COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

CENTRE FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN SECURITY ORGANS IN RWANDA: A CASE OF RWANDA DEFENCE FORCE IN MUSANZE DISTRICT

A dissertation submitted to the University of Rwanda in partial fulfilment of the Academic requirements for the Award of a Master's of Arts degree in Security Studies

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DECLARATION

I, **Willy NTAGARA** declare that this research entitled: **"Factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda: A case of Rwanda Defence Force in Musanze District"** is my original work and has not been presented to any other Institution. I also certify that, to the best of my knowledge any help received in the preparation of this thesis and all sources used have been fully acknowledged in the list of references.

Date:……/……/……..

Names:

Signature:……..

DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to:

My lovely wife: Alice INGABIRE, thanks for being a responsible caring mother and a supportive lover wife and partner who assumed family responsibility during my studies

To my children: Brianna AKEZA, Sacha Elior NTAGARA, Batia INEZA and
Ilyan NTAGARA thanks for being good to daddy during the past whole
of my absence. You are source of my strength and courage.
To my family members: My Mum, sisters and my brother

My close friends, my classmates

Are blessings to me

God blessed you

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **i**

DEDICATION ..... **ii**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **iii**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **iv**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **vii**

LIST OF ABREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS ..... **viii**

ABSTRACT ..... **x**

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1. Background to the Study 1

1.2. Statement of the problem 4

1.3. Research objectives 6

1.3.1. General objective 6

1.3.2. Specific objectives 6

1.4. Research questions 6

1.5. Scope of the study 7

1.6. Significance of the research 7

1.7. Structure of the study 7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK **8**

2.0. Introduction 8

2.1. Definition of variables 8

2.2. Literature review 9

2.2.1. Factors influencing women participation in the military 9

2.2.2. Challenges facing women participation in the military 11

2.2.3. Strategies to enhance the women participation in the military 13
2.3. Theoretical framework 14
2.3.1. Patriarchy Theory by Behavior 14
2.3.2. Structural Functionalist Theory 15
2.4. Conceptual framework 16
2.5. Conclusion 17
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 18
3.0. Introduction 18
3.1. Research design 18
3.2. Description of the study area 19
3.3. Population size 20
3.4. Data collection and Methods 21
3.4.1. Interviews 21
3.4.2. Documentary review 22
3.5. Data processing and analysis 22
3.6. Reliability and validity of the research instruments 23
3.6.1. Reliability 23
3.6.2. Validity 24
3.7. Ethical considerations 24
3.8. Study limitations 25
3.9. Chapter conclusion 25
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS 26
4.0. Introduction 26
4.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents 26

4.2. Key issues identified during fieldwork 27
4.2.1. Factors influencing women participation in RDF 27
4.2.2. Challenges facing women in the participation in RDF 31
4.3 Strategies to enhance women participation in RDF 35
4.4. Discussions of findings 39
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS 44
5.0. Introduction 44
5.1. Summary of key findings 44
5.2. General conclusion 45
5.3. Suggestions 46
5.3.1. To RDF 46
5.3.2. To MIGEPROF 48
5.4. Suggestions for future studies 48
REFERENCES 49
APPENDICES 54

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual framework model 16
Figure 2: Administrative map of Musanze district 20

LIST OF TABLES

Table4. 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents 26
Table4. 2: Factors influencing women participation in RDF 40
Table4. 3: Challenges facing women participation in RDF..... 41
Table4. 4: Proposed strategies to enhance women participation in RDF 43

ABREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

FPU	Formed Police Unit
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
RDF	Rwanda Defence Force
RPA	Rwanda Patriotic Army
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNPKO	United Nations Peace Keeping Operations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	United States

ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the factors influencing women participation in the security organs in Rwanda. Specifically, it identified the factors influencing women participation in RDF, the challenges facing women participation in the military and the applicable strategies to enhance the level of women participation in RDF. To achieve this, the study adopted a qualitative approach to gather information and used semi-structured interviews addressed to women soldiers and RDF Gender Desk. Collected data were analyzed by thematic content analysis and presented according to theme developed during the field research. Findings showed that the factors influencing women participation in RDF included the willingness to attach to a family tradition (72.2%), the aspiration to serve their country (83.3%), level of familiarity with the military (88.9%), the feeling that participating in military affairs is one way of empowerment and enhancing gender equality (86.1%) and the way of getting employment (75.0%). Moreover, identified challenges facing women participation in the military include social cultural resistance to join the military (75.0%), beliefs that women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties (69.4%), less attractiveness of military service as a career (77.8%) and Patriarchal roles associated with women's family roles (88.9%) which portrays the social perceptions that women are weak, patriarchal issues related to findings a marriage partner, separation from families at deployment, pregnancy, breastfeeding and limitations associated with having children as a barrier to women career progression in the military. Findings also showed that for RDF to increase the number of women participating in the military service, skill recognition and on more flexible career paths in order to increase the attractiveness of the military career (77.8%), retaining already serving women in RDF so as they act as role models to newly recruited women (63.9%), countering and repealing misconceptions about the military held by citizens (83.3%), increasing awareness among women (58.3%) by advertisements or other messaging that are oriented to military that emphasize on the reality of the military and devise a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at senior decision in making levels (68.4%). The study concluded that that women's decision to join the military is prompted by social, economic and cultural factors both within the military itself and outside the military in the environment in which women live and suggested that RDF needs to devise a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at in RDF. The policy should be driven and monitored at a high level and channeled in middle level of command and allocated adequate human and financial resources for their implementation.

Key words: *Women, participation, security organs, RDF, social factors, economic factors, cultural factors*

CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This study is entitled "factors influencing women participation in the security organs in Rwanda: A case of Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) and was conducted in RDF operating in Musanze District. The general objective was to understand the factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda and the specific objectives were: to understand the factors influencing women participation in RDF, to identify the challenges facing women participation within RDF and to suggest applicable strategies to enhance women participation in RDF. This introductory chapter shades light on the topic of the study detailing with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and structure of the study

1.1. Background to the Study

Over the years, there has been a tendency to exclude women from active participation in development processes and treat them as passive recipients of development assistance, with little recognition of their rights and voice (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2013). However, women's service in the security organs actually started long time ago and in many different roles in various jurisdictions. Since the beginning of 1970s, most western countries began to admit women in the military and to serve in active duties in all military branches (Burrelli, 2013: 27). On numerous occasions, women participated as all female-counterinsurgent teams in Iraq and Afghanistan thus in various forms those teams provided medical assistance and participated in highly combative special operations alongside Army Rangers and Green Berets in Afghanistan (Greenburg, 2017:24). According to Reis and Menezes (2019:2), women in different countries like New Zealand, Canada, Denmark, Finland and Germany have allowed women joining combat and other armed position in the military.

Furthermore, in 1990, there were 456,840 women directly employed by armed forces throughout the world (Reis & Menezes, 2019:4). But until 1994 some countries like Malaysia do not have any women soldier and women entering army sometimes experience a culture shock when they

have to learn the unfamiliar rope of establishing a ranking and of maintaining the proper relations of authority (Carreiras, 2012:7).

Beginning of the 21st century, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Countries admitted and increased the number of women in their armed force (Nordqvist & Röjd, 2018: 4). NATO's women committee enforced this via the implementation of a list of best practices developed in order to integrate a gender perspective into all different parts of the member states' national policies, legal regulations, procedures and practices concerning military operations (NATO, 2008:9).

Like many women around the world, African women have a long history in their contribution in the armed forces and contributing to security (Juma, 2019:18). However, much of the interpretation and analysis of security concerns in African context, was in many ways based on masculine interpretations and experience and tends to focus on the victimhood of women. In pre-colonial era, notable examples of women participation in the military include Queen Ahhotep I of Egypt who played an important role in her country's liberation struggle and the Dahomey Amazons who formed a key group of female warriors in the national army, and their equivalents in modern-day Zimbabwe (Juma, 2019:19).

However, the colonial political economy drastically altered gender relations and the role of women in the provision of the military service and security, relegating them mostly to the domestic sphere, reserving the provision of security to only men and creating military service as men empire (Reis &Menees, 2019:9). During the colonial era, African women found themselves under the structural constraints of both gender and racial discrimination. For that reason many women joined armed struggles fighting for independence in the belief that victory would not only liberate their nation but would also provide women with more freedom and opportunities (Juma, 2019: 7). Moreover, in most cases, post-independence African states urged women to return to the domestic sphere. While women were allowed to retain some of the dividends of their contribution to liberation, they failed to achieve the equality they had been promised (Fox & Paine, 2019:8).

Moreover, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) implemented resolution 1325 in 2000, which addresses the crucial role women have when it comes to preventing and resolving conflicts and building peace as the participation and involvement of women is critical in order to achieve and sustain peace and stability (UN, 2019:8).

In 2007, for the first time in the history of the UN peacekeeping, an all-female Formed Police Unit (FPU) arrived in Liberia to join the world body's operation to strengthen the rule of law and maintain peace in the West African country and assist in curbing crime and public disorders, which allows Liberians to get on with their lives in peace (Addis *et al*., 2004:17).

Government of Rwanda has also taken an integrated approach to gender and security not only in regards to civilian participation in political spheres but also in the public and private security organs (Powley, 2004:6). Moreover, government of Rwanda is keen to meet the target of ensuring women constitute 30 per cent of the peacekeepers Rwanda contributes to UN peace support operations in line with the UN Security Resolution 1325 and its related resolutions. Carreiras (2012:48) evidenced that inclusiveness is not a direct consequence of increasing numbers of women; it developed due to simultaneous organization and societal pressures. Therefore, the Western society and political decision makers have a preponderant role in the inclusion of women in the armed forces, leaving this responsibility aside from the exclusive sphere of the military leaders.

Government of Rwanda recognized women as key players in the reconstruction and development of the country and at the same time peace building and security and this commitment towards women participation resulted in the introduction of different policies, laws and programs and approaches to maximize the participation of women and advancing their economic status and well-being(Nader, 2016: 5) which include by not limited to Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, National Gender Policy, Gender Monitoring Office and National Women Council.

However, in spite of Rwanda's success in bringing women into the political sphere, Rwandan women are still reluctant to join the military and part of this is the negative portrayal of female soldiers in Rwandan society. MIGEPROF (2010:8) identified that the reluctance of women decision to join the military is rooted in the socio-cultural norms of the Rwandan society which

have been characterized by a patriarchal social structure that underlies the unequal social power relations between men and women, boys and girls which translates into men's dominance and women's subordination. Moreover, Nader (2016:9) argued that this may also be rooted in the socio-political context of Rwanda that kept men as masters of violence and brutality during war and consider women in combat as social deviance.

