IS WOMEN POLITICAL INCLUSION AN END IN ITSELF IN RWANDA? A META-SYNTHESIS OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCES

Nadine Mumporeze  
Ph.D., Hallym University, Chuncheon-si, South Korea  
nmumporeze@yahoo.fr

Dominique Nduhura  
Ph.D., Hallym University, Chuncheon-si, South Korea  
dnduhura@gmail.com

Abstract

Informed by the theory of women’s political representation, the present paper employs a thematic meta-synthesis method to investigate whether or not women political inclusion in political institutions furthers gender equality in Rwandan society. The main findings suggest that Rwanda has achieved high political representation of women, which may increase power for some women by allowing them to have a greater voice in society and access to education. However, numerous women do not ensure gender equality in all spheres of life as they continue to suffer excessively from politico-ethnic exclusion, unemployment, poverty, heavy domestic responsibilities, gender-based violence, and lack of access to health care services. Legal changes and policies designed to promote gender equality are unquestionably worsening. Although an underlying economic rationale remains leading, gender policies and strategies are implemented with attention to quantitative results rather than qualitative outcomes. Our findings suggest that the current statistics on the gender gap do not express the real situation of Rwandan women. Besides, these findings
yield a theory that high women's political participation may not translate into gender equality. Future research should aim to explore possible solutions to the identified problems.

Keywords
Women Political Inclusion, Representation Theory, Gender Equality, Rwanda

1. Introduction

One of the most common ideas in women's political inclusion (hereafter “WPI”) and gender equality literature is that WPI promotes gender equality through challenging the existing social and political systems that nurture women’s oppression in both the private and public sphere. Scholars suggest that the participation of women in decision-making arouses political and economic benefits. Politically, it improves policy outcomes, increases women’s number in institutions such as the parliament, decreases corruption, and advocates the inclusiveness of marginal groups in public spheres. Economically, it considers women as agents of development, encourages women’s participation in the labour market, and contributes to economic and development growth (Dollar, Fisman, & Gatti, 2001; Kabeer, 2005). Gender wise, there is a belief that WPI is pivotal to the attainment of equal gender rights (Guariso, Ingelaere, & Verpoorten, 2017) probably due to the fact that countries with higher numbers of women in decision making institutions such as parliament tend to have all-inclusive laws on gender issues including domestic violence, sexual harassment, and divorce (Asiedu, Branstette, Gaekwad-Babulal, & Malokele, 2018). However, previous studies in this field have offered inconclusive data on whether or not WPI contributes to eradicating gender inequalities in different social spheres. These inequalities are reinforced by a host of barriers at all levels mainly based on stereotypes in the corporate world that hinder women’s career advancement, hence depriving them of the confidence to vie for higher roles in society (Thankachan & Riaz, 2018). Therefore, building on women’s political representation theory, the present study employs a thematic meta-synthesis method to provide a holistic understanding and interpretation of the impact of WPI on gender equality in Rwanda.

1.1 Research Issues: Why Rwanda?

The key motivation for researching on Rwanda is that the country has made a big change since the 1994 genocide and consequent war, in which about one million Rwandans were massacred and 250,000 women were sexually violated (Straus, 2006). Rwanda has rebuilt itself through different reforms based on gender equality such as a legal framework that includes laws on matrimonial regimes, donations, and successions, the organization and usage of land in Rwanda, as well as legal sanctions against perpetrators of gender-based violence (The Ministry of Justice, 2016).
Further policies include the adoption of the Beijing conventions, that are meant to fight all forms of gender inequality, and the millennium declaration that among other things sets the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women as a must for sustainable development (The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, 2010). In the past two decades, the country is believed to have recorded significant economic growth, increasing standards of living and social changes focused on gender equality (Mukashema, Bokore, King, Husain, & McGrath, 2019). Women have been the foundation of this remarkable progress. Today, women percentage in the parliament reaches 61 per cent, which makes the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world (The World Economic Forum, 2018).

