International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development-– Volume 5 Issue 6, Nov- Dec 2022

Available at www.ijsred.com

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

MARKET OUTCOMES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN KENYA

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Abstract:

This study presents an analysis of the market outcomes of gender inequality across sectors in Kenya. The study tests the hypothesis that gender inequality persists in the labour market because of the characteristics of women and partly because of gender discrimination in wage setting. Ordinary least squares (OLS) methodology was used to explain participation and wages. According to the results of this study, education and other demographic factors are the key determinants of the choice of sector of employment and earnings in Kenya. The gender gap decomposition results suggest that men are favored in more sectors as opposed to women. The study recommends development of policy instruments to reduce gender inequalities in access to education and also government policies that minimize favoritism towards men in the labour market.

Keywords —Gender inequality, gender wage gap, labour participation..

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I. INTRODUCTION

Productivity growth is a central factor of economic growth in all economies the world over. Mobility of labour and other factors of production to higher-productivity activities may hence have a substantial impact on economic growth. This type of growth-enhancing structural change can be a contributor to the overall economic growth, a key development indicator. Most of the high-growth economies are typically those that have experienced substantial growth-enhancing structural changes especially in regard to labour productivity. Developing countries often have abundant and cheap unskilled labour and for that reason have a relative competitive advantage over developed countries in labour-intensive production such as primary production and low-skilled manufacturing jobs(McMillan et al., 2011).

A number of studies have revealed that men and women face unequal treatment in the labour market, especially in terms of wages and labour participation. Labour markets in almost all developed countries are characterized by significant gender inequalitieswhose explanation may be employers discriminating against female employees among other factors (del Río et al., 2011).

Promoting gender equality and women empowerment is increasingly being seen as instrumental in fostering inclusive and dynamic economies and healthy societies. Societies thrive when all people have equal access to resources and opportunities. In many cases women tend to re-invest most of their revenues in health, education and nutrition of their families and thus their full socio-economic participation produces high dividends in terms of economic development. Gender equality and women empowerment is closely linked to sustainable development and is vital to the achievement of human rights for all (Wekwete, 2014).

In many parts of the world especially in developing countries women continue to face constrains that hold them back from achieving their full potential. In Africa women face barriers in the workplace, in accessing infrastructure services, in economic opportunities and also in leadership representation. These barriers are mostly in form of restrictive cultural norms and practices as well as discriminative laws. As a result this leads to limited opportunities for the entire society, impacting both men and women, but in many cases women are more affected. These barriers have become a hindrance to the achievement of sustainable development goals and Africa's true development potential.

On average African women earn less than men in all economic sectors including agriculture which was estimated to 74% in 2019. Women are the primary producers in Africa but they lack access to land and farm inputs which makes them achieve lower yields in agriculture and experience greater insecurity in incomes than men (Banks & Africa, 2020). According to Mbratana and Kenne (2017), studies have revealed that women tend to work on average more hours than men but they are often among unpaid family and domestic workers.

ILO (2019) report shows that gender disparities are found in almost all countries across the world and that on average women earn 20% less than men world over. Moreover, mothers are reported to earn lower wages than non-mothers, a situation commonly known as 'motherhood penalty'. Further there is a tendency for wages to be lower in enterprises where the workforce is predominantly made up of women as opposed to men.

Globally it is estimated that countries lose about $160 trillion in wealth due to differences in lifetime earnings between men and women. In nearly all countries, women face barriers in their attempts to fully participate in the workforce and earn as much as their male counterparts. Therefore there is need to achieve greater levels of gender equality in labour markets and other areas as it will lead to substantial socio-economic gains for countries as well as better life for women (World Bank, 2018). Figure 1.1illustrates the global gender gap for different countries in 2017.

