

**MAKERERE**



**UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN, ART AND  
TECHNOLOGY**

**MARGARET TROWELL SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL AND  
FINE ARTS**

**PORTRAYING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT USING THE  
WOODCUT PRINTMAKING TECHNIQUE**

**BY**

**MUGANZI AUSI**

**16/U/7231/PS**

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE  
AWARD OF A DEGREE IN A BACHELOR OF INDUSTRIAL AND FINEART  
AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**2020**

**DECLARATION**

I MUGANZI AUSI hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that this research report is my original work and has not been submitted in any university or other institution of higher learning for academic purposes.

Signature: ..... *Ausi* .....

Date: ..... *17/12/2020* .....

MUGANZI AUSI

STUDENT

## APPROVAL

The research report carried out by MUGANZI AUSI was prepared under my supervision and is ready for examination with my approach.

Signature:  .....

Date: 14 January 2021 .....

DR. AMANDA TUMUSIIME.

SUPERVISOR



## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my family members most especially my father Twijukye Ausi who had been encouraging me to go and do it even at times I felt like it was so hard.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

A special debt of thanks is due to my supervisor, Dr. Amanda Tumusiime for her invaluable commitment and guidance which made this research possible.

I would also like to extend my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine art library staff for the help they have rendered me during my reading.

I thank God for the gift of life, without which I would not exist. Glory be to Him. Special thanks also goes to my dear parents Twijukye Ausi and Matsiko Janet for their guidance, courage and financial assistance in all ways of need.

Last but not least, to colleagues who rendered help in terms of guidance and material support while carrying out my research. May the Almighty bless the works of your hands and reward you with fruitfulness in life so that you can continue serving the nation.

**May God bless you all.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	i
APPROVAL .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	v
CHAPTER ONE	
1.0 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2Problem statement.....	6
1.3Purpose of the study.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	6
1.5Research questions.....	6
1.6 Scope of the study.....	7
1.7Significance of the study.....	7
1.8 Limitations .....	7
CHAPTER TWO	

2.0 Literature review .....	8
 CHAPTER THREE	
3.1 Research methodology .....	11
3.2 Introduction.....	11
3.2 Research design .....	11
3.3 data collection .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.4 Basic techniques used in the Project execution. ....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.5 lessons learnt from the project .....	13
3.6 challenges acountered in this project .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
 CHAPTER FOUR	
4.1 Presentation and discussion of findings.....	16
4.2 Personalities involved in the survey.....	16
4.3 The respondents involved in the survey.....	17
4.4 Images of the final work executed from the project.....	18
 CHAPTER FIVE	
5.1 conclusion and recommendations.....	22
5.2 Appendices.....	23
REFERENCES .....	25



## **ABSTRACT**

Chapter Section one in this research report indicates the introductory part of the project that was based on a theme that explored printmaking as a tool to execute the research deriving the compositions from the women empowerment topic. This arose out of the knowledge that has been acquired throughout the printmaking course training for the past three years at the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine arts.

Whereas, in chapter two of this book, I present the research methodology used and process that led to the production of the entire major work project and procedures. Chapter three of this report descriptively presents the student's practical procedures based on the project classification and attainment in relation to what was analyzed and proposed in the introductory part of the study. In chapter four, I state and suggest some of the recommendations in regard to research execution at the Margaret Trowell school of Industrial and Fine Arts. It further exhibits the body of works that have been completed based on this printmaking project

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will give an overview of the introduction problem of the statement, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance, limitations and scope of the study.

## 1.1 Background.

Woodblock printing is a technique for printing text, images or patterns used widely throughout East Asia and originating in China in antiquity as a method of printing on textiles and later paper. As a method of printing on cloth, the earliest surviving examples from China date to before 220 and woodblock printing remained the most common East Asian method of printing books and other texts, as well as images, until the 19th century.

There have been numerous efforts by researchers and international bodies to develop accurate measures of gender equality. Because gender inequality is a multifaceted concept, measuring it is often done by considering multiple indicators. Looking at single indicators would show that while a country like China has achieved parity between the sexes in educational attainment, the ratio of girls to boys indicates a strong son-preference, and the related practice of sex-selective abortion. However, no single measure can hope to capture the wide variety of dimensions in which gender inequality can manifest itself.

