Contextualising Universities' Third Mission:

A Study of African Women's Participation in Academic Engagement

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Abstract

The traditional mandate of universities has been to undertake research and teaching activities. However, in recent times, universities are pursuing a 'third mission' by collaborating with societal partners, including firms. Research suggests that such academic engagement (AE) activities are expedient for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Other studies have, however, drawn attention to the gender differences in men and women's pursuit and practice of AE. In particular, scholars have shown that the masculine cultures and structures of universities and firms are averse to women researchers' lived experiences and, thus, limit their participation in AE activities compared to their male colleagues. The emerging gender dynamics in AE has raised important, yet unanswered questions, regarding the potential of universities and firms to support the achievement of SDG5 (gender equality and women's empowerment), especially in developing countries that are characterised by weak institutions.

Given the importance of AE to the success of the SDGs, this thesis aims to fill this knowledge gap by first, providing an understanding of how the corporate sustainability practices of businesses are pragmatically contributing to the achievement of the SDGs related to gender, climate change, democracy, and poverty, within the contexts of Mexico, Ghana, Vietnam, and South Africa. Second, and focusing narrowly on the theme of gender and the sub-Saharan African context, the thesis sheds light on how and why gender differences exist in the opportunities for men and women researchers to participate in AE activities. Next, the study draws on Bourdieusian social theory and in-depth interviews with 36 women researchers from Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, and Botswana, to explicate how women researchers within these contexts utilise their agency to overcome the structural and cultural constraints impeding their involvement in AE activities. Finally, the thesis deepens insights into how, and why, the efforts of African women researchers to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE activities, come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers.

A key finding from the study is that AE promotes competitiveness and performativity in academia, which in turn distorts the gender equality targets enshrined in SDG5. In particular, the findings demonstrate that AE is a gendered and neoliberal activity that urges women researchers to develop and implement career strategies that sustain male privileges and female disadvantages within universities. Emerging from the analysis is also the fact that, although businesses can make significant contributions to the SDGs, a failure to embed community participation in their corporate sustainability principles and agendas, can reverse much of the progress made on SDG5.

This thesis makes several contributions. First, it extends and pushes forward existing scholarship and policy discussions on the SDGs by empirically investigating a significant, but understudied group of women, whose voices and experiences in academia have rarely been acknowledged. In addition, the study provides novel insights into the socio-cultural dimension of sustainable development by highlighting the utility of community participation approaches to corporate sustainability practices. Importantly, this study offers another way of viewing the gender gap in AE by drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) social theory to show how the current single-level and de-contextualised explanations of this problem limit our understanding of the interesting ways in which micro-individual career opportunities are shaped by contextual influences at the macro-level and organisational processes and practices at the meso-level.

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List of Abbreviations

AAC	Anglo-American Corporation
AE	Academic Engagement
ANC	African National Congress
ANP	Afrikaner National Party
AIDFI	Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation Incorporated
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CBM	Consultative Business Movement
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FNB	First National Bank
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LMCF	Leadership and Management Conceptual Framework
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SAN	Sustainable Agriculture Network
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TBL	Triple Bottom Line
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UN Global Compact	United Nations Global Compact
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

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[1] RECIRCULATE[1] was a five-year (2017-2022) sponsored project by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) that aimed to empower African researchers grow transformational impact through working with, in and for their communities and developing robust, durable and equitable partnerships with researchers in the United Kingdom. See http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/recirculate/

Declaration

This thesis has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree at this or any other University. It is the result of my own work and includes nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration, except where specifically indicated. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself. Excerpts of this thesis have been published as:

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Prologue

Howard-Grenville et al. (2022) encourage "management scholars to not be afraid to embrace our curiosity [or] to care about important societal issues" because "excellent management research can be motivated by curiosity – and caring – about important yet understudied phenomena" (p. 1419-23). Thus, it is worth mentioning to the reader that this study evolved out of my genuine curiosity about a relevant social issue, and my assiduous pursuit for answers to a critical question that has rarely appeared in the management and organisation scholarship: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?*

I trace the origin of my research interest to the morning of 7th April 2019, in Kitwe, Zambia, after I confidently entered a conference room full of academics and industry persons. I was one of several participants who had travelled from different parts of the world to participate in a RECIRCULATE project workshop that Lancaster University was hosting together with its partners in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). All participants had been invited to the workshop for a simple task: to exchange knowledge, ideas, skills, and combine our diverse expertise to develop innovative solutions that could help address issues relating to Africa's water economy. In addition, I was going to be introduced as the Research/Engagement Officer at the launch of an integrated research project called the Women Innovators Network for Africa, which was a part of the broader RECIRCULATE project. I was thrilled about my new role and, in particular, the opportunity to meet new people, network, and exchange knowledge and experiences with them.

From my perspective, the above-mentioned activities all sounded relatively easy or at least it was supposed to be, considering the calibre of professionals that were seated in that room. As such, I had no presumptions that my gender identity as a woman, would be relevant to what

was going to be done in that room. Little did I know that this collaborative exercise would become an exposition of the complex and multifaceted gendered practices that embody academic engagement in SSA. In that room, was a symbolic representation of the socio-cultural context in which academic engagement, and the knowledge-based economy more broadly, unfolds in SSA. Right at the heart of a theoretically simple knowledge exchange exercise, within that time and space, was a manifestation of the gendered power relations that exist between men and women in the African patriarchal context.

- **Scene One (RECIRCULATE workshop in Zambia, Group 1):**

The workshop activities begun with the separation of participants into different discussion teams. I was placed in a group of five (i.e. three women and two men, including a mentor). Our first exercise was to suggest a name for our group, with the guidance of our mentor (*British white male*, emphasis made). This exercise was easy, as were the next few activities that took place. Everyone at our table could discuss and share their thoughts on the ongoing debates, and I particularly noticed that the women were forthcoming with their ideas and engaged deeply in the conversations that took place. Most of the discussions and group presentations were also led by the women. Fortunately, or unfortunately, this group got disbanded and we were made to join other groups. This change was going to be the beginning of an interesting lesson.

- **Scene Two (RECIRCULATE workshop in Zambia, Group 2):**

In joining my second group, I saw that the women at the table again outnumbered the men (three men and four women, including our mentor). In contrast to my first group, however, the dynamics in my new group were very interesting. At this table was a male participant who was the director of a top organisation in Africa (for the purposes of anonymity, I hereby refer to him as Sam). He was also pursuing a PhD part-time (I got to know of this because he proudly announced it to us). Distinct from my previous group where all members agreed on who got to

act as the leader, here, Sam automatically assumed the leadership position without seeking our consent. In his judgment, his credentials made him more qualified for that position. From my perspective, we (myself and other members of the group) were somewhat intimidated (by both his authoritativeness, and his credentials which he incessantly spoke about), and did not contend his assumption of the leadership position. Sam's first share of assignments went to me – I was allotted the role of a *team secretary* who was responsible for writing down all our ideas, or perhaps *his ideas*. In this role, the phrases that were repeatedly hurled at me were: "Have you written it down"; "Write it down"; "You need to be fast" – all of which were said without a *please* or even a *thank you.*

An interesting moment that particularly caught my attention was when Sam challenged the leadership and ideas of our group's assigned mentor (an *African female academic*, whose credentials superseded his). He felt more knowledgeable about the activity we had been assigned to as a group, hence his reluctance to listen. I specifically recall our mentor asserting: "I have attended almost four of these RECIRCULATE project workshops and I know exactly what activity you are supposed to undertake. What you are currently doing is very wrong". Nonetheless, Sam's ideas and that of another senior male academic in our group mattered the most, and there was very little anyone could say to this effect. The opinion and ideas of other group members were also barely welcome. What was uniquely interesting was how Sam self-nominated himself for almost every one of the group's presentations (except for one where I presented because he was asked by one of the RECIRCULATE project's leaders to have someone other than him pitch), as well as in answering questions directed at the group.

When in one of our team's business pitches, we chose the idea of another member (a woman entrepreneur) over his because it was more relevant to the RECIRCULATE project objectives, it was a tough struggle. Sam did not just keep interrupting our discussions, he also talked non-stop about the relevance and financial viability of his idea compared to the woman's. We finally

succeeded in ‘convincing’ him to agree to this idea. However, when we lost the bid, Sam would not let us hear the end of it. He ceaselessly reminded us of his *brilliant idea* which we had rejected for a *less intelligent one* – and even after the day’s event ended, he still reminded us of our *mistake* as we walked to our rooms. My experience in this place, together with a series of other events formed the genesis of my interest in pursuing the topic of my PhD.

An Interesting Twist to the Previous Narrative:

- **Scene Three (RECIRCULATE workshop in Kenya):**

In February 2020, I had the opportunity to participate in another one of the RECIRCULATE project’s workshops. This time around, I went as a PhD student of Lancaster University, UK, and not the newly employed Research/Engagement Officer I was before. It is interesting to note that while my professional role and identity changed in these workshops, the significance of my gender identity and related role did not. At the workshop in Kenya, I was again assigned the role of a *team secretary* (perhaps due to my age and gender, as I was the youngest female at the table, which was also the case for the workshop in Zambia). The difference between the two events is that in Zambia, my allocation of this role was by the older males. For the workshop in Kenya, however, both the men and women at my table unanimously assigned me this role.

What is particularly fascinating is that, in this workshop, I had been originally assigned by the RECIRCULATE project organisers as a mentor to the group. However, I surrendered my mentoring role when I noticed there was a senior woman academic (both in terms of academic hierarchy and biological age) at the table. I made this decision based on my own socio-cultural beliefs relating to age, which suggests for young people to show respect to the elderly. My decision indeed reflects Umeh et al.'s (2022) assertion about the visibility of widely shared socio-cultural norms in most workplaces in SSA, and how these are manifested via practices

of “respect for, and loyalty to, superiors” (p. 7). Age and youthful appearance often affect the careers of African women academics by denying them of occupational opportunities (Forson et al., 2017; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015). The implication here is that, in SSA, gender is not the only prominent issue in the social settings where academic engagement activities occur, but issues concerning age and respect are equally significant.

Still reflecting on my experiences at the RECIRCULATE workshop, I noticed that in our group, the women took turns in playing the *team secretary*, however, none of the men assumed this role. Instead, the men talked a lot about their ideas and would go on to instruct the *team secretary* to note them down. In contrast to Sam, while this senior female academic (who I hereby refer to as Bertha) had some great ideas for the project pitches, she never imposed these on us. Rather, Bertha allowed the group to make independent decisions regarding her ideas. Hence, everyone had an opportunity to deliberate, discuss, and decide on a proposed idea. Bertha also allowed the ideas of other group members to be selected over hers, and even supported them. Again, Bertha never discussed her credentials or even started a conversation about it, even though she occupied a significant position in her field.

Reflections

> Higher education is expanding internationally both in response to state investment in the knowledge economy and as a consequence of new private and offshore providers…If any society is to succeed in this globalised economy, then a collective contribution from and participation of all citizens is a prerequisite…Gender issues are not only a matter of social justice but good economies as well (Adusah-Karikari, 2008, p. 26)

As mentioned earlier, my experience in Zambia is what piqued my interest to pursue this PhD, and in particular, this topic. The above narratives are my own experiences, and I do acknowledge that there could be several explanations given for the differences in Sam and Bertha’s behaviours. For instance, it could be argued that Sam and Bertha acted differently in

the workshops because of their educational backgrounds, professional experiences, or even psychological attributes. Thus, my intent and motivation for pursuing this PhD has been to fully comprehend my observations in the RECIRCULATE project workshops. While attending the workshops provided initial insights into the "hidden transcripts of discrimination" (Morley, 2006, p. 544) that underlie knowledge exchange activities in SSA, as time elapsed in my PhD journey, I became even more curious about: How, and why, does the socio-cultural setup of SSA appears to offer men more superiority, legitimacy, and dominance over women? Whose knowledge really counts in the university and industry collaboration activities taking place in SSA, and why? What is the situation of younger women academics like me in the African knowledge-based economy that the higher education sector is currently spearheading?

Beyond these questions, I have also sought to understand whether the 'fight' for gender equality, especially within academia, is overrated. If not, why and how is there so much contention about gender issues in SSA? For example, during the launch of the Women Innovators Network for Africa (WINA)[2] project in Zambia, both men and women expressed their concerns about the relatedness of WINA to feminism, and whether this network was aimed at disempowering men. For the women particularly, they wanted no part in a feminist movement because of either their socio-cultural and/or religious beliefs. Thus, I had to keep defending myself on why WINA was not a feminist agenda, but instead, a network that was focused on empowering and supporting emerging female leaders in SSA. Questions that I often had to respond to were: "What has gender really got to do with solving Africa's water problems?[3]" "Why do women need the extra attention, and how important is the WINA project

[2] The Women Innovators Network for Africa (WINA) evolved out of the RECIRCULATE project to promote women's role and involvement in the journey to address the global challenges. WINA is a women-focused and multi-cultural network that seeks to provide peer support (mentoring) and leadership support (coaching and training) for emerging female leaders across Africa. See https://recirculate.global/participate/wina/

[3] I wrote a rejoinder to this question, see http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/recirculate/2020/09/whats-gender-got-to-do-with-innovation/

when there are other pressing issues to be addressed?" I recall a senior male academic walking up to me and requesting for one of the key persons in the WINA project to be taken off the team. His argument – she had been divorced and had remarried, and in his view, such a person was *dangerous* and *very rebellious* to act as a role model for other women.

In patriarchal societies, it appears that defying traditional norms around gender as a woman is synonymous to rebellion. I make this assertion based on my personal experiences – as it applies to the advice given by a male colleague I worked with, to another female colleague of ours. Right in my presence, he instructed her to not befriend me because "the obsession of women like Afua with education means that they do not want anything to do with marriage. As such, friendship with Afua also means pursuing too much education that could destroy her home and lead to her divorce" – and this was in 2017. In 2019, I received a similar message from another male colleague. For him, "they will ensure that I do not fool by becoming preoccupied with education rather than settling down in marriage"– and this was all because I expressed interest to pursue a PhD during a conversation. It is evident that several factors account for the competency and legitimacy of a woman in SSA, and marriage tops the list.

So, why is gender equality and women's advancement in patriarchal contexts such as SSA largely contested? Having reflected on my observations in the RECIRCULATE project workshops and my personal experiences, do I consider gender as an overrated topic in the 21st century to talk about? No. Is gender (in)equality really an issue that needs to be addressed in the nascent social phenomenon of academic engagement? Absolutely – which then takes me to my proposed research topic: *Contextualising Universities' Third Mission: A Study of African Women's Participation in Academic Engagement.*

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

Traditionally, the core mandate of universities has been to generate and disseminate knowledge through teaching and research (Forson et al., 2017; Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022). However, in recent years, there has been increased calls for universities to enhance their scientific knowledge by pursuing a 'third mission' that involves collaborating and co-creating knowledge with societal stakeholders such as businesses, governments, and local communities (Dada et al., 2016; Kruss & Visser, 2017; Roncancio-Marin et al., 2022). Threaded through the third mission concept is the belief that "research is not to be conducted for its own sake, rather it is to be transferred to other stakeholders of the innovation systems including industry, politics, and society" (Sinell et al., 2018, p. 15). Contemporary research on the third mission suggests that the knowledge-related interactions between universities and external stakeholders, especially businesses, can boost innovation as well as facilitate the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Adams et al., 2016; Sarpong et al., 2022). Other studies indicate that these collaborative relationships are a hallmark of the global transition from production-based economies towards knowledge-based societies (Etzkowitz & Dzisah, 2008; Mensah et al., 2019; Morley, 2016). While there is no unanimously accepted definition of the knowledge-based economy (Jawhar et al., 2022), it can be broadly understood as:

> An economy that is capable of knowledge production, dissemination, and use: where knowledge is a key factor in growth, wealth creation, and employment, and where human capital is the driver of creativity, innovation, and generation of new ideas, with reliance on information and communication technology

(ICT) as an enabler (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1996, p. 9 – 11).

Essentially, the knowledge-based economy reflects a society that develops from and thrives on the generation, dissemination and application of knowledge. As knowledge becomes significant to innovation and in the realisation of the SDGs, the activity of academic engagement (AE) has emerged as one of the key mechanisms for universities to engage with other stakeholders who lie outside of its boundaries (Nakwa & Zawdie, 2016). In general, AE can be understood either as "knowledge-related interactions by academic researchers with non-academic organisations" or "inter-organisational collaboration instances, usually involving 'person-to-person interactions' that link universities and other organisations, notably firms" (Perkmann et al., 2013, p. 424). The manifestations of AE are extensive, ranging from formal activities like collaborative research, consulting, and contract research, to informal activities such as networking with practitioners (Perkmann et al., 2013, 2021).

Recently, a vibrant stream of work has drawn attention to gender differences in the level and type of AE activities undertaken by men and women academics (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Sinell et al., 2018; Tartari & Salter, 2015). Scholarly explanations of the gender gap indicates that male academics are more likely to participate in AE activities compared to women in similar academic roles because the latter faces a dual constraint; that is, first, women academics work in university environments that are mired with masculine norms, structures and cultures; and second, they attempt to collaborate with male-dominated firms that are biased towards their competences (Meng, 2016; Tartari & Salter, 2015). The differential participation of women and men academics in AE activities has called into question the existing claims about the gender neutrality of the knowledge-based economy (Durbin, 2011; Jawhar et al., 2022), and in particular, the assumptions in prior research about the potential of universities and firms to

adequately support the implementation of the SDGs without fostering inequalities within organisations and the broader society (Benschop, 2021; Cottafava et al., 2022).

Consequently, scholars have called for further research into the different activities being implemented to support the achievement of the SDGs (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021), including the universities' third mission (Hirsu et al., 2021). In particular, Unterhalter and Howell (2021) contend that we need to examine how "the work of teachers, learners, researchers or practitioners in tertiary education in low-and middle-income countries may be weakly or inadequately aligned to the implementation of the SDG agenda, and, if this is the case, what reasons account for this" (p. 26). Literature suggests that because of their European colonial foundation, African universities are often situated in a network of relationships with developed countries, which tends to push them toward the interests, debates, and concerns of these contexts (Amadi & Ememe, 2013; Fongwa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2015). Indeed, research has found that in an attempt to foster knowledge-based socio-economic development, African "governments and higher education institutions are debating and borrowing policies to promote interaction between university and industry" within this region, although the "scientific, technological and interactive capabilities of universities and firms [in this context] differ vastly" from that of developed countries (Kruss et al., 2012, pp. 516-7).

Now, if, the adoption of developed-country policies and practices has affected both the creation of inclusive African societies, and the contributions of African universities and firms' to the sustainable development agenda (Unterhalter & Howell, 2021), then, there is a need to critically assess the relevance of university and industry interactions to Africa's sustainable development aspirations, and in turn provide context-specific policies and approaches that can enhance development outcomes in this region (Kruss et al., 2015; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022). Concurrently, if, "in a globalised knowledge economy, the twin questions of who is participating [in this economy], and where [they are located] demand close analysis" (Morley

& Lugg, 2009, p. 41), then, it is also important to place a gendered lens on the sustainability co-creation activities that are taking place between African universities and businesses (Trencher et al., 2017). Research has shown that many African universities are imbued with the patriarchal cultures of their societies (Liani et al., 2021), and there is a tendency for "women disappear [to] when power, resources and influence increase" within these organisational settings (Morley & Lugg, 2009, p. 40).

Against this backdrop, this thesis sets out to investigate how the (in)actions of universities and firms are promoting and/or undermining the achievement of the SDGs by posing the following research question: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?* Taking the growing importance of the SDGs as its starting point, this thesis aims to put the topic of gender inequality back on the map of management and organisation research by (i) shedding light on the motivations, subjectivities, and experiences of African women researchers' pursuing AE activities, and (ii) discussing the related implications for research, theory, policy and practice. In line with these objectives, the thesis presents findings that advance scholarship on the potential of firms and universities to act as change agents in the development of knowledge-based economies, and consequently, in the achievement of the SDGs.

After this introduction, the thesis proceeds as follows. First, the final section of this introduction outlines the historical and contemporary context of African women's participation in AE to set the scene for the study. Chapter Two then elucidates the study's methodological approach while Chapters Three to Six present the study's findings that discuss the related role of business and universities in sustainable development. Chapter Seven provides a reflection of the study's theoretical, practical, and policy implications, as well as the limitations and promising directions for further research. Chapter Eight presents the conclusion of the study.

1.2 The historical and contemporary context of African women's participation in academic engagement

This study explores African women researchers' participation in AE, and for this purpose, a brief historical and contemporary analysis of their situation in the African academy and the wider societal context is considered essential. As Assié-Lumumba (2005) argued,

> The nature of African higher education systems and institutions, and the idea of the university for socioeconomic development in Africa evolved during various historical moments. While history is not destiny, it is still important to locate the contemporary institutional development and related social issues and the search for solutions in the historical context (p. 4).

Accordingly, the purpose of this section is to set the scene for the investigation of the African women researchers' participation in AE. The section begins with a historical account of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Africa and, in particular, that imposition of Victorian patriarchy on African women. Next, the section presents the contemporary context which uncovers how the historical circumstances of African women in HEIs may have changed over the past decades. Taken together, the focus of this section is to "link agency and structure by situating individuals within the context of the organisation and in their relations to each other, as well as by situating the organisation and organisational culture within the context of society and history" (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005, p. 856).

1.2.1 The historical context of African women's participation in AE

Higher education in Africa can be traced to the colonial period when missionaries established schools and colleges to train their converts (Assié-Lumumba, 2005; Bawa, 2019). Although the colonial colleges were mainly created to serve as secondary schools that provided

vocational/technical training to Christian converts (Ampofo et al., 2004; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015), they were "also largely male preserves, dedicated to the production of good colonial subjects intended to inherit the exclusively masculine mantle of colonial leadership and further the existing imperial interests dominating the African political and economic landscape" (Mama, 2003, pp.105-6). Hungwe (2006) explains that while the colonial education of men focused on improving their leadership capacities,

> the shepherding of young girls into mission schools was not only a means of trying to preserve purity, but also an effort to resubordinate young African women into new forms of domesticity and femininity that marked them as racially inferior. Missionaries taught home economics skills, such as flower-arranging and sewing, as well as Western patriarchal notions of what it meant to be good wives – "angels of the house" providing a safe haven for men and children (p. 39).

Several feminist scholars (e.g., Huppatz, 2009; Skeggs, 2004) have demonstrated how the notions of 'female respectability' and 'domesticity' can be used to regulate women's bodies and behaviours, often curtailing their opportunities to create, innovate and organise their own initiatives. For African women, studies highlight that the training they received on bourgeois notions of femininity and domesticity in the colonial colleges disenfranchised them by silencing their voices and subjecting their mobility to patriarchal scrutiny (Ampofo et al., 2004; Imas & Garcia-Lorenzo, 2023). In this regard, African women who had opportunities to work outside the home during the colonial period were typically expected to assume the more 'respectable' jobs such as teaching and nursing (Hungwe, 2006), while those who failed to act in accordance with these normative gendered expectations were maligned as 'prostitutes' (Gaidzanwa,1995). The discursive constructs of 'good' and 'bad' women were thus aimed at

confining African women to the home, while the public sphere which is associated with power, politics and decision-making, became the preserve of men (Amine & Staub, 2009; Otuo et al., 2022).

With the colonial pattern of education intersecting with the patriarchal cultures of traditional African societies, women's attempts to escape both African male control and White colonial subjugation became a difficult and painful process (Bhatasara & Chiweshe, 2021; Forson et al., 2017). Bawa (2019) underlines that religion was an instrumental mechanism for women's subordination in Africa, as "the commonly understood interpretation of the church's primary instructional guidebook, the Bible, is that according to God's hierarchical structuring, woman is subordinate to man and therefore occupies a subservient position to him" (p. 55). It is argued that this 'divine positioning' of men and women did not only reinforce cultural beliefs about womanhood in colonial times but, to-date, it has discouraged many women from participating fully and effectively in the development of contemporary Africa (Amine & Staub, 2009; Otuo et al., 2022). For Mama (2003), "a major legacy of the colonial period was that it left very few women either qualified or socially equipped to enter either the formal economy or the universities, which were as masculine in their composition as they were masculinising in their educational philosophy" (p. 106). It is this divisive legacy of colonialism that the sub-section below builds on, highlighting how African women's entrance and opportunities in higher education institutions (HEIs) continue to be regulated and controlled.

1.2.2 The contemporary context of African women's participation in AE

Following their political independence, many African countries established universities to offer men and women an opportunity to further their education beyond the mission schools and colonial colleges (Assié-Lumumba, 2005; Rathgeber, 2013). The newly created universities were to serve two major functions: "to support the national effort to meet essential human needs

in a sustainable manner; and to contribute to the competitiveness of the nation and its enterprises through the development and application of science, technology, and other forms of knowledge" (Sawyerr, 2004, p. 15). Mama (2006) notes that the creation of Africa's post-independence universities was fully embraced by African women with much enthusiasm, as they saw this opportunity as a more 'respectable' pathway to contribute to their societies beyond the confines of their domestic and reproductive duties. However, extant research suggests that many African governments did not fundamentally depart from the colonial education policies and, thus, African male nationalists constrained women's access and progress in higher education by implementing the post-independence development aspirations as a collective restoration of conventional masculinity (Mama, 2003; Johnson, 2014). As Ampofo et al. (2004) explicitly highlights, "the coercive control of women that was endemic to colonialism – e.g., rape as a form of military conquest and the domestication of women – has continued in the post-independence period and been sanctioned by repressive political regimes" (p. 692).

Indeed, although the global average for women in HEIs is 42%, current records show that only 8% of African women have access to tertiary education (UNESCO, 2020). In terms of academic staff in African HEIs, the evidence also demonstrates that women represent only 24% of the total numbers (ESSA, 2021). One of the most significant findings in research on HEIs in Africa is that these organisations remain male colonies (Forson et al., 2017; Prah, 2002). The legacy of colonialism is reflected at a structural level in women's under-representation in senior academic positions and at a cultural level in the legitimacy of organisational practices that facilitate men's access to these positions (Ahikire 2022; Morley, 2010). Studies indicate African women's experiences in higher education are symbolically and materially affected by gendered power relations, post-and-neo-colonialism, patriarchy, and rigid domestic relations (Mama, 2006; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017; Rathgeber, 2013). The

hegemonic culture that characterises African HEIs not only positions women as inferior to men, but it also limits their ability to express their professional identities (Johnson, 2014; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017). Evidence suggests that women in African HEIs are rarely academics or researchers, but rather provide administrative support services such as cleaning, catering, and student welfare (Mama, 2006; Rathgeber, 2013). In such marginal positions in the African academy, African women tend to be excluded from leadership positions and important decision-making in HEIs and, often, those who get involved in such roles are expected to defer to men in public situations (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015; Prah, 2002).

In general, African feminist scholars describe HEIs in Africa as gendered, male-dominated, and hostile environments which are averse to the academic growth of female faculty members (Ahikire 2022; Ampofo et al., 2004). For example, Tsikata (2007) found that younger women academics tend to be subordinately positioned by the institutional culture of seniority in African HEIs, making it difficult for them to assert their agency. Prozesky and Beaudry (2019) also found the existence of male benevolence in African HEIs, where men's inherent desire to act as providers and guardians of the home, made them to restrict women academics' local and foreign travel opportunities. Women in African HEIs are exposed to various forms of inequalities, including gender-based violence and sexual harassment (Morley, 2010; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017). There is also resounding evidence that African women tend to be confined to the invisible, informal, and feminised work of academia (Forson et al., 2017; Rathgeber, 2013), which affects their ability to rise to the professoriate level (Liani et al., 2020; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015). Some studies have also found women in African HEIs are largely concentrated in the social sciences, although many African governments tend to promote the natural sciences over the arts and humanities based on the neoliberal assumption that science will help Africa to 'catch-up' with Western industrialised societies (Ahikire 2022; Tsikata, 2007).

The hegemonic masculinity that prevails in many African societies poses huge challenges to women's ability to achieve work-life balance, as they are often socialised to prioritise marriage and motherhood above their careers (Adisa et al., 2019; Gaidzanwa,1995). Women's domestic role is considered as fundamental to the sustainability of marriage and the household and, thus, women who fail to meet the socio-cultural expectations of marriage and motherhood are stigmatised (Adisa et al., 2019; Liani et al., 2020). In performing their household chores, many African women also tend to decline sharing these responsibilities with men due to the availability of extended family helpers and domestic workers (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009). The demanding nature of African women's reproductive roles, coupled with the high demands of academic careers, impede their upward mobility and general success in academia (Prozesky & Beaudry, 2019).

On the whole, the complex pattern of gender inequality in African HEIs as evidenced from previous research, provides a substantial background for understanding African women researchers' participation in AE. The findings of previous literature suggest that African women's experiences in higher education are significantly shaped by historical, socio-cultural and behavioural factors (Tsikata, 2007; Forson et al., 2017). The less than ideal conditions that African women experience in accomplishing their academic careers, may as with many marginalised groups, affect their overall experiences with AE (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009; van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). While research is needed to improve the conditions of women in African HEIs, "unfortunately, no such framework is currently available as most studies that focus on the qualitative experiences of women once they gain entry into academic careers in SSA remain largely untheorized" (Liani et al., 2020, p. 263). A key task of this thesis is thus to fill this lacuna by investigating African women researchers' participation in AE using Bourdieu's (1977) critical social theory as a lens. Details of the Bourdieusian theoretical framework are presented in the next chapter, along with the study's methodology.

Chapter 2 - Methodological discussion

Increasingly, there is a broader consensus within management and organisation scholarship that women are not a homogeneous group (Karataş-Özkan & Chell, 2015; Mavin & Yusupova, 2022). These understandings have led feminist scholars to raise concerns about the ways in which "women's lives have been studied [in the social sciences] from a positivistic, patriarchal paradigm, which has no existential connection to the personal, that is, the world of lived experiences" (Garko, 1999, p. 168). A common critique from feminists and other postmodern critics of logical positivism is that by positioning an individual as a "disengaged or impartial researcher who studies others as objects, without investing in their well-being, or the outcomes of the research" (Leavy, 2014, p. 148), this philosophical paradigm tends to conceal and misinterpret the everyday experiences of women (Garko, 1999). The emerging argument then is that any research that seeks to explore the career experiences and realities of women must prioritise approaches which are underpinned by values and principles that allow women's individual stories, multiple identities and uniqueness to be foregrounded (Ely & Padavic, 2007; Nkomo & Rodriguez, 2019). For African women academics, Mama (2003) argues that a better understanding of their experiences with AE would "require gender-competent theory, research, and analysis that are fully cognisant of African realities" (p. 105). In line with this suggestion, Tatli et al. (2014) indicate that Bourdieu's sociological theory holds promise for investigating African women researchers' participation in AE owing to

> its ability to counteract the reductionist tendencies in positivist and social constructionist paradigms by offering a deeper and layered understanding of [African women researchers] as social agents and the [higher education] field as a system of structures, as well as the interplay between the two. Bourdieuan relationality provides [AE] scholarship with an extra analytical apparatus to trace and to reflect upon the relational lines of co-generative influence between

> phenomena, and to see the direct and indirect linkages between intentions, actions, structures, and potential outcomes. This perspective provides a more nuanced mode of accessing complex and multi-layered facets of what is understood as [AE]. Bourdieuan relationality, on the one hand, indicates paths to link individual actions to their structural settings, the past to the present and the future, and on the other hand, it preserves a space of freedom for the agents to exert an influence over their field of actions (p. 628).

Taking a relational perspective on reality, Bourdieu's work "rejects the idea of distinguishable substances but instead builds on the idea that actors cannot be separated from the context in which they are embedded: relations are the basic unit of social analysis" (Delva et al., 2021, p. 3). A major insight in Bourdieu's work is that agents occupy dominant and subordinate positions in a multidimensional space of social fields which are hierarchically structured by an unequal distribution of four forms of capital: economic (time, material possessions, finance), cultural (information, knowledge, education, skills, mannerisms), social (social connections, group memberships, networks), and symbolic (honour, prestige, recognition) (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Mendoza et al., 2012; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

From a Bourdieusian perspective, social fields are competitive arenas that have their own cultural logic, resources and stakes, and social agents can defend and/or improve their situation by drawing on their capital (Mendoza et al., 2012; Naidoo, 2004). Through the distinctive ways in which they transform, allocate, and distribute their capital to achieve their strategic aims, Bourdieu argues that agents reproduce and transform the habitus and field (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005; Tatli et al., 2014). The habitus, for Bourdieu, are the social structures that agents have embodied and which allows them to develop strategies for navigating social fields (Naidoo, 2004; Umeh et al., 2023). The habitus allows an internalisation of the four forms of capital

through a socialisation process, which are bodily expressed in the field through people's behaviours.

In examining African women researchers' participation in AE, Bourdieu's sociological perspective enriches this study in three main ways. First, Bourdieu's (1993) theoretical apparatus allows an investigation of the gender dynamics in AE from a multidimensional perspective. Bourdieu rejects the dualistic nature of sociological thinking and, thus, emphasises the organisation of research around "three necessary and internally connected moments" which are:

> First, one must analyse the position of the field vis-a-vis the field of power…Second, one must map the objective structure of the relations between the positions occupied by agents or institutions who compete for the legitimate form of specific authority of which this field in the site. And, third, one must analyse the habitus of agents, the different systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a determinate type of social and economic condition, and which find a definite trajectory within the field under consideration a more or less favourable opportunity to become actualised (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 104).

In the context of this study, Bourdieu's work empowers a dialogical understanding of the underlying social, cognitive, and corporeal structures shaping African women researchers' participation in AE (Fries, 2009). Importantly, it supports the multilayering of 'gendering' into micro (individual actions), meso (institutional rules) and macro (broader social structures) dimensions (Tatli et al., 2014).

Second, in drawing attention to the ongoing struggle between dominant and dominated agents in social fields, Bourdieu's work (1990) allows the researcher to look beyond the surface-level

indicators of gender discrimination in AE to also consider the more imperceptible forms of inequality. Although gender was not explicit in Bourdieu's work, his book on *Masculine Domination* acknowledged gender as a form of symbolic order that

> is embodied in the individual's habitus as a gendered view of the world. A gender-specific habitus thus means an identity that internalises and literally embodies the division of labour between the genders. In this way, it takes a personal form, moulding each individual from the very beginning of his or her life (Krais, 2006, p. 121)

This conceptualisation of gender as a form of embodied cultural capital by Bourdieu empowers an investigation of the social basis of gender inequality in HEIs and AE (Randle et al., 2015). For example, on one hand, the researcher could examine how the internalisation of the symbolic gender order makes African women researchers to become complicit in their own domination through symbolic violence, which encompasses "the acting out of a worldview and social order anchored deeply in the habitus of both dominants and dominated" (Krais, 2006, p. 122). On another hand, the researcher could explore the agency of African women researchers in overcoming gendered constraints through improvisation and competence (Krais, 2006). Taken together, Bourdieu's (1990, 1986) sociological theory provides a constructive framework to uncover the underlying power structures and power relations that may characterise African women researchers' participation in AE. "Power, in Bourdieu's view, is multifaceted and distributed, embedded in structures and relationships, and exercised in innumerable ways, sometimes visible, often unseen and irrecoverable" (Harvey et al., 2020, p. 3). In that sense, the researcher is to able to capture both the visible and invisible patterns of gender inequality in AE.

Third, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) conceptual toolbox of field, habitus, capitals and symbolic violence allows a conceptualisation of gender inequality as relational and contextual rather than as biologically determined. There is a general consensus among feminist researchers that gender is socially constructed through the everyday actions of men and women in complying with or challenging prevailing gender norms (Umeh et al., 2023). In a Bourdieusian sense, however, this practice of "'doing gender' does not mean the same thing to everyone everywhere; it does not even mean the same thing to every individual in a single society" (Krais, 2006, p. 128). From this perspective, it is arguable that the gendered experiences of African women researchers will vary in different contexts and at different times of their life cycle. In drawing attention to the relevance of the context of social action, the Bourdieusian framework allows the researcher to appreciate the contextual nature of AE as well as outline the context-specific patterns of gender inequality.

Significantly, Bourdieu's (1977) emphasis on context in his theoretical model is pertinent for this study's objectives, as Zavale and Schneijderberg (2021) contend that scholars interested in studying AE in Africa must utilise frameworks that can capture context-specific patterns and collaborative arrangements that are inaccessible through macro-structural data. The authors explain that Africa has weak innovative conditions, and therefore, the region tends to fall behind the frontier of the commonly used knowledge economy indexes for measuring the existence of AE activities, including innovation and technology. Due to its distinguishing structural conditions, studying AE in Africa is not only empirically challenging, but researchers must also employ research methods and frameworks that can generate findings which are unpredictable and meaningful (Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). In other words, the researcher's ability to provide a comprehensive account of African women researchers' lived experiences of AE, would be based on her creative use of research methods that do not attempt to situate people's perspectives and experiences into "predetermined response categories"

(Patton, 1990, p. 14). Maynard (1998) argues that using predetermined categories to investigate a subject, as commonly done in quantitative research, often results in a replication of already known facts and leads to "the silencing of women's own voices" (p. 18).

In light of prior research that points out the tendency for women in African universities to disappear with the upsurge of resources, power and influence (Liani et al., 2020; Morley & Lugg, 2009), a qualitative research approach was considered as appropriate to unveil the "invisibility cloak" on African women researchers' experiences of AE (Mitten, 2018, p. 318). Consistent with Bourdieu's conceptual framework which illuminates complex social processes (Tatli et al., 2014), qualitative methodologies are largely suitable for research that is focused on hearing silenced voices and gaining deep insights into complex problems (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative methodologies are also expedient for addressing the many unanswered how and why questions in extant research (Leavy, 2014), including the one raised in this thesis: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?*

The decision to adopt a qualitative research approach for this study was not categorically based on the researcher's intrinsic belief and/or a methodological fetishism that this technique is more appropriate than quantitative methods (Burman, 1997). In fact, prior research (e.g., Tartari & Salter, 2016; Meng, 2016) has used quantitative techniques to investigate gender inequalities in AE activities. However, because quantitative techniques tend to explicate the effects of social actions without illuminating their underlying mechanisms (Creswell, 2007), several questions remain unresolved in the AE literature regarding "the exact causal mechanisms that give rise to [gender] differences" between "men and women of equal scientific, institutional and professional status" (Tartari & Salter, 2015, p. 1187). Thus, beyond the fact that a qualitative research approach "is simply a better fit" for this study's aims and objectives

(Creswell, 2007, p. 40), this approach was also chosen to complement more quantitative studies and advance the field of AE. This objective is accomplished with the application of Bourdieu's reflexive sociological perspective, which offers a sophisticated methodological orientation that is lacking in current research on AE (Fries, 2009). As previously shown, the Bourdieusian sociological theory places an epistemological emphasis on "overcoming the antinomy of objectivism and subjectivism" (Wacquant, 1998, p. 220), and in Bourdieu's model, this interplay of structure and agency are best revealed though a reflexive combination of research methods (Fries, 2009). Thus, having decided on integrating the Bourdieusian sociological theory with a qualitative approach to address the overarching research question, the next section discusses the two main techniques that the researcher utilised in generating rigorous, robust and reliable data to accomplish the study's aims and objectives.

2.1 Research methods

This section introduces the reader to the rationale behind the researcher's use of narrative reviews and semi-structured interviews in generating sufficient and relevant data for this study, as well as discusses the relevance of the different methods to the research aims.

2.1.1 Narrative review

Although research on AE has grown exponentially, Perkmann et al.'s (2021) recent systematic review shows that the existing literature is largely focused on Western countries, which has left several questions about non-Western contexts to remain unaddressed. For example, the authors indicate that relatively little is known about the existence of departmental or university-level support for faculty members in developing countries in their pursuit of AE activities, as well as "the dynamics of engagement processes, [including] the process by which academic engagement is entered into, exited from, or persists" (Perkmann et al., 2021, p. 9). In presenting

a future research agenda from their review findings, Perkmann et al. (2021) articulated that there are significant opportunities "for institutional comparison…by the ever more pronounced role of middle-income and developing economies in global science and [the] related repercussions for academic engagement in these contexts" (p. 9).

In light of the above, the researcher identified the narrative approach as a more appropriate method for reviewing and compiling the relevant literature that relates to the aims of this study. Generally referred to as 'literature reviews' or 'traditional reviews' (Haddaway et al., 2015), narrative reviews are "comprehensive narrative syntheses of previously published information" (Green et al., 2006, p. 103). Narrative reviews can also be distinguished as:

> publications that describe and discuss the state of the science of a specific topic or theme from a theoretical and contextual point of view. These types of review articles do not list the types of databases and methodological approaches used to conduct the review nor the evaluation criteria for inclusion of retrieved articles during databases search (Rother, 2007, p. vii)

The narrative approach is typically valuable for research projects that seek to generate future research recommendations by integrating a wide-range of literature on a particular topic (Hall et al., 2021). Snyder (2019) argues that through the integration of different research findings and perspectives, "a literature review can address research questions with a power that no single study has" (p. 333). The relative power of narrative reviews is found in how it allows researchers to uncover topics that require more research within a field, and creates opportunities for developing theoretical frameworks and conceptual models which can advance a research field (Snyder, 2019). For Baumeister and Leary (1997), narrative reviews are valuable for refocusing attention on the most fascinating questions in a field that might remain permanently overlooked, whereas systematic reviews are relevant for summarising data to

address a narrowly focused question. Considering the relatively limited knowledge on the evolving collaborative relationships between universities and firms in Africa (Kruss & Visser, 2017; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022), the researcher intuitively believed that a narrative review approach was uniquely suited for this study, rather than systematic approaches such as meta-analysis, systematic reviews, and meta-syntheses (Siddaway et al., 2019).

Accordingly, a narrative approach was adopted for the literature reviews conducted in Chapters Three and Four, which provide a comprehensive background understanding of AE activities and corporate sustainability practices respectively. A narrative review method was used to present the evidence in Chapter Three, as a way of pulling together various pieces of information that could provide a broad perspective on the role and contribution of businesses towards the SDGs, as well as to describe the importance of multi-stakeholder approaches to sustainable development (Green et al., 2006). For the evidence presented in Chapter Four, a narrative approach was used to provide a novel way of comprehending the persisting gender gap in AE by identifying the problems, weaknesses, paradoxes, and controversies in the existing literature (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). Fundamentally, the purpose of the narrative reviews in Chapters Three and Four was not to compile and review all research articles that have ever been published on the topics of AE and corporate sustainability, but rather to creatively collect data that combines insights and perspectives from different fields. The narrative reviews in Chapters Three and Four allowed the researcher to develop a conceptual and theoretical structure before commencing empirical research. Specifically, it empowered the researcher to: "(1) gain a one-stop overview [on the collaborative relationship between African universities and businesses], (2) identify knowledge gaps [within the areas of research on AE and corporate sustainability], (3) derive novel ideas for investigation, and (4) position [her] intended contributions to the field (Donthu et al., 2021, p. 285).

Despite the significant advantages of narrative reviews, including those listed within this study, a number of criticisms have been raised about its methodological shortcomings (Snyder, 2019). Critiques are generally based around the argument that narrative reviews are unsystematic and lack a specified search strategy or follow no specified protocol (Donthu et al., 2021; Torraco, 2016). There are also critiques about the lack of an objective and systematic selection criteria for including or excluding articles, which for some scholars, leads to a clear bias in the author's interpretation and conclusions on a research topic (Green et al., 2006; Post et al., 2020). Responding to these criticisms, Hakala et al. (2020) contend that although the article selection processes of systematic literature reviews are more rigorous and transparent, the relative silence on its methods of interpreting prior research findings, makes systematic reviews to be similar to narrative reviews. For Hakala et al. (2020), "literature reviews remain an interpretivist quest – and are thus inherently subjective" (p. 23). As such, the lack of a content-analytical review process in the narrative approach, should not overshadow its "potential to identify far larger gaps, discussions and viewpoints that are either in a minority or wholly absent in an entire stream of literature" (Hakala et al., 2020, p. 23). Indeed, for this study, the strengths of the narrative review approach were found to outweigh its weaknesses because it allowed the researcher to "[stand] on the shoulders of giants…with a critical attitude" (Post et al., 2020, p. 353), and produce novel knowledge that theoretically advances research on AE and corporate sustainability. Nevertheless, to ensure that the articles presented in Chapters Three and Four were accurate, precise, and trustworthy as expected of a proper research practice, Table 2.1 outlines the basic steps of narrative reviews that were followed by the researcher.

Table 2.1: Basic steps for conducting a narrative literature review

Designing the review	involved reflecting on: Is this review needed and what is the contribution of conducting this review? What is the potential audience of this review? What is the specific purpose and research question(s) this review will be addressing? What is the search strategy for this specific review? (including search terms, databases, inclusion and exclusion criteria etc.)
Conducting the review	involved musing over: What is the practical plan for selecting articles? Does the search plan developed work to produce an appropriate sample or does it need adjustment? How will the search process and selection be documented?
Analysis	involved deciding on: What type of information needs to be abstracted to fulfil the purpose of the specific review? What type of information is needed to conduct the specific analysis?
Structuring and writing the review	involved evaluating: Are the motivation and the need for this review clearly communicated? What information needs to be included in the review? Are the results clearly presented and explained? Is the contribution of the review clearly communicated?