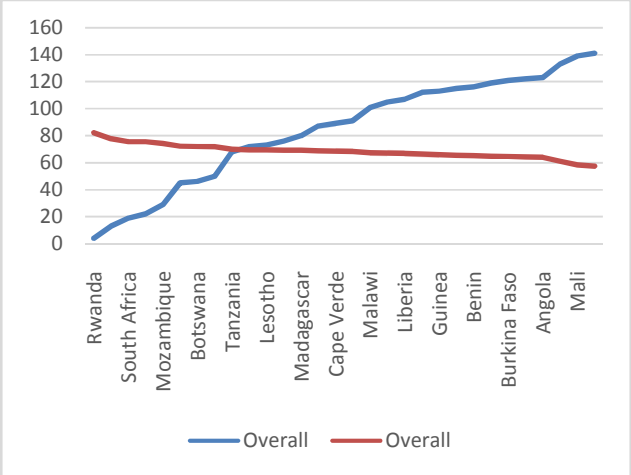


Figure 1.1

Figure 1.1 shows that Rwanda ranks 1st in Africa and is the only African country in the top 10 globally having closed about 82% of gender gap. Namibia South Africa rank in the top 20 globally and have closed about 78% to 76% of their gender gaps. Mali and Chad are among the lowest ranked in the index and have not yet closed 60% of their overall gender gap. Kenya ranks at position 76 globally with a score of 69%. The overall gender index comprises Health and survival outcomes, educational sub-index and labour force participation sub-index. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2017), out of the 46 high income countries covered by the index, five had closed more than 80% of their gender gap, 26 had closed between 80% and 70% and 14 had closed between 70% and 60% of their gender gap. It is only one country that had not yet crossed the 60% threshold. Further out of the 40 low income countries covered by the index, only one had closed more than 80% of its gender gap, nine had closed between 80% and 70% and 10 had closed between 70% and 60% of their gender gap. Two countries in this group had not yet crossed the 60% threshold. This report father notes that, while this does not suggest a relationship between gender parity and GDP, a growing body of research and empirical evidence suggests that gender parity may be a key driver of prosperity and economic growth.

A number of international and local policies on gender have been fronted over time with the aim of bridging the social-economic gaps that exist between women and men. Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality and goal 8 of Decent Work and Economic Growth together with the constitution of Kenya (2010) call for elimination of labour market discriminations. According to ILO combating labour discrimination is an essential part of promoting decent work whose impact is felt beyond the work place. Non-discrimination and gender equality have been the central to ILO, in terms focus, from the time since its inception. This is in line with the declaration of Philadelphia stating that, "all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of dignity and freedom, of economic security and equal opportunity, and the conditions in which this shall be possible must constitute the central aim of national and international policy" (ILO, 2016).

Gender Inequalities in Kenya

In Kenya since independence, in 1963 laws have evolved with the aim of addressing labour market inequalities and discrimination, recognizing both local and international human rights instruments. These rights been expanded to recognize gender equity in labour force participationwhich is inalienable and interdependent human right under UDHR (1948). Kenya has further committed to various instruments to guarantee equal working conditions for women, not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work Article 1(1) of the ICESCR (1966) states that all peoples have the right to self-determination and therefore can freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

In the year 2000, the first National Policy on Gender and Development (NPGD) was adopted in Kenya. The major goal of this policy was to provide a legitimate point of reference for dealing with gender inequalities at all levels of government and by all stakeholders. Further it made a way for gender mainstreaming across all sectors with a view of generating equitable development outcomes. This policy led to a number of achievements that included requirement for gender representation and mainstreaming of gender considerations across all sectors in the country. However the goals and objectives were not achieved as fast as was expected and this necessitated the revision of constitutional requirements for equality and non-discrimination policy (Republic of Kenya, 2019).

The Kenya Vision 2030 acknowledged that women are disadvantaged in accessing productive opportunities and resources. The capabilities of women are not developed to full potential due to limitations in accessing capital, education, training and healthcare. Therefore the vision's goal for gender, youth and vulnerable groups is equity, in both power and resource distribution between sexes, and improved welfare for all. Further equity is viewed as a recurrent principle in economic, social and political programmes with special attention being pointed to communities with high incidence of poverty, unemployed youth, women and vulnerable groups. The goal of the vision was to achieve equity in power and resource redistribution among these groups. Specific strategies were to be implemented with the aim of increasing the participation of women in all economic, social and political decision making processes. These strategies include provision of financial support to women to increase their incomes and reduce pay gaps, increasing representation of women in leadership and giving priority to women employees in public sector to attain the one third gender rule. (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

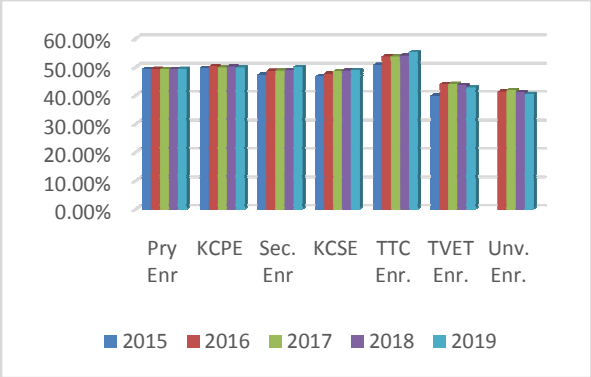
The constitution of Kenya (2010) prohibits any form of discrimination and accords equal opportunities for all in political, economic, cultural and social spheres under article 27(3). Gender equality rights are stipulated in article 26 which include but not limited to affirmative action programs and policies for redressing disadvantages suffered by individuals or groups due to past discrimination.

Gender Disparities and Education in Kenya

Education is a major contributor to sustainable human development and it is a key factor in empowerment of individuals and groups to better quality of life. Gender inequality in education tends

to reduce long-term economic growth through lower investment in human and physical capital. In the long-run inequalities in education lead to gender wage gaps (Zuzana, Susumu, Thierry and Nadege,2021).

The government of Kenya has since, independence (1963), pursued the goal of universal access to primary education, though this has not been fully achieved. The education policy in Kenya does not discriminate on gender basis and is essentially gender-neutral in outlook. Despite this fact the education system is characterized by significant gender disparities. At the national level boys and girls have almost equal access to primary education in terms of enrollment although the completion rates are not equal. This trend continues and the gap widens at secondary education and tertiary level. Notably, the education gap between boys and girls has been reducing over the years although it still persists. For example in 2003 total enrolment in primary school rose by 17.6% as a result of the implementation of free primary education policy by the government. There was a slight gender imbalance even at this stage with girls being 48.2% while boys were at 51.2% (Republic of Kenya, 2004 and 2007).



The figure1.2 shows that female enrolment at primary level is on average 49.2% indicating a slight gender gap which is the same case for primary completion at KCPE level. The gap at secondary school level enrolment seems to slightly increase but in 2019 the gap is eliminated at 50%. The completion gap of secondary level is slightly higher than that of primary level. This implies there are more boys completing secondary education than girls for all the years. Enrolment for teacher training institutes (TTC) is higher for women throughout an indication that there are likely more women teachers than men especially at the primary school level. Enrolment for TVET and Universities show a sharp decline for women meaning a wider gender gap.

Manufacturing in Kenya

Manufacturing sector plays a very important role in driving economic development by stimulating and sustaining high productive growth, creating employment and building competitiveness through exports. Manufacturing is key pillar to economic growth in that the rate of growth of the sector has direct and indirect impact on the development of other sectors of the economy. Kenya has not been able to develop a robust manufacturing sector, and economic growth has primarily been driven by agriculture and the service industry. The manufacturing sector has been facing challenges which have led to a significant drop in its contribution to GDP in the country. In 2018 manufacturing was identified as one of the 4 pillars in the Big 4 Agenda expected to spur economic growth. Since then government and the private sector have focused on measures that support development of the manufacturing sector. (Republic of Kenya, 2018).

Women in Kenya are not explicitly excluded from the manufacturing sector, but they are somewhat under-represented and undervalued. However Kenya's manufacturing companies are predominantly male owned and staffed across all subsectors with a ratio of 64% to 36% of men to women.

The Problem Statement

Kenya aims to achieve its full development potential and to this end it must harness the skills and creativity of all its citizens both men and women. Gender inequality in the labour market has led to gender productivity gap, which in turn leads to a lag in economic growth and development. Moreover, research shows that when men and women are empowered equally to participate in economic activities, it enhances productivity and better performance workers, which in turn leads to

improved development outcomes (World Bank, 2019). Governments and other stakeholders are advancing gender mainstreaming policies and initiatives to achieve national and international development goals.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2021) by the world economic forum Kenya ranks at position 95 overall out of 156, which is a decline from position 73 in 2006. Further Kenya has been ranked position 84 on women participation in economic activities which is a drop from position 40 in 2006. Women economic empowerment in Kenya has also been inhibited by disparities in compensation at the workplace. The wage gap between men and women is directly linked to their ability to be productive in the economic sphere. World Bank survey on informal enterprises shows that men-managed enterprises have a higher productivity compared to women enterprises, with productivity gap being by Ksh. 6,881 (World Bank, 2016).

A study carried out on wage determination and gender wage gap in Kenya revealed existence of gender inequalities across all sectors. The aim of this study was determine the market outcomes of gender inequality in Kenya. The study specifically aimed at finding the effect of gender inequality on wage and labour participation in Kenya.

Research Questions

What is the effect of gender inequality on wage in Kenya?

What is the effect of gender inequality on labour participation in Kenya?

Research Objectives

Examine the effect of gender inequality onwages in Kenya.

Analyze the effect of gender inequality on labour participation in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

SDG number 5 underscores the vital role of gender equality and therefore this study is vital since policy implications arrived at will help to reduce gender inequalities. The findings of the study will be useful in guiding in the formulation of appropriate labour policies that reduce gender inequalities across different sectors in Kenya. Further the results of this study point out factors that influence labour productivity in Kenya hence formulation of policy instruments that lead to better market outcomes in Kenya.

Scope of the Study

The study sought to analyze gender wage discrimination and labour productivity in Kenya covering the key sectors, agriculture, fishing, mining, manufacturing, construction, trade and services industries.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

THEORETICAL LITERATURE

Several wage formation theories have been put forward that explain wage determination, wages differentials and gender inequalities. These include compensating wage differentials, human capital theory, efficiency wage theory and dual labour market theory.

Compensating Wage Differentials

The idea of compensating wage differentials was first advanced by Adam Smith (1776), then Rosen (1986). The hypothesis contends that compensating differentials arise to reward workers for non-wage considerations. The theory therefore suggests that wage disparities exist among workers because of different characteristics of jobs within and among firms. This implies that workers consider both wage and non-wage factors in the labour market (Jacobs et al., 2014).

The proponents of the hypothesis asserts that the pleasant and unpleasant features of a job influence workers decisions to enter the job. The hypothesis suggests that more workers prefer jobs with pleasant features and because of competition these jobs have lower wages. Men and women, according to the compensating differentials hypothesis, are viewed to assess the unpleasant features of a job uniformly, but they act differently in regard to job choices. Men seem to attach more importance to wages and benefits while women consider interpersonal and other non-wage aspects of the job. This results to more women working in jobs with pleasant features but with less wages than men

(Filer, 1990). The compensating differentials logic is seen to be consistent with the functionalist logic.

Human Capital Theory

The human capital theory was formally developed by Mincer (1958) and Becker (1960). The theory explains how differences in training and education result in differences in levels of incomes among occupations and jobs. According to this theory earnings reflect remuneration for formal education, training and work experience (Sweetland, 1996). The human capital model links a person's expected participation in labour force to one's incentive to acquire marketable trainings. The training acquired through school or on-job training in turn determines the earning potential of the individual. Therefore the expected lifetime work period is an important factor in determining one's ability to achieve high earnings according to the model. Those who expect to work for long hours and foresee the greatest number of years in the labour force have higher expected returns. In contrast those who expect to drop out of labour force have reduced work time years which decreases their potential reward from human capital (Polachek, 2006).

Women who expect to bear and raise children, on average work less hours than men and tend to purchase less human capital investment than men. Lower human capital investment relative to men lowers the average earnings of women as well as their productivity. Hence women tend to work in low paying and low productivity sectors which do not require high skills leading to widening gender wage gaps and gender productivity gaps (Polachek, 2006, Becker, 1985).

Efficiency Wage Theory

Traditional economic theory of wages and unemployment treats the labour market as any other market where wages are determined by the forces of demand and supply. Wages are believed to be positively related to productivity such that observed wage differentials are assumed to be due to differences in productivity. Efficiency wages occur when employers deliberately set wages above market-clearing level to raise the cost of job loss by workers and in turn obtain higher productivity from them (Aigbokhan, 2011).

Efficiency wage theory has three variants which include, nutritional, turnover and shirking theories. The nutrition-based efficiency theory was advanced by Leibenstein (1957) and Mazumdar (1959). The theory explains the link between wages, nutrition and productivity in agriculture especially in developing countries. According to the theory employers do not lower wages even in the face of unemployment. This is because lowering wages would cause workers to consume less, thereby lowering their productivity.

Labour turnover theory was advanced by Salop (1979) and considers labour turnover cost minimization as the reason why employers would set wages above the market-clearing level. These costs include hiring and training new employees and production lost when employees exit, which negatively the profitability of a firm. To minimize these costs according to the turnover cost theory, employers tend to pay higher wages to retain workers (Salop, 1979).

The shirking theory is associated with Shapiro and Stiglitz (1984) and is concerned with inducement to higher productivity. According to this theory if the market-clearing wage is viewed as the opportunity cost to labour, paying such a wage would have little incentives on workers to perform well since losing the job would not be very costly. Employers therefore pay wages above this level to make the cost of job loss larger and encourage higher productivity. The theory further views monitoring of workers as being costly to the firm. The firm therefore pays an efficiency wage to prevent workers from shirking which increases productivity. This leads to wage differentials among occupations and within jobs (Wu & Ho, 2017, Shapiro & Stiglitz, 1984).

Empirical Literature

A study by Kabubo-Mariara (2003) found out that years of schooling was a necessary factor that determined the choice of occupation and earnings. Decomposition results of the gender pay gaps revealed the existence of a gender bias in favoring men across sectors. Another study by Agesa (1999) confirmed the presence of gender wage differentials with much of the difference being due to discrimination of women rather than a woman's

education or differences in employment capilities compared to male counterparts.

Milana (2018) investigated the determinants of male-female wage variations in the Hollywood industry. The results suggested that the simple features of being a female decreased the expected salary by 60 % before taking into consideration other factors.

(2019) in a study for Indonesia revealed that education is more important in influencing female than male participation decisions. This study reveals that once in the labour market, women earn equal pay to that of men, controlling for their characteristics. Nevertheless, women are less likely than men with similar characteristics to enter the labour market, but gender differences in participation narrow as education increases.

III. METHODOLOGY

This paper estimated labour market participation and wage equations for men and women by sector of employment as well as for both men and women combined. An analysis of the labour market in Kenya reveals that there are three main employment alternatives, self-employment, public sector employment and private sector employment. Multinomial logit model analysis was used to derive the Mills ratio for use in the earnings function using the Lee two-stage method (Lee,1983).

The standard Mincerian (Mincer,1974) humancapital earnings function was estimated, which assumes that the proportional change in wage earnings is a function of the characteristics of the individual (X_i), which include age, education and other characteristics, i.e.

$$\ln W_i=\alpha_0+\beta_1 X_i+\varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

$\ln(W_i)$ is the natural logarithm of the observed wage rate for individual iandε

$$\overline{W}_m-\overline{W}_f=B_m(\overline{X}_m-\overline{X}_f)+(B_m-B_f)\overline{X}_f \quad (2)$$

Equation two of decomposes gender wage gap analysis following the work of Oaxaca (1973). Wage regressions are estimated separately for men and women on the basis of a set of personal characteristics but are extended to take into account differences in occupation. The fitted regressions pass through the means of the data, and the raw mean wage differential can be broken down as equation two where: W_t is a vector of mean wages; X_t is a set of mean personal characteristics; t = m, f, where m and f denote male and female, respectively; β_m and $_f$ are the estimatedcoefficients. The first term on the right-hand side is the portion of the differential due to endowments, while the second term is the part attributable to differences in returns to these endowments. The first term is based on estimates of what a woman would receive if she faced the male wage structure. This term could as well be expressed in terms of how much a man would earn if paid according to the female wage structure.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Data Source

The study used the World Bank STEP survey data 2015-2017 that addressed the objectives stated. The STEP survey collects data on the supply, demand and distribution of skills in several developing countries including Kenya. In this study, the STEP household-level survey was used in collecting information from 3894 households. It used a three-stage stratified sampling design on cognitive skills, socio-emotional skills, job-specific skills, wages, and industry employed of adults aged 15 to 64 living in urban areas for both employed and unemployed. The survey also includes information about the family, health and language, and hence, providing additional information that serves as controls

Result Discussions

Men dominateof occupational distribution, both skilled (9%) and unskilled (13%) private sector. A Bigger percentage of men (9%) is also found in the skilled publicsector compared with their female counterparts (3%), as well as unskilled private sector (6% compared with only 1% of their female counterparts). Overall, men are more likely to work in both sectors, except in business where men and women occupy the same percentage (8%). Women on the other hand dominate less lucrative occupations, particularly subsistence farming (59% compared with only 34% of their male counterparts) and unpaid family work (7% women compared with only 2% of their male counterparts).Gender

inequalities in education are more pronounced at lower levels of education. For instant, 38% of all women never went to school, as opposed to only 22% of their male counterparts. Only 59% of the women in the sample had at least completed high school, compared with 72% of their male counterparts, and only 2% of the women had post-secondary education and above, compared with 4% of their male counterparts.The last row of Table 1 compares male and female log annual wages by sector of employment. We note that the mean earnings are generally higher for men than for women. For example, the mean log annual wages for males is about 0.42 points (4%) higher than for women. In the public sector, the mean wage for men is 0.9 points (9%) higher than for women. For the full sample, the gender wage gap is 0.94 points (10%).

Married men in all sectors seem to earn more than their unmarried counterparts. On the other hand, the effect of this variable for females is negative but only the coefficient for the private sector is significant. Although the sectoral results show a lower premium for married women in the private sector, the full sample coefficients imply a higher premium for married workers (both male and female) in the private sector compared with the public sector. Age is associated with higher wages for both men and women in all sectors, but the effect is stronger for private sector than for public sector employees. Age squared has a negative impact on wages and the effect is stronger for males than for females in both sectors, implying that wages increase at a decreasing rate with age. For the full sample, the effect is the same for both sectors, but more significant for the private sector. As with participation in the labour market, there is evidence of an inverted U- shaped profile of earnings as age increases.

As expected, the returns to education are all positive and significant except for public sector males with primary education and primary school leaving examination. In most cases, the impact of education seems to be stronger (larger coefficients) for females than for their male counterparts in all sectors. This confirms results obtained by Glick and Sahn (1997), Neumark (1988), and Paternostro and Sahn (1999). Contrary to findings by Glick and Sahn (1997), however, returns to education for male employees are higher in the private than in the public sector. The reverse is observed for females except for those with university education. For the public sector, the coefficients for females are also more significant than for their male counterparts, but the reverse is observed in the private sector. Generally, for both male and female workers in the private sector and females in the public sector, returns to education increase with level of education. For the full sample, returns to education rise with the level of education for both public and private sectors.The results using the Neumark decomposition method indicate that for the public sector, 78% (256-178) of the difference can be attributed to discrimination, compared with 71% (103-32) in the private sector and 78% (36 + 42) for the full sample. However, the largest component of the unexplained wage gap in all sectors springs from male advantage.

Conclusion

The results of this study reveal that determinants of labour participation differ across sectors for both men and women which confirms presence of heterogeneity in the labour market in Kenya. Education and other demographic characteristics are key determinants of labour participation for women but education seems to be more important in for women than men.

Women also earn on average lower wages than men across all sectors implying persistent gender wage gaps in the Kenyan labour market. Education seems to account for the biggest percentage in earning differences between men and women across sectors. Women with more education have higher participation rates and higher wages. Characteristics such as being married and age are associated with higher wages for men in both sectors, while married women earn less than their unmarried and male counterparts. Increasing returns to education are in general significant for both sexes across sectors.Wage gap between male and female workers were largely accounted for by education and other demographic characteristics. However there was a part of wage gap between male and female workers that was unexplained which implied gender wage discrimination across all sectors.

Policy Recommendations

The study results indicate that education is a key determinant of labour force participation as well as wages of women in Kenya. Education therefore has key implications on poverty through increased labour force participation and increased earnings. The government should therefore reduce gender inequalities in access to education to minimize gender inequalities in labour force participation.

The results on gender wage gap revealed a significant part of wage differentials between male and female workers that is not accounted for by demographic characteristics. This pointed out to gender discrimination in the labour market. The government should offer firms incentives to employ more women and develop policy measures to cater for women workers with maternal and childbearing responsibilities.

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