of women in rural areas. The findings revealed that nonfarm rural employment boosts women's income, puts women in leadership positions in women's groups such as the savings groups, and empowers women to become independent by reducing economic dependence on men or their husbands while also providing women with decision making power both in the community and households. Additionally, successful women in nonfarm employment, especially self-employed women, are role models and a motivation to other rural women to venture into nonfarm employment. Being successful as a woman in nonfarm employment also comes along with leadership roles and high social status in the community.

Key words: Nonfarm employment, women empowerment, rural nonfarm economy, Uganda.

INTRODUCTION

In developing countries, the majority of the population is still employed in the agricultural sector and especially in farm agricultural activities (Djido and Shiferaw, 2018; Lanjouw and Lanjouw, 2001). However, the growth of nonfarm activities in rural areas in developing countries has increased (Van den Broeck and Kilic, 2019). Nonfarm activities in rural areas include vending or operating small

rural shops, selling clothes and shoes, operating restaurants, buying produce from farmers, transport services, salon, and hairdressing, repair services for different things, etc. Africa is rapidly urbanizing (Adams and Opoku, 2016; Birch and Wachter, 2011) and with urbanization taking place, the rural economy must be impacted and one of the major impacts that can be

*Corresponding author. E-mail: kantonoe@yahoo.com.

attributed to urbanization in Africa is the expansion of the rural nonfarm economy which includes services in the rural areas. Uganda is still mainly an agricultural economy and the population that depends on agriculture especially farm employment still high. There are still several people not directly employed in farms but are involved in the agricultural sector indirectly for example acting as middlemen who transport agricultural products, buying agricultural products from farmers, selling pesticides and seed varieties etc.

WOMEN AND RURAL NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

Although the rural nonfarm economy is dominated by men, women engagement in nonfarm economy has been growing over time, with women playing a very important role in nonfarm economy (Ackah, 2013). The nonfarm economy is expanding in several countries of Africa as the continent continues to witness population increase and urbanization (du Toit, 2019; Nneka and Rafiu, 2020). Nonfarm economy is an employer of many, especially those with entrepreneurship skills (Ahmed and Nwankwo, 2013; Igwe and Icha-Ituma, 2020). Nonfarm rural economy therefore directly employs entrepreneurs, while on the other hand, it provides employment opportunities to those employed by the entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs in rural areas engage in nonfarm economy as own-account workers or self-employed workers who employ others too. In Africa, few women own lands, despite the majority of the women staying in rural areas (Adeniyi, 2010). Women can own the land upon purchase of land but many women in Africa are poor, which further makes them vulnerable. The option of engaging in nonfarm employment either as entrepreneurs or as workers working for others in rural areas can be a foundation for women to own assets and other properties. Land ownership rights in several African societies place women in precarious situations (Meeker and Meekers, 1997; Tripp, 2003). Women find themselves in situations where they work hard on farms yet they have little or no decisions over the produce from the land. They have no ownership of what is produced and therefore men determine the appropriation of the benefits from the land. Women must explore other alternatives through which they can have decision making powers over what they do. Nonfarm employment can be an alternative for women to escape precarious situations of laboring on land or farms for long hours yet in the end they have no ownership rights over what is produced. Cultural set up of society gives men an upper hand in the ownership of properties like land which makes it hard to break such cultural beliefs. This makes efforts to empower women in rural Africa quite hard to achieve the intended targets. In rural areas, women are limited from participating in nonfarm employment because of gender stereotypes (Esuruku, 2010; Shema and Mutarindwa, 2017). Nonfarm

employment can therefore, play an indirect or direct role in women's empowerment and emancipation.

Women in sub-Saharan Africa have exhibited great entrepreneurship potential (Chinomona and Maziriri, 2015; Langevang and Gough, 2012). Although women face several challenges, there is an increase in entrepreneurship among women. In Sub-Saharan Africa, entrepreneurship and nonfarm employment are closely related because in several cases entrepreneurs venture into nonfarm activities, especially as self-employed workers. African women are involved in several small-scale businesses where they are own-account workers in rural, semi-urban, and urban areas. Nonfarm employment is therefore stimulated by entrepreneurship and self-employment.