Even though the country has created a favourable environment for gender equality in general and WPI in particular, concerns have been expressed about the real impact of WPI given the progressively authoritarian system in the country since 1994 (Longman, 2006). In addition, this research focused on Rwanda due to the lack of academic studies on the impact of WPI on gender equality as one rare study only scrutinizes the influence of gender quotas on the symbolic representation of women (Burnet, 2011). Therefore, the present study comes to supplement the existing literature by analyzing not only the impact of women's symbolic representation on gender equality but also all different sorts of women's political representation.

1.2 Theoretical Framework: Women Political Representation Theory

Globally, there has been extensive research into WPI, with most academics analyzing this in relation to three dimensions of representation including descriptive, substantive and symbolic (Childs, 2004; Coffé, 2012; Lawless, 2004). In this research, we draw from Coffé (2012)’s study of the conceptualization of female political representation especially as that study is well-adapted to the context of Rwanda. Focusing on the case of parliament, Coffé (2012) described the three types of representation maintaining that descriptive representation focuses on the number of members of parliament (hereafter “MPs”). Substantive representation is concentrated on the impact that WPI has on influencing governmental policy, while symbolic representation refers to women MPs as role models for other women in society. Other scholars have theorized Rwandan WPI as a symbolic representation (Kayumba, 2010; Uwineza & Pearson, 2009) and as non-substantive representation (Burnet, 2008; Devlin & Elgie, 2008; Hogg, 2009; Longman, 2006). However, these studies were criticized by Coffé (2012) for analysing each form of women’s representation in seclusion while they are, in fact, interlinked. Therefore, the present study holistically scrutinizes the impact of all
sorts of WPI on gender equality in Rwandan society. More precisely, the present study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Do Rwandan women reap from WPI?
2. Is WPI an end in itself?

2. Methodology

The current study employs a thematic meta-synthesis method to deeper understand the impact of WPI on gender equality in Rwanda. This method was considered best-suited for this study as it is regarded as one of the most appropriate approaches for interpreting secondary data to broaden understanding of a specific social phenomenon (Grant & Booth, 2009). The data were gathered from academic databases of Google, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect by using these keywords: “Rwanda women political inclusion”, “Rwanda gender quota”, “Rwanda gender equality”, “the effect of women’s representation in Rwandan politics”, and “women's political representation theory”. To ensure quality and completeness, journal articles, web pages, reports, working paper, dissertations, book chapters, and blogs published in the period of 2004-2019 were considered, which resulted in 101 articles. We borrowed and adapted 10 criteria (see Table 1) from a previous study in order to systematically review research studies (Treloar, Champness, Simpson, & Higginbotham, 2000). We chose to use these criteria because they are the most frequently used instruments for qualitative studies guided by meta-synthesis method.

The application of the abovementioned criteria on 101 articles yielded 33 articles that were most suitable to this research (see Table 2). In order to assess the quality of included documents (see Table 1), we employed a three-point scale to each criterion (0 = criterion not met; 1 = criterion partially met; 2 = criterion totally met). This point-scale was proposed by Boeije, Wesel, & Alisic (2011) as the best method for weighing the data in a qualitative meta-synthesis study. After assessing the quality of the 33 documents, we concluded that all of them were suitable for this study. These documents were analyzed through a thematic analysis, which is used to identify, analyze, and report key themes (Boyatzis, 1998). As such, this method was considered suitable for this research since it allows to scrutinize, pinpoint, and record themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and this was the aim of this research. We used Nvivo software to code the most robust themes (see Table 3).
Table 1: Quality Assessment of Included Studies

| Criteria                                                                 | Totally met | Partially met | Not met |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------|
| 1. Is the research objective clearly specified?                          | 33          | 0             | 0       |
| 2. Is an appropriate motivation provided for employing a qualitative/quantitative approach? | 28          | 5             | 0       |
| 3. Do scholars clearly outline the theoretical framework?                 | 30          | 1             | 2       |
| 4. Do researchers cater for ethical issues?                               | 33          | 0             | 0       |
| 5. Is the sampling technique suitable and will the sample epitomize the target group? | 33          | 0             | 0       |
| 6. Do studies provide details about data gathering processes and how they were derived? | 27          | 4             | 2       |
| 7. Do researchers explain the techniques used for keeping data organised retrievable? | 23          | 7             | 3       |
| 8. What approaches of data analysis are employed and are they suitable to address the research purpose? | 33          | 0             | 0       |
| 9. Do studies address the limitation regarding reliability and validity in the collection and analysis of data? | 30          | 0             | 3       |
| 10. Is there a strong progression from research question to implications drawn from data | 26          | 4             | 3       |

