

**UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
CENTRE FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

**THE IMPACT OF GENDER EQUALITY POLICY ON PEACE WITHIN THE
RWANDAN HOUSEHOLD: A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN LEADERS**

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Declaration

This research is my original work and has not been presented to any other institution for any academic award. No part of this research should be reproduced without the author's consent or that of the University of Rwanda.

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Declaration by supervisor(s)

This research has been submitted with my approval as Supervisor in the University of Rwanda.

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Dedication

This research is dedicated entirely to my lovely Son Rwambibi Cyusa Brice who has always been a source of encouragement at all times during my stay at the college.

Acknowledgement

This research report could not have been completed without the assistance and support of others.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EDPRS:	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GMO:	Gender Monitoring Office
HIV:	Human Immune Virus
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
ILO:	International Labor Organization
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MIFOTRA:	Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport
MIGEPROF:	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINECOFIN:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDUC:	Ministry of Education
NISR:	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nation Scientific and Culture Organization
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
UR:	University of Rwanda

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Abstract

The study explored the impact of gender equality policy on peace within the Rwandan household using experiences of women in leadership positions and supplementary information from their husbands. The objectives of the study were to identify the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household, to find out the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making and to establish the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts. The researcher used a case study design with both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. The population of study included Ministers and State Ministers, Senators and Deputies, Governors and Mayors. The sample size was 60 respondents but 26 out of 48 were from Deputies who were selected using convenience sampling. The rest were taken out the entire population, but 15 of them did not return the questionnaires. The questionnaires, interview guide and secondary sources were the tools used for data collection. Therefore, 45 (75% response rate) were able to provide data. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics generated using SPSS. The results revealed that to a largest extent, the Gender equality policies have had a positive effect on household labor and women's decision making in the household but did not comprehensively help in mitigating marital conflicts in Rwandan families. Some men have more than one wife secretly outside their marriage and this creates conflict, marital rape and neglect of children in case divorce takes place. Findings from men revealed that cultural norms are still deep rooted among families where the man believes that he should dominate his wife and has a final say in all household matters. The study recommends that there is need to sensitize men to abandon their beliefs in traditional cultures where women are subjected to their domination, women should also be sensitized to understand their roles as wives and to report cases of men who abuse their marital rights.

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The study focuses on the impact of gender equality policy on peace within the Rwandan household based on experiences of Rwandan women in leadership positions and supplementary information from their husbands. This chapter highlights the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, scope and significance of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

It has been emphasized by the World Bank (2011) and Harcourt (2011) that gender equality is one of the initiatives taken by the leadership of most developing countries and their donor partners to enhance effective development programmes. Gender equality in all its dimensions, is essential for realizing sustainable development outcomes.

According to UNESCO (2000), gender equality means that women and men have an equal opportunity for realizing their full human rights, potentials, and for contributing to and benefiting from economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their homes, communities and societies.

For gender equality to be effective, international and national governments should have policies that guide them in designing and adopting gender equality practices and interventions (MIGEPROF, 2010). Gender equality policy is a set of principles, rules and guidelines formulated or adopted by the government or institution which advocate for the equal

respect and treatment of men and women, boys and girls without discrimination or bias based on their gender roles (Fiona, Nott & Stephen, 2000).

The Rwandan Government's commitment to gender equality is apparent in national policies as well as at the institutional level. Rwanda is a signatory to international conventions, treaties, laws and protocols which guarantee the equality between men and women such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No. 159/01 of 31st December, 2002. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1980, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No 159/01 of 31st December 2002. The Presidential Order No 159/01 of 31st December 2002 also approved and ratified Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1820 on Women, Peace and Security- 2008, The Convention on the Political Rights of Women concluded in New York on 31st March 1953 and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and ILO conventions on equality and non-discrimination (Abbott & Rucogoza, 2011).

The gender equality commitments have been enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda which ensures equal rights between Rwandan women and men without prejudice to the principles of gender equality and complementarity in national development (Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, Para. 10). In Article 9, the Republic of Rwanda commits itself to "build a state governed by the equality between women and men by ensuring that women are granted at least thirty per cent of posts in decision making organs". Article 54, paragraph 2, indicates further that "Political organizations must constantly reflect the gender

equality and complementarity, whether in the recruitment of members, putting in place organs of leadership and in their operations and activities.

The legal framework has been extended through laws dealing with gender based violence, inheritance rights and land ownership among others. These laws bear witness to Rwanda's accountability for gender equality and are aimed at paving the way for achieving gender equality in public and private life (MIGEPROF, 2010).

In policy, Rwanda has mainstreamed gender equality and equity considerations into its comprehensive long and medium national plans namely; Vision 2020, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), National Gender Policy and Fiscal Decentralization Policy among others (MINECOFIN, 2007).

The World Bank Report (2011) on Gender Equality and Development maintains that greater gender equality can enhance economic efficiency and improve development outcomes, and provides evidence to show that: i) Misallocating women's skills and talent comes as a large (and rising) economic cost (eliminating barriers that discriminate against women could increase productivity by 25 per cent in some countries); ii) Women's endowments, opportunities and the ability to make effective choices and influence decisions (agency) shape those of the next generation; and iii) Increasing women's individual and collective agency produces better outcomes, institutions, and policy choices.

At a household level, it is an accepted position and general knowledge that gender equality is key to the fight against domestic violence and the achievement of household peace. Household peace involves the peaceful co-existence of individuals in a home such as husband and wife, parents

and children, etc. The happiness enjoyed in the home between a husband and a wife is entailed in the distribution of gender roles and reception of gender benefits without discrimination against any household member based on their sex (UNESCO, 2000).

Gender equality policies and initiatives such as institutionalization of gender-friendly practices, enacting laws that prohibit gender discrimination and gender-based violence, involvement of both men and women in designing and implementing gender equality programs, strengthening of women's leadership capacity using participatory strategies, economic empowerment of women, etc... results into greater participation of both men and women in family decision making, greater understanding and awareness of domestic violence and its dangers in the family, improved capacity of women leaders in initiating family promotion programs (World Bank, 2001). It also leads to fulfillment of both sides in the relationship, i.e. mutual fulfillment, respect, understanding and happiness in the family (UN, 2001). All these have been designed and adopted by the Rwanda Government to ensure that there is peace in homes between the husband and wife on one hand and between parents and children on the other.

Owing to the fact that Rwanda has designed and implemented various programs and policies all aimed at achieving gender equality and equity, this study was prompted by the need to examine gender equality policy and household peace in Rwanda by using the experience of women in leadership positions without forgetting their husbands. This was intended to establish whether the gender equality policy has had a positive effect on family and household peace with Rwanda providing a favorable gender equality policies and laws.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The strong political will characterizing Rwanda Government and its commitment to promote gender equality has allowed development of national key instruments including but not limited to National Constitution, Vision 2020, EDPRS, Policies, gender sensitive laws, strategies and plans, and establishment of mechanisms and all of which have contributed to great socio, political and economic achievements as registered across the country. The National Gender Policy serves as a tool to facilitate taking into account equality of opportunities between women and men, boys and girls in every sector (Gender Monitoring Office, 2010).

Although the constitutional framework which is in line with the National Gender Policy provides quotas (at least 30%) for women in decision making organs which have resulted in an unprecedented number of women being elected or appointed to leadership and decision making positions at all levels (GMO, 2010), this alone has not provided sufficient social security to Rwandan families in general and to families of Rwandan women leaders in particular.

A survey found out that domestic violence was a lived reality across the country with women being the majority of the victims and husbands being the perpetrators (MINECOFIN, 2007). Several studies over the past six years point to high levels of gender-based violence in Rwanda. For example, a 2010 police report indicated that the number of women reported having been battered by their husbands increased from 388 in 2009 to 430 in 2010 while that of men who reported being battered by their wives increased from 84 in 2009 to 94 in 2010 (MIGEPROF, 2011).

Additionally, a GBV baseline study of 13 districts by Shyaka (2013) found out that women constitute the majority of victims of spousal murder (59.7%), while men were the majority

among spousal poisoning (81.1%) and suicide (67.2%). It also revealed that 20.7% of all respondents have had personal experience of GBV in the last 12 months prior to the study. Personal experience confirms that sexual abuse, hitting and economic deprivation are the most dominant forms of GBV in Rwanda. In terms of place, home is the common place for acts of GBV among adults with 83.2% and 51% for children. In the majority of cases, GBV is perpetrated by intimate partners (41.4%) and neighbors (21.2%). In the majority of cases, the perpetrators came from the community - predominantly husbands or ex-partners (MIGEPROF, 2011). Furthermore, statistics from the Rwanda National Police show that rape and assault are the common cases of gender-based violence and these cases are mostly committed by men against women. For example, 255 and 264 cases of rape were reported in 2012 and 2013 respectively while 578 and 413 cases of assault were reported in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Considering that women and girls were six times at risk of GBV compared with men and boys (Shyaka, 2013), the situation has adversely affected Rwandan women and indeed impacted on the Rwandan women leadership even at their household level.

Therefore, this current research was prompted by the need to assess the effect of gender equality policy on household peace in Rwanda using the case of women leaders. Men will also be involved in order to get a wider picture.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study was guided by the general research objective and the specific research objectives.

1.3.1 General Research Objective

The study was intended to investigate the impact of gender equality policy on household peace in Rwanda using the experience of women in leadership positions with additional information sought from their husbands.

1.3.2 Specific Research Objectives

- i. To identify the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household.
- ii. To find out the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making.
- iii. To establish the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household?
- ii. What is the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making?
- iii. What is the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of study refers to the parameters or confines within which the research was conducted. These can be divided into three categories (i.e. the subject scope, geographical scope and the time scope) as detailed below:

Subject Scope: The study focused on gender equality policy and household peaceful coexistence in Rwanda using experiences of women in leadership positions and supplemented by their spouses. This subject was preferred because Rwanda has taken long strides in promoting gender

equality. The study therefore sought to avail academic data on how these policies have fostered household peace among women leaders and their husbands.

Geographical Scope: The study was conducted in Kigali City and focus was put on women leaders in government political positions at all levels including their husbands. This is because the study sought to document the experiences of those women leaders in regard to household peace in the country.

Time Scope: The study covered the period between 2010 and 2013. This period was preferred because it was presumed to be current and therefore able to generate current data on the effect of gender equality policy on household peace in Rwanda.

1.6 Study Constraints

Even if the study ended successfully, the researcher faced some challenges during the process. These included the following.

There was limited time for participating women leaders to provide data because they were busy on their official duties. The researcher used secondary data to complement the information provided by those who participated.

Some respondents misplaced the questionnaires that were already filled which led to loss of data. The researcher decided to use the available information so as to complete the study in the stipulated time.

Some respondents did not fluently speak English and it was the mode of communication. The researcher decided to use Kinyarwanda in order to collect in-depth data on gender equality issues.

The respondents also gave responses in a poor manner which could not be easily captured and created ambiguity during analysis and interpretation.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Personal Interest

The study will further help the researcher to acquire a Master of Arts Degree in Security Studies of the University of Rwanda since it is one of the partial requirements for the award.

Academic Interest

The findings of this study will be seen as a contribution to the existing knowledge on gender equality and household peace among women leaders. Indeed, this will inspire academicians to find sustainable solutions for the prevention, control and elimination of gender-based violence in Rwanda, thus contributing to government efforts in promoting gender equity.

Social Interest

The findings of the study will enable political leaders to come up with more realistic programs for improving gender equality interventions. The findings are expected to remind the government officials about the implications of gender equality in ensuring household peace.

Conclusion

The above chapter covers the background to the study which introduces the researcher to the research problem and objectives, research questions, scope and significance of the study. The

major objective was to understand gender equality policy and household peace in Rwanda using the experiences of women in leadership positions with extra information availed by their spouses. The subsequent chapter focuses on the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents theoretical and empirical review of literature relevant to the variables of study, and the summary of literature review, indicating the lessons learnt and gaps the study will be trying to fill. Literature review also discusses various authors that have carried out studies on academic environment and academic performance. This enables the researcher appreciate what they have found out and the methodology used (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Review of the available literature is very important for this study because it helps in clarifying the research problem, specifying research questions, focusing on research design and ultimately answering the research problem.

2.1 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

2.1.1 Gender

Gender is defined by George and Ostlin (2002) as *"the social roles of men and women, and boys and girls, as well as the relationships among them, in a given society at a specific time and place. Biological differences can create different needs and capacities for women and men but these differences do not 'naturally' lead to or justify unequal social status or rights"*.

In broad terms, gender defines and differentiates what women, men, girls and boys are expected to be and do (their roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations). To differing degrees depending on the cultural context, gender can condition what these different groups are expected to think and feel (e.g. their preferences, hopes, nature and extent of their aspirations). Gender also governs how girls, boys, men and women are expected to relate to one another. It is a key determinant of who does what, who has what, who decides and importantly who has power. The

issue of power is critically important in understanding gender relations as discrimination and subordination persist because powerful groups in society benefit from it and act to maintain their privileged position vis-à-vis others.

2.1.2 Gender Equality

Gender equality means that women, men, girls and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections (UN Millennium Project, 2005). It also means that girls and women have "*... agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions" about the course of their lives without the fear of coercion and violence*".

Gender equality does not require that girls, boys, women, and men be the same or that they be treated exactly alike but rather implies an absence of bias or discrimination. Equality between women and men is both a human rights issue and a precondition for and indicator of sustainable people-centred development (United Nations, 2001).

In most societies around the world, gender norms favor men and boys. Boys and men particularly those who conform to the masculine norm typically benefit from gender inequality because it gives them more power and status, a stronger voice in decision-making, greater access to resources, greater personal freedom, more agency and more robust rights than girls and women.

Additionally, the 'gender division of labour' typically assigns women and girls the lion's share of largely invisible, unpaid care giving and household tasks; For instance, the work that men do

typically has greater prestige and is perceived to have more economic value than that done by women.

2.1.3 Policy

This is a plan or course of action utilized by a Government, Political party or Business which is intended to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters. A policy is a principle or protocol to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. The term may apply to Government, Private sector organizations, Groups as well as individuals. Catherine, et al. (2007) indicated that presidential executive orders, corporate private policies and Parliamentary rules of order are all examples of policies. Policies can be understood as political, management, financial and administrative mechanisms arranged to reach explicit goals.

2.1.4 Gender Policy

Gender policy is a set of guidelines or procedures that are intended for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality not perpetuated (UNESCO, 2000). The ultimate goal of gender policy is to achieve gender equality.

