

TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GENDER ATTITUDES IN AFRICA

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Abstract: Gender attitudes and its factors continue to be debated in an era where gender equality remains a priority to countries in the world. Modernization theorists have assumed a predictable positive pattern of the influence of economic development on gender attitudes, thereby arguing that higher levels of economic development such as GDP per Capita, increases support for gender equality across countries. Whereas this has been proven in European and Western countries, it is difficult to generalize the results to African countries as the phenomenon is understudied on the continent. Using data from the 5th round of the Afrobarometer survey and multiple regression/multi-level analysis, this study investigated the influence of economic development, in addition to other socio-cultural factors, on gender attitudes in 34 African countries. The study revealed that *a*) among countries in Africa, economic development, in this case GDP per Capita, does not significantly influence attitudes towards gender equality; *b*) people's ethnic background influences their attitudes towards gender equality; and *c*) Gender attitudes are strongly influenced by education, employment status and religious denomination.

Keywords: Africa, gender attitudes, gender equality, economic development, ethnicity.

INTRODUCTION

One of the main focus of gender discourse has been on attaining gender equality across the world. Scholars and advocates, through research and initiatives, are creating awareness and advocating for equality between men and women, and these efforts are yielding remarkable results. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2017), the world is making a steady progress in closing the gap between men and women in different spheres. The report, which gives the performance of various countries in achieving gender equality, shows that on

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the average, about 144 countries (covered in the report) have achieved 96 per cent gender parity in health outcomes, 95 per cent in educational attainment, 58 per cent in economic participation (reversed progress) and 23 per cent in political empowerment (unchanged since 2016) (Global Gender Gap Index 2017). Despite the progress in achieving equality at the global level, the situation is stagnant or reversed in some regions/countries.

Africa is one of the regions that have been reported to be making progress in achieving gender parity. For example, Rwanda, is one of the first four countries in the world that has closed its overall gender gap by more than 80 per cent (Global Gender Gap Index 2017). Burundi, Benin, Botswana, Rwanda, Namibia and Guinea have closed more than 80 per cent of their gap on the economic participation and opportunity sub index. On the educational attainment sub index, Botswana has achieved parity; whereas Burundi, Kenya, South Africa, Swaziland, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland have achieved parity on the health and survival sub index, and finally, Rwanda has achieved a 50 per cent parity on the political empowerment sub index (out of four countries in the world) (Global Gender Gap Index 2017). Despite the encouraging progress made by some countries in Africa in achieving gender parity, a lot more remains to be done in the region as it appears that very few countries are making substantial progress. The encouraging progress made by these countries toward gender equality indicate attitudinal changes in traditional normative expectations of gender roles (Inglehart, Norris 2003).

Several studies have shown that people in advanced industrial societies have become more liberal towards gender equality (Inglehart, Norris 2003; Bergh 2006). Previous studies have explored gender attitudes in Western countries including Europe and USA with very little focus on Africa. These studies, to a large extent, adopt a modernization perspective in the explanation of changes in attitudes towards gender equality. Explanations stemming from modernization theories have assumed a predictable pattern in peoples' attitudes: richer countries are more egalitarian than poorer countries, thereby putting a strong emphasis on economic development as a major

factor that influence attitudes towards equality. These findings are most often generalized to the rest of the world although the phenomenon is understudied in places like Africa, hence, it is difficult to ascertain if this trend holds in all cases. For example, as shown above, Rwanda is the fourth country in the world which is doing remarkable on the gender equality index (Global Gender Gap Report 2017), but the country has a smaller GDP per Capita (World Bank 2017) compared to other countries in the world. The point of this study is not to undermine the effect of economic development on gender attitudes in any way, but rather to explore the differences that exist among countries in Africa and to investigate other factors that possibly have stronger influence on attitudes towards equality.

Furthermore, some individual level factors that are likely to influence attitudes towards equality in Africa have not been explored. Individual factors that have been discovered include social background such as the level of education and experience with gender relations which includes participation in workforce (Bergh 2006; Wilensky 2002). This study argues that whilst these factors are relevant, other factors such as ethnicity and language are strong influencers of individuals' attitudes toward gender equality in Africa due to the ethnic polarization on the continent. However, these factors have not been established, and I attempt to do that in this study. In this regard, the study uses data from the 5th round of the Afrobarometer to investigate the following questions: What are the trends in peoples' attitudes toward the increasing demand or agenda of gender equality in Africa? What socio-cultural factors influence attitudes towards gender equality in Africa? Does economic development significantly influence gender attitudes towards equality in Africa? These issues are important because gender discourse have treated the position of women in the world homogenously, and advocated for gender equality without giving much attention to why interventions have not been successful in some parts of the world. The projection of the factors that influence gender attitudes in European countries onto African countries is very likely to culminate into ineffectiveness of gender equality policies. Therefore, before agi-

tating for gender equality and the liberation of women, there is the need to understand peoples' attitudes towards the agenda, and the country specific factors that influence them for the formulation of appropriate measures/policies.

The article has been organised in the following ways: The first section provides a brief overview of the findings of current studies and existing theories/models that explain peoples' attitudes towards gender equality, and elaborate the hypotheses for the study. The second section deals with the methods that were used in the study, detailing the indicators, their measurements and strategies that were adopted for the analysis. The third section comprises the data analysis, and the final part is devoted to a brief discussion and conclusions.

GENDER EQUALITY AND THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP

In order to start the discussion on gender attitudes, it is crucial to have an overview of gender equality (the key elements that is used to measure it) and the global gender gap. This is crucial because gender attitudes measure peoples' views on gender equality issues, hence, a broad knowledge about countries and their performance in gender equality is a good point to start. Gender equality across the world has been of major concern to most, if not all, countries. Even though there is no single measure to capture all the dynamics of gender issues in society, there are key aspects of gender equality that have been studied. These key areas, which have been studied by organisations such as OECD and World Economic Forum include health, education, labour participation and politics.

The Global Gender Gap Index (2017) indicate that across the globe, 58 per cent of the gap between men and women have been closed on the sub-index Economic Participation and Opportunity, 95 per cent on the educational attainment, 96 per cent on the health and survival sub-index, and 23 per cent on political empowerment. The global gender gap index was constructed based on 4 sub-indexes (consisting of many indicators), namely, the Economic Participa-