Source: Adapted from Treloar et al. (2000)

Table 2: Dataset

| Authors                  | Publication Year | Study Types | Methods                                                                 |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Abari                 | 2017             | Web Page    | Qualitative                                                             |
| 2. Abbott, Mutesi, & Norris, | 2015           | Report      | Qualitative                                                             |
| 3. Avramovic & Ringh     | 2018             | Thesis      | Quantitative & Qualitative: Survey, interview                           |
| 4. Bauer & Burnet        | 2013             | Journal Article | Qualitative                                                             |
| 5. Bayisenge             | 2015             | Journal Article | Quantitative & Qualitative: Survey, interview & FGD*                   |
| 6. Berry                 | 2015             | Journal Article | Qualitative                                                             |
| 7. Burnet                | 2008             | Journal Article | Qualitative: Ethnography                                                |
| 8. Burnet                | 2011             | Journal Article | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 9. Burnet                | 2012             | Book Chapter | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 10. Buss & Ali           | 2018             | Book chapter | Qualitative                                                             |
| 11. Cascais              | 2019             | Web Page    | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 12. Debuisscher & Ansoms | 2013            | Journal Article | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 13. Devlin & Elgie       | 2008             | Journal Article | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 14. Gatsinzi             | 2018             | Thesis      | Quantitative & Qualitative: Survey, interview                           |
| 15. Guariso, Ingelaere, & Verpoorten                  | 2017            | Working paper | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 16. Herndon & Randell    | 2013             | Journal Article | Qualitative: Interview                                                  |
| 17. Hogg                 | 2009             | Journal Article | Qualitative                                                             |
Source: The Present Study’s Authors

| Table 3: Main Themes |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Themes | Codes | Yes | | No | | Total |
| Benefits From WPI | Urban elite women: Self-confidence, social prestige, good salary, respect in public space, access to education | 29 | 88 | 4 | 12 | 33 | 100 |
| | Other (rural, poor, grassroots level) women: Nothing instead of over-workload, unpaid jobs, family conflicts | 29 | 88 | 4 | 12 | 33 | 100 |
| Political obstacles | Poliethmic exclusion | 28 | 85 | 5 | 15 | 33 | 100 |
| | Unfair elections and fictitious representation | 27 | 82 | 6 | 18 | 33 | 100 |
| Socioeconomic obstacles | Gender and power inequalities | 24 | 73 | 9 | 27 | 33 | 100 |
| | Persistent poverty | 23 | 70 | 10 | 30 | 33 | 100 |
| Legal obstacles | Laws offer non-protection to women | 23 | 70 | 10 | 30 | 33 | 100 |
| | Vague and unclear laws | 21 | 64 | 12 | 36 | 33 | 100 |
| | Gap between legislation and implementation | 20 | 61 | 13 | 39 | 33 | 100 |
| Educational obstacles | Low literacy rate and tertiary education enrolment | 20 | 61 | 13 | 39 | 33 | 100 |
Gender gap in university completion

| Gender gap in university completion | 19 | 58 | 14 | 42 | 33 | 100 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| **Health obstacles**              |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Lack of access to health care services | 18 | 55 | 15 | 45 | 33 | 100 |
| Unwanted pregnancies              | 17 | 52 | 16 | 48 | 33 | 100 |
| GBV                               | 15 | 45 | 18 | 55 | 33 | 100 |

Source: The Present Study’s Authors

3. Results

3.1 Do Rwandan Women Reap from WPI?

3.1.1 Considerable Benefits for Urban Elite Women

Majority of the studies (88 per cent) revealed that only a small number of urban and elite women have reaped great benefits from WPI and improved their self-confidence, access to well-paid positions in the parliament (See Figure 1) and ministries, better purchasing power including cars, clothing, and domestic servants. These forms of benefits are epitomized by the following testimony from one of the female interviewees:

*Economically also I have a better salary, I have a car that I could not have bought before, even if it is a loan but I pay it with my salary which also increases my confidence* (Uvuza, 2014: 114).