Source: adapted from Snyder (2019, p. 336)

As outlined in Table 1.1 above, the narrative review process began with deciding on the research aims, scope, and question(s) that the papers in Chapters Three and Four would address (Snyder, 2019), followed by searching for the most significant literature on the research subject, and using these literatures to guide the rest of the review. This approach reflects Jones and Gatrell's (2014) suggestion that a typical narrative review process should commence "with a small number of articles and books, which are then used to identify key authors and other articles that are related to the particular topic" (p. 257). For instance, while the *Research Policy* articles of Perkmann et al. (2013) and Tartari and Salter (2015) were identified as fundamental literatures on the topic of AE, Rasche et al.'s (2017) work on corporate social responsibility helped to provide an understanding of businesses' key role in tackling the global challenges. Using these key literatures as a starting point, the researcher proceeded with the review by

employing an iterative snowballing strategy to identify additional studies and broaden her knowledge on the different topics (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). The iterative snowballing process involved scanning through the references of the key articles, and also using their indexed keywords to search for other research that had cited them in numerous bibliographic electronic databases such as ERIC and Science Direct, Google Scholar, Web of Science, EBSCO Discovery Service, and Scopus. This iterative process specifically led the researcher to include both books and articles in highly ranked journals such as *Studies in Higher Education*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *Feminist Review*, *Science and Public Policy*, *Journal of Technology Transfer*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Journal of Business Research*, and *Technovation*.

Although the researcher utilised the conventional approach of including only articles that are in English, peer-reviewed and published in scientific journals, her particular interest in developing countries (especially Africa) also made her cautious to not only use journal rankings to determine the relevance and quality of the selected articles. Since most well-ranked journals tend to be North American-and European-based (Zavale & Langa, 2018; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022), the researcher's eccentric approach of looking beyond journal rankings was relevant and useful in capturing diverse perspectives on the research topic of interest (Hakala et al., 2020). Overall, the researcher sought to collect scholarly work that appropriately provide a balanced perspective on the topics of AE and corporate sustainability, with a goal of presenting an argument that encourages the explicit integration of gender into the ongoing scholarly and policy contributions on sustainable development. The final phase of the review process involved summarising, integrating and synthesising the findings from the articles found, and presenting them in a way that was pertinent to the broader research objective. The narrative review approach proved particularly useful here, as it allowed the researcher to not only identify an existing knowledge gap concerning men and women researchers' differential

participation in AE, but to also recognise the value of using Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice and Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) leadership and management conceptual framework to examine and interpret the body of relevant conceptual and empirical works on the gender divide in AE. Snyder (2019) argues that a well-conducted narrative review typically "creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge and facilitating theory development" (p. 333). Thus, following the preliminary insights developed from the narrative reviews done in Chapters Three and Four, the next step of the research process was advancing knowledge in the AE field by empirically investigating some of the emerging research questions from the reviews. Details of this process are discussed below.

2.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

Cunningham et al. (2017) observe that quantitative studies continue to dominate research on AE, although qualitative techniques can deeply extend our understanding of this activity. Underlying this problem are the common criticisms associated with using qualitative approaches, including issues of credibility, transparency, generalisability, subjectivity and researcher bias (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Leavy, 2014). To increase the legitimacy of qualitative studies on AE, Cunningham et al. (2017) encourage researchers to select data collection methods which carefully address the aforesaid critiques as well as enhance their intended contributions. As the focus of this study was to provide rich insights into African women researchers' lived experiences of AE, semi-structured interviews that is guided by a topic list (see Appendix D), were considered as uniquely suited for the empirical component of this study (i.e. Chapters Five and Six). In Bourdieu's model, interviews facilitate a narrative account of the objective structures that influence African women researchers' participation in AE, as well as their subjective understandings of which practices can facilitate their accomplishment of this task (Fries, 2009). Bryman (2012) argues that semi-structured

interviews are convenient when a researcher has a deepened rather than general understanding of a topic. Given that the narrative reviews had provided the researcher with a springboard for understanding the gender-related issues in AE, the semi-structured interviews were used in generating data that could address the specific issues identified from the reviews (Bryman, 2012). For example, a pertinent issue that emerged from the reviews was the question of how and why gender differences exist in men and women researchers' access and opportunities to participate in AE activities in the African context, with the latter appearing to face greater constraints compared to their male counterparts.

Thus, to address this knowledge gap, the researcher considered semi-structured interviews as a useful approach for gathering the "retrospective and real-time accounts by those people experiencing the phenomenon of theoretical interest" (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 19). In gathering these real-time accounts, however, the researcher chose to focus on only African women researchers' experiences of AE activities. This decision was based on the understanding that women's experiences of a phenomena can make an important and valuable contribution to the totality of human experience (Stevenson, 1990). At the same time, it is argued that studying women can provide newer interpretations to emerging issues in any field of research (Stevenson, 1990), including gaining a clearer sense of the potential role and contributions of universities and businesses to sustainable development (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). To this end, the researcher conducted 36 semi-structured interviews with women academics and research scientists from six African countries: Zambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi, and Botswana.

2.1.2.1 Research context

The study was focused on Africa for several reasons. First, although there are increasing requests for scholars to capture the fascinating ways in which the higher education sector in Africa has evolved into a complex enterprise, "45 (29 under-researched plus 16 non-

researched) out of 54 African countries have hardly or never been researched" including Zambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Botswana (Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022, p. 219). Owing to this lack of research on Africa, the potential role of African universities as agents of modernisation and sustainable development, remains relatively unknown (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). In this regard, the researcher believed that Africa provided an interesting context to study AE activities, especially because "the mechanisms of knowledge transfer between universities and firms in most African countries, particularly low-income countries, are still under-conceptualised" and "in-depth research is still needed to explore the ways through which universities and firms collaborate" (Zavale & Langa, 2018, p. 43).

Second, UNESCO (2020) reports that women constitute about 31% of academic staff in African universities, and out of this number, only a few are represented in the leadership and management of African universities (Forson et al., 2017; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015). For example, a report from the Education for sub-Saharan Africa (2021) shows that out of the twenty-four South African public universities, only five women are represented as Vice Chancellors. Given that women academics are greatly underrepresented in the upper echelons of African universities (Mama, 2003; Prozesky & Beaudry, 2019; Rathgeber, 2013), the extensive workshops being organised by the Association of African Universities for the leadership and management of African universities to promote AE activities, raises a number of concerns (Mensah et al., 2019). Importantly, such events suggest the need to strengthen our conceptual and empirical understanding of AE activities in Africa from a gendered perspective.

Third, as previously mentioned in the prologue, the researcher was involved in the RECIRCULATE project, which was designed to promote university-industry-government interactions in Africa. As the researcher had developed a strong acquaintance with the RECIRCULATE project participants, many of the women researchers who belonged to this established network were much eager to take part in the study, and the researcher believed that

this was “too good an opportunity to miss” because they seemed to offer “information-rich cases” (Bryman, 2012, p. 201). Thus, being faced with time and resource constraints as most researchers (Suri, 2011), the researcher decided to leverage on the RECIRCULATE project network to gain an easy access to the target population and reduce the time and financial costs involved in studying the research setting (Patton, 2002).

2.1.2.2 Sampling

While the decision of “studying one’s own ‘backyard’ is convenient and eliminates many obstacles to collecting data” (Creswell, 2007, p. 122), there is also often “a risk of collecting poor quality data” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 3). Paterson and her colleagues (2002) therefore recommend that researchers should use a mixed purposeful sampling approach to facilitate triangulation, and ensure that the data gathered is insightful and accurate. In line with this suggestion, the researcher used snowballing and criterion sampling methods (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Noy, 2008) to counteract the limitations of conveniently sampling participants from the RECIRCULATE project network (Suri, 2011). In implementing a mixed purposeful sampling approach, Saunders and Townsend (2018) suggest that researchers should initially use criterion sampling to identify a ‘good’ participant, whom they can later on ask for referrals to other potential participants with similar characteristics. Thus, the sampling process for this study began with the researcher finding and interviewing one ‘good’ participant from the RECIRCULATE project, based on the following characteristics: (i) a female academic and/or research scientist; (ii) who works in a university or research institute in Africa; (iii) and has made efforts to participate in AE activities or has experiences of participating in AE activities. As the researcher had previously attended two of the RECIRCULATE project workshops, she had met some of the participants in-person, and also had access to a RECIRCULATE project document that listed the contact details of all the workshop attendees, and some background information on them. The researcher’s approach of leveraging on the RECIRCULATE project

network resulted in the selection of 24 RECIRCULATE study participants. This number was complemented by a snowball sampling approach, which also resulted in the selection of 12 non-RECIRCULATE study participants (the participants details are presented in Tables 5.1. and 6.1).

As the non-RECIRCULATE project participants were accessed through third parties, they were often suspicious of the research aims, which made it quite challenging to gain a straightforward access to them. However, the researcher's background as an African woman researcher was instrumental here, as many of the participants believed they were 'helping a sister' out, and typically responded to her research invitation after much persistence. Thus, the researcher kept "pushing, and trying, and hoping, and smiling, and pushing some more" (Cassell, 1988, p. 94), by sometimes following up on her formal emails to the participants with an informal WhatsApp message, as most of them were easily reachable on this communication platform than the former. This approach was also utilised in contacting the RECIRCULATE project participants whom the researcher had never met in-person. Due to the lack of familiarity between the researcher and the non-RECIRCULATE project participants, she often anticipated a lack of receptiveness on their part. However, once the researcher got access to the non-RECIRCULATE project participants, it was relatively easy to get interview appointments, build rapport, and to hold longer and interesting conversations with them. Below is an example of a conversation that ensued between the researcher and a non-RECIRCULATE project participant, when the former asked the latter about how she managed work and family:

> RS8: I am being personal here. I am telling you all these stories [while] answering the questions because it is for you to also get a lot of information. You are young right? You should be in your 30s or late 20s.
>
> Interviewer: Late 20s.
>
> RS8: Yes, so just to also help you with your career and life...I mean you could get some advice here and there…People will say I am

> always for women…she's a feminist. What is a feminist? I don't know what that means anymore…Now this is me, I would choose my family anytime over my professional role…Maybe from where you stand I am sure you are not married right?
>
> Interviewer: Yes
>
> RS8: You are doing a PhD, so for you it is so important, education and all of that right…I have colleagues who did PhDs, learnt and learnt, they got the opportunities in America, they learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt, now they say they want to marry [but] then the men are not coming. It's not that the men are not there, but the truth is it becomes difficult because of the level you have attained, and I am not saying do not attain that level, don't get me wrong…So, if at some point I have to sacrifice my professional life for family, I would do that any day. (RS8, Ghana)

As the interview schedule was considered to be significant in the collection of relevant data for this study, an ample amount of effort and time was dedicated to designing and developing it, such that each section was focused on the specific themes that emerged from the review papers presented in Chapters Three and Four. The ultimate product, which resulted from a trial and error process, generated questions that reflected a life history approach (Bryman, 2012). In general, the interview guide explored themes ranging from the women's professional and personal lives, to their gendered experiences within and outside of AE activities. Below is a summary of all the themes that were explored in the interview schedule, along with the justification of their inclusion.

Career choice

Questions under this theme centred on understanding the distinctive ways in which cultural conceptions of gender might have shaped the women's early career-relevant choices and trajectories in becoming academics. The interesting ways in which men and women's structural positions within the society are reproduced through education systems were examined here (Adusah-Karikari, 2008; Bourdieu, 1990).

Organisational context

Questions about the organisational context enabled an exploration of how women's participation in AE activities are shaped by the gendered cultures and structures of the organisations they engaged with (e.g. universities, firms) (Acker, 1990; Tartari & Salter, 2015). This theme in particular was further explored under research productivity.

Research productivity

Given that individual participation in AE activities is strongly linked to research productivity (Perkmann et al., 2021), and university research cultures can enable and/or constrain the careers of academics (Deem & Lucas, 2007), questions in this area focused on how the setting of universities affected the performance outcomes of the women and created a vicious or virtuous cycle that shaped their participation in AE activities.

Organisations or groups

Here, the intention was to explore how the women's AE activities were shaped by network homophily (Ibarra, 1992), as well as the strength and weakness of their network ties (Granovetter, 1973; Jack, 2005). This theme also explored issues around the women's access to the relevant resources for participating in AE activities, and how they mobilised such resources to advance their careers. The questions in this section particularly explored the various forms of capital that the women owned (Bourdieu, 1986).

Modes of engagement

The women were asked to mention the channels through which they engaged with non-academic organisations and the specific actors they engaged with. The questions under this particular theme produced several interesting and informative responses, owing to their open-ended style (e.g. Could you please mention your modes of engagement with industry?). This

line of questioning allowed the women to provide the researcher with rich insights into all the differing actors participating in the AE 'ecosystem' in Africa (Perkmann et al., 2013), and whether men and women's differential participation in the AE activities were the result of individual preferences, structural and/or institutional influences (Calvo et al., 2019).

Gender dynamics

The intention here was to explore how gender beliefs and stereotypes shape the social relational context in which AE activities occur (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004), and how the participants experienced these socio-cultural influences.

Work-life balance

This section highlighted how the participants managed the two 'greedy institutions' – academia and the family – that typically affect women's careers (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004).

Sub-Saharan Africa

Having discussed the women's work-life experiences, the questions under this theme were developed to delve deeper into the societal context in which they were embedded (Jack, 2010). Here, the researcher examined how gendered processes at the macro (social), meso (organisational), and micro-levels (individual) shape African women's participation in AE. Questions here were also focused on capturing the structural and agentic dimensions of the women's careers (Bourdieu, 1990; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

Goals, identity, and success

Here, the development and symbolic power of the 'habitus' were examined (Bourdieu, 1990). Questions in this section centred on individual perceptions of ability and how this impacted on the women's career aspirations and agency in challenging the constraints impeding their participation in AE (O'Meara & Stromquist, 2015).

Background information

The questions here were centred around the significance of the participants' demographic and occupational differences. It was to outline how women's participation in AE activities were stratified by their intersectional differences (Nkomo & Rodriguez, 2019). The researcher intentionally explored the questions under this theme at the latter stage of the interview because she perceived these questions to be personal and sensitive in nature, and therefore wanted to first build a rapport with the participants before delving into this dimension of the interviews.

Open questions

The researcher included open questions in the interview schedule in order to allow new themes that were not considered or obtained from the literature reviews to emerge. This allowed the participants to bring to the researcher's attention other important issues that were relevant to their experiences of AE.

Having developed a comprehensive interview schedule under the aforementioned themes, the subsequent phase involved piloting the interview schedule to assess its quality, and then recruiting participants for the study. Here, Gioia et al. (2013) argue that the misconception that interview schedules must be standardised to maintain their consistency over the course of a research project, affects the extent to which a study will be able to uncover new concepts. Thus, the researcher did a pilot study with only one RECIRCULATE project participant, whose insights helped to improve the interview schedule in terms of the clarity and sensitivity of the questions. In this vein, all other relevant adjustments to the schedule were made during the interviewing process, with the researcher primarily following "wherever the informants lead [her] in the investigation of [her] guiding research question" (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 20).

For qualitative interviews, Creswell and Poth (2018) advise researchers to ask participants' two broad questions: "What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or

situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon?" (p. 194). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), following this line of questioning allows unexpected themes and concepts to evolve. Employing this approach, the researcher conducted 36 semi-structured interviews, which lasted between 50-90 minutes. All interviews were conducted in English, although in some instances, the participants did mention a word in their local dialect and later on explained its meaning to the researcher. The interviews all took place electronically via Microsoft Teams or Zoom, depending on the participants' preference. The collection of data via digital communication platforms was as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which made it impossible to hold physical meetings with the participants. Conducting interviews via digital communication platforms partly affected the quality of the data gathered, as there were cases of poor internet connectivity, which meant that some parts of the interviews either got lost in transmission or the researcher had to keep repeating the questions, which then extended the interview time.

All the conducted interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed, after which the researcher uploaded the well-formatted transcripts into the NVivo software programme for coding. The NVivo software programme was particularly useful in managing the coding and supporting the data analysis process, which involved exploring the relationships between emerging themes. The data collection and analysis process, however, were preceded by the researcher seeking for and being granted formal ethical approval by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Management School Research Ethics Committee at Lancaster University. During the interviews, the participants were also given a consent form, which informed them of their right to withdraw from the study. Confidentiality was also assured prior to the start of the interviews. Thus, in the context of ethical issues and anonymity, the participants' names or personal details have not been included in both the transcribed interviews and the written findings.

2.2 Data analysis

According to Eisenhardt (1989), the data analysis process should be approached with the question: "What are we learning?" (p. 539). For qualitative and interpretivist researchers who are interested in exploring people's different interpretations and meanings of social phenomenon, a thematic analytical approach is often recommended (Saunders et al., 2016). In accordance, the researcher adopted a thematic analytical approach, which encompasses six interrelated steps: (i) familiarisation with data, (ii) generation of initial codes, (iii) searching for themes, (iv) reviewing themes, (v) defining and naming themes; and (vi) writing up the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In familiarising herself with the data, the researcher sometimes wrote down the initial thoughts and ideas she developed while listening to the audio recorded interviews and/or reading the transcripts. Here, the analytic memo tool within the NVivo software programme was particularly useful for recording the emerging insights, and in turn, generating an audit trail from the coding process. Gioia et al. (2013) describe this writing process as "[getting] in there and [getting] your hands dirty – madly making notes on what the informants are telling us, conscientiously trying to use their terms, not ours, to help us understand their lived experience" (p. 19). For Braun and Clarke (2012), "note-making helps you start to read the data as data" because the researcher is "not simply absorbing the surface meaning of the words on the page, as you might read a novel or magazine, but reading the words actively, analytically, and critically, and starting to think about what the data mean" (p. 60-1). In this regard, the main aim of adopting this strategy was for the researcher "to become intimately familiar with [her] data set's content and to begin to notice things that might be relevant to [her] research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 61).

Having familiarised herself with the data, the next stage involved generating codes that could be developed into themes that address the research question. Creswell (1994) suggests that the process of iteratively reading the data is concurrent with systematically analysing the data, as the researcher intuitively begins to examine and revisit the people and events that are embodied in the data, which then allows them to identify the emergent themes. Braun and Clarke (2012) explain codes as the "building blocks of analysis" which help researchers to identify and label potential aspects of their data that applies to their research question. For this study, both descriptive and interpretative codes were generated; in that while some of the generated codes reflected the language and concepts used by the participants as they described their experiences, the others comprised of the study's conceptual and theoretical framework (Saunders et al., 2016).

Braun and Clarke (2012) argue that it is typical for qualitative researchers to combine both inductive and deductive approaches while coding and analysing their data because often times, "it is impossible to be purely inductive, as we always bring something to the data when we analyse it" and thus "at the very least, we have to know whether [a theoretical construct] is worth coding" (p. 58-9). With an inductive analytical approach, the themes identified are data-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006), whereas the deductive analytical approach is motivated by the theoretical interest of the researcher (Nowell et al., 2017). As previously mentioned, the interview schedule for this study had been organised in accordance with themes that centred around the identified gender-related issues in the AE literature. Thus, some themes such as the engagement modes for AE, networks, and societal gender roles were apparent before the analysis. Nevertheless, the researcher also employed an inductive approach to allow themes that had a strong link to the data themselves to emerge (Boyatzis, 1998). For this study, the use of both inductive and deductive coding strategies allowed the researcher to explore the novel

themes that were emerging from the data, as well as those concepts used in existing theories (Eisenhardt et al., 2016; Graebner, 2009).

With the initial codes generated, the next major step involved actively searching for themes by reviewing the data that had been coded to identify their areas of similarity and overlap (Braun & Clarke, 2012). At this particular stage of the analysis, the NVivo software programme was again convenient for searching for keywords in the data and scoping these searches as wide or as narrow as possible, mostly allowing the researcher to identify word combinations in the text, coding or attributes. During this process, the researcher's primary focus was on clustering all codes that appeared to share some common features, in order to understand what aspect of the participants' lived experiences they reflected. For example, the researcher observed codes clustering around impression management and socio-structural constraints. Taking a detailed look at the codes, the researcher identified that the codes were either centred around the women's challenges of participating in AE activities, or their strategic approaches in managing and overcoming the barriers impeding their involvement in AE activities. Thus, the researcher constructed themes relating to the challenges the women faced, the underlying reasons for their strategies, and the outcomes of the strategies they employed.

Having developed a workable set of codes, the next focus of the researcher was on exploring the linkages between the emerging themes and the overall story they told about African women researchers' experiences of AE. Questions reflected on during this aspect of the analysis was: "Is this a theme (it could be just a code)?" and "if it is a theme, what is the quality of this theme (does it tell me something useful about the data set and my research question)?" and also is "there enough (meaningful) data to support this theme (is the theme thin or thick)?" (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018, p. 810; also see Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 65). In reflecting on these questions to review and refine the themes, the researcher reread all the transcripts to determine whether the different themes that were emerging were reflective of the whole data

set or just minimal aspects. Having made judgments about the validity and quality of the emerging themes, the final phase for the researcher was to provide a compelling story about African women researchers' experiences of AE that was "convincing and clear yet complex and embedded in [this] scholarly field" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 69). The different themes are presented in the finding sections of Chapters Five and Six.

It is worth mentioning that the writing and analysis of the data were interwoven, as often expected of qualitative researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2012). To demonstrate the robustness and rigor of the research, and in particular the data analysis process, Table 5.2 and Figures 6.1-3 provide a graphic representation of the data progression stages (Gioia et al., 2013). As the researcher was relatively responsible for interpreting how the emerging themes were connected to her broader research question and to the field of AE where her work is situated (Braun & Clarke, 2012), she ensured that the quotes (and their explicit and implicit meanings) that were extracted from the data reflected the original accounts of the participants.

Having explained the data collection and analysis approach utilised, the next section acknowledges and addresses Lincoln and Guba's (1985) call for qualitative researchers to explicitly state their "biases, motivations, interests or perspectives" (p. 290).

2.3 Reflective account of methodological issues

According to Whetten (1989), researchers whose theories and findings are inductively generated, do have a greater responsibility to discuss their studies limits of generalisability. Here, the researcher admits that the study's philosophical assumptions and techniques utilised inherently limits its generalisability. First, the methodological approach to studying the AE experiences of African women researchers was "interpretive, contextual, experiential, personalistic, and particularistic" in nature (Stake, 2010, p.88), which makes generalising this

study's findings to a broader setting quite difficult (Yin, 2016). At the same time, the empirical component of this research was mainly developed from semi-structured interviews. The researcher's inability to observe the participants in their natural settings so as to appraise the precision of their claims, affects both the richness of the data gathered through the semi-structured interviews and the validity of the research findings (Bryman, 2012). Nonetheless, the researcher believes that the credibility of this research lies in its "generative promise" of stimulating new scholarly and policy dialogues on the gender-related issues within AE (Angen, 2000, p. 389), as well as encouraging new investigations into the positioning and experiences of African women within this burgeoning activity (Creswell, 2007).

Moreover, the researcher's disposition towards generating socially constructed knowledge about AE activities in Africa might have created a leeway for an intimate relationship to ensue between herself and the participants during the interviewing process (Creswell, 2007). In this regard, the researcher tried to minimise her influence on the study by providing the participants with significant details about the research, including her identity and financing body, the study's objectives, the participants' potential role, and how the findings will be used or published. Through the presentation of quotes in the finding sections of Chapters Five and Six, the researcher gives 'voice' to the participants, which in turn allows readers to judge the credibility, rigor and trustworthiness of this research (Bryman, 2012).

Another ethical issue that arose was whether the researcher should share her personal experiences with the participants during the interviewing process. Creswell (2007) mentions that sharing minimises 'bracketing' and makes it difficult for the researcher to construct meanings out of participants' experiences. The same author, however, also argues that "high-quality interpretive or qualitative research involves reciprocity between the researcher and those being researched" and achieving "this standard requires that intense sharing, trust and mutuality exist" between the two parties involved (Creswell, 2007, p. 213). In order to increase

the rapport and trust between the participants and the researcher, she allowed herself to become known to the women she studied. In particular, the researcher revealed details about her life that would foster a warmth between herself and the participants, as well as information that could reduce the power distance between herself and the researched (Oakely, 1981). For example, the researcher sometimes shared her age, nationality, and marital status with the participants when she posed questions relating to these issues.

Furthermore, although from the outset, this study's focus was on exploring the AE experiences of African women researchers, the researcher had to decide on whether to investigate their experiences as a collective group, or their country-specific experiences. Here, Munene et al. (2000) indicate that although "Africans do not share a unified cultural life in the strong sense that they all think, act and react in the same way and have the same political, religious and moral beliefs", they somewhat "do constitute a meaningful cultural group in the sense of a community who share many important values and practices" (p. 342-3). In other words, there is a "shared African culture that cuts across national boundaries" (Munene et al., 2000, p. 348), which makes studying the country-specific AE experiences of African women researchers relatively insignificant (Chasserio et al., 2014). This assertion was well-acknowledged by several participants, especially when the researcher asked the following question in the interviews: 'Does your society (i.e. country/region/tribe) have views on the role of a man or woman?' In answering this question, one of the participants, for example, remarked that: "As an African country, Zambia is no different from the rest of Africa…Afua whatever you believe will be the same as me" (A5, Zambia). Bearing this in mind, the researcher decided to recognise African women researchers as a collective group, whose lived experiences of AE can be studied collectively. This approach was particularly valuable in identifying the commonalities in the processes and practices of AE activities across the African region.

Again, the study's specific focus on women researchers as the unit of analysis allowed the researcher to hear and capture their 'silenced voices' which is often excluded in traditional scientific investigations on AE. Tartari and Salter (2015) have previously argued that "more insights into the challenges and opportunities that women academics face in their work, especially when they engage with non-academics, might ensure that the full potential of these talented and dedicated individuals is realised at both personal and societal level" (p. 1188). Thus, while this research could be critiqued for failing to include the perspectives of men, the researcher believes that women's experiences are legitimate in developing the knowledge base of AE (Leavy, 2014), and simply because the stories of the women studied are personal, does not imply that they are not credible or trustworthy (Stevenson, 1990). In studying women's experiences, the researcher also chose not to focus on women industry actors because of how the development and promotion of AE activities strongly centres on academia (Sinell et al., 2018).

Additionally, COVID-related discussions came up during the interviews, most of which were about the participants' challenges of working in this situation. While several participants (i.e. those who were mothers) mentioned that COVID had positively impacted on their careers by increasing the time spent with their families, a few others indicated that COVID had affected their AE activities. Despite these varying perspectives and interesting insights, the researcher decided not to actively explore the participants' COVID-related experiences because she wanted the developed theory and conceptual frameworks within this study to be relevant and applicable in a post-COVID world.

Finally, the researcher acknowledges that as a qualitative researcher, she had the overall responsibility of acting as a mediator who interprets the participants' experiences of AE (Bloor & Wood, 2006). In playing this role, the researcher was aware that her own background as an African woman researcher, including her prejudices, past experiences, biases, and disposition,

might have significantly shaped the interpretations given to the participants narratives (Creswell, 2007). As Parpart et al. (2000) observe, gender influences the analysis and interpretation of data, and men and women's differing experiences and worldview often shapes their reading and understanding of data in different ways. Given the researcher's bias of being an African woman researcher, she ensured to chronicle her personal feelings and reflections during the data collection, analysis and interpretation processes so as to provide a clear audit trail and increase the study's reliability (Creswell, 2009). To this end, this thesis "includes the voices of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem [that] extends the literature or signals a call for action" (Creswell, 2007, p. 37).

2.4 Summary of the thesis chapters

Having discussed the methodology underpinning this study, this section provides a summary of the subsequent chapters that present empirical and conceptual evidence to the overarching research question: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?* Fundamentally, the sub-sections below provide the reader with a general understanding of the interconnectedness between the findings presented in Chapters Three to Six, which discuss the relevance and value of multi-stakeholder approaches such as AE and corporate sustainability in the achievement of the SDGs.

2.4.1 International development and corporate sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the

ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, p. 43). The notion of sustainable development has emerged in the last few years with the understanding that the world faces severe environmental and ecological challenges which threaten its future existence (Ahmad et al., 2023). To ensure the well-being of all people and the environment, the United Nations (UN) has recently proposed 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) that identifies different stakeholders and seeks to align their efforts and contributions (Ahmad et al., 2023; Baù et al., 2021). Intriguingly, businesses are one of the identified stakeholders in the accomplishment of the SDGs (Benschop, 2021; Sarpong et al., 2022). As Ban Ki-moon, the former UN Secretary-General, articulated:

> "Business is a vital partner in achieving the sustainable development goals; companies can contribute through their core activities, and we ask companies everywhere to assess their impact, set ambitious goals and communicate transparently about the results" (GRI, UN Global Compact, & WBCSD, 2015, p. 4)

Against this backdrop, SDG9 specifically emphasises the role of industry, innovation, and infrastructure, in the achievement of the remaining goals (UN, 2015). Literature suggests that by contributing to sustainable development outcomes, firms can also directly and indirectly increase their profits (Böhm et al., 2022; Cornelius et al., 2008). This implicit economic benefit of implementing the SDGs, has sparked several scholarly debates and investigations regarding the extent to which businesses may consider the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development. For example, some scholars have studied how businesses are reframing their prevailing economic paradigm into sustainable growth models (Adams et al., 2016), while others have looked at how corporate efforts are generating economic activities and improving life simultaneously (Sarpong et al., 2022). Other research has also focused on the impetuses shaping the sustainability agenda of businesses (Babiak & Trendafilova, 2011;

Discua Cruz, 2020). In this regard, Broccardo et al. (2019) found that there are considerable differences in the "motivation for and implementation of corporate sustainability practices that are obscured by the corporate rhetoric of a high commitment to sustainability" (p. 2). Research shows that some firms implement corporate sustainability practices in order to enhance their brand reputation (Rasche et al., 2017), while others are driven by moral (Aguinis, 2011) and religious reasons (Discua Cruz, 2020). Based on the differences in their motivations for corporate sustainability practices, scholarly attention has been redirected towards understanding whether "the win-win statement around the SDGs can be just a naïve declaration hiding the real conflicts that are arising between firms and society" (Calabrese et al., 2021, p. 2). In other words, "are profit-orientated firms playing a role in achieving the SDGs, or are they still focusing on business as usual?" (Calabrese et al., 2021, p. 2).

The lack of understanding within prior research regarding the actual contributions of firms toward the SDGs, constitutes the primary discussion in Chapter Three of this thesis. Using case studies on Mexico, Vietnam, South Africa, and Ghana, Chapter Three extends understanding of how the actions and inactions of firms affect the achievement of the SDGs related to gender equality, poverty reduction, democracy promotion and climate change. While the the discussion in Chapter Three implores business and management students to "learn how to prepare, manage and evaluate development projects" (Owusu-Kwarteng & Jack, 2023, p. 547), some scholars have called attention to the weak sustainability syllabi in many higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing countries such as sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and the challenges this poses for students' understanding of development outcomes (Amadi & Ememe, 2013; Unterhalter & Howell, 2021). According to these perspectives, HEIs within these contexts fail to collaborate with external stakeholders such as businesses in their curricula design and development, which in turn creates a mismatch between the knowledge and skills possessed by students and those required by firms (Fongwa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2015; Kintu

et al., 2019). The implication then is that, in analysing the different roles being played by businesses in the achievement of the SDGs, it is also worthwhile considering how HEIs are making the effort to collaborate with them (McCowan, 2016; Unterhalter & Howell, 2021).

As Howard-Grenville et al. (2019) mention, "although sustainability management is becoming more widespread among major companies, corporate efforts frequently do not richly reflect the overall state of the world" (p. 359.) Thus, the value of management research in providing evidence on how businesses and other organisations are engaged in the development of SDG-related solutions, demands looking across several analytical levels and conceptualising the intricate and multifaceted arrangements that are (mis)directing progress on the SDGs (Howard-Grenville et al., 2019). Underpinned by SDG17 which underlines the value of 'partnerships for the goals' (UN, 2015), the sub-section below outlines the contents in Chapter Four of this thesis, which demonstrates these interconnections between HEIs, firms, and sustainable development, as reflected in the concept of AE. Specifically, Chapter Four responds to scholarly calls for more research on the (mis)alignment of African universities to national and regional development (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Sarpong et al., 2022).

2.4.2 Reconceptualising the gender gap in AE

In contemporary discourses on the role of business in sustainable development, HEIs have been positioned as knowledge producers who through their research, can provide solutions for the grand challenges (McCowan, 2016; Sarpong et al., 2022). The literature suggests that through collaboration, firms can capitalise on the knowledge and expertise within universities to create products, processes and services that promote sustainable development (Benneworth & Fitjar, 2019; Dada et al., 2016; Filippetti & Savona, 2017). In view of their relevance to firm innovation and sustainable development, much scholarly effort has gone into analysing how HEIs are aligning their roles, missions, and core values to the SDGs (Chankseliani &

McCowan, 2021; Cottafava et al., 2022). Within this stream of research, it has been identified that the third mission of HEIs – societal engagement activities – holds much promise for the accomplishment of the SDGs (Fongwa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2015; Sarpong et al., 2022). Scholars mention that the engagement activities of HEIs are particularly valuable to the SDGs because it allows academics to directly apply their knowledge and skills to local communities (Hirsu et al., 2021; McCowan, 2016). Contributing to this line of inquiry, Ahrweiler et al. (2011) provide a broad perspective on the engagement activities that HEIs are implementing, namely:

> *formal* (contract research; joint supervision of masters and PhD students; licensing of university patents to companies; co-publications; co-patenting; purchasing of university-developed prototypes; contract consulting; formation of entrepreneurial university spin-offs; university-based training and professional development for firm employees; use of university libraries, laboratories, and other facilities by firms; employment of graduates by companies; joint research programmes; and mutual secondments; as well as collaborative R&D) and *informal* (meetings, e-mail communication, jointly attended lectures and conferences) (Ahrweiler et al., 2011, p. 218).

From this extensive listing, recent research has made distinctions between the engagement activities that are more beneficial to firms and the wider economy (Link et al., 2007; Pugh et al., 2022; Tartari et al., 2014). According to Perkmann et al. (2013), academic engagement (AE) activities allow all collaborating "partners [to] pursue goals that are broader than the narrow confines of conducting research for the sake of academic publishing, and seek to generate some kind of utility for the non-academic partners" (p. 424). As a result, "many companies consider [AE] significantly more valuable than licensing university patents" (Perkmann et al., 2013, p. 424). AE activities has been distinguished by Perkmann et al. (2013, 2021) as the formal and informal collaboration arrangements (e.g. contract research, guest lecturing, and consulting) that often precede the commercialisation of academic knowledge for

financial profits. Given that AE activities are less bureaucratic and can be achieved through informal communication processes, studies indicate that they are more predominant among academics (Cohen et al., 2002; Link et al., 2007; Tartari & Salter, 2015), and in the context of SSA, where both universities and firms have weaker and underdeveloped technological and collaborating competences (Kruss et al., 2012; Zavale & Langa, 2018; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021).

For SSA, the historical evidence shows that following their independence, most countries within this region strove to establish national universities (Adeoti, 2009; Mama, 2003; Teferra & Altbach, 2004). These institutions were to assist postcolonial governments "catch-up with Western industrial capitalist" societies (Mama, 2003, p. 114) by acting as 'developmental universities' that provided solutions to Africa's development challenges of poverty, poor sanitation, unemployment, hunger and illiteracy (Assie-Lumumba, 2005; Moscardini et al., 2022). Amankwah-Amoah (2016) and Brown-Acquaye (2004) trace the idea of Africa's 'developmental universities' to Dr Kwame Nkrumah, one of Ghana's founding fathers who sought to transform Africa into an industrially advanced economy through science and technology. In making his development aspirations explicit during Ghana's independence celebration on 5th March 1957, Dr Nkrumah stated that:

> I believe that one of the most important services which Ghana can perform for Africa is to devise a system of education based at its university level on concrete studies of the problems of the tropical world. The University will be the coordinating body for education research, and we hope that it will eventually be associated with Research Institutes dealing with agriculture, biology, and the physical and chemical sciences which we hope to establish (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975, p. 94).

Fundamental in this speech was the tasking of HEIs in Africa towards the generation and exploitation of scientific knowledge that holds social and economic value to the region (Andoh, 2017). Despite the well-intentioned speeches and various implemented initiatives to achieve this vision, research shows that Africa is still poorly represented in the global science and technology landscape, and the region's development challenges also seem to have worsened (Amankwah-Amoah, 2016; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022). The failure of Africa's 'developmental universities' has been linked to different factors: while HEIs are criticised for having weak institutional capabilities and providing insufficient research outputs, governments are faulted for not providing context-specific policies and funding, and firms are blamed for being too foreign-based or lacking the 'absorptive capacity' to utilise the knowledge from universities (Harrison & Turok, 2017; Zavale & Macamo, 2016). Recently, some scholars have found that many African governments are encouraging African universities to pursue AE activities as a strategy to effectively restore the 'developmental universities' agenda (Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022; Zavale & Langa, 2018). However, rather than helping to tackle Africa's development problems, research shows that the practice of AE may actually be fostering the "grand challenge of inequality" (Benschop, 2021, p. 4). Similar to the patterns of gender inequality in AE observed in the UK and US (see Perkmann et al., 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015), the emerging evidence in SSA suggests that women researchers may face greater gendered barriers in their pursuit of AE activities compared to their male colleagues (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021).

As prior research has not yet illustrated the complex patterns of gendered participation in AE activities in SSA (Perkmann et al., 2021; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021), Chapter Four contributes to this research area by presenting a conceptual analysis of the macro, meso, and micro-level factors that might interconnect to distinctively shape African men and women academics involvement in AE activities. Specifically, the Chapter extends extant research on the gender

gap by drawing on Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) leadership and management conceptual model and Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice to develop an integrative conceptual framework that illustrates AE in SSA as a gendered and contextual activity that distinctively shapes men and women researchers' participation opportunities. A key takeaway from the findings in Chapter Four is for scholars to adopt the developed conceptual framework and empirically investigate the gender dynamics in AE in SSA, taking into consideration whether and how the motivation, resources, and engagement modes of African women researchers do differ from that of men, as prior research suggests (see Tartari & Salter, 2015).

Following-up on the scholarly invitation in Chapter Four, the succeeding sub-section highlights how Chapter Five responds to this call. The discussion in the sub-section below delves more deeply into gendered issues in HEIs, and outlines the core arguments of the discussion in Chapter Five, which provides insights into how the pursuit of AE activities by African women researchers may cause HEIs to subvert progression on SDG5.

2.4.3 African women researchers' participation in AE

Over the past years, a substantial literature has discussed how the content and practice of HEIs is being shaped by neoliberalism (Blackmore, 2002; Forson et al., 2017; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Teferra & Altbach, 2004). These studies reveal that neoliberalism has not only seeped into HEIs, but it has also restructured academic careers into entrepreneurial projects that encourages competition and performativity among individuals (Cannizzo, 2018; Mavin & Yusupova, 2022; Morley & Crossouard, 2016). Within the neoliberal academe, the individual is "incentivised to focus on research, 'capturing' external funding, publishing peer-reviewed articles from the resultant projects, and ensuring economic and social impact from the research" (Edwards, 2022, p. 906). Through a virtuous cycle, it is believed that academics who possess

financial resources ('gold') can ultimately increase their recognition and prestige ('ribbon') inside and outside their academic communities (Lam, 2011; Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).

In the quest to acquire funding and develop high-impact research (Edwards, 2022), Kelly and Grant (2012) found that men and women academics are distinctively positioned in the labour market by their parenthood and marital statuses. Contrary to the childcare and domestic responsibilities of women, the expectations of most employers and funding providers is that academics will mimic the image of the *ideal worker* who "works full time and overtime and takes little or no time off for childbearing or child rearing" (Williams, 2000, p. 1). As Acker (1990) has argued, this *ideal worker* "is actually a man [since] men's bodies, sexuality, and relationships to procreation and paid work are subsumed in the image of the worker" (p. 139). Thus, while many academic parents find it difficult to reconcile their professional responsibilities with the ideal worker image, men are always better positioned than women in the labour market of funding (Kim & Kim, 2021; Lawson et al., 2021). Not only do fathers (men) escape the penalties associated with parenthood, but cultural perceptions about their breadwinner role generates into a fatherhood premium that positively affects their earnings (Kelly & Grant, 2012; Luhr, 2020).

As Ridgeway (2006) observes, "whatever their origin, once status beliefs favouring men become culturally established, they root male advantage in group membership itself and thus advantage men even over their female peers who are just as strong as they and are not, say, lactating mothers" (p. 268). Indeed, research has shown that organisational decisions relating to recruitment, promotion and rewards are typically shaped by gender role expectations (Cornelius & Skinner, 2008; Eagly & Wood, 2012; El-Far et al., 2021), as well as gender stereotypes that develop from the (in)direct observations that people make about women and men's social roles (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). In most societies, women are often assigned household responsibilities, while men are expected to cater

financially for their families by working outside the home (Eagly et al., 2020; Kim & Kim, 2021). These gender role expectations, to a larger extent, limit the income-earning opportunities of women academics (Bullough et al., 2022), including those related to research funding (Kjeldal et al., 2005; Lawson et al., 2021). Nevertheless, O'Meara (2015) and Terosky et al. (2014) observe that, despite the numerous career-restrictive barriers that women academics experience, many are still able to break-free from these constraints. In fact, in the UK, Edwards (2022) found that women academics who are unsuccessful with external research funding, still conducted research using their personal funds as both a form of resistance and compliance to the market logics of neoliberalism.

This sense of ingenuity that women researchers appear to possess, forms the basis of the findings presented in Chapter Five of this thesis. In particular, Chapter Five draws on Bourdieu's (1984, 1990) concepts of field, habitus and capitals, and a qualitative research methodology to explore how women researchers in Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, and Botswana, have aligned themselves to the third mission of HEIs. In shedding light on the pursuit of AE activities by women researchers within these contexts, Chapter Five directs "attention on both the espoused and the enacted, namely what the faculty member herself believes is possible and what she does to move toward those goals" (Terosky et al., 2014, p. 61). From this perspective, the findings in Chapter Five deepen insights into the gendered nature of AE in SSA by highlighting the cultural and structural barriers that impede women researchers' participation, and their creativity in overcoming these constraints. Interestingly, a key finding in Chapter Five is that the career strategies utilised by African women researchers to advance their participation in AE activities, also have consequences for the achievement of SDG5. In this vein, Chapter Five concludes by reiterating scholarly calls (e.g. Blackmore, 2011; Hirsu et al., 2021; Morley & Crossouard, 2016) for more insights into whether, and if so

how, the ambition of HEIs to promote sustainable development through AE activities, may undermine progression on SDG5.

The next sub-section describes how the findings in Chapter Six provides a response to this scholarly call by investigating how, and why, women researchers' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE activities come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers.

2.4.4 A symbolic violence approach to gender inequality in AE

Feminist standpoint and theorists have long challenged the belief that gender inequality is a 'natural' phenomenon (Ely, 1995; Martin, 2004; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). Within this stream of research, it is argued that, "gender is an institutionalised system of social practices for constituting males and females as different in socially significant ways and organising inequality in terms of those differences" (Ridgeway, 2001, p. 637). In effect, gender inequality originates from automatic sex categorisation, which involves routinely labelling men and women, and relating to them based on the widely shared beliefs on men and women's expected behaviours and characteristics (Ridgeway, 2009; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). According to Ridgeway (2006), "we can think abstractly about an ungendered boss or employee, but we can never actually relate, even in imagination, to any specific boss or employee without gendering him or her first" (p. 268). Through the social process of 'gendering' or sex-categorising people in our interactive relations (either imaginatively, virtually, or during our in-person interactions with them), we activate the stereotypes, status assumptions, and cognitive biases about men and women that create and sustain gender inequality (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).

If gender inequality emerges from the gendered practice of automatic sex categorisation, it seems clear that its presence and effects are ubiquitous. Indeed, research has shown that inequality persists within HEIs, notwithstanding the institutional policies to promote equal

opportunities between men and women academics (Forson et al., 2017; O'Connor & O'Hagan, 2016). There is a significant and well-developed body of work that has discussed the different manifestations of gender inequality within HEIs (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015; Tsaousi, 2020); and these studies have pointed to the diverse factors that create and sustain such forms of inequalities, ranging from the male-dominated structures and cultures of HEIs (Bird, 2011; Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016), the gender-biased recruitment, promotion and evaluation processes utilised within these organisations (van den Brink & Benschop, 2014; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011), sexual harassment (Ampofo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Irvine, 2020), work-family conflicts (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Coate & Howson, 2016), to women's lack of role models in HEIs as well as their exclusion and/or marginalisation in male institutional networks (Durbin, 2011; Whittington, 2018).

Prior research on HEIs suggests that the challenges affecting women academics transcend all aspects of their lives and careers, including their participation in contemporary activities such as AE (Meng, 2016; Sinell et al., 2018). While research has not directly explored the origin of gender inequality in the practice of AE (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017), literature shows that individuals who are "scientifically productive, senior, male, locally trained, and commercially experienced" are also more likely to participate in this activity (Perkmann et al., 2021, p. 1). In line with these findings, Calvo et al. (2019) argue that women academics tend to participate less in AE activities because they are often ranked at the bottom of collaborative networks, and have a lesser and inferior status in HEIs and the broader society.

Expectation states theorists have explained that the enactment of social hierarchies in goal-oriented interactions such as AE activities are the result of status beliefs, which tend to define men and women's influence and leadership in the workplace or elsewhere (Eagly & Wood, 2012; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). In shaping their interactions, Ridgeway (2001) explains that "status beliefs affect many processes by which [men and women academics] are given access

to rewards, evaluated, and directed toward or away from positions of power, wealth, and authority" (p. 638). Not only do status beliefs hold women academics to higher standards of competence, but to be considered for occupational activities, they must also demonstrate that their competences supersede that of their male colleagues in similar professional positions (Ridgeway, 2006; Scarborough & Risman, 2017). Interestingly, the desire to succeed in a field that considers or makes them to feel like impostors, urges many women academics to conform and/or comply with the implicit rules of gender status beliefs (Kim & Kim, 2021; Tsaousi, 2020).