Being in line with the constitutional obligation of inculcating gender in all sectors of national life, the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) lay under pressure to recruit more female military personnel in order to meet the ambitious target of ensuring women constitute 30% of its force (Guy & Kruger, 2018 available at https://www.defenceweb.co.za/rwanda-defence-force/ accessed on 13th April 2020). Nader (2016:121) is of the view that social norms, economic factors and prevailing socio-political values, skills sets of women and resource constraints are barriers to achieving RDF goals.

Women residents in Musanze district as any other woman in Rwanda have been living in deplorable lives and facing powerlessness in terms of access, use and ownership of vital resources. According to NISR (2014), there are 111 women against 100 men in Musanze district and 34% of women in Musanze district are head of households. Moreover, most of women (51%) have little or no access to formal financial services and have not been able to fully participate in the security organs over the years. Nevertheless, the factors that prompt or hinder women participation within the security organs have not been fully investigated. This is clearly shown by the fact that studies regarding the factors influencing the participation of women in different security organs are limited. Despite this, the aim of this research is to clarify the factors that prompt or hinder integration of women into the security organs in Rwanda to fill the gap in the existing literature.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Women constitute 51.2% of the total Rwandan population (NISR, 2018:19). Hence, Government of Rwanda (GoR) recognized women as key players in peace building and security, and their participation in national spheres of life is critical towards sustainable economic development of its citizens which prompted to the enactment of different policies, laws and programs to ensure

their participation in different spheres of national life (Nader, 2016: 5). Implementation of these policies, laws and programs impacted positively on women's life as evidenced by women securing 64% of parliamentarians and 42% of cabinet members, 50% of judges and 43.5% of city and district council seats (GMO, 2018:19). Nordqvist and Röjd (2018:7) emphasize that increased participation of women in political spheres in general and in the security organs in particular is critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations.

However, women participation in the national spheres of life has not been the same across all sectors. Majority of women are employed as unskilled laborers or traders. Moreover, women compose the majority of the labour force in agriculture and animal husbandry (86% as compared to 61.5% for men) and that in towns; they are numerous in the unskilled occupations (NISR, 2018:10). Despite that RDF female military personnel have been increasing steadily in the last years, there are only 4% of women in the military in 2018 which is still very low (MoD, 2018). Within the framework of the UPKOs to increase women participation in UN peacekeeping operations to 15%, RDF has been able to only contribute 456 female military personnel during the last 15 years since 2004 when RDF began contributing to peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs, 2018:24).

With references to Musanze district, women account for 55.2 percent of the 4,492,000 economically active populations, with 83.6 percent participation in agriculture, women are highly engaged in the sector as independent farmers, wage farmers and unpaid family labor, micro and small businesses as an estimated 41%t of businesses are run by women (NISR, 2018: 28). Despite that both men and women face similar constraints in a number of areas, women experience additional gender-based challenges in operating their income generating activities and lack the willingness to join other sectors of the life spheres, included in the security organs,

Nader (2016: 6) attributed this low level of women participation in the military to low social norms, cultural and economic factors rooted in the Rwandan society and to some extent low literacy rate among women, limited capacities and skills. Nordqvist and Röjd (2018:9) highlighted that low level of women participation in the military exacerbate the gender stereotypes in the military, deteriorate military social relations and endanger the principles of gender equality. Moreover, there are considerable evidences that security organs with low level

of women participation tend to undermine women's security (UN, 2019:1). United Nations (2019:2) also viewed that low level of women participation in the military will hamper the credibility of protection responses that meet the needs of all local communities and increased confrontational atmosphere in peacekeeping operations.

Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study examines the factors that influence the women participation in the security organs in Rwanda with a special emphasize on Rwanda Defense Force (RDF).

1.3. Research objectives

The study has both the general and specific objectives. The following section presents these objectives

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of this study is to identify the factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda

1.3.2. Specific objectives

The research is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To understand the factors influencing women participation in RDF
2. To identify the challenges facing women participation within RDF
3. To suggest applicable strategies to enhance women participation in RDF

1.4. Research questions

The study seeks to find answers to the following research questions:

1. Which factors influence women participation in the RDF?
2. Which challenges are facing women participation within RDF?
3. Which strategies are applicable to enhance women participation in RDF?

1.5. Scope of the study

The study was undertaken in Rwanda Defence Force operating in Musanze district. RDF in Musanze district was chosen taking into account the proximity to the researcher's duelling in order to facilitate the data collection process. RDF was considered as considering the familiarity of the researcher with issues related to it as he, himself is a member. Much emphasize was laid on gender equality discourse in the security organs and the factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda.

1.6. Significance of the research

The need to undertake research in this area stems from the fact that women's contribution to national policy formulation is important because of the significant role they play in national development. Identifying factors that hinder their full participation will contribute to knowledge which can be used to enhance their participation in the military and police forces. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be used to come up with strategies that can be developed by policymakers and organizations to enhance women's participation in the military and police forces. The findings will especially be relevant to anthropologists and development planners in mainstreaming women's issues in development policies and programs. To academicians, this research adds to existing literature on gender mainstreaming in different spheres of life.

1.7. Structure of the study

This study starts with this introductory chapter which shaded light on the topic of the study detailing with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and structure of the study. Chapter two contains the literature review on the factors influencing women participation in security organs. Chapter three details the research methodology which entails the research design, study population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, data processing and analysis, validity and reliability of research instruments, anticipated research limitations and ethical considerations. Chapter four details a critical and interpretive discussion of the results according to specific objectives. Chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendations as well as the suggestion of future researches.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the related literature on the factors influencing women participation in security organs as presented by various researchers, scholars, analysts and authors. The chapter is structured as definitions of variables, theoretical framework, empirical review and conceptual framework.

2.1. Definition of variables

This section provides the definitions of the study variables that have relevance to the proper understand of the need of this study. Before understanding the factors affecting women participation in the security organs, the concepts of gender and sex are important to define since there are differences in how people understand and use them. Moreover, variables like economic factors, social factors and women participation are also defined as they related to each other.

Gender is a socially created division of men and women, founded in the sexual and reproductive relations (West & Zimmerman, 2007:12). *Sex* describes the biological differences between males and females and it often fills the function to explain differences as natural and obvious (Dahl, 2016:27). In this view, feminine and masculine traits are understood as natural consequences of differences in sex and some argue that men are considerably physically stronger than women (Goldstein, 2001:68). On the other hand, gender often refers to the roles that society ascribes men and women and is often used to emphasize the relational and inconstant aspects of the masculine and feminine stereotypes (Dahl, 2016:31). Feminists usually argue that differences in gender are culturally, socially or politically constructed, while patriarchy implies that there is a natural distinction between men and women that is rooted in biology (Heywood, 2012: 237).

Socio-cultural factors influencing women participation in the military are the elements that are related to or pertaining to the combination or interactions of women social and cultural habits (Mungai, 2014:12). Some of these factors are: social taboos, gender roles, religious conservatism. On the other hand, economic factors are economic measures of a women's work

experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation (Mungai, 2014:13). Cassirer and Addati, (2007:29) asserted that household income, income earner's education, occupation are taken into consideration during the analysis of the socio-economic status of a given family. According to Nordqvist and Röjd (2018: 10), women participation in security organs indicates women's freedom to speak, assemble and associate with armed forces; the ability to take part in the conduct of military affairs; and the opportunity offered to her to enlist as a candidate in the armed forces and be selected and included in the armed forces.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Factors influencing women participation in the military

Women participation in the armed forces across nations and over time has been depending on different factors both internal and external to the military organization at hand and these factors include social, cultural, political and organizational factors (Iskra *et al.,* 2002). Segal (2008: 13) pointed out that women participation in the military and other armed forces happens when military missions and values are perceived as being more compatible with women's service, when charges in women's social participation make them more suited and willing to perform military roles and when threats to national security are more serious as to require the participation of all citizens.

Based on this framework, Segal (2008:14), military variables are of overriding importance as the national security situation, level of threat and nature of military missions, technological changes and various aspects related to force structure and military accession policies are considered as major determinants of women participation in the military.

Culture has persistently been as one of the factors that impede the participation of women in the military (Cowan & Siciliano, 2011:19). According to Cowan and Siciliano, 2011:20), culture refers to the social construction of gender, social value, public discourse and equity. Segal (2008: 16) pointed out perception concerning women military participation is fundamentally the result of a social construction. Deep-rooted traditions and socio-cultural beliefs about what women can or cannot do have hampered women's participation in active military service.

Gender-based hierarchies, which subordinate women to men, and the unequal division of labour between sexes is a case in point, which operates to keep women to their traditional stations as managers of the household (Totensen et *al.,* 2008).

Moreover, sex-stereotyping and gender segregation in employment and the allocation of roles in private and public life are primarily a product of the early socialization process, and the indoctrination of the social environment (Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 43). In this regard, many women have hang-ups and lack confidence in their ability to competently execute military and public leadership roles, and are socialized to believe that politics is a male domain (Nzomo, 2002: 36).

Furthermore, socio-cultural traditions tend to assume that women's public roles are secondary and are merely additional activities to their 'primary' domestic roles (Enloe, 2007:58). Women and men behave according to ideologies that were culturally transmitted from many centuries ago, and which were transferred through social institutions such as mythology, religion, history, oral literature and narratives. Gallagher (2001:32) emphasizes this fact by stating that the call to give women a separate definition from that of men has been a historically persistent demand.

Some elements of African societal cultural practices and values permeate into organizations and inhibit effective leadership and in most African cultural women are supposed to care for the home and ensure the continuity of the lineage while men are considered to be strong, knowledgeable, skilful, risk-taking and powerful and are therefore supposed to work to be breadwinners (Dolphyne, 2005: 44; Kuada, 2008:21).

Moreover, in the traditional culture of many countries, this business of being in the military or the police is perceived to be the business of men and girl joining the army would be considered a deviance ((Burrelli, 2013: 39).. According to Nader (2006:8), some women who join the army face resistance and hostility from their families and friends, although this resistance appears to have been greater among the women who joined the military and many families of newer recruits appear to be more positive, demonstrating a slow shift in attitudes towards military women. Nevertheless, negative attitudes towards women in military and police uniform do persist, and

there have been instances where women have found it harder to meet a partner because some men believe they must be violent or more problematic than civilian women.