![Figure 1: Women Members of Parliament](http://grdspublishing.org/)

However, numerous studies stressed that this is just part of the reality as for instance, many women members of parliament (hereafter WMPs) are struggling to balance job and family roles including all the tasks assigned to them in their homes. Besides, the findings indicated that some
WMPs have basic levels of education and lack of leadership, analytical, as well as computer skills (Herndon & Randell, 2013; Wallace et al., 2008), without which their level of political involvement is almost impossible.

3.1.2 No Gain for Other Women (Rural, Poor, Grassroots Level)

Unlike urban elite women, elected officials at the local level (see Figure 2) are not compensated through wages or stipends from their participation in politics, as revealed by several studies (88 per cent). This is epitomized by the following testimony from a rural female interviewee:

> We never thought that things would be like this. A wife leaves her family for trainings, for communal labor, for meetings, and then a week has gone by. No time to work at home or to go to the fields. The husband who is there thinks you are going to come with something for the family [i.e., money or other tangible benefit]. You see, there is nothing but trouble and conflicts in the family. When you think about leaving this position, something that is not at all easy to do, you are accused of having the [genocidal] ideology. We have found that it’s not anything more than exploitation, creating poverty in our families ... we are going to die (Burnet, 2011: 330).

![Figure 2: Grassroots Women Leaders](source: The New Times (2019))

Besides, our findings revealed considerable anger and frustration from husbands over wives’ absence from household activities with "nothing to show for it". Consequently, the husbands tend to make their wives’ workload heavier by refusing to lend any assistance with all types of job. For rural women in leadership positions, it becomes an uphill task since most of them cannot afford to
hire house helpers to deal with numberless chores such as cooking, cleaning, caring for kids and collecting water at home, planting, weeding, and harvesting (Burnet, 2012).

3.2 Is WPI an End in Itself?

While WPI statistics may lead to the conclusion that Rwandan women are free from all issues that women experience in other nations, most of the studies included in our meta-synthesis argue otherwise. Instead, a number of women remain faced with the same serious gender inequality issues as before the implementation of pro-women policies (Avramovic & Ringh, 2018; Buss & Ali, 2018; Gatsinzi, 2018) (see Table 4):

![Figure 3: Women Jailed for Political Motives](image)
Source: Mashego (2018)

| Social Spheres | Obstacles | Descriptions |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. Political   | 1.1. Politico-ethnic exclusion | Most WMPs are from one ethnic, ruling party and women in opposition party are silenced or jailed: see Figure 3 (Cascais, 2019; Longman, 2006; Reyntjens, 2004; The WomenStats Blog, 2018; Warner, 2018). |
|                | 1.2. Unfair elections and fictitious representation | The population is informed in advance of the candidate for whom to vote. WMPs are members of the RPF or its coalition partners (Berry, 2015; Longman, 2006; Powley, 2005; Reyntjens, 2004). |
| 2. Socioeconomic | 2.1. Gender and power inequalities | Power relations and gender roles have not changed much. Many women face heavy workloads, power and gender roles imbalance (Burnet, 2008; Devlin & Elgie, 2008; Kantengwa, 2010). |
|                | 2.2. Persistent poverty | Many women live in extreme poverty in rural areas. Girls face |
unemployment and discrimination for pursuing careers traditionally regarded as male employment (The WomenStats Blog, 2018; Topping, 2014).

3. Legal

3.1. Laws offer non-protection to women

Law No 59/2008 of 10/09/2008 on prevention and punishment of gender-based violence: sexual harassment in public space is not legalised although sexual harassment by a husband or an employer is both illegal (Abari, 2017; Abbott et al., 2015; Kagaba, 2015).