From the literature reviewed in this paper concerning women in the rural nonfarm economy, empirical research or previous studies indicate that women are increasingly getting involved in the nonfarm rural economy and their contribution cannot be underestimated. This paper, attempts to answer the question: What is the role of nonfarm employment in the socio-economic empowerment of rural women in a developing country like Uganda? To answer this question, data was collected from a typical rural setting in Uganda from women who are employed in nonfarm employment. It is worth mentioning that Uganda is mainly an agricultural economy with the majority of the population living in rural areas (Mukwaya et al., 2012). This means that the rural economy plays an important role in the livelihoods of Ugandans as the major employer and contributor to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

To understand the experiences and choices of women employed in nonfarm employment, we used individual semi-structured in-depth interviews for data collection. The participants were identified through a snowball purposive random sampling technique in which participants were able to recommend other participants for the study. One of the authors of this paper whose relatives reside in Busolwe west sub-county in Butaleja district made the initial contacts and she got the first two participants who were ladies that own retail shops businesses, through these two ladies we got recommendations for other participants and the chain continued until we had the required number of participants for the study. In total 20 women were interviewed, and the age range of participants was 19 to 36 years. The participants were all from Busolwe West Sub-county in Butaleja district in Uganda. The participants' responses were recorded and transcribed during the data analysis process. The participants engaged in nonfarm activities employment that included selling food items in the market, selling clothes and shoes, operating small restaurants, operating Mobile Money, sewing, operating small retail shops dealing in several items, operating bars, buying produce from farmers, etc. In addition, we also observed the daily lives of some participants both at their workplaces and at their homes. This helped us understand their experiences of working as nonfarm workers and their roles in the community.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

The presentation of the findings is derived from major themes that emerged from analyzing data, using thematic analysis and coding in Nvivo; these themes included self-employed workers (own-account workers and self-employed workers who employ others) and those working for others for wages; we identified these as categories of women in nonfarm employment. The other themes from our data analysis included land ownership rights, the desire to be self-employed, and the low benefits from farm employment which we grouped under the motivations of women for engaging in nonfarm employment. The last set of themes included increase in women's income, enhancement of women's savings and social status, the reduction of income poverty, the reduction of dependence on men/husbands and the promotion of women's groups which we categorized under the impacts of nonfarm employment on women's socioeconomic empowerment during the paper writing.

CATEGORIES OF WOMEN IN NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

Rural women in nonfarm employment can be divided into 2 categories; self-employed workers (own-account workers or self-employed workers who are employers) and those employed by others by working for wages, for example, Participants A, D, G, E, I, J, etc. were own-account workers or self-employed employers while B, C, K, L, N, O, etc. were employed by other nonfarm workers in their enterprises. Several studies have been done on self-employed women in rural areas in various countries (Datta, 2003; Robinson, 2001; Srivastava and Srivastava, 2010). These women engage in self-employment either by choice as entrepreneurs or because of the necessity for survival in rural areas. In Uganda, many workers are self-employed workers like in several other developing countries. Women especially the young women are attracted to self-employment through which they can employ other workers or work as own-account workers.

MOTIVATIONS FOR NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

The motivation for engaging in nonfarm employment for rural women is driven by 3 major factors: land ownership rights, desire to be self-employed and low benefits from farm employment. The women stated that they are deprived of management and control of the land due to ownership rights that grant men the ownership, management and control of the land on which farm work depends, also the desire to be self-employed than working on people's farms and the low financial benefits from agriculture or farm employment pushes women to engage in nonfarm employment. A poor return on

agriculture is one of the factors that push women into rural nonfarm employment. Farming in developing countries mainly depends on nature with low investment in irrigation (Mukhoti, 2019; Nobe, 2019). This accounts for low returns on farming and makes depending on farm employment unattractive for many people. Self-employment is predominant in developing countries (Burchell and Coutts, 2019; Fields, 2019), therefore, young women are attracted to nonfarm employment to be self-employed and financially independent from their spouses or parents. The land ownership rights in Uganda are also partly responsible for women's participation in nonfarm employment; land in Uganda is mainly owned by men and yet the majority of the women depend on the land for agriculture (Mpiima et al., 2019). Although more women in Uganda are employed in agriculture especially farming than men, the majority of men own land than women. This means that most women have no control over the land on which farming is done. Women in rural areas as part of looking out for alternatives are employed in nonfarm employment. These 3 major factors were clearly stated by the participants when they were asked what motivated them or the reasons for participating in nonfarm employment. They narrated that:

"I am engaged in nonfarm work because as a woman I do not own land, besides nowadays there is no big land to use for farming. I decided to start selling some items as a woman who also wants to be self-employed." – Participant A.