Art is the way something is done — “the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others.” A good piece of art can excite, provoke, soothe and inspire. Art brings beauty into our world. Art is important because it makes our world a better place. It also brings a sense of enjoyment and pleasure. Art allows for the expression of truth and beliefs. Some art challenges our beliefs. Other works affirm our faith. Art is an important tool in causing us to examine our beliefs in light of an artists’ rendition or perception of truth. Art has the ability to transport us to a different time and place. It allows us to gain historical perspective and understanding. Art allows us to appreciate different periods in history and their impact and significance in our world.

Gender inequality acknowledges that men women are not equal and that gender effects and individual’s lived experience. These differences arise from distinctions in biology, psychology, and cultural norms. Some of these distinctions are empirically grounded while others appear to be socially constructed. Studies show that the different lived experience of genders across many domains including education, life expectancy, personality, interests, family life, careers, and political affiliations. Gender inequality is experienced across cultures.

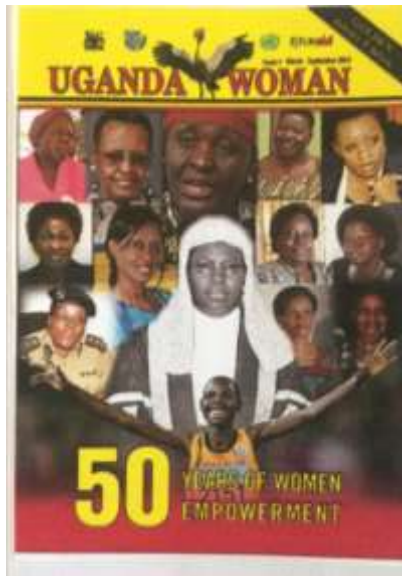
In 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft set out what she saw as the principles for emancipation of women: education of girls on the same footing as boys, an end to prejudice against women, and those women should be evaluated on their own merits rather than the achievements of their partners. As highlighted in the introduction, the past 200 years has seen marked improvements in these respects<sup>26</sup> as well as many that Wollstonecraft could never have foreseen. However, for all the progress that has been made, the elimination of discrimination against women is not yet fully achieved. Compared to men, women are often to do more of the domestic duties such as child-rearing, do lower status jobs, more involved in informal sector, less likely to be entrepreneurs, participate less in the political decision making process, paid less, more likely to experience violence and so on (OECD 2013, 2015).

In order to better understand where and how gender inequalities emerge and persist, it is necessary to find ways to measure gender inequalities over time. This chapter therefore seeks to address three interrelated questions. First, how can we measure gender inequality in a historical perspective and, second, using these measures, what trends do we observe in gender equality in the world economy over the last century? Lastly, to what extent does a relationship exist between gender equality and economic development in the long run? These questions are addressed by analyzing a wide range of indicators of gender equality in the twentieth century, based upon indicators used in currently available gender equality indices.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, this chapter introduces a composite index of gender equality covering 129 countries between 1950 and 2003. This index evaluates women's position compared to men in four dimensions (socio-economic, health, household and politics).<sup>28</sup>

Even though the empowerment of women and closing the gap between the two genders have been widely acknowledged as important development objectives, finding “methods for systematically measuring and tracking changes in levels of gender equality” is not straightforward (Malhotra 2003). There have been numerous efforts by researchers and international bodies to develop accurate measures of gender equality. Because gender inequality is a multifaceted concept, measuring it is often done by considering multiple indicators. Looking at single indicators would show that while a country like China has achieved parity between the sexes in educational attainment, the ratio of girls to boys indicates a strong son-preference, and the related practice of sex-selective abortion. However, no single measure can hope to capture the wide variety of dimensions in which gender inequality can manifest itself.

To compare the overall performance of countries in achieving gender equality, it is also necessary to have a measure that can summarize multiple indicators. Combining data into a composite index means that different dimensions can be brought together into a single standardized value.

### 1.11 Inspirations about socio-economic life of people in slums:







## **1.2 Problem statement**

In Uganda the issue of inequality between men and women has become a point of discussion in almost all dimensions. In the past, women were considered inferior over men and they were always treated in a minor way. A woman would not sit on table with men for discussions about business, war plans, among others. With the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women have come to fight for their equality and in a bid to support this rally; I will use the art of printmaking as a medium of communication to promote equality between men and women in Uganda.

## **1.3 Purpose of the study**

To explore the woodcut printing technique and produce prints portraying women emancipation in Uganda.

## **1.4 Objectives of the study**

- Ideation.
- Making of several sketches illustrating equality between men and women in Uganda.
- To execute the sketches or drawings into final woodcut prints.

## **1.5 Research questions**

- To find out whether the art of printmaking can be used as a medium of communication to promote equality between men and women in Uganda.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

The research was executed during this semester and involved the inner depth of visual, literal and written literature from surveys conducted in residents in central Uganda.