Moreover, combining work and family in moderate world became stress of the women in military service. Crouch (20099:28) state that this is became a double burden to the women to maintain the role between mother and wife with work. Pregnancy and childcare have also been highly controversial and emotion issues regarding women's in military and pregnant military women is considered as a threat to military efficiency and deplorability (Chafet & Helena, 2006:26).

2.2.2. Challenges facing women participation in the military

Women who wish to join or are already in the military are faced with an environment designed by and for women. According to Goldstein (2001:112), the rarity of women in the military is explained through one of two different cases: First, a state or society that is highly sexist which do not tolerate women in combat. Second, a relatively peaceful state does not need women within the military and consequently does not prioritize recruiting females.

Goldstein (2001:115) points out those individuals are forced into certain categories and roles based on gender. Pinch (2006:2) agrees with this, mentioning how women within the military throughout history have been relegated to support and nursing roles. However, Pinch (2006:3) has written a study on the military in Canada and argues that women have made perhaps the most dramatic gains in participation rates in all employment and societal organizations, including the military.

While the biological potentials really support a great diversity, cultural or constructed gender is described as obstructing gender diversity and this is shown in how the modest biological inclination towards males' higher war capability becomes transformed into all-male war (Goldstein, 2001:114). Subsequently, what was only a potential in biology becomes a mandate in culture and society. Harries-Jenkins (2006:23) explains how women, as often being a clear minority in military groups, even are being treated as highly visible tokens, rather than contributing and competent military employees. Moreover, Pinch (2006:7) explains that there is an ongoing debate revolving around how far gender diversity can and should go.

Different views arise on whether it is possible to combine operational military standards and simultaneously optimize equal opportunities for men and women given that armed forces are organizations dealing with crisis that should respond capably and quickly when called upon (Pinch, 2006:8).However, there is an increasing interest in diversity and gender equality within military organizations. According to Harries-Jenkins (2006:27), women have an increasingly important role in western armed forces and are nowadays represented at almost every position within the military.

Alvesson and Billing (2002:27) brought up the RDF as a public organization where there has been an attempt to blurring gender by a demasculinization of a noticeably male sphere. Today, peacekeeping activities are more integrated in the military occupation and this has facilitated recruitment and adaption of women, and led to a demasculinization of the organization (Alvesson & Billing, 2002:25).

Moreover, in a realm to increasing women participation in the military or armed forces, the UN Security Council adopted UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security (Tryggestad, 2014:29). UNSCR 1325 calls for all member states to make sure women's and the society's security needs are safeguarded through increased emphasis on prevention, protection and participation. However, the main difference from prior security focus is the shift of attention from women as victims, to women as resources, active and important contributors in shaping their own future through participation. UNSCR 1325 also calls for some specific actions to be taken such that more women are to be deployed in military operations and gender perspectives are to be part of all planning and execution of military operations.

In relation to the armed forces, different nations have international obligations related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and most mandates for military operation now also include a reference to UNSCR 1325. Therefore, armed forces need to plan their operations with the aims of UNSCR as part of their objectives and end-state to be reached. Secondly, by including gender perspectives as a tool to conduct all parts of the operations, there will be greater chance of being more effective in dealing with such constant challenges as force protection, intelligence, information efforts etc.

2.2.3. Strategies to enhance the women participation in the military

Efforts to improve female representation in the politics and others spheres of life have often focused on quotas and reserved shares. However, what is really needed is a nuanced approach that tackles the underlying, interconnected barriers that women face during their willingness and decision to join the military.

Moore (2018:2) argued that there are formal commitments to recognize the importance of retaining diverse personnel, but informal barriers remain. Despite that many militaries already have different commitments aimed at enhancing women enrolment in the military, single parents and women still face professional setbacks. Therefore, there is a need of a quick recognition and address of the pressures of military careers on families, which includes frequent moves and prolonged absences from loved ones during deployments. Counting parental leave toward promotion will also be necessary for the professional advancement of women, who disproportionately take on the role of primary caregiver. Furthermore, women are also less likely than men to consider a military career in the first place. Hence, to address these well-known challenges, new recruitment strategies will aim to showcase the wide variety of occupations it offers, in an attempt to make the military more attractive to women.

Wilén and Heinecken (2018:5) identified that the measures such as focused recruitment of women, introducing quotas and no longer restricting women from combat roles improved the gender balance in South African army after apartheid in a way of making the army more representative of the country in both race and gender. Moreover, South Africa also introduced gender-mainstreaming policies with the aim of improving gender equality in the army. More (2018:12) viewed that promoting the operational and social benefits of women in the military is just the first step toward increasing their numbers in the military. To move beyond commitments and toward organizational change and buy-in, military leadership and policymakers must go beyond women's representation in the ranks and become aware of how gender relations are constructed, at home and on the battlefield.

Swick and Moore (2018:8) believes that rather than putting the burden solely on female recruits to perform well in combat units, there is much the services can do to support the

integration of women. According to Swick and Moore (2018:9) this support can include an increased focus on career development, including mentorship and an effort to achieve a critical mass of female personnel within combat units. Exposure is often the best way to change mindsets about women's capabilities, and further integration of all combat arms roles will go far to put women on an increasingly equal playing field. Therefore, by achieving a critical mass, the military can build a network of female service members within units to contribute to consistent command climates and positive unit cohesion, and to provide support and address concerns in the case of sexual harassment or assault.

2.3. Theoretical framework

This section presents the theories underpinning this study. Various models have been developed empirically to demonstrate the factors influencing women participation in the security organs and in the military in particular. Discussed theories include Patriarchy Theory by Behavior and the Structural functionalist Theory as presented in the following sub-headings.

2.3.1. Patriarchy Theory by Behavior

Patriarchy Theory by Behavior was advocated by Millet and Beauvoir in 1969 as cited in Mutume, (2004:25). Patriarchy Theory by Behavior laid emphasis on male dominance of the female folks and suggests that males are seen as controlling access to institutional power and it is argued that they mould ideology, philosophy, art and religion to suit their needs (Anifowose, 2004:25).

Sjoberg and Gentry (2007:76) emphasized that in the modern society like all other historical civilization is a patriarchy and the fact is evident that the military, technology, universities, science, political office and finance-in short, every avenue of power including the coercive force of the armed forces, is entirely in male-hands. However, what lingers of supernatural authority, the deity, his ministry, together with the ethics and values, the philosophy and art of our culture is of male manufacture (Millet, 2009:24). The above shows that the power of the male permeates everything and women are thought of as a sub-group in a man's world.

The theory relates to this study as it shows how the power of male permeates everything, diffuse its universality. Women are thought of as a group in a man's world. Relating the theory to the issue of factors influencing women participation in the military under study, Rwandan society is a patriarchal one where men historically dominated everything, particularly the military arena. Women were historically marginalized in national and local politics and more generally in the public and private life of nations despite their numerical strengths in terms of the population size (GMO, 2018:12). Traditional values speak more when it comes to women's participation in the military and everyone sees military as man's game.

2.3.2. Structural Functionalist Theory

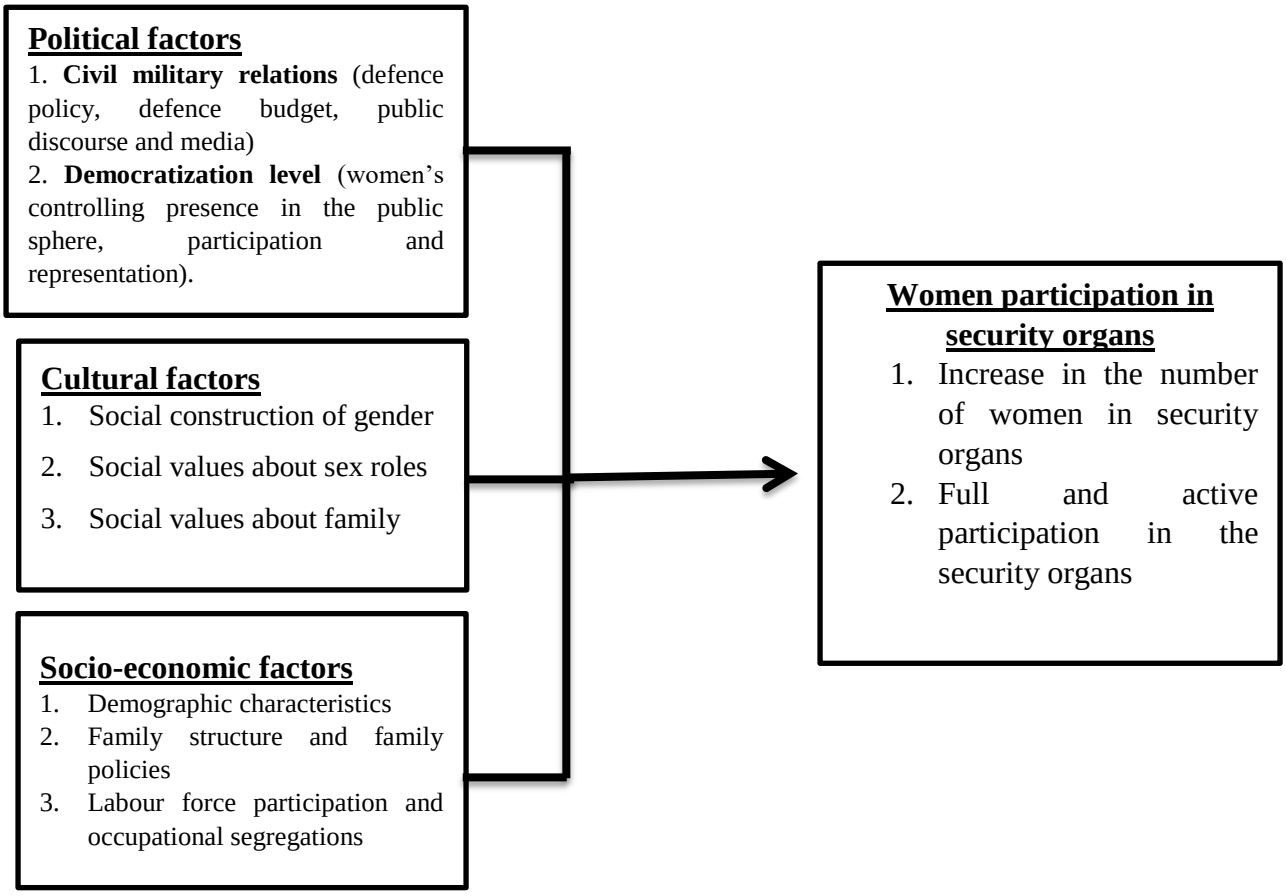
Structural Functionalist theory was advocated by Parsons in 2001. Structural Functionalist theory explains why society functions the way it does by focusing on the relationships between the various social institutions that makes up society such as government, law, education, religion. Parsons (2001:12) posited that different and complementary gender roles are beneficial for the society. Hence, understanding that the complementarity between men and women is essential towards the proper understanding of why and which factors are prompting or deterring women from participating in the military.