2.1.5 Household Peace

The term Peace in the household or marital peace is described as the pleasing arrangement of marital qualities that contribute to harmonious co-existence and the happiness of both partners (Larson & Holman, 1994; Warner, 2001). A recently published comprehensive review of marital and family literature serves as a starting point. Several University faculty and practicing

Clinicians nationwide have explored current research identifying common characteristics of peaceful and happily married couples. These professionals found seven qualities common in successful and stable marriages. These findings reflect a broad base of related study that was critically reviewed and compiled (Dollahite & Marks, 2005).

Research suggests that marital or household peace is the result of many aspects of marital happiness. Some of the happiness factors include: i) religious commitment, ii) selfless, realistic and committed vision of marriage, iii) intimate friendship reflecting shared experiences, fondness and admiration, iv) ability to manage perpetual/unresolvable conflicts without hurting partner, v) ability to resolve "solvable" problems through compromise, tolerance and healthy communication skills, vi) high Congruence and vii) avoiding marrying too young and immaturely (Dollahite, et al., 2005).

For the purpose of this study there are various indicators that are prerequisite for marital happiness. These include sharing household chores, sharing income and expenditure, allowing spouses to make independent sex life and reproductive choices, taking care of children's welfare equally, allowing a spouse to progress in his/her career development, freedom of association, e.g., political, economic, religious, etc., respect, honesty, trust and granting freedom of property ownership among others.

It can therefore be argued that in order to observe and respect a combination of the above aspects of marital happiness and peace, it is important for the husband and wife to treat each other with respect and compassion where gender bias and discrimination is non-existent. This promotes gender equality in the home and creates marital bliss and a peaceful relationship

2.2 Status of Gender Equality Among the Rwandan Households

Although Rwanda has shown commitment in ensuring gender equality, traditional values and beliefs especially in rural areas continue to perceive women as inferior and subordinate to men (Abbott & Rucogoza, 2011). Nearly 60 per cent of women work as dependent family workers and over 80 per cent of women are engaged in agricultural work as the primary producers mainly in subsistence farming. Gender based violence especially physical violence is a major concern and on the increase (Abbott & Rucogoza, 2011). For example, a survey found out that domestic violence was a lived reality across the country with women being the majority of the victims and husbands being the perpetrators (MINECOFIN, 2007). Several studies over the past six years point to high levels of gender-based violence in Rwanda. In the 2005 Demographic Health Survey, 31% of women reported having suffered physical violence and 35% reported having suffered some form of marital violence.

In the education sector, girls continue to be underrepresented in science and engineering in secondary school and higher education. Girls are also much less likely than boys to gain a place at a public university (Abbott and Rucogoza, 2011). For example, although female enrolment of girls in Rwandan primary education has drastically increased, gender imbalance in transition, retention and completion rates in primary schools still remain high. For example, in 2006, transition rate from primary to secondary indicates 55.3% of girls compared to 62% for boys (MINEDUC, 2007). Analysis of the National Examination performance revealed that in 2006 & 2007 girls had lower scores than boys in all subjects. For example in 2007, the average Mathematics score for boys 25.04% compared to 21.40% for girls. While in sciences, the average score for boys was 32.09% compared to 25.90% for girls (National Examinations Council, 2008).

Population growth rate remains high and the fertility rate is high burdening women with pregnancies and childcare. Women, in addition to productive work on average spend more than 20 hours a week on collecting wood and water. Women continue to carry out domestic work and childcare but their domestic works are not valued compared to men. Women, especially poor women and those living in rural areas are generally unaware of their rights (Abbott and Rucogoza, 2011) in regard to gender equality. This situation distresses women and creates marital unhappiness which breeds domestic instability.

Therefore, working towards equality between women and men is vital if all inclusive development goals enshrined in the EDPRS and Vision 2020 are to be achieved. This is because gender equality ensures that girls who are the future women and wives in Rwandan families are given the same opportunities as boys to look ahead to an equal future. The UN Millennium Project (2005) and the United Nations (2001) indicates that equality between adult men and women provides children a model for mutually respectful relationships as well as the full realization of everyone's human rights. If children cannot witness and internalize social norms, attitudes and behaviors that support gender equality, then equality between girls and boys will be difficult for them even to imagine, much less achieve.

Therefore, ensuring gender equality requires the commitment of both Government and private institutions at the international and national level to design and implement gender equality, responsive policies and laws that respect the status of both men and women without discrimination or bias based on gender roles. It is on this basis that Rwanda has mainstreamed and prioritized gender equality policies and laws in all her national development programs as discussed in details in the subsequent section.

2.3 Legal and Policy Framework on Gender Equality in Rwanda

In order to ensure gender equality and equity, various laws and policies in Rwanda have been designed, adopted, enacted and implemented to give women rights to equality with men and empower women to realize their full potential in the economic, social and political spheres. Abbott and Rucogoza (2011) point out that there are three types of rights that women have within the legal and policy framework for gender equality. These include: i) the right to equal treatment with men, meaning that men and women should be able to have the same outcomes; ii) specific rights where women have needs that men do not have- for example, the right to maternity care; and iii) affirmative action rights where special measures are taken to speed up the achievement of women's right and the empowerment of women – for example by having a quota of seats for women in decision-making bodies. The laws and policies that advocate and promote gender equality in Rwanda include the following:

2.3.1 The Constitution

The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda was introduced in June, 2003 following approval by a referendum held on the 24th May 2003 (MINECOFIN, 2003). Women groups played an important role during the extensive consultations held on the Constitution and lobbied for quotas for women in parliament and public offices. The Constitution incorporates the principles of gender equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and provides a strong legal framework for mainstreaming gender.

Some of the provisions of the Constitution that advocate for gender equality include:

- i) universal suffrage which means that all adults, men and women have the right to vote and stand for office in national and local elections (art.8);

- ii) all citizens are born and remain free and equal in rights and duties. All are equal before the law. This means that men and women are equal (art.11);
- iii) thirty per cent of all posts in official decision making organs are reserved for women. This means that at least 30 per cent of the members of all decision making bodies such as the Cabinet, Parliament, District Councils should be women(art.82);
- iv) discrimination based on gender is illegal and punishable in law. This means that if you are discriminated against on the grounds of your gender the person who does the discriminating can be punished (art.126);
- v) only monogamous civil marriage between a man and a woman is recognized. This means that a Rwandan citizen is prohibited from having more than one marriage partner at the same time. Husbands and wives are equal in marriage and have the same rights on divorce (art.26); and
- vi) equal pay for work of equal value. This means employers are prohibited from paying less to their employees on the grounds of gender (art.37).

2.3.2 The Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2007-2012

The EDPRS is the mid-term strategy for implementing Vision 2020. Gender is cross cutting issue in EDPRS along with HIV/AIDS, the environment, youth and social inclusion (including inclusion of people living with disabilities). There are three key programs which include: Private Sector Growth, Vision 2020, Umurenge Programme and promoting good governance.

As noted by MINECOFIN (2007), the National Gender Policy guides the implementing departments in ensuring that the strategies and programs they adopt to implement the EDPRS are gender sensitive and empower women.

The gender monitoring office ensures that gender disaggregated data is collected and that policies, programs and strategies related to EDPRS are monitored and evaluated to ensure that they are promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Gender responsive budgeting ensures that government spending is in line with mainstreaming gender in line with EDPRS (GMO, 2010).

The EDPRS Strategic Outcomes include maternal mortality rate as one of the strategic outcome indicators and the National Gender cluster plays a central role in the annual review process which looks at what has been achieved over the previous year while the EDPRS II looks at closing the gaps that have not been fulfilled by the EDPRS I in the previous policy frame work.

2.3.3 Vision 2020

Vision 2020 is the long term development framework that highlights the development goals for Rwanda. It provides a vision of how Rwanda will transform into a knowledge based middle income economy. Gender is a crosscutting issue. This means that women should benefit from all development programs on equal measure as men do (MINECOFIN, 2003). All policies and programs in Vision 2020 take gender into account and ensure that women and girls needs are equally respected as those of men and boys.

2.3.4 The National Gender Policy

The National Gender Policy as documented by MIGEPROF (2010) provides a framework for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and demonstrates the Government's commitment to addressing all forms of gender inequality in the country.

The National Gender Policy clearly sets out the process of mainstreaming gender in all public and private sectors, policies, programs, projects and so on. It is also concerned with the empowerment of women. According to Organic Law No 51/2007 of 20/09/2007, the Policy sets out the key objectives for ensuring the economic empowerment of women: for employment and growth; for health; in education and vocational training; in governance and justice; in environment protection and land use management; of the most vulnerable; for participating in the private sector; in water and sanitation; in infrastructure; in transport; and in ICT. All of these are in line with the EDPRS priorities.

2.3.5 The National Decentralization Policy

The National Decentralization Policy enables women as well as men to take part in making decisions about priorities for government and contributing to the planning process and to stand for elections for committees at a local level (Abbott and Rucogoza, 2011).

2.3.6 The Girls Education Policy

The Girls' Education Policy and Strategic Plan were approved in 2008. They are aimed at achieving gender equality in education at all levels. The Policy will be implemented through Girls Education Strategic Plans at District, school and institutional levels (MINEDUC, 2008).

The overall objective of the Policy is to guide and promote action aimed at the progressive elimination of gender inequalities in education and training at all levels. A Girls' Education Task Force collects data to assess progress annually and reports on the findings.

As part of the implementation of the policy, separate toilets for girls and boys are being provided in all primary schools to reduce the drop-out of girls from education (Abbott and Rucogoza,

2011). Special attention is being given to encouraging girls to take science and mathematics subjects where they are underrepresented in secondary, technical and vocational and higher education.

2.3.7 The Economic Rights and the Empowerment of Women

This policy framework is not only about being able to borrow money from financial institutions on the same basis as men it is also about being able to save and having the right to own savings. Women have the same rights to control their own savings as men in Rwanda (MINECOFIN, 2007).

Women have the same rights to be economically independent as men - that is, they have the same right to generate money and to decide how that money is spent as men do. Women have the same right to decent work as men do. By decent work, this means work that enables a woman to earn enough for her and her family to live on, that enables them to have time to enjoy non-work activities that is secure and where they work in a healthy and safe environment (MINECOFIN, 2003).

Starting an income generating activity is one way in which women can become economically independent. When women have control over their own money it enables them to take control over their lives and gives them greater bargaining power with men. Women can take decisions so that their needs and their daughters' needs and interests are met as well as those of their husbands' and sons'. When women have money, the health of their children improves, daughters are more likely to go to and be kept in school and women's health improves (MINECOFIN, 2007).

The Government is committed to improving access to finance for women as well as men and especially in rural areas. This will enable women to borrow money to invest in making their farms more profitable or to start non-farm income generating activities. This is one way that women can earn their own money and not to be dependent on their husband or/father.

2.3.8 Other Gender Equality Frameworks

There are other gender equality responsive laws, policies and institutional frameworks which complement the above highlighted ones. These include:

- i) the Labour Law which advocates for fair treatment of workers irrespective of their gender, sex, race, culture, etc (Official Gazette, Law No. 13/2009 of 27/05/2009);
- ii) the anti-gender based violence law which legislates for zero tolerance of gender-based violence (Official Gazette, Law No. 59/2008 of 10th Sept 2008);
- iii) Women's Political Rights and the Political Empowerment of women which advocates for Women's Representation on Decision Making Bodies and their rights to vote on equal terms as men (Official Gazette, Law No. 27/2010 of 19/06/2010);
- iv) the National Women's Council which is specifically in place to ensure that the needs and interests of women and girls are taken into account in political decision making at both at grassroots and national level (Official Gazette, Law No. 02/2011 of 10/02/2011);
- v) Women's rights in marriage and the family which advocates that women's rights to marital property and family life are observed and respected. It also advocates for women's rights on divorce and property inheritance (Official Gazette, Law No.22/99 of 12/11/1999);

- vi) **Women's Reproductive Rights and Right to Health:** This ensures that women have a right to carry out medically recommended and performed abortion if the pregnancy puts the woman's health at risk. It also advocates for women's rights of access to contraception, ante-natal care, rights to give birth in a health facility, rights to HIV/AIDS prevention such as access to condoms and right to access mutual health insurance (Republic of Rwanda, 2011).
- vii) **Women's Right to Peace and Security:** This advocates for prevention of violence and conflict, protection of women's rights and taking into account the special needs of women, reinforcement of women's participation in decision making and peace-building and women's empowerment in the post-genocide reconstruction (Republic of Rwanda, 2011).

2.4 Gender Equality Theories: The Theory of Feminism

Various theories on gender equality have been developed pointing to the fact that there is need to respect the equality and equity of all people with respect to their gender differences. The current study follows the feminism theory which according to Freedman (2001) and Oster (2002), advocates that men and women should be equal politically, economically and socially.

Feminism is the struggle to end sexist oppression. Its aim is not to solely benefit any specific group of women any particular race or class of women. It does not privilege women over men but has the power to transform in a meaningful way the lives of both men and women regardless of their sex and gender differences. Feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression directs attention to systems of domination and the inter-relatedness of sex, race and class oppression.

The author therefore, argues that feminism compels lovers of equality and social peace to centralize the experiences and social predicaments of women who bear the brunt of sexist oppression as a way to understand the collective social status of women. Defining feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression is crucial for the development of the theory because it is a starting point indicating the direction of exploration and analysis.

The feminist view is always presented in various theories which include the social feminism, liberal feminism, cultural feminism, racial feminism, ecofeminism, separatist feminism, Amazon feminism and black feminism. These different theories of feminism are widely acknowledged and taught in women's studies courses, gender studies courses.

2.4.1 Socialist Feminism

The social feminist theory as discussed by Barbara Ehrenreich in her theoretical reviews (Barbara, 1983; Barbara, Hess & Jacobs, 1986) indicates that Socialist feminism focuses on both the public and private spheres of a woman's life and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression (Barbara, 2007). Proponents of this theory assert that women are unable to be free due to their financial dependence on males that women are subjects to the male rulers in capitalism due to an uneven balance in wealth. In other words, they see economic dependence as the driving force of women's subjugation to men. Furthermore, socialist feminists see women's liberation as a necessary part of larger quest for social, economic and political justice.