"I was discouraged because farm employment was less yielding. I would earn less from what I used to plant, I also do not own land as a lady, and I do not like to depend on my husband for everything. I have many friends who sell essential commodities in the market these motivated me to be involved in nonfarm employment." – Participant G

"I am currently working in a small restaurant and this is because it provides me with daily income, unlike farm employment where it takes longer for one to get financial benefits. Farming also involves unexpected setbacks and natural disasters affect crop production. Also, in this area, we do not have much land and it is owned by men, so as a woman I prefer working in the restaurant to save my money." – Participant J

As already discussed, majority of the women do not own land in Uganda just like in several developing countries (Daley and Englert, 2010). Nonfarm employment is an alternative for ownership rights. The women especially own-account workers or self-employed workers in rural areas get empowered through ownership rights. Not owning land is replaced by the ownership of small enterprises through which the women can work and meet their needs. Through nonfarm employment, women can save and buy land and other properties for

Table 1. Participants' approximate monthly earnings.

Participants	Nature of employment	Approximate Monthly earnings (Uganda shillings)
A	Self-employed	100,000
D	Self-employed	150,000
F	employee	50,000
H	employee	60,000
K	employee	50,000
L	employee	40,000
M	Self-employed	200,000
Q	employee	70,000
R	Self-employed	250,000
T	Self-employed	300,000

Approximately USD 1 = UGX 3600.

themselves.

IMPACTS OF NONFARM EMPLOYMENT ON WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Nonfarm employment increases women's income

The most notable benefit of nonfarm employment is that it creates a source of income which is more dependable compared to farm employment. Previous studies have concluded that nonfarm employment has a positive correlation with rural households' income (Bezu et al., 2012). In this study, the participants demonstrated that nonfarm employment comes with several benefits especially offering a source of daily, weekly, or monthly income that they can depend on for their livelihoods. Table 1 shows a list of selected participants' approximate monthly earnings from nonfarm employment. Nonfarm employment for women in rural areas empowers them economically in several ways by providing a source of financial support and savings. The participants in the research reported that some of the benefits of being in nonfarm employment were the ability to get daily or monthly income which boosts their earnings and contributes to savings. Previous studies have demonstrated that nonfarm employment increases income for rural women in Sub-Saharan Africa (Machethe, 2004; Ovwigho, 2014). This increase in income or creation of a source of income comes with financial independence which empowers women economically and socially due to their social status as nonfarm employed women. Although this study did not explore in detail the relationship between the nature of employment and income earned, from the research findings there seems to be a correlation between the nature of employment and level of income. Generally, women who were self-employed or own-account workers earned more than those who were working for others. This partly explains why self-employment is an increasing choice for many persons in Sub-Saharan Africa especially the young.

Self-employment is flexible and self-employed workers can increase their earnings through expansion, diversification, and hard work. Several participants who were not self-employed expressed their wish to work as self-employed workers.

Nonfarm employment boosts women's savings and social status

Nonfarm employment boosts the savings for future investment. Women employed in nonfarm employment can save some little money through savings groups. In Uganda, these groups are commonly known as village Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs). SACCOs must be legally registered but it is common to find groups in the villages which are not registered and are managed by an elected committee. In this study, almost all participants were members of certain groups where they saved money weekly. The participants stressed out that they have village groups where they save money for example US\$1.2 (Uganda shillings 5,000) per week. Through these women's saving groups members can get loans which they can invest in small businesses and earn more profits:

"I am a member of a women's group where we save Uganda shillings 5,000 per week. At the end of each year, we sit down and divide the money according to what each person saves from January to December. The group has a committee headed by the chairperson; the treasurer keeps the money." –Participant M

"Our group has grown in number, we are over 50 women saving every week, and we also give small loans to women who are into businesses like selling clothes and other items in the market. Our group also decided that we give loans to non-members of the group including men at a higher interest rate than group members. Every year we sit down and calculate what each member must get." Participant Q

These kinds of women's groups have been effective in the empowerment of women not only in Sub-Saharan Africa. A previous study in the same district of Butaleja district -Uganda, pointed out that women SACCOs were essential in rural development because they contribute to economic empowerment (Mahago, 2018). In Uganda, several women are in SACCOs (Johnson and Nino-Zarazua, 2011; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016).