Parsons (2001:12) argued that men and women are socialized in different ways in order to prepare them to assume their gender roles as adults where a clear division of roles between men (undertaking instrumental roles) and women (undertaking expressive, nurturing roles) led to stable families and to positive socialization of children. The man is to work outside the home and act as a link between the family unit and the larger world (Ballington, 2008:36). According to Ballington (2008:39), gender is an important part of personal identity and family life and it is deeply woven into the moral fabric of the society and men and women are socialized differently and this has had an impact on the participation of women in the military. Parsons (2001:12) illustrated this Structural Functionalist Theory via AGIL scheme (A: Adaptation, G: Goal attainment, I: Integration and L: Latency/pattern maintenance) to relate to how the society functions together. Therefore, it is essential that interdependence among different parts of the society is promoted to be able to work harmoniously together and promote order and balance in the system.

This justify the relation of this theory to the current study as women participation in the military should be everyone's business both men and women irrespective of gender and not an exclusive men's arena. Moreover, the theory relates to the study as it highlights the socio-cultural factors that influence women participation in the military and undertake military roles and demonstrates how women have been historically left behind in the pubic spheres of life, which contradict the Parsons (2001)'s Structural Functionalist Theory which suggests to welcome and include everybody in the social system to ensure social order.

2.4. Conceptual framework

Figure 1 below present the conceptual framework of the study showcasing the documented factors influencing women participation in the military.



Source: Carreiras (2006:18)

Figure 1: Conceptual framework model

From figure 1, women participation in the military is influenced by political, cultural and socio-economic factors. Political factors include civil military relations (defence policy, defence budget, public discourse and media) and democratization level (women's controlling presence in the public sphere, participation and representation). Political factors are evaluated at strategic level and create a strategic dimension of women participation in the military. Such dimension is represented by national and international security situation, alliance strategic concepts, defence policy and strategic characteristics of the missions in which women are deployed. Moreover, cultural factors include the social construction of gender, social values about sex roles, and social values about family. To this note, cultural factors create a cultural dimension which depicts the military ethos, value about gender within the military and the corporate culture in the military. On the other hand, women participation in the military will be influenced by socio-economic factors including demographic characteristics, family structure and family policies, labour force participation and occupational segregations…). However, socio-economic factors create the organizational or dimensional culture that is depicted by army format, technology, force structure, accession policies and internal organization's orientations.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented an overviews and different perceptions of other scholars toward the factors influencing women participation in the security organs, the challenges facing women participation in the security organs, and the possible strategies that can be applicable in enhancing women participation in the security organs. Moreover, the theoretical review presented the theories that underpin this study namely the Patriarchy theory by Behavior, and the structural functionalist theory.

These theories discussed the the power of male permeates everything, diffuse its universality and women are thought of as a group in a man's world. The theories also underlined that the understanding of the complementarity between men and women is essential towards the proper understanding of why and which factors are prompting or deterring women from participating in the military and suggested that women participation in the military should be everyone's business both men and women irrespective of gender and not an exclusive men's arena. Moreover, the researcher narrowed and synthetized the factors influencing women participation in the security organs into a conceptual framework presented at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the methods and techniques that were used to collect data for this study. It specifically details the research design adopted for this study, study area and study population, sample size, data collection and Methods, data processing and analysis, reliability and validity of the research instruments, ethical considerations and study limitations.

3.1. Research design

Churchill (2006:23) defined a research design as a framework that is used by researchers to conduct research. According to Creswell (2009:87), a research design forms the blue-print or maps that details how the research collected information that is relevant to addressing the research questions. According to Kothari (2008:14), a good research design must yield maximum information and provide an opportunity for considering many different aspects of the problem. Since the researcher is interested in the understanding how men and women within RDF perceive equality and the factors that influence women enrolment and participation in military, this study is based on a qualitative research approach.

Bryman and Bell (2003:34) opined that qualitative research approach enables the researcher to interpret and analyze the empirical materials in depth. Based on this idea, this research employs a qualitative research since it is a non-numerical examination of observations which leads to discovery of underlying meanings of patterns and relationships which is appropriate for the current research.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005:27) described qualitative research approach as involving an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. Hence, since respondents' views concern their own thoughts, feelings and perceptions, the study will adopt the ontological starting point of the world being socially constructed, where reality is dependent upon individual's perception.

Moreover, the epistemological position in this study is ascribed to the traditions of interpretation, where the world is constructed through our ability to attach meanings to actions and objects

(Prasad, 2005:27). Therefore, the researcher did not search for one single truth but several realities that contribute to proper understanding of the factors influencing women participation in this institution.

3.2. Description of the study area

Musanze District is one of the 5 Districts of the Northern Province created by the organic law n˚29/2005 dated on 12/23/2005 related to administrative entities of the Republic of Rwanda. It is boarded by: North: Uganda & Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) through Virunga National Park (VNP), South: Gakenke District, East: Burera District, West: Nyabihu District, Virunga Park: (60 km2), Lake Ruhondo: (28 Km^2) in the south west.

Musanze district is divided into 15 sectors: Busogo, Cyuve, Gacaca, Gashaki, Gataraga, Kimonyi, Kinigi, Muhoza, Muko, Musanze, Nkotsi, Nyange, Remera, Rwaza and Shingiro. These sectors are split into 68 cells (with an average of 5 cells per Sectors) and 432 villages (average of 29 villages per sector). The current population is 368, 267 with a density of 694 habitant/Km2 (2012).

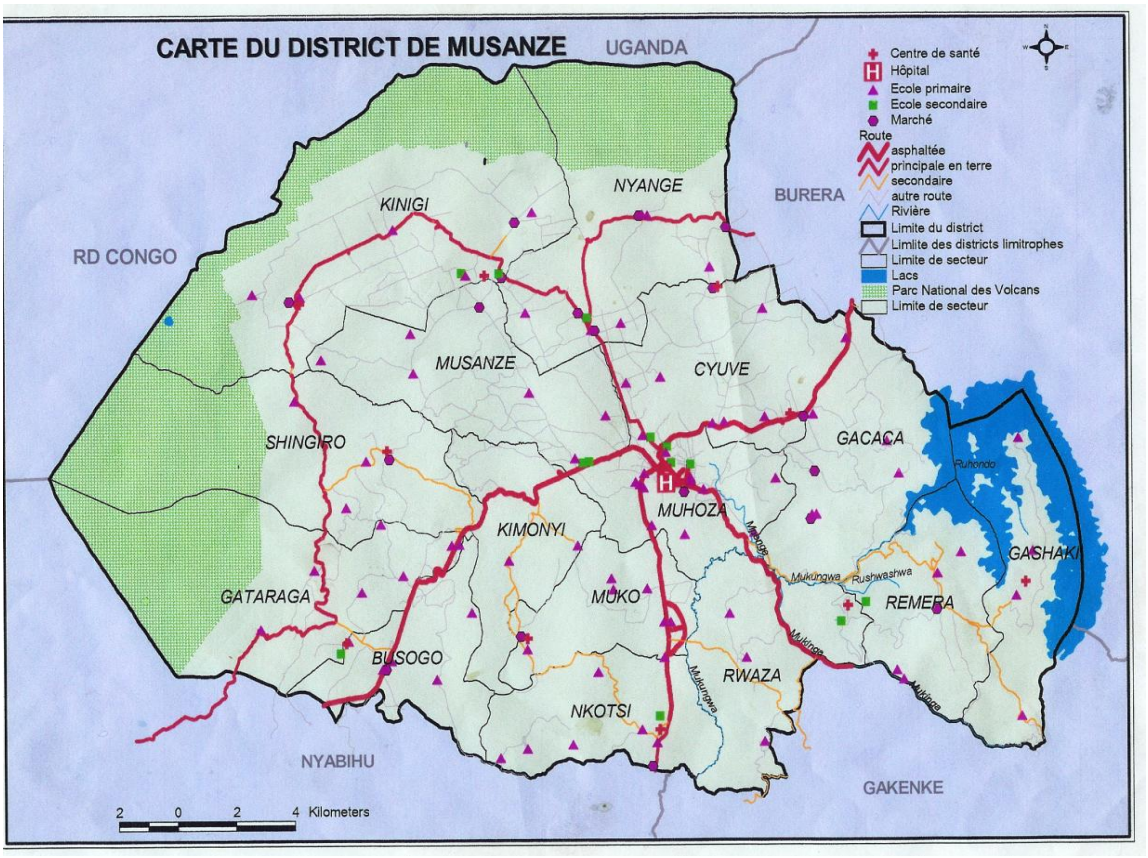


Figure 2: Administrative map of Musanze district

One the other hand, Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) was previously a liberation force known as Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) and the Law No 19/2002 of 17/05/2002 renamed RPA as Rwanda Defence Force. Since 2002, RDF adopted a joint structure with a Chief of Defense Staff at the helm of the Defense Force which offer flexibility required to respond to a variety of contingencies (MOD, 2019 available at http://www.gov.rw/security-peacebuilding accessed on 13th April 2020). RDF is made up of the High Command Council, General Staff, the Rwanda Land Force, the Rwanda Air Force and specialized inter-service units (Guy & Kruger, 2018 available at https://www.defenceweb.co.za/rwanda-defence-force/ accessed on 13th April 2020).

RDF's mission is as provided in the constitution is:

i. To defend territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the republic
ii. To cooperate with other security organs in keeping and safeguarding public order and enforcing law
iii. To participate in humanitarian activities in case of disasters;
iv. To contribute to the development of the country;
v. To participate in international peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance and

3.3. Population size

Neuman (2003:23) defined a population to refer to either all the particular type of entity limited by geographical location or one or more characteristics. For the purpose of this study, 800 individuals in the 3rd Division operating in the Northern and Western Region of Rwanda.

