

Thesis Title: Followership and Women's Empowerment to Sustainable Development: A case of Women in the National Association of Women's Organizations in Uganda

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Abstract: Taking the case of women in the National Association of Women's Organisation in Uganda (NAWOU), this study investigated followership and women's empowerment for sustainable development. Informed by the propositions of Social Contract Theory, Morals by Agreement Theory, and Capability Theory, the study delved into the concept of followership, followership as a tool and action in the empowerment process; and the nature of women's followership as they pursue their empowerment for sustainable development. The way women are perceived as followers and the implications of these perceptions on women's empowerment for sustainable development was also examined. The study followed a case study design through which data was collected from thirty-one, purposely selected, key informants using in-depth interviews. Data was analysed using the grounded theory approach. Findings showed that followership was generally a taken for granted concept. Respondents characterised it as "going along", "going after something" and "being controlled". Some of the respondents used followership as a cooperative venture, retrospection on past experiences, as a detour, seeking to stabilise or destabilise the status quo, identifying preferred values, and mentorship. Fear was found to be the main causal condition for followership, with minimal self-reflection in followership actions and limited chances of empowerment. Empowerment emerged when individuals acted consciously and had a number of well understood alternative courses of action to choose from. Some people acted to avoid followership, some embraced it unconsciously with no question and others consciously but critically embraced it in their actions. Most voices reiterated that many women perpetually followed unconsciously even when other alternatives were available. However, women's followership of NAWOU was found to be pragmatic and conscious of the implication of possible empowerment. But, education, family ties, and financial situations played a role in the attainment of that empowerment. It was concluded that depending on personal characteristics, perception of empowerment, and the typology of followership adopted, women could gain empowerment for sustainable development. The study recommended that NAWOU, the government, academic institutions, and similar organizations reconsider the concept of followership and its implications on empowerment.

Date: 19th April 2022

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Smart Room, CHUSS.

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Godfrey B. Asiimwe
2. Dr. Robert S. Esuruku

Opponent: Professor Consolata Kabonesa