The groups where many of the participants are women in nonfarm employment contribute positively towards women socio-economic empowerment in 3 major ways. First, economically women are encouraged to save for future investment which enables them to acquire assets like land and cattle which they previously did not own. They are also able to boost their small businesses with money from their savings and contribute towards the development of the households. Participant R did mention during the interview that nonfarm employment helped her save money which she used to acquire a small plot of land. Several other interviewees explained that the reason for saving was to buy land, cattle, and other properties. Secondly, women who are in nonfarm employment are the most active members of the SACCOs through which they take up leadership roles. This improves their social status as leaders in the community. Saving groups of women are managed by women themselves and some of the groups give out loans to men in the community. These groups act as a springboard for attaining a high social status for women who are involved in the management. Participant T stated that "...as the chairperson of a big SACCO in this sub-county I am respected in the community and given chance to speak at community events or functions, this was not the case before". Thirdly, nonfarm employed women through their savings act as role models to other women, since the most active members in these groups are women in nonfarm employment who earn either daily, weekly or monthly; the women in farm employment look up to these women as role models whom they would like to emulate. Several of the participants stressed that they were attracted to nonfarm employment after seeing how much those in nonfarm employment were saving weekly in the SACCO. Participant L highlighted that:

"I was attracted to nonfarm employment after seeing that women in nonfarm employment were saving much and received much more at the end of the year compared to those who were in farm employment. For farm employment, it is possible to lose the whole season because of crop failure or drought and other natural factors".

Nonfarm employment reduces income poverty among women

Nonfarm employment is a great contributor to rural poverty eradication and the improvement of livelihoods.

The participants demonstrated the fact that due to nonfarm employment they were assured of income that would be of use to meet their needs. In the study, the participants were asked to evaluate their standard of living before engaging in nonfarm employment compared to the current way of living where they are engaged in nonfarm employment. All the 20 participants highlighted that their standard of living had improved due to nonfarm employment:

"Nonfarm employment has helped me improve my way of living, before I could not afford to buy most of the basic needs like sugar, salt, and food for my daughter given the fact that I am a single mother. However, currently, I do not have to worry about the basic needs because through nonfarm employment am working hard and saving for the future." – Participant K

"I was very poor and a dependent on my husband and other relatives but because now I am self-employed and working in nonfarm employment my income has been greatly boosted which has made me one of the admirable women in the community." – Participant R

Poverty is defined in different ways and individuals in different communities define being poor differently. The participants pointed out that relative to most women employed on farms, they are wealthier. Empirical research has demonstrated that nonfarm employment reduces rural poverty and vulnerability (Lanjouw, P. and Shariff, 2004). In rural areas of poor countries, most persons suffer from absolute poverty (Kates and Dasgupta, 2007). Nonfarm employment contributes to the breaking of absolute poverty in rural areas, especially among women.

Nonfarm employment reduces the dependence on men/husbands

The participants explained that one of the major impacts of nonfarm employment was the reduction of their dependence on men or husbands especially economic dependence. The women also highlighted the fact that they can make independent decisions which gives them some freedom to determine and do what they want to do. This was stressed by many participants for example:

"I would say one of my achievements has been the fact that I can survive on my own now, I can make independent decisions without necessarily consulting from my husband. I can buy household items that I want without begging for money from my husband." Participant A

"For me, since I started my small business in the market, I no longer have to depend so much on my husband's

finances and also I am saving to purchase some of the things that I need as a woman without getting permission on whether I should save or not.” – Participant N

Through the reduction of dependence on men and attainment of decision-making power, women can reduce the gender inequality that exists in society. This also changes gender role attitudes and perceptions about women. In most societies, women are perceived as housewives, domestic helpers, and caretakers. These gender roles are facilitated by stereotypes against women. These stereotypes that are so strong in rural areas can be broken through nonfarm employment which offers women greater freedom to work hard and achieve their desired goals. Nonfarm employment takes women away from the parameters of their homes, it exposes women to the outside world beyond their homes which influences their lives and contributes to the motivation to work and be successful women.