In socialist sense the feminism theory discourages domination of one sex over the other. In this respect it will be helpful in adopting the theory for the current study since it is examining the role of gender equality policy on peace within the Rwandan household using the experience of

women leaders. The socialist feminism is important in the current study because it confronts the common root of sexism, racism and classism through the social-economic and political empowerment of women which the government of Rwanda has greatly strived to achieve. The theory of socialist feminism is very relevant for this study because it is an inclusive way of creating social change that values contributions and gender characteristics of both men and women as opposed to the traditional patriarchal role of men over women in the Rwandan society.

2.4.2 Liberal Feminism

According to Judith (1990), liberal feminism is a form of the equality type of feminism which argues that equality for women can be achieved through legal means and social reform. Liberal feminism leans towards an equality or sameness argument with men. It conceives politics in individualistic terms and looks to reform present practices in society rather than advocating for a wholesale revolutionary change.

Liberal feminism was proposed by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792 when she maintained that instead of viewing women as ornaments to society or property to be traded in marriage, women are also human beings deserving of the same fundamental rights as men (Taylor, 2003). The theory was later promoted by Betty Friedan in 1963 when he argued that women have all along been deprived of opportunities because of the male patriarchal belief and have been rendered as sexual creatures (Margaret, 2007).

The liberal feminism theory is therefore linked to this study because it advocates for the application of legal approaches in ensuring gender equality when the rights of one sex are unfairly threatened by the other due to their gender stereotypes. This is supported by the fact that the gender equality policy in Rwanda is supported by the legal framework which ensures that

legal action is taken against a man or woman who mistreats or discriminates the other because of their gender differences.

2.4.3 Cultural Feminism

Cultural feminism is a belief that a female nature or female essence is essential to society. The theory supports the idea that there are fundamental personality differences between men and women, that women's differences are special and should be celebrated. This theory of feminism supports the notion that there are biological differences between men and women. For example, "women are kinder and gentler than men" leading to the mentality that if women ruled the world there would be no wars (Hooks, 1994, 2000).

The relevance of the cultural feminism theory in this study is that it seeks to promote gender equality by improving the relationship between the sexes and often cultures at large by celebrating women's special qualities, ways and experiences; Often believing that the culture is overly masculine and requires balance from feminine perspectives. It is because of this patriarchal tradition of male domination of women in Rwanda that the Government has strictly emphasized gender equality in both the private and Government institutions which is the basis of this study.

2.4.4 Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as myriad forms of feminist and environmental theories and activism intersected. The term was introduced by Françoise d'Eaubonne in her book *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* [Feminism or Death] published in 1974 (Oster, 2002).

Ecofeminism is a social and political movement which unites environmentalism and feminism. Ecofeminists argue that a relationship exists between the oppression of women and the degradation of nature. Eco-feminists are concerned with connections between sexism and the domination of nature. They are also concerned with racism and other characteristics of social inequality (Adams, 1993).

Therefore, eco-feminism rests on the basic principal that patriarchal philosophies are harmful to women, children and other living things. Parallels are drawn between society's treatment of the environment, animals, resources and its treatment of women. In resisting patriarchal culture, eco-feminists believe they are also resisting plundering and destroying of the environment. This theory is relevant in our current study due to the fact that the Government of Rwanda has taken various measures to protect the environment from destruction. Some of the measures adopted have been to empower women with economic opportunities (such as easy access to finance and *girinka* program) for engaging in business activities alongside men. This is believed to divert their focus on environmentally and unfriendly activities such as subsistence agriculture.

2.5 Effect of Gender Equality on the Household

2.5.1 Effect of Gender Roles on Household Stability

Becker (1973, cited in Hooks, 1990) was the first one to provide a theoretical framework for studying the effect of gender roles on the marriage institution and Becker, et al. (1977, cited in Hooks, 1990) provide a theoretical analysis of marital dissolution. Their economic approach to the family interprets behaviors such as childbearing, marriage and divorce to be active choices of maximizing individuals. According to this view, the marriage institution is a highly efficient

setup for individuals when one partner specializes in market work while the other specializes in domestic work.

As a consequence, if partners start invading each other's territory, specialization is reduced and the gains from marriage decline. Furthermore, the decision to stay married depends on the comparison of utility while married and the utility associated with the outside option of a divorce so this reduces the desirability of staying married. Due to greater male attachment to the labor force and generally higher wages and the fact that it is unavoidable that women take care of carrying and breastfeeding their children, the most stable marriages are those in which the husband exchanges economic support for his wife's household tasks and vice versa.

The Beckerian model was heavily criticized by Oppenheimer (1997), who put forward the flexibility model which provides different predictions on how marital stability and peace is affected by female employment. One of his main points of criticism is that high degree of specialization puts relationships at risk as a temporary or permanent incapacity of a specialized agent implies that functions vital to the well-being of household members are not carried out. In contrast to the Beckerian model, the flexibility model predicts that shared responsibility of bringing home income and taking care of the housework reduces the income risk of households, bringing more financial stability and household peace to the family and less stress and thereby making them more robust to outside shocks of domestic violence.

There is also a growing literature that looks at the role of gender equality on family formation and marital stability and peace. Bertrand, et al. (2013) show that societal norms that wives should not earn more than their husbands, affect marriage formation and household peace. Moreover, couples where the wife earns more than the husband are less satisfied with their marriage and are

more likely to divorce. Finally, women who earn more than their husbands are also found to carry out a greater share of the household chores than women whose partners earn more than them. These findings are therefore in contrast with the predictions of the Beckerian model where the benefits of marriage stem from specialization and predict a positive relationship between the couple's earnings gap and women's share of household tasks.

The flexibility model predicts that shared responsibility of bringing home the bacon renders relationships more robust, stable, harmonious and has found considerable support by empirical evidence (Schoen, et al., 2013). It is interesting to relate these predictions to the findings of Bertrand, et al. (2013) which implies that once the wives start bringing home the *filet mignon*, marital stability is put at risk. This suggests that there might be that marital stability increases along the distribution of the wives share of household income until equality is reached but once the couple passes this threshold, they put the stability of their marriage at risk.

John Gottman's (1999), scientifically validated theory of marriage based on 25 years of longitudinal research is one of the leading theories in the study of gender equality and marital satisfaction and stability. Gottman's theory (1999) states that positive interaction and friendship is the key to marital satisfaction and the prediction of marital stability and happiness over time. Despite Heyman & Smith-Slep's (2001), recent critique that Gottman's ability to accurately predict divorce may be over generalized based on the lack of cross-validation analyses, Gottman's theory of marital satisfaction as prerequisite for marital stability and happiness continues to be regarded as a leading theory in the field of gender study. His theoretical framework is valuable in this study as the goal is not to predict domestic violence or divorce but to predict marital stability and household peace, particularly, marital satisfaction and marital

conflict resolution. Gottman (1999) defines marital stability [or peace] as a satisfying marital relationship that is not disrupted by separation or divorce. He states that "the most important finding was that more positive affect was the only variable that predicted both marital stability and happiness".

Faulkner (2002) uncovered interesting gender differences in their support for the validity of this phenomenon. They found that wives who are distressed due to unfair gender differences were more negative, were more likely to evaluate their partner's neutral and negative messages as negative, given a negative evaluation of their partner's antecedent message and were more likely to offer a negative reply than were all other spouses. It is worth to argue that gender inequality propels lack of peace in the household and creates marital dissatisfaction and instability.

2.5.2 Gender Equality and Division of Labour in the Household

From a feminist perspective, differences in gender roles influence the ways in which men and women manage conflict. Women are more likely to initiate discussions of conflicting relationship issues (Gottman, 1999). Men have been found to be more likely to withdraw from negative marital interactions while women are more likely to pursue the conversation or conflict (Johnson, 2001). Women are more likely to be attuned to the emotional quality of marital functioning and more sensitive to events that occur in the relationship (Johnson & Wu, 2004).

Feminist theory (Brown, 1995) promotes an awareness of power differentials associated with gender. The traditional female gender role is a social orientation that emphasizes closeness and solidarity, while the traditional male gender role emphasizes power and status (Tannen, 1990). Tannen suggests that female/male miscommunication results when males and females use different gender frames when speaking and listening to each other. The assumption is that males

communicate in terms of power and status while females communicate from a perspective of closeness and solidarity. Ickes (1993) reviews the findings that neutral and unbiased gender roles are linked with increased marital satisfaction for men and for women. Ickes reports that neutral and unbiased women paired with neutral and unbiased men reported considerable success in communicating and solving problems with their partners as well as high levels of satisfaction with their lives as a whole, control over life events and optimism for the future.

Guzman (2000) clearly argues that due to increased policies, legislations and interventions to promote gender equality, the "traditional marriage" in which the wife stays at home caring for the house and children while the husband provides economic support is no longer the norm. Instead the prevailing practice today is a dual earner household.

The implications of these changes for family life are both widespread and dramatic. As wives enter the labor market, both men and women have had to redefine their roles within their marriages. Women, for example, are increasingly taking on a larger chunk of the responsibility for the financial well-being of their families, contributing close to 30% of family income (Hayghe, 1993). As such, the role of breadwinner no longer belongs exclusively to men. For some women, the role as provider is a welcomed experience and central to their identity (Guzman, 2000). For others, their paycheck provides family extras, while having little or no valued effect on their role within the family (Guzman, 2000). The large majority, however, view their new role with some contradictory beliefs (Potuchek, 1992). While they recognize their contribution to their family's economic well-being and enjoy their work, they see their economic contribution and work activity as being secondary to that of their husbands. Regardless of how married women identify with their role as economic provider, the majority worry about the

effects that working outside the home may have on their family's well-being (Guzman, 2000). In order to accommodate their family responsibilities and increase the time they have to spend with their children and spouses many women have changed or gone into occupations that offer greater flexibility, passed on promotions, limited their work hours and schedules and worked closer to home (Presser, 1995). Therefore, despite their increased labor force participation and earnings, it is worth to argue that women continue to be more likely than men to make adjustments in their work life to fit their traditional family life which affects their status as compared to men.

As their wives have moved into the labor force, men have begun to respond by taking on more household and child care responsibilities (Peterson & Gerson, 1992). However, it is important to point out that women continue to bear the bulk of responsibility for child care and household tasks (Presser, 1995). In addition, increases in women's labor force participation have not been fully met with increases in the amount of time that husbands devote to family responsibilities; nor have women fully decreased the time they spend on household tasks commensurate with their increases in the labor force. Therefore, many married women are working longer days putting in both a full shift at work and at home.

Research studies lend strong support to the argument that there are benefits for families considering a change to a fairer or more equitable division of the pleasures and pains of family life. Greater equality in the performance of family work is associated with lower levels of family stress, higher self-esteem, better health and higher marital satisfaction for mothers. There is also higher marital satisfaction for fathers especially when they take more responsibility for the needs of their children- fathers are happier when they are more involved (Finchman, 2004).

2.5.3 Gender Equality and Decision-Making in the Household

Household gender equality attributes and dependency ratio also influences household decision-making. The household head who is usually the husband is required to play a greater role in major decisions and often other members are less involved compared to households where the woman has greater decision making power. Similarly, Skod (2007) argues that a household with a high dependency ratio (number of persons under 15 and over 64 divided by the total number of household members) is likely to have a greater involvement of women in activities related to family well-being decisions but less involvement in production and marketing activities than a household with a lower dependency ratio.

Changing trends caused by gender equality in education, growing awareness of the blatant inequalities, the need to correct them and the economic situation are reshaping the decision-making process within households. This is a conflicting process as the man sees his dominant decision-making powers waning, while the woman is discovering that she is being empowered as she gets more and more into the decision-making position. While in some homes this changing process is through negotiation but in others it is through confrontation. Many women experience decision-making problems as a result of the inequalities in the perception of the gains from the activities carried out by household members (Skod, 2007).

A woman's ability to bargain in the household is usually augmented by the increase in her income which leads to greater equity in the dispensation of household resources. Ngome (2003) found in her study that 77 per cent of the men and 73 per cent of the women interviewed said the lack of income affects the man's decision-making power. She also found that 98 per cent of the women and 83 per cent of the men believe once a woman is in a position to meet the needs of the

household, she obtains more respect from her husband, while the lack of income meant women were subjected to insults, leading to lack of peace in the home and eventually disempowerment by the husband in decision-making.

However, even though women are economically empowered to make decisions in their families, the reward system is unfair because the areas of decision-making are biased in favor of the man. For example, Skod (2007) argues that women work longer hours than men and much of women's productive work is unrecorded and not included in the System of National Accounts. Children are closely integrated into household production systems and the patterns that disadvantage girl-children begin very early. Poor households need their children's labour, sometimes in ways that also disadvantage boys. Domestic chores, notably fetching water, fuel wood and are one of the factors limiting girl's access to schooling. Consequently, this affects woman's ability to participate in certain economic activities.

In terms of political participation, women's rights are usually not respected by their husbands. A case in point is where women are sometimes marginalized in their voting rights and sometimes, it is the husband who determines which candidate the wife should vote for. Additionally, women are consistently under-represented in institutions at the local and national levels. For example, Skod (2007) found out that only 10 per cent of the members of the National Assembly elected in 2002 in Cameroon were women. This was actually an improvement from the 5 per cent in the previous assembly. Representation at the local councils is about the same. A study by Endeley and Sikod (2005) found that among representatives of the twenty-seven villages in the rural areas of the Central and Southern Provinces they studied, only two were women.

Power gaps are therefore evident and have implications both for economic decision-making in resource allocation, reproductive/fertility choices and contraceptive use. Spousal communication is positively associated with contraceptive use. The ability of women to negotiate decisions that affect fertility depends in part on their access to independent income, the choices that are created through literacy, numeracy and formal education.

Gender equality especially in regard to resource allocation is critical in household decision making for economic and human development. Many decisions made at the household level influences the welfare of the individuals living in the household as well as their communities. Decisions such as where to live, how to generate income, how much to invest and consume, and how many children to have constitute common dilemmas faced by households in regard to gender roles (Angel-Urdinola & Wodon, 2010).

Within households gender roles influence the dynamics of household decision making. If various household members (including male, as opposed to female members) have different preferences, it is expected that households will behave differently according to who controls household resources. For example, it is often argued that when women have better command over income sources, decisions on how these resources are spent tend to favor children more in terms of human capital investment (Angel-Urdinola & Wodon, 2010).

Blackden and Bhanu (1999, cited in Piesse & Simister, 2002) found out that in Sub-Saharan Africa children in female-headed households or households where the wife contributes equally to decision making as the husband have better enrollment rates than those in male-headed households. Therefore, gender equality and higher involvement of women in decision making within the household has also been shown to lead to better outcomes in terms of nutrition.