Tab. 1.1. *Global rankings, 2017*

GLOBAL INDEX	ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND OPPORTUNITY				EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		HEALTH AND SURVIVAL		POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Country	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Iceland	1	0.878	14	0.798	57	0.995	114	0.969	1	0.750
Norway	2	0.830	8	0.816	38	0.999	80	0.973	4	0.530
Finland	3	0.823	16	0.793	1	1.000	46	0.978	5	0.519
Rwanda	4	0.822	7	0.820	113	0.951	1	0.980	3	0.536
Sweden	5	0.816	12	0.809	37	0.999	112	0.969	8	0.486
Nicaragua	6	0.814	54	0.702	34	1.000	1	0.980	2	0.576
Slovenia	7	0.805	13	0.801	1	1.000	1	0.980	11	0.440
Ireland	8	0.794	50	0.710	1	1.000	96	0.971	6	0.483
New Zealand	9	0.791	23	0.768	43	0.988	115	0.969	12	0.430
Philippines	10	0.790	25	0.764	1	1.000	36	0.979	13	0.416
France	11	0.778	64	0.683	1	1.000	54	0.977	9	0.453
Germany	12	0.778	43	0.720	98	0.970	70	0.975	10	0.447
Namibia	13	0.777	9	0.813	41	0.999	1	0.980	26	0.318
Denmark	14	0.776	36	0.728	1	1.000	95	0.971	16	0.406
United Kingdom	15	0.770	53	0.705	36	0.999	100	0.971	17	0.404
Canada	16	0.769	29	0.744	1	1.000	105	0.970	20	0.361
Bolivia	17	0.758	60	0.682	108	0.956	69	0.976	14	0.408
Bulgaria	18	0.756	51	0.710	80	0.980	36	0.979	23	0.346
South Africa	19	0.756	89	0.652	84	0.983	1	0.980	18	0.399
Latvia	20	0.756	15	0.798	1	1.000	1	0.980	41	0.246
Switzerland	21	0.755	31	0.743	83	0.993	90	0.972	28	0.314
Burundi	22	0.755	1	0.911	128	0.876	1	0.980	40	0.255
Barbados	23	0.750	2	0.877	1	1.000	83	0.973	82	0.150
Spain	24	0.746	81	0.657	45	0.988	81	0.973	22	0.354
Cuba	25	0.745	99	0.629	1	1.000	103	0.970	19	0.382
Belarus	26	0.744	5	0.927	35	0.999	45	0.979	5	0.773
Bahamas	27	0.743	3	0.871	1	1.000	50	0.978	98	0.122
Lithuania	28	0.742	28	0.748	1	1.000	1	0.980	42	0.241
Mozambique	29	0.741	17	0.789	130	0.857	56	0.977	24	0.340
Moldova	30	0.740	11	0.811	66	0.992	1	0.980	72	0.176
Belgium	31	0.739	46	0.716	1	1.000	63	0.976	37	0.264
Netherlands	32	0.737	82	0.657	1	1.000	108	0.970	25	0.323
Portugal	33	0.734	35	0.730	70	0.992	55	0.977	43	0.240
Argentina	34	0.732	111	0.596	44	0.988	1	0.980	21	0.356
Australia	35	0.731	42	0.724	1	1.000	104	0.970	48	0.232
Colombia	36	0.731	32	0.740	30	1.000	1	0.980	59	0.206
Estonia	37	0.731	38	0.728	1	1.000	36	0.979	52	0.218
Albania	38	0.728	70	0.673	87	0.988	120	0.968	31	0.284
Poland	38	0.728	55	0.702	31	1.000	1	0.980	49	0.230
Serbia	40	0.727	72	0.670	47	0.997	1	0.980	38	0.262
Costa Rica	41	0.727	104	0.620	40	0.999	79	0.974	27	0.314
Ecuador	42	0.724	93	0.642	54	0.996	57	0.977	32	0.262
Panama	43	0.722	62	0.691	55	0.995	1	0.980	51	0.222
Israel	44	0.721	65	0.681	1	1.000	98	0.971	47	0.232
Uganda	45	0.721	59	0.693	124	0.913	88	0.973	30	0.305
Botswana	46	0.720	6	0.822	1	1.000	48	0.978	122	0.079
Bangladesh	47	0.719	129	0.465	111	0.954	125	0.966	7	0.493
Peru	48	0.719	98	0.632	82	0.988	49	0.978	33	0.277
United States	49	0.718	19	0.776	1	1.000	82	0.973	96	0.124
Zimbabwe	50	0.717	48	0.710	89	0.988	68	0.976	62	0.197
Jamaica	51	0.717	39	0.725	1	1.000	93	0.972	74	0.171
Kazakhstan	52	0.713	30	0.744	48	0.997	36	0.979	93	0.130
Mongolia	53	0.713	20	0.775	85	0.983	107	0.969	107	0.102
Croatia	54	0.711	63	0.689	58	0.995	1	0.980	68	0.180
Honduras	55	0.711	74	0.669	29	1.000	78	0.974	81	0.200
Uruguay	56	0.710	91	0.645	32	1.000	1	0.980	53	0.216
Austria	57	0.709	80	0.660	84	0.988	72	0.975	54	0.216
Romania	58	0.708	57	0.698	56	0.994	1	0.980	75	0.156
Luxembourg	59	0.706	76	0.667	1	1.000	86	0.973	66	0.184
Venezuela	60	0.706	67	0.678	49	0.997	1	0.980	75	0.167
Ukraine	61	0.705	34	0.738	28	1.000	51	0.978	103	0.107
El Salvador	62	0.705	97	0.634	67	0.992	1	0.980	56	0.214
Chile	63	0.704	117	0.573	39	0.999	47	0.978	36	0.266
Lao PDR	64	0.703	22	0.769	118	0.833	74	0.974	87	0.137
Singapore	65	0.702	27	0.762	94	0.972	101	0.971	101	0.110
Bosnia and Herzegovina	66	0.702	116	0.575	92	0.981	42	0.979	35	0.275
Macedonia	67	0.702	96	0.636	90	0.985	65	0.976	58	0.209
FYR	68	0.700	69	0.674	125	0.910	62	0.976	44	0.239
Vietnam	69	0.698	33	0.738	97	0.972	138	0.957	97	0.124
Dominican Republic	70	0.697	95	0.638	72	0.991	1	0.980	69	0.191
Russian Federation	71	0.696	41	0.724	50	0.997	1	0.980	121	0.085
Ghana	72	0.695	18	0.784	119	0.931	118	0.968	112	0.097

Source: *World Economic Forum; Global Gender Gap Report, 2017*

tion and Opportunity, the Educational Attainment, the Health and survival and the Political Empowerment sub-indexes. The Economic participation sub-index is made up of variables such as ratio of female labour force participation (International Labour Organization 2016); wage equality between men and women doing the same work (World Economic Forum 2016); female technical workers and professionals compared to males and ratio of female senior officials, managers and legislators (World Economic Forum 2016). The health and survival sub-index consists of healthy life expectancy of females