The researcher intended to explore the use of different media, materials and come up with a different and well explained visual artwork.

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

The research project provided a basis for analyzing the woodcut printing technique that I have recently learnt in the field of printmaking to examine women emancipation in Uganda for the production of wall hanged prints

Improving upon the quality of printing through study, research and practicing. Providing information to the scholars, writers like art critics, news agencies. Discovering and exploring more techniques on how to handle different material for printing projects. High grade of proficiency and skill was exposed in the art works that were designed by the artist.

## **1.8 Limitations.**

The project runs through a long, tiresome process before a unified beautiful and complete print is produced. The cost of some materials is high and this worsens cost of production for instance from acquiring boards to inks and then framing and mounting. It involves a health challenge such as over exposure to stinking paraffin since it is the most readily available liquid used to clean boards (for printing) when to add other scooping and incision.



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 Literature review

International Women's Day was first established at the 1910 International Socialist Women's Conference in Copenhagen. German women's rights activist and Marxist theorist Clara Zetkin was the one who tabled the idea. Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Denmark celebrated the holiday for the first time on March 19th 1911, with the Soviet Union the first to make it a public holiday in 1917. The date of 8th March was adopted internationally in 1921. In 1977, the United Nations declared 8th March as *International Women's Day*, a day each year when the world should celebrate, recognize and remember women and the accomplishments they have made to society.

In Africa, women and girls are disproportionately affected by poverty and discrimination. Women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and have limited access to the educational resources and financial tools they need to succeed. Women's leadership and participation in politics, civil society, and the private sector is limited on local, national, and global levels. Adolescent girls face particular challenges, including lower educational outcomes and traditional harmful practices.

However, it has become widely accepted that promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) is essential to achieving sustainable human development, poverty eradication, and economic growth on the African continent. Despite many international agreements set to promote GEWE, women still lag behind men in education, employment, politics, health, and access to public services. According to the UNFPA (2014), gender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life.

Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence; have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or through setting up businesses; enjoy equal access to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions. An important part of gender equality is empowerment for women, which focuses on power imbalances and giving women more control to manage their own lives. Without both, sustainable development is not possible. In fact, several studies show that excluding women's input into development by inhibiting their involvement in education, leadership, finance, and social improvement has a negative impact on development (Lucas, 2001; Okojie, 1996).

This only further reinforces women's dependence on men rather than promoting them as equals. It is important for women to take ownership over their own empowerment, and this has increasingly been occurring across the African continent, as seen through a growing number of women's movements and grassroots women's organizations. It is

the local women that have the greatest understanding of the deficiencies that women and girls face, and essential knowledge of how to advance their rights.

When women push for social change and accountability, they develop leadership skills; some use these skills to transform their lives, their families, and their communities for the better. Because gender roles are socially determined, it is equally important to approach GEWE in a culturally sensitive manner and to recognize that women, as a group, are diverse and have differing interests. This means that taking multi-pronged approaches to GEWE is necessary to meet the needs and concerns of even the most marginalized and vulnerable women.

To create lasting change in GEWE, gender mainstreaming must occur throughout all sectors of society and women need to acquire the necessary leadership skills that lead to true transformation. Many different types of initiatives are occurring throughout Africa that address the role of women in leadership or provide leadership skills to women

### **The Art of Empowering Women.**

My art is aimed to inspire women to be bold, beautiful and empowered!



As modern women, it is important that we connect to our source of strength, and art is my chosen avenue to contribute to that. I believe that art has the potential to awaken something within us and open up new ways of thinking. With this in mind, I aim to explore the world of female empowerment art and gear my work towards elevating the feminine to its rightful place alongside the masculine.

The paintings I create aim to facilitate that movement. Portraying women to be strong and fearless activates our inner heroines and encourages women to be bold and make a name for themselves. This activating force is infectious, it's already happening all around us, in literature, music, movies and everyday life and will encourage society to take notice of the amazing capabilities of women.

My inspiration comes from various places. History is a great teacher and researching strong, historical, female figures is a great passion of mine. Another source is connecting to the Goddess energy through female circle meditation and to the spirit animal through shamanic meditation. Female strength comes from within and centering and tapping into your inner power is essential to making that small change to believe in your own power.

Female empowerment art can help us remember that our inner strength and power is not in spite of, but because of our sensibility, vulnerability and compassion.