Cooperative bargaining theory which means gender equality in decision making, suggests that expenditure decisions are proportional to resource contribution (Angel-Urdinola & Wodon, 2010). In this respect, gender equality in a household empowers women to increase their household earnings. Equally, as a woman's income increases as a share of total household income so does her bargaining and decision-making power. Hoddinott and Haddad (1995) suggest that a doubling of the share of cash income held by women within a household may increase the share of the budget allocated to food by the household by about 2 percent may reduce much more significantly the shares allocated to cigarettes and alcohol (by 26 percent and 14 percent, respectively).

2.6 Empirical Review of Gender Equality and Household Peace

One of the gender factors that influence household peace and stability is attachment security. In a study by Cobb, Davila and Bradbury (2001), 172 couples were surveyed within six months of marriage and again one year later. Questions involved attachment security, perceptions about partner's security and marital peace. Supportive behaviors were also videotaped in the initial screening. Positive perceptions of partner's security were associated with supportive behavior which predicted increased marital peace.

The next pair of individual factors are gender-related personality and temperament. In a study by Blum and Mehrabian (1999), 166 couples were administered marital peace and pleasantness arousability-dominance temperament scales. Marital peace and stability correlated positively with couples who had similarity in pleasantness and dominance. People who were more pleasant reported being happier in marriage and vice versa.

One obvious interactional factor is intimacy. Sanderson and Cantor (2001) looked at 44 couples who completed measures examining their own intimacy goals, their perception of their partner's goals, marital interaction patterns like social support or time spent together and marital peace. Marital peace and stability were associated with the intimacy goals of both partners. It was also found to be mediated by the gender perceptions of both spouses.

The next factor involves the husband's contribution to household labor. In a study by Allen and Webster (2001), 319 couples where the wife had developed a physical impairment were surveyed at baseline and five years later. Men who were happy in marriage and have egalitarian attitudes about roles at baseline were found doing more chores at follow-up than those who were unhappy or had traditional views.

According to Hinchcliffe, Hooper, Roberts and Vaughan (1975, cited in Bagwell, 2006), the future quality of the marriage is dependent on how the non-depressed spouse deals with the stress that is brought on by their partner's depression and gender differences. Halgin and Lovejoy (1991) indicate that there is a reciprocal relationship between gender equality and depression in a spouse on one hand and maladjustment in the marriage. The gender-depressed spouse may have little interest in social relationships of the couple thus causing the non-depressed spouse to feel more isolated and this can cause further deterioration in the marriage (Halgin & Lovejoy, 1991).

There are problems on a domestic level as well. Bagwell (2006) stated that there are monetary problems in such households. The depressed person is usually less able to complete their domestic responsibilities such as housework or caring for the children which places added burdens on the non-depressed spouse (Halgin & Lovejoy, 1991). This phenomenon is also a

gender-based factor considering the fact that women's contributions to households are not recognized in most cultures and regions.

Researchers have identified the most common reasons people give for their marital instability and divorces. A national survey by the National Fatherhood Initiative (2005) found that among the most common reasons given for divorce was lack of gender equality in the relationship (44%) and abuse (29%). Therefore, it is worth to argue that when a husband does not treat the wife as an equal human being, marital conflicts are likely to occur.

2.7 Review of Academic Gaps

There are various empirical studies that have comprehensively examined the relationship between gender equality and household peace and stability (National Fatherhood Initiative, 2005; Skod, 2007; Piesse & Simister, 2003). However, most of these studies were conducted in foreign countries such as the United States of America, Cameroon and Ivory Coast respectively. This means that the data collected may be different in one way or the other with the data that could be collected if a similar study was conducted in Rwanda. Secondly, there is no available academic empirical study on the same subject that has extensively covered the effect of gender equality, household peace and stability. The current study therefore tries to cover this academic gap by conducting a similar study in Rwanda.

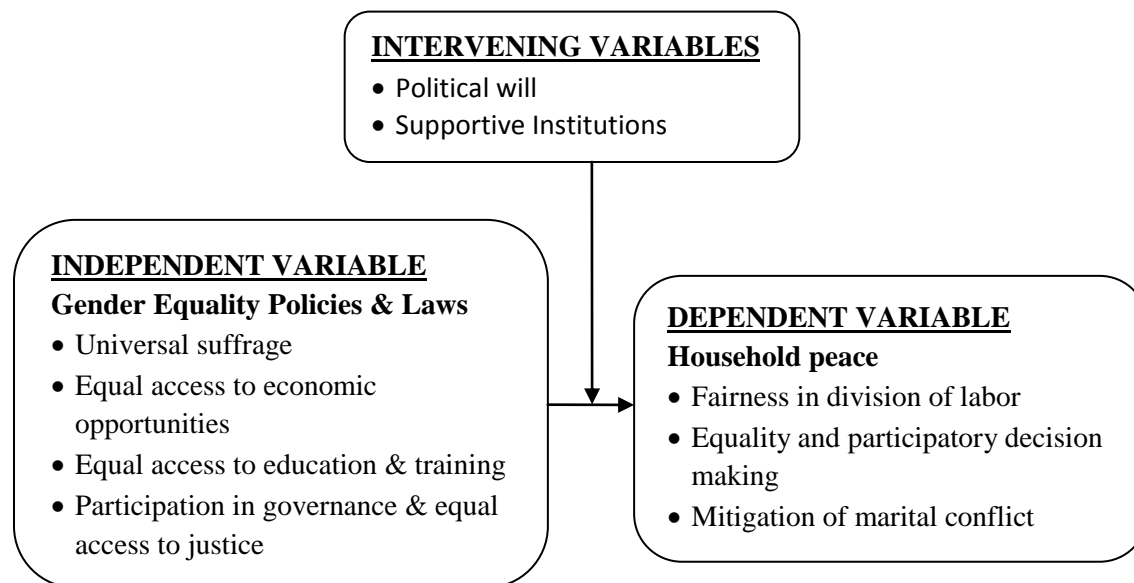
Additionally, other studies that have covered gender equality and household peace (Cobb & Bradbury, 2001; Halgin & Lovejoy, 1991) included both men/husbands and women/wives as respondents during data collection. However, men/husbands are the most perpetrators of gender inequality towards their wives. Therefore, including them in these studies could have given them an upper hand to be compromised in their responses thus distorting the study findings. Therefore,

the current study tries to close this academic gap by conducting the study using women leaders whose responses may be uncompromised since they are less guilty in perpetuating gender inequality.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in figure 2.1 shows the relationship between gender equality policies and laws on one hand and household peace and stability in Rwanda on the other.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Adopted from Literature Review

From the conceptual framework in figure 2.1, it is clear that gender equality policies as an independent variable (represented by the universal suffrage, equal access to economic opportunities, equal access to education and training and participation in governance and equal access to justice) affects household peace and stability which is a dependent variable

(represented by fairness and equality in division of labour or distribution of household roles and equality and participatory decision making) between couples in the households.

However, there is also political will and supportive institutions which acts as moderating variable because for gender policies and laws to be effective the political establishment should be willing to support policies and laws. In addition, the responsible institutions (both government and Non-Government) should be supportive and capable to promote and implement gender equality programs and interventions.

Conclusion

Although the availability of good gender equality policies in Rwanda has promoted some degree of equality between men and women, the issue of gender based violence still remains within households. Both theoretical and empirical evidence opine that women and men co-exist in unlevelled ground where the contributions of women and their decisions within the household are undervalued not only by their husbands but the whole society in some occasions. Therefore, achieving gender equality requires concerted efforts in ensuring that there is sensitization such that gender-biased beliefs about women are eliminated. The subsequent chapter covers the methodology which details the methods and processes of data collection, presentation and analysis.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology of research namely; research design, area of the study, population, sample size, sampling technique, sources of data, data collection techniques and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The study followed a case study design because case studies are very important in bringing the researcher to an understanding of a complex issue and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Case study designs also emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships and this provides a deeper understanding of gender equality practices in Rwanda and how it has affected household peace among families with women in leadership positions and their husbands. Using a case study design also helped the researcher to apply a variety of methodologies and rely on a variety of sources to investigate gender equality policies and household peace among families with women leaders since there were no available academic studies that have been conducted on the subject in Rwanda so far.

3.2 Population

The study was carried out in a population of 82 women who were in political leadership positions. Out of the 82 women, 18 were from the central Government (9 Ministers, 2 State Ministers and 7 Permanent Secretaries), 58 from Parliament (10 Senators and 48 Deputies) and 6 from the Provincial level (2 Governors, 3 Mayors and 1 Province Executive Secretary). These were preferred because by virtue of their status as women leaders, they were presumed to have

ample data on how gender equality policies have affected household peace in Rwanda. However, during the study it was also important to seek for supplementary data from men in order to get a clear picture of their experience with their spouses. It was for this matter that 9 men were also contacted to provide data. However, they were not the focus of the study they only provided additional information which was done through interviews only.

3.3 Sample Size and Sample Selection

Out of the 82 women leaders, the researcher selected 60 women leaders in political positions) from the 3 levels of Government leadership hierarchy. These included 18 from the central Government (9 Ministers, 2 State Ministers and 7 Permanent Secretaries), 48 from Parliament (10 Senators and 26 Deputies) and 6 from the Provincial level (2 Governors, 3 Mayors and 1 Provincial Executive Secretary).

Additionally, 9 men were also requested to provide data in regard to gender equality policy and their experience with their spouses. Only 9 were selected because during interviews, the researcher observed that they were providing similar information regarding their experiences.

Convenience sampling was used to select Deputies. This sampling method involved collecting data from respondents who were available and where participation was convenient to them. The researcher purposively selected only women leaders who were married, widows, divorced, and separated including their spouses. The preference for women who have/once had marriage partners was desirable because it gives the true experiences that those women have encountered with their male partners with regard to their gender roles. Table 3.1 shows the population, sample size and sampling methods.

Table 3.1: Population and Sample Size

Levels of Government	No. of women leaders	Sample size	Sampling Method
Central Government			
Ministers	9	9	Convenience
State Ministers	2	2	Convenience
Permanent Secretaries	7	7	Convenience
Total	18	18	
Parliament			Convenience
Senators	10	10	Convenience
Deputies	48	26	Convenience
Total	58	36	
Provincial Level			
Governors	2	2	Convenience
Mayors	3	3	Convenience
Province Executive Secretaries	1	1	Convenience
Total	6	6	
Grand total	82	60*	

Source: Primary Data, 2014

**However, 15 women did not return the questionnaires that were administered to them. Therefore, out of 60 selected respondents, only 45 provided data.*

During interviews, 9 men were also contacted to provide their data about their experience in regard to gender policy and household peace. Since participation was by ones convenience, only 9men accepted to provide data for the study.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The researcher used three methods for collecting data during the study. These included the questionnaire, individual in-depth interviews and desk review. The first two methods were used in collecting primary data while the review of secondary sources was used in collecting secondary data.

3.4.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire with close ended questions was administered to the selected women leaders. Close-ended questions were preferred because they are easy to fill and the process takes a short time.

Two principal modes of administration were utilized which include self-completion and interviewer administration. Self-completion was applicable to respondents who wanted to read the questionnaire and interpret for themselves while interviewer administration was applicable to respondents who preferred that the data collector reads, interpret and record their responses.

The questionnaire was preferred because it can collect large amounts of information from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way. The results of the questionnaires are also quickly and easily quantified by either a researcher. However, close ended questions provided no way of telling how much thought a respondent had put in. It was also subjective because what is 'good' to one respondent may be 'not be good' to another respondent. It is because of this weakness that the researcher incorporated in open ended questions and interview guides.

3.4.2 Individual In-depth Interviews

The use of close-ended questions limit respondents from giving alternative opinions and responses which may be relevant and helpful in the study and this motivated the researcher to use individual in-depth interviews which allowed the respondents to express opinions without being influenced by the researcher (Foddy, 1993) and which helped to eliminate bias in the study.

Through these interviews, open-ended questions were asked to allow respondents to express their own opinions, experiences and attitudes towards gender equality and household peace. These interviews typically asked women leaders and their husbands to describe or explain particular practices or issues in relation to their personal household experiences. For these interviews to be effective and successful, the researcher was unobtrusive and developed empathy with interviewees to win their confidence. In addition, the researcher appeared natural and engaged with the selected women leaders on a person-to-person basis. The researcher only engaged in 'active' listening and recording of responses, which showed the interviewees that close attention was being paid to what they said.

The strength of in-depth interviews was that they allowed the researcher to gather in-depth information which could not be obtained through document review. However, they were time consuming.

3.4.3 Desk Review

In addition to the use of the questionnaire and in-depth interviews which collected primary data, desk review was used to obtain secondary data by reviewing relevant documents. It involved reviewing already existing documents which contained information on gender equality policy and household peace.

These documents included previous thesis and dissertations, academic journals, reviews, reports, news papers, magazines and websites.

The benefit of reviewing secondary data sources was that much of the background work needed on gender equality has already been carried out, for example, through literature reviews, case studies, published texts and statistics.

This wealth of background information means that reviewing secondary data had a pre-established degree of validity and reliability. Furthermore, secondary data was helpful in the research design of subsequent primary research and provides a baseline with which the collected primary data results can be compared to.

3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

After the approval of the proposal by the University of Rwanda (UR), the researcher was given the letter of introduction to the selected offices. The researcher requested for permission and time from the respondents to administer the research instruments. The major research instrument (the questionnaire) was given to technical staff and experts to get their comments on where changes were needed. This expanded the validity and consistency of questionnaire. After making some modifications it was then re-administered.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Validity of data collection instruments refers to the appropriateness of instrument to measure a variable and come up with intended results (Amin, 2005). Validity means the success of the scale in measuring what it sets out to measure. The researcher pretested the questionnaire by using research experts especially lecturers of the UR. These were requested to determine whether questions in the questionnaire and interview guide were able to collect valid data. The researcher then based her judgment of those experts in deriving conclusions about the validity.

Reliability of a measurement instrument is the extent to which it yields consistent results when the research tools are administered in separate and different settings. In order to increase reliability, the researcher used the same template as far as possible and used static methods. The researcher first performed standardized tests by administering the instrument from one person or situation to another. Furthermore, the research instruments were administered to people who understood gender equality issues and those who were engaged/have been engaged in marital relations. Given the credibility of selected respondents, the same answers would probably be given to another independent researcher.