Since the researcher wanted to catch a wide range of perspectives and perceptions, he endeavoured to have respondents representing a diverse group of people. Hence, during this study, a random sample of 36 respondents was used and was seen as sufficient to provide adequate information for the current study and was 10 female soldiers working RDF administrative blocks at RDF Command and Staff College, 15 female foot soldiers, 2 female soldiers in the special force in Bigogwe, 3 either male or female personnel working in RDF Gender desk. These respondents were randomly and conveniently selected to participate in this study. Moreover, the researcher included 6 civilian girls in the working age in the premises of the

RDF Command and Staff College to gather the views of non-military personnel on the factors influencing women participation in RDF.

3.4. Data collection and Methods

Cooper and Schindler (2011:42) defined data collection as the systematic and calculated gathering of information based on research variables. Information for this study was collected by use of a semi structured interview and document analysis. These methods are justified in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1. Interviews

For this study, interview is a useful qualitative data collection technique that can be used for a variety of purposes. The interview refers to a personal exchange of information between the interviewer and the interviewee (Bowling, 2012:23). In this case, the researcher used a semi-structured interview schedule to guide the discussion with the respondents who are key informers and thus needed to elaborate on several issues. In-depths interviewing was conducted as there is need to document the specific experiences and proposals of the respondents.

Since the study sought to understand and gain insight in people's perception about gender equality aspects within RDF and the factors influencing women participation in the military, semi-structured interviews were most suitable. These interviews will make possible for the researcher to cover broad themes and to enable an open conversation, whereby respondents have the chance to describe and exemplify their responses.

Kvale (1996:6) defined semi-structured interviews as an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena. Based upon this definition, the researcher believes that this is a complete description of what the study aimed to do.

Semi structured interview were addressed to 5 key informants (2 female soldiers in the special force in Bigogwe, 3 either male or female personnel working in RDF Gender desk) and 31 individual interviews addressed to 10 female soldiers working RDF administrative blocks at

RDF Command and Staff College, 15 female foot soldiers and 6 civilian girls in the working age).

For the purpose of identification, and with the aim to ensure anonymity, all respondents were given coded numbers based on their categories. Codes are as follow: FA for female soldiers working RDF administrative blocks at Rwanda Command and Staff College; FS for female foot soldiers, SF for female soldiers in the special force; GD for male or female personnel working in RDF Gender desk and CG for civilian girls in the working age. During the interview, conversations were recorded via taking notes and audio-recording.

3.4.2. Documentary review

Documentary review enabled the researcher to collect secondary data as support to primary data gathered via semi-structured interview. Creswell (2009:26) defined documentary review as the process by which existing documents are analyzed and used for the purpose of the study at hand. Hence, the researcher used this tool to go through different text books, journals, published reports to obtained supportive information on the variables under study in order to fully understand the organizational context in RDF and to get an overall view of how RDF work with issues around gender equality to grasp what RDF communicate externally, the researcher refered to documents available to RDF and MoD website.

Documentary review enabled the triangulation of data as a way of comparing different data from different sources. According to Oso (2009:36), this enables the researcher to support or dismiss given findings and thereby be able to outline possible misalignments between the perceptions of interviewees and what is found in the documents or views of other researchers on the subject matter.

3.5. Data processing and analysis

Before data analysis, collected data were processed to arrange them into meaningful categories. Data processing was done through editing and transcription of the semi-structured interviews. Robson (2002:28) defined editing as the process by which errors in completed questionnaires

and recorded interviews are identified whenever possible. During this study, editing enabled the research to remove possible errors and misstatements in the semi-structured interviews.

Having conducted all the interviews, the interpretation of the empirical materials were transcribed and identify themes and subthemes in order to get a broad overview of opinions and respondents' perceptions. This was done by looking for repetitions, similarities, differences and theory related materials. At this stage, important themes were identified in order to answer to the stated research questions and undertake an interesting analysis and a review of existing literature was developed. Moreover, an emphasis was turned to documents to be able to compare empirical findings of the current study with existing researches.

3.6. Reliability and validity of the research instruments

Reliability and the validity of the research instruments were tested to ensure the generalizability of the research findings. The following section presents the procedures that were applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

3.6.1. Reliability

Reliability refers to a measure of the degree to which the responses the research questions are consistent and therefore yield consistent results (Robson, 2002:29). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003:42), reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields reliable results or data after repeated trials. Hence, an instrument is reliable when it can measure a variable accurately and obtain the same results over a period of time.

To ensure the reliability of the research instruments, the researcher ensured the complementarity of data collection methods (interview and Documentary). By using these two methods and comparing data from these methods, it enabled the researcher to support or dismiss the unreliable findings. Moreover, for reliability purpose, the research instrument was sent to the research supervisor who scrutinized the instruments and gave comments and feedback. The feedback received from the supervisor was used to adjust research instruments before undertaking the final study course.

3.6.2. Validity

Validity as noted by Robson (2002:31) is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study. Hence, validity is used to ensure that the study actually measures what it intends to measure from the beginning. To ensure validity of the research instruments, the research considered content validity of the research instruments from which was framed in accordance to the research objectives and based on prior review of existing literatures on the study variables. Content validity was confirmed by the research supervisor before its use.

3.7. Ethical considerations

This is study is in compliance with the laws and regulations set forth for research proposals, the study is in conformity with the rules and regulations of the University of Rwanda in conducting researches. During the course of this study, the researcher adhered to a number of ethical considerations:

a. **Respect for intellectual property:** All data collected were referable back to its source as much as possible. This paper makes use of quotations in various instances but included the appropriate source as well. It is likely on more than occasion to have an expression or statement that is similar to another researcher's writing. However, the researcher did not willingly set out to do so.
b. **Respect for individuals:** The researcher did not undermine the rights and freedoms of individuals during the data gathering process. The researcher didnot make derogatory or discriminatory remarks.
c. **Neutrality**: The researcher intends to remain neutral during the length of the research and relied on justifiable and valid evidence to arrive at conclusions.
d. **Confidentiality and anonymity:** Information collected was used for the purpose of this academic research only and the participants were assured of their confidentiality before participating in the study. Moreover, the address and identification of the study participants was kept anonymous and was not be disclosed to anyone.

e. **Consent:** The participation in the study was voluntary and there was not any form of coercion or undue pressures. Participants participated on a voluntary basis and whoever though to withdrawal from the study was free to do so.

3.8. Study limitations

Limitations are matters and occurrence that arise in a study which are out of the researcher's control that can limit the extensity to which a study can go, and sometimes affect the end results and conclusions can be drawn (Robson, 2002:40). Every study no matter how well it is conducted and constructed has limitations.

Some of the potential limitations this study was whether selected participants give the necessary information needed to yield accurate findings. Moreover, as the results are taken out of their raw contexts, when collected via interviews, there is risk for misinterpretation and distortion of actual perception of the respondents, despite that there is a possibility that the results might be meaningful when the researcher interpret, categorize and reflect upon them.

Some of the respondents restrained themselves from providing some of the needed for the study due. But, the data were triangulated with documentary sources of information to cover the gap in collected data.

Moreover, the sample size for this study would be not representative of the Rwanda defense force (RDF) as it only contains a subset of the entire selection. Hence, there is a difficulty in the generalization of the study findings.

3.9. Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented the methodological approaches that were used to collect, present and analyze data for this study. The chapter described the area of the (RDF), research design adopted for this study which was qualitative research design, the study population size, data collection and Methods which included the semi-structured interviews and Documentary review, data processing and analysis, reliability and validity of the research instruments, ethical considerations and the study limitations. In each of these items, the rationale of their choice and the procedure its application were presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes and interprets the findings of this study. The chapter specifically presents the factors influencing women's participation in RDF, the challenges facing women participation in the RDF and applicable strategies that are deemed to enhance women participation in the RDF. Findings are presented in accordance to the specific objectives and provide the views of respondents of each item related to the main documented factors of women participation in the security organs. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews addressed to women in RDF and individuals, working in RDF gender Desk, women civilians in the working age randomly selected in the study area. However, before assessing these factors, the chapter presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

4.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

In this section, the respondents were differentiated in terms of their gender, age, level of education and years of service in RDF. Each item has an implication as per the nature of the study and the percentage of distinctiveness of each group of the respondents was based on the total number of the respondents. This information was collected as such information can present the ability and the diversity of responses provided by respondents on the factors influencing women participation in the RDF, the challenges they face and the strategies to enhance women participation in RDF.

Table4. 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Gender	Male	2	5.56
	Female	34	94.44
Age	25-35 years	32	88.89
	35 years and above	4	11.11
Education	Secondary	28	77.78
	Bachelors' degree	8	22.22
Experience	1-3 years	5	13.89
	3-5 years	13	36.11
	5 -7 years	18	50.00

Source: Field data, April 2020

Table 1 show that most of the study participants (34 of 36) were women and the majority (32 of 36) was aged between 25 and 35 years, with four participants older than 35 years. Nearly, half (18 of 36) had been working in RDF for 5-7 years while the other half has been working in RDF for less than 5 years. Moreover, all of the participants had received formal education, with more than a half completing secondary school (28 of 36) or beyond while (8 of 36) have completed a bachelor's degree. All the study participants described receiving different form of military-related training at the start of, and/or during, their employment in RDF, with most exposed to training in more than one area of operation.

4.2. Key issues identified during fieldwork

During field work, key issues identified include the factors influencing women participation in RDF and the challenges facing women in the participation in RDF. Moreover, study participants proposed applicable strategies that can enhance women participation in the RDF and are also presented in the subsequent section.

4.2.1. Factors influencing women participation in RDF

This section illustrates the data collected from study participants to identify the factors influencing women participation in RDF. These factors are presented in accordance to the mainly cited factor by study participants with the aim of finding answers the research questions. In this context, respondents were asked to what they considered to be the factors motivating females to join RDF and the following themes aroused:

I joined the military as way to put my feet in my father's. My father was a soldier in RDF during the liberation struggle. He always told me how good to serve in the military and the benefits that are associated with it. So, I grew up keeping in mind that I should also serve in RDF as my career **(**Interview with FS1, Musanze, April, 2020).

Based on the above scenario, it is shown that women decide to join RDF willingness and wishes of women to attach their careers to their family's traditions and continue in the way their family members have done in the past. This implies that, women are pushed by the traditions of their family in their young age and decide to join the military.