Nonfarm employment promotes women’s groups especially savings groups

The issue of Savings Credit and Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) has already been discussed but added to this there are several other women’s groups that are present and that have been established due to nonfarm employment activities. These groups include groups for women operating in the market, women who buy agricultural produce, women operating salon and hairdressing, women operating restaurants, etc. In these groups, women can socialize and share knowledge on business management, both government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have been able to use these groups to aid women. These groups also attract other women to venture into nonfarm employment to be members of the groups/associations. In India, the concept of women’s self-help groups has been vital in empowering and transforming women’s livelihoods (Jain and Jain, 2012; Swain and Wallentin, 2009). In Uganda over years, women’s SACCOs and their role in women’s development have increased (Mayanja and Tipi, 2017).

Women’s SACCOs and other women self-help groups and associations are dominated by women who are in nonfarm employment. In the savings groups where the participants were members, they meet weekly to save money:

“I am a member of a women’s group, we meet and save weekly, our group is flexible you save as much as you can. It is a group of women who operate small businesses in the market area.” Participant F

Similarly, Participant H explained that “Our group is among the largest groups, we meet every Sunday at around 4 pm, we save weekly and give out small loans to those who need the loans”.

Besides the SACCOs, other groups such as those for market vendors, salon and hairdressers and restaurants operators among others offer women with an opportunity to share ideas, experiences and solutions for problems they encounter while providing an opportunity for creating a sense of belonging.

CONCLUSION

Nonfarm employment is a strong empowerment tool for women in rural areas both economically and socially. Economically, it reduces women’s dependence on men for their financial needs and enables women to save small amounts of money which they can use to invest in smaller businesses that expand their incomes, also part of the money can be useful in buying assets and properties including land in the long-run. Socially, nonfarm employment for rural women offers an alternative to start-up small businesses that they own and have control over. These businesses empower women to participate in decision making for their enterprises and gain social status because of the ability to help others in the community. The women also inspire other women to move away from farm employment to nonfarm employment which has a positive effect on women’s empowerment and emancipation. Nonfarm employment therefore, breaks stereotypes and social or cultural beliefs that keep women dependent and vulnerable in the society. For rural women, nonfarm employment can be boosted by increasing their savings groups. Therefore, state, and non-state actors should concentrate on boosting such groups while giving freedom to the women to do what they can do or are good at. In several cases, women’s savings groups have received money from state and non-state actors but directed to specific activities which the women have little or no interest in doing. Understanding the interests of women in rural areas is important in designing tailor made policies and interventions for empowerment and emancipation of women.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- Ackah C (2013). Nonfarm employment and incomes in rural Ghana. *Journal of International Development* 25(3):325-339.
- Adams S, Opoku EEO (2016). Population growth and urbanization in Africa: Implications for the environment. *Population growth and rapid urbanization in the developing world* pp. 282-297.
- Adeniyi L (2010). Women Farmers and Agriculture Growth: Challenge and Perspective for Africa face the economic crisis (No. 308-2016-5110).
- Ahmed A, Nwankwo S (2013). Entrepreneurship development in Africa: An overview. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and*