3.7 Coding of Data and Editing

Collected Data were first coded and then edited to remove errors and quality control. Data editing is defined as the process involving the review and adjustment of collected survey data. The purpose is to control the quality of the collected data. In order to ensure that data was free from errors, the researcher used a cross item checking technique within a questionnaire. Experts in the field of questionnaire design and data collection were also given copies of the survey questionnaire to ensure that it was free from all coding errors.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics which included a method of analyzing and interpreting quantitative data. Descriptive Statistics involved the presentation of numerical facts or data in form of tables, graphs and pie-charts, etc... To present this quantitative data, the researcher, after data collection, entered the collected and coded data into the computer using MS Excel which was later converted into SPSS. The SPSS

then was used to summarize the data into few indices using tables, graphs and pie-charts which were represented by numerical/frequency and percentages. The analysis, discussion and interpretation were then done within the context of these summary findings.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Narrative data obtained from individual interviews and secondary sources was analyzed using qualitative data analysis. It involved reading and re-reading interview responses and data from relevant documents in order to extract relevant meaning (Powell & Renner, 2003).

In order to bring meaning to the organized words the researcher had to identify themes, ideas, concepts, and phrases used. This process helped to determine similarities and differences of opinions of women leaders and their husbands in the way women leaders and their husbands responded.

During this process, the researcher was able to determine consistencies and differences of opinions. Data was then related with the objectives and used to supplement quantitative data by giving it more meaning.

3.9 Ethical Issues

The researcher observed and respected various research ethics including objectivity, integrity, openness, social responsibility, non-discrimination, competence, human subjects' protection among others. The researcher first explained the purpose of the research to respondents, respected human dignity and respected the respondents' choice to participate/not participate in the study. Confidentiality was observed and the names of respondents were not published/revealed in this dissertation.

Conclusion

This chapter highlights the various methods and techniques which were applied during data collection, analysis and interpretation. It shows the study design, target population, sample size and design, data collection procedures, validity and reliability of the research instruments and data analysis methods. The subsequent chapter presents the data analysis and research findings from both primary and secondary sources.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of findings using perceptions and real life experiences from women leaders and their husbands in Rwanda. This study examined the impact of gender equality policy on peace within the Rwandan household.

In terms of organization, the first section presents the response rate, followed by background information about respondents and descriptive statistics of the findings which are arranged thematically in respect to the study objectives. The analysis and interpretation of results followed both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

4.1 RESPONSE RATE

The study targeted 60 respondents as the sample size. However, 15(25%) of the questionnaires were not returned as respondents reported to have misplaced them. Therefore, 45 questionnaires that were filled and returned by respondents represents a response rate of 75%. This response rate is desirable and it surpasses that one recommended by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and Graduate Careers Council of Australia (2001) who regard an overall response rate for the questionnaire of at least 60-70% to be both reliable and valid.

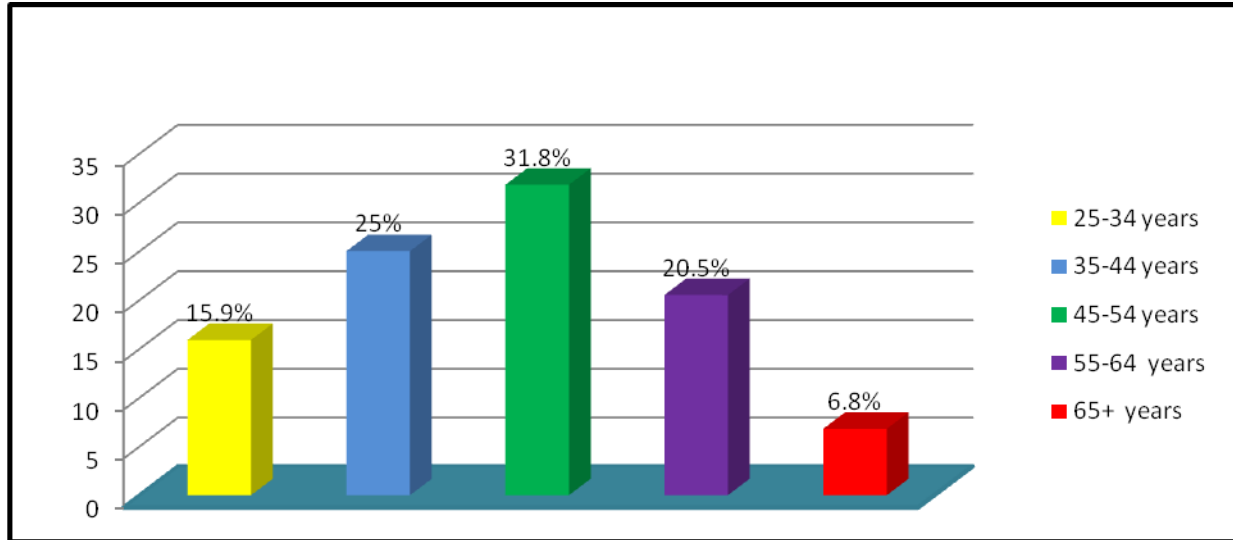
4.2 PRESENTATION OF RESPONDENTS

This section presents respondents' age category, marital status, level of education/qualification, type of household and period spent in leadership positions.

4.2.1 Age Category

The age categories ranged from 25 years to 65 years and above as shown by figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Age Category



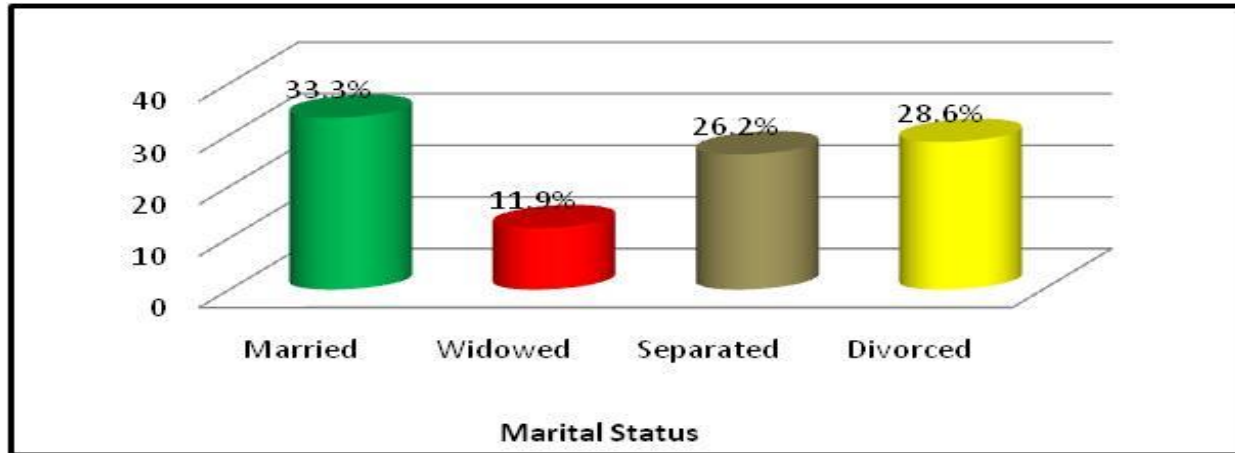
Source: Primary Data, 2014

As table 4.1 shows, the majority respondents representing 31.8% were in the age category of 45-54 years followed by 25% and 20.5% who fell in the age categories of 35-44 years and 55-64 years respectively. This indicates that in our study we dealt with mature women in leadership position.

4.2.2 Marital Status

The study also presents the marital status of the respondents as indicated in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Marital status



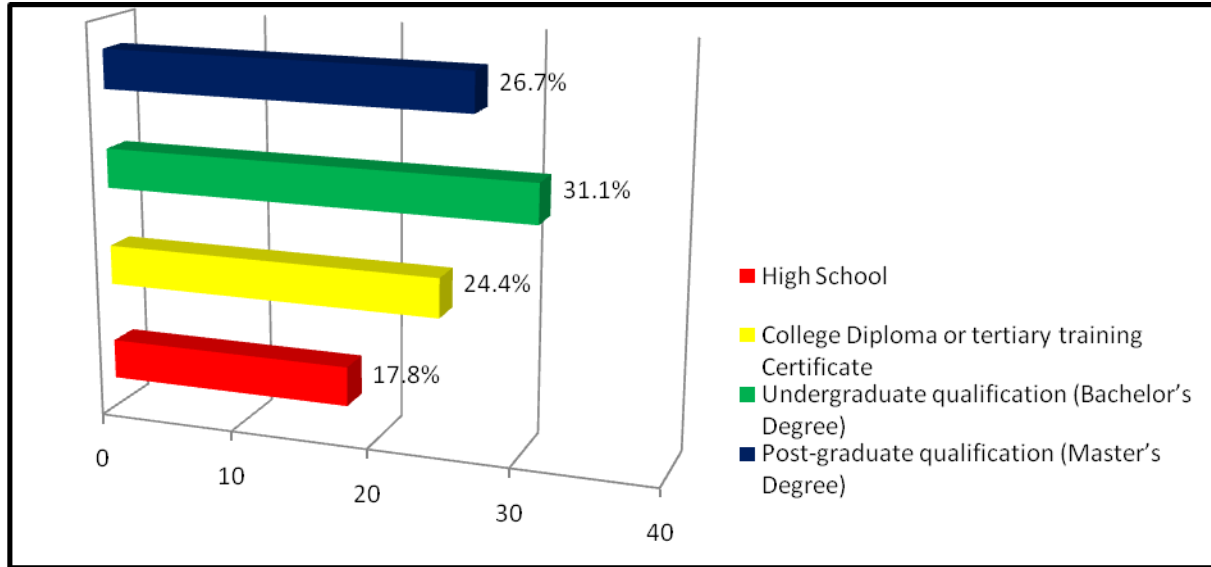
Source: Primary Data, 2014

According to figure 4.2, it can be noted that 33.3% of the women respondents were married followed by those who were divorced (28.6%) while separated were represented by 26.2%. This indicates that women leaders share similar marital experiences like any other Rwandan woman. The fact that 54.8% were not living with their husbands indicates that their marriage institutions are unstable as indicated by women who were divorced (28.6%) and living as separated (26.2%).

4.2.3 Level of Education

The study also presents the respondents' level of education/qualification. Figure 4.3 shows the responses.

Figure 4.3: Level of Education



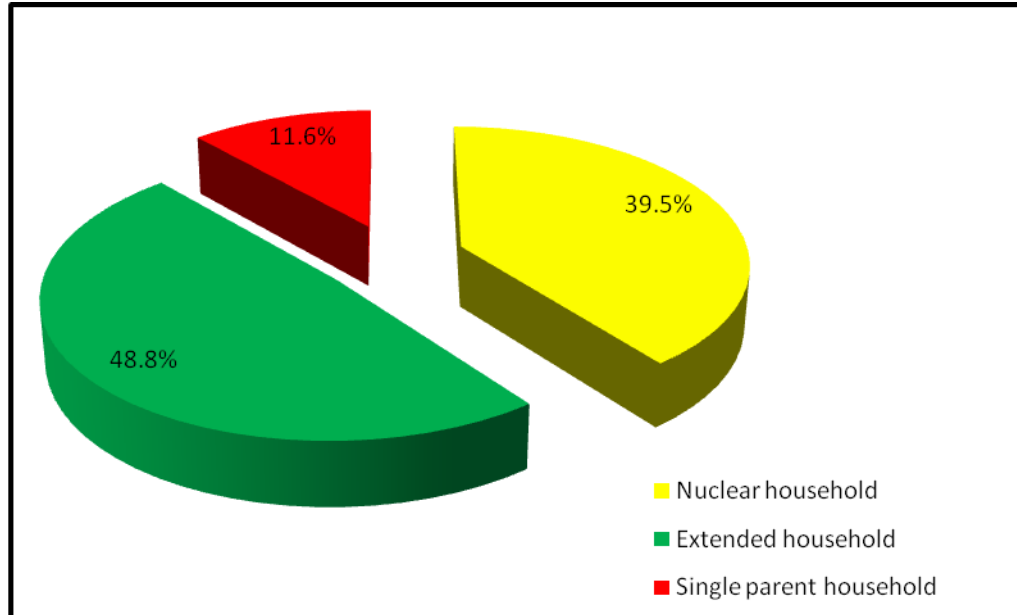
Source: Primary Data, 2014

In terms of the education level attained by respondents, 31.1% had attained undergraduate qualifications (Bachelor Degrees), followed by 26.7% who had completed postgraduate qualifications (Masters Degrees) and 24.4% who had college Diploma or tertiary training certificate. Only 17.8% had completed high school and they were in the least educated category. This shows that in addition to age, all the surveyed respondents had the required level of education that is a proof that they understood the questions that were administered to them through the questionnaire and the interview guide on gender equality and household peace in the Rwandan homesteads.

4.2.4 Type of Respondent's Household

The study also presents the type of households from which respondents were drawn. This was very important as the household tends to influence peace between a husband and a wife. Figure 4.4 shows the results.