Narrating her own story, one female study participants stated:

During my young age, I experienced many people belittling girls saying that, We [women] are lazy and can't work hard work that requires physical strengths. So, I decided:"…..let me join RDF so that I can get chance to prove those people wrong. What do men have of special that I as a girl cannot have? I believed in myself and I joined RDF with such determination (Interview with FS2, Musanze, April, 2020**)**.

Based on this narrative, it is deducted that as Rwanda's traditional culture has been characterized by women marginalization in all spheres of life. Moreover, people believe that women cannot perform well in the military as their men counterparts. So, women participants in this study identified that they joined RDF to demonstrate that women are also able to perform well in these duties that were traditionally reserved to men.

Respondents shared a common view about practical reasons of joining the RDF. One of the study participants described her motives for joining the RDF:

Actually, I did not join the military during the struggle for liberation. I was already in the country. But I joined the army just after the struggle. Like any other citizen, I wish I could have been part of the movement, to have your input and your say in the liberation of your country. Because, the RPF ideology was very attractive to us [young people]. As you may know, our country has been under the ideology of oppression and discrimination for a long time. Hence, myself, I coveted that this system is changed. That is why I joined the RDF to have a say in the enforcement of the new ideology of the country and contribute to the stability and security of my motherland (Interview with FA3 and FS4 and FS5, Musanze, April, 2020).

Therefore, the ideological and practical reasons also motivate women towards joining the RDF. Many of the interviewed women shared the need to support the Government of Rwanda in rebuilding the country and joining RDF is one way of doing the bit for the country.

During the interview, another theme aroused related to the level of familiarity of women to the military. One study participant highlighted the following:

I came from a place near a military base and have been in contact with the military since I was a little girl. So, I knew about the existence and the behaviors of the soldiers, integrity, order and discipline always drew my attention and attraction. But, what was really impressive was their devoted solidarity and helping heart towards the community, in one way or another and the dependence of the people on the military (Interview with FS6, Musanze, April, 2020).

Another study participant corroborated:

You know, military affairs are not well known to everyone in the society. We have myths about them [military] and even fear. But, for me, there was a soldier in my neighborhood. So, in his time off, he used to come and visit our household with his friends. I used to chat with them and they told me how life in the military is, and my fear was relieved. I got familiar with them. SO, I decided…why not joining the military? I think that was my motive to join RDF in the first place (Interview with FA6, Musanze, April, 2020).

Hence, as women get familiar with the military, hear their story, experience and benefit from their activities, the willingness of women joining the military and participating in the military will increase which in turn increases the number of women in the army. However, low level of familiarity with the military among women has long been a hindrance to women and has led to small number of women willing to apply for the positions in the army. The more a person is familiarized with the military, the higher the self-identification and the attractiveness towards the military will be.

Narrating her story one of the study participants stated:

We [women] were long ago excluded from participating in different sectors of national life. We [women] only remained home taking care of children and elders. Me, I did not believe that this was true…So, myself I joined RDF to learn new skills and improve my capacities. This empowered me, and now can [Even if I can retire from the army] participate in different spheres of life with the same voice and strength as men…Now I do know my rights and can exercise them (Key informant interview with SF1, Bigogwe, April, 2020).

Many study participants corroborated with the above submission and one of them stated:

We [women] sometimes belittle ourselves. Many women still believe that the military is not of their business. They still do not want to take a challenge. So, on my behalf, I decided to join the military to take such challenge and show the public that we [women] also have the potential to do it. I wanted to challenge the status quo and change the myths about the military service. That is how I believed and made my mind to join the RDF (Key informant interview with SF2, Musanze, April, 2020).

Therefore, the interviewed women shared a common view and believed that joining RDF was one way getting empowered. Taking into account the fact that women were excluded by the social norms and values and their own personal values from participating in the military, women are now getting away of such values. Women are now aware that they can do it and can also perform military service as their male counterparts.

Moreover, another factor was identified by study participants as being employment opportunity in RDF. Narrating they own stories, study participants highlighted:

I joined RDF to be secured in employment. I have previously worked for different private companies with short-term contracts which did not enable me to grow in career. But, I reflected on the fact that in RDF you only stop working there if you retire or if you meet some misfortune. So, I decided to join and work here. As you can see I am stable and I am progressing in rank over time (Interview with FA7 and FS10, Musanze, April, 2020).

Narrating her own story, another female respondent echoed:

I did sciences in high school. At the end of my studies, I didn't get chance to get a scholarship to continue in the higher studies and my parents were not able to privately pay for me and cater for my livings. I also had no chance of at least getting a job. My life became miserable. So, once I held that RDF is recruiting new soldiers, I directly applied and fortunately I got recruited. This was my last resolve to at least earn a living (Interview with FS7 and FS12, Musanze, April, 2020).

Other respondents pointed out that she was motivated by benefits that are offered by RDF to its workforce.

Before joining RDF, one of my friends told me: You know, RDF provides a competitive salary, paid maternity leave and a chance to get military-funded scholarship. So, I decided to apply and join RDF to benefits from these allowances as there are few private companies that can offer such benefits to their employees (Interview with FS8, Musanze, April, 2020).

During the interviews, an interesting theme aroused. One interviewed female soldier highlighted:

I had finished high school and then I heard the announcement that RDF is recruiting. I asked my parents if I can apply and join. She [My mother] said: Go and work for the country. You see how they [RDF] helped us when we were living in bad and challenging conditions. So, my daughter, go and work together with them (Individual interview with FS9, Musanze, April, 2020).

Deducting from this quote, some women joined RDF as they owe to the government of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) which was changed into RDF. This also shows that women may join RDF due to the fact that many Rwandans have trust in the RDF and the government of Rwanda as they secured the country after halting the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994.

Hence, it can be said decision to join the military is influenced by the willingness of women to get employment opportunities within the military. Participants shared the view that they joined the RDF to get secure employment and associated benefits were influential factors that motivated women in joining RDF specifically for those who are new in the army. However, women take employment in RDF as the last resort they have seen after completing their secondary school. This is an indication that employments in the military may not be attractive to women, and this may hinder women from joining and participating in the military.

4.2.2. Challenges facing women in the participation in RDF

The second objective of this study was to identify the challenges facing women participation in the RDF. This section presents the challenges that women face that hinder them to join RDF and

the challenges they face when they are within RDF due to the fact that they are female. These constitute the internal factors that may hinder women from joining the military. To do this, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with women soldiers to arrive to the following responses. First theme that aroused was social and institutional values and norms. One study participant narrated:

People still believe that, we [women] are weak and cannot cope in active combat and negate our strengths. Even those who are willing to join the military are already being taken to various courses like hospitality in belief that they cannot participate in war (Individual interview with FA9 and FS13, Musanze, April, 2020).

To this note, another respondent in RDF Gender Desk explained:

As you may know…women are treated well. Military trainings are tough and people believe that they are not for women. Women soldiers are seen as aggressive and masculine. Military services are socialized and portrayed as male arena. This discourages women from entering in such empire dominated by male (Individual interview with FS14, Musanze, April, 2020).

One female soldier echoed:
In Rwandan culture, not only in Rwandan culture, very few women are willing and would like to join the military. Women still think that the military is the man's job and it is their destiny **(**Respondents Interview with FS15, Musanze, April, 2020).

Based on the above submissions by the study participants, it was found that the decision of women to join RDF is constrained by people beliefs that women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties that are believed to be reserved for only men. This emphasizes the fact that military services were historically reserved to only men and war is a men arena. Moreover, it was found that some women are reluctant to join the RDF due to persistent traditional societal values and attitudes towards women soldiers which portrays women soldiers as masculine and aggressive, violent as compared to civilian women. Therefore, these gendered stereotypes continue to be restraining factors of women full and active participation and integration in the military and act as initial gatekeeper for women's inclusion in the military.

During the interview, another theme aroused regarding the perception of the families and the society towards women military. One female narrated her story and echoed:

When I decided to join RDF, I told my parents about the decision. But, the reactions were fierce enough that I was going to change my mind. My father yelled at me" Do you know the legacy of our culture? Women were not allowed in the military. It is said that military duties are tough, women cannot do that. It is a difficulty job, so women are too weak to perform these jobs (Respondents Interview with FA9, Musanze, April, 2020).

Narrating her own experience, another participant said:

When I decided to get into the military, I was confident because I had ambitions and willingness to join RDF. However, my family and my marital status became an issue. I was going to be separated from my husband and family members. People said and accused me of neglecting my family and duties of bearing and taking care of children and pretending to join the army which is dominated with males (Respondents Interview with CG4, Musanze, April, 2020).

To this note and corroborating to this view, another study participant observed:

Soldiers are trained to attack and defend from attacks, both of which necessitate the legitimized use of violence, which is seen as the preserve of men. How can a woman perform such tasks? Such a woman can't be tolerated as a normal family member **(**Respondents Interview with FA2, Musanze, April, 2020).

Violence and aggressively of women soldiers was also highlighted by women as a social perception. Narrating her own story, one study participant reported: My joining RDF was very hard. I met different challenges that changed my decision to join RDF. My parents believed that joining RDF is becoming deviant to the family, becoming violent and not fulfilling filial duties as a girl (Respondents Interview with CG1, Musanze, April, 2020).

Deducting from the above submissions by study participants, cultural and societal perceptions towards the integration of women in the military do not essentialize that women are able to

compete equally as their male counterparts. Hence, women are still seen as tokens or judged based on masculine criteria. This generates two different views: Either masculinization of women in the military or dissonance in situation where it puts much strain on women. Moreover, a focus on women's natural physical strengths and capabilities silences the diversity of female characteristics, nature and physical appearance of women soldiers negates the experiences of women who have played important and active roles in warfare. Moreover, the notion of peaceful and generative femininity that are routed in traditional cultural values of the Rwandan society. Unfortunately, these values bound down space and willingness of women to participate in the military and deny women agency within the military via the expectations that women will fulfill roles that support but are not actively involved in warfare.

During the interview another theme aroused. Narrating her story, one of the study participants echoed:

Me, joining the RDF was really hard. I was the only girl of my father together with seven boys among whom 2 were already soldiers. My parents were against my joining RDF saying: (…), if you are a soldier, how will you get married? Who on earth will need you as a wife? None of your friends will accept you… (Respondents Interview with CG2, Musanze, April, 2020).

Narrating her own story, one study participant said:

Before joining RDF, I was single with no kids. I was told early by some of my relatives who once were soldiers: if you want to be successful in the army, you shouldn't have kids. If you have kids, you will not be able to go there higher up. You will need to take leave while others are in trainings, so your progress is limited (Respondents Interview with FA8, Musanze, April, 2020).