3.2. Vague and unclear laws

Law No 59/2008 of 10/09/2008 on prevention and punishment of gender-based violence in Article 8: The article is unclear as regards women’s motherhood leave (Ibid).

3.3. Gap between legislation and implementation

Women do not always have the right to own the property by acquiring a property certificate because of men's reluctance (Bayisenge, 2015).

4. Education

4.1. Low literacy rate and tertiary education enrolment

Public tertiary education enrolment in 2016: Male 70% vs Female 30% (The Ministry of Education, 2016).

| Exit Award (2015-2016) | Male | Female |
|------------------------|------|--------|
| Bachelor’s Degree      | 9,047| 8,725  |
| Master’s Degree        | 605  | 316    |
| Ph.D.                  | 2    | 0      |

Source: The Ministry of Education, 2017

4.2. Gender gap in university completion

Literacy rate: 72.1% Male vs 39.1% Females are able to write (The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2015).

5. Health

5.1. Lack of access to health care services

60% of women cannot access health care services due to lack of money (The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2015).

5.2. Unwanted pregnancies

Half of all pregnancies

5.3. GBV

One in five are victims of sexual violence (The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012)

Source: The Present Study’s Authors

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The abovementioned findings reveal that, although WPI has opened opportunities for a few women to enter elite positions (Schindler, 2011), many women are not better-of and patriarchal attitudes are still deep-rooted. Specifically, WPI has failed to deeply change women’s status quo and has increased politico-ethnic exclusion instead (Longman, 2006; Pottier, 2002; Reyntjens, 2004). Some scholars credit these failures to the current authoritarian nature of Rwandan government that utilizes WPI under the guise of democracy as a way for attracting foreign investors and aids donors rather than allowing WMPs to promote women-friendly policies, tolerance for ethnic and political dissent (Bauer & Burnet, 2013; Hogg, 2009; Longman, 2006; Reinh, 2019). WPI shortcomings are thought to stem from the fact that the parliamentary elections are fabricated, which confirms “the image of a cosmetic operation for international consumption” (Reyntjens, 2004:186). This also corroborates The Norwegian Institute of Human Rights election observers report that witnessed fraud in parliamentary elections (Samset & Dalby, 2003).

The findings also reveal that WPI has reinforced the status quo (Guariso et al., 2017), hence increasing poverty because local representatives do not receive wage, yet they spend all their time...
in performing political responsibilities rather than catering for income-generating activities. Further, another fact explaining this increase in poverty is that unemployment rate is very high even though the official data shows that poverty has reduced progressively since 11 years ago (The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2015). This finding confirms a recent report showing Rwandan poverty statistics have been manipulated for the sake of asserting economic miracle and maintaining Rwanda’s relationship with its major donors (Wilson & Blood, 2019).

Another important finding is that despite important numbers of WPI, women still face gender inequalities in private and public spheres. At home, for instance, domestic duties are still divided along traditional gender lines even though women have obtained political positions. It is as if, as long as family relations are based on traditional gender division of labor, men and women cannot engage equally in politics. This finding is supported by Mosedale’s (2005) study indicating that economic and political empowerment of women without mechanisms to eradicate traditional gender division of labor at home and at work is not enough to bring gender equality.

Further, the findings revealed that women legislators are obliged to protect the RPF political party interests rather than protecting women’s rights. This finding supports Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler’s (2005) study stating that in undemocratic countries like Rwanda, increased women representation in political life does not translate into elected representatives’ responsiveness to women’s rights and concerns. Thus, this finding confirms the multi-faceted theoretical framework of women’s political representation suggested by Coffé (2012) as a suitable model for understanding the impact of WPI on gender equality in Rwanda. More particularly, while this model allows to understand WPI weaknesses in general, it also indicates that the representation in place is more descriptive than anything else.