Figure 4.4: Type of Respondent's Household



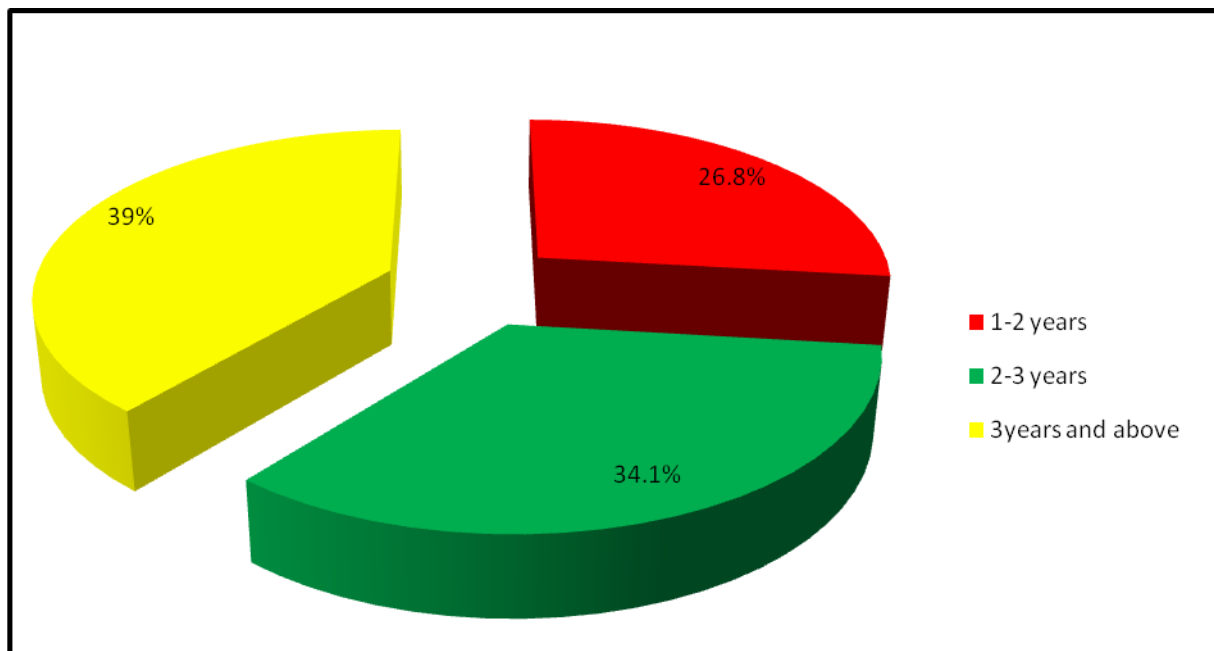
Source: Primary Data, 2014

As figure 4.4 shows, 48.8% of the respondents were drawn from extended households and 39.5% were from nuclear households. Extended family is a household with many people including children, parents, grandparents among others while nuclear family is a household with few blood relations especially parents and children. The dominance of respondents from extended households can be explained by the fact that most families have very many dependants who were integrated into those families because of the effect of the 1994 genocide against Tutsis in which they lost their caretakers. It also explains the fact that women, in addition to their leadership roles have huge household responsibilities to manage and take care of their households.

4.2.5 Period Spent in Leadership Position

The study also sought to show the period that respondents had spent in leadership positions. This was very important as it helps to determine whether the respondents were familiar with their responsibilities in comparison to their household chores. Figure 4.5 shows their response.

Figure 4.5: Period Spent in Leadership Position



Source: Primary Data, 2014

Regarding the period that respondents have spent in leadership positions, it was found out that 39% had spent a period of 3 years and above while 34.1% had spent 2-3 years in leadership positions. This indicates that the surveyed women leaders had enough experience on leadership and therefore were able to provide valid information in regard to gender equality policy and household peace in Rwanda.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This section presents the research findings on the impact of gender equality policy on peace within the Rwandan household using the experiences of women leaders and their spouses. The findings are presented and analyzed in regard to the objectives of the study. These objectives included identifying the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household, the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making and establishing the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts.

4.3.1 Findings on Gender Policy and Execution of Household Work

The study sought to investigate the effect of gender policy on division of labor between the husband and wife in the household. This was included in the questionnaire because since the gender policy is responsible for providing guidelines for married people, its policies highly influence how household labor is divided between the husband and the wife. Using a four-point Lickert scale, four item questions were used which comprised to measure how gender policy has affected division of labor in the households of the surveyed women leaders. Table 4.1 shows respondents' opinions on gender policy and division of labor in the household.

Table 4.1: Opinions on Gender Policy and Division of Labor in the Household

	Item	SA	A	D	SD
1	All household work should be shared by both partners	17(39.5%)	19(44.2%)	3(7.0%)	4(9.3%)
2	A Wife must be allowed to take up employment outside the home	23(51.1%)	19(42.2%)	3(6.7%)	-
3	It is difficult to balance official work with that of household chores	20(44.4%)	16(35.6%)	5(11.1%)	4(8.9%)
4	Women career is more affected by having children than that of the husband	30(66.7%)	15(33.3%)	-	-

Source: Primary Data, 2014

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

As table 4.1 shows, it is established that gender equality policy has a positive influence on household labor relations in various aspects. This can be explained by the fact that most items with which the majority respondents agreed were designed with a positive connotation towards household division of labor as the foregoing analysis shows.

4.3.1.1 Sharing Household Work

In item 1, 83.7% of the women leaders agreed that doing all household work should be shared between both partners. Through interviews, one respondent said, *"after work, I go home and supervise how housemaids/houseboys do the work and this supplements the supervisory role of my husband"*. Despite the fact that the majority women leaders reported that they did household work with their husbands, all of them pointed out through interviews that traditional cultures were still deeply rooted in the Rwandan communities because husbands subjugated their wives.

One woman reported, *"there are some household chores that husbands cannot do such as bathing children, washing babies' clothes, cooking, etc"*.

Men also agreed that household chores should be shared by both partners. However, most of them reasoned that gender equality laws and policies conflict with traditional norms and cultures. In an interview, some arguments were put forward, for example, *"in most cases because in traditional African families, there was specialization of roles between the husband and wife where the wife was responsible for doing all household soft chores such as cooking, looking after children, laying the bed, washing clothes and cleaning all other household utensils, cleaning the compound etc.. while the husband was responsible for paying school fees to children, building and renovating a house as well as providing all other household needs"* . It was argued that in today's Rwandan society, *"some people still respect such traditional norms and whenever a married man is found cooking food at home, their relatives or neighbors tend to perceive it as shameful and some will go an extra mile to start spreading rumors in the neighborhood that such a man has been bewitched by his wife, that he is not manly enough, that he works on orders of his wife"* (**Married Man's Response in an Interview, November 2014**). Similarly one respondent further argued that, *"despite the existence of good gender policies and laws in Rwanda, even women still believe in the dominating power of the husband over the household and they have accepted it as a principle that some household chores are reserved for men while others are for women based on tradition"*.

It was also argued that *"no matter what positions women held, they were still required to take care of their families and engage in household chores"*.

These findings are corroborated by Skod (2007) whose study on "*Gender Division of Labor and Women's Decision-Making Power in Rural Households in Cameroon*" established that husbands even if they are aware of their responsibilities to treat women fairly and equally still oppressed and subjugated them. Even women still believed in being inferior to their husbands.

Therefore, it is worth to note that even if Rwanda has gone far ahead of other countries in promoting gender equality, traditional beliefs are still an impediment towards total equality of both sexes.

4.3.1.2 Employment Outside the Home

Pertaining to employment of women, 93.3% of the women leaders agreed that it is good for husbands to allow wives to take up employment outside their homes. It was noted that their husbands should become happy with their wives' official roles and encourage them to perform better and deliver effectively.

These findings concur with men's responses through interviews which revealed positive opinions on the employment of women. For example, it was argued that, "*I become impressed with a working wife*", "*when a woman takes up employment, it increases on our family earnings*", "*a working wife does not stress her husband with daily financial needs*" (**Men's Responses Through Interview, November, 2014**). These responses are in agreement with Angel-Urdinola and Wodon (2010) whose study on Income Generation and Intra-Household Decision Making in Nigeria found out that men were pleased if their wives contributed to household financial earnings. However, it is the researcher's belief that some men may develop suspicion of cheating by their wives when they get employed and develop new and unknown networks of male friends from the workplace.

It is worth to note that due to the desire for economic gains, men are compelled to allow their wives to take up employment outside their home, yet there are other benefits such as social networking, building friendships etc...

4.3.1.3 Balancing Work

In regard to balancing work, 80% of respondents agreed that it is difficult to balance official work with household chores. It was, however, established through interviews that most of them had household helpers who were managing households in their absence. However, one woman noted that "*even with a household helper, it is not easy for a working mom to effectively balance official and homestead work since household chores need constant attention from the woman, for example child care, household hygiene, etc..*".

Findings from interviews with men also corroborate women's responses as exemplified by one man who revealed in an interview thus, "*if a woman is working, it becomes very hard to effectively perform both at work and at home in equal proportion*". Allen and Webster (2001) corroborate these findings by revealing that women who work outside their homes find it difficult to perform better at work as well as their households.

These findings are consistent with a study by Barbara (1983) on "*women in the global factory*", who revealed that women get easily exhausted by unfavorable working conditions which eventually affect their household work thus straining their marital relations.

Basing on these findings, the researcher ought to indicate that when women get jobs outside their homesteads, it becomes double work since they have to take care of their family as well as trying

to achieve targets at work. This really becomes stressful and makes it difficult to balance the responsibilities.

4.3.1.4 Child Bearing and Career

In terms of child bearing, all respondents (100%) agreed that at one point in time, women's official careers are more affected by having children than that of their husbands. Through interviews, one woman argued that, "*when women give birth, they go on maternity leave and this affects their job performance. Even those pursuing studies get affected by the increased maternity responsibilities which affects their career and skills development*".

Findings from interviews with men also were in agreement with that of women. One man among those who were interviewed argued that "*in addition to maternity leave affecting job performance, women who give birth usually tend to focus on their newly-born babies to the extent that they forget about other job responsibilities*".

The above findings are consistent with Sen. George and Ostlin (2002) who in their study on "*Engendering Health Equity*" argue that the arrival of a new born baby puts extra responsibilities on the mother's shoulders and this negatively affects job productivity both at home and in the workplace.

Owing to the above findings, the researcher ought to argue that indeed child bearing affect the productivity of women since the baby needs extra attention which competes with job related demands. One would nevertheless indicate that child bearing is part of humanity and the roles associated with it should not affect other responsibilities since it has to be fixed in the woman's timetable.

4.3.2 Findings on How Gender Equality Policy Affects Decision-Making in the Family

The study also sought to investigate the effect of gender equality policy on household decision making. This objective was very important in the study because decision making between a husband and wife usually tends to influence the stability or lack of peace within the household. As with table 4.1, questionnaire items were also designed on a four point Likert scale as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Opinions on Gender Equality Policy and Household Decision-Making

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Women leaders should take advantage of their official leadership position to influence household decision-making process		-	27 (65.9%)	14 (34.1%)
2	Women need to participate in decision making regarding the education of their children	26 (59.1%)	13 (29.5%)	4 (9.1%)	1 (2.3%)
3	Husband and wife need to decide together in making choices of their reproductive life process	29 (64.4%)	16 (35.6%)	-	-
4	Husband and wife should make joint decisions regarding how earnings are spent	23 (56.1%)	17 (41.5%)	1 (2.4%)	
5	Women need freedom to go and seek for better opportunities e.g. job, education	26 (57.8%)	19 (42.2%)	-	-
6	Women should participate in decision making regarding time allocations in doing domestic work	30 (68.1%)	11 (25.0%)	3 (6.8%)	-
7	Husbands need to exonerate their wives from domestic work because of competing responsibilities (domestic and public)	2 (4.4%)	1 (2.2%)	23 (51.1%)	19 (42.2%)
8	Women should be allowed to participate in decision making on the type of religion to join	26 (60.5%)	12 (27.9%)	5 (11.6%)	-
9	Women should be freely allowed to decide on how to improve their career without the possible interference of husbands	28 (62.2%)	16 (35.6%)	1 (2.2%)	-
10	Wives need to be empowered to choose their own political affiliation without the interference of their husbands	25 (58.1%)	15 (34.9%)	3 (6.9%)	-

Source: Primary Data, 2014

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

Regarding respondents' opinions on gender equality policy and household decision-making, table 4.2 shows respondents' opinions in regard to the items presented in the table.

4.3.2.1 Use of Leadership Position to Influence Decision-Making

Accordingly, the study found out that 100% of all women leaders disagreed that a woman leader should not use her official leadership positions to influence household decision-making process.

It was noted by one respondent during the interview that *“a woman who holds a leadership position can make decisions at home but through negotiations with her husband”*.

This belief is also collaborated by men who were interviewed and gave various opinions, for example, responses such as *“a woman should not take advantage of her leadership position to manipulate her husband”*, *“a woman even if she is a leader will always be a woman and will always be under the headship of her husband when it comes to marital issues”* etc. were reported during interviews with men.

However, a study by Brown (1995) contrasts with the findings by indicating that most women after becoming leaders tend to transfer their leadership authority to their households by trying to manipulate their husbands and this greatly affects marital peace.

Therefore, though some women abuse their leadership positions, it is important for the wife to discuss with the husband rather than manipulating him to dominate household decision making.

4.3.2.2 Education of Children

Regarding education of children, 88.6% of respondents opined that women should participate in decision making regarding the education of their children. One woman argued that *“as a woman I feel I should make joint decision with my husband on the education of children. However, even*

if we do that jointly, it is the husband who takes more responsibility in picking children from school".

Similarly, interviews with men also showed that majority of them were pleased to engage in discussions with their wives regarding their children's education. Some positive comments were made during interview where men made arguments such as, "*I become happy when my wife is contributing ideas regarding the way in which to educate our children*", "*I always involve my wife in discussing about our children's education issues*" etc (**Interviews with Men, November, 2014**).

These findings contradict with Faulkner (2002) who argues that despite the rise of women liberation movements in Africa, traditional norms where women are suppressed and dictated upon by their husbands still exist. For example, his study revealed that women's ideas and choices in regard to children's education are always ignored by their husbands especially when they do not financially contribute to the child's school fees payment and other school requirements.

Owing to these contradictions, it is worth to argue that even if men allow their wives to take part in deciding their children's education, in most cases, the final decision is always made by the man since it is the husband who mostly caters for scholastic requirements.

4.3.2.3 Making Reproductive Choices

It was unanimously agreed by women leaders that the husband and the wife ought to jointly make choices regarding their sexual and reproductive life process (100% of responses). Some women leaders said that some of them were forced into sex because their husbands argued that

they paid bride price and were therefore entitled to have sexual intercourse at any time of their choosing. One woman Senator argued that “although sexual intercourse is desired by all of us, my husband loves to engage in sexual intercourse more frequently than I do and in case I am not ready, it usually results into conflict. In terms of reproduction, women agreed that they negotiated with their husbands on the appropriate reproductive choice. For example, one woman Parliamentarian had this to say *“I always sit with my husband and we discuss when and when not to have a child”*.

However, interviews with men produced varied response with some men indicating that they negotiated sexual intercourse and reproductive choices with their wives while others indicating that they had exclusive right to make a final decision. For example, men gave various comments such as *“I negotiate with my wife when to have sexual intercourse and when she is not ready, I excuse her and we abstain until she feels ready for it”*, *“I am entitled to have sexual intercourse whenever I want whether my wife is ready or not and I have exclusive rights on determining how many children to produce since I am the family head and solely taking care of my children’s needs”*.