Based on these submissions above, participants shared a common view on patriarchal issues related to findings a marriage partner, separation from families at deployment, pregnancy, breastfeeding were taken as challenges to women participation in the military. Moreover, there are also limitations associated with having children as a barrier to women career progression in the military, and the social perceptions that young women who join the military discourage marriage potentials by finding it difficult to meet a partner to approach them and hinder their

patriarchal duties. Moreover, there are persistent negative attitudes towards women in soldiers may be violent and different from civilian women while women are associated with peace and are often essentialized with reference to their roles as mothers that require them to be nurturers and life-givers and should remain at home. Hence, all these factors constitute a barrier to women participation in the military.

Another interesting theme aroused regarding working hours. One male soldiers working for RDF Gender Desk observed:

RDF is facing cultural barriers to integrate more women in the military. However, the nature of work the RDF personnel are required to perform is not at all times eye-catching to women. They [women] have to work long hours even during the nights. This adds to their triple roles [Reproductive, productive and community management], which make it hard for them to bear in association with their patriarchal duties (Key Informant Interview with GD1, Musanze, April, 2020).

Hence, long working hours was also highlighted as a practical reason why women chose working within private and other employment institutions rather than working in the security organs especially in the military.

4.3 Strategies to enhance women participation in RDF

Despite that RDF has made progress in its recruitment of women, there is still a distinctive numerical imbalance between men and women. Hence, there is a need of devised strategies to increase the number of women in the RDF but also enhance their participation within RDF. The study also wanted to identify the possible and applicable strategies that should be adopted to enhance the women participation in RDF.

During an interview, when asked what should be done to enhance women participation in RDF, an interesting them aroused:

Increasing the number of female in RDF would be good to not only RDF as an institution, but also us, women who are in the military. But, RDF should first maintain the existing women personnel. Women tend to leave the army at early age with an excuse of family issues and this

put in danger the willingness of RDF to increase the number of women in the army (Key informant Interview with GD2, Musanze, April, 2020).

To support this argument, respondents reported that women have a higher turnover rate, which shows that retaining women is troublesome for the organization. One female soldier noted: If RDF wants a more diverse workforce, with a greater number of women, the younger recruits need role-models to look up to, to show them the way, to motivate them and to make them realize it is possible to do this (Respondents Interview with FS10, Musanze, April, 2020).

During the interview, the following interesting theme aroused. “Most women in RDF tend to leave the military during pregnancy, or when their children are very young. This not only undermines the composition of RDF but also associated with costs. Hence, adequate attention should be drawn to the approach based on skill recognition and on more flexible career paths in order to increase the attractiveness of this professional environment and reduce the number of women who leave the military. Poor retention of women in the military lead to lack of experienced personnel, loss of skills sets and leads to a lack of female role-models, and in the worst scenario; difficulties in retaining young women recruits. Hence, for RDF to be able to increase the number of women, retaining already serving women in RDF so as they act as role models to newly recruited women or other prospective recruits. To this end, what is required in RDF is a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at senior decision in making levels. To achieve this, there is need of a continuous consultation with female military staff on the challenges and opportunities they face as women working within RDF.

When asked about reasons of the uneven distribution of women and men in RDF, the main issues raised were related to deeply rooted traditions and culture. To this note, one respondent observed:

Women are less represented in the RDF and there is uneven distribution of male to women. This is a result of many factors. But, I believe this is mainly due to our [Rwandan] cultural and societal beliefs that consider only men are as warriors”. This needs to be changed. Those in

charge need first to address this issue of cultural perceptions. Women will join surely (Key Informant Interview with GD1, Musanze, April, 2020).

The way people see RDF is of great concern. One member of the RDF gender Desk interviewed echoed:

It would be hard for more women to be enrolled in the military in the current conditions. People believe that to be recruited in the military requires substantial physical fitness and masculinity. This image portrayed by the people to the military sweep away the little chance women would consider the military as a career of their [women] choice (Respondent interview with GD4, Musanze, April, 2020).

To this note, the same member of the RDF gender Desk interviewed suggested:

On my behalf, a very promising initiative would be the development of a new recruitment policy reflecting the realities of the military service. Yes…you can set quantifiable targets and assess the results. But, remember, we [the military] want to increase the number of women in the army! So, the emphasis should be laid down on seeking the skills needed in the military (Key Informant Interview with GD2, Musanze, April, 2020).

Moreover, one study participant echoed:
RDF should strive to become a first choice employer…to attract the attention of women as a career. To do this, RDF should ensure that there is a renowned equal opportunity atmosphere, offering competitive salaries, job security and other benefits….They [women] will join for sure (Respondent Interview with FS13, Musanze, April, 2020).

During the interviews, respondents shared a common view on the perception of women in the military. One respondent echoed:

People, all think that if you join the military, you are going to go to war-tone zones, you are going just to go out there and get shoot, which is not true. People are not aware that there are other roles in the military apart from combat roles. More information sharing to the public is

essential towards sweeping away the myths in the military careers (Respondent Interview with FS7, Musanze, April, 2020).

Another respondent also supported the previous argument and stated:

Many people, especially women believe and consider the military as a fallback option: you join the military because you have nothing else to do with your life, no other alternative. You need to earn a living there but you are not fond of being always in the uniform (Respondent Interview with FS14, Musanze, April, 2020).

Moreover, many people still believe that the military is for men. One respondent highlighted:

In people's mind, [the military] means [guys serving in wars]. Not for women. So, if it was shown that women can also play important roles in the military, by like advertising, it could sweep away the cloud over people's mind and influence women towards joining the military (Respondent Interview with CG5, Musanze, April, 2020**)**.

Other participant suggested addressing the stigma. She noted that women in the military might have a negative image in the society. One female soldier noted:

Most of women outside here do not see themselves in the military. There is a stigma. But, for me, there is nothing better than seeing a female high-ranking officer. It gives you something you wish you can strive for and also get there. It is really very empowering. Hence, it would be really stimulating if women in the military are them sharing experience to young women like in schools and other events joining many people to influence us [Young women] thoughts about the military service (Respondent Interview with CG6, Musanze, April, 2020) .

To stimulate women to joining RDF, women who participated in this study suggested that it would be helpful to emphasize the flexibility of the military service in any advert related to the military. She echoed:

Lots of my friends were not aware of the fact that joining the military is not a life commitment. They didn't realize that it is not necessary to live in the military forever; that it is not committing forever". Many of them only wanted to go into nursing and other sciences. They [My friends]

didn’t realize that this can also be done here [in the military]” (Respondent Interview with FA2, Musanze, April, 2020).

Deducting form the above submissions, people have common misconceptions about the military service and women in the military. Once the military is portrayed by the large general public as sexist, low paying and stressful environment, many women will be discouraged from pursuing a career there. Otherwise, women will be the first to be more attracted to working there as career. Hence, countering and repealing these perceptions, having a reputation as first class-employer could help attract more women to consider joining the military. Moreover, advertisements or other messaging that are oriented to military should emphasize on the reality of the military, by for example debunking myths perpetuate via movies. Military service should also be made more attractive not only to women but also men to uproot its conception as fall back option. Furthermore, changing the perception of the role of women in the military would enhance the women’s interest to join the military. Hence, this lack of understanding of the military as a careers as others needs to be addressed and fully advertised mostly to women and other influential people. This would stimulate the willingness of young women joining the military.

4.4. Discussions of findings

Findings depicted in this chapter illustrated that factors influencing women participation have two contradicting directions. Some of these factors push women towards joining the military while others restrain them from joining the military. Moreover, some of these factors may be linked to the myths and internal organization culture within the military arena while others are linked to external environment within which women live.

The first objective of this study was to understand the factors influencing women participation in RDF. The main factors identified are summarized in the following table:

Table4. 2: Factors influencing women participation in RDF

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Willingness to attach to a family tradition	26	72.2
Aspiration to serve the country	30	83.3
Level of familiarity with the military	32	88.9
Empowerment and enhancing gender equality	31	86.1
Employment opportunity	27	75.0

Source: Field data, April 2020

Findings show that the main factors and most cited factors accounting for women participation in the security organs include willingness to attach to a family tradition (72.2%), the aspiration to serve their country (83.3%), level of familiarity with the military (88.9%), the feeling that participating in military affairs is one way of empowerment and enhancing gender equality (86.1%) and the way of getting employment (75.0%).Moreover, the other factor is the trust they have to them and the feeling that they owe to the Government and they believe that the government have done too many things to them so; they must participate together with other to advance the country stability. This agree with Smith and Rosenstein (2017) who also identified that the main reason for females to enlist in the US armed forces before 2004 was the trust and faithfulness to the goals of the organisation.

Furthermore, women joined RDF considering the importance, dignity and adventure attached to the participation in those areas that were traditionally disallowed to women and means of strengthening equality of gender and race to the workplace. Findings agree with Eighmey (2006) who identified that since 2001, just after terrorism attack on World Trade Center in the US, women were willing to join the armed force due to dignity and adventure. Dignity was seen as the equality of gender and race to the workplace, this is both the self- and perception by others. Some of the women who joined RDF were motivated and influenced by their familiarity with the army in their childhood. This implied as a woman get familiar with the military, hear their story, experience and benefit from their activities, it will sweep away the misconceptions she has on the military and the propensity to join in her young age increases. Findings are supported by

Berkowitz *et al.* (2009) also found that women who join the military have in one way or another been in connection to the military and are familiar with the military, either through participation in military related training or other social relations. In tandem with this, findings showed that some women joined RDF to continue their family military traditions. This implies that some of the family members also served in the military and a woman felt to continue or join their relative in the military. In support with this, Berkowitz *et al.* (2009) also emphasized that women tend to join the military when they are either familiar with the military or have grown in family with strong military traditions. Hence, based on the above findings, the first objective was achieved and the first research question was answered by the current findings which are supported by the findings in the existing literature.

The second objective of this study was to identify the challenges facing women participation within RDF. On this, the main challenges as cited by respondents are summarized in Table below:

Table4. 3: Challenges facing women participation in RDF

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Socio-cultural resistance to women to join the military	27	75.0
Beliefs that women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties	25	69.4
Less attractiveness of military service as a career	28	77.8
Patriarchal roles associated with women's family roles	32	88.9

Source: Field data, April 2020

Based on the above the main challenges facing women participation in RDF include social cultural resistance to join the military (75.0%), beliefs that women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties (69.4%), less attractiveness of military service as a career (77.8%) and Patriarchal roles associated with women's family roles (88.9%). These findings indicate that women participation in the military is restrained by socio-cultural resistance to women participating in the sectors that are believed to be occupied by men and these attitudes act as initial gatekeeper for women's inclusion in the military. To this note, people still think that

women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties that are believed to be reserved for only men. This emphasizes the fact that military services were historically reserved to only men and war is a men arena. Hence, Rwandan cultural and societal values portraying women military as aggressive and masculine, negative social perceptions towards women military.

