

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

Yonjoo Cho<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Texas at Tyler

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper has caught my attention as it seems timely as it explored how gender influences the acquisition, development, and application of sustainability knowledge and skills among academic staff in a Zimbabwean university, where male-dominated norms and structures are prevalent. This case study of an African university from the UN's gender equality goal is worth publishing after reflecting the following several areas for improvement:

1. Restructure the paper, incorporating key elements of research: introduction (including problem statement), theoretical background (intersectionality, gender equality in higher education institutions, and the Zimbabwean context), method, findings, discussion (significance of the study, implications for research and practice, study limitations), and conclusion. In this sense, you may see missing elements in the paper.
2. Clearly state the problem statement and study purpose in the introduction section. I see four objectives of the study but don't see overarching research purpose and question(s). You may move four objectives in the beginning of the method section. Among four objectives, the second objective as to the evaluation levels of sustainable development competencies of staff is unclear as it connotes a measurable factor or variable, which was not part of the research focus.
3. Add a sentence or paragraph that gives readers an overview of the paper at the end of the introduction section. This will help us understand what will be covered in the paper in advance.
4. Define what intersectionality and gender equality in HEIs is about in the theoretical background section to set the clear stage in terms of understanding before moving on.
5. Reconsider the selection of the study design as it is as if the author used three interviews with deans as major data sources and the survey of 40 academic staff members as supplementary, which does not mean that the study employed mixed method as intended.
6. Separate findings and discussion as the two differ in terms of focus. Add the study findings identified without any further discussion in the findings section, and discuss significance of the study, implications for research and practice, and study limitations in the discussion section.
7. Revise the current title to aptly sum up the study focus as the study did not examine the relationship between gender and sustainable development competencies.

8. After reading this paper, my first question had to do with “what's new?” The study findings were already discussed in the introduction and literature review section. Were there any surprises and unique phenomena in this case study of a Zimbabwean context?