Similarly, Shyaka (2013) is consistent with these findings by revealing that women in Rwanda still face sexual abuse such as unwanted kissing or touching of woman’s sexual parts, unwanted rough or violent sexual activity, marital rape or attempted rape, refusing to use condoms or restricting a woman’s access to birth control. This further includes keeping women from protecting themselves from sexually transmitted infections (STIs), threatening women into unwanted sexual activity, repeatedly pressuring women to have sex or perform sexual acts and repeatedly using sexual insults towards women.

Partners ought to give each other time to be ready for the sexual encounter and discuss and come to a common agreement on when and how many children to produce and which type of family planning to use since the choices affect both partners.

4.3.2.4 Decision Making Regarding Household Income and Expenditure

In terms of expenditure, 97.6% of respondents agreed that the husband and wife should jointly decide how to spend their earnings in order to determine what the entire family has decided as a priority. However, some women reported negative opinions such as *“my husband makes sole decisions on how to spend money even if it is me who earned it and brings us into marital conflicts”*.

Men who were interviewed had varied responses. One man argued that *“the issue of income is liberal because it depends on who earns or brings more to the family”*. However, one respondent argued that *“when it comes to expenditure, a husband is the head of the family and is the one who should determine how much to spend and on what household needs”*. This places the husband over household finances and this may create marital conflict especially when the wife claims to be the supreme manager, decision maker or contributor to the family earnings.

Despite existence of conflicts, some men said that *“in any institution there must be a boss who has the final say or approval. In this case, the husband can be compared to the president of the house and his decision is final”*. Some men argued that they shared bank accounts with their wives and this made it easy for them to decide how to spend their earnings. On most occasions, it was reported that the husband and wife sit together and make a list of household requirements and agree on what to prioritize in as far as spending was concerned. This was reported to have improved trust between husband and wife in such families.

Nevertheless, men argued that it does not matter how much their wives earned, they still remained solely taking care of all household needs thus suggesting that women make limited effort to contribute financially to their families' wellbeing.

It is imperative to note that some arguments agree with findings of the study by Ickes (1993) on *Traditional Gender Roles* who found out that men were jointly deciding on how to spend their household income with their wives. On the other hand, the dominating power of the man over his wife was also reported even if the woman contributed to household income.

Therefore, rather than discussing and reaching a common ground when it comes to spending in the household, some husbands dis-empower their wives by making decisions solely in complete disregard of their wives' ideals and aspirations.

4.3.2.5 Seeking for Better Opportunities Outside Home

Regarding seeking opportunities, 100% of women agreed that wives need to be given freedom to seek for better opportunities e.g. jobs outside home. Through effective discussion and understanding about the benefits of letting women get jobs. Women also argued that husbands allowed them to seek for better opportunities such as job. One woman noted that, *my husband encourages me to look for a job such that I can complement on his income and improve our household welfare*". However, some respondents argued that even if career progression was an open decision, their husbands could not allow them to go into foreign countries for employment since it would mean living far from their families for a long time.

Interviews with men also revealed that men easily accepted their wives to seek for opportunities. For example, some comments by men were like *"I find it good for my wife to seek for*

employment opportunities because it shows that she is hard working which is good for our family". "I don't mind if my wife goes to work outside the home so long as the job does not contradict her roles as a wife". On the other hand, some men argued that they only accept their wives to pursue opportunities within the country and could never allow them to go abroad.

These revelations are consistent with Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan (2013) who argue that most men allow their wives to seek better employment such that they can be relieved of household financial demands.

It is incumbent upon husbands to discuss with their wives about seeking for opportunities as it helps them to earn a living on their own and contribute to household income on the other hand.

4.3.2.6 Decision Making Regarding Time Allocations in Doing Domestic Work

In terms of domestic work, respondents agreed that they participated in decision making regarding time allocations in doing domestic work (93.8% of responses). In case of competing responsibilities (domestic and public), husbands did not exonerate their wives from domestic work (93.4% of responses). During interviews, it was noted that time allocation for domestic work was discussed with their husbands but noted that husbands required them to budget and plan how to balance official work and household chores. In such circumstance, it can be argued that husbands did not have sympathy for their wives despite the work pressures they went through.

Pertaining to interviews with men, some men indicated that "*women have to make their own timetables regarding household work*". Contrary to women's responses, some men reported that

they were sympathetic and sometimes exonerated their wives from doing domestic work in some special cases like when their wives were sick, breast feeding or weak.

These findings agree with Allen and Webster (2001) who noted that for household peace, the woman should be allowed to participate in decision making regarding time allocation for household chores. The authors argue that when there is mutual understanding on when household work should be done, it minimizes conflicts when certain chores are not done provided it is within the agreed time schedule.

Owing to these findings, it can be opined that the decision for making a time schedule for domestic work be the role of the wife since she knows the time that is convenient for her. Husbands also ought to be sympathetic and relieve their wives of some household duties especially when the wife becomes physically incapable due to competing workloads.

4.3.2.7 Deciding on Freedom of Worship

With freedom of worship, 88.4% agreed that it was important to jointly decide with their husbands on the type of religion or political party to join. It was argued that since they were leaders their husbands knew the responsibilities that come with leadership such as accountability on performance and they did not interfere with the official agenda. Additionally, one woman Deputy reported thus, *“I have freedom of worship and can join the religion I prefer”*.

Regarding interviews with men, it was revealed that they allowed their wives to worship in a religion of their own choice. One man argued that *“I have no problem if my wife chooses her own religion so long as that religion preaches peace, morality and brotherhood”*.

The findings on worship slightly contradict with Dollahite and Marks (2005) who argued that in order to have unity of purpose towards spiritual growth, the husband and wife should belong to the same religious denomination since “a family that prays together also stays together”.

Therefore, even if there is freedom of worship, couples need to agree and reach a common agreement on a religion and they join it with the entire family.

4.3.2.8 Decision Making on Career Development

Regarding career development, it was also agreed that women should freely decide on how to improve their career without the possible interference from their husbands (97.8% of responses).

One female Mayor noted “*when a woman is given chance to explore the available career development opportunities, employment opportunities become open to her*”.

During interviews men also were in support of women career development for example, one respondent reported that “*women need to be positioned to access career development opportunities especially education*”. Men argued that they supported their wives to pursue career development if it contributes to the livelihoods of their families and national development at large. However, it was noted that career development depends on the intellectual, financial and psychological capacity of the wife as an individual and the family at large. Sometimes, the funds for financing the wife’s career development may be scarce and she may think that the husband has deliberately denied her a chance and this may result into conflicts. Furthermore, sometimes one of the couples may not be educated and he/she may object to the idea of spending family income on further training and education.

The above findings are consistent with the UN Millennium Project (2005) that advocates for full empowerment of women on wide range of issues particularly career development and advancement. The project advocates for husbands to let their wives pursue any career development opportunities of their choice.

It is worth to argue that the woman's career development is very important in the household especially when the husband is unable to fully cater for the family needs since human development increases opportunities for gainful employment.

4.3.2.9 Decision Making on Political Affiliation

In political decisions, 93.1% of respondents agreed that they were empowered to choose their own political affiliation without the interference from their husbands. One female Governor reported that *“since there is political liberalization in the country, I am free to join any political party of my choice even if my husband belongs to another party”*. This shows that women in Rwanda have been empowered to influence governance system through active political participation.

Interviews with men also produced similar findings where men agreed that they allowed their wives to join any political affiliation of their choice. These findings are corroborated by Brown (1995) who argues that since democracy has swept across the globe coupled with fundamental human freedoms, the issue of political affiliation should be left for an individual to choose on his/her own. There is an implication that women also enjoy a favorable degree of freedom in terms of political affiliation.

4.3.3 Findings on the Role of Gender Equality Policies/Laws in Solving Marital Conflicts

The study also investigated the role of gender equality policies and laws on mitigating marital conflicts. This was very important because in the presence of well designed and effective laws some gender based abuses are likely to be averted as the potential perpetrators fear the legal consequences. Table 4.3 shows the responses.

Table 4.3: Opinions on Gender Equality Policies/Laws and Mitigation of Marital Conflicts

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Gender equality laws have protected some women from being beaten by their partners	-	38(84.4%)	7(15.6%)	-
2	Gender equality law has protected women from sexual abuse by their partners	-	39(86.7%)	6(13.3%)	-
3	Gender equality policy has enabled women to contribute to decision-making within their households	33(73.3%)	10(22.2%)	2(4.4%)	-
4	Gender equality policy has enabled men to participate in household work alongside their wives	3(6.8%)	10(22.7%)	31(70.5%)	-
5	Gender equality policy and laws has enabled women to own personal properties	39(86.7%)	6(13.3%)	-	-
6	Gender equality law has created family stability by prohibiting polygamy and polyandry	40(88.9%)	5(11.1%)	-	-
7	Gender equality laws clearly defines how properties should be shared in case of divorce	42(93.3%)	3(6.7%)	-	-

Source: Primary Data, 2014

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

Regarding gender equality policies/laws and mitigation of marital conflicts, respondents' opinions showed that the gender policies and laws have mitigated marital conflicts on a variety

of aspects such as battering women, sexual abuse, decision-making power, men's participation in household work, property ownership by women, family stability and sharing of property after divorce.

4.3.3.1 Battering/Respecting Women

As indicated in item 1, respondents agreed that gender equality laws have encouraged men to respect their wives and protected women from being beaten by their husbands (84.4% of responses). Women who were interviewed gave various responses, for example one woman said that *“the gender policy in Rwanda provides guidelines on how men should peacefully relate with their wives while the gender law is a legal framework that deals with prosecuting and punishing people who violate gender law. This makes men to fear doing anything abusive to their wives”*. Another woman noted that *“my husband respects me because he knows that if he mistreats me, he will be imprisoned”*. It is however, worth to note that some women are mistreated in their households and they fear to report their husbands for fear of marital conflicts and divorce. In most cases, the law only punishes husbands after they have already beaten their wives meaning that it has less effect in preventing women battering.

However, interviews with men revealed that men did not respect women for fear of the law but because it was the best thing to love, care for and respect their marriage partners. One man revealed that *“for me I made it a rule that I will always respect my wife whether there are gender laws or not. I also made a personal commitment to never beat my wife”*.

The above findings contradict the assessment by the Government of Rwanda in collaboration with the UN and UNFPA (n.d.) which found out that domestic violence was a lived reality across the country and incidences of domestic violence were high in Kigali City. Women battering were

among the common forms of abuse reported and women were the majority of the victims with their husbands being the perpetrators.

Nevertheless, it ought to be argued that gender policies and laws have also contributed to the wellbeing of women in their households since any abuse of women is effectively punishable under Rwandan law.

4.3.3.2 Sexual Abuse

It was also reported that the gender policy has protected women from sexual abuse by their husbands (86.7% of responses). Thus one woman noted that *“my husband cannot sexually abuse me because he knows the severe consequences of sexual abuse”*. It was however, revealed that some women still experienced some forms of abuse such as marital rape and they could not report such cases for fear of public judgment. For example, one woman noted that *“my husband sometimes forces me into sexual intercourse and I fear to report him because it may destabilize my family”*.

However, interviews with some men showed that women were taking advantage of the gender equality law to sexually starve their husbands. For example, one man revealed that *“sometimes, my wife denies me sex for a long time and this psychologically hurts me”*. On the basis of being denied sex, some men reported that they were forcing themselves on their wives, for reasons such as *“when I pay bride price, I am entitled to sexual intercourse whenever I need it”*.

It was also argued that though the laws have protected them from sexual abuse some women did not understand all the components of the law and that they are less sensitized about it. In addition, women who were forced into sex by their husbands were shy to report such cases and

therefore, cases of sexual abuse were hard to quantify. It is also probable that some women can have sexual desires and their husbands ignore them but this issue was never raised probably because of shyness.

This is consistent with a study by Shyaka (2013) who found out that despite good gender equality laws, sexual violence still existed in Rwanda, the major case among married people being marital rape which was seldomly reported.

Owing to such misunderstandings, married people need to sit together and negotiate when to have sex and come to a common agreement because sometimes wives may be out of moods when their husbands are in high sexual desires or vice versa.

4.3.3.4 Decision-Making Power

Regarding decision making, it was also agreed that the gender equality policy has enabled women to contribute to decision-making within their households (95.5% of responses). One respondent revealed through interviews that *“in the previous regimes, women had no decision making power but currently the government has empowered them to economically and politically make decisions that affect their lives thus allowing them to effectively engage in family discussions with their husbands”*.

Findings from men also revealed that it was because of intensive sensitization on gender equality that they abandoned traditional beliefs and started to respect their wives. One man had to report that *“the current Government has put more effort in ensuring that traditional norms where husbands subjugate their wives are abandoned and they live as equals within the household”*.

In a related development Harcourt (2011) argues that most times traditional cultures blind people into believing that masculinity means suppressing their wives. The author argues that in such cases when men are sensitized they become tolerant, caring and respectful towards their spouses.

It is worth to note that in cases where men are educated on the importance of gender equality, respect for their wives improves and they allow them to engage in household decision-making which promotes marital peace.

4.3.3.5 Men's Participation in Household Work

In terms of household work participation, 70.5% of the respondents noted that the policy had not enabled men to participate in household work. It was argued that the gender policy provides guidelines but these guidelines have not encouraged husbands to help women in household duties. The participation of some husbands in household work was not being influenced by the gender policy. This information was corroborated by men who argued through interviews that the policy did not define what type of household chore a man should do and what a wife should do.

However, Ickes (1993) argues that promotion of gender education breaks rigid cultures and norms which are unfair to husbands and wives. In this case, when there is gender education, the researcher believes that husbands who mistreat and burden their wives become sensitized and adopt mutual tolerance and respect for their spouses.

4.3.3.6 Property Ownership by Women

Similarly, it was generally agreed that gender equality laws have enabled women to own their personal properties (100% of responses). It was noted that unlike in the past where women

ownership of property was ignored, today, women are empowered to own properties such as land, houses, businesses, etc courtesy of the favorable gender policies and laws. It was argued through interviews that women can now own assets either independently or jointly with their husbands courtesy of the gender equality laws.

Men who were interviewed also agreed that the empowerment of women in Rwanda through the policy and legal framework has not only empowered them socially but also economically. Some comments were put forward during interviews such as *“women in Rwanda are now more economically empowered than before. They now own land and buildings in both rural areas and urban centres”*.

The above findings are consistent with Endeley and Sikod (2005) who argue that in traditional Africa, men assume patriarchal role in the household and believe that they should be the sole owners of family assets. It therefore requires sensitization and enactment of legal frameworks to enforce gender equality especially in the economic arena such that women’s property ownership are protected from being grabbed by husbands.