Findings also showed that due to patriarchal nature of the Rwandan society, socialization and expectations about traditional gender roles remain strong and still questions about women's capabilities in the military and the military is not generally accepted as a legitimate and promising career choice for women. Findings agree with Bachman *et al*. (2000) who also emphasized that women are less attracted by the military as are their male counterparts. Bachman *et al*. (2000) added that women are generally less involved and interested in the armed force which is demonstrated by fewer female applicants in the armed forces during recruitment.

Moreover, women participation is constrained by the lack of understanding of local perceptions about womanhood and women's participation in the military rooted in the traditional culture. Women lack enough time to spend in the military coupled with the patriachical roles of pregnancy, care and household management. Findings are supported by Masinjila (2008) who also highlighted that women find it hard to participate in the armed forces due to limited time available to them because of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. Therefore, gender role issues and ideologies place women hierarchal style in which women are valued less than men because of their socially ascribed roles in reproductive sphere. Based on the above findings, the second objective of this study was achieved and addressed and the research question answered as well in support of the existing literature as the study was not undertaken in vacuum.

Furthermore, the third objective of this study was to suggest applicable strategies to enhance women participation in RDF. On this, the main strategies identified by study participants are summarized in table below:

Table4. 4: Proposed strategies to enhance women participation in RDF

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Flexibility to increase the attractiveness of the military career	28	77.8
Retaining already serving women in RDF as role models	23	63.9
Transformative gender policy that promotes and facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women	25	69.4
Countering and repealing misconceptions about the military	30	83.3
Increasing awareness among women	21	58.3

Source: Primary data, 2020

From the above, study participants proposed that for RDF to increase the number of women participating in the military service, adequate attention should be drawn to the approach based on skill recognition and on more flexible career paths in order to increase the attractiveness of the military career (77.8%), retaining already serving women in RDF so as they act as role models to newly recruited women (63.9%), countering and repealing misconceptions about the military held by citizens (83.3%), increasing awareness among women (58.3%) by advertisements or other messaging that are oriented to military that emphasize on the reality of the military and devise a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at senior decision in making levels (68.4%) could help attract more women to consider joining the military and to would enhance women participation in the RDF. Based on the above findings, the third objective of this study was achieved and addressed and the research question answered as well.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.0. Introduction

This chapter sum up the study findings and make conclusion based on the study findings, provide suggestions for policy implications and suggestions for future studies. Findings were obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with women military and RDF Gender Desk personnel to find out the factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda. Findings are summarized in accordance to the specific objectives of this study which are: to find out the factors influencing women participation in RDF, to assess the challenges facing women participation in RDF and identify the strategies to enhance women participation in the RDF.

5.1. Summary of key findings

Findings of this study are summarized based on the specific objectives which are: to find out the factors influencing women participation in RDF, to assess the challenges facing women participation in RDF and identify the strategies to enhance women participation in the RDF. Summarized findings were obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with women military and RDF Gender desk, analyzed using thematic content analysis through a qualitative approach. The following are the findings of this study.

The first objective was to identify the factors influencing women participation in RDF. Findings showed that influenced women's decision to join RDF included the willingness to attach to a family tradition, the importance of participating in those areas that were traditionally disallowed to women and reserved to men, and the aspiration to serve their country, level of familiarity with the military, the feeling that participating in military affairs is one way of empowerment and enhancing gender equality and the way of getting employment.

The second objective of this study was to identify the challenges facing women participation in the RDF. Findings showed that the decision of women to join RDF is constrained by people beliefs that women are physically weak and unable to perform some duties that are believed to be reserved for only men. This emphasizes the fact that military services were historically reserved

to only men and war is a men arena. Moreover, it was found that some women are reluctant to join the RDF due to persistent traditional societal values and attitudes towards women soldiers which portrays women soldiers as masculine and aggressive, violent as compared to civilian women. Moreover, there are cultural and societal perceptions towards the integration of women in the military do not essentialize that women are able to compete equally as their male counterparts. Hence, women are still seen as tokens or judged based on masculine criteria. participants shared a common view on patriarchal issues related to findings a marriage partner, separation from families at deployment, pregnancy, breastfeeding were taken as challenges to women participation in the military. Moreover, there are also limitations associated with having children as a barrier to women career progression in the military, and the social perceptions that young women who join the military discourage marriage potentials by finding it difficult to meet a partner to approach them and hinder their patriarchal duties.

The third objective was to identify strategies applicable to enhance women participation in RDF. Findings showed that For RDF to increase the number of women participating in the military service, adequate attention should be drawn to the approach based on skill recognition and on more flexible career paths in order to increase the attractiveness of the military career, retaining already serving women in RDF so as they act as role models to newly recruited women or other prospective recruits, and a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at senior decision in making levels. Moreover, findings showed that countering and repealing misconceptions about the military held by citizens, having a reputation as first class-employer, advertisements or other messaging that are oriented to military that emphasize on the reality of the military could help attract more women to consider joining the military.

5.2. General conclusion

Rwanda has succeeded towards the integration of women in political, economic and social institutions at all levels. However, as it is for many military organizations, RDF is not yet able to fully integrate women and gender perspective in its operational structures. This study examined the factors influencing women participation in RDF and proposed some strategies that may be applied to enhance women participation in RDF.

Based on the study findings, it was concluded that the factors influencing women participation included the willingness to attach to a family tradition, the importance of participating in those areas that were traditionally disallowed to women and reserved to men, and the aspiration to serve their country, level of familiarity with the military, the feeling that participating in military affairs is one way of empowerment and as way of getting employment within the military.

However, other factors influencing women participation in the security organs deter women from joining the security organs and include social attitudes and thought that women are physically weak and unable to perform military duties, cultural and societal values portraying women military as aggressive and masculine, negative social perceptions towards women military that women are not created to perform military services and patriarchal roles that portrays women's primary roles as mothers and wives assigned them with competing domestic responsibilities and care works.

5.3. Suggestions

Based on the study findings and the suggestions provided by the study participants, the following suggestions were made to RDF, MIGEPROF and RDF Gender Desk. Suggestions addressed to RDF were aimed at increasing the number of women in RDF and ensure their active and full participation in RDF, suggestions made to MIGEPROF aimed and establishing higher level mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in the military while for RDF Gender Desk, it is for a continuous advocacy towards women's awareness to their participation in the military.

5.3.1. To RDF

For RDF to increase the number of women and ensure their active and full participation, the following suggestions are made towards this aim:

1. RDF needs to devise a transformative gender policy that promotes affirmative action to facilitate the integration and effective involvement of women at in RDF. The policy should be driven and monitored at a high level and channeled in middle level of command. To this policy, adequate human and financial resources must be allocated to implement policies and standing orders to enable the groundbreaking transformation of equality issues within the RDF.

2. RDF should strive to become a first choice employer to attract the attention of women as a career. To do this, RDF should ensure that there is a renowned equal opportunity atmosphere, offering competitive salaries, job security and other benefits.
3. RDF should work hard to repel the misconceptions that people have about the military. By any means like advertisement and public notices, information oriented to military should emphasize on the reality of the military, by for example debunking myths perpetuate via movies.
4. RDF should increase exposure of women in the military to the public at large in order to generate interest among women who would otherwise never have considered joining.
5. RDF should mainly involve more women in recruitment processes. This would be a best way to help generate interest in serving among women who may not have previously considered the idea.
6. RDF should continuously organize campaigns with prospective young women in schools in order to provide with them information and teach them about the opportunities available for women in the military and the benefits associated with them in order to generate interest from them to join the military.
7. To enhance women participation in the military requires not only recruiting more women but also to ensure that they are able to pursue their careers in the military for at least as long as men. Therefore, RDF should devise procedures, programs and regulations that are aimed at enhancing women stay at the military and ensuring their career growth and development.
8. Military environment is still conceived by and for men. Given the corporate culture that prevail in the military, it not enough to pour in women and stir, it's about changing structures and practices to ensure that all members of the military both women and men can thrive. Therefore, RDF should strive to change the prevailing mentality by the involvement of commanding officers at all levels not only at the very highest level but also at middle level of command.
9. RDF Gender Desk should strive towards enhancing women' awareness on the possibilities to develop career in the military. This should be done via the provision of civic education in secondary schools to change the belief that women are not meant to be in the military.

10. RDF Gender Desk should advocate for development of military role-model among women military personnel to unlock the interest of young women towards joining the military.

5.3.2. To MIGEPROF

1. MIGEPROF should advocate for the enactment of the policies and legislations to address all women-men imbalances with an emphasis on RDF and other security organs. Such legislations should include for instance affirmative action that enshrines a quota for women's integration in the military and other security organs.
2. Cultural attitudes and perceptions by the society are a major hindrance to women participation in the military. MIGEPROF should invest more efforts towards changing these attitudes and perceptions via awareness creation campaigns in order to achieve significant change in the interest of women wiling to join the military.

5.4. Suggestions for future studies

This study was limited to factors influencing women participation in security organs in Rwanda. The study focused on one security organ (RDF) and used a small sample size. Hence, a more comprehensive study is necessary to assess these factors within other security organs and using a larger sample size to enable the generalizations of the current findings.

Moreover, this study only used a more qualitative approach. Hence, amore qualitative and quantitative study is required to gather data on the participation, treatment, experiences and performance of women in the security organs as way of ascertaining their role and challenges of women in the security organs.

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Note: The study seeks to identify the factors that influence the women participation in the security organs in Rwanda with a special emphasize on Rwanda Defence Force (RDF). Besides, the study attempts to identify strategies that are required to enhance women participation in RDF.

1. What do you consider to be the factors that motivate females to join RDF?
2. What do you think are the major reasons leading females to join RDF?
3. What do you think that are main challenges faced by female in joining RDF?
4. What do you think would be the solutions to these challenges?
5. Do you think that the current strategies used by RDF in recruiting female soldiers in the military are effective?
6. In your opinion, suggest some measures that can motivate women to join RDF.

THANK YOU!