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**THE ECONOMIC RAMIFICATION IN EQUATING WOMEN  
EMPOWERMENT WITH FEMINISM IN AFRICA**

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## I. ABSTRACT

There is quantum empirical evidence and numerous literature that correlate women empowerment to macroeconomic growth, which further make a strong correlation of empowerment of women to feminism agenda. This has led to the rise of gender democracy and feminism in the past two decades up to date. However this development of women with high educational status driven under feminism is failing to correlate to any meaningful macroeconomic growth in Africa as proposed, which this paper phenomenological seeks to prove the lack of correlation between feminism and women empowerment, hence leading to low or no effect in macroeconomic growth in Africa economic ecosystem.

## II. INTRODUCTION & BARGROUND

The paper acknowledge all the literatures that has argued to support women empowerment equated to feminism and it correlation to macroeconomic development of a country, with different empirical evidence based on the geographical areas chosen for the research studies, as a result about 11 scholarly publication which has gained wide readership on the subject matter of feminism was used as a reference to define the axiom of this argument, support of empiricism leading to theorization.

The report of United Nations Economic and social council in March 1969 underscore the place of women in Ethiopian society as at that time. The paper state “Women occupy a very significant and decisive place in the society, cultural, economic and political life of Ethiopia”. It further posit; their importance is evident both in modern and traditional sectors, not only as housewives and mothers in society as a para-eminent role, as well as their contribution to quality of day-to-day life (*Pg.2 E/CN.14/SW/INF.15*)

It was noted "Ethiopia being a predominantly an agricultural country; farming is primary occupation that determined the rhythm of economic life.

In such environment, people live modesty, dedicating themselves mostly to traditional occupations. Since farming is a family enterprise, women in Ethiopia help in agricultural activities and have a quasi-equal social status with men. A farmers wife is his chief adviser and helper and it may well fall to her lot to be responsible for the marketing also" (Pg 3. E/CN.13/SW/INF.15)

This underscore the fact that, to be able to create a meaningful economic growth, one has to understand the endogenous market value and its structures of a particular geographical area and engineer most of its labour force to this sector of the market for economic growth.

However an error emerges when an effort is made to logically correlate women empowerment to high level educated women activism in gender equality and women right advocacy as the (Pg3 E/CN.13/SW/INF.15) Noted 'that modern features of government allow women to enjoy equal rights, privileges and obligations under the law and have been called upon to fight for these rights as most women in the past and current continue to do in some part of the world'.

This is noted to be the premise of feminism upon which all the publicly and most promoted research papers rely upon to argue their case as a universal applicable theory, however this paper seeks to argue that it is inapplicable in African ecosystems, when feminism is persuasively cooked-up to mean women empowerment and correlate it to macroeconomic growth of a nation.

Under the context of Africa, women empowerment has always been defined as acquiring a skill that is complimentary to the effort of the husband or the man in the society that she looks up to, not to ascend and equalize in the same status within socioeconomic agenda which (Pg7. E/CN.14/SW/INF.15) of United Nations Economic and Social Council 1969 succinctly define it as a replicable phenomenon in Ethiopia and it states "As a rule Ethiopian women are very clever with their hands and eager to acquire new skills; most of them possess skills in pottery making, basketry, spinning, weaving etc. but the items which they produce are usually for their own domestic use and not so

much for sale. As the paper finally put, what they need is some encouragement and guidance as to how their own crafts could be used as a means of increasing family income.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research was to establish a qualitative understanding from the active performance of feminist and non-feminist women in various degrees of socio-economic status and its correlation to macroeconomic development for easy comparative analysis.

A phenomenological study of the grounded theory approach was adapted to record, describe, analyze and theorize the experience relating to women activities to national economic development. This scientific approach was adopted to develop a deeper understanding of the existing problems within the phenomenon to allow for converging of new ideas with the old (Troachim, 2006). Strauss (1987) suggest that grounded inquiry by careful analysis of data, involving the examination of field notes, study of the transcribed interviews sentence by sentence, coding of each sentence or phrase, sorting the codes, making comparisons among the categories and ultimately constructing a theory by this approach. This is able to unraveling the elements of experience, their interrelationship for a theory to be developed. This enables the researcher to understand the nature and the meaning of an experience in reference to a particular setting (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The Subjective experience of people is the most objective means of establishing scientific knowledge (Epistemological Assumptions) (Creswell, 2013; Wolcott, 2008; Guba and Lincoln, 1998). Mostakas(1994) underscores that phenomenological research is the only means of capturing subtle meanings and personally held beliefs without external thought complexes on the participants.

Grounded theory is more distinctive from priory theoretical orientations because its practice is underlined in the assumption that theory should be grounded in data from the field; actions, interactions and social process of people (Creswell, 2013) juxtaposing with the literature or scholarly work on feminism equated to women empowerment and its defined correlation to national economic development.

A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to the sample market to give meaning to the phenomenological and inductive nature of the research studies; a means to arrive at the preposition or theorize based on (Descarte, 1912: 1988) self-evidence. (Kant, 1966) underscores three source of knowledge; sense (phenomenological empirical given in perception); imagination ( necessary to arrive at a synthesis of knowledge) and Apperception (consciousness of the identity of things) Thus the only means of ensuring comprehensive self-report which give the research participant the latitude of open-ended questionnaire to freely express themselves un-ended regarding any of the phenomenon of investigation. Non-probability sampling method was used to enable the researcher to identify and question informants because of their individual positions, roles, bar grounds and experience.

#### **IV. THEORY & LITERATURE**

(Dollar and Gatti 1999; Klasen 1999) asserted the primary pathways through which gender systems affect growth are by influencing the productivity of labour and the allocation efficiency of the economy. (Pg.12.E/CN.14/SW/INF.11) report that in Ethiopia participation of women in community development programmes dates back to some very humble beginnings initiated by the wives of the men community development workers in 1961/62. During that time some efforts were made by men to organize women for educational purpose and they tried to involve their wives to assist them in carrying out the programme for women in the rural areas. Women were encouraged and helped to form their informal groups. However majority of the rural women were not attracted by the ideas and were reluctant to join.

This present a critical question, why were the women reluctant to join the groups for women economic empowerment? S. Lubega(2000) posit that traditional concept of women in Uganda places them in an inferior position in relation to men. Kiswahili proverb, according to S. Lubega depict that when a woman assumes power in the house, the house is as good as destroyed because all sorts of people will seize the opportunity to confuse it. She further asserted married women usually must seek permission from their husbands to conduct business and particularly in rural areas women frequently have to give up income from their business to their husbands.

Finally she concludes economic independence of women lies at the heart of the problem. Women lack of control over productive resource and assets is systemic issues. Inequality in marital status and property ownership intersects with cultural attitude and beliefs. And Ugandan men express the view that women will become uncontrollable, unmanageable, disrespectful if gain economic dependence.

UPPAP (2002) Bride wealth payments lead to the perception among both men and women such that men own women and that, it is therefore a woman’s job to both provide for and serve man.

Fig. P1

Structure of Uganda’s productive economy (1997) in percentage Elson and Evers

Sector	Share of GDP	Contribution of Women to GDP	Contribution of Men to GDP
<b>Agriculture with small holders</b>	49.0%	72.6%	24.8%
<b>Industry</b>	14.4%	4.3%	24.8%
<b>Services</b>	36.6%	23.1%	50.4%

The table marked Exhibit “P1” provide significant information on the high contribution of women to GDP of Uganda through it Agriculture sector since 1997 yet what is the current state of Uganda’s economy as at 2017 understanding it dependency on the Agricultural sector, in the mist of feminism advocacy. 40% depreciation of the shilling in September 2015. Inflation also edged up to 8.5%. With the economy growing at a rate of 4.5% to 5% 2015/2016 against what was anticipated by government at 5.4%. The paper argue that women economic empowerment should rather focused in directing these women to the sectors of the economy, they could seize the opportunity to become efficient and effective, the only bases to realize the link to macroeconomic growth than an attempt of correlating the three variables defined as economic empowerment, feminism and macroeconomic growth; logically to achieve an agenda which has strong ramification to Africa economic developmental system beyond what we could imagine.

Emmanuel Akyeampong (2012) posit “warfare, state formation and political centralization elevated men over women but even in non-centralized states the process of production and reproduction in kinship networks subordinated women to men”.



Claude Meillassoux (1981) asserted “if we are to understand how the domestic society operates, reproduction must be taken into central consideration. The domestic community is indeed the only economic and social system which manages the physical reproduction of human beings, the reproduction of the producers and the social reproduction at large through a comprehensive set of institutions, by the ordered manipulation of the living means of reproduction.

(Boserup, 1970; Goody, 1976) observed agricultural patterns mapped into marriage, so where the plough was used; men did much of the work in agriculture, polygamy was minor, where the wife was largely dependent on the economic provision of the husband. Where women are the primary agriculture workers such as in planting cultures; polygamy is valued and men marry many wives. Akyeamong further asserted, on historical and ethnographical accounts, pre-colonial Africa was not an era of perfect gender parity, colonial Africa clearly emerged as an era of institutionalize gender inequality. Finally claimed the contours of the colonial production system excluded women from the cash economy and created gender-biased.

From all the literature submission by this paper, argue clearly; the African economic ecosystem never permit women to assume an equal gender equality with men as the premise upon which this paper stands to draw an empirical analysis from field data that measure the economic impact of highly educated women classified feminist with marginal or low level educated women classified non-feminist in a comparative studies to deduce it ramification to national economy.

## V. DATA DEVELOPMENT, ANALYSIS & DEDUCTION

The studies was conducted using one million (1,000,000) women as a sample population for the survey within the African region, taking into consideration women at the age of 20-55yrs of age. The studies were measured strictly with four (4) major variables to analyze the impact of women to national economic development. Which are defined below;

- a. **Feminism**; measuring the belief and acceptance to the concept of feminism
- b. **Education**: Understanding and measuring the participant level of education

- c. **House Hold Duty:** Measuring the extent of performance in household duty as a mother and a wife
- d. **Domestic Impact:** The measure of how her current profession affect economic livelihood of the community and the society, the participant belong.

The priority of this whole studies was to measure the economic impact of feminism and non-feminism towards macroeconomic development. With such purpose as a priority, special emphasis on the various statistical testing of variable dependence and it computation to consume the focus of this paper were limited in presentation, however certain theoretical relationship were identified scientifically to form the premise upon which to derive the objective of this paper.

A Student T-test was run on the various categories of variables to ascertain it dependence. It was established per the analysis that highly educated women are strongly feminist as compared to lowly or non-educated women and it further established through the Pearson’s correlation test that the highly educated women and house hold duty are strongly correlated but inversely proportional. Implying when women are more educated, they turn to be less committed to house hold duties as compared to lowly or non-formal educated women.

This easily led to the creation of the simple table below from the sample population framework as follows

Table 1x.

Variable	Response Date	Non- Response Data
Highly Educated	458,000	0
Non-Highly Educated	542,000	0
Feminist	410,000	48,000
Non-Feminist	542,000	0
Household duty Contract	454,000	0
Household duty Non-Contracted	546,000	0

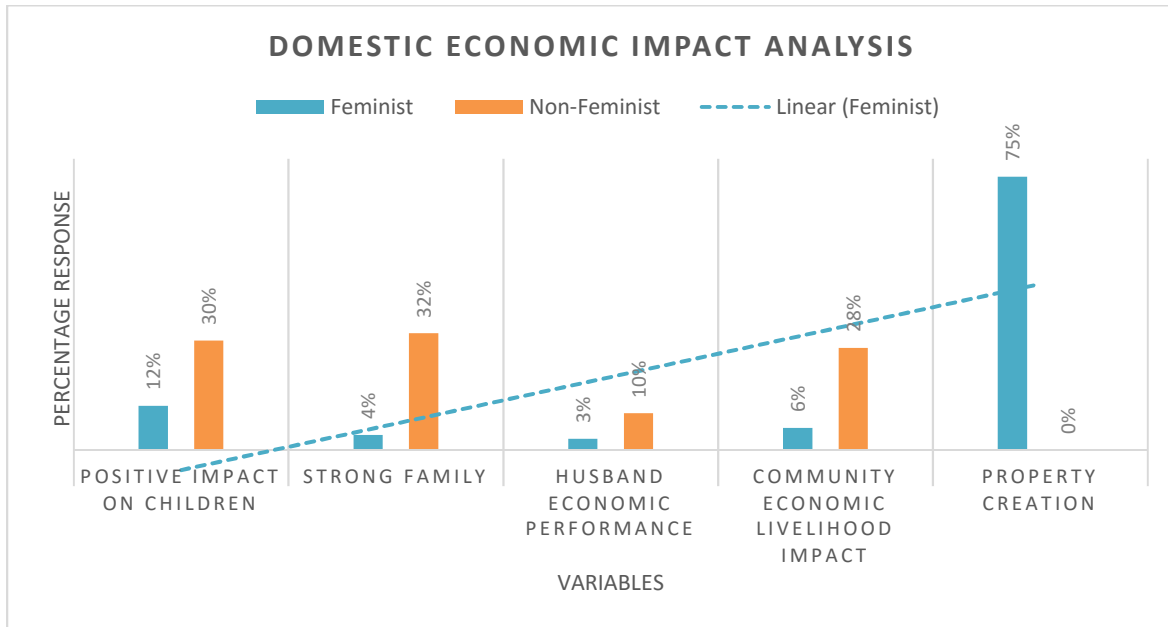
“Domestic Economic Impact” as an indicator was measured under the following variables defined below

- i. **Positive impact on Children:** The extent upon which children are groomed to be responsible members of the society.
- ii. **Strong Family:** This defined the cohesiveness, unity and actively contributing to the socioeconomic development of the community
- iii. **Husband Economic Performance:** This defines the man’s performance in any socio-economic venture.
- iv. **Community Economic Livelihood impact:** This define the impact of the woman profession in the community according to public report
- v. **Property Creation:** This defines the wealth creation purpose to satisfy material interest as individual.

Table 2x.  
Domestic Economic Impacts Studies

Variable	Positive Impact on Children	Strong Family	Husband Economic Performance	Community Economic Livelihood Impact	Property Creation
Feminist	12%	4%	3%	6%	75%
Non-Feminist	30%	32%	10%	28%	0%

Graphical Exhibit 3x.



1. Feminism has a very low economic impact on socioeconomic development in Africa
2. It is justified per this argument that non-feminist are actually making macroeconomic impact in Africa ecosystem.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The paper argue that the UN-women economic empowerment conference, themed Progress of the world’s women in transforming economies from 2015-2016 justify the paper preposition with their further fact findings but it was wrongly interpreted and argued on the lenses of feminism. For instance, their study using the data from 219 countries from 1970 to 2009 found that every additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreased by 9.5%. This kind of education has nothing in connection with feminism advocacy and such a distinction should be always established in the bases of women empowerment.

This paper further mirror, the original structure of Africa traditional socio-economic system of development, placing women as the axiom of strong family institutional establishment, for a strong nation. Furthermore African women are brought up to see their effort as a complimentary to their male counterparts in nation building not equality of socioeconomic power in management. Therefore the total misconfiguration of this economic system is creating confusion and contributing to the malfunctioning of the continent macroeconomic performance to some large extent.

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

1. Education of women should be devoid of feminism agenda but actively driven to technical skills and quality house management a grounds for a strong family which has effect to a strong economy.
2. The economic ecosystem of individual African nations need to be well understood to drive women empowerment and educational agenda to enable them become effective economic players as a complimentary role to men who are traditionally leading figures in economic ventures
3. In developing economy, most of the women are at the forefront of informal sector which is very unique of its kind and need not be undermined with high level education within the framework of feminist agenda because that forms the backbones of such economy, rather they need to be equipped with managerial economics and methods to be efficient in productivity, to step-up the value of their economic livelihood.

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