4.3.3.7 Family Stability

It was agreed that gender laws in Rwanda have created family stability by prohibiting polygamy and polyandry (100% of responses). It was further indicated that the law had prohibited marriage to more than one partner at a time which has limited polygamous marriages in Rwanda. However, women indicated that even if the law prohibited polygamy and polyandry, some husbands were secretly marrying more than one wife and this created marital conflict when the official wives got to know about it. One woman noted that *“I know a man who is legally married yet he has gone ahead and married secretly and even rented a house for the second wife”*.

However, men who were interviewed argued that the banning polygamy had not created family stability. One man revealed that *“after being married, when the wife is aware that the law does not allow the husband to marry the second wife, she may behave badly towards her husband”*.

On several occasions, men noted that gender based violence is attributed to the husband and wives who abuse and mistreat their husbands are ignored.

These findings are consistent with Faulkner (2002) who argues when a spouse is aware that his/her partner cannot search for an alternative marriage partner, he/she becomes careless and treats the other spouse with contempt and disrespect. Therefore, despite the fact that men are barred from marrying more than one wife, wives ought to respect their husbands and live happily.

4.3.3.8 Sharing of Property After Divorce

In regard to property sharing, 100% of respondents agreed that the gender equality law clearly defined how properties should be shared in case of divorce. This is because the law has eased property sharing process in case of divorce. However, in terms of property sharing, women indicated that *“the gender policies and laws do not cater for the welfare of children in case of divorce. After the sharing of properties between the husband and wife, some people sell the property or remarry and forget the children they had produced in previous marriages which turns those children into street beggars”*. It was argued that the law needs to be amended to include the welfare of children in the event of divorce.

However, men noted that property sharing is determined by the matrimonial regime consented to by both partners at the time of the civil marriage. During the civil union at the sector, each

partner can choose to own properties independently or jointly. It is the marital regime that will define how properties are shared in case of divorce.

The findings are collaborated by Heyman and Smith (2001) who argue that in the event of divorce the husband and wife need to share the properties they have acquired in the time they have been together. The authors further note that the responsibilities for the custody of children need to be defined.

Therefore, it is worth to note that gender equality policy in Rwanda has helped to define property sharing process when the husband and wife decide to dissolve their marriage.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations from the analyzed data in chapter four. The chapter is presented in themes with respect to the study objectives. These themes include the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household, the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making and the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study established that women leaders and men have a similar view that doing all household work should be shared between both partners. This is consistent with the social feminism theory which presupposes that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. However, in practice, traditional beliefs are still an impediment towards total equality of both sexes since men still shun household chores as a reserve for women.

It is revealed that women leaders and men believe that it is good for husbands to allow wives to take up employment outside their homes. The social feminism theory also corroborates the findings by emphasizing women empowerment through economic emancipation. This is also evidenced by the fact that in modern society where family demands have been increasingly monetized, when women work and earn income, they contribute to family welfare and relieves the husband from the financial burden.

In regard to balancing work, findings from both men and women show that it is difficult for women to balance official work with household chores. In practice, women are constrained home chores such as cooking, household hygiene, etc, constraints that are not commonly experienced by men. The social feminism theory concurs with this finding by arguing that women emancipation should be extended beyond equality to emphasize equity because of women's unique gender characteristics, abilities and disadvantages.

Both men and women agree that women's official careers are more affected by having children than that of their husbands. This is true in real experience because women's reproductive nature demands that they get work leave after giving birth which greatly affects their career performance and progress. This is corroborated by Oppenheimer (1997) who believes that the social status of women in society makes their spouses treat them as household objects.

Regarding gender equality policy and household decision-making, it was found that both men and women that a woman leader should not use her official leadership positions to influence household decision-making process. However, as noted by Cobb and Bradbarry (2001), in real practice when women rise to higher positions they strive to dominate their husbands. The study finds experiences of men who have been subjugated by their spouses on this basis.

It is generally agreed that both men and women should participate in decision making regarding the education of their children. However, testimonies from respondents showed that the final decision is always made by the husband. As stressed by Adams (1993) is demonstrates that women have no upper hand in making education choices for their children.

All women leaders agree that the husband and the wife ought to jointly make choices regarding their sexual and reproductive life process. This is corroborated by cultural feminism theory which seeks to promote gender equality by improving the relationship between the sexes and often cultures at large by celebrating women's special qualities, ways and experiences. However, in real practice, men argued that they have exclusive right to make a final decision on sexual intercourse and reproductive choices.

In terms of expenditure, it is established that the husband and wife should jointly decide how to spend their earnings. In theory, cultural feminism supports this idea by emphasizing that a husband and wife should work together to improve their family welfare. However, in practice, men argue that they are family heads and therefore reserve the right to make the final decision.

It is unanimously agreed by both men and women that wives need to be given freedom to seek for better opportunities e.g. job outside home. In practice, this is relevant and necessary in modern society where costs of living and family welfare are constantly increasing. The eco-

feminism theory gives credence to this argument by stressing that both the husband and wife should contribute to family welfare.

Women agreed that it is important for a wife to participate in decision making regarding sharing domestic work with their husbands. In practices this promotes family harmony as the couple helps each other to improve family welfare. This is consistent with the liberal feminism theory which advocates for shared gender roles in the home. However, most men don't participate in domestic work, a factor that constrains relations with their wives.

With freedom of worship, women leaders agreed that it was important to jointly decide with their husbands on the type of religion to join. In practice, this religious harmony helps to promote stability in the home as the husband and wife can easily connect with each other on matters of faith. This is corroborated by theoretical work of Hooks (1990) who argues that sharing religious beliefs strengthens the marital bond.

Regarding career development, it was also agreed by both men and women leaders that women should freely decide on how to improve their career without the possible interference from their husbands. This is relevant in today's society where women are challenged by the labor market to improve their skills and training for better job performance.

It indicated that the gender policy has protected women from sexual abuse by their husbands. This is consistent with the Rwandan government's gender equality policy and law which prohibits any form of marital abuse by either of the spouses. Faulkner's (2002) theoretical proposition also gives support to this argument by indicating that the husband and wife should only engage in sexual intercourse out of mutual understanding and free will rather than through coercion and force. However, some women reported that they still experienced some forms of sexual abuse silently and they are shy to report such cases.

It was agreed that gender laws in Rwanda have created family stability by prohibiting polygamy and polyandry. This is in line with the Rwandan constitution (2003) which prohibits marrying more than one wife/husband at the same time. The theory of feminism also supports this legislation by emphasizing a monogamous marriage as the only one that guarantees family stability. Even though this has been a marital practice in Rwanda, testimonies allude to some

men who have extra marital affairs and established secret second families unknown to their wedded wives.

Similarly, it was agreed by both men and women leaders that gender equality laws have enabled women to own property by empowering them to engage in economic activities. This is a common practice in Rwanda where women are now empowered to engage in any form of economic activity, thus corroborating the ecofeminism theory. The gender equality law has minimized conflicts over property during divorce because it clearly defined how properties should be shared but it does not cater for the welfare of children.

5.2 Conclusions

The study focused on the effect of gender equality policy on household peace using the experience of women in leadership positions and their spouses. It was conducted with three main objectives of finding out the effect of gender policy on division of labor in the household, identifying the effect of gender equality policy on household decision-making and examining the role of gender equality policies/laws in mitigating marital conflicts.

In conclusion, although men tend to dominate women and leave some household chores for them, there is general agreement between men and women that all household work should be shared by both partners. Gender equality policy has promoted the status of women by sensitizing men to help their wives in doing household chores. However, some of the traditional cultures still make some men shy away from doing part of the household chores. This is largely due to ignorance of certain laws by some women which is meant to protect them. Nevertheless, women usually find it difficult to balance official work with household chores. This is mostly complicated when they have young children to take care of and paying attention to other household work.

Gender equality policy has improved women's decision making power in their households. Women can now make household decisions with their husbands on matters of how to spend their earnings, how to educate their children, how to plan their sexual and reproductive choices, career development and now men can allow their wives to take up employment outside their homes but they do not allow their wives to take up jobs in foreign countries.

It is very important that there should be effective communication between women leaders and their husband to minimize incidences where some women abuse the gender policies and laws by denying sex to their husbands which makes men to justify the use of marital rape. That way stable relationship will be enhanced among the women leaders' families and peace will prevail among their homes. Equally important is that the laws be amended to include the welfare and protection of children in an event of divorce.

5.3 Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Gender and Family promotion should conduct sensitization campaigns via schools and the media in order to change the mindset where boys still believe that household chores are for women. This will ensure that young boys will encourage them to abandon their patriarchal beliefs and turn into responsible adults.
2. The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion should conduct extensive and intensive sensitization of women to better understand the gender equality policies and laws because some women have turned these laws as tools for fighting their husbands.
3. The Rwandan Parliament should amend laws governing the sharing of property between the husband and the wife in the event of divorce. The welfare and custody of children should be considered as this will ensure that children of divorced parents also have means of supporting their livelihoods.
4. MIGEPROF should be in the forefront to sensitize women who are domestically abused to be bold and report such behaviors to the law enforcement agencies.
5. It is equally important that Rwanda Men's Resource Center (RWAMREC) should sensitize men to respect their spouses' choices and decisions regarding when to engage in sexual intercourse. Paying bride price does not mean that men turn their wives into sexual machines but rather should agree and respect the wives' views because at certain times women may feel without sexual moods.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study focused mainly on women leaders only. We suggest therefore that future research should be conducted to cover women in general to find out how gender equality policies and laws have affected their household peace.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Women Leaders

My name is Kayirangwa Beline, a student at the University of Rwanda, pursuing a Masters of Arts Degree in Security Studies. I am carrying out research on gender equality policy and household peace using the experiences of women leaders in Rwanda. The objective of the study is to determine how gender equality policy has affected household peace among women leaders in Rwanda. You have been selected along with other women leaders to provide data and contribute to this research since you as women leaders have relevant and true experiences of how gender equality policy has affected your household peace. The benefit of the study is that it will be used to assess Rwanda's progress in achieving gender equality and its outcomes in regard to household peace. I therefore, kindly, request you to provide me with information for completing this research questionnaire. Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be solely used for the purpose of this research and your identity will not be published in the dissertation.

Section A: Background Information (Tick (√) the right/appropriate option)

1. Gender Male Female

2. Age (indicate years)

15-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

3. Marital status

Married Widowed Single mother Cohabiting Engaged Divorced/separated

Men

4. Level of education

Secondary School High School

College Diploma or tertiary training Certificate University education level attained:

a) Bachelor’s Degree b) Master’s Degree c) PhD Other

5. Type of your household

1) Single member household Extended household Nuclear Household Step family household Foster family

6. How long have you been holding (a) leadership position (s)?

1 year or less 1-2 years 2-3 years 3years and above

For each of the following statements in sections B, C and D indicate (by ticking) the appropriate answer using the coded responses; where SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree. Then comment on your answer appropriately

Section B: Gender Policy and Division of Labour in the Household

	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Comment
1	All household work should be shared by both partners					
2	A Wife must be allowed to take up employment outside the home					
3	It is difficult to balance official work with that of household chores					
4	Women career is more affected by having children than that of the husband					

Section C: Gender Equality Policy and Household Decision-Making

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	As leader making decisions at work, women should desist from influencing household decision-making process				
2	Women need to participate in decision making regarding the education of their children				
3	Husband and wife need to decide together in making choices of their reproductive life process				
4	Husband and wife should make joint decisions regarding how earnings are spent				
5	Women should be empowered to make their own choices in regard to how to spend their sex lives				
6	Women need freedom to go and seek for better opportunities e.g. job, education				
7	women should participate in decision making regarding time allocations in doing domestic work				
8	Husbands need to exonerate their wives from domestic work because of competing responsibilities (domestic and public)				
9	Women should be allowed to participate in decision making on the type of religion to join				
10	women should be freely allowed to decide on how to improve their career without the possible interference of husbands				

11	Wives need to be empowered to choose their own political affiliation without the interference of their husbands				
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Section D: Gender Equality Policies and Mitigation of Marital Conflicts

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Comment
1	Gender equality laws have encouraged men to respect women and protected women from being beaten by their partners					
2	Gender equality law has protected women from sexual abuse by their partners					
3	Gender equality policy has enabled women to contribute to decision-making within their households					
4	Gender equality policy has enabled men to participate in household work alongside their wives					
5	Gender equality laws has enabled women to own personal properties					
6	Gender equality law has created family stability by prohibiting polygamy and polyandry					
7	Gender equality laws clearly defines how properties should be shared in case of divorce					

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Women Leaders

1. Explain the effect of gender policy on women leaders on matters of division of labor in their households.

Aspects to consider

a) Household work

.....
.....

b) Employment outside home

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.....

c) Child care and welfare

.....
.....

2. What is the effect of gender equality policy on women leaders in matters of decision-making in their households?

Aspects to consider

a) Sharing household chores

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.....

b) Income and expenditure

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.....

c) Sex life and reproductive choices

.....
.....

d) Children's welfare

.....
.....

e) Career development

.....
.....

f) Association, political, economic and religious

.....
.....

3. What do you consider as the sources of conflict among households of women leaders in Rwanda?

Aspects to consider

a) Sharing household chores

.....
.....

b) Income and expenditure

.....
.....

c) Sex life and reproductive choices

.....
.....

d) Children's welfare

.....
.....

e) Career development

.....
.....

f) Association, political, economic and religious

.....
.....

g) Disrespect and abuses

.....
.....

h) Property ownership

.....
.....

4. To what extent has gender equality policies mitigated marital conflicts among households of women leaders?

Aspects to consider

a) Sharing household chores

.....
.....
b) Income and expenditure

.....
.....
c) Sex life and reproductive choices

.....
.....
d) Children's welfare

.....
.....
e) Career development

.....
.....
f) Association, political, economic and religious

.....
.....
g) Disrespect and abuses

.....
.....
h) Property ownership

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Men

How do Men as Spouses of women leaders perceive Gender equality laws and policies regarding peaceful coexistence in their households?

Aspects to consider

a) Sharing household chores

.....
.....

b) Income and expenditure

.....
.....

c) Sex life and reproductive choices

.....
.....

d) Children's welfare

.....
.....

e) Career development

.....
.....

f) Association, e.g., political, economic, religious, etc

.....

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g) Disrespect and abuses

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h) Property ownership

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