Tab.1.2. (Cont'd) *Global rankings, 2017*

GLOBAL INDEX		ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND OPPORTUNITY		EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		HEALTH AND SURVIVAL		POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT		
Country	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Leotha	73	0.685	84	0.655	1	1.000	35	0.970	84	0.147
Slovak Republic	74	0.694	79	0.662	1	1.000	1	0.980	89	0.135
Thailand	75	0.694	24	0.767	106	0.658	51	0.978	127	0.072
Kenya	76	0.694	44	0.720	130	0.629	1	0.980	85	0.147
Maldives	77	0.693	88	0.653	83	0.988	75	0.974	79	0.157
Greece	78	0.692	73	0.670	76	0.991	89	0.973	88	0.136
Belize	79	0.692	21	0.772	85	0.988	81	0.976	139	0.052
Madagascar	80	0.692	48	0.716	114	0.650	76	0.974	94	0.127
Mexico	81	0.692	124	0.518	93	0.996	98	0.977	34	0.276
Italy	82	0.692	118	0.571	60	0.995	123	0.967	46	0.234
Myanmar*	83	0.691	26	0.754	95	0.975	66	0.976	132	0.059
Indonesia	84	0.691	108	0.610	88	0.986	60	0.976	63	0.193
Kazakhstan	85	0.691	78	0.664	78	0.990	1	0.980	92	0.130
Suriname	89	0.689	105	0.618	73	0.991	91	0.972	71	0.177
Cameroon	87	0.689	40	0.725	129	0.668	92	0.972	64	0.191
Czech Republic	88	0.688	92	0.643	1	1.000	1	0.980	91	0.130
Capit Verde	89	0.688	106	0.615	93	0.980	110	0.969	70	0.178
Brazil	90	0.688	83	0.655	1	1.000	1	0.980	110	0.101
Senegal	91	0.688	102	0.624	132	0.631	87	0.973	20	0.268
Cyprus	92	0.688	66	0.679	44	0.988	126	0.966	115	0.093
Malta	93	0.682	107	0.610	1	1.000	102	0.971	85	0.146
Georgia	94	0.679	75	0.669	81	0.989	124	0.967	114	0.093
Tajikistan	95	0.678	52	0.708	115	0.641	87	0.976	117	0.088
Paraguay	96	0.678	90	0.652	63	0.994	97	0.971	113	0.094
Armenia	97	0.677	71	0.671	42	0.999	143	0.939	111	0.099
Azerbaijan	98	0.676	45	0.717	91	0.984	142	0.941	131	0.063
Cambodia	99	0.676	56	0.698	121	0.621	1	0.980	106	0.104
China	100	0.674	86	0.654	102	0.663	144	0.936	77	0.160
Malawi	101	0.672	85	0.654	126	0.606	77	0.974	81	0.152
Brunei Darussalam	102	0.671	61	0.692	78	0.990	111	0.969	140	0.031
Hungary	103	0.670	68	0.675	88	0.992	36	0.979	138	0.035
Malaysia	104	0.670	87	0.654	77	0.991	53	0.977	112	0.098
Swaziland	105	0.670	112	0.595	59	0.995	1	0.980	102	0.109
Maldives	106	0.669	94	0.641	1	1.000	133	0.963	128	0.072
Liberia	107	0.669	58	0.695	138	0.772	85	0.973	45	0.236
India	108	0.669	119	0.576	112	0.652	141	0.942	15	0.407
Sri Lanka	109	0.669	123	0.521	86	0.986	1	0.980	65	0.188
Guatemala	110	0.667	101	0.626	103	0.962	1	0.980	109	0.102
Nepal	111	0.664	130	0.599	116	0.636	116	0.969	80	0.155
Mauritius	112	0.664	113	0.595	89	0.992	1	0.980	116	0.090
Guinea	113	0.659	10	0.813	149	0.609	132	0.964	76	0.162
Japan	114	0.657	114	0.580	74	0.991	1	0.980	123	0.078
Ethiopia	115	0.656	109	0.604	134	0.619	44	0.979	50	0.223
Senegal	116	0.652	4	0.864	142	0.714	131	0.964	128	0.065
Tunisia	117	0.651	131	0.446	99	0.966	71	0.975	55	0.216
Korea, Rep.	118	0.650	121	0.533	105	0.960	84	0.973	90	0.134
Gambia, The	119	0.649	100	0.627	127	0.696	122	0.968	104	0.106
United Arab Emirates	120	0.649	130	0.499	61	0.994	129	0.965	67	0.180
Burkina Faso	121	0.646	47	0.716	139	0.629	134	0.963	125	0.075
Nigeria	122	0.641	57	0.728	135	0.613	94	0.972	135	0.052
Angola	123	0.640	119	0.560	139	0.768	44	0.976	39	0.262
Bhutan	124	0.638	103	0.622	123	0.916	137	0.959	114	0.096
Fig*	125	0.638	127	0.479	71	0.991	36	0.979	105	0.104
Slovenia	126	0.632	120	0.537	75	0.991	136	0.941	117	0.097
Algeria	127	0.629	132	0.442	107	0.957	106	0.970	86	0.145
Timor-Leste	128	0.628	136	0.393	117	0.934	43	0.979	60	0.205
Kuwait	129	0.628	125	0.518	52	0.996	117	0.969	141	0.037
Qatar	130	0.626	122	0.523	31	1.000	117	0.965	143	0.036
Turkey	131	0.625	128	0.471	101	0.965	99	0.977	118	0.088
Mauritania	132	0.614	134	0.417	131	0.853	107	0.970	57	0.214
Cote d'Ivoire	133	0.611	135	0.575	137	0.800	121	0.968	108	0.102
Egypt	134	0.608	115	0.413	104	0.960	99	0.971	119	0.087
Jordan	135	0.604	118	0.377	51	0.996	113	0.969	126	0.075
Morocco	136	0.598	137	0.391	122	0.920	128	0.965	100	0.117
Lebanon	137	0.596	133	0.440	109	0.954	109	0.970	142	0.039
Saudi Arabia	138	0.584	142	0.320	96	0.975	130	0.965	124	0.077
Mali	139	0.583	126	0.518	140	0.741	139	0.936	99	0.118
Iran, Islamic Rep.	140	0.583	140	0.357	100	0.965	135	0.963	136	0.046
Chad	141	0.575	77	0.667	144	0.572	73	0.974	120	0.087
Syria	142	0.568	144	0.274	110	0.954	1	0.980	130	0.063
Pakistan	143	0.546	143	0.309	136	0.802	140	0.948	95	0.127
Yemen	144	0.516	141	0.345	141	0.737	119	0.968	144	0.014

Source: *World Economic Forum; Global Gender Gap Report 2017*

compared to males and ratio of sex at birth. Finally, political empowerment is made up of females in parliamentary seats,

ministerial level and head of states compared to males (World Economic Forum 2016)

Table 1 shows the global ranking of countries in terms of their performance on the gender equality scale, as well on the individual sub-indexes with Iceland occupying the first position and Yemen the last on the ranking. The table shows a remarkable performance for educational attainment in particular across majority of the countries, as well as health and survival. What is worth noting is the poor performance on the political empowerment sub-index even for countries in the top 10 position. Why are performances on the other aspects of gender equality much better than political empowerment? Gender attitudes are not the same as gender equality, however, the two are intrinsically linked. Without egalitarian attitudes to gender equality, many attempts to achieve gender equality will be useless. Hence, it is important to find out what peoples' attitudes towards women's political empowerment (in addition to other aspects of gender equality) are, and why they are conservative towards this aspect of gender equality.

Gender equality in Africa and Gender Attitudes

Historically, a high number of African societies had a matrilineal descent, and this placed women at the centre of family and kinship, thereby, giving them ways through which they could exercise authority (strong women organizations, queen mothers, spiritual leaders, advisors, regents and co-rulers among others) (Sheldon 2016). However, as the presence of European missionaries, officials and traders increased in Africa, many women began to lose their economic autonomy and power. This worsened under colonization, and other external factors such as the spread of Christianity, Islam and modernization which promoted the shift to patrilineal societies (Stoeltje 2017).

In the 1950's, the UN and other organisations started an interrogation of cultural practices (such as female genital mutilation, early marriages, and female infanticide among others) that posed a threat to the health and rights of women in Afri-

ca, and advocated for the elimination of these practices (United Nations 1979). The late 1990s saw an intensification of efforts to abolish these practices, and the International Conference for Population and Development held in 1994 was devoted to the discussion of the rights of girls and women (UNFPA 2014). This conference, to a large extent chartered the course of women's empowerment and gender equality in Africa, as governments were urged to abolish FGM and encourage equal treatment of boys and girls. Additionally, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, which had a 3rd goal of promoting women's empowerment and gender equality helped boost the agenda as leaders of African countries also agreed to this goal (Murunga 2016). Subsequently, the African Union adopted several regional frameworks such as *The Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa* (2003), *The Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights* (2006), and *The Framework for Action and Recommendations on Harmful Traditional Practices* (2011) among others, all of which were in support for women's empowerment and gender equality (Murunga 2016).

Given the commitment towards gender equality in previous years, the beginning of the 20th century was characterized by significant changes in traditional gender roles in the world, although these changes vary among countries (Inglehart, Norris 2010). In Africa, the last half of the 20th century brought several expanded opportunities for women in spheres such as education, employment and family expectations among others (Sheldon 2016). Statistics show that the percentage of females in labour force is increasing, as well as enrolment in school for girls. In countries such as Mozambique, South Africa, Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Liberia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Togo, and Guinea among others, women constitute almost 50 per cent of the labor force (World Bank Data 2017). Similarly, Rwanda, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Senegal, Mauritius and Tunisia among others score above 1 (advantage for girls) on the gender parity index for school enrolment (primary and secondary) (World Bank Data 2017). However, these improvements are not ubiquitous on the continent, as

more remains to be done in several other countries and indicators of gender equality.

Over time, these changes in gender roles have altered cultural attitudes toward gender equality (Inglehart, Norris 2010). However, this attitudinal changes also differ among countries. In this respect, many studies have been conducted to investigate and understand the causes of attitudinal changes toward gender equality and why they differ across countries. A group of scholars (Inglehart, Norris 2010; Bergh 2006; Wilensky 2002) found a strong influence of the level of economic development (whether directly or through other factors) on peoples' attitudes towards gender equality. For example, a cross-national study by Inglehart and Norris (2010), revealed affluent countries such as Finland, Sweden, Canada, Norway, New Zealand and others as having more egalitarian attitudes compared to poorer countries (countries with small GDPs) such as Nigeria, Armenia, Jordan etc. Therefore, they concluded that richer countries are more liberal or show more support for gender equality than poorer countries. This finding is also consistent with those of Bergh (2006); Wilensky (2002); as well as Voicu & Tufiş (2012) who argued that other factors that influence gender attitudes are all associated with the level of economic development (resulting from modernization) of a country.

Other factors which have been found to influence gender attitudes include social background characteristics such as increasing levels of education (Bergh 2006; Wilensky 2002; Brewster and Padavic 2000; Cunningham et al. 2005) work experience or women's participation in labor force (Bergh 2006; Wilensky 2002; Banaszak, Plutzer 1993; Baxter, Kane 1995; Bolzendahl, Myers 2004) and religious orientation (Inglehart, Norris 2010; Alexander, Welzel 2011; Guiso et al. 2003). The findings of these studies revealed that increasing levels of education have a positive influence on gender attitudes, thereby, producing more liberal attitudes toward gender equality among people with higher levels of educational attainment. Additionally, women's participation in the labour force have been found to alter gender relations, and leads to more support for gender equality as men and women work

alongside. Finally, studies have found strong influence of religious orientation on gender attitudes. Guiso et al. (2003), for example, found out that religiosity has a negative influence on attitudes towards working women. Their study revealed that people who are religious have less favourable attitudes towards working women, and this effect, varies depending on the religious denomination, thereby, concluding that there is a more positive association of attitudes among Christian religions.

Whereas these studies have explored and shed light on the factors discussed above as influencing peoples' attitudes towards gender equality in European countries, studies on Africa is lacking, thereby, making it difficult to generalize the results of previous studies to the cases of countries in Africa. Also, other factors that is specific to countries in Africa, particularly ethnicity, have not been explored at all. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring the factors mentioned above in 34 African countries in order to ascertain if they influence peoples' attitudes towards gender equality in the same way (as have been found by previous studies), and to introduce a new factor – ethnicity – in shaping peoples' gender attitudes. This is crucial in the formulation of policies on gender equality in Africa due to the fact that countries on the continent are significantly different from European countries.

Theoretical framework and hypotheses

The term gender attitudes can be referred to as peoples' attitudes regarding gender relations in society (Bergh 2006). For the purposes of this study, gender attitudes refers to peoples' expectations about what gender relations should be like (Bergh 2006). Several theories/models have been adopted in explaining the factors that influence peoples' attitudes towards gender equality, why they change and why they differ across countries.

Modernization theories have been widely used and debated in explaining this phenomenon. One group of scholars (Inglehart 1977, 1990; Inglehart, Norris 2003; Lundmark 1995)

propose an explanation of change in values as the cause of changes in attitudes towards gender equality. According to Inglehart, the values of advanced industrial societies continue to change from “materialist” to “postmaterialist”. Materialist values, which is characterized by the basic needs for survival, such as food and shelter, are associated to traditional industrial societies. Postmaterialist values, on the other hand, is characterized by self-expression values and quality of life which subsequently lead to the demise of traditional family values and alters peoples’ attitudes towards gender equality into egalitarianism. However, the shift towards postmaterialist values are as a result of rapid/continuous industrialization and economic development, which in effect, influence peoples’ attitudes towards gender equality. These values, according to Inglehart and Norris (2003) are becoming widespread across advanced societies through generational replacement, and thus, provides the basis for which attitudes towards gender equality are more liberal in those societies than in developing countries.

On other hand, another group of modernization theorists, posit a structural explanation to the changes in gender attitudes in modern societies (Wilensky 2002; Davis 1984; Goode 1968; Inkeles 1980; Levy 1969). They argue that due to a continuous process of industrialization, “rich democracies” have come to share many similarities which has resulted in a “convergence” among these societies. The continuous process of industrialization result in occupational structure changes, that is, the shift from demand for unskilled manual workers to skilled workers. This shift, coupled with the low economic benefits of having children, has provided incentives and increased women’s participation in the labour market. The modern labour market requires higher education for employment, thereby, increasing the educational levels and labour force participation of women. Therefore, this change in gender relations (women and men both working and studying alongside) influence their attitudes towards gender equality to becoming more liberal (Wilensky 2002).

Although the theoretical perspectives of these two groups of scholars are different, they share a strong emphasis on economic development as a major factor that influences peoples’

attitudes towards gender equality at the aggregate level. Inglehart argues that the economic development of a country influences values, which serves as the key leading to changes in peoples' attitudes whereas Wilensky (2002), on the other hand argues that economic development should correlate with peoples' attitudes towards gender equality at the aggregate level. From these two perspectives, we expect economic development to be correlated with gender attitudes at the aggregate level either directly (Wilensky 2002) or through values (Inglehart, Norris 2003). Either way, the theory assumes that countries with higher levels of economic development have more liberal attitudes towards gender equality than countries with low levels of economic development. While these assertions have been proven in most European and Western countries, I argue that this may not be the trend for most African countries, and hypothesize that:

a) while economic development influences peoples' attitudes towards gender equality in Africa, countries with higher levels of economic development, for example high GDP Per Capita, are not significantly different from those with low levels of economic development in their attitudes. Furthermore, other factors, apart from economic development, influence gender attitudes. At the individual level, Wilensky (2002) proposes a structural explanation and highlights factors such education and labour force participation as strong factors that influence peoples' gender attitudes. Similarly, the Cognitive model posits that education broadens up students' cognitive abilities and enables them to analyse or see social issues from different perspectives, thereby, altering their attitudes towards traditional gender roles and expectations (Werfhost, Graaf 2004). Additionally, interest-based and exposure-based models posit that people support agendas when they stand to benefit from it (Bolzendhal, Myers 2004). Therefore, women are more likely to support gender equality than men because it favours them (Voicu, Tufiş 2012), and working women are more likely to have liberal attitudes towards women in employment. The exposure based model argues that when people are exposed to pro-feminist ideas and situations that promote the agenda of equality, it influences their attitudes, thereby mak-

ing them pro-egalitarian. Education, socialization and personal experiences play a key role in this model. Through education and socialization, people learn about feminist ideas, and personal experiences of discrimination at work based on gender fuel peoples' support for equality (Voicu, Tufiş 2012). From these propositions, we expect education and work experience/employment status to have a strong influence on people's attitudes towards equality in Africa. Therefore, we expect that:

b) people with higher levels of education in Africa have more liberal attitudes towards gender equality;

c) women in Africa have more liberal attitudes towards gender equality compared to men, given that they have higher levels of education;

d) women who are working or have had work experience have more liberal attitudes compared to men who are not working or have not had any work experience. Moreover, the social change theory explains the mechanisms that may cause transformations in beliefs and attitudes. According to this theory, two key mechanisms – cohort replacement and intra-cohort change lead to the process of attitudinal changes. Cohort replacement, which is more relevant to this study, is characterized by the assumption that there is a formation of beliefs and attitudes during childhood and youthful stages which become a part of the person as an adult. Formative experiences include the political, social and economic situation that an individual was born and raised, and this shapes peoples' beliefs and attitudes (Mannheim 1952; Ryder 1965). Hence, every cohort is likely to be different taking into account their formative experiences, that is, the political, social and economic situation they experienced at the formative period (Voicu, Tufiş 2012). The end result is social change, where younger cohorts replace older cohorts and attitudinal changes are then passed on to generations. Therefore, we should expect a strong influence of age in attitudes towards gender equality and I derive my fifth hypothesis:

e) younger people in Africa have more liberal attitudes towards gender equality compared to older people. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, given the heterogeneity of Africa, some cultural factors which have not been explored by previ-

ous studies are likely to influence peoples' attitudes and this study aims to investigate them. Africa, a continent with 54 countries, is ethnically polarized with thousands of ethnic groups (Asante, Gyimah-Boadie 2004). Ethnicity plays an important role in most societies in Africa as it is based on people sharing similar culture and serves as the means by which people identify themselves. Societies with strong ethnic relations culminate in ethnocentrism and a resulting discrimination against people who are considered as minorities. The issue of discrimination against ethnic minorities has been discussed and debated among scholars in ethnic studies. Carlsson (2010), notes that ethnicity appears to be the major factor perpetuating discrimination. Ethnic discrimination is a problematic phenomenon and still persists in many countries despite the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation (Zschirnt, Ruedin 2016), and the victims of ethnic discrimination are mostly the minority groups (Zschirnt, Ruedin 2016). Therefore, the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities is very likely to influence their attitudes towards gender equality. As the interest based model posits, some people support gender equality because they stand to benefit from it (Bolzendhal, Myers 2004), therefore, achieving gender equality means more opportunities/benefits for the women of ethnic minorities and the improvement of their economic and social status, and hence, makes them more likely to support the agenda of gender equality compared to member of ethnic majorities. Therefore we expect that:

f) members of ethnic minorities have more liberal attitudes towards gender equality than members of ethnic majorities in Africa.

DATA AND METHODS

This study uses data from the 5th round of the Afrobarometer survey to address the issues raised. The Afrobarometer survey is a cross-cultural dataset that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance and economic conditions in more than 34 countries in Africa (www.afrobarometer.org).

The 5th round of the survey included 34 countries: Botswana, Tanzania, Togo, Burundi, Ghana, Mauritius, Zambia, Kenya, Cape Verde, Uganda, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Liberia, South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Lesotho, Morocco, Cote d'Ivoire, Tunisia, Benin, Guinea, Madagascar, Senegal, Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Mali and Niger. This study uses multiple regression and multi-level analysis to investigate the influence of individual and aggregate factors on peoples' attitudes towards gender equality in Africa. The use of multi-level here is appropriate due to the exploration of two levels of analysis in the study as used by Bergh (2016) for a similar purpose. Hence, the study uses GDP per Capita as a second level predictor. Data on GDP per Capita (for 2017 in US dollars) were obtained from the World Bank.

Dependent Variables

Attitudes towards gender equality have been measured by previous studies with questions in surveys relating to ideologies about gender relations in different spheres of society such as the family, participation of women in the labour force, political participation, and education. This study focuses on three theoretical dimensions of beliefs about gender equality: women's participation in political leadership, equal rights for women and educational priority for girls in the event of limited funds. In the Afrobarometer (2015), three questions (relating to politics, education and equal rights for women) are represented by 2 statements each. Women's participation in political leadership is captured by the item: "men make better political leaders than women, and should be elected rather than women; women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men". Equal rights for women is captured by the item: "in our country, women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do; women have always been subject to traditional laws and customs, and should remain so".

Finally, the educational priority of girls is also captured by the item: “if funds for schooling are limited, a boy should always receive an education in school before a girl”. Respondents were asked to choose one of the following options; “strongly agree with statement 1”, “agree with statement 1”, “strongly agree with statement 2”, “agree with statement 2”, “agree with neither”. For the purposes of this study, the items have been transformed into a likert scale of 5- points in an egalitarian direction, with higher values representing egalitarian values towards gender equality and combined into an index (from 0 to 1). However, this is not an ideal index as it only measures political participation, education and general right of women, and lacks measures relating to the family and work sector.

Independent Variables

Education, employment status, gender, ethnicity and GDP per capita, controlling for religious denomination, are the independent variables for this study. Education is measured with the question, “what is your highest level of education?” The answers ranged from “no formal education” to “completed university education”. Education is treated as a continuous variable in the study, and all the categories are maintained to ascertain the differences (if any) among the various levels of education and gender attitudes. Employment status is measured with the question, “Do you have a job that pays a cash income? If yes, is it full-time or part-time? If no, are you presently looking for a job? 0 = no (not looking), 1 = no (looking), 2 = yes, part time, 3 = yes, full time, and don’t know”. This has been transformed into a binary variable of people who are “employed” or “unemployed” for this study. Gender is recoded with males as 1 and females as 0. Age (centre scaled) is treated as a continuous variable.

Ethnicity is measured with the question, “which language is your mother tongue or language of origin? That is, the language of your group of origin?”. This was modified according to each country in the survey. The sample has more than 1000

ethnic groups for all observed countries. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the ethnic groups are classified (recoded) into two main groups; minority and majority. All ethnic groups that are considered to be ethnic minorities of the countries in the dataset are grouped under “minority” (1) and ethnic majorities are grouped under “majorities” (0). This classification is largely based on the number of observations of each ethnic group. This is because one classification or characteristic of ethnic majorities and minorities has to do with the numbers; in most cases, majorities mostly dominate a country with their numbers (Asante, Gyimah-Boadie 2004). Hence, for the purposes of this study, all ethnic groups which have less than 100 observations are placed in the category of minorities whereas all others are grouped under majority. Religious denomination is measured by the classification into “Christian”, “Muslim” and “Other”, and GDP per Capita is measured in US dollars.

Models

The analysis first explored individual factors that influence gender attitudes across African countries based on the structural explanations that have been outlined in this study. Hence, multiple regression models were built using individual factors; education, employment status, gender, ethnicity and age. Using these factors with the gender attitudes index that was created for the study, the equation of the model can be stated as:

$$\text{Gender Attitudes index} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Education} + \beta_2 \text{Employment} + \beta_3 \text{Gender} + \beta_4 \text{Ethnicity} + \beta_5 \text{Age}$$

Secondly, by combining the individual and 2nd level predictors we are able to explore which factors, sociocultural or economic development, influence gender attitudes the most. Therefore, a multi-level model was built using both the individual factors (with the exception of age) and GDP per Capita. The equation can be stated as:

$$\text{Gender Attitudes index} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}\text{Education} + \beta_{2j}\text{Employment} + \beta_{3j}\text{Gender} + \beta_{4j}\text{Ethnicity} + \beta_{5j}\text{Age} + \beta_{0j}\text{GDP}$$

RESULTS

Individual Level Analysis

Structural explanations as well as cognitive, interest-based and exposure models that have been outlined in this study have posited that social background characteristics influence peoples' attitudes towards gender equality. Therefore, I conduct a multiple linear regression to study the explanatory power of the factors: education, employment status, gender, ethnicity and age on gender attitudes at the individual level. I focus on general trends in attitudes across countries, and interpret age as a measure of generation. The analysis show varying results. Figure 1 shows the general trends of attitudes towards gender equality across the 34 countries, that is, the mean values of the index for each country. As can be seen from the graph, Botswana is the most egalitarian country whereas Niger is the most conservative. We can also observe from the graph that there is no wide gap between countries as their means are quite close to each other in terms of their performance on the index (see tab. 4). However, we also see some small but significant differences between countries in the Sub-Saharan African region compared to countries in North Africa. Botswana, Tanzania, Togo, Burundi, Ghana, Mauritius, Zambia, Kenya, Cape Verde, Uganda, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Liberia, South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland, which are in the Sub-Saharan region have the most liberal (bullets in blue on the graph) gender attitudes whereas North African countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco among others fall in the bottom (with red dots on the graph).

Another notable observation apart from regional differences in gender attitudes on the graph is that most of the countries in the bottom, that is, the countries that are more conservative in their attitudes are the Muslim dominated

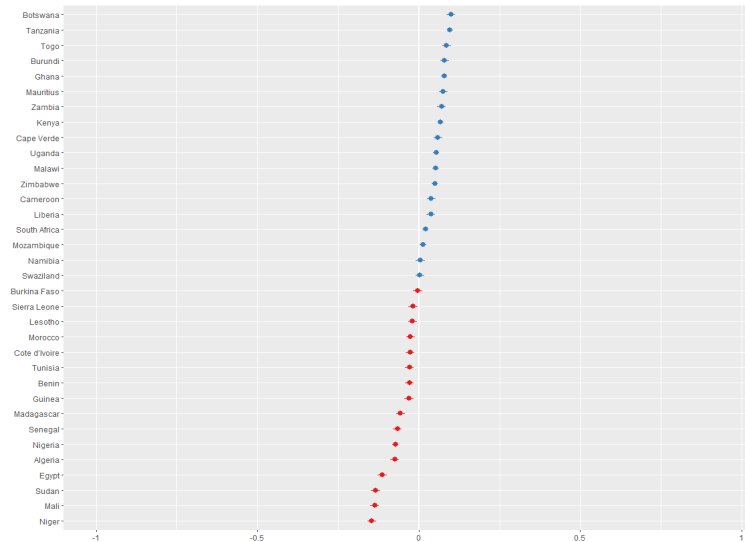


Fig. 1. Mean Gender Attitudes across Countries

countries, with Niger in the very last position (lowest mean gender attitude) followed by Mali, Sudan, Egypt, Algeria and Nigeria (all of which are Muslim dominated countries).

This confirms the previous findings of Guiso et al. (2003) that Muslims are more conservative in their attitudes toward gender equality compared to Christians. This is an important finding as most African countries are divided along the lines of religion with Islam and Christianity as the main/country religion of most, if not all countries on the continent.

In order to explore the explanatory power of the individual factors, three linear regression models were built (see tab. 2). Model 1 included the index and education, employment status, age, gender and ethnicity. Model 2 added religious denomination to the factors (all individual variables were included here), and age was excluded in model 3 since its effect completely disappeared with the addition of new predictors (in model 2). The explained variance (adjusted R²) of the model improved (to 5 per cent) in model 3 with the exclusion

of age. The results of the regression models show a statistically significant results for education, Gender, Ethnicity and Religious Denominations at a 99 per cent CL (see table 2). The results show that education positively and significantly increases egalitarian attitudes. Compared to people with informal schooling, those who completed high school have an increase of 9.6 liberal attitudes. The same can be said about people who completed university education, compared to people with informal education, their liberal attitudes increases by 7.7. Generally, the t-values also increase with every level of education and shows how significant the influence of education is on gender attitudes.

Furthermore, employment status significantly influences gender attitudes. Compared to people who are employed, unemployed people are more liberal in their attitudes and this is significant at a 95 per cent CL. Moreover, the effect of gender is significant at a 99 per cent CL. However, the effect is negative meaning that compared to men, women have more liberal attitudes. Similarly, ethnicity has a significant influence on gender attitudes, with members of minority ethnic groups having more liberal attitudes compared to members of ethnic majorities at a 99 per cent CL, and this confirms hypothesis 6 of this study. Additionally, religious denomination has a strong significant influence on gender attitudes; compared to Christians, Muslims are more conservative in their attitudes towards gender equality. The effect of age, however, is not stable as it is insignificant. Model 1 shows that people are becoming more liberal as they get older ($p < 0.05$). However, in model 2, with the addition of religious denomination, which has a very strong effect on attitudes, the effect of age almost disappears, and is statistically insignificant. This is most likely because the variables religiosity and age are usually highly correlated (the older a person, the more religious he or she is). From this analysis, we can accept hypotheses 2, 3 and 6, and reject hypothesis 5.

Tab. 2.1. *Coefficients of the effects of the individual factors on gender attitudes. Model 1*

MODEL 1			
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.04	9.04e-13 *
	Post-graduate	0.17	< 2e-16 *
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.15	< 2e-16 *
	Primary school completed	0.12	< 2e-16 *
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.14	< 2e-16 *
	Some Primary schooling	0.91	< 2e-16 *
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.13	< 2e-16 *
	Some university	0.15	< 2e-16 *
	University Completed	0.15	< 2e-16 *
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.81	0.000684 *
AGE		1.776e-04	0.023454 *
GENDER		-0.03	< 2e-16 *
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.03	< 2e-16 *
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim		
	Others		
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.032	
F STATISTIC		130.312*** (df=13; 50758)	

Multi-level Analysis

By combining individual and aggregate level predictors, multi-level analysis was conducted to ascertain what factors,

Tab. 2.2. *Coefficients of the effects of the individual factors on gender attitudes. Model 2*

		MODEL 2	
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.02	0.000304 *
	Post-graduate	0.14	< 2e-16 *
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.11	< 2e-16 *
	Primary school completed	0.08	< 2e-16 *
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.10	< 2e-16 *
	Some Primary schooling	0.05	< 2e-16 *
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.09	< 2e-16 *
	Some university	0.12	< 2e-16 *
	University Completed	0.12	< 2e-16 *
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.01	0.001132 **
AGE		5.215e-05	-0.03
GENDER		-0.03	< 2e-16 *
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.02	9.41e-13 *
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim	-0.08	< 2e-16 *
	Others	-0.02	6.74e-07 *
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.053	
F STATISTIC		189.896***	9df=15;50756

socio-cultural and economic, influence gender attitudes the most in Africa, and three models were built for this purpose. A first look at the relationship between Gender attitudes and GDP per Capita is displayed in figure 2. The scatterplot shows that there is no correlation between Gender attitudes and GDP per Capita across the countries used in this study.

Tab. 2.3. *Coefficients of the effects of the individual factors on gender attitudes. Model 3*

		MODEL 3	
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.02	< 2e-16 *
	Post-graduate	0.14	< 2e-16 *
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.11	< 2e-16 *
	Primary school completed	0.08	< 2e-16 *
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.10	< 2e-16 *
	Some Primary schooling	0.05	< 2e-16 *
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.09	< 2e-16 *
	Some university	0.12	< 2e-16 *
	University Completed	0.12	< 2e-16 *
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.01	0.001247 **
AGE			
GENDER		-0.03	< 2e-16 *
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.02	1.09e-12 *
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim	-0.08	< 2e-16 *
	Others	-0.02	7.21e-07 *
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.053	
F STATISTIC		203.430***	9df=14;50757

Model 1 included all the individual level predictors with the exception of age, and model 2 included GDP per Capita to the initial model. Table 3 shows the estimates of the fixed effects on gender attitudes. Model 1 reveal that all individual level predictors are statistically significant with the exception of ethnicity (t-value<1.96). Model 2 reveal that the effect of

GDP per Capita is statistically insignificant and this confirms hypothesis 1 that there are no significant differences among countries based on GDP per Capita. This could be due to the small variations in gender attitudes and levels of GDP per capita across the African countries in this study, but also points out to the indication that whereas economic development is a strong influencer of gender attitudes in other parts of the world, the situation is different in Africa. GDP is statistically insignificant and also negative which further indicates that economic development does not influence gender attitudes in the same way in Africa as it does in European or other Western countries. Therefore, we can accept the hypothesis that African countries with higher levels of economic development, for example high GDP per Capita, are not significantly different from those with low levels of economic development in their attitudes. The significant results of education, employment, gender and religious denomination are in the same direction as previous results with the individual level analysis. Education has a strong positive influence on gender attitudes, unemployed people have more liberal attitudes, women are more liberal compared to men, and Christians are more liberal compared to Muslims and other religious denominations.

Model 3 (fig. 3) shows an interaction effect between employment status and gender (to check hypothesis 4). We can see from figure 2 the effect of employment status on gender attitudes among men (1) and women (0). Both employed and unemployed women are more liberal compared to men in the same situation. However, we see that the gap between employed women and unemployed men is not huge. On the contrary, there is quite a big gap between unemployed men and women, with unemployed women having more liberal gender attitudes. The results confirm the hypothesis as it shows that women who are employed have more liberal attitudes compared to men who are unemployed. Therefore, from the multi-level analysis, we can also accept hypothesis 1 and 4. Another remarkable results about the interaction is the gap employed and unemployed women. From theory, the expectation is that working women are more liberal than women who are not in labour force, however, we can see clearly from the graph that

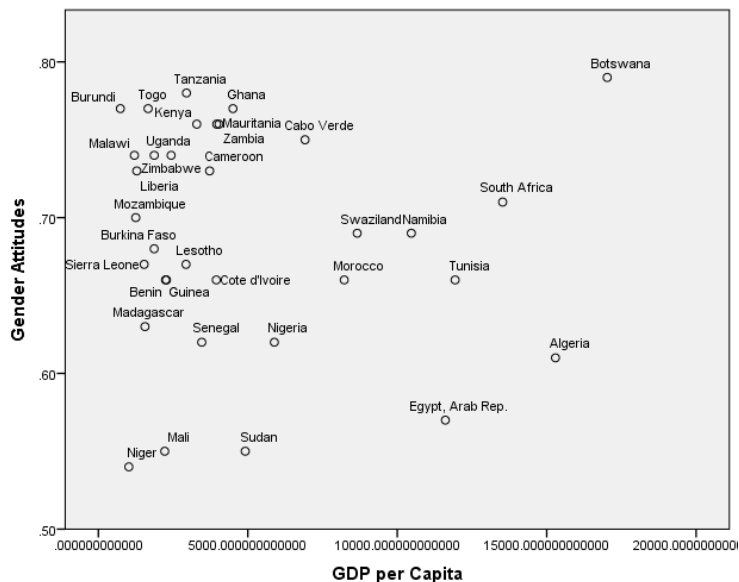


Fig. 2. Scatter plot showing the relationship between Gender Attitudes and GDP per Capita

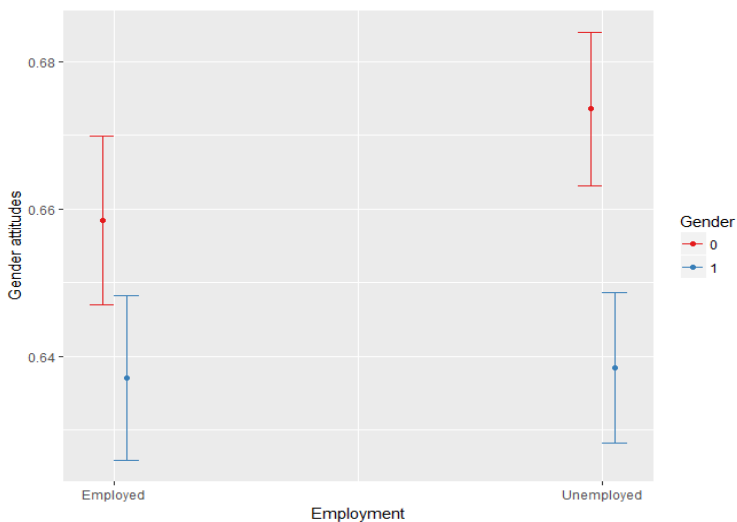


Fig. 3. Interaction effects between Employment and Gender. *0 = "Females", *1 = "Males"

(even though not a huge gap) the latter have more liberal attitudes than the former.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this study, I set out to investigate the factors that influence gender attitudes towards equality in Africa, and to address the questions of whether economic development influence gender attitudes and what socio-cultural factors affect these attitudes. The study shows that at the individual level, gender attitudes are strongly influenced by education, employment status, gender, ethnicity and religious denomination. People with high levels of education (from informal education) have more liberal attitudes. The results of the study is consistent with the propositions of the cognitive model which explains that individuals become open-minded as they get educated and are able to change their attitudes towards a more egalitarian way (Werfhost, Graaf 2004). The findings of the effect of education and labour force participation on gender attitudes in this study is also consistent with that of some previous studies in Europe (Wilensky 2002; Bergh 2006) as women who were employed showed more liberal attitudes compared to men who were unemployed.

One of the most remarkable findings of this study is the influence of ethnicity. At the individual level, people's ethnic background influence their gender attitudes in Africa, with members of ethnic minorities having more liberal attitudes than people of ethnic majorities. One of the reasons for the difference in gender attitudes between the two groups may be due to the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities, hence, it becomes crucial for them to show support for equality as it would increase their household sustenance in terms of jobs, for instance, which leads to income and other opportunities which are otherwise already limited for their group. This study is the first to discover this finding about ethnicity as a factor influencing gender attitudes in Africa. Furthermore, this study, consistent with the findings of Guiso et al. (2003) and Charles (2019) show that Christians have more egalitarian attitudes

Tab. 3.1. *Multi level fixed effects on gender attitudes. Model 1*

		MODEL 1	
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.015	2.65***
	Post-graduate	0.14	10.41***
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.11	16.80***
	Primary school completed	0.05	8.36***
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.10	16.85***
	Some Primary schooling	0.04	6.24***
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.08	13.67***
	Some university	0.12	15.33***
	University Completed	0.13	16.52***
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.01	5.29***
GENDER		- 0.04	- 17.75***
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.004	1.37
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim	- 0.03	- 8.47***
	Others	- 0.02	- 5.10***
GDP PER CAPITA		-	-
EMPLOYMENT (EMPLOYED: GENDER)		-	-
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.032	
F STATISTIC		130.312*** (df=13; 50758)	

than Muslims, and this also reflects on the index where most of the countries that performed poorly (in terms of gender attitudes) are Islamic countries.

However, this study focused more on the effect (of being

Tab. 3.2. *Multi level fixed effects on gender attitudes. Model 2*

		MODEL 2	
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.015	2.65***
	Post-graduate	0.14	10.42***
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.11	16.81***
	Primary school completed	0.05	8.37***
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.10	16.86***
	Some Primary schooling	0.04	6.24***
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.08	13.68***
	Some university	0.12	15.34***
	University Completed	0.13	16.53***
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.01	5.28***
GENDER		-0.04	-17.76***
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.004	1.36
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim	-0.03	-8.47***
	Others	-0.02	-5.10***
GDP PER CAPITA		-0.01	-0.55
EMPLOYMENT (EMPLOYED: GENDER)			
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.053	
F STATISTIC		189.896*** (df=15; 50756)	

Muslim or Christian) at the individual level. Additionally, the study sought to ascertain whether we can observe differences among younger and older people and a possible intergenerational

Tab. 3.3. Multi level fixed effects on gender attitudes. Model 3

		MODEL 3	
		ESTIMATES	PR(> T)
EDUCATION	No formal Schooling	0.015	2.67***
	Post-graduate	0.14	10.43***
	Post-secondary qualifications, not university	0.11	16.84***
	Primary school completed	0.05	8.39***
	Secondary school completed/ high school	0.10	16.88***
	Some Primary schooling	0.04	6.25***
	Some Secondary school /high school	0.08	13.69***
	Some university	0.12	15.34***
	University Completed	0.13	16.55***
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	0.02	6.32***
GENDER		-0.028	-7.45***
ETHNICITY	Minor	0.004	1.38***
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	Muslim	-0.03	-8.52***
	Others	-0.02	-5.11***
GDP PER CAPITA		-0.01	-0.55
EMPLOYMENT (EMPLOYED: GENDER)		-0.02	-3.67***
OBSERVATION		50,772	
ADJUSTED R2		0.053	
F STATISTIC		203.430*** (df=14; 50757)	

replacement, however, this could not be seen as the results was statistically insignificant. Finally, another crucial finding of this study is the effect of economic development on gender

Tab. 4. *Mean gender attitudes across countries*

Algeria	0.61
Benin	0.66
Botswana	0.79
Burkina Faso	0.68
Burundi	0.77
Cameroon	0.73
Cape Verde	0.75
Cote d'Ivoire	0.66
Egypt	0.57
Ghana	0.77
Guinea	0.66
Kenya	0.76
Lesotho	0.67
Liberia	0.73
Madagascar	0.63
Malawi	0.74
Mali	0.55
Mauritius	0.76
Morocco	0.66
Mozambique	0.70
Namibia	0.69
Niger	0.54
Nigeria	0.62
Senegal	0.62
Sierra Leone	0.67
South Africa	0.71
Sudan	0.55
Swaziland	0.69
Tanzania	0.78
Togo	0.77
Tunisia	0.66
Uganda	0.74
Zambia	0.76
Zimbabwe	0.74

Tab. 5. *Descriptive statistics for gender attitudes index and age*

VARIABLE	MEAN	MEDIAN
Gender Attitudes Index	0.70	0.75
Age	37.2	34.0

attitudes in Africa. The assumption of Modernization theorists that high levels of economic development lead to egalitarian attitudes is contradicted in the findings of this study. The study shows that among countries in Africa, economic development, in this case GDP per Capita, does not significantly influence gender attitudes towards equality. Therefore, the trend found in previous studies (regarding the effect of GDP per Capita), does not hold in African countries. This result is

partly consistent with the findings of Charles (2019) who also observes a negative and inconsistent effect of economic development on gender attitudes in Africa (using country-level predictors such as Human Development Index as well as GDP). At the country level, religious denomination proves to be a stronger factor that influences peoples' gender attitudes in Africa rather than economic development. Charles (2019) observes and explores this issue in much detail by examining the processes through which religious denomination and religious culture become a strong factor in influencing peoples' attitudes toward gender equality in Africa.

From the analysis and discussion, we can draw a general conclusion that socio-cultural factors influence gender attitudes towards equality in Africa more than economic development. Therefore, changes in the socio-cultural factors of African countries will lead to more egalitarian attitudes towards gender equality. We can also derive four main conclusions: educated people have more liberal attitudes, women are more liberal, ethnic minorities are more liberal and Christians are also more egalitarian in their support for gender equality. This article makes a significant contribution to the debates in the field of gender attitudes towards gender equality. It is among the few studies to explore the factors that influence gender attitudes among African countries, and to discover the non-homogenous effect of economic development on gender attitudes as well as the firsts to discover ethnicity as a strong factor that influences peoples' attitudes towards gender equality in Africa.

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