The present study’s findings bear significant implications in that they generate a theory that WPI is not an end in itself. One of the explanations to this is that, contrary to the roots of women’s rights in feminism in European countries (McLaughlin, 2014), Rwanda's promotion of gender equality in general, and WPI in particular, has not resulted from grassroots women's movements, but primarily from top-down RPF's policy agenda (Burnet, 2008; Debusscher & Ansoms, 2013). Given that, Rwandan women still face different serious inequalities in different social spheres including politico-ethnic exclusion, GBV, gender roles and power inequalities, lack of access to health care, service and legal protection, etc. Hence, one would hope that this research will probably arouse the Rwandan government in cooperation with grassroots women’s activist groups, and human rights activists to address the above-mentioned gender biases. Besides, this study revealed
that some female politicians needed technology-related skills, leadership skill, gender, and feminist analytical skills. In order to provide a firm foundation for WPI, this research will possibly inspire Rwandan government and civil society to plan necessary strategies for tackling this issue.

In a nutshell, considering that this study provides a general overview of different shortcomings of WPI in Rwanda, further research remains acutely needed to theorize the above-mentioned problems, hence exploring possible solutions. Given that the above findings point to a situation where women participation in Rwandan politics yields uneven, incongruous and somewhat deviating outcomes, which is always strongly refuted by the government, future studies may need to devise new interdisciplinary approaches to deeply analyse the Rwandan situation. Women political participation is often stifled by various social issues including patriarchy and related gender misconceptions (Debusscher & Ansoms, 2013). We therefore recommend that future research dwell on images, stereotypes and media representation of women in Rwandan political instances.

References

Abari, N. (2017). Rwanda’s Path to Gender Equity. Retrieved June 8, 2018, from https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2017/10/18/rwandas-path-to-gender-equity/

Abbott, P., Mutesi, L., & Norris, E. (2015). Gender Analysis for sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance. Kigali: Oxfam International, Rwanda. https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.3924.3042

Asiedu, E., Branstette, C., Gaekwad-Babulal, N., & Malokele, N. (2018). The effect of women’s representation in parliament and the passing of gender sensitive policies. In Issues on African Development I. Philadelphia: American Economic Association. Retrieved from https://www.aeaweb.org/conference/2018/preliminary/1875?q=eNo1i0EKgCAUBe_y1i4qaOM5uoDkXCeEvo9fChHvmmbtZmAmQ00jE-XNJTNJD5V2iMKApGxK9VoBApHJ0uR3drLUXjdrJvrBCYK81D-6xJ3-UO6sRmazShPHr1XCJw

Avramovic, A., & Ringh, S. (2018). Post-genocide gender equality: Understanding the gender equality process within the political sphere after the Rwandan genocide against the Tutsi. Södertörn University.

Bauer, G., & Burnet, J. E. (2013). Gender quotas, democracy, and women’s representation in Africa: Some insights from democratic Botswana and autocratic Rwanda. Women’s Studies International Forum, 41(2), 103–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.05.012
Bayisenge, J. (2015). Women’s land rights in the context of the land tenure reform in Rwanda – the experiences of policy implementers. *Journal of Eastern African Studies, 9*(1), 74–90. 
https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2014.985496

Berry, M. E. (2015). When “bright futures” fade: Paradoxes of women’s empowerment in Rwanda. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 41*(1), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1086/681899

Boeije, H. R., Wesel, F. van, & Alisic, E. (2011). Making a difference: towards a method for weighing the evidence in a qualitative synthesis. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice, 17*(4), 657–663. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2753.2011.01674.x

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478073506qp063oa

Burnet, J. E. (2008). Gender Balance and the Meanings of Women in Governance in Postgenocide Rwanda. *African Affairs, 107*(428), 361–386. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adn024

Burnet, J. E. (2011). Women have found respect: Gender quotas, symbolic representation and female empowerment in Rwanda. *Politics & Gender, 7*(3), 303–334. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X11000250

Burnet, J. E. (2012). Women’s empowerment and cultural change in Rwanda. In S. Franceschet, L. M. Krook, & M. J. Piscopo (Eds.), *The impact of gender quotas* (pp. 190–207). Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199830091.003.0012

Buss, D., & Ali, J. (2018). Rwanda: Women’s Political Participation in Post-Conflict State-Building. In F. N. Aolán, N. Cahn, D. F. Hayne, & N. Valji (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199300983.013.45

Cascais, A. (2019). Rwanda – real equality or gender-washing? Retrieved October 8, 2019, from https://www.dw.com/cda/en/rwanda-real-equality-or-gender-washing/a-47804771

Childs, S. (2004). *New Labour’s women MPs: women representing women*. London: Routledge.

Coffé, H. (2012). Conceptions of female political representation: Perspectives of Rwandan female representatives. *Women’s Studies International Forum, 35*(4), 286–297. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2012.05.004
Debusscher, P., & Ansoms, A. (2013). Gender equality policies in Rwanda: Public relations or real transformations? *Development and Change, 4*(5), 1111–1134.  
https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12052

Devlin, C., & Elgie, R. (2008). The effect of increased women’s representation in parliament: The case of Rwanda. *Parliamentary Affairs, 61*(1), 237–254. https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsn007

Dollar, D., Fisman, R., & Gatti, R. (2001). Are women really the “fairer” sex? Corruption and women in government. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, 46*(4), 423–429.  
https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-2681(01)00169-X

Gatsinzi, P. (2018). *Women participation in politics at the grassroots in Kicukiro Sector in Rwanda.* State University of New York.

Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information and Libraries Journal, 26*(2), 91–108.  
https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x

 Guariso, A., Ingelaere, B., & Verpoorten, M. (2017). *Female political representation in the aftermath of ethnic violence: A comparative analysis of Burundi and Rwanda* (No. 2017/74).  
https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2017/298-4

Herndon, G., & Randell, S. (2013). Surviving genocide, thriving in politics: Rwandan women’s power. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 5*(1), 69–96.  
https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v5i1.2779

Hogg, C. L. (2009). Women’s political representation in post-conflict Rwanda: A politics of inclusion or exclusion? *Journal of International Women’s Studies, 11*(3), 34–55.

Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender equality and women’s empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1. *Gender & Development, 13*(1), 13–24.  
https://doi.org/10.1080/13552070512331332273

Kagaba, M. (2015). Women’s experiences of gender equality laws in rural Rwanda: the case of Kamonyi District. *Journal of Eastern African Studies, 9*(4), 574–592.  
https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2015.1112934

Kantengwa, M. J. (2010). The will to political power: Rwandan women in leadership. *Bulletin-Institute of Development Studies, 41*(5), 72–80. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2010.00168.x

Kayumba, C. (2010). *Understanding High Presence of Women in Rwanda’s Parliament.* Germany: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.
Kwizera, E. (2019). Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in parliament worldwide. Retrieved November 18, 2019, from https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/2018-left-rwandans-more-inclusive-parliament

Lawless, J. L. (2004). Politics of presence? Congresswomen and symbolic representation. Political Research Quarterly, 57(1), 81–99. https://doi.org/10.1177/106591290405700107

Longman, T. (2006). Rwanda: Achieving equality or serving an authoritarian state? In B. Gretchen & H. E. Britton (Eds.), Women in African Parliaments (pp. 133–150). London: Lynne Rienner.

Mashego, L. (2018). A woman who tried to run for the Rwandan presidency still faces 20 years in jail. Retrieved November 18, 2019, from https://www.w24.co.za/Work/Jobs/another-woman-who-runs-for-the-rwandan-presidency-faces-20-years-in-jail-20180827

McLaughlin, J. (2014). Feminist social and political theory: Contemporary debates and dialogues. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mosedale, S. (2005). Assessing women’s empowerment: towards a conceptual framework. Journal of International Development, 17(2), 243–257. https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.1212

Mukashema, I., Bokore, N., King, R., Husain, A., & McGrath, S. (2019). Challenges of Gender Mainstreaming in Collaborative Transnational Research. PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences, 5(2), 252–268. https://doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2019.52.252268

Pottier, J. (2002). Re-imagining Rwanda: Conflict, survival and disinformation in the late twentieth century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511491092