Women academics' acquiescence to gender norms and status beliefs opens the way to the analysis of symbolic violence in Chapter Six of this thesis, which analytically explores "how power fosters the practicing of particular masculinities and femininities and how it/they is/are perceived, experienced, and interpreted by occupants of more and less powerful positions" (Martin, 2003, p. 357). Specifically, Chapter Six draws on Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic violence to demonstrate that the gendered practices through which women academics conform to the gendered social order vis-à-vis their participation in AE activities, are primarily "guided by principles of [gender] that are lodged in their habitus, and thus situated below the threshold of reflexive consciousness" (Weininger, 2005, p. 139). The findings in Chapter Six provide fine-grained insights into the gendered character of the career strategies that African women researchers implement to advance their participation in AE activities. In doing so, Chapter Six draws on in-depth interviews with 36 women researchers from Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria, Botswana, and Zambia.

The subsequent sub-section discusses how the findings in this study provide a collective understanding of the overarching research question: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?*

2.5 Relevance of the study

As previously mentioned, the core objective of this study is to draw attention to gender inequality issues in the growing collaborations between African universities and firms by (i) deepening insights into the challenges and opportunities for African women researchers to support the implementation of the SDGs through their AE activities, and (ii) discussing the related theoretical, practice and policy implications for management and organisations scholarship. Accordingly, this research makes several important contributions.

First, this study centres on the role of universities and firms in the achievement of the SDGs. Calabrese et al. (2021) contend that "the challenges for this paradigm shift are enormous, and it is not possible to postpone the evaluation of the role played by firms in achieving the SDGs anymore" (p. 2). In this sense, "there is a need to critically scrutinise the multiple solutions offered by businesses – but also by governments, NGOs and multi-stakeholder governance initiatives – to tackle climate change and the many other ecological crises we face" (Böhm et al., 2022, p. 841). By explicating the varied ways in which businesses are impacting the lives and welfare of local communities through their corporate sustainability practices, this study addresses the important question: "Are profit-orientated firms playing a role in achieving the SDGs, or are they still focusing on business as usual?" (Calabrese et al., 2021, p. 2).

Second, the study contributes to research that has demonstrated HEIs as key actors in the SDGs implementation (e.g., Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Hirsu et al., 2021). While collaborative relationships such as AE activities are among the useful and practical ways in which HEIs can contribute to the success of the SDGs, many of these engagement forms are weak in developing countries, and further research is required to understand the important processes for improving them (McCowan, 2016; Hirsu et al., 2016). Unterhalter and Howell (2021) argue that strengthening the institutional capacities of HEIs in developing regions "is not only a scenario

for realising the SDGs but is an important development initiative in its own right" (p. 26). In this regard, by reconciling the situated challenges of African women researchers' pursuing AE activities with the 'empty-shell policies' of their institutions, this study extends understanding of how HEIs in SSA could develop their institutional capacities to create and maintain collaborative relationships with societal partners such as firms.

Third, although research and policy discourses on the third mission have increased at both the national and international levels, many of these have not delved deeper into the topic of gender (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015; Tartari & Salter, 2015). This gap is problematic, particularly as the organisational norms and practices of many organisations tend to contradict their equity, diversity and inclusion policy commitments (Cornelius & Skinner, 2008; Leigh & Melwani, 2022). The inconsistencies between "what is said and done" by organisations (Martin, 2004, p. 354), compels many minorities to often suppress their identity-based experiences (Forson et al., 2017). Yet, overlooking the experiences of minorities, especially women, implies that "organisation theories and theorists will not be able to fulfil the social responsibility that makes for better science and better strategies for tackling these grand challenges" (Benschop, 2021, p. 3). Thus, in placing the AE activities of African women researchers within the larger context of sustainable development, this study moves a distinct group of stakeholders whose voices are rarely heard or represented in organisation research from being hidden to being visible.

Fourth, the study extends contemporary research exploring gender inequality issues in academia by demonstrating the importance of distinguishing between the two types of "inequality producing regimes" (Blackmore, 2011, p. 447) that characterise the competitive playing field of AE and supports the perpetuation of gender inequality: concealed and overt forms of inequality. In drawing on the Bourdieusian concept of symbolic violence to demonstrate the gendered character of African women researchers' career strategies vis-à-vis AE, this thesis provides clarity on the persistence of gender inequality in AE. Concurrently, by

showing how gender inequality persists through the taken-for-granted assumptions that merit increases occupational success in academia, this thesis accounts for why prior research (e.g. Morley, 2006; O'Connor, 2020) has argued against the use of surface-level institutional policies and actions (e.g., gender-bias training, quotas, affirmative action) to address gender inequity in HEIs and/or enhance the careers of women academics. The findings suggest that such gender equity measures and support initiatives can subvert explicit forms of discrimination into symbolic violence, based on the backlash it tends to generate from the dominant group (typically men) and causes women academics to misrecognise that the playing field of academia is unequal.

Fifth, the thesis builds upon recent research that has pointed to a potential gender gap between men and women researchers in SSA (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021). Nsanzumuhire and colleagues (2021) previously revealed that women researchers in Rwanda were more likely to face significant barriers in pursuing AE activities. This thesis builds upon this work by uncovering the mechanisms underlying the challenges of and opportunities for women researchers in SSA to participate in AE. Specifically, this study deepens insights into the gender dynamics of AE in SSA by broadening the scope from Rwanda to include several other countries (i.e. Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria). In particular, by offering rich insights into how women researchers in SSA advance their participation in AE activities, this thesis addresses scholarly calls (e.g. Perkmann et al., 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015) for research that facilitates institutional comparison between developing and developed countries, especially regarding the differences and similarities in women researchers' expectations and experiences of AE.

Sixth, as both the literature and policy debates on the third mission has interpreted the universities' role and contributions from an economic development perspective, attention has rarely been paid to the social aspects (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022). By focusing on the

ingenuity of African women researchers to participate in AE, this thesis responds to scholarly calls for more insights into the social dimension of the third mission (Benneworth & Jongbloed, 2010; Olmos-Peñuela et al., 2014). Further, in illustrating how the concept and practice of AE is conveyed, reinterpreted and reformed by local traditions, institutions and cultural values in SSA, this thesis extends several research streams examining the relevance of context to this activity (e.g. Kruss et al., 2015; Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021).

Finally, although the Bourdieusian social theory was developed from empirical work on the French academe in the 1960s, the conceptual tools of capital, habitus, field and symbolic violence have been rarely applied to research on higher education (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015; Tsaousi, 2020). By applying Bourdieusian social theory to explain how the mundane practices and actions of African women researchers come to establish social relations of inequality in the academe, this thesis contributes to higher education research utilising this theoretical framework to shed light on the reproduction of inequality in HEIs (e.g. Blackmore, 2011; Tsaousi, 2020). In particular, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) toolkit allows this thesis to establish the structure of the AE field by illuminating the struggles that occur within academia, and the kind of resources that women researchers draw on to succeed within this neoliberal patriarchal workplace.

Table 2.2: An overview of the thesis

CHAPTER	TOPIC	GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION	PURPOSE
1	Introduction	In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?	To introduce the reader to the research aims, overarching research question and thesis structure. This chapter also provides an overview of the history and contemporary context of African women's participation in AE.
2	Methodological discussion	In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?	To outline the methods for data collection and analysis.
3	International development and corporate sustainability	How are the corporate sustainability practices of businesses pragmatically contributing to the achievement of the SDGs?	To outline the role and contribution of business toward the sustainable development agenda; and To provide important insights into how the (in)actions of firms affect progression on SDG5.
4	Reconceptualising the gender gap in academic engagement: A multilevel analysis	How and why do gender differences exist in men and women researchers' access and opportunities to participate in AE activities in SSA?	To conceptualise AE in SSA as a contextually embedded and gendered activity that organises men and women researchers' participation differently; and

			To extend understanding of the gender gap in AE by illustrating the iterative relationship between individuals and their social settings.
5	In pursuit of the third mission: A Bourdieusian perspective of women's participation in academic engagement in sub-Saharan Africa	How do women researchers in SSA navigate the gender-related barriers impeding their participation in AE activities?	To determine women researchers' sense of agency to participate in AE activities and; To understand how they activate this agency to overcome cultural and structural impediments, and consequently, improve their involvement in AE.
6	A symbolic violence approach to gender inequality in academic engagement	How, and why, do women researchers' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers?	To examine whether and how the persistence of gender inequality in AE is established by women researchers' conformity to and/or resistance to the performance cultures in the neoliberal academe.
7	Discussion	In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?	To discuss the implications of the study's findings for theory, policy and practice; and To point out promising directions for further research.
8	Conclusion	In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities	To reiterate the purpose of the study and the objectives achieved.

		and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?	

Chapter 3 - International Development and Corporate Sustainability

3.1 Chapter summary

This chapter aims to advance understanding on the relationship between sustainability and development, and in particular, the role of business in development work. First, it outlines what the concept of development encompasses, providing insights on the different forms of development work. In examining the concept of development, the chapter also provides a brief history on its emergence as an academic discipline, and the four distinctive features of development studies. Second, the chapter sheds light on the role and contribution of business in development outcomes by discussing the different ways in which firms have supported or undermined development goals through their corporate sustainability agendas. The chapter provides explicit key case studies on Mexico, Vietnam, South Africa, and Ghana, illuminating how the presence, decisions, and activities of businesses can have a long-term influence on gender (in)equality, poverty reduction, democracy promotion and climate change adaptation. Overall, the discussions in this chapter are key reflections on the *private sector for development agenda*, and is aimed at triggering a discussion on how core business can be best aligned with societal interests to achieve development objectives.

3.2 Introduction

As a multidisciplinary subject, development studies is concerned with how nations have evolved, and are still evolving. The term ‘development’ broadly represents the process of continuous change in different aspects of the human society. What counts as development is extensive, and ranges from democratic participation and better governance, environmental

sustainability issues, socio-structural transformations taking place, and improved human development.

Historically, development studies have focused on developing countries, which have often been referred to as the 'Third World', the 'Global South' or 'developing economies'. Development studies as an academic discipline emerged with the difficulties experienced by developing countries in establishing themselves after the postcolonial era in the twentieth century. It is therefore the shared experience that developing countries have with colonialism, and their desire to advance after the colonial period has ended, that motivates development studies to remain focused on these countries. However, the strong attention of development studies on developing countries does not mean that the scope and concerns of the field are limited to these countries alone. The issues that development studies seek to address extend beyond developing countries to include the so-called 'developed countries/economies' or 'First World' or 'Global North' countries. For example, most developed countries face severe challenges with high consumption levels and high carbon dioxide emissions, which in turn affects developing countries through the repercussions of global environmental emissions (Sumner, 2008). Again, both developing and developed countries experienced and were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has further raised attention to how 'development' and improvement of societies are also a concern for so-called 'developed societies' (see, e.g., IMF, 2020). As the socio-economic challenges faced by Global North countries correspond with the concerns of development studies, it is clear that all countries need 'development', in the broadest sense of the word.

The development studies discourse describes the range of projects, schemes, programmes and initiatives that are focused on improving the human society as 'development interventions'. Development interventions are varied and involve a wider range of social actors. Recently, the narrative of development agendas recognises the private sector as being integral to the

achievement of the global goals. Development thinkers are especially calling on businesses: (1) to be interventional and intentional in their investment decisions; and (2) to be attentive to the impacts of their activities on sustainable development. In response to such development calls, we see the Coca-Cola Company, for instance, partnering with the Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation Incorporated (AIDFI), a Philippines-based social enterprise, to implement the Blastik Project (see Manila Bulletin, 2021). Specifically, Coca-Cola, through its Coca-Cola Foundation, provided the financial resources needed to scale up the Blastik Project, after AIDFI's successful pilot of a village-scale plastic recycling centre. By funding the Blastik project to help plastic waste reduction as well as create jobs for local communities, we can conclude that Coca-Cola is looking to engage with development work.

While engaging the private sector in development work is admirable, businesses are also known for protecting their own interests. So, then, how can businesses go beyond their provision of private goods, and help in providing public goods? Can businesses engage in inclusive and sustainable development as current development agendas champion? These are important questions for business and management students to reflect on, especially for individuals who appreciate the idea that "economic growth may be slow to benefit the most disadvantaged, and growth has to be sustainable if long-term development goals are to be achieved" (Humphrey et al., 2014, p. 8).

In this chapter, we examine the role and contribution of business in the attainment of development outcomes, primarily from the perspective of developing countries. The discussion will focus on both the intentional and unintentional ways in which the private sector has influenced development in various contexts. We begin the chapter by explaining the concept of development and offering a brief history on development studies. In this section, we also discuss some of the notable criticisms against the development field. Next, we will review the ways in which businesses, through their corporate sustainability agendas, have supported or

undermined development goals. We provide explicit key case studies to underline how business activities impact on development outcomes such as gender (in) equality, poverty reduction, democracy promotion and climate change adaptation. In addition, we will discuss how core business can be best aligned with societal interests to achieve development objectives.

3.3 What is development?

The term 'development' is relatively broad and vague. Development as a concept has also been defined differently by various scholars, and has different meanings and interpretations attached to it. Todaro and Smith (2003), for example, considers development as "a multi-dimensional process that involves major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality, and eradication of absolute poverty" (p. 17). Their view suggests that development is about restructuring social systems and improving the livelihoods of people through an increased economic growth. On the other hand, Amartya Sen (1999) perceives development to be "the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency" (p. xii). For Sen (1999), development is essentially about gaining freedom from definite obstacles, such as poor economic opportunities, repressive states and poverty, that constrain people from achieving their full capabilities. To an extent, both Amartya Sen (1999) and Todaro and Smith's (2003) definitions of development share some similarities regarding the need to improve people's economic well-being and to eradicate poverty. Sen (2013), however, further argues that development should extend beyond fulfilling people's felt needs to include sustaining human freedoms. This line of reasoning well reflects Reyes' (2001) understanding of development as "a social condition within a nation, in which the authentic needs of its population are satisfied by the rational and

sustainable use of natural resources and systems" (p. 109). Consistent with Reyes' (2001) perspective of using resources judiciously to meet people's needs, Sen (2013) acknowledges that the environment in itself is a resource, and it is only through the efficient and sustainable use of all resources that we can generate people's capabilities. Thus, for Reyes (2001) and Sen (2013), development approaches can only enhance the capabilities and healthy life of future generations if they have a long-term focus.

These different understandings of development highlight the multiple components associated with the concept (i.e., economic, social, environmental, physical, and demographic). In addition, they implicitly show that there can be implications for the kind of definition one chooses to align with. For example, if one agrees with Todaro and Smith's (2003) explanation of development, then it is possible that such a person may tackle development from a political and economic perspective, as compared to someone following Reyes' (2001) definition, whose primary concern is about environmental sustainability. Overall, we can see that development is an inherently multidimensional and complex process, involving multiple stakeholders working at different levels to bring about change in the socio-economic conditions of people and societies, especially those that have less favourable conditions. In simple terms, development is about making socio-economic changes that causes people to become empowered, and in turn, achieve their full potential as humans. Further, it is critical to recognise that development has a contextual character – in the sense that people in different contexts can have different understandings of development. So, for instance, *a good and decent life* could be interpreted as 'zero hunger' to a person living in Sub-Saharan Africa, whereas to another person in Europe, this might be 'access to good healthcare'. What this example emphasises is that development differs considerably across countries and regions. When we understand that development is context-specific, we begin to appreciate the fact that individuals within the

same region, country or even household can hold divergent perspectives about development. Moreover, what counts as development changes over time.

In terms of conception and implementation, development can be large-scale and 'top-down' or small-scale and 'bottom-up' (Black, 2010). The idea of development being top-down and/or bottom-up is used to describe how development projects and programmes are organised, and the level at which different stakeholders (e.g., government, local communities, NGOs) participate in the development process. For example, the Three Gorges Dam in China is one of the world's biggest hydropower complex projects (see Gleick, 2009, for further reading), and exemplifies a top-down development initiative. Funded by both domestic and international commercial banks, including the China Development Bank, this dam was mainly constructed to help increase China's electricity through hydroelectric power, and to protect farmlands belonging to local farmers within the Hubei province from flooding. The Three Gorges Dam represents a top-down development initiative because of the relatively higher input the project funders had in the design, implementation and management processes, as compared to the beneficiaries (in this case, the farmers and the local community). As the beneficiaries were less involved in the development processes that led to the building of the Three Gorges Dam, instead of supporting the local farmers, the project led to their displacement and impoverishment (Wilmsen et al., 2011). This does not suggest that development projects that employ a top-down approach are damaging, because there are several advantages to them. In fact, top-down development approaches can be advantageous in the implementation of complex projects such as the Three Gorges Dam because sometimes, local communities may be unwilling to relinquish their unrealistic plans (Mukherji, 2013).

With development approaches that are bottom-up, the communities are consulted at all stages of the project, including the monitoring and evaluation. An example of a bottom-up development project is 'Empowering Girls through Sport and Play in Senegal' (see Right to

Play, 2021), which was organised by a non-profit organisation called Right to Play, as part of their development activities to advance gender equality in and through sports. This project is classified as a bottom-up development initiative because the organisation had an objective of empowering local actors, and as a result, created opportunities for them to help in designing and implementing the programme. As Mukherji (2013) observes, "the key advantage of the bottom-up approach is its potential to exploit local information to design projects that are needed locally and to distribute its benefits to those who need them the most" (p. 1548). Also, through the involvement of local communities in the allocation and spending of project funds, bottom-up development approaches can foster local accountability mechanisms (McCarthy et al., 2017). Employing a bottom-up approach is therefore advantageous, to the degree that it allows development interventions to reflect the desires of the project beneficiaries. However, in scenarios where sub-groups within local communities possess much power to deprive a project's targeted sub-groups from enjoying its benefits, a bottom-up approach may be problematic (Mukherji, 2013). Also, because bottom-up approaches are more participatory in nature, they can be very slow and labour-intensive to implement, and can sometimes lose momentum along the way.

3.3.1 Development as an academic discipline

At its heart, development studies seek to improve the lives of people. As an academic discipline, development studies focus on issues of poverty, resource distribution, gender equality and the like. The discipline was coined in the early 1950s and 1970s after World War II, with the purposes of transforming former colonies of European powers such as France, Britain and Portugal (Leys, 1996; Sumner & Tribe, 2008). At the time, it was believed that countries at a 'backward stage' could advance by following the West's guidelines on modernisation (Sylvester, 1999; Bodruzic, 2015). Development studies was therefore birthed

from a “decolonisation process in the 1950s and 1960s, as newly independent states sought policy prescriptions to ‘catch up’ economically with industrialised nations” (Sumner, 2008, p. 644). For their part, underdeveloped countries were mandated to accept massive support from developed countries, create a thriving democratic environment and make a rational use of their local resources.

Over the years, however, research has shown the support provided by developed countries to developing countries has introduced a process of neo-colonialism, which represents “a system of domination and exploitation, invested and maintained by the former colonial power in which economic, financial and military instruments work for keeping in power well-disposed leaders and maintaining favourable policies which procure economic and financial advantages” (Taylor, 2019, p. 1066). Rather than supporting their decolonisation process, former colonial rulers remain (in)directly involved in the affairs of developing countries, thereby delimiting their political independence. The negative effects of neo-colonialism, according to Durokifa and Ijeoma (2018), is that it allows

> imperialist nations [to] advance their economic neo-colonial aspirations through various schemes under the guise of improving or developing other countries. These imperialist countries major in areas such as poverty alleviation, education, child mortality and foreign aid while having an inclined mind to exploit these other countries natural resources or subject them to policies that are against their beliefs or national interests (p. 356).

In the specific case of sub-Saharan Africa for example, reports from the London Stock Exchange shows that about 101 British companies operate in more than 36 countries in this region and as a result, currently own more than $1-trillion worth of the region’s most valued resources including gold, diamond, and oil (Odijie, 2022). Other research has also highlighted

how the World Bank's structural adjustment programme (SAP) was widely adopted by several African leaders, based on their optimism that this programme would enhance their achievement of economic development (Taylor, 2019; Zeleza, 2017). Nevertheless, the SAP backtracked Africa's development progress and plunged the region into further debt because it failed to reflect African realities. Interestingly, the SAP's failure to facilitate development in Africa and other Global South regions, is what has redirected the attention of development thinkers towards the creation of the SDGs, which argues for development in both developing and developed countries (Durokifa & Ijeoma, 2018; Odijie, 2022).

Previous development studies were guided by modernisation theory, where the state is the principal agent in monitoring development, economic growth and macroeconomic policies. During this period, development was parallel to economic growth, industrialisation, and structural societal reforms (Tezanos Vázquez & Sumner, 2013). Over the years, modernisation theory has been criticised by dependency theorists for not incorporating Sen's (1999) conceptualisation of development as freedoms and self-esteem (Mensah, 2019). According to dependency theorists, the industrialisation activities of developed countries greatly reinforce underdevelopment in developing countries, because often, developed countries tend to exploit the economic surplus of developing countries (Agbebi & Virtanen, 2017). Besides dependency theory, several others including globalisation and world systems theorists, have also critiqued the notion of development proposed by modernisation theorists (for further reading, see Reyes, 2001).

A key argument against modernisation theory's idea of development as industrialisation is that, although industrialisation may bring about economic growth, there are also challenges relating to environmental sustainability. The promotion of economic development through industrialisation has seen many investors building factories in wetlands, as well as demolishing forests, which are detrimental to our environment. Based on the definition of sustainable

development presented in the 1987 Brundtland Report, a development approach whereby the environment is being destroyed for profitmaking, may create jobs to fulfil the desires of present generations, but will consequently compromise the needs of future generations through aftermath effects of global warming, soil erosion and climate change. In essence, economic growth is neither a condition for development nor does it promote sustainable development.

This realisation that we need to protect and preserve our world has recently led to promotion of the concepts of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' (Mensah, 2019), with development thinkers and practitioners now increasingly emphasising issues of sustainability and climate change, human rights, and local and global inequality, particularly gender inequality. These new features have added to the complexity of the development enterprise because for development to be effective in its interventions, development frameworks must now capture the complexities of the ecological, economic, social, and cultural contexts of social groups, as well as the experiences of these groups with climate change impacts. This has also meant that, nowadays, if you want to engage in development work, you must be careful in the kind of approaches you adopt and utilise.

In the last few years, some of the fundamental changes that have taken place in development studies have been largely driven by prominent development economists such as Paul Streeten, Amartya Sen, and Ravi Kanbur (Sumner, 2006). The economic backgrounds and works of these scholars, especially Amartya Sen (1999), has shifted development studies from being an economic-focused approach into a multi-disciplinarity. Amartya Sen's (1999) work on *Development as Freedom*, for example, offered valuable insights about the need to redefine and broaden the concept of development to include freedom, capabilities and well-being. A major contribution that Sen has made to the development discipline is showing that "measuring a multidimensional concept such as development with one single (economic) dimension is incoherent, an incoherency that is reflected in the changing distribution of global poverty away

from low income countries" (Tezanos Vázquez & Sumner, 2013, p. 1742). Sen's redefined concept of development has influenced the World Bank in the adoption of participatory development and community-driven development as its main operational strategy for poverty reduction. Essentially, the contributions of these highly reputed development economists have been instrumental in reshaping the field, in terms of development scholars moving away from using economic indicators as the sole measurement for quality of life, to instead a shift to using more nuanced and holistic indicators of well-being.

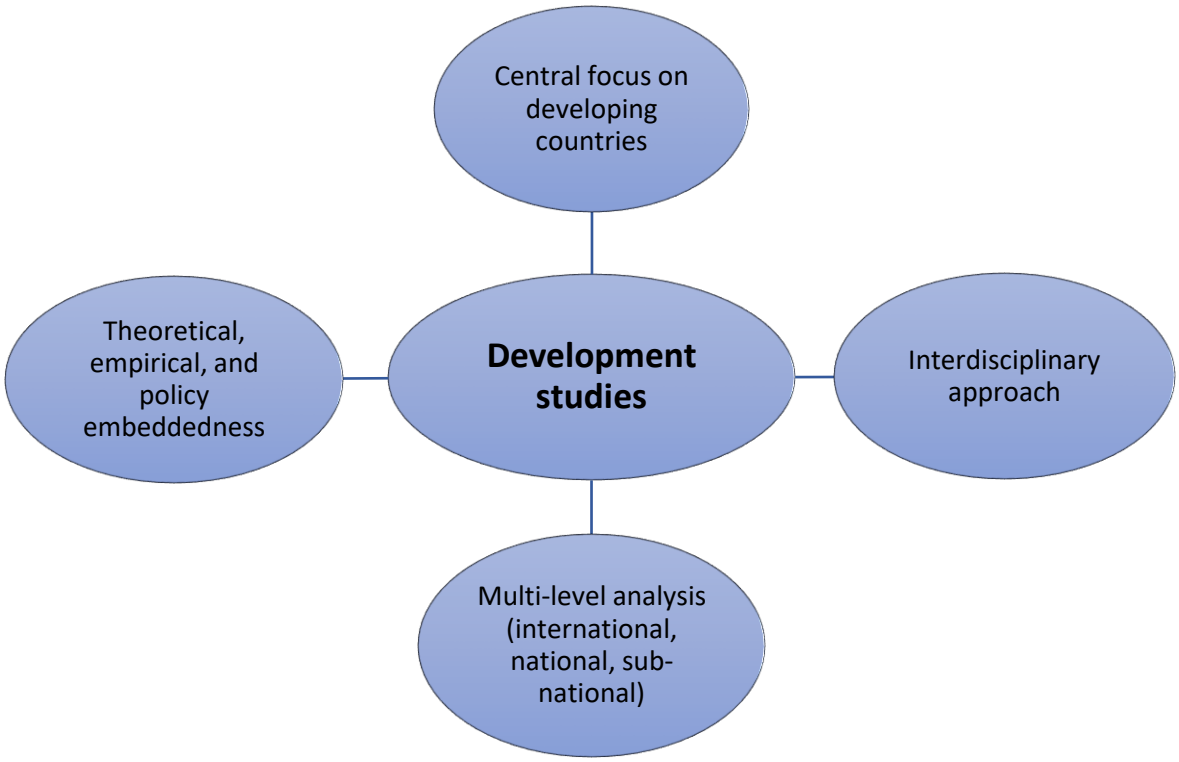
In addition to these scholarly contributions, the COVID-19 pandemic has created an awareness among development scholars and practitioners that, perhaps, it is time the field redirected its primary focus on just developing countries to a much broader scope. The COVID-19 pandemic has "highlighted the falsity of any assumption that the Global North has all the expertise and solutions to tackle global challenges, and has further highlighted the need for multi-directional learning and transformation in all countries toward a more sustainable and equitable world" (Oldekop et al., 2020, p. 1). In other words, the pandemic has shown that, today, development studies is focused on comprehending and tackling situations that are entirely different from the time when the field initially emerged, and it is important that the field widens its international scope beyond developing countries. Global development approaches often focus on "processes and problems that cover all countries, including those in the Global North" whereas "international development focuses on inter-state relations, often via aid, and on problems *of* and *in* the Global South (Oldekop et al., 2020, p. 2).

3.3.2 Four distinctive features of development studies

As an academic discipline, development studies has four key features that make it distinct from other programmes (see the overview in Figure 3.1):

1. Development studies has a prime focus on the interest and realities of developing countries. This implies that when development researchers must examine the activities of multinational corporations, for instance, their focus is to understand how the activities of such corporation's impact on developing countries.
2. Development studies is interdisciplinary and is built on the notion that development issues are complex. This means that development thinkers whose intention is to understand developing countries and their position within the world economic and political system must draw from different academic disciplines to gain rich insights.
3. Development studies encourages analysis at the local, national, and international levels. This suggests that development interventions or initiatives can range from International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes and private investments in Africa (i.e., at the international level) to a development support programme in a class in a Pakistani village (i.e., at the local level).
4. Development studies is simultaneously theoretical, policy-oriented and empirical. Unlike other academic disciplines, the cross-disciplinary nature of development studies gives it a wide-ranging scope and orientation toward theoretical, empirical and policy issues.

Figure 3.1: The four distinctive features of development studies



Source: adapted from Loxley (2004)

3.3.3 Criticisms of development studies

While development studies is a field of theory and practice that has a good academic and political standing, it also has many internal debates concerning its focus and approaches of achieving development. First, development studies has been criticised for its reduced geographical focus on developing countries, especially Africa. Moyo (2009), for instance, argues that Africa's overreliance on aid is because of the unending aid flows to this continent. She and several other scholars believe that the structures of multilateral lending agencies like the World Bank (WB) and the IMF are supposed to recolonise previously decolonised countries like Africa (see Abeselom, 2018, on this debate). As international finance institutions, a key focus of the WB and IMF has been to provide economic development assistance to developing countries. Increasingly, however, the global financial architecture utilised by the WB and IMF

have been criticised for promoting a neoliberal market logic that benefits transnational corporations who operate in developing countries (Ruggie, 2018). The IMF, for example, often encourages transnational corporations to make 'hot money' investments in developing countries as a way of boosting their economic growth. However, many developing countries lack the appropriate policies that can effectively support these 'hot money' investments, which implies that such economic initiatives tend to generate adverse effects on them, including destabilising their local currencies and increasing unemployment cases (Abelvik-Lawson, 2014). Such negative consequences have made academics and UN advisers (e.g., Abelvik-Lawson, 2014; Ruggie, 2007) to increasingly suggest that international finance institutions such as the WB and IMF need to incorporate human rights-based approaches such as the Ruggies Guiding Principles into their economic policy initiatives so as to minimise any repercussions from their development programmes. There have also been suggestions for the IMF and WB to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation exercises that can inform future development projects (Ruggie, 2018).

The world's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has augmented the criticisms against development studies' narrowed attention "on problems *of* and *in* the Global South" (Oldekop et al., 2020, p. 2). It is now becoming increasingly visible through the COVID-19 pandemic that the so-called 'developed countries' are also very much in need of 'development'. For example, several reports have shown that many developed countries, including the Netherlands, are struggling to bring the latest wave of COVID-19 infections under control. Similar to most developing countries that are challenged with an efficient healthcare system, reports indicate that the soaring demand for COVID-19 testing in the Netherlands, combined with a shortage of health workers to book them, is pushing the country's health services to its limits (see Moses, 2021). Furthermore, the governments of other developed countries such as Belgium, Austria, Croatia and Italy are dealing with citizen protests because of measures they

have put in place to prevent a quicker spreading of COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these protests have involved police interventions with tear gas and water cannons (BBC, 2021b). These ongoing events have increased the criticisms against development studies, as they highlight the limits of the 'development' within Global North countries.

Moreover, the application of knowledge from development studies across diverse sociocultural settings, and in different time periods, is often difficult (Black, 2010). During the era of positivist social science, development theory took an un-self-reflexive approach toward its mode of problem-solving, in the sense that most early development thinkers believed that the people who resided in developing countries had simple identities, personalities, and mindsets (Black, 2010). Based on this logic, development studies gave itself fewer channels to generate and deliver the types of help that local communities might need. Even today, the discipline still makes flawed assessments about the kind of support it should provide to local people. Many times, development studies fail to recognise that all countries have diverse historical and cultural backgrounds, and therefore a one-size-fits-all approach will be ineffective. Such shortcomings justify the importance of development scholars and practitioners involving beneficiary communities in the design and implementation of interventions. It is vital to recognise that "developmental achievements are notoriously difficult to sustain" and, "*in extremis*, [developmental interventions] can be severely damaging to the communities they are engaged with, whether by omission or commission" (Black, 2010, p. 123).

Finally, because development studies is still a field whose money and agendas influence the world, there is often an undeniable trend for institutions (especially those focused on development issues, such as the United Nations) to operate according to a market logic. Because the discipline operates in this way, an individual or organisation could face challenges in accessing resources and funding for research that contradicts the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for example, or even for research that tries to assess the SDGs more critically

with regard to their relevance and impact. This implies that neoliberal thinking has a significant influence on the research agenda pursued by development scholars, which in turn makes it challenging for the discipline to maintain its focus on critical research areas.

3.4 Understanding the role of business in development work

Beyond the criticisms, development studies work has made massive contributions to education, health, gender equality, individual and community economic empowerment. Development has "been emancipatory in both its meaning and effects, creating at its best new and unprecedented opportunities for historically marginalised people and communities" (Black, 2010, p. 124). Even under deficient development regimes, countries like Korea and the Philippines have made significant strides with their gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, literacy and life expectancy. These emancipatory possibilities have resulted from the policies and initiatives of international institutions such as the IMF, the United Nations and the World Bank. The emancipatory sense of development is primarily reflected through the increased number of development studies programmes in many universities across the globe, the growing presence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in many developing countries, and more recently, the mounting pressure on the private sector to participate in development work.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, along with a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that aim to eradicate the world's problems of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation. In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs identify businesses as a key stakeholder in the new global development agenda. In 2012, for example, the then-United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon invited businesses to participate in an important panel meeting to advise on the global development framework.

The UN Global Compact website also writes that "fulfilling these ambitions will take an unprecedented effort by all sectors in society – and business must play a very important role in the process" (see UN Global Compact, n.d.). The SDGs clearly bring much optimism around the role and contributions of businesses in the sustainable development agenda, yet, how can businesses fulfil this important role that is expected of them? When it comes to businesses' contribution to development work, there are several ways to achieving this. For instance, businesses can support development through their economic resources, as we see from the case of Coca-Cola and the Blastik project in the Philippines. Businesses can also contribute to development by creating jobs to help reduce unemployment. In the United States, for example, Walgreen Boots Alliance designed and implemented early career programmes, and also provided career support and training to address the unemployment issues affecting young people in Chicago (Jones & Comfort, 2019). Through their expertise in analysing different markets' potentials, businesses can assist development professionals to develop context-specific development interventions. Businesses can also contribute to the sustainable development agenda through their repeatability and reproducibility (R&R) knowhow, technological expertise, production and scaling experience of businesses to help improve development interventions using technology and innovation. Nonetheless, a significant way in which businesses can contribute to development is by integrating corporate sustainability principles into their core business activities.

We must however understand that the private sector plays a complex role in development. First, there is a distinction between "private sector *for* development" and "private sector development" (Byiers & Rosengren, 2012, p. 9, emphasis in the original). The former concerns development activities that encourage productive business investments and allows businesses to capitalise on private-sector funds (Pauw, 2015). On the other hand, the latter focuses on the domestic economies of developing countries, mostly involving governments within these

countries "designing and implementing policies to encourage economic transformation through investment, productivity growth, business expansion, and employment" (Pauw, 2015, p. 585). The 'private sector *for* development' agenda therefore recognises businesses as a key enabler and implementer of development. In fact, it demands a change in how businesses do business – that is, businesses are required to move beyond financial contributions, to instead incorporate poverty eradication and sustainability in their programmes. With this understanding, we use the next sub-section to particularly highlight how businesses can engage in corporate sustainability to help accomplish the 'private sector *for* development' agenda.

3.4.1 Corporate sustainability and development

In the past two decades, awareness has increased among governments, investors, consumers, and the media about the importance of addressing the economic, social and environmental impacts generated from businesses activities (Jones & Comfort, 2019). This growing consciousness about business impacts has led to a rise of corporate sustainability movements which are seeking accountability from businesses. It is thus now common to see many companies and organisations embedding sustainability considerations in their investment decisions and activities. Several companies have incorporated sustainability agendas into their business strategies and policies; with most of these targeted at addressing "environmental, social and economic issues, including climate change, water and energy conservation, waste management, the conservation of natural resources, employee health and well-being, diversity and equality of opportunity, responsible sourcing and local economic development" (Jones & Comfort, 2019, p. 132).

In general, the strategies and initiatives that businesses are implementing to promote sustainable development are what we term as corporate sustainability (Oldekop et al., 2020). The term corporate sustainability developed from the concept of sustainable development, and

embodies businesses strategies to deliver products and services in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner. Corporate sustainability concerns the diverse roles that businesses can play in helping to achieve the SDGs, including prioritising long-term sustainable growth models over short-term financial rewards (Sanga et al., 2021).

The concept of corporate sustainability is based on the triple bottom line (TBL), which is basically a model that seeks to balance the economic (profit), social (people) and environmental (planet) priorities of companies. Fundamentally, the TBL model posits that instead of making an impact on just one bottom line, businesses should generate impact on three levels: profit, people and the planet. In the TBL framework, Mensah (2019) outlines that companies looking to promote sustainability will prioritise: (1) "economic models that accumulate and use natural and financial capital sustainably; (2) environmental models that address biodiversity and ecological integrity; and (3) social models that improve political, cultural, religious, health and educational systems, and continually ensure human dignity and well-being" (p. 5).

In terms of acting sustainably, the UN Global Compact (2014) suggests that companies must do the following five things: (1) operate in alignment with the universal principles of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption; (2) look beyond their own walls and take actions that support the societies around them; (3) commit to sustainability at the highest level through their leadership; (4) report annually on their corporate sustainability efforts and progress; and (5) engage locally where they have a presence (adapted from the UN Global Compact, 2014, n.d.).

Similar to corporate social responsibility (CSR), companies have several reasons for engaging in corporate sustainability and choosing to act sustainably. One of the most common explanations that has given is the purported business case – whereby sustainability practices and policies are implemented by companies for the purposes of positively influencing their

financial bottom line (Rasche et al., 2017). This means that some companies practise corporate sustainability to build positive brand images, enhance their brand reputation, and distinguish themselves from their competitors (Jones & Comfort, 2019). Apart from increasing their financial value, firms also adopt corporate sustainability principles simply because they feel that it is the 'right thing to do' (Rasche et al., 2017). This motivation falls under what we describe as the moral case for corporate sustainability. Some corporations may also engage in corporate sustainability activities as a way of compliance, especially if they happen to operate in places where there exist strong and well-enforced legal regulations. Further, some firms may choose to act sustainably because certain actors (e.g., NGOs, the media, investors) are continually monitoring their behaviour to ensure that they are compliant to the principles of sustainable development. For some businesses also, their efforts at corporate sustainability are mainly because other firms have done the same (coercive and mimetic isomorphism).

In looking to reconcile business and development, we use the next set of case studies to illustrate how businesses can impact on development outcomes such as poverty reduction, gender equality, democracy promotion and climate change adaptation. Specifically, the cases help to highlight how businesses, through their presence, decisions and actions, can directly and indirectly promote or undermine sustainable development.

Table 3.1: Section overview of the role of business in development work

Summary Points…

The role of firms in development is to engage in responsible business practices, and to pursue opportunities that help to solve societal challenges through business innovation and collaboration. In the business and development literature, there is a distinction between:

- **Private sector development** – refers to how governments in developing countries design and implement policies to encourage economic transformation through business investments, productivity growth, business expansion, and employment.

- **Engaging the private sector *for* development** – refers to *activities* for development, including those that encourage productive business investment and leverages on private-sector *finance* for development.

Corporate Sustainability and Development:

Corporate sustainability refers to all the efforts and strategies that businesses put in place to promote sustainable development. The concept is derived from the concept of sustainable development, and represents business strategy to deliver goods and services in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Reasons to account for why firms choose to act sustainably:

- Business case
- Moral case
- Compliance
- Coercive and mimetic isomorphism

According to the TBL framework, companies looking to promote sustainability will prioritise:

(i) Economic models that accumulate and use natural and financial capital sustainably
(ii) Environmental models that address biodiversity and ecological integrity
(iii) Social models that improve political, cultural, religious, health and educational systems, and continually ensure human dignity and wellbeing

To act sustainably, the UN Global Compact (2014) suggests that companies must do the following five things:

- Operate in alignment with the universal principles of human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption;
- Look beyond their own walls and take actions that support the societies around them;
- Companies must commit to sustainability at the highest level through their leadership;
- Report annually on their corporate sustainability efforts and progress;
- Engage locally where they have a presence.

3.5 Case studies on business impact on development outcomes

3.5.1 Poverty reduction[4]

Poverty severely affects every country's socio-economic development. It not only determines the quality of life of individuals, but it also impacts on the general well-being of a society. When it comes to the ways in which businesses can contribute to reducing poverty, and for that matter promoting development, Vietnam offers a remarkable story.

During the 1990s, Vietnam experienced a substantial and comprehensive socio-economic transformation, which was partly linked to the inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) (Hemmer & Hoa, 2002). However, the change that occurred in Vietnam was not an overnight success. Rather, this socio-economic change can be traced to the institutional reforms that the Vietnamese government implemented in 1986, which involved the liberalisation of economic prices and the de-collectivisation of agriculture (Hemmer & Hoa, 2002). Part of the government's strategies included creating a legal policy on FDI in 1987. This new policy opened the economy to foreign investors, thereby boosting the country's inward investment.

The capital inflows of FDI into Vietnam were extremely significant, such that the country's registered capital of FDI grew from US$371 million in 1988 to US$8,497 million in 1996. In contrast to other developing countries (4.9 per cent in China, 2.2 per cent in Indonesia, 5.2 per cent in Malaysia, 2.4 per cent in Thailand and 1.5 per cent in the Philippines), the implemented FDI levels of Vietnam were remarkably high (7.2 per cent of GDP in 1997). By the end of 2001, Vietnam had around 3,000 foreign investment projects operating in the country, with a registered capital of US$32, 415 million in total. In 2001, FDI contributed up to 30 per cent of

[4] This case study is primarily adapted from Hoa, N. T. P., & Hemmer, H. R. (2002). Contribution of Foreign Direct Investment to Poverty Reduction: the case of Vietnam in the 1990s. *Discussion Papers in Development Economics, Institute for Development Economics*.

Vietnam's investment (10.5 per cent of GDP in 1999) and 21 per cent of export turnover, creating 300,000 jobs for the populace (Hemmer & Hoa, 2002). The increasing growth that occurred in Vietnam significantly transitioned the country from being a socialist economy to a market economy, and from being an agricultural to an industrial economy.

3.5.1.1 Business FDI and poverty reduction

How did FDI become a key ingredient in Vietnam's socio-economic transformation? Well, first, it is important to note that income inequality is not automatically reduced by FDI, nor does FDI address all the relative dimensions of poverty (Ofori et al., 2022). However, FDI promotes growth, which subsequently reduces income poverty. Specifically, the inflows of FDI into a country increases its GDP per capita, which in turn translate into higher economic growth rates and productivity. Governments need this increased economic growth to be able to fund public goods such as water, education and healthcare. This means that FDI "is an essential source of capital that complements domestic capital for development" (Adams & Opoku, 2015, p. 49).

Often, FDI works through factors such as market expansion, innovation, technology transfer, and employment creation, in helping to fight against poverty (Adams & Opoku, 2015). Foreign capital is only productive, however, when certain favourable conditions have been put in place by the host countries of businesses. Some of these conditions include: a sufficient high level of human capital, a complementarity between domestic investments and FDI, a high savings rate and open trade regimes, and a high level of absorptive capacity in a recipient economy (Dwumfour, 2020; Munemo, 2014). In the case of Vietnam, the country had many of these positive conditions for businesses to operate. The country also had economic and political stability, "an untouched large market, a potentially growing economy, hard and competent workers, and low-wage labour costs" (Hemmer & Hoa, 2002, p. 11).

In general, Vietnam provides a good case for businesses' FDI as an effective poverty reduction tool. On the other hand, it also highlights the relevant role of quality policies and institutions in enforcing business regulation for development. Importantly, appropriate regulatory controls are necessary for effectively utilising capital inflows from FDI to increase economic growth (UNCTAD, 2013). Regulation is therefore fundamental to the determinants and impacts of capital flows (Adams & Opoku, 2015). These factors are what attract investors, whether they are interested in the domestic market or exportation activities. A well-regulated market that is favourable for doing business is relevant to ameliorate poverty in most developing contexts (Dwumfour, 2020).

In the next section, we provide a case study to demonstrate how the absence of business regulations can negatively impact on the attainment of the SDGs on gender equality.

3.5.2 Gender[5]

In the 1990s, more than 400 women were murdered in Ciudad Juarez and its neighbouring cities in the Chihuahua state on the Mexican border (Pearson, 2007). Many of the victims were young women who were aged between 12 and 30, who came from poor neighbourhoods that had substandard housing. Investigations revealed that a significant number of the women were employees at the Ciudad Juarez maquiladora industry, who mostly worked the late shift. Additional investigations revealed that the victims often had to travel through unsafe and unprotected areas, either walking or using public transport – which made them very vulnerable to attackers. The reports further revealed that many of the women were murdered on their way to or from their jobs in the factories, either at dawn or late at night. Evidence suggests that

[5] This case study is adapted primarily from Pearson, R. (2007). Beyond women workers: Gendering CSR. *Third World Quarterly*, *28*(4), 731-749.

many of the victims disappeared or were found dead and mutilated after being turned away from work for lateness.

Interestingly, the management of the export factories in Ciudad Juarez refused to take accountability for what happened outside their factory walls, or the factory's working hours. Management argued that outside the workplace, the workers were responsible for their own safety and well-being. This meant that the young women were victims of their own circumstances, even though the maquiladora industry in Ciudad Juarez implicitly played a part in the murders. What is more interesting is the slow pace of the Chihuahua state authorities on the murder investigations because they believed that the victims were prostitutes – a remark that is popular among those who consider female factory workers as being out of place and out of role. The conventional statements of the factory owners and authorities echo most of the explanations for crimes against women.

3.5.2.1 Business and gender (in)equality

The case of Ciudad Juarez's maquiladora industry is a good example of the development impact of business activities both nationally and globally. First, it highlights how companies can contribute to gender inequality by downgrading the place and valuation of women workers. At the same time, it reflects a common criticism against engaging the private sector in the development agenda – can businesses be altruistic in the absence of regulations?

When the maquila factories located to Ciudad Juarez in the 1970s and began its operations, the town was one of the fastest growing places in Mexico. Ciudad Juarez not only had a population of about 1 million, but about 60,000 immigrants were estimated to have entered the town almost every year (Pearson, 2007). Over 25,000 people were also employed in the maquila sector alone. At the time of the murders, the environmental and physical infrastructure of Ciudad Juarez had severely deteriorated. Yet, the maquila industry continued to grow economically.

In the business literature, most firms are known to use their corporate sustainability efforts to develop the communities in which they operate. According to the UN Global Compact (2014), "the most fundamental contribution a company can make toward achieving societal priorities is to be financially successful *while* upholding a high standard of ethics and treatment of employees, the environment and the community" (p. 29). Through corporate sustainability initiatives, firms can expand access to basic necessities like transport services, infrastructure and secure human and labour rights of citizens. However, this is not the case with the maquila industry. The challenges the women workers faced with transportation, for example, reflects "the marginalisation of poor people from entitlements such as utilities, paved roads, adequate police protection, and appropriate and affordable transport" (Pearson, 2006, p. 744). Further, it demonstrates the gendered nature of marginalisation and the vulnerability of women to its consequences. The disconnect between a growing industry and the structural collapse of infrastructure in Ciudad Juarez specifically emphasises a profound stigmatisation and neglect of women's rights by society and the municipality itself. Conversely, the situation represents the failure of businesses to treat the well-being of local communities as a sustainability goal that is incorporated into their decision-making and growth strategies.

The UN Global Compact (2014) explicitly mentions that sustainable companies are those that "look beyond their own walls and take actions to support the societies around them" (p. 8). For companies that have aligned themselves to the universal principles of labour, human rights, anti-corruption and environment, this would mean incorporating gender issues into their organisational strategies for promoting diversity. Yet, many businesses tend to ignore the reasons why they create gendered sustainability policies or even recruit women employees as a central component of their competitive strategy. The narrative of the maquiladora industry shows how companies often engage women workers as a disposable form of labour, which can easily be discarded (Pearson, 2007; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019). Like the maquiladora industry (and

several other companies operating in developing countries), the gendered devaluation of female labour is often seen in how organisations hire and position men in technical and supervisory positions, with women relegated to the lower ranks.

Clearly, a production process that is driven by disposable women's labour contradicts the core ideas about corporate sustainability. Corporate sustainability requires that companies make social investments in the (re)production of women's labour power. The deaths of maquila women workers in Mexico highlights the fact that effective and comprehensive corporate sustainability policies and initiatives must extend beyond the factory gate to the local communities from which corporations recruit women's 'cheap labour' (Pearson, 2007). Rather than implementing narrow and instrumental versions of corporate sustainability initiatives, firms must consider the families and communities of their workers who are dependent on them for their daily needs in their policies and initiatives (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019).

It is important to recognise that the private sector has enormous impact when it comes to tackling sustainability challenges through their core business, mainly because the inextricable relationship between the health of the business and the well-being of its workers, the communities in which it operates, and the planet as a whole. By being recognised as a sustainable business, firms can attract and maintain the best workers, as well as increase their corporate reputation. These direct and indirect benefits can in turn translate into financial profits for businesses. So, beyond the moral obligation of companies to implement comprehensive sustainability initiatives, there are also several important reasons for businesses to act sustainably, including the endless advantages it can offer to them.

In the subsequent case studies (i.e., democracy promotion and climate change adaptation), we will discuss some of the efforts that businesses have made to protect their own interests, as well as their operational communities. The case on democracy promotion in South Africa, in

particular, reveals how businesses can galvanise support from both local and international actors to maintain their operations.

3.5.3 Democracy promotion[6]

In 1910, South Africa joined other Britain colonies to become a self-governing dominion. During this period, only white people had citizenship rights. This was also the time when gold and diamonds had been discovered in South Africa, and the country was quickly industrialising through these resources. The Great Depression and World War II, however, shortened South Africa's industrialisation phase, plunging the country into a great economic crisis. In 1948, Afrikaner National Party (NP) won the general elections that were run in South Africa, mainly because of a promise to improve the living conditions of the people. A key political ideology of the NP held was 'apartheid' – a system that legitimised the systematic and legislated racial segregation and oppression of all those identified as black, Indian or so-called 'coloured' (people of mixed race) (Wielenga et al., 2021)

Before the NP came into power, a group of black South African leaders had formed an alliance in 1912 to establish the African National Congress (ANC), with an aim to defend the political and civil rights of black people in South Africa (Michie & Padayachee, 2019). After the 1948 election, the ANC changed its operations by starting a Defiance Campaign that sought to promote passive resistance. The focus of this campaign was to end the apartheid regime through civil disobedience protests against pass laws, curfews and the segregation of mixed race and white people in public facilities. In 1959, some members of the ANC who were disappointed separated from the party to form another coalition called the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania

[6] The case study on South Africa was mainly adapted from Michie, J., & Padayachee, V. (2021). South African business in the transition to democracy. In *Ownership and Governance of Companies* (pp. 11-20). Routledge. Wielenga, C., Sooliman, Q., & Gouvelis, H. (2021). *The role of business in South Africa's transition to democracy*.https://www.ilo.org/africa/countries-covered/south-africa/WCMS_775667/lang--en/index.htm

(PAC). Like the ANC, members of the PAC also led a series of protests against the apartheid regime and other oppressive structures such as the Pass Laws system, which restrained black people's movement. The apartheid government responded aggressively to many of these protests, one of which includes the Sharpeville massacre of 1960.

3.5.3.1 Business and democracy promotion

For business to survive, the state must function appropriately. Although businesses role in peace processes may seem questionable, in South Africa, they were an important catalyst for political transformation, particularly toward the end of apartheid. For example, in 1976, two entrepreneurs (i.e. Harry Oppenheimer, who was the CEO of Anglo-American Corporation, and Anton Rupert, who was an Afrikaner business mogul) came together to establish the Urban Foundation, which advocated for an improvement in the social conditions of black people who were located in the urban areas (Smit, 1992; Handley, 2005). Although South African businesses' involvement in the country's democratic transition began in the early 1970s, this became intensified after the 1985 Rubicon speech by the then-Prime Minister P. W. Botha (Wielenga et al., 2021).

Originally, the 1985 Rubicon speech was supposed to announce major economic and political reforms in South Africa. However, the then-Prime Minister Botha was unwilling to change his position on the apartheid regime. Botha's refusal to make reformations in South Africa, worsened the country's existing economic crisis, as international businesses lost interest in investing in the economy, which in turn lead to continued capital flight, a dropping of the rand value, trade sanctions and the withdrawal of many businesses from the country. As the apartheid government faced international pressure, businesses operating in South Africa also created an internal conflict resolution 'community' that brought together various socio-political forces. The 'community' consisted of politicians, labour experts, community leaders, social activists, clerics, domestic and international entrepreneurs who supported South Africa in

developing solutions to address its socio-economic challenges. Christo Nel, a business consultant, established the Consultative Business Movement (CBM) in 1988. Christo Nel had been previously hired by Chris Ball, the director of First National Bank (FNB), to change the attitudes of employees at the bank toward racial issues (Callinicos, 1988). During its initial formation, the CBM was made up of twenty businessmen who were not only interested in challenging the NP's apartheid propaganda, but also establishing relationships with black leaders and breaking the existing 'socio-political logjam' (Wielenga et al., 2021). A tangible result of businesses' role and contribution in South Africa's democratic rule was the creation of a Labour Relations Act in 1995. It was this Act, and that of the 1996 Constitution, which laid the foundation for South Africa's transformation into a democratic regime.

In discussing how businesses can promote democracy, South Africa's case is unique. For South Africa, the private sector was successful in championing democracy because certain business individuals and groups took 'gutsy' leadership styles. In addition, businesses pooled their resources together for a common goal, as well as established organisational bodies that could help address specific issues. Importantly, during the apartheid era, six big companies controlled the South African economy, four of which were owned by the Ruperts (Rembrandt), the Oppenheimers (Anglo-American), the Gordons (Liberty), and the Menell's and Hersov's (Anglovaal) (Wielenga et al., 2021). As these companies controlled more than 80 percent of the South African economy, it allowed them to have a significant influence on the entire populace. Moreover, the fact that businesses operating within South Africa decided to take a unified approach, also allowed these companies to play a crucial and successful role in South Africa's complex transition to democracy.

In our next case, we describe the commitment and distinct efforts of a notable agri-business firm to maintain resilient businesses and communities in the face of climate change.

3.5.4 Climate change adaptation[7]

It is widely understood that many of the carbon emissions affecting the climate are the result of business-driven economic activities. Nevertheless, businesses can also contribute to innovation and climate change solutions, and therefore have a crucial role to play in ecological, economic, and social resilience activities to enhance climate change impacts. At the same time, businesses also have a responsibility of protecting their value chain and serving their customers. To better understand the private sector's complex role in climate change adaptation in developing countries, lessons can be learned from Olam International.

Olam International is one of the leading agri-businesses in the world, and has operations in sixty-five countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Ecuador, Peru, Indonesia and Tanzania. Olam is renowned for its agricultural activities in coffee, cocoa, rice, cotton and cashew. The company employs about 23,000 people, and has over 13,800 customers, which it supplies food and industrial raw materials to worldwide (Olam, 2020a).

Between 2011 and 2014, Olam partnered with the Rainforest Alliance to develop and implement the 'Climate Cocoa Partnership for REDD+ Preparation' project in Ghana. The aim of this project was to tackle Ghana's cocoa industry challenges, especially those concerning cocoa production and deforestation. In previous years, agricultural forecasts had identified that cocoa trees in Ghana were highly susceptible to the changes in rainfall and seasonal distributions. Using these predictions as a guide, Olam undertook a further risk assessment. The company identified that a shortfall in cocoa yield and quality in Ghana would not only affect its own business operations, but also the local communities on which they greatly relied on for cocoa supply. The assessment also revealed a greater tendency for many Ghanaian cocoa

[7] This case study was mainly adapted from Rainforest Alliance. (n.d.). Our alliance. https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/

producers to shift to other forms of agriculture, owing to the challenges they faced. These agricultural changes could exacerbate the already existing problem of deforestation, and ultimately lead to forest fires, as well as pests and diseases plagues. In realising that the company's agricultural programmes could not address the impending climate change problems and other resource risks, Olam sought partnership with Rainforest Alliance (Olam, 2020b).

Olam's partnership with Rainforest Alliance is seen as strategic because the objective of Rainforest Alliance mostly seeks to "ensure the long-term economic health of forest communities through protecting ecosystems, safeguarding the well-being of local communities and improving productivity" (Rainforest Alliance, n.d.). Together, Olam and Rainforest Alliance developed a joint project on sustainable cocoa-growing practices. The programme was to promote the conservation of biodiversity, increase agricultural productivity and in turn the income of smallholder farmers, as well as provide a long-term stability to all value chain participants. About 2,000 farmers from thirty-four communities were trained in sustainable cocoa production practices, which followed the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) standards. The trainings were to provide the farmers with an understanding of how they could build more resilient farming systems in order to be increase their preparedness and adaptability to future climate change impacts. As part of the project, both farmers and students were also educated on climate change and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, a UN advisory and knowledge partnership). Through this project also, Olam restored forest areas in the target communities by providing native tree seedlings.

Olam's case demonstrates how companies are addressing climate change adaptation challenges in ways that support the sustainable development agenda. It also emphasises the private sector's strength in recognising and managing risk, promoting education on sustainable development and creating new employment opportunities – which are all necessary for both communities and businesses to maintain their resilience in the face of climate change difficulties. For

businesses in particular, the discovery of marketable solutions and the development of business models to help deal with global challenges such as climate change, water scarcity and unemployment, provides these organisations with huge opportunities to increase their economic growth and build new markets. Table 3.2 lists some of the key insights from the case studies on the role of business in sustainable development.

Table 3.2: Overview of the case studies

Key Insights from the Case Studies		
Development Goal	**Country**	**Business Contribution**
Poverty Reduction	Vietnam	Supporting poverty reduction through foreign direct investment
Gender	Mexico	Upholding gender inequality by downgrading the place and valuation of women workers
Democracy Promotion	South Africa	Supporting the transition to a democratic state
Climate Change Adaptation	Ghana	Supporting local farmers with the world's first climate smart cocoa

3.5.5 Aligning business and societal interests for development

A key lesson from the MDGs was the importance of national and local contexts. Evaluations done on the MDGs highlighted that adapting development approaches to local contexts (especially its socio-cultural aspects) is critical to the success of the development programmes. And so, to best align core business and societal interests for development, the following must be considered:

1. Firms must acknowledge the fact that their presence, decisions and activities can have a long-term influence on people and societies. To support development, therefore, firms must make it a high obligation to act sustainably in all their operations. Being able to recognise and take ownership of the mark they directly and indirectly leave on society is the foremost and important role businesses can play in the development process.
2. Firms must be careful and knowledgeable about the socio-cultural context in which they decide to operate. Culture plays an important role in poverty reduction and all other sustainable development efforts. When firms are well informed about the cultural values of communities, they can undertake development interventions using culturally sensitive approaches.
3. Businesses must be guided by their values and be strategic about which countries to set up in. When companies are guided by a core set of values, it becomes easier for them to make decisions about the kind of development initiatives to support and promote.
4. Corporations must embed community participation as a principle in their corporate sustainability agenda. This will ensure that corporate sustainability policies and strategies become aligned with human rights approaches. In addition, including communities in the conception and implementation of corporate sustainability efforts will go to improve the quality of these initiatives. For example, substantive change can only come about with the inclusion of women workers in the decision-making processes related to corporate sustainability policies and strategies.

3.6 Conclusion

The key takeaway from this chapter is: The market functions of corporations create both intended and unintended development impacts on society. The case studies we discuss in this

chapter highlight that while governments may be responsible for meeting the needs of poor and vulnerable populations, businesses can also help to address these problems.

The emerging development agendas such as the SDGs "encompass a set of goals that are more complex, transformative, interdependent and universally applicable" (United Nations, 2015, n.d.a). All stakeholders including businesses must therefore be involved. In this regard, business and management students should learn how to prepare, manage and evaluate development projects. It is also requisite that students develop insights about how to measure efficiency and increase the impact of development projects that are business driven. As Schuurman (2009) writes,

> Development studies still attracts, perhaps remarkably so, quite a number of students. The reasons for studying development studies have not changed over the years. Students continue to have a genuine concern for the plight of the poor in the Third World, indignation about the unequal distribution of resources on a global scale and the urge to do something about this (p. 837).

Thus, the discussions in this chapter are key reflections on the distinctive features of the *private sector for development agenda*. To reiterate Sumner (2006), "the aim is to trigger discussion rather than attempt closure" (p. 644).

3.7 Chapter questions

1. What motivates businesses to become involved in development work?
2. What are the key factors that businesses should take into account when getting involved in development work?
3. What are the differences between multinational corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises with regard to their role and contribution in development work?

4. Apart from foreign direct investment, in what other ways can business contribute to poverty reduction?

3.8 Further resources

Business for 2030 website, www.businessfor2030.org/.

- This website provides examples of real-life cases of different businesses that are involved in advancing the UN 2030 development agenda. It also embeds how corporations are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Desai, V., & Potter, R. B. (2008). *The Companion to Development Studies* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

- This book offers a comprehensive overview of the key theoretical and practical issues that are currently dominating in development studies.

Dotsey, S., & Kumi, E. (2020). Does Religious Faith Matter in Development Practice? Perspectives from the Savelugu-Nanton District in Northern Ghana. *Forum for Development Studies*, *47*(2), 351–381.

- This article provides an example of how socio-cultural values can shape development practice, to increase students' understanding of the importance of firms' knowledgeability of a context.

Gleick, P. H. (2009). Three Gorges Dam Project, Yangtze River, China. In *the World's Water 2008–2009: The Biennial Report on Freshwater Resources* (pp. 139–150), Washington, DC: Island Press. Online version: http://worldwater.org/water-data/.

- This book chapter provides a good overview of the challenges and consequences of promoting economic growth over sustainable and long-term development goals.

Amini, M., & Bienstock, C. C. (2014). Corporate Sustainability: An Integrative Definition and Framework to Evaluate Corporate Practice and Guide Academic Research. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 76,* 12–19.

- This article discusses more on corporate sustainability frameworks, mostly highlighting the elements that academics and businesses can look out for when evaluating tangible corporate sustainability activities and actions.

Oldekop, J. A., Horner, R., Hulme, D., Adhikari, R., Agarwal, B., Alford, M., et al. (2020). COVID-19 and the Case for Global Development. *World Development*, *134*, 105044.

- This article provides an insight into how COVID-19 accentuates the case for a global, rather than an international, development paradigm.

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Chapter 4 - Reconceptualising the Gender Gap in Academic Engagement: A Multi-Level Analysis

4.1 Chapter summary

With North America and Europe advancing in the area of knowledge and technology exchanges between universities and societal stakeholders (e.g. industry, government), the neoliberal discourse and practice of academic engagement (AE) is increasingly been extended to developing regions such as sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The prevailing view is that AE is a relevant organisational model for higher education institutions within these contexts to co-pursue science and innovation with firms. Hence, despite speculations in extant research about women's disadvantages in AE relative to male academics, the topic of gender is often overlooked while scholarly attention lingers on the institutional conditions of universities. In this paper, we propose a conceptual framework that allows the expansion of future research on the role of gender in AE. Employing a multidimensional perspective to discuss and analyse the gendered nuances within AE, this chapter shows how gender intersects with other macro-structural factors such religion, culture and (post/neo) colonialism to shape the distinct possibilities of men and women academics' participation in AE. The analyses suggest that research on gender inequality in AE needs to be more intensive in their epistemological stance to incorporate the society and culture in which higher education institutions exist, as the wider context defines the subjectivity and organisational power relations perpetuating the disparities between men and women academics. The chapter concludes by discussing how this new conceptual framework can advance the theory, research, and practice of AE.

4.2 Introduction

With advancements in knowledge and technology exchanges between universities and other stakeholders (e.g. industry, government) in Europe and North America, the neoliberal discourse and practice of academic engagement (AE) is increasingly been extended to developing countries such as sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (Kruss & Visser, 2017; Sá, 2015; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). The prevailing view is that AE is a relevant organisational model for higher education institutions (HEIs) and firms in developing contexts to collaborate and co-pursue science and innovation like industrialised countries (Dada et al., 2016; Perkmann et al., 2021; Pugh et al., 2022). In recent times, however, some studies have drawn attention to the comparative differences in the technological and research capacities of developed and developing nations, highlighting that most countries in SSA lack the support structures that foster AE activities, including the financial resources, research infrastructure and knowledge exchange policies (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021; Sá, 2015; Zavale & Langa, 2018). Based on these contextual differences, scholars have greatly devoted attention to problematising the ways in which AE unfolds in SSA, and queried its implications for the achievement of regional development (Filippetti & Savona, 2017; Kruss et al., 2015). Nevertheless, as the preponderance of studies have remained attentive to the institutional and structural capacities of HEIs and firms to implement AE activities in SSA (Zavale & Langa, 2018), what seems to have been largely ignored by these studies is the important question of how and why gender differences exist in AE activities in SSA, and also, what underlies the gender-related barriers constraining African women researchers' access and opportunities to participate in AE activities compared to their male counterparts (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021).

Accordingly, our endeavour in this conceptual paper is twofold: first, we seek to underpin the theme of gender in the AE literature on SSA by drawing on Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) leadership and management conceptual framework to explicate how power and privilege

establishes distinct possibilities for African men and women academics' to participate in AE activities. This aim is informed by the enduring concern about whether AE may reproduce gender inequality and power relations in HEIs (Morley, 2006; Queirós et al., 2022). Our second aim is to provide a holistic understanding of the gender divide prevailing in AE by pulling together the dispersed literature on developing and developed contexts. A recent systematic review of the AE literature by Perkmann et al. (2021) shows that there is a visible absence of non-Western studies on the role of gender in AE activities, and this knowledge gap has contributed to the less consistency in the findings about the forces shaping men and women academics' participation distinctively. This is not surprising, as current studies have explicitly or implicitly taken an individual or organisational/institutional perspective to conceptualise the gender dynamics in AE. Presently, the leading explanation for the gender gap in AE is the role played by the individual decisions and motivation of men and women academics (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Sinell et al., 2018). Other research has however argued against attributing the gender gap in AE to individuals, as this trivialises systemic sources of disadvantage (Meng, 2016; Tartari & Salter, 2015). This article contributes to the existing literature by arguing that using Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice to examine the gender gap in AE, can expand our knowledge and understanding of this problem. In particular, this theoretical framework can enable us to link the various perspectives on the gender gap, and use their strengths to develop a more fine-grained understanding of the iterative relationship that exists between individuals and their wider environment.

This paper continues as follows. We first outline recent trends in the AE literature and make the case for utilising Bourdieu's (1977) sociological theory and Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) multi-layered framework to comprehend the gender dynamics. We next extend our earlier arguments on the gender divide in AE by introducing a conceptual model that offers an integrative logic for explicating the distinct possibilities for men and women academics'

participation. We conclude by outlining a future research agenda, as a way of encouraging new streams of investigations on this topic.

4.3 Conceptual background

Over the last few decades, policymakers and scholars have successfully encouraged universities to include a 'third-mission' to their traditional roles of teaching and research (Carl & Menter, 2021; Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022). Recent work (Perkmann et al., 2013, 2021) has introduced the concept of 'academic engagement' (AE) to cast a wider net and embrace the broad range of activities that individual academics are pursuing under the 'third-mission', ranging from collaborative research, ad-hoc advice, networking, contract research to consulting. Conceptually, AE "represents inter-organisational collaboration instances, usually involving 'person-to-person interactions' that link universities and other organisations, notably firms" (Perkmann et al., 2013, p. 424). Arguments are that AE provides academics with opportunities to enhance the knowledge production function of universities for the purposes of economic development and innovation (Dada et al., 2016; Queirós et al., 2022).

In studies related to context and AE, several scholars have documented patterns of inconsistences between and within countries (Filippetti & Savona, 2017; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021). For SSA particularly, research shows that apart from South Africa, AE is in the early development stages in most parts of the region, and these collaborative relationships are not only weak, but also mostly informal (Kruss & Visser, 2017; Sá, 2015; Zavale & Langa, 2018). For example, in Mozambique, Zavale and Schneijderberg (2021) found that the engagement activities taking place between academics and firms were in the form of embodied knowledge exchanges that occurred either through consultancies, informal meetings, conferences, and student internships. Similar findings have been made in Rwanda (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021),

Tanzania (Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022), Nigeria, and Uganda (Kruss et al., 2015), about a general weakness of AE in SSA. Unlike their counterparts in Europe and America who are motivated by publishing opportunities and reputation building, Mtawa and Wangenge-Ouma (2022) argue that financial incentives underlie the participation of African academics in AE activities, owing to the poor renumeration within universities. It is within this struggle and competition for the private good benefits that are obtainable from participating in AE activities, that Nsanzumuhire et al. (2021) draw attention to the potentiality for women researchers to be severely disadvantaged by gendered barriers.

Although Nsanzumuhire and colleagues (2021) were not explicit about the origins of these barriers, their finding is consistent with research from developed contexts (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Sinell et al., 2018) which have highlighted the influential role of gender on the participation of men and women academics. While research on AE may be inconclusive, the emerging evidence is that women academics participate much lesser in AE activities compared to their male counterparts (Tartari & Salter, 2015). Perkmann et al. (2021) explain that the relative advantages of male academics vis-à-vis AE stem from their occupancy in the more prominent positions in universities, which positions them ahead of women in the formation of wider social networks and mobilisation of resources for collaborations. Women, however, are often disadvantaged in gathering the necessary resources for collaboration because of challenges relating to the lack of universalism in science (Tsaousi, 2020), an undue burden of domestic responsibilities on them (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015), and their exclusion from the social networks where the development and exchange of resources occur – that is, the "Kula rings of power" (Etzkowitz et al., 2000, p. 115).

Elsewhere, Abreu and Grinevich (2017) have argued that the gender gap in AE is an outcome of the masculinity and imbalanced gender composition of most firms. This they argue makes venture capitalists (typically male) to be naturally biased against the competences of women

academics. With the absence of role models in academia and female peers in industry to support them, women academics become dually constrained to fully and equally participate in AE like their male colleagues because fundamentally, "they work in male-dominated environments within their universities and their disciplines, and when they try to collaborate with industry, they face barriers to the more rewarding types of industry engagement in part because they are again trying to enter a male-dominated environment" (Tartari & Salter, 2015, p. 1187). Facing a double-bind, women academics become discouraged, disappointed, demotivated, and often envisage unsuccessful outcomes from their efforts toward AE (Calvo et al., 2019). At the very least, the double-bind also affects the modes of engagement utilised by women academics, as they tend to have fewer resources and networks, and must also spend a lot more energy and time to find suitable industry collaborators with whom they can engage with (Meng, 2016).

Despite the significant progress made on delineating gender differences in AE, what remains unclear to date is the "exact causal mechanisms that give rise to these differences" even among "men and women of equal scientific, institutional and professional status" (Tartari & Salter, 2015, p. 1187). It is this gap that stimulates the arguments within this paper. While this study acknowledges the arguments made in prior research, it avoids drawing on the narrow conceptualisations of the gender gap which dominant the existing literature because these explanations fail to account for the societal context within which AE activities unfold, as well as the deep-seated cultural norms about gender that shape organisational power relations and individual motivations and choices. Instead, this paper takes a multidimensional approach to critically evaluate how gender inequality in AE is constitutive of women's status and experiences within organisations (meso-level), shaped by societal constraints (macro-level) and informed by individual choice (micro-level). Thus, in developing its arguments, this paper adopts the conclusion reached by Tartari and Salter (2015): "one suggestion that emerges from our findings is that macro-level rather than micro-level context matters more for explaining the

engagement gap between men and women" (p. 1185). Based on their insightful research – which draws on tokenism theory to discuss gender inequalities in AE – the authors challenged the spurious and invisible line that separates the current explanations for the differences in men and women academics' participation in AE activities.

This paper furthers this macro-microlevel perspective by drawing on Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) leadership and management conceptual framework (LMCF) that eschews methodological individualism. Revisiting and reflecting on African feminism and postcolonial theory, Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) developed the LMCF after reviewing extensive empirical research on women's leadership styles, status, and the gendered influences on women as leaders and managers. The LMCF challenges the person-centred approach and gender difference model often used to study the work and gendered experiences of women, which neglect structural factors and make female and male differences seem artificial and unnecessary. Essentially, Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) conceptual framework suggests that gender differences in AE are shaped by three processes. First, are the socio-historical, political, economic, and cultural factors within societies that influence men and women's social positioning. Second are the institutional structures and cultures of organisations that determine different experiences for men and women at work. Third, are the cultural and gender identity of men and women, as well as their behaviours, attitudes, and personal characteristics, which develop from their embeddedness in societies (Jack & Anderson, 2002).

Beyond allowing us to foreground women's experiences as contextual, fluid and dynamic, the LMCF fails to outline the social relations that amalgamate the macro, meso, and microlevel processes. In order to draw these three dimensions together and translate the benefits of Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) framework to the study of AE, we turn to Bourdieu's (1990) theory of practice, which Ozbilgin and Tatli (2005) believe "offers an alternative methodological account of society and individual that promises to bridge this superficial divide through an

understanding of the relational properties of social phenomena" (p. 857). Bourdieu (1977) proposes the following conceptual tools in the operationalisation of the LMCF: field, habitus, and capital. The *field* refers to the structured social spaces in which our social life is embedded (Bourdieu, 1990). To navigate the competition within the field, Bourdieu (1986) identifies four main types of *capital* (economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital) that are unequally distributed among actors. Beyond capital, Bourdieu (1977) also indicates that navigating the field is influenced by the *habitus*, which he explains as "an acquired system of generative schemes" that offers direction to people's "thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions" (p. 95). By drawing on the concepts of the habitus, field, capital and dispositions, we are able to clearly observe the interconnections between the three analytical levels (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

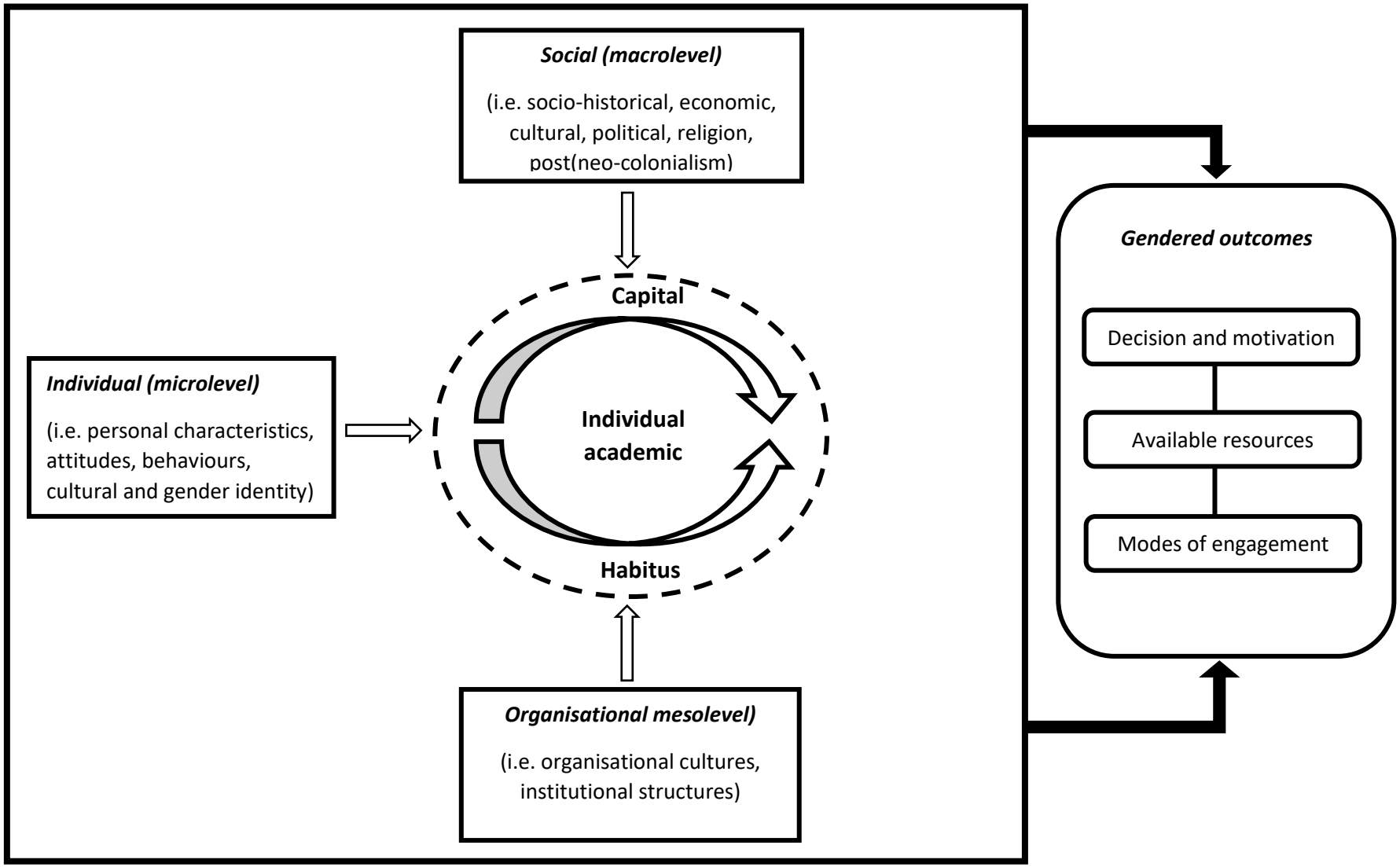
Within the realm of AE, the interweaving of Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) framework with Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice under a joint conceptual framework is valuable in sketching out the multidimensional social spaces within which academics exist; the competition within the different fields and the capital(s) at stake that direct academics to enact individual and/or collective strategies that either undermine or advance their participation in AE activities; and finally, understand how individual academics craft their careers along the lines of a habitus that has been built out of their embeddedness and history within the society. In the next section, we present our multi-dimensional framework of analysis and unpack how gendered outcomes in AE are shaped by an aggregate of individual behaviours, cultures, traditions and objective structures.

4.4 A multi-level gendered analysis of AE

This paper seeks to strengthen the theoretical foundations necessary for locating gender in the AE literature on SSA, by presenting a conceptual framework that creates opportunities for

future research on this topic. As outlined in Figure 4.1, our integrative conceptual model suggests that gendered outcomes in AE are derivative from and sustained by an amalgam of multiple factors. The first element, macro-structural level, draws attention to questions related to the conditions that create dissimilarities in men and women academics' cultural privileges and access to context-embedded resources. The second, meso-institutional and relational level, focuses on organisational arrangements and interactions that reinforce the resource (dis)advantages of men and women academics. Finally, the micro-individual level addresses the individual biography of men and women academics. Although our framework separates the different levels, it is crucial to constantly take into consideration the linkages between the macro, meso, and micro dimensions; of how organisations and societies result from individual actions as well as how individuals are influenced by social systems and organisations. We indicate explicitly that together, the field (i.e. the dashed lines which represents the different levels), capital, and habitus, generate three key gendered outcomes that have implications for men and women academics' involvement in AE: i) decision and motivation; ii) available resources (e.g. social networks); and iii) engagement modes (e.g. conferences, consulting). In the ensuing discussion, we unpack details of the model through available empirical evidence on SSA.

Figure 4.1: An integrative conceptual framework highlighting gendered outcomes in AE as a function of multiple mechanisms



4.4.1 Social (macro) level

The studies reviewed show that individual success in AE involves devoting time to relevant activities, including attending external meetings with industry partners and delivering talks at industry organised conferences, which allows one to build collaborative networks and a reputable professional status outside academia (Calvo et al., 2019; Perkmann et al., 2021). Due to the disproportionate division of domestic responsibilities, women academics tend to have limited less time to invest in such activities compared to men (Tartari & Salter, 2015). In SSA, evidence suggests that beyond care commitments at home, women academics are also likely to be constrained by gendered power relations that relate to "what if…the husband says no…?" (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017, p. 7). According Okeke-Ihejirika (2017), "postcolonial systems of governance and decision-making rendered women second-class citizens to men with the boundaries of their public (e.g. participation in paid work and politics) and private lives (e.g. cultural expectations for marriage, procreation, and gender division of labour) firmly defined" by the colonial masters' perspectives on a woman's place at the time (p. 3). The result of this socialisation process is the 'natural' positioning of men as 'emperors' in many traditional African societies, who wield the power over almost all household decision-making (Adeola Olaogun et al., 2015; Wolf & Frese, 2018). These cultural beliefs are reinforced by religions such as Christianity and Islam, that typically teach women to take a subservient and subordinate position to men (Ojediran & Anderson, 2020; Otuo et al., 2022). Thus, whenever a woman desires to take part in research and conference activities, she must advise, negotiate, and make sure her husband or other male household heads understand the importance (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017). Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that many husbands have prevented their spouses from working or seeking employment (Ojediran & Anderson, 2020; Wolf & Frese, 2018).

Campion and Shrum (2004) emphasise that gender stereotypes confine women academics in SSA to 'education and research localism' – which refers to women's lack of overseas or national/regional training and work-related experience. The authors found that while statuses such as 'household head' and 'breadwinner' have earned male researchers several travel opportunities, statuses like 'wife' and 'mother' have denied women researchers similar opportunities, especially extended trips and spending time overseas. However, Ynalvez and Shrum (2011) indicates that making connections with advanced countries can increase the research output and collaboration tendencies of academics in developing countries because of the information and material resources embodied in these social networks. Women in particular may benefit from international mobility by breaking free from exclusionary networks in their local areas and experiencing enriching international collaborations (Cañibano, 2019). By moving across borders, it is argued that women academics can rise vertically through 'glass ceilings' (Cañibano, 2019). Nevertheless, women academics in SSA tend to study overseas much less and therefore develop fewer connections with foreign academics and institutions (Tsikata, 2007; Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011).

Although the conception that gender and culture position women as wives, mothers and homemakers may not be unique to Africa, attention has been drawn to the fact that within this context, these socio-cultural value systems are not distinct from each other, but are often nested together with religion, patriarchy, and (post/neo) colonialism (Forson et al., 2017; Otuo et al., 2022). From a Bourdieusian perspective, we can argue that a cultural disposition where men wield sufficient patriarchal power to shape women's mobility in the private sphere, raises pertinent questions about how such gendered power relations and subjectivity might be extended to the public sphere. This is further discussed in the succeeding section.

4.4.2 Organisational (meso) level

While women researchers manage to negotiate inequalities in the broader social context, research shows that these disadvantages are also manifest within the workplace. Studies indicate that organisations are gendered in their schemes and policies for recruiting and promoting employees, and these often work against women's careers compared to men (Acker, 2006; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009). In the context of AE, Tartari and Salter (2015) indicate that the policies designed to support women researchers, especially departmental-level strategies, can effectively promote their participation in this activity. However, in SSA, evidence shows that even with the numerous higher education policy reforms, these are not substantive enough to improve the situations of women academics (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015; Morley, 2006; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017). African universities are thought to "make a mockery of all the proud national and regional political and policy commitments to gender equality and justice" because of their "lack of commitment to gender issues and taking women seriously in the intellectual sphere" (Mama & Barnes, 2007, p. 3). Now, if policies are decisive to individual participation and success in AE, and these appear to be weak in SSA, we can argue that a wide gap exists between men and women academics.

Acker's (2006) concept of 'inequality regimes' emphasises that gender is one of many factors influencing societal and organisational inequality, as there are often "loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organisations" (p. 443). For SSA, postcolonial feminists repeatedly point at colonialism as re-inscribing gender bias and stereotypes into the organisational procedures and rules of many universities (Forson et al., 2017; Tsikata, 2007). Mama (2003) articulates that "the colonial primary and secondary schooling [w]ere already heavily gendered, with women's capacities being channelled almost exclusively into imported bourgeois notions of femininity centred on domesticity and wifehood" (p. 106). While women

may have not been officially excluded from the post-independence universities that were built in Africa (Tsikata, 2007), the relics of colonialism have ensured that women's access to these institutions, as well as the leadership patterns, administrative structures, cultural symbols and power within HEIs, continue to be modelled on masculine experiences and expectations (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015; Rathgeber, 2013).

Thus, notwithstanding qualification, women academics in SSA could be refused employment because of the gender stereotype that they are a distractive influence in male-dominated laboratories (Adeola Olaogun et al., 2015). Rathgeber (2013) also notes that women academics are often assigned to departmental tasks relating to administration and pastoral care, including embarking on community outreaches, counselling students, and organising unofficial student events – laborious activities which do not count towards their promotion. As a way of reinforcing gendered power relations in the academe, Tsikata (2007) found that women academics are routinely called 'Mrs', 'Auntie' and 'Mama' whereas men get addressed by titles such as 'Dr' or 'Prof' to symbolise their intellectual superiority. Interestingly, Okeke-Ihejirika (2017) found that the status of 'Mommy', 'Mama' or 'Madam' were accessible social instruments for older women academics to assert their own specific agendas, including working productively with junior male faculty. Inversely, an 'unmarried status' typically deprived women academics (especially those considered not quite old enough) of senior positions in SSA (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015).

As Ridgeway (2014) argues, gender beliefs acting through micro-level social relations in the workplace, not just biases evaluations of male and female competence, but also their suitability for authority and associational preferences. Gender-biased associational choices typically promotes *cloning*, which represents a homophilic process that often directs men "smoothly toward positions of power and resources while creating networks and, therefore, informational and opportunity barriers" for women (Ridgeway, 2014, p. 7). Supporting this argument,

Osongo (2006) and Rathgeber (2013) found that while most male academics in SSA have unrestricted access to institutional networks that provide rich funding information, women's inclusion into such groups and/or their ability to gain access to senior faculty members (often males) who might help them obtain research funding, largely depended on them organising tearooms. If AE thrives on a virtuous cycle of academic success; wherein individuals who possess rich portfolios of capital (e.g. government grants, social capital, publications) are more likely to pursue this activity (Perkmann et al., 2013), then the asymmetrical resource differences between women and men academics leaves open the question: to what extent do the resource disadvantages that women academics in SSA face, affect their individual disposition toward AE? We delve more into this discussion in the next section.

4.4.3 Individual (micro) level

Recent research has begun to conceptualise and empirically investigate how individual participation in AE is shaped by one's identity (Calvo et al., 2019; Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022). In relation to this, Wheadon and Duval-Couetil (2019) have argued that the cognitive processes that form our intentions are rarely deliberate, as "individual motivations are developed unconsciously and shaped by a tangle of external influences and internal resources (like past experiences, biases, perceptions, expectations and a variety of other inextricable social, contextual, and cognitive factors)" (p. 319). In other words, whether and how one chooses to participate in AE is as a result of their habitus, which predisposes individuals to a repertoire of possible actions and certain patterns of behaviours (Bourdieu, 1977). Relatedly, an insightful study by Prozesky (2006) showed that South Africa's history with patriarchy and apartheid, has inculcated self-efficacy beliefs in many women academics, who "do not readily believe that they have contributions to make to knowledge production, or that their insights are of significance as a contribution to the existing body of knowledge" (p. 100). The studies we

reviewed show that such self-efficacy beliefs negatively affect the publication efforts and output of African women academics, causing them to publish almost thirty percent fewer academic articles than their male counterparts (Prozesky, 2006; Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011). For the few women who are able to develop their academic capital, Morley (2006) also found that their professional and intellectual capital often tends to be devalued and misrecognised by their male counterparts.

Indeed, the past life experiences of an individual can affect their contemporary opportunities (Bourdieu, 1990). Yet, often, the assumption of most generic structural theories is that the empirically observable gender differences between men and women would automatically be obliterated if they share similar socio-structural conditions and role expectations (Ridgeway, 2014). What such theories fail to consider is how gender is embodied and internalised by individuals, as well as the enduring ways in which gendered cultural expectations are attached to women and men throughout their lives (Tsaousi, 2020). In SSA, Nawe (2002) offers a good example of how gender internalisation may differentiate women and men academics' participation in AE activities. Observing the social interactions between men and women academics in organised seminars and workshops, Nawe (2002) concluded that these social settings:

> remain[s] the domain for men and opportunities for developing their capacities through exchange of experiences, networking, and exposure in general. And where a few women get such opportunities, their ability for effective sharing of experiences is also limited by the unconsciously assimilated socialisation process and somewhat forceful and perhaps overwhelming pressure from the mere number of men. Their voices may be listened to at times, but this would generally be done through a deliberate move for men to be seen/acknowledged as being gender sensitive in response to developments on advocacy on gender issues and the general concern for inclusiveness in developmental issues (p. 2).

The quote above is a representation of men 'mobilising masculinities' (Martin, 2003), which Berger et al. (2015) have argued, "hinders the inclusion of women in the technological innovation networks, their ability to participate on an equal footing and their ability to add their perspectives that might bring technological innovation further" (p. 574). From a Bourdieusian lens, this quote reveals how the habitus empowers gendered structures to manifest in ordinary social interactions, directing women academics to enact behaviours to their own disadvantage. Explicating further on Nawe's (2002) observation, Ebila (2015) argues that in most African societies, a 'proper' woman is that woman who does not talk back at men or speak out because 'silence' is construed as a form of respect. Women must therefore be seen, and not heard – an idea that was not only colonially created, but has been institutionalised within masculinist countries through their patriarchal inheritance from African traditions (Ebila, 2015). Arguably, if social statuses such as gender are a fundamental source of human motivation (Ridgeway, 2014), then the inferiority and superiority attached to femininity and masculinity in African traditions have significant gendered consequences for AE. Specifically, the inferior status associated with femininity will not just 'silence' the voices of African women academics in the social spaces where AE occurs, but it may also influence which individuals and organisations they may choose to initiate, build, and maintain interactions with, notwithstanding their skills, experiences, and qualifications.

4.5 Discussion and conclusion

At the outset of this paper, we made a theoretical argument about why we believe the theme of gender should be placed more explicitly in current discussions on AE in SSA. First, we highlighted a perennial focus on the organisational-level features in the extant literature on SSA, which overlooks individual experiences and fails to sufficiently uncover embedded

inequalities (Zavale & Langa, 2018). Second, we found the evidence on gender inequality in AE from other regional contexts as quite striking, and undeniably worth giving a closer look in Africa. Third, there are lingering concerns from scholars about how globalising discourses such as AE may exacerbate old or introduce new forms of inequality in higher education (Morley, 2006; Queirós et al., 2022), as well as undermine the past equity gains of developing nations (Filippetti & Savona, 2017). This paper therefore aimed to fill these research gaps and provide a foundation for future empirical work on gender differences in AE in the context of SSA.

A key point worth raising from our review is the conceptualisation of gender inequality in AE as an outcome of the mundane practices of everyday life, including the way women academics feel when talking to their male counterparts in conferences. By using Bourdieu's (1977, 1986) conceptual tools of capital, habitus, and field to operationalise Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) LMCF, we have shown how society and culture (at the macro-level) can interpenetrate universities to influence both the structures and cultures of these organisations (at the meso-level) as well as the behaviours of individuals within them (at the micro-level). Our multidimensional conceptualisation which identifies and analyses both the overt and covert forms of inequality that create and sustain the gender gap in AE, has offered fresh insights to clearly articulate not just 'how' but also 'why' gender differences exist in AE, even among men and women academics whose scientific, institutional, and professional statuses are identical.

Our analysis has implications for the AE literature. Although there has been increasing calls for research that analyses the gender dynamics in AE (Perkmann et al., 2021; Whittington, 2018), many of the existing studies have focused on the individual and organisational level influences. We attempted to address this deficit by examining the unique context of SSA, to which we demonstrate that individuals and organisations are influenced by social level

processes such as (post/neo) colonialism, religion, and culture. With our findings suggesting that the social context gives meaning to subjectivity and organisational power relations, this paper supports and reiterates scholarly calls for society and culture to be incorporated into AE studies (Carl & Menter, 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015). We argue that gender intersects with other factors (such as race and class) to shape individual and group experiences in interesting ways, and AE research needs to be more intensive in its epistemological stance to integrate "the broader capitalist, colonial, postcolonial and transnational contexts in which organisations exist" (Nkomo & Rodriguez, 2019, p. 172).

Our paper has implications for practice, especially the formulation of AE policies and support initiatives that aim to be gender-sensitive, inclusive and robust. The issues concerning women in academia find a locus in Goal 4 and 5 of the sustainable development goals (United Nations, 2015), and our findings suggest that attaining gender equality in AE demands concerted efforts, and possibly a new integrated conceptual framework that offers "sharper swords to slay the seven-headed dragon" of gender inequality in academia (van den Brink & Benschop, 2012, p. 89). Advocating for scholars and policymakers to move away from narrow conceptualisations and analyses of gender inequality in AE, we present and propose a conceptual model which underscores the reciprocal relationships between society, organisations and individuals. We, however, caution scholars and policymakers who intend to adopt our model to pay particular attention to their study's social level context, in order not to homogenise the experiences of academics.

Despite the usefulness of our conceptual framework, further research is required to explore and ascertain the specifics on the gendered outcomes. For instance, studies could employ our conceptual approach to interrogate empirically, whether and how gender shapes the motivation, resources, and channels of industry engagement of women academics in SSA. This can provide insight on the agency of women academics, in order to help demystify current characterisations

of them in management and organisation studies as powerless victims (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2017). Importantly, such studies will enable us to recognise the current and potential contribution of African women academics to the present and future development of SSA. Further, given the different ways in which religion, gender, and other strands of inequality play across the societal dynamics in SSA, empirical work employing our framework could examine how these strands impact AE, identifying the patterns and differences. For example, few studies have theorised how religion (which has become a salient structure in reinforcement of cultural beliefs around 'womanhood') legitimises patriarchal socio-cultural norms within organisations (Otuo et al., 2022). Operationalising this framework could also lead to an examination of the influence of these macro-structural factors on women's choices, including self-selecting themselves into research areas that reinforce their partnership with less profitable firms compared to male academics (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017).

Overall, the analysis and suggestions we have presented, are inspired by the increasing demand for higher education research to contribute to our understanding of where "women academics 'sit' in networks of collaboration, [as] little is known about their embeddedness in the social structure of science, compared to men, and how this embeddedness has (or has not) changed over time" (Whittington, 2018, p. 511). In this paper, we have emphasised that studies that engage at the macro, meso and micro levels will simultaneously help to grow a culture of innovation that reflects an awareness of gender within the broader ambitions around gender, innovation and sustainable development, helping to shape national and regional policies designed to encourage scientific endeavours, as well as solve the global challenges. Our paper contributes to the growing body of context-specific studies on gender differences in AE, and offers a new lens for understanding the gender gap between men and women academics.

4.6 References

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Chapter 5 - In Pursuit of the Third Mission: A Bourdieusian Perspective of African Women's Participation in Academic Engagement

5.1 Chapter summary

Academic engagement (AE) has come to dominate contemporary discourse on the universities' third mission to promote socio-economic development by engaging with external stakeholders such as industry and governments. While it is well known that researchers in developing contexts such as sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are severely constrained in their ability to undertake AE activities, accounts of their ingenuity to still accomplish this task in environments mired with weak institutions remain elusive. Focusing on six countries (i.e. Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, and Botswana) and drawing on the Bourdieusian social theory, this chapter explores the challenges of, and opportunities for, women researchers in SSA to participate in AE activities. The analysis revealed that women researchers in SSA are hindered by gendered barriers such as work-family conflicts, the masculinist habitus of firms, and 'empty shell' policies, which they countered by using three key innovative strategies; namely, *shifting spaces with legitimate privileges, buying a stake in transitional networks, and securing the purse with cultivated dispositions.* The chapter offers rich insights into the career experiences of women researchers in developing contexts, elucidating how they circumvent systemic barriers to further their interests. The chapter concludes by discussing the findings and the related implications for the theory and practice of AE.

5.2 Introduction

In a seminal article, Etzkowitz et al. (2000) identified the emergence of a 'third mission' of universities, noting that through specific technology transfer arrangements, this new paradigm would transform the research and teaching efforts of universities' into social and economic development. Since then, scholars inspired by Etzkowitz and colleagues' (2000) academic entrepreneurship model, have examined other mechanisms for transferring university research to knowledge users (Cohen et al., 2002; D'Este & Patel, 2007). Specifically, academic engagement (AE) has been identified by researchers pursuing this line of inquiry as an important mechanism for universities to enhance regional and national development efforts by implementing research and development (R&D) initiatives that promote knowledge exchange and transfer, as well as innovation (Perkmann et al., 2013, 2021). In fact, research shows that AE involves a broader range of partners including firms, government agencies, non-profit organisations (Olmos-Peñuela et al., 2014), and many companies consider this mode of engagement to be significantly more valuable than licensing university patents, which is typical of academic entrepreneurship (D'Este & Patel, 2007; Perkmann et al., 2013).

In recent times, the extant discourse on AE has revealed some contextual differences within and between countries (Filippetti & Savona, 2017; Zavale & Langa, 2018). Work to date shows that in many developed countries such as the UK and US, AE is in the 'consolidation phase' – where there is a plethora of research and relevant policies providing direction for this activity, and the focus of scholars is to increase its usefulness for innovation (Bastos et al., 2021). Conversely, most developing regions such as sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are at the 'developmental phase'– whereby both researchers and universities are increasingly responding to the idea of AE and have begun incorporating engagement activities into their traditional academic roles of teaching and research (Bastos et al., 2021). Despite the increasing significance of AE in SSA, the emerging evidence shows that this activity is characterised by

weak institutions and structural deficiencies, which makes it challenging for many researchers to become actively involved and/or succeed in it (Kruss et al., 2015; Zavale & Macamo, 2016). A recent systematic review by Zavale and Langa (2018) showed that while studies on SSA are increasing, hardly any of the works reviewed focused on the ingenuity of researchers in this context to still accomplish the third mission amid the constraints within their environment, including working in departments that lack structures and procedures for AE. In particular, the AE literature appears to have remained silent on the accomplishment of the third mission among women researchers in SSA, whom studies have indicated are more likely to face gender-related barriers compared to men (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021; also see Tartari & Salter, 2015).

Accordingly, this paper aims to extend the extant discourse on AE in SSA beyond the existing boundaries of thought by posing the following research question: *How do women researchers in SSA navigate the gender-related barriers impeding their participation in AE activities?* In addressing this question, the paper aims to offer rich insights into the enterprising ways in which women researchers in SSA accomplish the third mission in contexts which are characterised by weak institutions and gendered socio-cultural and religious persuasions. In this regard, the paper draws on Bourdieu's (1977) concepts of field, habitus and capitals, to conceptualise AE as a contextually contingent activity that occurs among actors with particular dispositions and portfolios of capitals struggling and strategising as they seek to manipulate their position within the field of academia. Embarking on an empirical enquiry to unpack these dynamics, the paper specifically examines the challenges and opportunities for African women researchers to participate in AE activities by drawing on 36 in-depth interviews with women researchers from six countries: Zambia, Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, and Kenya.

This paper makes significant contributions to the literature on AE in several ways. First, this paper extends understanding of AE in SSA as a gendered activity by making explicit the gendered barriers defining different participation arrangements for men and women

researchers. Second, the paper introduces new forms of capital to broaden understanding on career success in AE. Whereas previous researchers have largely attributed the accomplishment of AE to social capital (Meng, 2016; Whittington, 2018), this paper broadens the literature strand on capital by exemplifying the gamut of capitals (i.e. social, cultural, economic) that are required to succeed in this activity. Third, by outlining how women researchers in SSA fulfil the third mission with specific dispositions and portfolios of capital, this paper responds to the call for studies to provide rich insights into the growing but hidden population of researchers pursuing the third mission in developing contexts (Perkmann et al., 2021), and concurrently, answer the "core research questions, particularly regarding the modes of interaction, the kind of knowledge and resources universities and firms' exchange, and the outcomes yielded from these processes" that have remained under-conceptualised in the AE literature on SSA (Zavale & Langa, 2018, p. 42).

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. In the next section, a review of the salient literature on AE is presented, after which Bourdieu's theoretical framework on habitus, field, and capital is used to conceptualise AE as a gendered activity. Next, the paper discusses the methodological approach and techniques utilised for analysing the data. The paper then presents the findings on the strategic manoeuvres of women researchers within the AE landscape in SSA. It concludes by discussing the findings as they relate to extant research and by presenting future research suggestions.

5.3 Contextualising academic engagement in SSA

While the 'third mission' lacks a precise definition (Hirsu et al., 2021), it generally represents the increasing role of universities in social and economic development (Pugh et al., 2022). Encapsulated in this concept is an increasing expectation that universities will extend their

traditional teaching and research roles to include scientific collaborations with other stakeholders in the wider economy, including businesses and governments (Etzkowitz & Dzisah, 2008; Olmos-Peñuela et al., 2014). As the study of the third mission has become more mainstream, scholars have identified two main categories: academic entrepreneurship and academic engagement (Link et al., 2007; Perkmann et al., 2013). In general, academic entrepreneurship often results from academic engagement, and largely focuses on exploiting academic inventions for financial rewards through activities such as the patenting and licensing of research (Perkmann et al., 2021). Academic engagement on the other hand, is pursued for varying objectives and can be described as "knowledge-related collaboration by academic researchers with non-academic organisations" (Perkmann et al., 2013, p. 424). The knowledge-related interactions that encompass academic engagement ranges from "formal activities such as collaborative research, contract research, and consulting, as well as informal activities like providing ad hoc advice and networking with practitioners" (Perkmann et al., 2021, p. 424). Studies indicate that academic engagement is not only practiced extensively across disciplines and countries than academic entrepreneurship, but also has significant economic prospects for universities and businesses (Olmos-Peñuela et al., 2014; Perkmann et al., 2021). In this vein, this paper focuses on academic engagement (AE), especially as there is suggestive evidence that this activity has a long tradition in SSA (Filippetti & Savona, 2017).

The origin of AE in SSA has been traced to the launch of the "Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980–2000" (Mihyo, 2013, p. 43), which led to the transformation of public universities into 'developmental universities' that were envisioned to assist governments decolonise local populations and address their basic existential challenges (Etzkowitz & Dzisah, 2008; Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022). The 1970s and 1980s particularly witnessed many African universities engaging with both businesses and technology-oriented research institutions through conferences, guest lectures, consultancy, and

student internships, which were all informal and short-term arrangements (Kruss et al., 2015; Mihyo, 2013). However, from the 1990s onwards, this positive momentum was weakened by the externally-imposed neoliberal structural adjustment policies (SAPs), which negatively affected many African universities (Forson et al., 2017; Zeleza, 2017). Several studies have drawn attention to the link between the SAPs and the overall weak patterns of AE displayed in SSA (Kruss et al., 2015; Mihyo, 2013; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022). According to this literature, the implementation of the SAPs was paralleled with a reduction in government expenditure toward higher education, as the latter became much more recognised as a private rather than a public good (Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2022). The cutback in public funding implied that researchers in SSA were, and still are, responsible for finding alternative income sources for their academic work. The upshot of this ongoing struggle, as observed by Mtawa and Wangenge-Ouma (2022), is the utilisation of AE as a funding generating venture by African academics.

Within this competitive environment, Nsanzumuhire and colleagues (2021) have drawn attention to a potential gender gap in AE in SSA, suggesting that women researchers are more likely to face greater constraints in accomplishing the third mission than men. Although the authors were equivocal about the sources of the disadvantage, their claims reflect recent advances within the AE literature that is redirecting scholarly attention toward exploring how and why male researchers participate more in AE activities compared to similar women (Sinell et al., 2018; Tartari & Salter, 2015). So far, key arguments on the gender gap in AE can be categorised under two broad headings. First, is a group of studies which have adopted a demand-side perspective to argue that the gap is an upshot of systemic biases; namely, gender status beliefs often downplays the competences of women researchers, which in turn causes them to be overlooked for certain roles/tasks/jobs in the workplace (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Meng, 2016). Focusing on a supply-side, the second perspective considers the gap as the result

of individual ‘choices’ to engage (or not) in AE activities (Sinell et al., 2018). These studies explain that women researchers often exclude themselves or are excluded by the greater family responsibilities on them, which tend to constrain their ability to dedicate either their time or develop the resources (e.g. social networks) that can facilitate their involvement in AE (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Tartari & Salter, 2015).

Despite their differing perspectives, the derived theoretical implication of these studies is that the personal costs for women researchers to participate in AE is higher than their male colleagues. There is however little that can be gleaned from the literature on AE, both on SSA and elsewhere, to account for how women researchers’ advance their participation in AE activities, in both theoretical and practical terms (Terosky et al., 2014). Elsewhere, Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) have argued that Bourdieu’s theoretical framework has the “ability to draw together ideas and insights that have already been explored by others” (p. 5), and therefore, can enrich understanding of complex issues such as the gender dynamics in AE. The paper therefore draws on the Bourdieusian social theory to synthesise the arguments in the AE literature and advance understanding of the prevailing issues.

In Bourdieu’s (1997) theory of practice, he noted that social actions are not generated exclusively from people’s interactions with social structures, or they pursuing goals in a calculated manner. Instead, social actions arise from the dialectical relationship between people’s habitus and capital within a given field (Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu, this dialectical relationship reflects a logic of practice, which “runs as follows: “[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice” (Dixon-Woods et al., p. 2744). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) describe the *field* as the diverse social spaces that amalgamate to form societies, which although distinct, also tend to intersect. Bourdieu (1977, 1986) however highlights that there are different norms and logic characterising each field, and there are also particular forms of capital that are unevenly distributed among individuals within these fields, often requiring them to act in

tactical ways that reflects the playing of a game. From this starting point, it is possible to interpret the 'choices' of women researchers to participate in AE activities or otherwise, as being driven by their specific position in the competitive field of AE.

Bourdieu (1990) specifically uses the concept of *habitus* to help capture the "feel for the necessity and logic of the game [of AE]" that women researchers may have (p. 64), as well as an unarticulated familiarity with their environment that allows an easy navigation (Tsaousi, 2020). In general, the habitus can be described as people's dispositions and values which they acquire through their everyday activities and experiences in life (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015). The habitus acquires its features from the position in which people are often embedded within the social structure (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015), and is primarily manifested through people's behaviours and characteristics, including the manner in which they carry themselves around. Besides the habitus, Bourdieu (1986) argues that people's game-playing strategies are based on their possession of four forms of *capital*: social (social connections, group memberships, networks), cultural (information, knowledge, education, skills, mannerisms), economic (income, material possessions), and symbolic (honour, prestige, recognition). Central to Bourdieu's theory is the interlinkage between capitals (Randle et al., 2015), and how men and women's different social positions impacts on their accrual and/or transformation of capital (Huppatz, 2009; Tsaousi, 2020). For Bourdieu, "a gendered field is thus cast within a male social order or habitus that is difficult to penetrate by women" (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015, p. 112).

Notwithstanding the ambiguities and flaws in Bourdieu's theoretical framework as some scholars have pointed out (e.g. Skeggs, 1997), this paper responds to calls (e.g. Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005) for a more sympathetic reading of his work to show how the operationalisation of the concepts of field, habitus, capital within AE research, can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the gender dynamics. In the context of this paper, the Bourdieusian literature

provides two main advantages. First, this theoretical lens can provide insights into the structural and agential dimension of women researchers' participation in AE, as well help to delineate the tangible and intangible factors that shape their possible courses of action. Such evidence can augment the scholarly attempts to develop a deepened and multifaceted understanding of the gender gap in AE (Meng, 2016; Tartari & Salter, 2015) by specifically extending the current literature on 'choice' which appears to have overlooked the possibility of structural constraints on women researchers. Importantly, Bourdieu's theoretical framework allows the gendered identities and practices of women researchers to become perceptible through the ways in which they might construct their strategies in line with their habitus, which typically regulates people's dispositions and practices, as well as their understandings of the social world (Karatas-Özkan & Chell, 2015).

Additionally, the theory's emphasis on the multiplicity of capitals can provide a comprehensive response to the ongoing debate about whether social capital is the primary defining factor for (un)successful collaborations (e.g. Meng, 2016; Whittington, 2018). Contemporary scholarship on the gender gap remains as contentious as ever in comprehending how women academics manage to engage with firms for example, despite their exclusion from the 'Kula rings of power' – which refers to the social networks that systematically privilege men in developing and exchanging career-related resources, knowledge and reputation (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). In this regard, Bourdieu's theory can reveal how women researchers compete, collude, negotiate, and contest for position in fields (Idahosa, 2020); first, by accepting the "*illusio* – the social reality of the game" (Dixon et al., 2006, p. 2744) – and then figuring out the game-rules from the logic of practice in specific fields, deploying or 'investing' their different capitals into the game, and then moving strategically within the field based on their different social positions (Randle et al., 2015) to enact strategies that can facilitate their participation in AE. Theorising the innovative ways in which women researchers in SSA accomplish AE from a Bourdieusian

perspective, it is argued here, can extend the broader literature, which despite the few, but important studies, have many questions unanswered. In what follows, the paper now explains the guiding research methodology.

5.4 Methodology

Having a specific interest in comprehending the enterprising ways in which women researchers in SSA pursue and accomplish AE activities, an emic approach was deemed appropriate to fully understand their situated experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Specifically, an exploratory qualitative research approach was implemented to comprehend the constraints on and opportunities for women researchers in SSA to succeed in AE. Three criteria informed the study's sampling strategy and participants inclusion. First, armed with the interest to capturing women's involvement in AE from the perspective of universities, only women academics and research scientists were recruited to participate in the study. Second, since it was important to understand the different manifestations of AE in SSA, the sampled participants needed to have had experiences in participating in AE activities. Third, driven by the objective of gaining detailed understanding of gendered issues in AE from a nuanced perspective (micro, meso, and macrolevels), the sample was drawn from a set of participants with diverse characteristics – ethnicity, age, religion, marital and motherhood status, ranking, education, scientific disciplines, work setting – which produced data that is both representative of the phenomenon under investigation, and information-rich (Patton, 2002).

Different strategies were employed in recruiting the participants. These included the researcher leveraging on her Project[8] network, from which she gained unfettered access to 24 participants

[8] This study is drawn from a larger project that trained African academics and research scientists on how to undertake academia-industry-government collaborations.

who served as an initial database. The additional 12 non-Project participants were accessed through participant referrals and snowballing (Geddes et al., 2018). Altogether, 36 women researchers originating from countries in East-Africa (Kenya), Southern-Africa (Botswana, Malawi, and Zambia), and West-Africa (Ghana and Nigeria), met the sampling criteria for this study. The participants were mostly aged between 27 and 67, with approximately two thirds (64%) being doctorate degree holders. While 22 were married, 8 were single, 4 were divorced and the remaining 2 were widowed. Together, the length of time the participants reported to have worked in academia ranged from 38 years to 6 months. Table 5.1 summarises the participants' key characteristics.

Table 5.1: Summary of participants biodata

Pseudonym	Level of education	Ranking	Field of specialisation	Country	RECIRCULATE
A1	PhD	Research Associate	Entrepreneurship	Ghana	Yes
A2	PhD	Professor	Environmental Health and Sanitation	Ghana	Yes
A3	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Food Science	Kenya	Yes
A4	Masters	Lecturer	Economics	Zambia	Yes
A5	Masters	Lecturer	Business Management	Zambia	Yes
A6	PhD	Lecturer	Biochemistry and Biotechnology	Kenya	Yes
A7	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Agricultural Economics	Nigeria	Yes
A8	PhD	Associate Professor	Gender and Development Studies	Kenya	Yes
A9	PhD	Lecturer	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Botswana	Yes
A10	Masters	Lecturer	Development Economics	Zambia	Yes
A11	PhD	Associate Professor	Chemistry	Nigeria	Yes
A12	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Agricultural Communication	Nigeria	Yes
A13	Masters	Tutorial Fellow	Mechanical Engineering	Kenya	No

A14	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Human Resource	Ghana	No
A15	PhD	Lecturer	Oral literature	Nigeria	Yes
A16	PhD	Lecturer	Industrial Engineering	Zambia	No
A17	PhD	Lecturer	Mechatronic Engineering	Kenya	No
A18	Masters	Research Development Officer	Agricultural Economics	Malawi	Yes
A19	Masters	Teaching Associate	Chemical Engineering	Botswana	Yes
A20	PhD	Senior Lecturer	History	Nigeria	No
A21	PhD	Lecturer	Computer Science	Botswana	Yes
A22	PhD	Professor	Chemistry	Kenya	Yes
A23	PhD	Professor	Biotechnology	Nigeria	No
A24	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Industrial Engineering	Nigeria	Yes
A25	PhD	Senior Lecturer	Immunology	Kenya	No
RS1	PhD	Director of Research & Partnerships	Psychology	Botswana	Yes
RS3	PhD	Principal Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	Yes

RS4	Masters	Principal Officer	Political Science	Malawi	No
RS5	PhD	Senior Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	No
RS6	Masters	Principal Technologist	Nutrition	Ghana	No
RS7	Masters	Chief Economist	Economics	Malawi	No
RS8	PhD	Senior Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	No
RS9	Masters	Research Scientist	Public Health	Nigeria	Yes
RS10	Master	Director of Research	Biology	Malawi	Yes
RS11	Masters	Research Scientist	Architecture	Ghana	Yes
RS12	Masters	Marketing Officer	Marketing	Ghana	Yes

5.4.1 Data collection

The data for this study was primarily gathered through semi-structured interviews, which extended over an 11-month period. All the interviews also took place via Zoom and Microsoft Teams digital communication platforms, which were audio-recorded and typically lasted between 50 - 90 minutes. The semi-structured interviews were considered useful, given that there is sufficient objective knowledge about AE, but subjective knowledge is lacking concerning the participation of women researchers in SSA (Richards & Morse, 2007). An extensive interview protocol was developed to cover key aspects of AE in SSA and the gendered dimensions to it (see Appendix D). The interview questions were open-ended, and were also framed in a way that helped to both elicit unstructured responses from the participants, as well as generate a discussion between them and the researcher (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2018). Each of the interviews begun with the researcher assuring the participants about the anonymity and confidentiality of their identities and contributions, and ended with the gathering of their socio-demographic information. The interview process typically begun with the researcher inviting the participants to provide a background story of the circumstances that influenced their decision in becoming researchers. Based on this icebreaker, informants were then asked several questions, including explaining their underlying motives for pursuing AE activities; the challenges to and benefits of participating in AE activities; the organisational factors contributing to women's marginalisation and/or exclusion from AE activities; and broader socio-cultural forces shaping women's involvement in AE individually and collectively. A conscious effort was made to delve further into the tangible examples of their experiences using probes, which encouraged them to discuss in-depth their decision-making processes and particular courses of action (Sweet, 2020).

5.4.2 Data analysis

All the recorded interviews were transcribed, de-identified to ensure confidentiality, and uploaded into the NVivo 12 software package for coding. Taking a thematic analytical approach, three main steps were used in analysing the data. The first involved getting familiarised with the data by iteratively reading the transcripts and writing down any initial ideas that developed from this process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process birthed a system of initial codes (e.g. male-dominance, networks, work-family, engagement modes, religion and gender) that accentuated two key facets of the ingenious strategies facilitating the participation of African women researchers in AE activities. The first feature concerned the systemic weaknesses and structural barriers that appeared to impede their ability to accomplish AE. The second were counternarratives that highlighted their sense of agency in terms of how they could progress with AE activities, in both theoretical and practical terms.

Drawing on theoretical insights from the AE literature, the second stage involved sorting and collating the broad array of codes into overarching themes by assessing their analytical connections (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process revealed a salience of 'position-takings' in the emerging themes (e.g., RS11 mentioned that "It's a man's world…so you always have to find a tactical way"), which led the researcher to draw insights from the readings on Bourdieu's (1993) sociological perspective to develop in-depth insights into the women's behaviours. Specifically, Bourdieu's (1977) concepts of field, habitus, and capital were advantageous in offering insights into the findings by; first, capturing the importance of the social context; second, by elucidating how women's lives and experiences are complicated by both past and contemporary circumstances; and finally, by illuminating the micro-interactions that characterise the knowledge exchange process with regards to AE. Overall, Bourdieu's (1984) sociological theory was valuable in outlining how the women's strategies were a "structured and structuring structure" (p. 171). It is worth highlighting that while a Bourdieusian theoretical

lens was applied to the data, it was solely done to support the analysis and interpretations, and not utilised as a rigid prejudgment on how to read the data correctly.

The third stage of analysis was to "define and refine" the emerging themes by identifying their significance and suitability to the research topic and question (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92). The review process helped to assess the credibility of the emerging themes to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021), and the final development of three aggregate themes, namely: 'shifting spaces with legitimate privileges', 'buying a stake in transitional networks', and 'securing the purse with cultivated dispositions.' These themes helped to make the women's stories intelligible and feasible for theoretical explanations that emphasise the challenges of, and opportunities for, women researchers in SSA to accomplish the universities' third mission. The final aggregate themes were reviewed for their interconnectedness, after which they were applied to the entire dataset to yield an understanding of the participant's strategies (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Table 5.2 is a summary of the themes that emerged from the data, along with their meanings which highlight the enterprising strategies of African women researchers.

5.4.3 Ensuring validity and trustworthiness

Before the findings are presented, this section discusses the paper's methodological limitations. First, the semi-structured interviews used in gathering data for this study, implies that this paper does not fully account for all aspects of the participants lives and occupational realities beyond the narratives provided (Sweet, 2020). Second, because all the participants' accounts are subjective, it is impossible to overlook their "self-serving attributional bias" in attributing only positive actions to themselves while ascribing negative events to others (Mezulis et al., 2004, p. 711). Third, the researcher was actively positioned in the research process (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and although her shared social-collective identity with the participants may have been

convenient for building rapport, this researcher bias could have also influenced her interpretations to the data (Sweet, 2020). It was therefore important for the researcher to remain vigilant about her personal experiences as an African woman researcher, and to avoid the risk of reading, comprehending, and construing the data through this lens. Being mindful of this 'insider membership' and its potential consequences (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2018), the researcher ensured to practice reflexivity in all aspects of the research process, continually questioning any personal biases and perspectives (Sweet, 2020). Nevertheless, the 'insider membership' provided a greater depth to the data gathered, as participants were more willing and open to share their experiences with me (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2018). As one participant, for example, said: "I think I have spoken out. This has been the most candid conversation that I have had" (A4, Zambia). Overall, the evidence presented in this paper may relatively reflect the careers and experiences of all women researchers in SSA. Thus, it is imperative to not homogenise the findings presented in this paper, as that could undermine the individuality of women's experiences.

Table 5.2: Themes, meanings and representative data

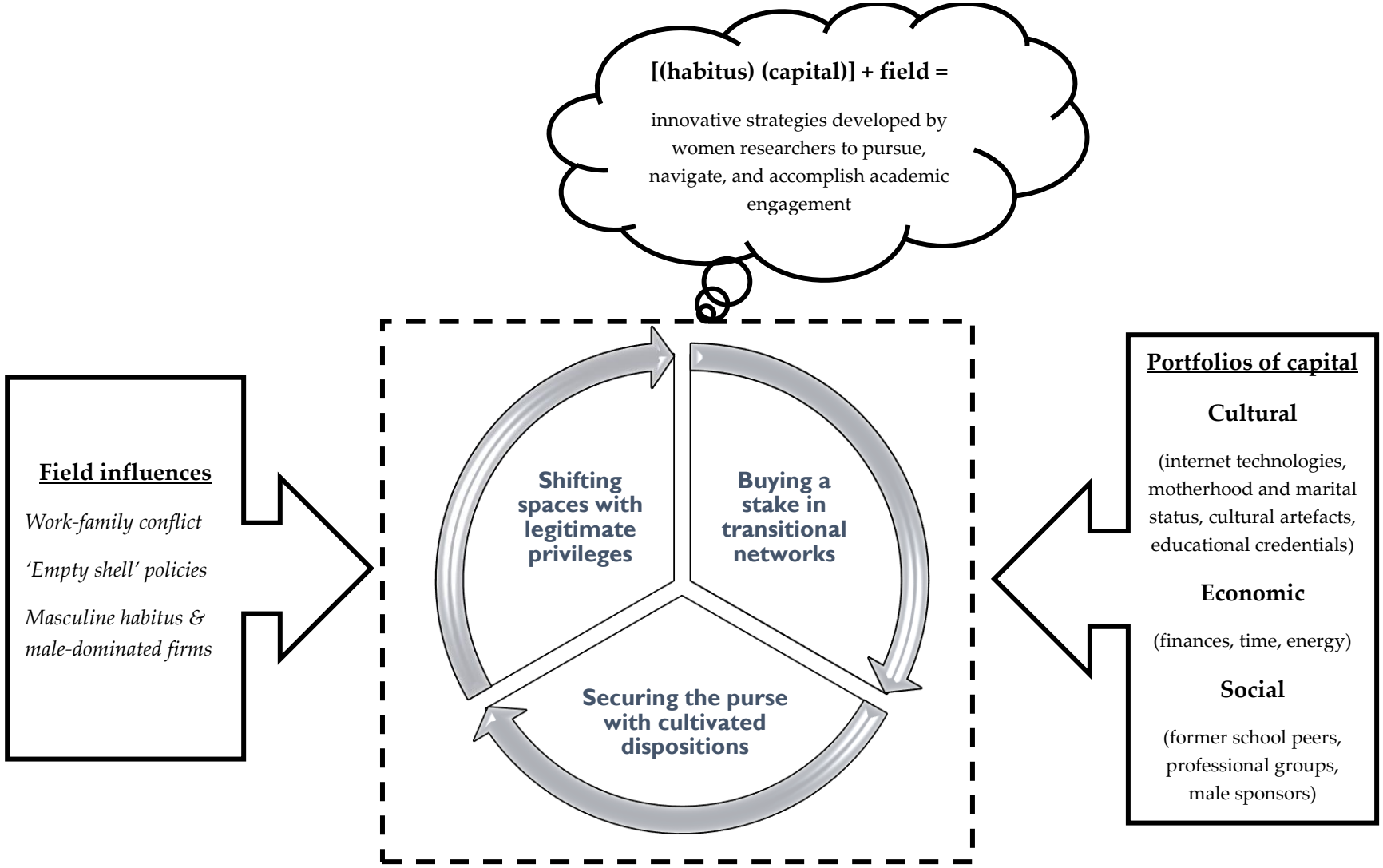
Second-order themes	Meanings of the strategies	Representative data
Aggregate theme: *"Shifting spaces with legitimate privileges"* **A. Second order themes:** - Sociocultural norms influencing who, where, and how to engage - Mobilising and deploying 'hidden' privileges to subvert career-restrictive barriers (e.g. work-family conflicts)	Bringing into play a set of entitlements to tackle complex and multifaceted entry problems	You would always have to factor family in when you make any decisions. So like you would want to do something during the weekends but then you have been away all through the week, weekends too you want to still work? No, you have to put it aside and then give family time (RS6, Ghana) As an individual, these African cultural values and norms have not affected me because I am divorced…So, I can independently make decisions without thinking that I am offending a husband (A5, Zambia)
Aggregate theme: *"Buying a stake in transitional networks"* **B. Second order themes** - Acquiring social capital through creative ways (e.g. gift-giving; portraying humility)	Recognising and investing in key networks to overcome weak institutional support structures and progress with collaborative activities	You know some institutions you have to do favours for your [male] boss in order to be included in an activity (RS7, Malawi) You know when you are engaging with industry, they need to…know that you have competence and then you are associating with credible groups, because you know

- Selective positioning within networks for AE-relevant capital (e.g. titles, respect and credibility, male sponsors)		trust and credibility is what the industry kind of really looks out for (A11, Nigeria)
Aggregate theme: *"Securing the purse with cultivated dispositions"* **C. Second order themes:** - Male dominance of firms, perceiving male hostility - Learning dispositions and behaviours that appeal to the masculine habitus of firms (e.g. emotional resilience, confidence) - Speaking 'industry language' to foster collaboration	Adoption of languages, dispositions, and behaviours to build, maintain, and accrue rewards from attained collaboration opportunities	Because many women are associated with being sympathised, as you are going to an industrial place which is male dominant, you have to…go with a face whereby you don't need to be sympathised with (RS4, Malawi) I have learnt to talk [industry's] language…I now understand the way they do things…So, I am not just coming there and then just saying whatever it is that I need. I say something that I know will appeal to them without deceiving them (A21, Botswana)

5.5 Findings

The findings indicate three interrelated strategies utilised by women researchers pursuing AE in the context of SSA: *shifting spaces with legitimate privileges; buying a stake in transitional networks;* and *securing the purse with cultivated dispositions*, as demonstrated in Figure 5.1 below. As Figure 4.1 highlights, the dotted square lines represent the multiple fields and nested sub-fields (constituting the broader social context) in which African women researchers are embedded. The first theme considers how women researchers draw on certain 'hidden' yet valuable social privileges to access the field of AE and establish a position for themselves. The transitional network investments were identified as a form of bartering system where the women advanced their participation in AE by trading in personal resources for those within groups. While networks did facilitate the women's participation, it did not fully secure their position and rewards from AE. An add-on strategy that was found to be utilised by the women, was adopting languages, dispositions, and behaviours, that could help them secure the embedded resources within collaborations. In what follows, the paper presents the fine details of these strategies with illustrative quotes. The overarching objective of the findings is to demonstrate the dynamic ways in which AE is accomplished by women researchers in SSA; contexts which are characterised by weak institutions and gendered socio-cultural and religious persuasions.

Figure 5.1: A theoretical model illustrating the constraints and possibilities of AE accomplishment among women researchers in SSA



5.5.1 Shifting spaces with legitimate privileges

The challenging task of creating a 'balance' between their home and work activities was manifest in the women's reflections on the reciprocal relationship between these two social institutions. 'Shifting spaces with legitimate privileges' as used in organising the findings refers to the women's strategies that addresses their work-family conflicts and ensures their participation in AE simultaneously. For example, RS9 recounted how she publicly unveiled her dual work-family identities on LinkedIn, to pre-emptively overcome the obstacles that are typical for Muslim women professionals:

> So, I am a woman and I am also a lady in the Muslim veil; I wear the hijab. So that would mean having to sort out two stereotypes: "Oh she's a Muslim woman; she probably would be at home" …So one of the things that has helped me with the different clients that I meet is that they already have an idea of what I can do and the things I have been doing from LinkedIn. So, by the time they are connecting with me, they already have an idea of "Oh this is Dr [mentions name] (RS9, Nigeria)

The above illustrates how cultural symbols such as the veil can become a site of struggle and contestation for Muslim women because of conflicting interpretations. Though women generally experience discrimination in recruitment and selection in the workplace, the narrative above suggests that these biases may be severe for Muslim women due to negative stereotypes about their religious practices such as praying five times at work. As the quote highlights, wearing the hijab not only increases the visibility of Muslim women's identity in the workplace compared to Muslim men, but it also activates the social prejudice about their work reliability. However, by "chronicling the work [she does] and putting it on LinkedIn daily", RS9 leverages on the visibility and inclusivity of social media platforms as form of cultural capital to negotiate her identity as an unencumbered worker who has valuable skills and abilities to offer the academic field. While some of the women spoke about the restraints on their careers by the

structures and cultures of African families, others mentioned receiving some support from their families, which eased their burdens. Despite the support of her husband and domestic helper, A4 reflected on how she still felt disadvantaged in her career, due to controlling cultural attitudes within the social spaces where AE activities occur:

> You can imagine you have been invited for a conference and you are doing your part in that conference. You have prepared, you have worked hard and its only 2 days out of the 30 days that you are not at home, then somebody now questions that: "Ah your husband let you come here? Why did he let you come here? Who is taking care of him? Why are you not taking care of your child or children?" (A4, Zambia)

What we see here is a glimpse of how dominant career-restrictive cultural norms permeate into work-related settings to shape African women researchers' AE experiences. Like many of the married women and mothers in this study, A4 lamented on how gendered sociocultural assumptions and patriarchal discourses fuel unequal relationships between men and women at multiple levels of the African society. Although some of the participants mentioned that the direct participation of men in childcare has increased in SSA, their breadwinner role remains prime. Thus, there are still higher expectations for women to be more family-oriented than men. In terms of their occupation, it is socio-culturally expected that women will have nominal career aspirations and/or even grow their careers at a much slower pace than men, especially if their career pursuits might jeopardise the stability of their homes. Interestingly, the women in this study appeared unperturbed by the hegemonic image of the 'good' mother and wife that these cultural narratives bestowed upon them, as some provided examples of how they manoeuvred around their mobility constraints. A24, for example, spoke expressly on how she took her children to conferences to mediate the tension between work and family:

> Everywhere I go, I go with my children. If I am going for [name of professional group] meeting, I go with my children. I want them to be aware of what I am

> doing, I want them to be a part of what I am doing. Mummy is leaving the house for this conference, where is she going to? Come with me and see where I am going. (A24, Nigeria)

This woman offers an interesting ambiguity: she is ready to take on the feminised African academe, but chooses to pick the more esteemed path to achieve this ambition – the family path. Many of the participants articulated that marriage and motherhood are symbols of pride, dignity, and respect in many traditional African societies. Thus, "if you have all these [career] achievements and you are not married, you are not seen as a legitimate woman" (A1, Ghana) or could otherwise be "seen as a failure because you don't have children" (A16, Zambia). The implication here is that the 'respectability' of most women researchers in SSA greatly hinges on domesticity rather than occupational accomplishments (Skeggs, 1997). In this regard, "when a lady is a…*Dr Mrs* – a Dr who is not only reading your books but you are able to manage your family – you have that [higher] respect" (RS3, Ghana). The choice of A24 to engage her children in conferences is therefore a means of legitimating her womanhood to gain the respectability of a *Dr Mrs*, and also an implicit strategy of weakening the effect of social controlling attitudes. Once legitimated, respectability can become, in itself, a kind of symbolic capital that A24 may embody and convert into pension benefits from her children. Several of the women spoke of the limited social security programmes available for the elderly in most African societies, and how parents could earn such provisions from their adult children via debts of honour. The analysis further revealed that the symbolic value of respectability, also influenced the type of social spaces in which the women were willing to conduct their engagement activities:

> Most of the industry are male dominated. If you want to meet them, engage with them, they are not forthcoming to meet a woman like me whereas if it was man to man, they would maybe meet in a bar [which is] a place where I cannot go.

> But because its male-male they meet all over the place, in different types of setups its easy, but for me it has to be formal all the time. (RS10, Botswana)

The experience of RS10 is instructive, as she describes the interesting ways in which gendered sociocultural norms delineate *who, where, and how* African women researchers should participate in AE activities. This imposed socio-cultural restrictions on women is clearly a significant issue, especially since most firms are led by men, and therefore women researchers who intend to participate in AE activities must inevitably interact and network with men. To address this challenge, some of the women narrated how their association with professional groups allowed them to improve their work-family conflicts. As 11 explained:

> Women need to really network more, that's where the men beat us hands down because the men are able to go to the clubs and they interact, they go and play golf, they interact, but women will go to work and we come home to our families…That's why I like the professional associations because then it gives you a professional platform to network. (A23, Nigeria)

By virtue of their socialisation into specific positions in the family, workplace, and society, African women learn which capitals are required for accomplishing tasks in the different fields. With this knowledge, women attempt to reconcile their social positioning with the demands of their jobs, including being calculating with their networking patterns. The tactical positioning of African women researchers in specific groups as finely articulated by A23, offers an entry point to discuss in the next section, their 'ideal' social networks.

5.5.2 Buying a stake in transitional networks

Investing in transitional networks was one of the creative strategies that African women researchers devised to facilitate their participation in AE. This strategy was specifically driven by a number of inherent features in their universities' structure, culture, policies, and governance. First, and importantly, the data indicates that many African universities grapple

with institutional weaknesses and inadequate policies that hinder interactions between academia and other external stakeholders, especially industry. While some universities have espoused AE in their policies, with complementary memorandums of understanding (MoU), many of these policies are superficial, and therefore in actual practice, AE is weak and greatly driven by personal initiatives. The argument, in short, is that many of the policies envisioned to promote AE are 'empty shells' (Hoque & Noon, 2004) which cannot meaningfully support those aiming to pursue this venture. This was summarised by a participant who bemoaned how collaboration opportunities are stifled by the university leadership's lip service to policies and a lack of clear procedures from existing policies:

> The institution in their policy says it supports industry collaboration, but the active role that should be played by the institution is still what is lacking. The policy is there. Of course, if you identify some industry you would want to collaborate with, they will write you those letters and they will give you the support, but the 'go-get-it' is not there. (A25, Kenya)

Without established structures to 'go-get' AE opportunities, the findings reveal that a combination of economic, cultural, and social capital, may have functioned to bolster the women's participation. As the following reveals:

> We do have a business development department which specifically looks at some of these collaborations with industry…One of their challenges…is that when those people are going to look for these opportunities, [the industry partners] don't know them…These are [my] peers, we work in the same scientific field. When I am looking for an opportunity, when they see my face: "Oh A10, I was at school with A10" …So I can easily get the opportunity just over a phone call. (A10, Zambia)

Basically, this quote underlines that "who you know and who knows you still often trumps what you know and affects how much you can achieve" (Ranga & Etzkowitz, 2010, p. 4) in the AE field in SSA. Highlighted in the above is the linkage between cultural capital and the

(re)production of social capital; wherein the force of cultural capital is seen in how opportunities for participating in AE activities are weighted differently between A10 and the business development team because of their different educational backgrounds. The use of informal recruitment methods to secure opportunities by A10 suggests that the AE field is stratified vis-à-vis the range and types of social capital held by different people. Indeed, it was found that some women did not possess A10's type of social capital, and counterbalanced this disadvantage by selectively positioning themselves within invaluable social networks that either facilitated their acquaintance with industry clients or provided status markers (e.g. titles, respect, male sponsors, credibility) that aided leapfrogging into the AE field. As reflected in the following:

> The Council for Regulation of Engineering Practices in Nigeria (COREN) is the one in charge of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN). Every manufacturer is a member of MAN and it is COREN that is heading them, and I am a COREN certified engineer. So, when I step into the industry, the first thing I intimidate them with is: "I am a COREN certified engineer" and…I have my practicing license to 2023, I am not owing any money, so I am a very good engineer" and then…they say: "Okay what are your numbers?" and I just tell them. They browse it, they see my name…and say: "Okay madam, you can sit down and let's talk." There is a basis to talk. (A24, Nigeria)

From the above, one gets a sense that African women researchers recognise the competitiveness of the AE field, along with the entitlements and obligations linked to playing this game. On the surface, this quote appears to simply suggest the relevance of social capital to women's participation. Yet, upon closer inspection, the knowledge and practical skills that A24 exerts to 'intimidate' and bargain with industry actors, highlights how cultural capital can be successfully acquire and sustain social capital. In the social spheres where AE materialises, cultural capital gives women researchers a sense of the rules of the game that is recognised and rewarded by institutional gatekeepers. Unveiled in the quote above is also an illustration of the

interchangeability of capital. It shows how securing the exclusivity of social connections not only involves 'buying' social capital with membership fees, but also how the "reproduction of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250). In simple terms, time and energy are both essential to developing social capital. In this regard, there were isolated instances where some of the women talked about not associating with professional bodies, owing to a lack of economic capital (e.g. finances, time and energy). As the following illustrates:

> A lot of the female architects are not even ready to join [professional associations], they are not even interested…they don't have time for talk-talk and chat-chat. (RS11, Ghana)

> I belong to an organisation but…I am trying to even come out because each time they are always talking about collecting money…Me I told them that I am not interested. (A7, Nigeria)

For women who are ambivalent about AE or do not want to participate in this field, the rule of 'buying a stake in transitional networks' is immaterial. For women who have intentions of participating, however, their commitment to this rule is substantial. Relatedly, A9 explained how she tactically invested her grant to gain access to her male supervisor's research network:

> I received my own grant in my first year [at my institution] and I didn't know people personally. That was the challenging part. So I had to go with [my male] supervisor because your supervisor is the person who is going to evaluate [your] performance…If it's your peers, you can choose to not establish relationships…and it has worked well for me by the way. He has also included me in his research work. (A9, Botswana)

Several participants reflected that at the start of their careers, there were only a few female role models and/or mentors who could support them in learning and navigating the different spaces in academia. One participant explained that senior women researchers are still "[fighting their]

way into institutional networks even before [they] can start dragging another person into it" (A15, Nigeria). Understanding the relative position of women researchers to men, A9 deployed the act of gift-giving, which constitutes a particular form of symbolic violence, as the embedded reciprocity in this act imposes a form of domination over the recipient who misrecognises the economic reality of the exchange (Bourdieu, 1991). The ability to recognise and select influence targets within the organisationally specified authority structure, and performing the technically correct and contextually appropriate action of gift-giving, is a form of cultural capital that A9 has converted (consciously or otherwise) to accumulate social capital.

There was an acknowledgement that network membership alone is insufficient for women to fully participate and benefit from AE activities. Transitional network investments may be expedient for initial contact-building with prospective collaboration partners, and perhaps, for recruitment into collaborations. However, earning the embedded rewards in collaborations, required other strategies. The next section discusses the women's tactics for accomplishing this deed.

5.5.3 Securing the purse with cultivated dispositions

A theme that threaded through the data was the male-dominance of firms, and the distinctive ways in which this organisational setting stimulates and rewards individuals' possessing a masculine habitus. The women recognised that to gain greater rewards from investing their capitals while participating in AE activities, they also needed to develop a masculine habitus. The quote below accentuates firms as not only male-dominated and predisposed to masculine behavioural codes, but also financially powerful and biased towards women's competences:

> Industries are male-dominated because that's where the money is and where money is, that's where men are. So, there could be an attitude problem like:

> "What is this woman trying to tell us and all that?" or "Can these women think this way?" …There is always suspicions from men…Women can't do things; those are the stereotypes, and therefore, the practice is to ignore the idea. (A8, Kenya)

In this account, A8 appears to be describing the socio-cultural perceptions about women's inferior innovative tendencies and competences. More interesting is how she construes the perpetuation of male economic advantage, which can somewhat be related to women's caregiving role that reduces their full participation in occupational activities compared to men who are perceived as the breadwinners of their families. The cumulative disadvantages of this unequal household labour division are men's financial advantages over women. Two of the women who had experienced gender pay disparities in the AE activities they participated, explained how men's breadwinner role appeared to favour their reward deservingness:

> There was a time that I was collaborating with a certain institution…we were in a committee together and I remember we were getting allowances and…as the woman, I was given the least. I was angry, I left (laughs) [because] I was doing everything like everybody else so I didn't see why. (A22, Kenya)

> I was participating in a specific type of research on entrepreneurs and…each of us should have been compensated with 1600 dollars…but ask me what happened? I did the work, I wrote the report, I did everything and I got only 200 dollars while [the men] got 1600 dollars…when I probed [it was because I was a young woman]. (A4, Zambia)

There are several issues to unpick here. First, both A4 and A22's quotations highlight how the economic rewards in AE are gendered, with suggestions that women are salaried less simply because they are not men. The quote suggests that the perceptions that people tend to hold about men and women's competences in work-related contexts are often biased by gender status beliefs, which distinguishes men as more deserving of higher rewards than equivalent women. The physical manifestation of such stereotypic beliefs is the wage difference between

men and women researchers. This socio-cultural perception that women researchers should be remunerated less than men, regardless of their contribution, can potentially impact on their decision and motivation to engage in AE activities. Importantly, young women researchers may avoid participating in AE activities altogether, especially if they believe that their gender and age will continually undermine their efforts. The findings revealed that women's ability to (equally) accumulate economic capital is often grounded in their enactment of an appropriate habitus and particular dispositions, as well as depended on a number of processes:

> Sometimes, there are people whom I feel their confidence level in me is too low. So, I invite them to my house…It's a three-bedroom house and has virtually everything, but at the same time, it is tiny…By the time I take you on a tour around my house, you will sit down and then reflect: "No, this lady can do this job." You sometimes have to set an example for them to see what you are capable of, if not the society will continue to see you in that light: "You can't do it [because you are] a female, but when they visualise it and then talk to you, their confidence level goes up. (RS11, Ghana)

Like RS9, whose narrative was previously discussed, RS11 sought an unconventional solution. Instead of being passive approach toward the acquisition of AE opportunities, she built a model house to communicate her potentials to prospective partners. Underpinned in this narrative is the fact that, the ability of women researchers to gain advantages in AE may not necessarily be about having an extensive amount of cultural capital, but being able to carefully and effectively utilise it. Arguably, African men researchers, who, by their position in industry and the society in general, may not need much cultural capital as much as do women. For women, however, being able to appropriately use male-oriented communication styles, was necessary for them to actively participate in and benefit from AE activities. On a slightly different bent, RS4 noted that demonstrating masculine dispositions affirms a woman's 'fit' for this field:

> [Try] to make sure that you are not emotional when you go to such [male-dominated] places because most definitely they will play with your feelings.

> They will use inappropriate words just to trigger you and if you are not okay you will end up like lashing on them instead of calming the situation down and say: "Oh yea we have joked about this issue, its fine, lets now go back to business." (RS4, Malawi)

This quote highlights how women's ability to experience and/or display certain expected emotions can increase their chances of entering and remaining in the masculinist field of AE. As RS4 suggests, successfully blending into this masculine field involves inculcating masculine cultural dispositions and validating these through a performance. In other words, women researchers must have the ability to receive and internalise the culture of hostility that masculinist firms transmit and reward. This assertion is exemplified by A24, who reflected on how stepping outside of the masculine behavioural scripts of industry to exhibit normative feminine attributes, indirectly puts a woman's social and economic capital at risk:

> Most firms are male-led…and you know, men are characterised with confidence, boldness…with negotiation power. God just gave it to them…So when you are going there, you need to arm yourself with all these tools…and when they see that you can match them one-on-one, they listen to you. But when they see that you cannot match them, they rubbish you and refer you somewhere else (A24, Nigeria)

Reflected in this quote is how the habitus unconsciously shapes behaviour, without necessarily assessing the appropriateness of women's choices and practices. Ironically, A24 suggests that masculine qualities are God-given and cannot be emulated, but again, countersigns that learning these 'natural' characteristics to impersonate men can be advantageous. It is interesting that A24's description of men and women's behaviours and leadership characteristics is centred around Christian religious principles, showing the fine link between the women's cultivated dispositions (i.e. worldview, schema of thinking) and socialisation processes. In SSA, Christianity originated from colonialism (Otuo et al., 2022), and the Bible recognises women as subordinate to men in God's hierarchical structuring, and therefore

occupy a subservient position to them (Bawa, 2019). To this end, much of the decision of women researchers in SSA to invest in linguistic styles, aesthetic preferences, and styles of interaction that are appreciated by male industry actors was greatly influenced by their positioning within the social hierarchy, and expectations that such cultural dispositions could increase their chances of success in their pursuit of the universities' third mission.

5.6 Discussion and conclusion

This paper explored the enterprising ways in which AE is accomplished by women researchers in SSA; an environment which is characterised by weak institutions and gendered socio-cultural and religious persuasions. Scholars have documented that AE in SSA is weak owing to systemic weaknesses and structural challenges within this context (Filippetti & Savona, 2017; Kruss et al., 2015). While it is well-known that researchers in SSA are severely constrained in their ability to participate in AE activities (Zavale & Langa, 2018), and women researchers are also more likely to experience gendered barriers than men (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021), accounts of their agency and ingenuity to still accomplish the universities' third mission amid these constraints remain elusive. Employing Bourdieu's (1990) concepts of capital, field, and habitus as a theoretical lens, this paper investigated the challenges of, and opportunities for, women researchers in SSA to participate in AE. Using an exploratory qualitative research approach, the paper captured three key innovative strategies that furthered the AE careers of women researchers in SSA; namely, *shifting spaces with legitimate privileges, buying a stake in transitional networks, and securing the purse with cultivated dispositions.* Illuminating AE in SSA as a gendered activity, this research casts new lights on how gendered barriers such as work-family conflicts, the masculinist habitus of firms, and 'empty shell' policies, might create differences in men and women researchers' participation in AE.

This research makes three key contributions to extant research on AE and higher education more broadly. First, by revealing how women researchers in SSA struggled to enter and progress in AE, this paper adds to the existing literature discussing gender inequalities in academia by explicating the gendered barriers that impede women researchers' progression in AE compared to men. The paper's specific focus on women researchers in SSA, provides new insights into the experiences of a growing population of researchers pursuing the third mission otherwise overlooked by extant research on AE (Perkmann et al., 2021; Zavale & Langa, 2018). Importantly, the transitional network investments made by women researchers in SSA, in order to gain access to industry partners illuminates understanding of how universities and firms in SSA interact, which remains under-conceptualised in the AE literature (Zavale & Langa, 2018).

Second, by drawing on Bourdieusian social theory and in-depth interviews to examine the gender dynamics in AE, this paper responds to the recent calls for research approaches that can deepen understanding of the observed patterns of inequality in the existing literature (Meng, 2016; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). Most critically, the theoretical approach employed in this paper not only strengthens the prevailing argument that AE is a gendered activity that presents different challenges and opportunities for men and women researchers (Tartari & Salter, 2015), but it also delineates the gendered features of this activity that shapes their participation differently. Explicitly, the paper underlines that AE is: (1) a social field that is characterised by gendered socio-cultural values, organisational norms and individuals' beliefs; (2) an activity that rewards individuals who align their gendered habitus and capitals to it; and (3) a social phenomenon that encourages the possession of masculine, rather than feminine characteristics.

Third, building on existing work on the role of social capital in AE (Meng, 2016; Whittington, 2018) and transcending it at critical points, this paper highlights important oversights in the AE literature regarding the gamut of capitals that facilitate individual participation in this activity.

The stories recounted by the women researchers in terms of their purposeful enactment of masculine dispositions for example, illustrates that although "one form of capital – social, cultural or economic – may be sufficient to enter" the field of AE, "further capitals [must] be acquired to retain and advance interests" (Randle et al., 2015, p. 603). Relatively, then, this paper's findings shift attention from the question of *whether* social capital underpins all successful collaborations to the question of *how*, or under *what* conditions do the different capitals develop and interconnect to shape individual participation in AE. Furthermore, the cognitive capacity of women researchers to manage the impediments to their participation in AE, serves as a corrective against the dominant narrative that has over-simplified understanding of their sense of agency to progress in this activity (Terosky et al., 2014).

The findings reported in this paper also hold some implications for practice. First, considering how women researchers in SSA were frustrated by the 'empty shell' policies in their institutions (Hoque & Noon, 2004), it is encouraged that governments and universities will desist from adopting one-size-fits-all approaches to implement AE activities, as these often fail to account for the specificities of different contexts (Kruss et al., 2012; Pugh et al., 2022). Given the weak institutions in SSA, such 'best practices' may only foster inequalities in higher education, especially since the SAPs severely affected the careers of African women researchers by first, burdening them with the patriarchal demands of being the primary caretakers at home (Forson et al., 2017), and then increasing their workload through the marketisation of universities (Zeleza, 2017). Second, in observing the significance of transitional networks to women researchers' participation in AE, it is recommended that the leadership of universities in SSA should aim to incorporate faculty members, especially women, as intermediaries in the development of institutional networks for AE. As an example, quotas could be reserved for faculty members to join technology transfer offices to help

increase the success of institutionally driven engagement activities. Such an approach will limit the failure of technology transfer offices to promote AE activities (Sinell et al., 2018).

Despite the theoretical and practical contributions of this paper, there are also limitations within it that provide further research opportunities. First, although the paper observed that the research participants' diversity along the lines of age, education, work organisations, and nationalities, might have significantly shaped their ability to mobilise resources and participate in AE activities, these concerns were outside the scope of this paper. Future research could therefore provide a fine-grained understanding of how these socio-demographic categories co-constitutively define the positionalities and identities of women researchers in SSA, and in turn, shapes their involvement in AE (Umeh et al., 2022). Second, the fascinating ways in which the women's strategies aligned with socio-cultural norms, draws particular attention to interesting questions about the cultural reproduction of social inequalities in academia (Randle et al., 2015). An important point of inquiry for future research involves examining whether and how the innovative strategies utilised by women researchers in SSA may re-inscribe inequalities in AE activities and in academia more broadly. Given the growing concerns about whether and how AE may exacerbate the situation of women in academia (Queirós et al., 2022; Tartari & Salter, 2015), such insights could address many of the pending questions on gender diversity in AE (Bastos et al., 2021).

In conclusion, this paper sought to advance understanding of the strategies employed by women researchers in developing contexts to pursue, navigate, and accomplish AE, notwithstanding working within weak institutions, as well as gendered, cultural, and religious constraints. Perhaps the most important contribution of this paper lies in its ability to capture how the contemporary turn to the topic of gender in the AE literature, promises compelling insights into the contributions of women researchers to the universities' third mission (Tartari & Salter, 2015), and a further opportunity for institutional comparison between developed and

developing countries (Perkmann et al., 2021). Overall, this paper's theorising of AE linking the African context and the Bourdieusian social theory, presents newer insights that inspire further research to advance our understanding of how the universities' third mission may exacerbate or improve the existing social inequalities within the broader society.

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Chapter 6 - A Symbolic Violence Approach to Gender Inequality in Academic Engagement

6.1 Chapter summary

How, and why, do women researchers' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in academic engagement (AE) come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers? Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence as a theoretical lens, and 36 in-depth qualitative interviews with women researchers in Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, and Botswana, this chapter explains how the neoliberal agenda of AE plays out as a gendered activity that affects women's full access and inclusion in academia, as well as curtail the achievement of gender equality goals. The analysis suggests that the struggle for positions, financial resources, and power within the academe, encourages women researchers to comply with, and/or conform to the dominant masculinist practices of higher education through three adaptive strategies – (1) "Adapting to the masculine culture," (2) "Contesting masculinity for legitimacy," and (3) "Appropriating femininity for legitimacy". The findings reveal that while these strategies facilitate women researchers' participation in AE activities, they also continually pushed them further back into their disadvantaged position in academia. In contributing to a growing interest in understanding the perpetuity of gender inequality within academia, the chapter presents a theoretical framework outlining how the neoliberal drive of AE (re)produces, sustains, and legitimises patterns of female disadvantages and male privileges, even amongst individuals who have no conscious desire to do so. The implications of the chapter's findings for theory and practice are also outlined.

6.2 Introduction

The growing calls for universities to extend their traditional functions of research and teaching to develop collaborations with non-academic organisations has directed scholarly attention toward identifying the ways in which this new mission is being accomplished (Perkmann et al., 2021; Queirós et al., 2022). Often brought into sharp focus is academic engagement (AE), which has been identified as a significant mechanism for knowledge and technology exchanges between universities and other stakeholders including governments, firms, and local communities (Perkmann et al., 2021). The core value of AE is to establish the relevance of universities to society, and consequently, establish their legitimacy, reputation and continuous funding (Mendoza et al., 2020). As the study of AE has become more mainstream, studies have shown that its success largely depends on the individual actors who implement this activity, rather than on organisational processes (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021).

Accordingly, scholars have investigated the practice of AE from different standpoints and contexts (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021), examining how individual characteristics such as age, scientific discipline, seniority and gender, influence the ways in which academics engage with their non-academic partners (Perkmann et al., 2021; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). Of the different individual characteristics, however, gender has received much attention in the AE literature, following preliminary findings on differences between men and women academics. Employing tokenism theory, for example, Tartari and Salter (2015) show how the masculine culture and structure of universities impede women's participation in AE activities within the UK context. Meng (2016) makes similar observations in the US, although the study links the gender gap to stereotypes and prejudices about women researchers' capability and suitability for AE. Following another study in the UK, Abreu and Grinevich (2017) conclude that the gender divide is partly the result of women's conscious choices and attempts to improve their

participation in AE activities, and therefore, the disparity may not necessarily close once the obstacles affecting them are removed.

Despite the existing literature being replete of studies on the challenges affecting women academics' experiences of AE, research to date has failed to explicate first, what triggers the (un)conscious choices of women academics that hinder their access and inclusion in academia; and second, identify how these (un)conscious choices perpetuate gender inequality in AE. More specifically, there is limited knowledge on how and why there is the existential threats of a widening gender gap regardless of the numerous interventions designed to achieve gender equality in AE. Hence, this study seeks to address the following research question: *how, and why, do women academics' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers?*

Our aim in this paper is to show how the efforts made by women academics to break free from systemic constraints in the academe and in the spheres of life where AE activities occur, symbolically perpetuate their situated challenges, as they continue to play by the already existing rules of the game within these spaces, and the power relations contained therein. We specifically argue that the gender gap in AE is upheld by several symbolic mechanisms of continuity within academia (Gander, 2019; van den Brink & Benschop, 2012), including the "masculinised stereotype of the 'ideal' scientist that [sits] in tension with the 'ideal' mother stereotype" (O'Connor, 2020, p. 217). Indeed, previous studies contain an abundance of observations on the normalisation of masculine behaviours and practices within academia that (un)intentionally marginalise and/or exclude women academics – ranging from the 'forgetting' of women's academic titles (Tsikata, 2007), devaluation of women's scientific contributions (O'Connor & O'Hagan, 2016), to the framing of women as the 'problem' in mentoring

programmes (Dashper, 2019) – which we argue are systemic barriers that effectively create and sustain gender inequality in AE through an act of symbolic violence.

In line with our objective, we draw on Bourdieu's (1990, 2001) concept of symbolic violence as a theoretical lens to show how the banal, everyday acts of face-to-face interactions by women academics to improve their participation in AE activities, converge into a steady stream of symbolically violent acts that continually pushes them further back into their disadvantaged position within academia, without this violence being recognised. Our paper also draws on qualitative data from 36 semi-structured interviews conducted with women researchers from six sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries – Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Botswana. Each of these informants were selected from these countries based on their participation in a Global Challenges Research Funded (GCRF) project that was designed to foster eco-innovation in Africa through capacity building and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Our contribution to the discourse on the gender gap in AE is in threefold. First, we make important theoretical contributions by complementing the extant emphasis on the theoretical relevance of Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence to the field of gender, work, and organisation (Gander, 2019; Yamak et al., 2016). Specifically, we offer richer insights into the different social contexts that shape the career decisions, desires and behaviours of women researchers in the workplace, and uncover the entrenched power structures weakening the achievement of gender equality in organisations. Second, in outlining how women's (un)conscious career choices vis-à-vis AE are influenced by their work environments and the struggle to survive in the masculine academe, we offer a more fine-grained analysis on the structure and agency dimensions of the gender gap. Although earlier studies suggest that the gender gap is shaped by both structural and agential factors, the dynamics between the two remain under-conceptualised in the AE literature, which we seek to address. Third, we develop and present a theoretical model that integrates the core tenets of symbolic violence with distinct

dynamics of the empirical context to depict the process by which inequalities and power relations are reproduced through women's strategic manoeuvring of systemic constraints, and specify the conditions under which these inequalities may be most likely to persist. This empirical characterisation addresses the much-needed response to scholarly calls (Queirós et al., 2022; Tartari & Salter, 2015) for more impact-driven research that provide incisive ways of encouraging AE activities without perpetuating gender inequality within higher education institutions (HEIs).

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. The succeeding section provides a brief review of the wide-ranging literature on gender issues within higher education and in AE activities. The section further sets out the rationale for proposing symbolic violence approach to investigating how gendered inequalities may play out in AE and HEIs. Next, we explain our methodology and present our findings. We discuss and conclude our study with some thoughts for future research and practice.

6.3 Gendering HEIs and AE: Emerging perspectives

Acker's (1990) seminal study on gendered organisations showed that when employers think of the 'ideal worker,' it is not a woman. Implicit in this understanding of organisations are questions such as: How do women navigate the expectations inherent in the 'ideal worker' and emphasise their competence? Do organisations end up adapting to women, or do women adapt to the masculine expectations it embodies? In the higher education context, past research suggests the latter rather than the former. The male-dominance of HEIs is a well-documented phenomenon, with the evidence showing that women continue to face systemic and symbolic barriers within academia that negatively impact on their careers (Bird, 2011; Kandlbinder, 2014; van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). HEIs are known to perpetuate patriarchal power

relations (Forson et al., 2017; Tsikata, 2007), and some scholars have argued that “unless women [can] adopt a masculine subject position, they [will be] exiled to the margins of [the] academe with their perspectives and contributions actively devalued (Fotaki, 2013, p. 1269).

Interestingly, to legitimate their own career successes, many women tend to accept how unfavourably the feminine is positioned by the masculine values and practices of HEIs (Cech & Blair-Loy, 2010; Woodhams et al., 2022). For example, in a study on HEIs in South Africa, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Uganda, Morley (2006) found that both women faculty and female students resented and resisted affirmative action programmes. Though instituted to redress gender inequity, the misogynist attitudes and symbolic imageries of women as having lower intellectual abilities than men, made the women themselves to oppose these programmes and rather deepen their belief in merit (Morley, 2006). Meritocracy, implicitly suggests that “the most talented and hard-working people get ahead; those who are poor must try harder, and when they do, the inequality gap will be closed” (Scully, 2002, p. 399). By developing a disposition that favours merit, women reinforce a general acceptance that the criteria and procedures used in HEIs to recruit and promote faculty members are objective and gender-neutral (Bird, 2011; Nielsen, 2016; O’Connor & O’Hagan, 2016). O’Meara (2015) argues that such a “positioning reinforces acceptance of the status quo and an implicit assumption that structural and organisational barriers are bearable if one simply works hard enough” (p. 354). However, the extent to which women academics may succeed through hard-work alone remains questionable, especially with merit attributed to men (Blackmore, 2011; Woodhams et al., 2022).

Prior research indicates that Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence is theoretically relevant in studying different social issues from a gendered perspective (Idahosa, 2020; Yamak et al., 2016), including the behaviour displayed by Morley's (2006) participants. According to van den Brink and Benschop (2012), Bourdieu was one of the first scholars to highlight the myths

of meritocracy and impartiality in academia. The university, in Bourdieu's view, "is a site of struggles for status, control, and valued forms of capital" (van den Brink & Benschop, 2012, p. 509). Since there is an unending competition among academics for various things, including funding, publications, and reputation, they are constantly strategising to implement actions that would increase their positions in the field and benefit their careers (O'Connor & O'Hagan, 2016; Tsaousi, 2020). To ensure that they are always better positioned than others in securing these rewards, Bourdieu (1990, 1994) argues that dominant agents in the academic field (typically men), strategise by imposing their *doxa* – which represents "their beliefs of 'how things should be' in terms of the rules of the game, what counts as capital, [and] the limits of the field" (Kloot, 2009, p. 472).

Interconnected to the realisation of the doxa is the *habitus*, which is a set of dispositions that people have developed over the course of their life through socialisation processes and their everyday experiences, that often guides their reasoning, perceptions and behaviours (Connolly & Healy, 2004). The habitus is powerful such that, whereas people always exist in more than one field, they continuously bring the same habitus to each *field*, which are the social spaces in which dominant and subordinate groups struggle for control – a kind of arena which can be likened to people playing a game that has specific field-rules (Bourdieu, 1990). Possessing the specific type(s) of *capital* which are esteemed in a given field, according to Bourdieu (1984), can define and differentiate one's relative power to others. In academia, Bourdieu identifies two main forms of capital which are significant for career success: the first is intellectual capital, which can be distinguished as an individual's scholarly expertise and their reputation in and outside of the academic community; and the second is academic capital, which symbolises an individual's hierarchical control of a specific department or the entire university (Rowlands, 2018). In Bourdieu's framework, for example, intellectual capital is a form of symbolic violence that "can only be exerted on a person predisposed (in [their] habitus) to feel

it" as significant for their career success in academia, because "others will [and can] ignore it" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 51). Using a Bourdieusian approach to analyse and interrogate Morley's (2006) participants' shift toward meritocracy, it becomes more explicit as a facet of "symbolic violence which the habitus, created by and creating the field, entrenches and reproduces" (Gander, 2019, p. 110). Symbolic violence manifests itself through the distinctive ways in which particular groups of people come to accept and internalise certain norms and values which subordinate them, and thereby intentionally or unintentionally contribute to their own subordination (Connolly & Healy, 2004). According to Krais (2006), a key feature of symbolic violence is how it often "precedes the interactions in which it is manifested" and how "by incorporating the established order, the oppressed, in this case women, cannot but identify themselves as inferior subjects" (p. 122).

The Bourdieusian feminist literature has shown that in their lifetime, women and men will internalise different gendered discourses and related expectations, which will guide their choices, aspirations and dispositions in everyday life (Gander, 2019; Yamak et al., 2016). In recent times, one of such gendered discourses is academic engagement (AE), which refers to the collaborative relationships between academics and non-academic actors that are centred around knowledge and technology exchanges (Mendoza et al., 2020; Perkamnn et al., 2021). These collaborative relationships can either be formal (e.g. consulting, joint research projects) or informal (e.g. networking) (Perkamnn et al., 2021). Offering a radically new way of evaluating career success in academia, AE reflects the current shift toward the corporatisation and marketisation of HEIs which appears to have increased neoliberal meritocracy amongst academics, encouraging them to not only be individualistic, but also enterprising, self-promoting, and pursuing competitive success for positions and funding (Blackmore, 2011; Mavin & Yusupova, 2022). The core idea of AE is for universities to demonstrate their societal impact by fostering links with knowledge users such as industry, firms, and governments

(Mendoza et al., 2020). In this vein, a considerable body of evidence shows that women academics find it difficult to compete fully and equally with men for job positions within the field of AE (Meng, 2016; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015). The challenges for women to develop successful careers in AE has been linked to several factors, including a hostile and unreceptive industrial culture in science and technology (Tartari & Salter, 2015), a lack of access to critical resources like networks (Meng, 2016), gender-segregation in the labour market, patriarchal cultures, and gendered division of labour (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017). These gendered subtleties, it is argued, do not deter women from partaking in AE, but rather establish higher participation costs for them compared to their male colleagues (Perkmann et al., 2021).

Recently, a growing body of scholarly work has sought to extend our understanding of how women exclude themselves and/or become excluded from AE activities, and the significant role of HEIs in improving women's participation in AE activities (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Tartari & Salter, 2015). This literature suggests that diversity within HEIs, especially the inclusion of more women in its leadership and management, will make it easier for women academics to identify potential female mentors and role models who can encourage and support their participation in AE activities (Perkmann et al., 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015). Although there is evidence to show that women academics have a sense of agency and can advance their careers in the absence of institutional support structures (O'Meara, 2015; Forson et al., 2017), the contemporary discourse on the gender gap lacks any recognition of how women academics strategically manoeuvre around the constraints they face to still participate in AE activities such as delivering speeches at conferences organised by industry actors. For example, Tartari and Salter's (2015) seminal study on the gender gap in AE does not reveal how women academics in the UK managed to gain access to and engage with useful and valuable industry contacts, despite their exclusion from the 'Kula rings of power' – which represents the social

networks that systematically privilege men in developing and exchanging career-related resources, knowledge and reputation.

Overall, our theoretical discussion illustrates that very little is known about the efforts made by women academics to negotiate mutually productive exchanges with their engagement partners, and more importantly, the gendered implications of their actions. Such knowledge gaps draw attention to the need for a more fine-grained analysis of the gender divide within AE, so that the circumstances of women academics can be improved. For example, elsewhere, van den Brink and Benschop (2012) and Dashper (2019) have argued against focusing on women as the solution to tackle gender inequality in HEIs, as such women-focused approaches cannot distort the inherent gendered power relations between men and women. In fact, placing the onus on women, it is argued, is also encouraging them to develop strategies that collude with and oppose their own marginalisation (Fotaki, 2013; Gander, 2019).

Based on the above-mentioned gaps, we posit that African women represent an interesting group of academics to examine the emerging perspectives within the AE literature, particularly as they pursue this activity within contexts that are characterised by weak institutions and patriarchal structures (Forson et al., 2017; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021). Zavale and Schneijderberg (2021) found that because HEIs in SSA are financially constrained, the greater ambition of many African researchers when collaborating with external stakeholders is to obtain additional resources for their departments. Such structural challenges not only make it more difficult for African women to construct meaningful academic careers, but it also increases their predisposition to strategically manoeuvre around these barriers to get ahead, given the ongoing competition in their neoliberal patriarchal workplaces (Mavin & Yusupova, 2022). We explain our research methodology and data analysis in the section below.

6.4 Methodology

Data for this paper was drawn from a larger study of 36 African women academics and research scientists from six SSA countries: Botswana (*n* = 4), Ghana (*n* = 9), Malawi (*n* = 4), Nigeria (*n* = 8), Kenya (*n* = 7), and Zambia (*n* = 4). These participants were selected from countries which participated in a Global Challenges Research Funded (GCRF) project that was designed to foster eco-innovation in Africa through capacity building and interdisciplinary collaboration. The project specifically trained and supported researchers from these countries to work with, in and for their communities. The topics on which the project participants were trained on, ranged from knowledge exchange to entrepreneurship and innovation, which are deemed relevant to academia-industry-government collaborations. The project primarily aimed to address the United Nations (2015) sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially Goals 5 (Gender equality), 6 (Clean water and sanitation), and 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and 8 (Decent work and economic growth).

Given our objective to unveil the lived experiences of women researchers in SSA vis-à-vis their participation in AE activities, a qualitative research design was deemed appropriate for the study's purpose (Sweet, 2020). The broader study was specifically designed to focus on capturing the opportunities and challenges faced by women researchers in SSA, especially when engaging with external stakeholders such as governments and industry. Hence, we gave 'voice' to the narrative accounts of these women (Geddes et al., 2018), to unpack the complexity of AE and inform future action plans about its gendered dimension in the empirical context of SSA, which appears to have been overlooked in the ongoing scholarly and policy debates (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021). Participants were purposively selected for the study following three key criteria: (a) must be a female academic or research scientist (b) live and work in a public university or research institution in SSA and (c) must have had prior experience of AE projects. Thus, given the perceived cognisance of the project participants on

AE activities, the first set of 24 informants were recruited through the project. Additional 12 informants were enrolled through participant referrals and snowballing, many of whom were selected based on the evidence provided by previous informants (Geddes et al., 2018).

Since AE is still emergent in many African HEIs (Kruss et al., 2015), the inclusion of the non-project participants was useful in gaining richer insights on the significance of AE amongst a wider range of women researchers in SSA, beyond those involved in the project. Beyond this, an important consideration for the selected sample was diversity – in ethnicity, age, religion, marital and motherhood status, ranking, education, scientific disciplines, work setting, and varying levels and types of AE participation – to highlight their distinct individual experiences yet capture their shared experiences as African women researchers. Also, it is worth highlighting that many of the participants were from institutions and departments where women were less represented. So, while we recognise that women's participation in AE is domain specific, we focused on gaining insights into their gendered experiences in HEIs and with AE activities beyond their discipline-related experiences.

The first author proceeded to conduct semi-structured interviews with the informants, between May 2021 and March 2022, via Zoom and Microsoft Teams digital communication platforms, which was helpful in mitigating health related concerns imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews were all audio-recorded, lasted on average 50 minutes and transcribed verbatim within 24 hours after each interview. Generic pseudonyms such as 'Academic (A)', and 'Research Scientist (RS)' were used to represent each informant, followed by a specific numeral and their countries of origin (see Table 6.1). The interviews comprised of pre-defined questions on topics ranging from the participant's background, organisation, work, to their family context and involvement in AE activities. For example, some questions were framed as: *"How do you think being a woman affects your engagement with industry?", "how conscious would you say you are of your gender in the workplace?", "how do you think society views a*

female academic?". These set of questions were aimed at understanding the gendered experiences of the women vis-à-vis AE, as well as gender power relations at their workplaces, and societal perceptions of women academics in the African setting.

Considering the sensitive and personal nature of the interviews conducted, building high levels of trust with the participants was pertinent. The confidentiality assurances clause that was included in the research protocol was particularly useful here. Further rapport was built through the socio-collective identity that the first author shared with the participants, which allowed them to conveniently start-off narrating their gendered experiences. Probes were employed during the interviews to gain further clarification on specific points as required.

Table 6.1: Biographical sketch of participants

Pseudonym	Years of work	Positions	Field of specialisation	Country	Age	(Non)Project*
A1	10-15	Research Associate	Entrepreneurship	Ghana	39	Project
A2	> 20	Professor	Environmental Health and Sanitation	Ghana	67	Project
A3	10-15	Senior Lecturer	Food Science	Kenya	42	Project
A4	5-10	Lecturer	Economics	Zambia	33	Project
A5	5-10	Lecturer	Business Management	Zambia	64	Project
A6	>20	Lecturer	Biochemistry and Biotechnology	Kenya	59	Project
A7	10-15	Senior Lecturer	Agricultural Economics	Nigeria	51	Project
A8	>20	Associate Professor	Gender and Development Studies	Kenya	61	Project
A9	<5	Lecturer	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Botswana	42	Project
A10	10-15	Lecturer	Development Economics	Zambia	40	Project
A11	>20	Associate Professor	Chemistry	Nigeria	54	Project
A12	10-15	Senior Lecturer	Agricultural Communication	Nigeria	40	Project

A13	10-15	Tutorial Fellow	Mechanical Engineering	Kenya	38	Non-Project
A14	10-15	Senior Lecturer	Human Resource	Ghana	40	Non- Project
A15	<5	Lecturer	Oral literature	Nigeria	43	Project
A16	<5	Lecturer	Industrial Engineering	Zambia	32	Non-Project
A17	10-15	Lecturer	Mechatronic Engineering	Kenya	38	Non-Project
A18	10-15	Research Development Officer	Agricultural Economics	Malawi	37	Project
A19	5-10	Teaching Associate	Chemical Engineering	Botswana	32	Project
A20	10-15	Senior Lecturer	History	Nigeria	41	Non-Project
A21	5-10	Lecturer	Computer Science	Botswana	39	Project
A22	>20	Professor	Chemistry	Kenya	60	Project
A23	>20	Professor	Biotechnology	Nigeria	62	Non-Project
A24	5-10	Senior Lecturer	Industrial Engineering	Nigeria	48	Project
A25	>20	Senior Lecturer	Immunology	Kenya	55	Non-Project

RS1	5-10	Director of Research & Partnerships	Psychology	Botswana	44	Project
RS3	>20	Principal Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	50	Project
RS4	>5	Principal Officer	Political Science	Malawi	27	Non-Project
RS5	10-15	Senior Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	45	Non-Project
RS6	>5	Principal Technologist	Nutrition	Ghana	31	Non-Project
RS7	10-15	Chief Economist	Economics	Malawi	37	Non-Project
RS8	15-20	Senior Research Scientist	Food Science	Ghana	43	Non- Project
RS9	5-10	Research Scientist	Public Health	Nigeria	40	Project
RS10	10-15	Director of Research	Biology	Malawi	49	Project
RS11	10-15	Research Scientist	Architecture	Ghana	37	Project
RS12	5-10	Marketing Officer	Marketing	Ghana	46	Project

* Project refers to the project participants while non-project participants are those who were accessed through informant referrals.

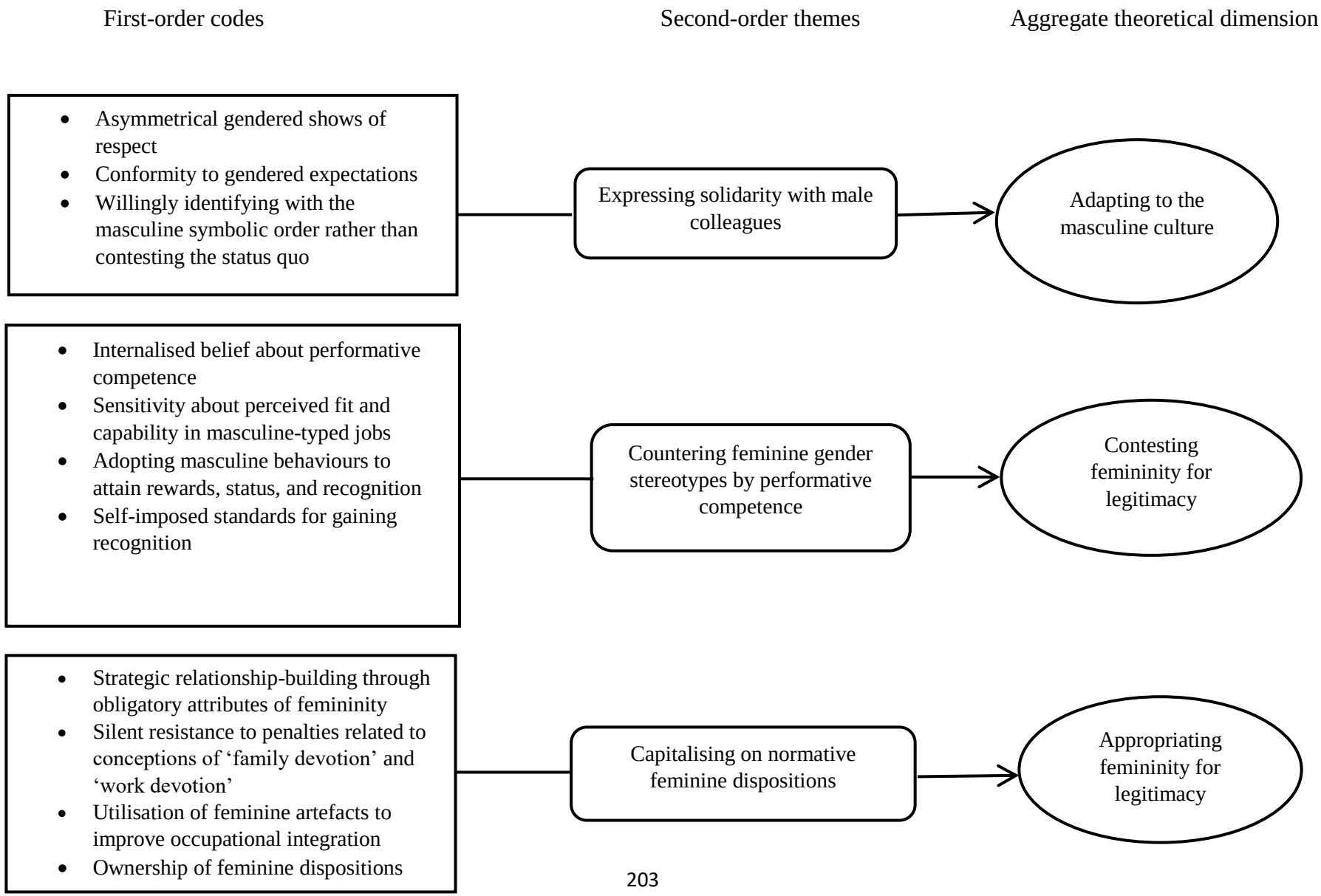
6.4.1 Data analysis

We adopted a thematic approach to analyse the transcribed data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which was uploaded into the NVivo 12 qualitative data analysis software to facilitate the coding process. Consistent with the principles of thematic analysis, our search for meaning and themes begun with iteratively reading the interview transcripts in an active way in order to familiarise ourselves with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To ensure consistency and precision in the analysis, the first author who independently coded the data, shared the initial descriptive codes with the other authors to discuss, revise and assign meaning and interpretation. For example, there was a code that the first author described as 'impression management' but as the analysis progressed and the authors discussed the descriptive codes in several meetings, it became clearer that the pattern identified across the participants' narratives well-reflected Bourdieu's (1990, 2001) notion of symbolic violence: while the women resisted the patriarchal norms and expectations within their work environments, they also subjected themselves to these standards. This phase was particularly relevant as the collective support of the other authors was critical to refining the analytical codes and ensuring reliability of the analysis.

In applying a Bourdieusian theoretical lens to our data, we focused on coding sections of the data that appeared relevant to the symbolic violence experiences of the women (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Next, we collated all the codes that had been generated from this process, and worked towards converting them into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). During this phase, our focus was on merging the codes that overlapped into a common theme, while discarding those that did not reflect the emerging themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). As part of revising the codes, we also checked for their fittingness to the data set. In the final phase of our data analysis, we redefined all the emergent themes, as well as categorised them by explaining what each represented, how they were interconnected, and the specific dimensions of the data that they captured (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Overall, the three themes that emerged and are presented in

the next section – *adapting to the masculine culture, contesting femininity for legitimacy, appropriating femininity for legitimacy* – generally capture the paradox that characterises the social spheres in which women researchers operate, as well as their practices in manoeuvring around these settings to advance their careers. Importantly, while reference was made to the literature frequently during the coding and active reading phase to account for all dimensions of interest, we also remained open to previously unreported, newly discoverable phenomena. For example, whilst the theme related to the women's adjustment to the masculine culture of HEIs was more concept-driven, the themes on women manipulating normative feminine qualities to enhance their careers, emerged more directly from the data. Figure 6.1 depicts the data structure of our research and Figures 6.2 – 6.3 show how our data analysis progressed from raw data quotes into first-order codes, second-order themes, and subsequently, our overarching aggregate theoretical dimensions.

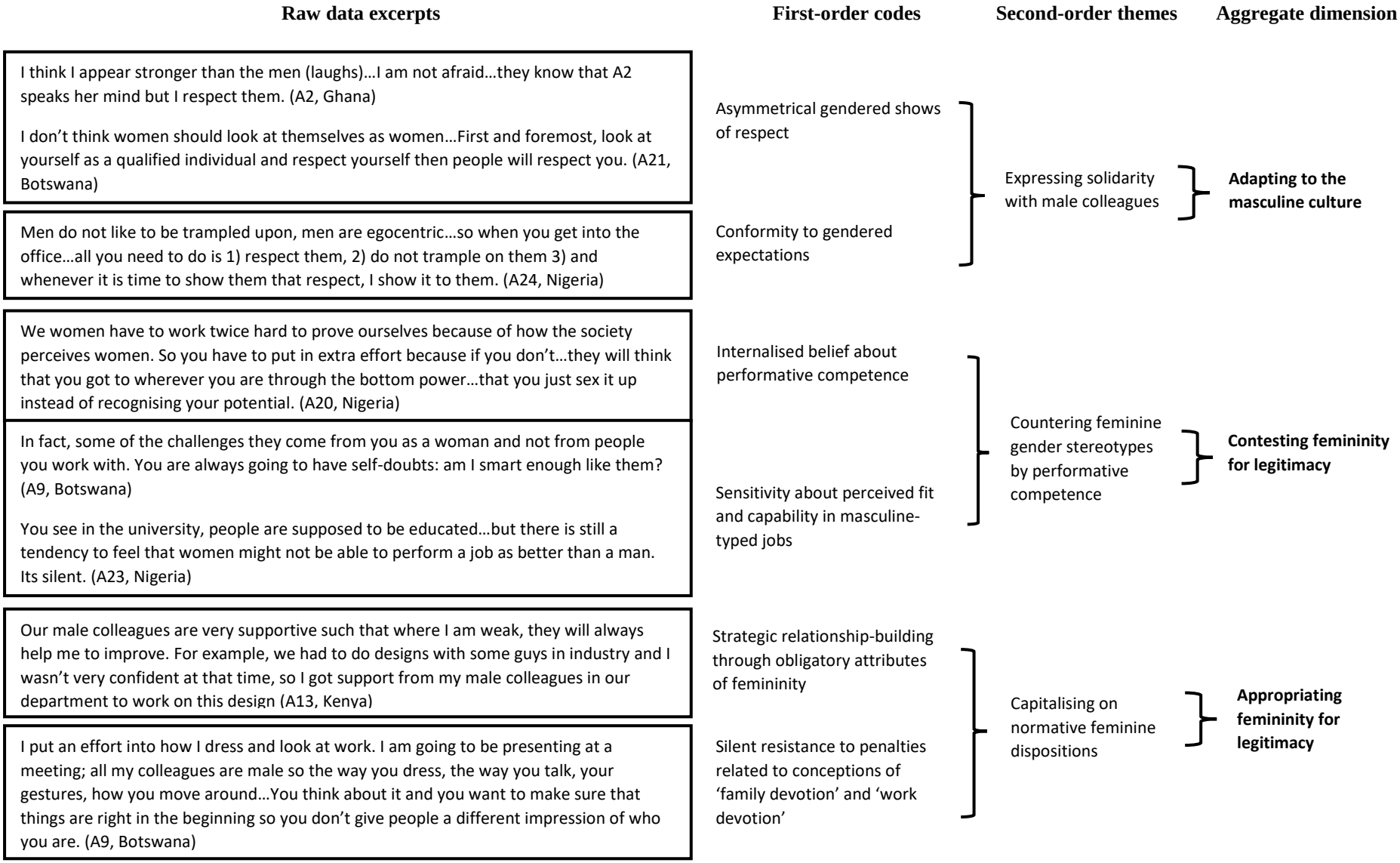
Figure 6.1: Overview of data analysis



6.5 Research Findings

Organised around three key themes, the succeeding section presents a discussion of how and why women academics' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE, reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers. The first theme is what we refer to as 'adapting to the masculine culture,' represents the willingness of women academics to identify with, rather than challenge the masculine symbolic order of the academe; the second is their dispositions of 'contesting femininity for legitimacy' by adopting masculine styles of behaviour in order to be regarded, rewarded, and recognised; and finally, 'appropriating femininity for legitimacy,' which sheds light on the (dis)advantages arising from their ownership of feminine dispositions.

Figure 6.2: Illustrations of the data analysis process with data excerpts – 1



6.5.1 Adapting to the masculine culture

Despite being male-dominated spaces that are structured along masculine academic and professional cultures, universities have a strong reputation for being meritocratic institutions that promote diversity. The idea of academic freedom especially suggests that all members of this field are accepted alike. However, our data (see Figure 6.2) suggests that many African women researchers experience little of that freedom. Gender inequality in African HEIs manifests in different ways, including male hostility (A20, Nigeria), low recognition and devaluation of women's intellectual competence (A4, Zambia), deliberate restrictions on women's ascent to leadership positions (RS8, Ghana), and tokenism (A8, Kenya). A significant finding that emerged was how the cultural artefact of 'respect' had been converted into an arbitrary power relation to realise male domination. A24 described this succinctly:

> In my institution…I noticed that as a woman, if you are respectful and you know your *onion* – you are bright, you are intelligent, you can teach and not that you are struggling…the men will respect you, but in as much as they respect you, you should respect yourself and in respecting yourself, you should reciprocate by respecting them. (A24, Nigeria)

At first glance, the context described by A24 appears to promote collegiality, as both men and women are subjected to deferential behaviours. However, a close examination shows elements of patriarchy, which has been operationalised by the introduction of 'respect' as distinguishing of intellectually competent women. The notion of patriarchy becomes more discernible from the asymmetrical gendered shows of 'respect' by men, who expect to receive 'respect' from women without displaying intellectual competence like the latter. What the 'respect' metaphor adds to the picture of symbolic violence here is to highlight the gender identity of the *researcher* – a man – as it is women who must exhibit certain types of characteristics such as deference and intellectual competence to secure their positional and professional legitimacy. Nevertheless, by counting on women's inherent disposition to become reputable academics,

men successfully deactivate any potential risk of overt resistance to the arbitrary power relations in their subtle appeal for 'respect.' In this study, the degree to which the women tacitly accepted 'respect' as necessary for building and managing their professional legitimacy, modifying their appearance, behaviour, and willing their compliance without coercion, was the most striking. The extracts below illustrate the complicity of women:

> As a woman…at your workplace, you have to treat your [male] colleagues as colleagues and not lord it over them, respect them, and stay in love. (A2, Ghana)
>
> If you are going to bring irrelevant topics to what you wanted to say or present, that's when people start doubting your potential and maybe not respect you. (A9, Botswana)

These excerpts illustrate how the patriarchal imposition of 'respect' values acquire legitimacy and generates oppressive effects on women unwittingly. For example, A2 believes that women must embody love and refrain from virtues of dominance at the workplace. This complicity of A2 in the dominant culture of 'respect,' which is a form of acquiescence, becomes through the analytical lens of symbolic violence, an example of misrecognition. If the alternative of domination is subservience, then, A2 misrecognises that in accepting to not 'lord' over her male colleagues, she indirectly surrenders her leadership power and privileges as a woman. Discriminating against women for engaging in so-called 'irrelevant topics' as A9's quote also suggests, are conventional ways of male domination. This particular 'respect' discourse masks how the voices of women researchers are silenced in the social spaces of AE while reinforcing male privilege, hierarchy and power, simultaneously. Like A9, several of the participants were concerned with enacting specific images that aligned with the respected *African woman researcher,* drawing upon this image to navigate their workplaces and societies. In particular, the social approval, power, and career success that 'respect' could bestow on women researchers in SSA, was what greatly influenced many of the participants to subject themselves to this unrelated evaluation of their work and professional image:

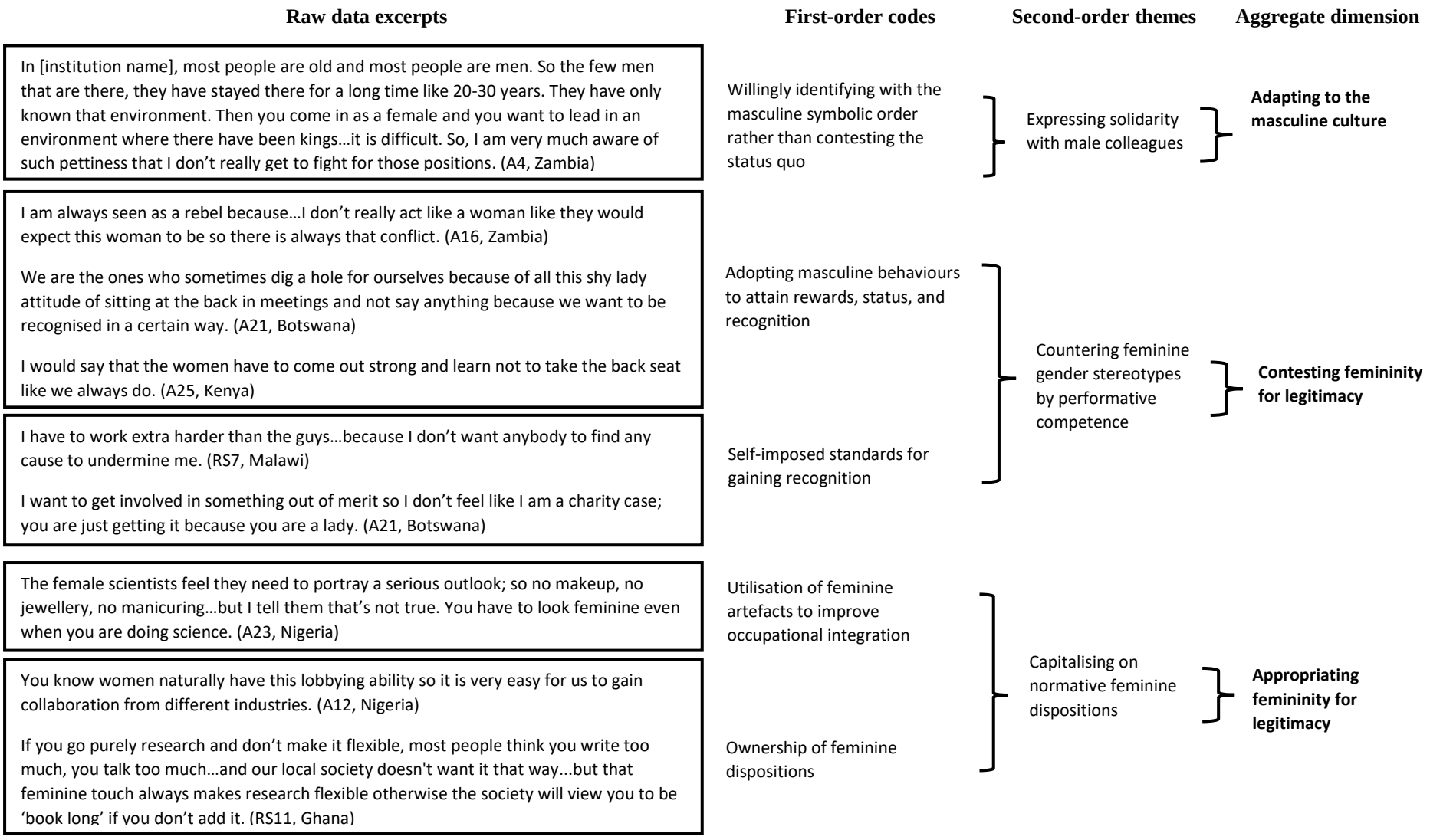
> If you are a professor like [female professor's name] and you are fighting with the workers and neighbours because their dog came to your compound, you lose all the respect (laughs). (A8, Kenya)

> There is a particular way that they want you to behave as a woman…They would want you to respect a man just because he is a man. As a married woman, they would not want you to be close to a man…when you [do], you will easily be misunderstood…this is the attitude that calls out for caution. (A12, Nigeria)

The desire and struggle to meet organisational expectations and live up to societal norms related to the respected *African woman researcher* as the above quotes highlight, are succinct illustrations of women's internalised acceptance of 'respect' as constitutive of intellectual capital, and thus, become complicit in legitimating this cultural arbitrary as just and reasonable. The narratives show that the cultural arbitrary of 'respect' not only undermines the autonomy of women researchers in the workplace, but those who violate this socio-cultural norm are viewed as non-conforming, and are most likely to be chastised by the conformists. Put simply, women who accept 'respect' as legitimate, do not only misrecognise its effect on their behaviours, but they also chastise women who 'disrespect' and consider this cultural arbitrary as wrong.

Arguably, then, African women researchers (the 'respectful and respected') who internalise the gendered values and norms of the academe are also unlikely to fault the process and practice of enacting gender-appropriate behaviours to obtain career opportunities, especially if these have accorded them privileges in the past. This assertion becomes more evident in the ensuing discussion, which unravels manifestations of women's quest for and efforts to attain legitimacy beyond the boundaries of academia, as they undertake AE activities.

Figure 6.3: Illustrations of the data analysis process with data excerpts – 2



6.5.2 Contesting femininity for legitimacy

Contesting status beliefs about femininity and age was a big theme in the data (see Figure 6.3), as participants shared their experiences of gender-biased performance evaluations, competence judgments, and reward deservingness. Men and masculinity were core to women's experiences in many narratives. In this regard, some participants cited exhibiting masculine characteristics and others, disembodying their gender identity for professional legitimacy. As A3 explained:

> People will always doubt you…Are you competent…Are you even a Professor? You are too young to be a Professor and you are a woman…You go to county governments, they are old men than you, your father and grandfathers, so they wonder, what are you going to tell them? But now, it is for you as a woman to do your thing, show them what you got, otherwise they would not listen to you. (A3, Kenya)

This quote illustrates how women, through anticipation, preconsciously accept male judgments about their competence and contribute to their own domination. According to A3, the *ideal African researcher* is 'an older man, with a beard, and a big stomach,' which makes all individuals who contradict this image, illegitimate. Forson et al. (2017) assert that because African societies "revere age maturity and correlate this with seniority and respect, it is difficult for young people to find a voice" (p. 16). Thus, at the intersection of femininity and age, young African women researchers, for example, experience a double disadvantage: they have to justify their professional selves before individuals and/or institutions that are heavily influenced by a patriarchal and ageist culture. To a degree, women may have the agency to reject this intellectual oppression. However, discourses around femininity/masculinity and women's own internalised status beliefs about competence and merit appear to be so powerful and normalised that resistance becomes rather difficult to articulate or enact. The outcome is women's belief in 'show them what you got' as the excerpt above captures – a subtle agenda that blends the search for legitimacy with performativity, in an attempt to positively influence

the behaviour of others (typically men) through social interaction. However, this strategy of contesting social perceptions about the *ideal African researcher* is a manifestation of symbolic violence in itself because women have also tacitly accepted that the only legitimate way for them to be accepted as researchers, is to conform to the attributes associated with this masculine image.

Several manifestations of this form of symbolic violence were identified among our participants, which they misrecognised as 'meeting and maintaining standards' in academia. These included, 'giving punchy introductions during presentations' (RS1, Botswana), 'creating an impressive LinkedIn profile' (RS9, Nigeria), 'providing timely responses to queries' (RS12, Ghana), 'crafting the most professional email' (A9, Botswana), but recurrently in 'being a hard worker' (A10, Zambia) or 'being excellent in terms of commitment and delivery' (A16, Zambia). As RS7 remarks:

> If I am given a job, I execute it to the best of my abilities. If I go to a meeting and presenting, I have all the facts. If they ask me questions, I answer all the questions…because I don't want to be there and not know, then they will just say: *oh, because it's a woman*. (RS7, Malawi)

The anxiety and self-consciousness that RS7 undergoes about her job performance as the above illustrates, is a classic visible manifestation of symbolic violence on women. The 'oh because it's a woman' highlights how RS7 perceives her intellectual competence to be inferior to that of men, which puts a burden on her to legitimate her abilities through performativity. The narratives of the participants showed a dominant belief in men's intellectual superiority by women themselves and men, which meant that women academics are never be able to comply with any evaluative criteria, and those who attempt compliance, have to forego time with their children, develop feelings of inadequacy and guilt, and physically and emotionally overburden themselves, as RS7 suffers. As organisations are neither meritocratic nor are individuals'

gender-neutral, then, this search for legitimacy in HEIs and as women researchers perform AE activities, is highly problematic. In that, the gendered perception about the intellectual inferiority of women academics, implicitly places a limitation on the rewards they can realise from 'show them what you got' strategies, notwithstanding their efforts.

Yet, the findings show that competence performativity continues to be promoted as 'a good thing' and rationalised on the grounds of competitive advantage. Senior women researchers particularly encourage and inculcate in (junior) women researchers this attitude of proving one's capability through gendered performance behaviours. As A23 articulates:

> Sometimes it's not deliberate [that women are overlooked], it's just that the women need to step out more, and that's what I [tell] this group I mentor. I tell them: "If you are appointed to a committee, please prepare before a meeting…just don't talk for the sake of talking but contribute [such] that you are seen…as someone who is competent. So that when there is an opportunity, you will come to mind." (A23, Nigeria)

The foregoing is a telling statement that represents three key elements of symbolic violence: pedagogy, misrecognition and complicity. As previously discussed, the ethos of 'meeting and maintaining standards' encourages hard work and toil, and this myth often points to accomplished women like A23 to suggest the possibilities of career advancement and institutional mobility through meritocracy. Paradoxically, A23's career success as a Professor legitimates her intrinsic cultural codes that women must 'prepare before a meeting' and should not 'talk for the sake of talking', but must rather make competent contributions if they are to merit job opportunities. The point here is not whether enacting these behaviours facilitated A23's career advancement, but the fact that she encourages other younger women (in this case, her mentees) to pursue such an approach, makes her a perpetrator of the regulatory practices within academia that creates disadvantages for women, knowingly or unknowingly. Clearly, A23's participation in the masculine academe, has made her habitus to undergo an unnoticed

adjustment that is reflective of the demands of this field. It is highly possible then that slowly and unconsciously, her mentees may substitute their cultural codes for hers, especially if they perceive that her career achievements rested on this strategy. As one junior researcher under mentoring told us:

> I had a mentor [who] told me that [she] messed [her] life by ignoring [her] social life…and got divorced by [her] husband…So she told me one thing that I am learning right now…whenever I feel like I am so much concentrated on my professional life, I try to go two steps backwards, just to accommodate my social life because no man is an island. (RS4, Malawi)

Conveying the power of socialisation processes such as mentoring to imprint on our bodies gendered values and expectations, RS4's disposition to take 'two steps backwards' underlines the authoritative positioning of female mentors and role models in (re)inscribing inequality through pedagogy. Instead of being trained to 'step out more' as A23 does with her mentees, RS4 is taught to create a 'good' work-life balance which prioritises family over career, if she intends to evade the social disapprovals that her mentor is undergoing as a divorcee in the African setting. The participants' narratives revealed that, compared to Western societies where marriage and bearing children within wedlock carry few social consequences, African women could garner respect from their maternal and marital statuses. Thus, many of our participants had a deep status consciousness in shouldering the burden of upholding their families together, often as a strategy to silence their critics and prove their worth as wives and mothers. The intriguing ways in which (junior) women researchers insentiently obey the advice of their mentors as observed with RS4, is in itself a form of symbolic violence, triggered by a "tacit and practical belief made possible by the habituation which arises from the training of the body" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 172). Through their pedagogic authority, senior women not only reduce the risk of resistance against the gender-biased values in academia, but also facilitate a

reproduction of a collective recognition and congruence of habitus amongst other women, activating a vicious cycle of competence performativity for career opportunities.

Consequently, while it is improbable that women academics may secure career opportunities by intensely preparing before engagement meetings, and/or overperforming to validate their competence in committees, they become complicit in believing that it is in their own self-interest to do so. This is understandable, but nonetheless, in doing so, women also privilege the *ideal researcher* as male, and misrecognise the fact that they engage with male-dominated committees and/or masculine organisations which are not value neutral. Indeed, we found evidence that contesting femininity by performing masculine characteristics does not automatically generate career opportunities for women academics, and thus, other strategies may be necessary. This is discussed in the following section.

6.5.3 Appropriating femininity for legitimacy

Going back to RS7's disposition to avoid criticism for being a woman, we observed another group of women who leveraged on their femininity for capital(s) and legitimacy. Instead of employing masculine qualities, these women embodied and enacted normative feminine values to manoeuvre around different gendered constraints. RS10, for example, talked about managing her emotions even when she felt verbally and sexually harassed in engagement meetings:

> You are meeting someone and they start giving out languages or comments that are not professional at all, but you have to strike a balance…don't give in, but at the same time, ensure that you are being professional…so that you can get [the conference resources that] you went there for…you just laugh it off other than being angry because you know that when you are angry, that is the end of the game. (RS10, Malawi)

The above illustrates the interplay between the structuring context of AE in SSA, and women's agency in making choices about their involvement. Offering a nuanced understanding of RS10's posture towards the game, explanations from one participant revealed that: "One of the motivation or incentive [for participating in AE] is that it leads to your promotion because the more you connect with industry or the more networks you have or collaborators, the more funding you bring, the more students you supervise, the more articles you produce" (A3, Kenya). With this caveat in mind, we are able to fully grasp RS10's decision to 'laugh it off other than being angry' – an action that is shaped by the wider social context in which she operates, recognising that securing resources could increase her chances of getting promoted. While hardly appearing to hold the necessary habitus for career success in academia, RS10 drew from her knowledge of the respected *African woman researcher* – one who does not fight back even when she is victimised – and made use of this cultural arbitrary to accomplish her goals of 'being professional' to get the conference resources, thus gaining agency. Nevertheless, the objective hardship of desiring career success and the subjective experience of managing emotions through self-censorship until the 'end of the game' as articulated by RS10, is a form of symbolic violence. RS10 is not only powerless in devising and implementing an appropriate strategy to counter the discrimination she faces, but she also appears to have a subjective commitment to upholding the socio-cultural rules of distinction that subjugate women and silences their voices in social spaces.

"Being, becoming, practising, and doing femininity are very different things for different women from different classes, 'races,' ages, and nations" (Skeggs, 2001, p. 297). Unlike RS10 who employed bodily manifestations of femininity to assert agency, RS11 utilised a more disembodied form. As RS11 explained:

> What happens in the institute is that [all the men paint their] rooms cream colour, but when I moved to the office, I painted it white…I got some wall

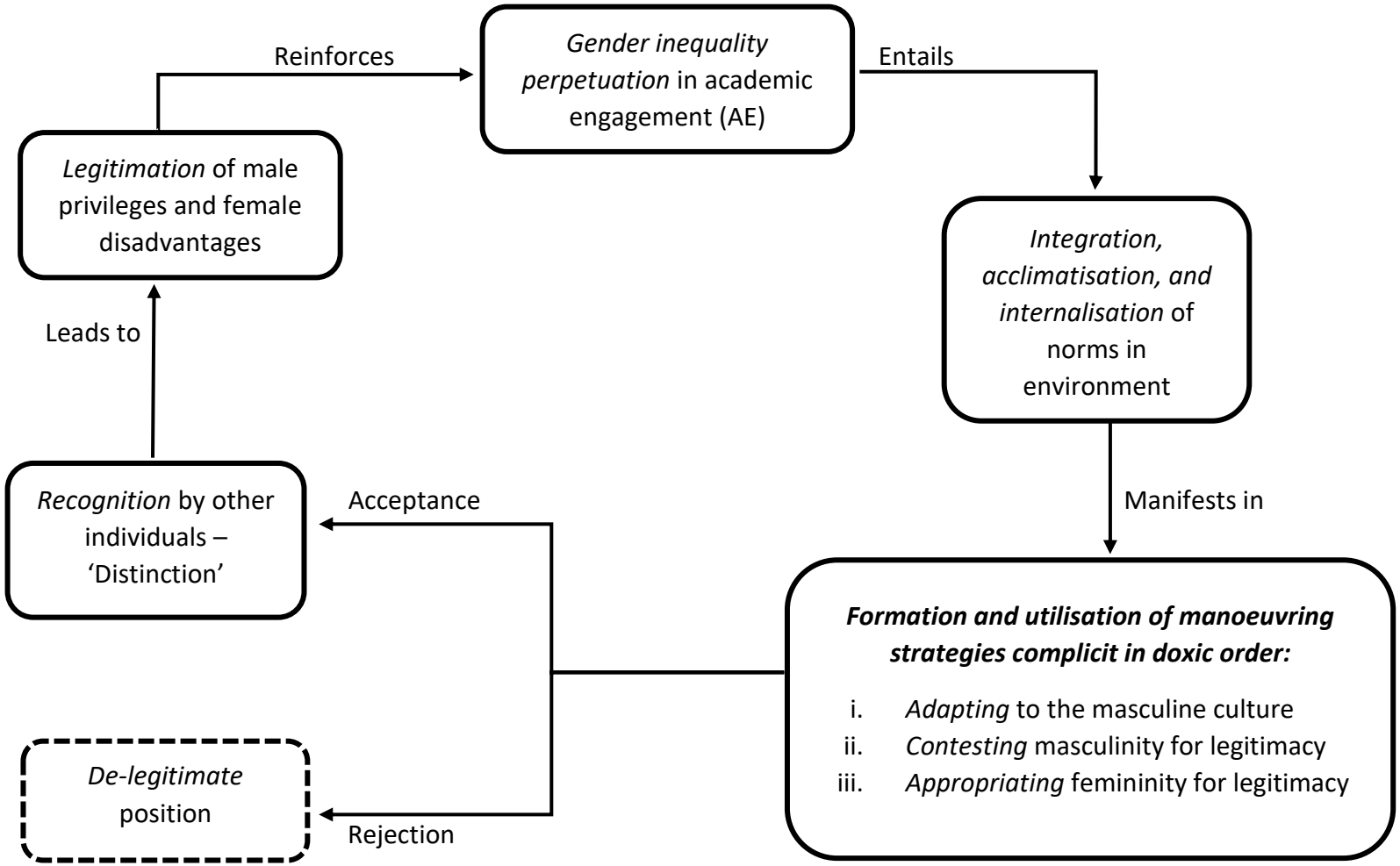
> hangings and stuff and I decorated my office…because I needed to make an impact there and I was not given the chance. So, in my office space where I am entitled to, I used that one to make that difference. (RS11, Ghana)

What emerges from the above is the gendered nature of the habitus, and how it guides women in perceiving and pursuing only some career choices, notwithstanding the range of possible options available. Similarly, it shows that for many women, their career choices depend largely on their repertoire of conceivable and practical options. RS11 mentioned experiencing motherhood penalties when she first joined her institution. As a mother with young children, her male colleagues repeatedly excluded her from field trips "because in their heads, you are a female and you can't be fast…and you can't [also] leave your kids in the house and go [on treks] with them and spend over a week…it's not a woman's thing" (RS11, Ghana). The penalties that RS11 experienced exemplify the coexistence and tension between normative expectations that mothers will and should always be on call for their children, and the normative belief of the 'ideal worker' as one unencumbered by responsibilities outside of work. Yet, because this is a tacit form of gendered discrimination, women may find it difficult to challenge. Determined to still 'make an impact' in the workplace and combat this symbolic violence, RS11 adopts the strategy of decorating her office space using feminine artefacts. Although originally intended to manage her distress at work, it produced unintended consequences, which she capitalised on to access the male-dominated institutional networks for resources, information, and AE opportunities:

> I remember the first time that the [male] director stepped into my office, he was like wow…and so, the next time they were doing the deputy director's office, he told them to come and see me…So it starts from that small corner where you are that nobody takes away from you, nobody even cares what you do in there. You do it, and then [the men] start gossiping…so when the jobs are coming, they start recognising that: *oh, you can do it.* (RS11, Ghana)

This example reflects the Bourdieusian feminist literature (e.g. Krais 2006; Yamak et al. 2016) which argues that women are not mere repositories of capital, but have their personal strategies for accumulating the different forms of capital. We observe how RS11 utilised her womanhood as a cultural resource to differentiate her abilities from that of her male colleagues, and to legitimate her professional competences. This strategy, while pertinent, also constitutes a form of symbolic violence across two dimensions. First, although RS11 recognises that the culture and structures of her organisation are disadvantageous to her career progression, she looks inwardly to resolve the motherhood-ideal worker tension, rather than pushing for all overall transformation of the underlying structures. Second, in mentioning that women must 'start from that small corner,' she implicitly accepts the dominant negative perceptions about the work commitment of academic mothers. The fact that she feels the need to demonstrate competence in order to build and sustain a reputation with her male colleagues, (un)intentionally naturalises the discourse on motherhood penalties and legitimates the domination system.

Figure 6.4: The cyclical process of gender inequality perpetuation in academic engagement



6.6 Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we examined the theoretical mechanism underlying the perpetuation of gender inequality within HEIs and in the relations and spheres of life where AE activities occur by examining the strategic manoeuvring practices of women academics. Empirically, we draw on the narratives of women academics from six SSA countries – Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, and Kenya. Emphasising the micro-interactions that characterise knowledge and technology exchanges between universities and non-academic organisations, our findings suggest that AE is a gendered activity that is characterised by a symbolic struggle for positions, financial resources, and power. The findings further reveal that the masculine nature of AE, and men's easy access to the social spaces where this activity occurs, significantly urges women academics to strategically manoeuvre within and around the systemic constraints impeding their progression. Importantly, we found that women academics utilised three manoeuvring strategies to advance their participation in AE activities, which they acquired through their embeddedness in the neoliberal patriarchal workplace. As shown in Figure 6.4, when put into action, these strategic manoeuvres also tacitly (re)produce, sustain, and legitimate patterns of male privileges and female disadvantages, even amongst individuals who have no conscious desire to do so, because primarily, women researchers are still playing by the masculinist virtues and culture in academia.

First, the framework highlights that gender inequality in AE is ubiquitous because it ultimately rests on one's integration, acclimatisation, and internalisation of the norms governing the gendered spaces of action. In other words, gender inequality in AE is hard to recognise because its gradual unfolding appears immaterial, and there is often a vague connection between women academics and the unreceptive attitudes, behaviours and cues within their environments, that undergird the inequality. The ambiguity inherent in the subtly expressed forms of gendered discrimination particularly leads women academics to misrecognise their mistreatment as an

outcome of their personal shortcomings, which causes them significant distress, undermines their confidence as well as performance. Consequently, many women academics self-judge, self-blame, and self-help themselves, developing complicit manoeuvring strategies around *Adapting to the masculine culture; Contesting masculinity for legitimacy; and Appropriating femininity for legitimacy*, to avoid being marginalised in their neoliberal patriarchal workplaces. The extent to which the self-presentation behaviours and manoeuvring strategies of women academics are accepted as legitimate or rejected, depends largely on whether or not they meet the expectations of their target audience. Since women academics are motivated to have others perceive them more positively, those who receive positive evaluations from their respective audience will continuously yearn to uphold these rewards, whilst those whose strategies are rejected work harder to achieve recognition. Over time, women internalise the image and strategies they are portraying, and what began as simple performances of managing people's impressions about them, becomes regulated in a way that strengthens the very power relations that dominate them.

Our theoretical framework extends the existing literature in several ways. First, in response to calls for more research on how to encourage AE without perpetuating inequalities (Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Queirós et al., 2022), our study unveils some important, yet overlooked aspects in the discourse on the gender gap, and provides a cause to rethink the primacy of agency in current explanations that ignore the role of social and symbolic structures on women academics' (un)conscious choices (O'Meara, 2015). In this regard, our paper addresses broader concerns within the field of gender, work, and organisation about the need to increasingly promote gender-inclusive strategies that tackle structural and cultural inequalities, rather than those that position women as deficient and place the responsibility on them to change. Second, while previous scholarship has emphasised the central role of female mentors as a strategy to mitigate the gender gap in AE (Sinell et al., 2018; Tartari & Salter, 2015), our study, which

draws on a Bourdieusian approach, reveals that successful women in male-dominated fields typically reinforce, rather than undermine the impediments to women's careers. Our findings show that senior women are sometimes constrained in their ability to tackle gender inequality because of how their affiliation with junior women faculty is misconstrued as an act of gender-based favouritism. Such misconceptions encourage senior women to reproduce the very 'glass ceilings' they have cracked by continuing the "discourse that women don't succeed because they 'don't play the career game' and therefore are not as qualified as men" (Gander, 2019, p. 119). Based on this finding, we follow van den Brink and Benschop (2012) to argue that while the approach of using female mentors to address gender equality may encourage women's participation in AE, "the mentors themselves have a lot to learn about the inclusion and support of female talent" in academia (p. 88). Significantly, organisations should provide the favourable conditions for long-tenured women academics to appropriately act as agents of change and gender equality advocates (Dashper, 2019).

Our research also has some practical implications. First, the promotion of AE in developing countries like SSA, remains highly contested because from one perspective, the successes of developed countries make policymakers to perceive AE as a desirable policy goal (Kruss et al., 2015). Other perceptions indicate that AE poses challenges for developing contexts, including (re)introducing new inequalities, undermining past equity gains, and denying the cultural specificity of women's experiences (Blackmore, 2011). Based on our findings on the challenges that (junior) women faculty experience at the intersection of gender, culture, and age, we argue that without proper structural guidance, the neoliberal drive of AE may only deepen existing inequalities. Most gender-inclusive policies are often targeted at the explicit forms of inequality, however as our findings highlight, employing equity policies like the affirmative action to fight against the explicit forms of inequalities, could subvert them into forms of symbolic violence. We thus support Pugh et al.'s (2022) assertion that, rather than

adopting a one-size fits-all approach in the promotion of AE activities, policy makers must recognise the contextual conditions of universities, and the deep-seated career-restrictive cultural norms and traditions within different societies that shape men and women's careers. We emphasise that understanding the durability of gender inequality in HEIs and AE, requires analysing how different inequality forms can co-exist to shape women researchers' careers. This is particularly important for SSA, where there is a tendency to adopt policies and models for AE that originated from a few elite American and British HEIs, while overlooking the region's development challenges (Kruss et al., 2015).

While this paper has deepened understanding of the gendered experiences of women researchers operating in contexts characterised by structural deficiencies, it has several limitations which also provide opportunities for future research. First, in studying the career stories of 36 women researchers who are living and working in the English-speaking parts of SSA, we have privileged their lived experiences over those in other parts of this region (Forson et al., 2017). As such, our findings cannot be generalised to the entire population of women researchers in the large and diverse region of SSA, especially those in the French-speaking countries. This paper therefore makes no claim to have presented the views of all African women researchers, and suggests for future research to use qualitative research methodologies to broaden our study to other African countries and developing contexts, across different HEIs, to reveal more interesting nuances about AE. Again, since academics are in an ongoing struggle for positions (Rowlands, 2018); prestige, distinction, and symbolic violence remains a constant presence in HEIs, and thus, research could examine who is able to accrue capital for AE and who is not, in addition to investigating who is being subordinated and why.

Overall, this study draws attention to the fact that, although the ongoing knowledge and technology exchanges between academics and non-academic organisations may establish the legitimacy of universities, this neoliberal activity also "shifts constellations of power and

conditions of inequality in higher education institutions, for both better and worse" (Zippel & Ferree, 2019, p. 806). In closing, we reiterate Kandlbinder's (2014) statement that indeed "for some there is disadvantage in being a woman researcher", however, our focus in "taking gender into consideration [in examining AE in SSA] is not a feminist position that attempts to counteract some perceived disadvantage in being a woman researcher" (p. 1564-71). Instead, this paper maps the contribution of women academics to the SDGs, especially Goal 4 (quality education).

6.7 References

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Chapter 7 - Discussion

7.1 Introduction

> No significant progress will be made on any of the SDGs if we exclude women's experiences, understandings and professional expertise (Hirsu et al., 2021, p. 64)

Contrary to the Millennium Development Goals which placed minimal focus on the relevant contributions of universities and firms towards the attainment of development outcomes, the SDGs identifies these two organisations as both targets in their own right, and as important players in the collective effort to achieve socio-economic, environmental and technological development (Eikelenboom & Long, 2022; Hirsu et al., 2021). However, as Chankseliani and McCowan (2021) point out, "the SDGs are not a problem-free, consensual package that universities [and businesses] can simply set their sights on and gather the political will and resources to achieve" (p. 2). The SDGs have a global and wide-ranging focus, and therefore, harnessing the potential of universities and business to support its achievement would require a direct engagement with the specific individuals who are experiencing the problems identified by the SDGs (Howard-Grenville et al., 2019). Based on this caveat, and seeking to understand the current situation of a particular group of individuals whose problems are widely captured in SDG5, the following research question inspired this thesis: *In the African patriarchal context, how can African women researchers participate in the evolving collaborative relationships between African universities and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development?*

As "business practices are at the heart of many of the complex issues captured by the SDGs" (Howard-Grenville et al., 2019, p. 358), this thesis begun addressing this research question by

first exploring how the corporate sustainability agendas of firms in Ghana, Mexico, South Africa, and Vietnam, are (un)successfully tackling the grand challenges of gender equality, climate change, democracy, and poverty respectively. The thesis then applied a Bourdieusian theoretical lens to examine how the pursuit of AE activities by women researchers in Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, and Botswana, directly and indirectly reflects the alignment and implementation efforts of African universities towards the achievement of the SDGs. Below is an elaboration of the findings challenge and extend existing theory, research, practice and policies that concern the role of business and universities in sustainable development. Table 7.1 also provides an overview of the findings.

7.2 Theoretical contributions

At the most general level, this thesis contributes to the contemporary evidence on the potential role and contributions of HEIs towards the attainment of the SDGs. A number of commentators have pointed to the notable absence of studies that provide an understanding of the link between the universities' core functions (i.e. research, teaching, and societal engagement activities) and the achievement of sustainable development (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Cottafava et al., 2022). The extent to which the policies, practices and systems of HEIs in developing countries can adequately support the achievement of the SDGs, as an empirical phenomenon in and of itself, is an important line of research that has been largely overlooked by the current literature (Unterhalter & Howell, 2021). By producing an account of the pursuit and accomplishment of AE activities among women researchers in SSA, this thesis contributes to recent research (e.g. Hirsu et al., 2021) that has started conceptualising the ways in which the engagement functions of HEIs are implicitly supporting the achievement of the SDGs.

Secondly, the study's findings concerning Olam International's training support to Ghanaian farmers, as well as the Consultative Business Movement's role in the transition of South Africa into a democracy also add to recent research (e.g. Fougère & Solitander, 2020; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019) which has started focusing on how businesses can generate environmental and social change beyond their economic efforts. Specifically, this thesis extends the business and management literature by enriching understanding of how businesses operating in the global South have explicitly utilised their corporate sustainability agendas to help tackle democracy (SDG16), poverty (SDG1), and climate change (SDG13) issues within these contexts. For democracy particularly, there are currently varied views on the political role and impact of companies (Fougère & Solitander, 2020; Frynas & Stephens, 2015). While some studies consider firms as capable of supporting governance issues (Reinecke & Donaghey, 2021; Scherer et al., 2016), others have argued that the unequal power dynamics that often exists between multinational companies and local communities can result in economic imperialism (Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Mäkinen & Kourula, 2012). In this regard, this study contributes to the emerging literature on political corporate sustainability by illustrating how companies can operate in ways compatible with democratic values, and positively transform the social settings in which their operations take place.

The insights described above lead to this study's third theoretical contribution. In response to the ongoing calls for research that refocuses attention on gender issues within the broader discipline of corporate sustainability and business ethics (Böhm et al., 2022; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019), this thesis contributes to feminist organisation perspectives by adding insights into how gender inequality at the workplace can undermine progression on SDG5. Benschop (2021) argues that the myths surrounding the impartiality of organisational structures and practices have caused many organisational theorists to overlook "the grand challenge of inequality" (p. 4), which concerns how inequalities within organisations and the broader society are created

and sustained through the unequal distribution of employment opportunities, security and income within organisations. Using the case of the maquiladora industry in Mexico, this thesis has shown that firms have an equally important sustainability goal of improving the wellbeing of their employees (Cornelius et al., 2008), along with their responsibility of improving the communities in which they operate (Discua Cruz, 2020; Rasche et al., 2017).

The next contribution of this thesis is to the literature on higher education, and lies in the study's application of Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic violence to advance understandings of the complexity and persistence of gender inequality in AE activities. The notion of symbolic violence specifically enables this study to present an analysis of the paradox in the strategies implemented by women academics to advance their careers. Whereas prior research on the gender gap in AE has provided "a good understanding of who suffers from bias and disadvantage in organisations, we have much less appreciation of the mechanisms that allow inequalities to persist" (Amis et al., 2020, p. 4). In this regard, this study provides insights into the cyclical process that creates and sustains the gender gap in AE by illustrating how gender stereotypes and the myth of meritocracy within organisations, influence women researchers to develop and implement career strategies that reflect descriptions of the (male) *ideal worker* (Acker, 1990), in order to enhance their recruitment into AE activities and their rewards obtained from participating in these activities.

Further, within the context of structure-agency research, this study's finding that women researchers in SSA can actively pursue AE activities amid the structural and cultural constraints within their environment is noteworthy. In particular, the findings add support to the notion of women's capacity to effectively act as agents of change in the management and organisation literature (Evetts, 2000; O'Meara, 2015) by presenting novel insights on the ingenuity of women researchers in SSA to accomplish the third mission of universities in environments mired with weak institutions and scarce resources for research and development (R&D).

Although previous studies have explored the challenges for researchers in SSA to undertake AE activities (Mihyo, 2013; Sá, 2015), it has yet to examine "the modes of interaction, the kind of knowledge and resources universities and firms' exchange, and the outcomes yielded from these processes" (Zavale & Langa, 2018, p. 42) because of the overreliance on macro-structural data (Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). By taking a micro-level perspective to investigate the pursuit of AE among women researchers in SSA and the innovative strategies complementing their accomplishment of this activity, this thesis addresses these conceptual deficiencies.

The final insight from this study builds on those described above. Specifically, the thesis responds to the call for more context-specific studies on AE (Kruss et al., 2015; Perkmann et al., 2021) by highlighting the structural and cultural forces within SSA that distinctively define AE within this region from those in developed contexts, thus providing opportunities for future comparative studies. While the social context has been acknowledged in the AE literature (Tartari & Salter, 2015), the explication of its influence on individual and institutional participation remains underexplored. Thus, this study broadens the scope of current inquiries into the context-specificity of AE by identifying how macro-structural factors such as culture, post(neo)colonialism, and religion, can create gender differences in men and women researchers' participation in SSA.

7.3 Policy and practical implications

Beyond the abovementioned theoretical contributions, this thesis has meaningful implications for organisations seeking to support the success of the SDGs, especially those concerning gender equity. It is believed that if leaders of businesses and universities are aware of the factors facilitating and/or constraining their organisational efforts toward the SDGs, they can identify and effectively obliterate the issues that are likely to undermine development outcomes.

In order to make the most of the insights presented in this thesis, first, it is crucial that policymakers and scholars are reflexive about their cultural stance when discussing inequality issues and/or working towards developing approaches to tackle them. As Cech and Blair-Loy (2010) observe, cultural beliefs often affect how leadership and management teams approach the design and implementation of gender equality policies and interventions. Since there are "frequently hidden transcripts of discrimination even in the policy-contexts most committed to gender equity" (Morley, 2006, p. 544), this study suggests that intervention processes to tackle inequality should begin with leaders discussing with, and gathering qualitative data from target beneficiaries to comprehend the issues at hand. Donmoyer (2012) mentions that qualitative data provides deeper insights into complex issues, which in turn empowers policymakers to not only recognise the simple-mindedness of their what-works question, but to also accommodate contextual differences in policy writing and programme development. In other words, qualitative data provides policymakers with new cultural frames to understand, reflect on, and design multiple solutions to problems.

Along these lines, this study further suggests that corporations should establish institutional mechanisms that promote public participation in their decision-making and intervention schemes. While the present research has demonstrated that firms are helping to address the grand challenges in diverse ways, the findings have also shown that "companies are signing up to UN-sanctioned human rights standards and schemes where the pathways for managing grievances are based on the choices that companies make in their own self-interest" (Owen & Kemp, 2023, p. 12). As observed in the case study on South Africa, using inclusive and collaborative approaches to design grievance procedures and conflict resolutions – for example, by engaging affected stakeholders at multiple levels of the society – can result in the development of interventions that better reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. However, in taking such an approach, firms should be sensitive to the existing and unequal

power dynamics that characterise a society by undertaking a stakeholder mapping exercise (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019), as well as developing and using evaluation measures to enhance the effectiveness of public participation (Donmoyer, 2012).

Linked to the above, it is further suggested that corporations can utilise their political corporate sustainability initiatives to support the achievement of SDG5 at the national and international levels. As highlighted in Chapter Three of this thesis, the significant role of businesses in South Africa's attainment of democracy is an attestation of their power in the contexts in which they operate. Businesses are not only transnational, but evidence also suggests that they dominate the gross domestic product of the world's topmost economies (Abelvik-Lawson, 2014; Odijie, 2022). Industries could therefore capitalise on this advantageous positioning to promote women's rights by including benchmarks and conditionalities to the support they provide to nations. For example, firms could link universities' eligibility for research grants to their attainment of gender-specific targets and practices in order to increase women's full and equal participation in AE. In doing so, however, businesses must recognise that such gender equality programmes may embody a market logic that is encouraged by the competition among different HEIs for legitimacy and funding (O'Connor, 2020). Thus, to effectively address SDG5, businesses must ensure that the metrics and accountability measures that they decide to utilise do not promote the "performative 'doing' of equality" (Tzanakou & Pearce, 2019, p. 1191). Instead the conditionalities must encourage "campaigners and diversity workers to think strategically about how best the potential of equality schemes can be realised while working to minimise their impact upon the very people they are meant to support. This must be a feminism that works within *and* against neoliberalism" (Tzanakou & Pearce, 2019, p. 1207).

On the other hand, universities can also support the creation of a balanced relationships between firms and societies. Anand and Sen (2000) note that,

> the obligation of sustainability cannot be left entirely to the market. The future is not adequately represented in the market—at least not the distant future—and there is no reason that ordinary market behaviour will take care of whatever obligation we have to the future. Universalism demands that the state should serve as a trustee for the interests of future generations" (p. 2034).

While the state is influential in shaping businesses' commitment to sustainability as Anand and Sen (2000) highlight, it is also understood that many developing countries have weak and disjointed national systems of corporate governance as compared to Western contexts (Durokifa & Ijeoma, 2018; Taylor, 2019). Owing to such governance gaps, many developing countries tend to face challenges in effectively evaluating businesses' external impact on their societies and, thus, often require the supplementary efforts of other relevant stakeholders such as customers, NGOs, and local communities. Here, universities are identified as uniquely positioned to support such corporate governance activities. Through their teaching and learning activities, universities can prepare future generations of political, economic, and social leaders in the design and implementation of responsible actions that support sustainable development. At the same time, universities can use their research and engagement activities to assess the environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance of firms. Research has shown that a key focus of most businesses is to retain their shareholders' interests and, thus, their ESG data is often financially focused (Delgado-Ceballos et al., 2023). However, through the publication of their research findings, universities can encourage firms to provide more credible, timely, relevant, and comprehensive ESG data that can positively influence their shareholders' investment decisions (Delgado-Ceballos et al., 2023).

Another practical implication of this study is that, rather than manipulate or exploit their employees, corporations should take appropriate steps to promote their wellbeing. Given the findings regarding the maquiladora industry in Mexico, managers should be intentional in

conducting regular wellbeing assessments to identify and address the issues affecting their workers. In addition, firms should be deliberate about creating organisational boards and committees that allow employees to participate and impact executive decision-making processes. Employee governance often tends to be negligible in most companies due to shareholder governance arrangements (Alamgir, & Banerjee, 2019; Boatright, 2004). However, promoting employee governance and empowering workers to have an internal influence on key decisions of the organisation, can reduce the deleterious impacts of corporate activities at the local and international levels (Faleye et al., 2006). This is particularly important because "agitating for change from within companies might ultimately be more successful than the punitive fines mighty, global corporations may well shrug off, or the dire prognostications of dystopian collapse" (Kong et al., 2023, p. 20).

Regarding the study's contributions to enhancing managerial practice in universities, the findings revealed that while women researchers in SSA have a sense of ingenuity to undertake AE activities, their pursuit of the third mission of universities is also circumscribed by 'empty shell' policies and inadequate institutional support. This suggests that universities in SSA should focus on re-evaluating their institutionalised structures for AE so as to provide the resources necessary for academics to accomplish the third mission. A way in which universities could encourage and support AE activities would be to include individual academics in their establishment of knowledge and technology transfer offices, as well as in the management of university-led collaboration activities (Al-Tabbaa & Ankrah, 2019). In doing so, universities will be able to fully capitalise on and benefit from the skills, networks, and expertise of individual academics in their collaboration attempts with various societal stakeholders, especially firms.

Furthermore, universities should be deliberate about gendering their AE-related policies, practices, and systems. Prior research has shown that although AE is individually-driven, it is

also an activity in which institutional-level policies can enhance women researchers' participation (Perkmann et al., 2021; Tartari & Salter, 2015). Findings from this study has also shown that women researchers often assume that their male colleagues and prospective male collaborators will think highly of them for manifesting masculine-typed qualities. Thus, linking this study's findings about the impression management behaviours of women researchers with those drawn from research on gender stereotypes, highlights the importance of reframing AE-related jobs to emphasise the feminine-typed qualities (e.g., good communication skills) that are relevant to building successful collaborations (Al-Tabbaa & Ankrah, 2019). Addressing the imbalance between the earnings men and women receive for the same job and/or role in AE activities are also measures that organisations could implement to increase women researchers' feelings of worth and equality. To make visible the masked but widespread forms of gender discrimination, organisations should include compulsory monitoring and evaluation schemes in all aspects of their AE activities (Martin, 2003).

Moreover, the notion that AE is a neoliberal activity suggests that in gendering their practices and policies, universities should ensure that women researchers who are indifferent about AE are not penalised for their non-participation in this activity. Specifically, AE "should not be flagged as an imperative for all as this would be against the principle of academic freedom" (Hirsu et al., 2021, p. 63). From a practice and policy perspective, it is proposed that AE should not be used as a standard promotion criterion in universities, but instead alternative routes should be provided for researchers who cannot engage in AE activities. For women researchers who are interested in AE activities, it is recommended that universities provide explicit policies and support structures, as well as acknowledge their engagement work. For example, universities could publish newsletters on women researchers who are pursuing AE activities to increase their confidence. Such newsletters could also be useful to other women academics

who have an interest in pursuing AE activities, but lack the necessary information and guidance.

Finally, the thesis recommends that women at the upper echelons of universities should be trained on the topic of mentorship, as the findings presented in this study indicates a greater tendency for senior women researchers to promote the adoption and use of masculine-typed characteristics among early career women academics. Daspher (2019) contends using mentoring as an approach to achieve gender equality because of how this approach tends to motivate minorities to adopt behaviours that sustain and reproduce the gendered norms of organisations, rather than those that challenge the unfair structures and work practices. In this regard, the study recommends that universities should endeavour to create environments that are supportive and gender-sensitive to the challenges of women researchers, as this can help increase their feelings of belonging in the workplace and reduce the undue burden of impressing for success at work.

7.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research

While the present research offers valuable insights, there are several limitations that also opens up exciting avenues for future investigation. First, although the study highlighted how corporations can widen gender inequality, it fails to provide examples of situations where they have supported the attainment of gender equality goals. Thus, future research should delve more deeply into how corporate sustainability actions have advanced the achievement of SDG5 within organisations and the society at large. Recent research has begun to investigate the equality, diversity, and inclusion policies of firms in non-Western contexts, and this research documents that many of the work-related policies within these organisations originate from Western countries, which make them ineffective in addressing inequality issues (Ozkazanc-

Pan, 2019; Umeh at al., 2022). Given the tendency of governments in SSA to wholly adopt policies from developed contexts (Kruss & Visser, 2017; Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021), it may be interesting for research to examine how organisations (e.g., universities, firms, research institutes) design and implement strategies to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within AE in SSA, as well as the origins of these policies. Such studies may also be useful for identifying managerial practices that create and sustain inequalities in AE in SSA, thereby building on and extending this study's practical as well as theoretical implications.

In addition, the study encourages future work to uncover any additional career advancement strategies that African women researchers utilise to enhance their participation in AE activities, and whether there are variances in their strategies when engaging with women-led firms and male-led firms respectively. Indeed, some research has demonstrated that informal institutional structures affect the legitimacy of women's innovation in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in SSA (Otuo et al., 2020), and that many women entrepreneurs within this context are equally seeking for legitimacy and often have to create self-identities that can support their entrepreneurial practice (Ojediran et al., 2022). This finding provides reason to expect that future studies would find inconsistencies in the strategies developed and implemented by women researchers in SSA vis-à-vis their participation in AE activities. In this sense, the findings in this thesis may be used to prompt further examination of whether, and if so how, the strategy of 'securing the purse with cultivated dispositions' for example, applies to collaborative relationships between women researchers and women industry actors. Furthermore, this study's interview-based method is limited, as it does not provide opportunities to directly observe and question how the audiences of women researchers' impression management behaviours react to them. Future observational research might seek to investigate this question. It would be also useful if the career advancement strategies documented in this thesis were tested through quantitative work and by using a larger sample of women researchers across different countries in SSA.

Additionally, Throop and Murphy (2002) mention that "as influential and ostensibly ground-breaking as Bourdieu is generally perceived to be, however, there are some fundamental flaws in the development of his grand theory" (p. 186). Indeed, while Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) sociological theory allowed this study to distinguish gendered issues relating to privilege, power and (dis)advantages within the field of AE in SSA, "his theoretical and empirical writing [was] limited in terms of [critically analysing] other forms of difference such as disability, age, religion and belief, race and ethnicity" (Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012, p. 191). Given that "gender is fundamentally complicated by class, race/ethnicity, and other differences" (Acker, 2006, p. 422), an intriguing subject for future research to consider would be an investigation into the intersectional inequality issues that may exist within the field of AE. For example, paying keener attention to how African women researchers' experiences of AE is shaped by gender and disability, represents an important area for future research. Tatli and Özbilgin (2012) argue that "studying gender in isolation results in misleading conclusions on the nature and processes of gender inequality in organisations" (p. 187). Thus, to provide further evidence of inequality issues within AE in SSA, it will be important for future research to draw on more critical feminist theories such as intersectionality theory, to deepen insights into African women researchers' varied experiences of discrimination (Collins & Chepp, 2013; Crenshaw, 1991).

Finally, this thesis conceptualised and empirically examined a potential gender gap in AE in SSA from the standpoint of women researchers, which may help leaders design more effective gender-sensitive interventions to buffer against the widening of inequalities within academia. Certainly, "given the widespread understanding of gender discrimination as pertaining primarily to women, leaders in many organisations may be inclined to overlook the potential for men to perceive themselves as vulnerable to gender discrimination" (Tost et al., 2022, p. 1805). Past research indicates that such assumptions would be a mistake, as men also tend to experience gender discrimination, although at a relatively lower rate than women (Tost et al.,

2022). Thus, one potential future direction for research on AE in SSA would be to identify the strategies facilitating men researchers' pursuit and accomplishment of the third mission and then examine it more closely for inequality issues. Interesting avenues to explore in future research would be: How do senior male researchers' mentor junior male faculty in universities in SSA, and how do these mentoring practices shape their conduct and success in AE activities? How do male researchers align their interests with male industry actors to gain collaborations with them? This study suggests that scholars and policymakers should make efforts to increase both men and women researchers' participation in AE. Future research could therefore build on the findings presented in this research by examining the specific narratives of male researchers to provide a more nuanced picture of why and how universities and firms in developing contexts such as SSA, are addressing the grand challenges.

Table 7.1: Overview of key findings and contributions

Chapter Overview	Guiding Research Question	Theoretical Underpinning	Key Findings	Key Contributions
International development and corporate sustainability	How are the corporate sustainability practices of businesses pragmatically contributing to the achievement of the SDGs?	United Nation's (2015) Sustainable Development Goals	The market functions of businesses create both intended and unintended development impacts on society. Being able to recognise and take ownership of the mark they (in)directly leave on societies, is the foremost and important role businesses can play in the development process.	Contributes to research proposals (e.g. Böhm et al., 2022; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019) for an increased attention on gender within the broader discipline of corporate sustainability and business ethics by highlighting how the actions and inactions of firms can revert the progress made on SDG5. The findings of this paper also advance stakeholder theory by integrating insights from business ethics and international development studies. In particular, the paper generates new and significant insights into the socio-cultural dimension of sustainable development by highlighting the relevance and usefulness of community participation approaches in the (un)success

				of corporate sustainability practices.
Reconceptualising the gender gap in academic engagement: A multilevel analysis	How and why do gender differences exist in men and women researchers' access and opportunities to participate in AE activities in SSA?	Bourdieu's (1977, 1986) triad of concepts (i.e. habitus, field, capital) and Nkomo and Ngambi's (2009) leadership and management conceptual model	AE in SSA is a gendered and contextual activity that is distinctively shaped by the (i) socio-cultural and structural context within which academics operate; (ii) organisational arrangements and interactions within HEIs that reinforce the resource (dis)advantages of men and women academics; and (iii) individual biography and choices of men and women academics.	Contributes to SSA-focused AE studies (e.g. Mihyo, 2013; Zavale & Langa, 2018) by exemplifying how macro-structural factors such as religion, culture and colonialism, which are unique to this context, may establish a gender gap between men and women researchers. This study further extends understanding of the gender gap in AE by adopting a multilevel and relational approach to reveal the macro, meso, and micro-level gendered processes generating male privileges and female disadvantages. By identifying and examining the individual, organisational and macro-contextual influences on the gender gap in AE from a Bourdieusian perspective, insight emerges that utilising single-level and de-

				contextualised theoretical approaches to examine the gender differences in men and women researchers' participation in AE activities, obscures how micro-individual career opportunities are shaped by broader contextual factors at the macro-level and organisational processes and practices at the meso-level.
In pursuit of the third mission: A Bourdieusian perspective of women's participation in academic engagement in sub-Saharan Africa	How do women researchers in SSA navigate the gender-related barriers impeding their participation in AE activities?	Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice	The study highlights that, irrespective of the impediments they face, including being marginalised and/or excluded from male-dominated institutional networks, women researchers can improve their situation in AE by 'shifting spaces with legitimate privileges; buying a stake in transitional networks; and securing the purse with cultivated dispositions.'	Contributes to the literature discussing women researchers' agency to advance their careers (e.g. Kim & Kim, 2021; O'Meara 2015) by uncovering novel insights about the ingenuity of women researchers in SSA to accomplish AE in environments mired with weak institutions and scarce resources for R&D. Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital is helpful identifying the opportunity structures that exist within AE in SSA and the resources that are necessary for

				women researchers to take advantage of these opportunities, as well as how those who lacked such resources were constrained in their ability to access particular opportunities. The concept of capital also helps to further see the ways in which women researchers advance their participation in AE by accruing or exchanging capitals to transform constraints into opportunities.
A symbolic violence approach to gender inequality in academic engagement	How, and why, do women researchers' efforts to overcome the systemic constraints impeding their participation in AE come to reinforce the very structures that establish those barriers?	Bourdieu's (1990) concept of symbolic violence	A key takeaway is that, while women researchers may have a sense of agency to manage structural and cultural barriers, they tend to enact this agency in a seemingly paradoxical way by simultaneously challenging and reinforcing prevailing inequalities.	Contributes to scholarly calls (e.g. Abreu & Grinevich, 2017; Tartari & Salter, 2015) for an understanding of how and why there is the existential threats of a widening gender gap regardless of the numerous interventions designed to achieve gender equality in AE. Bourdieu's (1990) concept of symbolic violence provides a clearer sense of AE as an outcome of the social setting within which it unfolds, and

				therefore understanding AE requires attention to context. The concept of symbolic violence reveals the interplay between structural and agential dimensions of African women researchers' participation in AE, exposing both the overt and concealed barriers that underlie their career advancement within AE.

Chapter 8 - Conclusion

In line with Howard-Grenville et al.'s (2022) suggestion for management scholars to be "more confident and courageous in joining global societal conversations" (p. 1422), this thesis sought to shed light on how universities and firms are distinctively supporting and/or undermining the achievement of the SDGs, and to promote a better understanding of how these organisations can effectively act as agents of change in the global transition towards knowledge-based economies without reinforcing social inequality. More specifically, the thesis has shown how the corporate sustainability practices of businesses can tackle the grand challenges in developing countries, as well as highlighted how the pursuit of AE activities by women researchers in SSA, reflects the efforts of universities towards the sustainable development agenda. As the SDGs have critical implications for how different societies frame and tackle the grand challenges (Benschop, 2021), this study invites scholars and policymakers to consider the power and gender inequalities uncovered in the analysis presented in this study, especially when designing and implementing development interventions that aim to promote inclusivity and gender equity. For example, the African Union Commission (AUC) has categorically cited in the overarching development plan for Africa – 'African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want'– that it seeks to promote development which fosters gender equality and youth empowerment because:

> No society can reach its full potential, unless it empowers women and youth and removes all obstacles to women's full participation in all areas of human endeavours. Africa must [therefore] provide an enabling environment for its women, children and young people to flourish and reach their full potential (AUC, 2015, p. 12)

While the above vignette of the AUC provides a snapshot of the good intentions that African leaders have towards the lives and careers of women and the youth, achieving this ideal would require more than just simple expressions in policy documents. If we are to make any progress toward creating an inclusive African society, it is imperative to investigate and comprehend the diverse development-oriented activities supporting the AUC's aspirations (Amankwah-Amoah, 2016; Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022), and the extent to which these activities are inclusive and gender-sensitive (Benschop, 2021). In this regard, some studies have analysed the evolving collaborative relationships between African HEIs and businesses that are aimed at promoting sustainable development (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021; Zavale & Langa, 2018), and an interesting conclusion from these studies is that most African governments and HEIs are increasingly inclined "to import and promote models and practices that evolved over decades in a few top American and British research universities" which are inappropriate to the region's development challenges and ambitions (Kruss et al., 2012, p. 516). For Kruss et al. (2012), an effective way of dealing with Africa's challenge of wholly imitating and adopting foreign-based policies would involve the creation of "new models…that extend existing conceptual frameworks and take into account global changes in knowledge generation, diffusion and adaptation in relation to the specificities of African contexts" (p. 516).

Accordingly, this thesis has presented an account of African women researchers' experiences of AE activities to extend the existing literature that discusses Africa's ambition to achieve knowledge-based socio-economic development through university and industry collaborations. The thesis, which began with the personal curiosity of the researcher to comprehend the gendered issues manifested in the RECIRCULATE project workshops, has offered rich insights into how and why gendered practices within the African patriarchal context may stifle women's full and equal participation in the evolving collaborative relationships between African HEIs and businesses. As Howard-Grenville et al. (2022) rightly observe, "problem-

driven research ideas and associated curiosity not only motivate but can sustain [the] pursuit of important research" (p. 1422). Indeed, in the researcher's pursuit to understand an observed phenomenon in the RECIRCULATE project workshops, she also identified that underlying the bulk of AE research was an inherent tension in comprehending the gender divide between men and women researchers (Nsanzumuhire et al., 2021; Perkmann et al., 2021). The ongoing scholarly quest to disentangle this gender gap puzzle has resulted in the growth of analytical investigations on AE from different dimensions and in different organisational and country settings, including Africa (Meng, 2016; Zavale & Schneijderberg, 2021). For example, at the macro-level, some scholars have examined the characteristics of the social setting within which AE unfolds (Dada et al., 2016; Filippetti & Savona, 2017), to provide an understanding of how this creates gender differences between men and women researchers (Tartari & Salter, 2015). Other research has also focused on the meso-level, highlighting the relevance of organisational structures and cultures on AE activities in itself, and the gender gap (Kruss & Visser, 2017; Queirós et al., 2022). Some studies have also paid attention to the micro-level, analysing the role and characteristics of individual actors in the accomplishment of AE activities (Cunningham et al. 2018; Mtawa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2022).

While several studies have highlighted that gender differences exist in AE, Bourdieu's (1977) sociological framework is yet to have been applied in identifying the underlying mechanisms contributing to these inequalities. Thus, this thesis complements extant work by drawing on Bourdieu's (1984) critical social theory to investigate African women's participation in AE from a multidimensional perspective. At the micro-individual level, the study has demonstrated how women academics develop feminine and masculine dispositions to increase their chances of participating in AE activities. At the meso-organisational level, the study has shown how universities operate as gendered organisations that perpetuate practices that favour men over

women academics. At the macro-structural level, the research underlines how women academics are constrained in their participation in AE by patriarchy and family commitments.

Additionally, this study shows that firms and universities are fundamental stakeholders in the global transition towards knowledge-based economies. For firms specifically, it was identified that through their corporate sustainability agendas, these organisations are impacting the lives and welfare of local communities in developing countries, including the attainment of democracy. For universities, the findings revealed that although their third mission is relevant and useful in achieving the SDGs (especially SDG4 and SDG9), women researchers face severe constraints that hinder their participation in AE activities as compared to their male counterparts. It further emerged that the lack of evidence-based insights and policies to better guide the actions and practices of African women researchers in their pursuit of AE activities, poses great challenges for the achievement of SDG5.

Furthermore, the thesis has shown that women academics are innovative in tackling the gender inequalities that affect their participation in AE and in academia more broadly. Previous research suggests that women academics are typically excluded and/or marginalised from the relevant social networks where they could access potential industry partners (Meng 2016; Tartari & Salter, 2015). The findings of this study, however, complements this existing literature by revealing how women academics are not only cognisant of their challenges in obtaining social capital for AE, but also how they strategically join 'ideal' professional groups that increases their chances of building connections with relevant industry actors.

Moreover, this study has provided insights into a more practical application of Bourdieu's (1990) work in researching gender inequality in AE. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) concepts of field, habitus, capital and symbolic violence, the thesis has revealed how dominant gender norms influence women researchers to construct gendered identities and practices that enable

and constrain their participation in AE simultaneously. In particular, the study has highlighted how systems of meaning and power are subtly imposed on women academics in a way that causes them to become complicit in legitimising and solidifying the structures of inequality that negatively impact on them (Karatas-Özkan and Chell, 2015). Such findings suggest that gender equality policies need to be targeted at both the subtle and overt forms of inequality in order to effectively improve the conditions of marginalised groups (Umeh et al., 2023). Thus, a key takeaway from the evidence presented in this thesis is that attaining the SDGs, significantly requires scholars and policymakers to develop and implement context-specific strategic actions and practices that can offer appropriate direction to universities and firms. In particular, the analysis presented in this study highlights that policymakers and scholars concerned with promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion within organisations and the broader society, must consider utilising new cultural frames to comprehend and design gender-sensitive and inclusive interventions that enhance the related role of universities and business in sustainable development.

In sum, this study's aim was not to single out Africa for the challenges that women researchers within this context typically experience, but instead, it sought to contribute to the theoretical discussions on how to improve the lives and careers of women in academia. In this vein, the thesis has provided "more insights into the challenges and opportunities that women academics face in their work, especially when they engage with non-academics, [in order to] ensure that the full potential of these talented and dedicated individuals is realised at both personal and societal level" (Tartari & Salter, 2015, p. 1188). Taken together, it is hoped that the findings presented in this thesis can inspire future studies to advance understanding on the role and contributions of businesses and universities in the sustainable development agenda, analysing different dimensions of this issue and examining them across different sectors and regions. Pursuing this line of investigation is considered important, especially as the influences of the

COVID-19 pandemic on our societies has demonstrated that "it is a prime time for management scholars to pursue generative research – that which prompts and propels further novel and important research, produces high-quality studies with theoretical and empirical rigor and transparency, and stimulates a line of inquiry with sustainable impact for a broader audience" (Howard-Grenville et al., 2022, p. 1422).

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Appendix A

Appendix A.1: Letter to potential participants

Name of Researcher: Afua Konadu Owusu-Kwarteng

Name of Supervisors: Dr Cynthia Forson; Dr Lola Dada; Prof. Sarah Jack

Title: The Role of Gender in University-Industry Knowledge Exchange Ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa

Dear Participant,

I am a PhD student at the Entrepreneurship, Strategy and Innovation Department of Lancaster University Management School (LUMS), Lancaster, United Kingdom.

I would like to invite you to participate in the interview(s) for my study which aims at understanding *"The Role of Gender in University-Industry Knowledge Exchange Ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa."* As the topic suggests, the overarching aim of this study is to explore the role of gender in the knowledge exchange and collaborative activities that occur between industries and public universities or research institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.

As an academic and/or research scientist who lives and works in sub-Saharan Africa, I consider your experience as relevant to understanding the phenomenon under investigation. Considering the increasingly significance of these collaborations in sub-Saharan Africa, your participation in this study can go to improve gender parity as industries and universities build partnerships to exchange knowledge. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

I have attached in this email a Participant Information sheet and a Consent form to give you more details about the interview(s). Please take the time to read the information to decide whether or not you will want to participate in the research. The study is supervised by Dr Cynthia Forson; Dr Lola Dada; and Prof Sarah Jack; based in Lancaster University Ghana and Lancaster University respectively.

Once you have confirmed your participation in this research, please return the consent form to me. Having done this, I will ensure to contact you shortly to arrange a suitable date and time for the interview.

Finally, kindly note that due to its exploratory nature, the in-depth interviews to be held as part of the study might be quite involving and lengthy. It is anticipated that each interview might last for about 60-90minutes.

I look forward to a favourable response from you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Afua Konadu Owusu-Kwarteng

a.owusu-kwarteng@lancaster.ac.uk

Appendix B

Appendix B.1: Participant information sheets

Title: The Role of Gender in University-Industry Collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa

I am a PhD student at Lancaster University, and I would like to invite you to take part in a research study about the Role of Gender in University-Industry Collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa.

Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the study about?
This research project is about the role of gender in university-industry collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa. It mainly focuses on exploring whether and how gender shapes three crucial factors: i) decision and motivation to engage with industry; ii) available resources for industry engagement (e.g., networks, research productivity); and iii) specific engagement modes (e.g., conferences, consulting).

Why have I been invited?
I have approached you because you are an African, an academic or a researcher, and a RECIRCULATE project participant. I am interested in understanding your role and gendered experiences as a female academic who has engaged with industry. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decide to participate in this study, an interview will be held between you and the researcher via Microsoft Teams. As part of the interview, you will be asked to describe the influence of gender on factors such as career choice, and professional identity. For most part of the interview, you will be allowed ample time to discuss your research productivity, networks, and industry engagement channels (e.g., conferences, consulting) and the significance of these to your participation in university-industry collaboration. Each interview is expected to last for about 60-90minutes.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?
If you take part in this study, your insights will contribute to our understanding of the ways in which universities partner with firms in Africa, and whether these collaborations are gender inclusive in nature.

Do I have to take part?
No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide not to take part in this study, your involvements in the RECIRCULATE Project will not be anyway affected.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time during your participation in this study. If you want to withdraw, please let me know, and I will extract any ideas or information (=data) you contributed to the study and destroy them. However, it is difficult and often impossible to take out data from one specific participant when this has already been anonymised or pooled together with other people's data. Therefore, you can only withdraw up to **3 weeks** after taking part in the study.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
It is unlikely that there will be any major disadvantages to taking part. However, taking part of the study will mean investing a good amount of your time (i.e. about 60-90minutes) for the interview that will take place between you and researcher.

Will my data be identifiable?

Regarding the collected data, myself (i.e., the researcher conducting this study), together with my PhD supervisors will have access to the ideas you share with me. I will keep all personal information about you (e.g., your name and other information about you that can identify you) confidential, that is I will not share it with the others. I will remove any personal information from the written record of your contribution. All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project. While I will collect your names, these are not important to my analysis. As such, all names will be removed and replaced with something generic to protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of the information you will share with me.

How will we use the information you have shared with us and what will happen to the results of the research study?
I will use the information you have shared with me only in the following ways: I will use it for research purposes only. This will include my PhD thesis and other publications, for example journal articles. I may also present the results of my study at academic conferences and possibly practitioner conferences. I anticipate that the study's findings can inform policymakers about how to make the collaborations between universities and firms more gender inclusive.

When writing up the findings from this study, I would like to reproduce some of the views and ideas you shared with me. I will only use anonymised quotes (e.g., from my interview with you), so that although I will use your exact words, all reasonable steps will be taken to protect your anonymity in our publications. If anything, you tell me in the interview suggests that you or somebody else might be at risk of harm, I will however be obliged to share this information with my PhD project supervisors. If possible, I will inform you of this breach of confidentiality.

How my data will be stored

Your data will be stored in encrypted files (that is no-one other than me, the researcher will be able to access them) and on password-protected computers. I will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in my office. I will keep data that can identify you separately from non-personal information (e.g., your views on a specific topic). In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years.

Privacy Notice

For further information about how Lancaster University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our webpage:

This study is funded by Lancaster University, UK, under the RECIRCULATE Project. The funder expects me to make my data available for future use by other researchers. I will exclude all personal data from archiving. I intend to archive/share the data via a dedicated RECIRCULATE OneDrive data storage site where these persons upon request, will be allowed access to this information.

What if I have a question or concern?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact myself on (a.owusu-kwarteng@lancaster.ac.uk) or any of my PhD supervisors: Prof. Sarah Jack (s.l.jack@lancaster.ac.uk); Dr. Lola Dada (l.dda@lancaster.ac.uk); and Prof. Cynthia Forson (c.forson@lancaster.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact: Dr. Marian Iszatt White (m.iszattwhite@lancaster.ac.uk).

Sources of support

In case you need any form of support, based on the sensitive and potentially distressing topics we might have discussed as part of the research, kindly contact:

Dr Paul McKenna **(RECIRCULATE Project Manager)**

T: +44 1524 510301

E: p.mckenna@lancaster.ac.uk

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School's Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for considering your participation in this project.

Appendix C

Appendix C.1: Consent form

Project Title: The Role of Gender in University-Industry Collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa

Name of Researcher: Afua Konadu Owusu-Kwarteng
Email: a.owusu-kwarteng@lancaster.ac.uk

Please tick each box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during my participation in this study and within **3 weeks** after I took part in the study, without giving any reason. If I withdraw within **3 weeks** of taking part in the study, my data will be removed. ☐

   PLEASE NOTE: It is difficult and often impossible to take out data from one specific participant when this has already been anonymised or pooled together with other people's data. Therefore, you can only withdraw up to **3 weeks** after taking part in the study.

3. If I am participating in the interviews, I understand that any information disclosed remains confidential and I will not discuss it with or in front of anyone who was not involved unless I have the relevant person's express permission. ☐

4. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications or presentations by the researcher/s, but my personal information will not be included and all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project. ☐

5. I understand that a fully anonymised data (including audio-records of interviews held, transcripts of interviews, consent forms, and participant information sheets) will be offered to Lancaster University's institutional data repository and will be made available to genuine researchers for re-use (secondary analysis) with an appropriate data license. In accordance with University guidelines, the uploads and storage of all audio-recorded data will involve using pseudonyms to protect my anonymity and privacy. ☐

6. I understand that my name/my organisation's name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentation without my consent. ☐

7. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed, and that data will be protected on encrypted devices and kept secure. ☐

8. I understand that data will be kept according to University guidelines for a minimum of 10 years after the end of the study. ☐

9. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____ Date _____ Day/month/year

One copy of this form will be given to the participant and the original kept in the files of the researcher at Lancaster University

Appendix D

Appendix D.1: Interview guide

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore how gender shapes the participation of women academics in university-industry collaborations in sub-Saharan Africa.

Research Objectives

- To explore the social (macro), organisational (meso), and individual (micro) level factors that contribute to shaping how women academics participate in university-industry collaborations
- To determine how gender influences the decision and motivation of female academics with regards to their participation in university-industry collaborations
- To investigate if women academics have the resources (e.g. networks, research productivity) relevant for participating in university-industry collaborations, and to understand how they deploy these resources for industry engagements
- To identify what channels (e.g. conferences, consulting) women academics utilise for university-industry collaborations, and to determine whether this is impacted by gender

Introduction

▪ About the interviewer

▪ About the research study and in-depth interview

▪ Confidentiality, anonymity, and audio recording (via Microsoft Teams)

Interviewee Details

Name:
……
……

Tel:
……
……

Address:
……
……

CAREER CHOICE	**PROMPTS**
Societal factors are known to contribute to the disparity in the career paths of female and male academics, including **cultural aspects** and **informal social norms** that **reinforce** the **stereotype of science and research as jobs mostly suited to men** (Correll, 2001; Santos, Horta & Amâncio, 2020). This aspect explores whether**:** • Cultural conceptions of gender serve to constrain the early career-relevant choices of women as academics – which has implications for their decision/motivation to engage (or not) with industry	**Q1. What influenced you to choose a career in academia/research?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Interests/childhood experiences?* *Family history of academics?* *Social norms/values?* *Gender?* *Any other reasons?* *If motivated by gender* **How did gender influence your decision?**
Examines how **structural positions of men and women in society are reproduced through education systems** that associate male students to STEM fields (Adusah-Karikari, 2008)	**Q2. What is your field of specialisation? What influenced you to specialise in this subject/field?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Interests/childhood experiences?* *Family history of academics?* *Gender norms/values?* *Societal relevance?* *Any other reasons?* *If influenced by gender* **How did gender influence your decision?**
ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT	
African universities and research institutions are observed to be an **'old boys' network'** – male dominant and unfriendly to women (Mabokela, 2003; Mama, 2003; Tsikata, 2007)	**Q3. What single word would you use to describe your institutional environment in terms of a research culture/university-industry collaboration/?**
Gender inequality issues can be observed from the organisational context through **structures, processes, and practices** (Stamarski & Son- Hing, 2015). This is further explored under research productivity.	**Q4. What is your reason for the choice of word?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Organisational structures?* *Policies? (e.g. promotion criteria)* *Processes (e.g. research production process)*

To understand the **subjective perceptions** of women academics about their organisational contexts, and whether this affects their: • Decision and motivation for university-industry collaboration • Available resources • Preferred modes of engagement with industry	*Practices? (e.g. role assignments, workload allocations)*
Academic roles comprise multiple foci – **teaching, research, and service** (Edgar & Geare 2013). To explore the core academic roles of women academics. This is further explored in the section on research productivity.	**Q5. Could you please tell me about your daily and periodic activities in your professional role at your organisation?**
RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY	
Examines the impact of **individual-level factors** such as personal characteristics, research styles, field of specialisation, and research support, on women's research productivity (Wood, 1990).	**Q6. What are the available opportunities in your subject/field for research?**
Research cultures within university departments can contain **'both enabling and constraining'** factors, and these are likely to influence performance outcomes (Deem & Lucas, 2007, 127). Enablers include management of workloads to create research space, internal funding, research mentors for inexperienced staff, research seminars and research methods sessions. Constraining features include high teaching loads, demanding administrative roles, lack of time for research and absence of experience in getting funding, managing projects, staff, and budgets, and writing for publication (Deem & Lucas, 2007, 127). Explores women's involvement in research and their department's support for it – how does **group-level factors**,	**Q7. What is your institution and/or department's ethos for conducting research?** <u>*Probe:*</u> *Do you consider these convenient? If yes, how so?* *If no, what aspects are negative?* *How does it affect your ability to engage in research?* *How do you work around it, to still participate in research activities?*

such as **managerial practice and organisational culture** influence research productivity?	
Gender imbalance in faculty service loads in terms of both the number of activities — and in the amount of time spent on such activities. Academic women (regardless of rank, discipline) are more likely to be heavily involved in: - pastoral care - committee work (but not necessarily decision-making bodies) - teaching (Guarino & Borden, 2017).	**Q8. How much time do you have to engage in research work?**
To examine whether the research agendas of women are determined by their institutional context, personally motivated, or related to other factors.	**Q9. What sort of research projects are you mostly involved in? What are the reasons for such projects?** *Probe:* *Personal interests?* *Career focused?* *Institutionally determined?* *Funding sources?*
Female academics are less rich and diverse in **social capital** than their men, which often **leads to their exclusion from the "Kula rings of power"** - the informal gatherings in science where resources, knowledge and reputation are exchanged and developed (Etzkowitz et al., 2000, 115)	**Q10. How much information access would you say you have, about opportunities to participate in research projects?** *Probe:* *Which persons have more information access and why?* *What restricts information access?* *What empowers this information access?*
Notable obstacles include time constraints stemming from teaching commitments, individual motivation and resourcing as important factors influencing research performance (Harris & Kaine, 1994), autonomy, recognition, competence, motivation, time, financial resources, and personal confidence (Bazeley, 2010; Edgar & Geare 2013; Wood, 1990) • To understand **women's perceptions** about the **institutional, economic, and**	**Q11. What kind of obstacles do you particularly face, regarding your ability to conduct research?**

other barriers affecting research productivity	
	Q12. How are you able to access funding for research? *Probe:* *Academic ranking?* *Networks?* *Institutional support?*
	Q13. Can you please provide details on the research funding you have received so far? *Probe:* *Sources of funding (external or internal)* *Funding value* *Time intervals* *First/last funding received*
	Q14. What forms of institutional structures are in place, enabling you to undertake research projects?
	Q15. What kinds of personal support systems do you have in place, that allow you to undertake research work?
Exploration of Homophily – the extent to which a female academic is tied to other academics that have a similar characteristic, such as gender, race, age, class, or any other distinguishing trait.	**Q16. If you were to undertake a research project, who would you invite to join? And why?**
In gender unequal contexts, **the research networks established by women scientists could help to counter many gender imbalances** through the formation of distinctive network patterns that disrupt routinised practices and create new opportunities for greater social legitimacy among peers (Diaz-Faes et al., 2020) Explores whether women's research **collaborations are local or global.** This has implications for: • Decision and motivation for university-industry collaboration • Available resources • Preferred modes of engagement with industry	**Q17. Which individuals/groups do you often have research collaborations with? Why?** *Probe* *Internal or external colleagues* *Local or international collaborators* *Male or female* *Relationship with collaborators (e.g. network members)* *Academic or industry colleagues*
ORGANISATIONS OR GROUPS	

The network literature is clear that **technical knowledge diffuses through social networks of relations** (Walsh & Maloney, 2007; Singh & Fleming, 2010). **Social Capital Theory** – • Social capital has been defined as "[t]he sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit. • Social capital thus comprises both the network and the assets that may be mobilized through the network." (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, 243). • **"[w]omen's networks** tend to be **poorer** in social capital than those of their male peers" (Etzkowitz et al., 2000,171) • Women are often **excluded from resourceful networks despite their career location** (Miller et al., 1981; Ibarra, 1992).	**Q18. What kind of organisations or groups are you involved with <u>inside</u> the university?** *If no, why not?* *If yes, please describe…* *<u>Probe:</u>* • *Professional or personal, religious* • *Gender composition* • *Membership type* • *Roles* • *Organisations or groups positioning* • *Organisations or groups structure (e.g. size, proximity, homophily)* • *Relationship characteristics (e.g. communication frequency and length of relationship)* • *Organisations or groups resources (e.g. introductions, nominations, collaborations, and paper reviews)* • *Relevance to career advancement*
Men tend to have predominantly male networks, while **women tend to have female or mixed networks** (Brass, 1985) Women tend to have **network compositions with more strong, dense, relations** (as opposed to diverse or spanning "brokerage" ties), and tend to be tied to **fewer influential individuals** (Brass, 1985; Moore, 1990; Ibarra, 1993; McGuire, 2002). This can have implications for: • Career advancement opportunities	**Q19. What kind of organisations or groups are you involved with <u>outside</u> of the university?** *If no, why not?* *If yes, please describe…* *<u>Probe:</u>* • *Professional, personal, religious, gender composition* • *Membership type* • *Roles* • *Organisations or groups positioning*

• Information and resource access, including funding and industry contacts • Increased scientific productivity and innovation	• *Organisations or groups structure (e.g. size, proximity, homophily)* • *Relationship characteristics (e.g. communication frequency and length of relationship)* • *Organisations or groups resources (e.g. introductions, nominations, collaborations, and paper reviews)* • *Types of Organisations or groups ties (international or local)?* • *Relevance to career advancement*
	Q20. To what extent, if at all, do you feel that the networks you associate with, have impacted on, or have the potential to, affect your engagement with industry?
Women are **worse positioned in the social networks** of collaboration and commercialization with industry than men are. This situation will reduce their motivation to collaborate, because they will not expect successful outcomes of this effort (Calvo, Fernández-López, & Rodeiro-Pazos, 2019, 418)	**Q21. If you had the opportunity to be part of any organisations or groups you currently do not have access to, which type of organisations or groups would that be?**
U-IC ENGAGEMENT MODES	Now that we have touched on collaboration, can we delve a bit further into the kinds of collaborations you have undertaken
Suggestions are that female scholars are more **motivated for teaching activities than men**, who are more motivated for commercialisation and learning activities; and (2) **senior scholars are more interested in accessing to resources** whereas junior scholars are more focused on learning (Ching-Ying, Chen-Wei & Shih-Chieh, 2019). To determine the industry engagement **channels** of women academics and understand: • Links between the motivation and industry engagement channel utilised	**Q22. Can you please mention your modes of industrial engagements?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Consulting* *Research collaboration* *Research projects* *Conferences* *Teaching e.g. guest lecturing, shared assignments,* *Student company visits* *Careers fairs* *Student projects* *Providing post-ad hoc advice*

• Links between available resources and engagement mode Possible differences between junior and senior women academics regarding industry engagement channels	
	Q23. What are your reasons for collaborating or engaging with industry actors through these channels? *Probe:* *Time related constraints* *Academic ranking* *Research agendas* *Gender influences*
For individual researchers, the **decision to engage** with industry depends mainly on their **social context** and their **perceptions** of the **potential costs and benefits** from engagement (Tatari & Salter, 2015)	**Q24. What informs your decision or motivates you to want to (or not) engage with industry?** *Probe:* *Personal* *Professional (e.g. career advancement)* *Organisationally driven* *Gender related* **If gender related, can you explain how gender influences this decision?**
Female academics differ from their male counterparts – some of which may be due to **conscious choices**, such as self-selection into **research areas** that are more conducive to links with the public and not-for-profit sectors • Links between gender, women's research agendas and types of industries engaged with • Links between types of firms and gender gaps in university-industry collaboration	**Q25. What kind of firms do you mostly engage with and why?** *Probe:* *Small-scale? Large firms?* *Local or international firms?* *Public and not-for-profit sectors* *Sector specific e.g. retail, transport, personal services?*
Institutional support for engagement may also lead to higher level of academic effort at engagement	**Q26. Would you say the conditions of your organisation supports university-industry collaborations?** *Probe:*

(Perkmann et al., 2013). This has implications for the: • Level of engagement • Types of engagement modes women use	*Institutional incentive schemes (e.g. promotion, tenure, remuneration)* *What are the available opportunities (conferences, etc.)?*
	Q27. What kind of support does your institution provide to encourage university-industry collaborations? *Probe:* *Education* *Finance* *Training*
	Q28. What challenges do you encounter in accessing these institutional support arrangements?
	Q29. To what extent, if at all, do you feel that the organisational context, values, and norms have impacted on, or have the potential to, affect your collaborative activities with industry?
	Q30. Besides your institution, if you required support to engage in a university-industry collaboration, who would you go to for assistance? *Probe:* *Organisations or groups?* *Family?* *Mentors?* *Work colleagues?*
U-IC GENDER DYNAMICS	
Evidence shows that those researchers who have **previously collaborated with firms are more prone to have future engagements** (Schartinger et al., 2002), and they increase their value as providers for the firms (D´Este & Patel, 2007; D ´Este & Perkman, 2011).	**Q31. How would you describe the kind of relations you have established with industry?** *Probe:* *How did you come by these opportunities?* *How long have these relations been established?* *Have you had other opportunities because of these relations?*
Explores how gender beliefs shape university-industry as a social relational context	**Q32. What has your experiences been like, from your past experiences of collaborating with industry actors? Any gender-related experiences?** *Probe:*

	Could you please share a story in relation to this?
Tokenism theory – proportional representation of men and women contributes to gender differences (Kanter, 1977) - Women academics may be **asked to take on ceremonial tasks**, such as being the only female member of a committee OR research team As a result of tokenism, women may be assigned work roles that do not enable them to gain access useful and valuable industrial contacts (Tatari & Salter, 2015)	**Q33. How do you think being a woman affects your engagement with industry?** *Probe:* *Gendered roles?* *Gendered stereotypes?* *Leadership?* *Perceptions on competencies?*
	Q34. In your opinion, how might gender shape the way a woman interacts with male- led firms?
	Q35. To what extent, if at all, do you feel that collaborations with firms have impacted on, or have the potential to, affect your career? *Probe:* *If yes, could you explain in what way(s)?* *If no, could you explain this?*
WORK-LIFE BALANCE	
Women are subjected to the pressure from two "**greedy institutions**" – academia and the family (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004).	**Q36. What is your marital status? (Married, partnered, single, divorced, or widowed?)**
	Q37. Do you have any children? If yes how many and how old are they? **(If no children, go to Q42)**
	Q38. Who looks after them while you are at work?
Women faculty do more housework at home than their male counterparts (Schiebinger & Gilmartin, 2010) and experience more **difficulty in achieving work-life balance** (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). This has several implications for: • Women's decision and motivation for industry engagement activities	**Q39. If married/partnered etc. and/or with children:** ***Could you please tell me how you combine and accommodate your family and work life?***

• Capacity to acquire the resources necessary for engagements (e.g. networks, research) • Type of engagement modes they utilise	
Explores whether **'motherhood is a penalty'** (Baker, 2010) or that **being married** and **having children gives academic women 'credits'** as opposed to 'penalties' (Aiston & Jung, 2015)	**Q40. Has your profession as an academic affected your family life? If so, how?** **Q41. How does your family life affect your work life?**
	Q42. For you, which role is more important…your feminine role or professional role as an academic/researcher. Why?
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN CULTURAL CONTEXT	
Gender as performativity – One is not free to perform gender in any way one chooses (Butler, 1990). Each culture's norms restrain proper gender behaviour and these norms have social effects (Ahl, 2006)	**Q43. Does your society (i.e. country/region/tribe) have views on the role of a man or woman? What are these?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Norms/values/ideas?* *Sanctions?* *Rules of conduct?* *Gender roles?* *Gender stereotypes?*
Gender as a basic organising principle that profoundly **shapes/mediates the concrete conditions of our lives…our consciousness, skills, and institutions,** as well as in the distribution of power and knowledge (Lather,1992, 91) Ridgeway (1997) argues that when cultural beliefs about gender are salient, they shape behaviour most powerfully by affecting people's sense of what *others* expect – • Exploration of women's internalised gendered identities	**Q44. How conscious would you say you are of your gender in the workplace?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *What informs/triggers this?* *How do you express this?* *When and where?* **Could you share a story or an example of this?**
Societal beliefs on gender can be characterised in two main forms: - A **<u>hierarchical dimension</u>** that associates males with a superior	**Q45. How do you think society views a female academic?** *<u>Probe:</u>*

status and instrumental competence - A **<u>horizontal dimension</u>** of fundamental difference that associates each sex with what the other is not (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).	*Competencies (skills, expertise, knowledge)?* *Opinions about family life and roles?* *Respect?* *Level of authority/Power?*
	Q46. Can you mention certain words that society uses to 'label' or describe male/female academics?
To understand women's subjective perceptions of how the multilevel gender system allows processes that contribute to the reproduction of gender inequality at the **macro, micro, and interactional levels** to occur simultaneously.	**Q47. To what extent, if at all, do you feel that the African cultural context, values, and norms have impacted on, or have the potential to, affect your career progression?**
GOALS, IDENTITY, AND SUCCESS	
This section seeks to explore **Bourdieu's (1990) concept of 'habitus'** – one's perception of one's self, place, identity and dispositions	**Q48. In your view, what would indicate as the characteristics of a 'successful academic'?**
	Q49. Do you think you are a 'successful academic'? <u>Probe:</u> *Why and why not?*
Gender theorists have suggested that **individual perceptions of ability can be a means of fostering female agency** in academia and challenging the status quo (Allen, 2013; O'Meara & Stromquist, 2015). Women and men **assess their own skills differently** when engaged in career-relevant tasks. These divergent **self-assessments contribute to the formation of different career aspirations** based on the skills believed to be necessary to engage and succeed in such tasks (Correll 2004). This has implications on: • Decision and motivation for university-industry collaboration	**Q50. As a female academic, how confident would you say you are about:** <u>Probe:</u> *Professional image* *Skill set and expertise* *Gender identity* *Cultural identity (as an African woman)*

• Links between the kind of networks build and even research productivity (i.e. available resources) • Preferred modes of engagement with industry	
	Q51. What would you require to become a more successful and prestigious academic?
Expectation states theory – gender status beliefs influence men and women's behaviour in mixed gender settings: men tend to talk more, make more task suggestions, act more assertive, and appear more influential than women (Ridgeway, 2001) If women **act against status expectations**, others may **penalize them**, for example, for asserting authority or engaging in self-promoting behaviour (Ridgeway, 2001)	**Q52. Overall, how would you describe the gender relations between male and female academics within your academic setting?** *<u>Probe:</u>* *Friendly or unfriendly?* *Gendered roles? (e.g. at meetings, department vs. institutional level)* *Gendered stereotypes/perceptions about competencies/skills?* *Information access?* *Access to informal networks?* *Leadership roles*
BASIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Age (the biological age of an individual) continues to have an **ambiguous effect on academic engagement** with industry (Perkmann et al., 2021)	**Q53. How old are you?**
Women are often discussed as having **insufficient education** or **experience** (Boden & Nucci, 2000)	**Q54. What is your level of education?**
Explores whether **seniority** (in terms of academic hierarchy) is **related with academic engagement** as evidenced in Italy and the UK (Perkmann et al., 2021).	**Q55. What is your academic ranking?**
The situation of women, varies according to national contexts (Chasserio, Pailot, & Poroli, 2014) – which allows an examination of the **similarities and the differences** in the experiences of women academics regarding gender and university-industry collaboration	**Q56. What is your country of origin?**

OTHER ISSUES

This research project is about the role of gender in university-industry collaborations in sub-Saharan Africa. It mainly focuses on the way gender shapes three crucial factors: i) decision and motivation to engage with industry; ii) available resources for engagement (e.g. networks, research productivity); and iii) specific engagement modes (e.g. conferences, consulting). The questions focused on the career choice, academic organisational context, sub-Saharan cultural context, research productivity, networks, and industry engagement channels of women academics, and the relevance of these to their participation in university-industry collaboration. As the project unfolds, the researcher is expecting to have a more focused approach to this subject. Therefore, I appreciate if you could answer the following questions, which aim to improve the research methods I use.

Q58. Do you have any other issues that you would like to cover in relation to the subject of this project?

Q59. In what ways do you suggest women's participation in university-industry collaboration could be improved?

Q60. Do you know of any other person in your group who might be willing to take part in this study? *Probe: (Name; email or telephone; address)*

Thank you for your time. With your permission I may have to come back to you to clarify certain points to gain a better understanding of your experiences. I will understand if this is not convenient, however your help would be appreciated.

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Appendix E

Appendix E.1: Sustainable development framework

Appendix F

Appendix F.1: Publication trajectory of thesis chapters

CHAPTERS	PUBLICATION TRAJECTORY	PUBLICATION OUTPUT
Chapter 3	This chapter is adapted from a manuscript submitted to and published by the Cambridge University Press as part of a book on Corporate Sustainability (2nd ed.), edited by A. Rasche, M. Morsing, J. Moon, & A. Kourula. The manuscript is authored by Afua Owusu-Kwarteng and Sarah Jack. The conceptualisation, analysis and writing of this manuscript were all done by the first author. Adjustments have been made to the original manuscript (such as in the numbering of sections, figures and tables) to improve the coherence with other parts of this thesis.	Book chapter
Chapter 4	This chapter is adapted from a manuscript submitted to Studies in Higher Education. The manuscript is authored by Afua Owusu-Kwarteng, Cynthia Forson, Lola Dada and Sarah Jack. The conceptualisation, analysis and writing of this manuscript were all done by the first author. Adjustments have been made to the original manuscript (such as in the numbering of sections, figures and tables) to improve the coherence with other parts of this thesis.	Journal article (AJ3)
Chapter 5	This chapter is adapted from a manuscript submitted to the 2023 European Academy of Management Annual Conference. The manuscript is authored by Afua Owusu-Kwarteng. The	Conference article

	conceptualisation, formal analysis and manuscript preparation were all done by the author. There have been adjustments made to the original manuscript (such as in the numbering of sections, figures and tables) to improve the coherence with other parts of this thesis.	
Chapter 6	This chapter is adapted from a manuscript submitted to Gender, Work & Organisation. The manuscript is authored by Afua Owusu-Kwarteng, Cynthia Forson, Lola Dada and Sarah Jack. The conceptualisation, analysis and writing of this manuscript were all done by the first author. Adjustments have been made to the original manuscript (such as in the numbering of sections, figures and tables) to improve the coherence with other parts of this thesis.	Journal article (AJ3)