- Sustainable Development.
- Bezu S, Barrett CB, Holden ST (2012). Does the nonfarm economy offer pathways for upward mobility? evidence from a panel data study in Ethiopia. *World Development* 40(8):1634-1646.
- Birch EL, Wächter SM (2011). *Global urbanization* University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Burchell BJ, Coutts AP (2019). The experience of self-employment among young people: An exploratory analysis of 28 low-to middle-income countries. *American Behavioral Scientist* 63(2):147-165.
- Chinomona E, Maziriri ET (2015). Women in action: Challenges facing women entrepreneurs in the Gauteng province of South Africa. *International Business and Economics Research Journal (IBER)* 14(6):835-850.
- Daley E, Englert B (2010). Securing land rights for women. *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 4(1):91-113.
- Datta R (2003). From development to empowerment: The self-employed women's association in India. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16(3):351-368.
- Djido AI, Shiferaw BA (2018). Patterns of labor productivity and income diversification—Empirical evidence from Uganda and Nigeria. *World Development* 105:416-427.
- Du Toit A (2019). Agriculture, value chains and the rural non-farm economy in Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe. *Value chains in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Springer pp. 185-201
- Esuruku R (2010). Political and social economy of gender and rural livelihoods in Uganda. *Journal of Development Studies* 1(1):163-178.
- Fields GS (2019). Self-employment and poverty in developing countries. *IZA World of Labor*.
- Igwe PA, Icha-Ituma A (2020). A review of ten years of African entrepreneurship research. *Research handbook on entrepreneurship in emerging economies*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Jain D, Jain B (2012). Does microfinance empower rural women? empirical study in Udaipur district, Rajasthan. *Empirical Study in Udaipur District, Rajasthan* (April 1, 2012). *Researchers World-Journal of Arts, Science and Commerce* P 3.
- Johnson S, Nino-Zarazua M (2011). Financial access and exclusion in Kenya and Uganda. *The Journal of Development Studies* 47(3):475-496.
- Kates RW, Dasgupta P (2007). African poverty: A grand challenge for sustainability science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 104(43):16747-16750.
- Langevang T, Gough KV (2012). Diverging pathways: Young female employment and entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa. *The Geographical Journal* 178(3):242-252.
- Lanjouw JO, Lanjouw P (2001). The rural non-farm sector: Issues and evidence from developing countries. *Agricultural Economics* 26(1):1-23.
- Lanjouw P, Shariff A (2004). Rural non-farm employment in India: Access, incomes and poverty impact. *Economic and Political Weekly* pp. 4429-4446.
- Machethe CL (2004). Agriculture and poverty in South Africa: Can agriculture reduce poverty. Paper presented at the Paper Presented at the Overcoming Underdevelopment Conference held in Pretoria 28(1):29.
- Mahago R (2018). *Microfinance Services and Economic Empowerment of Women in Butaleja District, Uganda*. (Doctoral dissertation, Uganda Management Institute).
- Mayanja I, Tipi T (2017). The economic empowerment of women in Uganda through mushroom production. *Turkish Journal of Agriculture-Food Science and Technology* 5(11):1401-1406.
- Meeker J, Meekers D (1997). The precarious socio-economic position of women in rural Africa: The case of the Kagura of Tanzania. *African Studies Review* 40(1):35-58.
- Meier zu SF (2016). What determines women's participation in collective action? Evidence from a western Ugandan coffee cooperative. *Feminist Economics* 22(1):130-157.
- Mpiima DM, Manyire H, Kabonesa C, Espiling M (2019). Gender analysis of agricultural extension policies in Uganda: Informing practice? *Gender, Technology and Development* 23(2):187-205.
- Mukhoti BB (2019). *Agriculture and employment in developing countries: Strategies for effective rural development* Routledge.
- Mukwaya P, Bamutaze Y, Mugarura S, Benson T (2012). Rural-urban transformation in Uganda. *Journal of African Development* 14(2):169-194.
- Nneka O, Rafiu YO (2020). Managing the Nigerian rural environment through women empowerment in non-farm activities in Kajuru local government area of Kaduna state. *Journal of Materials Science Research and Reviews* pp. 31-41.
- Nobe KC (2019). *Irrigation management in developing countries: Current issues and approaches* Routledge.
- Ovwigho BO (2014). Factors influencing involvement in nonfarm income generating activities among local farmers: The case of Ughelli south local government area of delta state, Nigeria. *Sustainable Agriculture Research* 3(526-2016-37781).
- Robinson S (2001). An examination of entrepreneurial motives and their influence on the way rural women small business owners manage their employees. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 6(2):151.
- Shema JB, Mutarindwa S (2017). Women's entrepreneurship in Rwanda: Overcoming entrepreneurial stereotypes through government support. *Contextualizing entrepreneurship in emerging economies and developing countries* Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Srivastava N, Srivastava R (2010). Women, work, and employment outcomes in rural India. *Economic and Political Weekly* pp. 49-63.
- Swain RB, Wallentin FY (2009). Does microfinance empower women? evidence from self-help groups in India. *International Review of Applied Economics* 23(5):541-556.
- Tripp AM (2003). Women in movement transformations in African political landscapes. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 5(2):233-255.
- Van den BG, Kilic T (2019). Dynamics of off-farm employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: A gender perspective. *World Development* 119:81-99.

Related Journals:

