

Review of: "Exploring the Relationship Between Gender and Sustainable Development Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: Insights from a Zimbabwean University"

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The authors have tried to gain insights into the challenges faced by female academics in higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing sustainable competencies for a sustainable future, a case study was conducted using mixed methods, focusing on a university in Zimbabwe. The paper is generally well written, but the literature review lacks depth and the empirical section lacks clarity. Despite the relevance of the topic, I recommend to the authors to revise the paper as suggested below:

- In page 3 the definition of the hypotheses related to sustainable development competencies is somehow abrupt. The authors define well the context, but it is not clear why they focus on sustainable development rather than on any other field or subject. Is this a paper on gender unbalances? Or on the gender unbalances in SD competencies? Please elaborate.
- Again, the literature review does not set the background of the research hypotheses. The hypotheses are exposed very briefly in the introduction and then forgotten in the literature review, which focuses solely on how big the gender gap is and what causes it.
- A section on the issue at stake, which is sustainable development competencies, is completely missing.
- More information about the university used in the case study is needed. The authors refer to 43 staff members and to 3 deans. Do they refer to 3 faculties/departments? Does each of them has some 15 staff? In what areas do they specialise? Moreover, some information is needed about the Zimbabwean university system and its main characteristics in terms of how universities are organised. Typically, there are some differences even between European countries and within countries.
- It is not clear if the authors interviewed 3 deans or 43 staff or both. This becomes clearer later in the paper, but it is necessary to add detailed information about the population in the beginning of the discussion of the methodology. What are the differences in the two surveys run? What questions were they asked? Is it possible to add the questionnaire in an appendix?
- The evidence concerning competencies is problematic. The authors produce limited evidence concerning the actual competencies of women. They do not present objective indicators, for example, on their research output, and they just present information on the tasks they carry out. In other words, the authors can say that there are less women than

men working in academia, but how can they say that they have less competencies? That they are less able to do R&I? That they are less good at managing or performing tasks? This needs to be supported not just by deans' statements.

- Useful references:

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