Powley, E. (2005). Rwanda: Women Hold Up Half the Parliament. In J. Ballington & A. Karam (Eds.), Women in parliament: Beyond numbers, a revised edition (pp. 154–163). Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

Reinl, H. (2019). “Feminist utopia” in post-genocide Rwanda? Dismantling the narrative around women’s political representation. London and Berlin. Retrieved from https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/journal/2018/12/18/feminist-utopia-in-post-genocide-rwanda-dismantling-the-narrative-around-womens-political-representation

Reyntjens, F. (2004). Rwanda, ten years on: From genocide to dictatorship. African Affairs, 103(411), 177–210. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adh045

Samset, I., & Dalby, O. (2003). Rwanda: Presidential and parliamentary elections 2003. Oslo: The Norwegian Institute of Human Rights/NORDEM.
Schindler, K. (2011). Do new opportunities arise for women in post-war countries? The case of Rwanda. *Weekly Report, DIW Berlin, 7*(3). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10419/57677

Schwindt-Bayer, L. A., & Mishler, W. (2005). An integrated model of women’s representation. *The Journal of Politics, 67*(2), 407–428. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2508.2005.00323.x

Straus, S. (2006). *The order of genocide: Race, power, and war in Rwanda*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Thankachan, S., & Riaz, S. (2018). Corporate stereotyping of women at workplace. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences, 4*(1), 186–200. https://doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2018.41.186200

The Ministry of Education. (2016). 2016 Education statistical yearbook. Kigali: The Government of Rwanda.

The Ministry of Education. (2017). Education Statistics. Kigali: The Government of Rwanda.

The Ministry of Justice. (2016). Law governing matrimonial regimes, donations and successions. Kigali: Official Gazette n°31. Retrieved from http://www.minijust.gov.rw/fileadmin/Law_and_Regulations/Official_Gazette_no_31_of_01.08.2016.pdf

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. (2012). *Rwanda demographic and health survey*. Kigali: The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda.

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. (2015). *Integrated household living conditions survey (EICV4)*. Kigali: The Government of Rwanda.

The New Times. (2019). RPF picks youth, women grassroots leaders. Retrieved November 18, 2019, from https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/rpf-picks-youthwomen-grassroots-leaders

The WomenStats Blog. (2018). Women in Rwanda: The Truth about gender equality. Retrieved February 14, 2018, from https://womanstats.wordpress.com/2018/02/13/women-in-rwanda-the-truth-about-gender-equality/

Topping, A. (2014). Rwanda’s women make strides towards equality 20 years after the genocide. Retrieved March 15, 2018, from https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/apr/07/rwanda-women-empowered-impoverished

Treloar, C., Champness, S., Simpson, P. L., & Higginbotham, N. (2000). Critical appraisal checklist for qualitative research studies. *Indian Journal of Pediatrics, 67*(5), 347–351. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02820685
Uvuza, J. (2014). *Hidden inequalities: Rwandan female politicians’ experiences of balancing family and political responsibilities*. University of Newcastle. Retrieved from theses.ncl.ac.uk/jspui/handle/10443/2475

Uwineza, P., & Pearson, E. (2009). Sustaining women’s gains in Rwanda: The influence of indigenous culture and post-genocide politics. Kigali: The Institute for Inclusive Security.

Wallace, C., Haerpfer, C., & Abbott, P. (2008). Women in Rwandan Politics and Society. *International Journal of Sociology, 38*(4), 111–125. https://doi.org/10.2753/IJS0020-7659380406

Warner, G. (2018). Rwanda Ranks In The Top 5 For Gender Equity. Do Its Teen Girls Agree? Retrieved February 21, 2019, from https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/01/10/577018509/rwanda-ranks-in-the-top-5-for-gender-equity-do-its-teen-girls-agree

Wilson, T., & Blood, D. (2019). Rwanda: Where even poverty data must toe Kagame’s line. Retrieved August 19, 2019, from https://www.ft.com/content/683047ac-b857-11e9-96bd-8e884d3ea203