I see my work not only as decorative pieces but also as a tool to contribute to women's empowerment movement. Through the association with strong animals such as the Lion or Tiger, I portray women to be beautiful whilst holding the fierce energy, capable of thriving in any situation. By presenting women as equal to the 'King of the Jungle' I hope to encourage them to take ownership of their lives and accomplish their dreams and aspirations.

Art is a reflection of our inner being and by fully immersing yourself in a piece of art you allow your true emotions to take control. The passion I hold for art is the catalyst for my creation, supporting my journey towards a level playing field for all humans.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.1 Research methodology**

This section of the report provides a description of methods and steps that were used to come up with the entire work so as to realize the pre-determined goal of the research project. Woodcut, the oldest technique used in fine art printmaking, is a form of relief printing. In this case the artist's design or drawing will be made on a piece of wood (usually beech wood), and the untouched areas are then cut away with gouges, leaving the raised image which is then inked. Woodcut prints are produced by pressing the selected medium (usually paper) onto the inked image. If colour is used, separate wood blocks are required. Woodcut printing is sometimes referred to as xylography or a xylographic process (from the Greek words 'xulon' for wood and 'graphikos for writing/drawing), although these terms are commonly reserved for text prints.

### **3.2 Research design**

#### **Identification of a theme and topic**

This was my starting point, I considered finding out information on women empowerment. This was done through field researching and referencing the internet sources for information (visual and theoretical) which yielded enough information that was necessary for executing work.

#### **Project proposal writing:**

After brainstorming and discussing more about the area of concern I thought of noting down the issues that led me to writing of a report what would show my reason and objective for undertaking the task. This had two sections in which I introduced the project, gave a background about the project, stated the problem, formulated research questions, stipulated the purpose of the study, objectives and further more I defined the scope in which I worked for the execution of the project. In the second chapter I looked at the methodology which I was to follow for the execution of the project under which I highlighted on the methods of data collection whereby I considered all. For instance from the internet, Magazines, consultation from available experienced printmakers, painters on how to handle the project among others which appeared helpful to me. I considered looking at plans, techniques and media to be used and also a project brief which was a set of instructions or guidelines to enable me to accomplish a given task in a way that meets client's expectations. More so I stated the expected limitations to the project as well as delimitations.

### **3.3 Data collection**

When this commenced, I was able to collect visual data which comprised of a variety of pictures depicting women emancipation both locally and internationally. This served as a basis and proceeded to look at different ways printmaking artists have tried to communicate on gender equality between men and women. This was a great inspiration in the ways that I produced my work. I also collected literature on how projects related to mine have been handled, weaknesses and measures of effective execution.

Here I referred to my resource book, looked at the visual research and generated rough initial sketches that were further developed to be at the back of every work produced during this project. I was also able to peruse through different prints (by other artists like **Frank Shepard Fairey** ) looked at how they handle their subject matter, composing power, and skilled color application as well as different harmonies. This exposed me more to a new dimension of working.

Further developing and refinement of the sketches for the pre-determined work hence making them ready for the transferring/registering demanded some concentration and consultations from my supervisor and other people for discussion and advice, this therefore needed to be paid a little more time to be covered. It was an achievement and a significant step to finalize this in this project and it only allowed me to start thinking about feasibility of the project in terms of costs by listing requirements, preparing the possible budget for items that were to be used such as scoopers and gouges, sketch books, inks like Mixing white which is significantly used in its scarcity, Display stalls, suspenders (for holding work), frames and glass, written material about the work.

### **3.4 Basic techniques used in the Project execution**

#### **Mark making technique(s)**

This involved sensitive use of lines (directional), shapes, texture, among other elements in order to come up with the intended subject. This was used in favor of time, and provided me with ease to work on every single piece of the project. This has also been possible due to some skill that has been acquired through this three year period training at the Margaret Trowell School in specifically printmaking elective course.

### **3.5 Lessons learnt from undertaking the project:**

The project has exposed me to a new dimension and tested my ability of embarking on projects that are outside classroom setting. This can help meet and address certain issues in the society using printmaking. The project has exposed me to different techniques used in terms of color application (using specified color schemes), textures, composing to be able to make effective communication for instance reduction method. I was also able to set a bench mark basing on some professional Ugandan and international printmakers so as to identify the loop holes, weaknesses and strengths in this printmaking field. This allowed me to check on former working style basing on final work procedures and execution.

### **3.6 Challenges encountered during the project work.**

As a printing student, I was supposed to provide some materials for the project such as inks like mixing white which was then in scarcity and hence expensive, kerosene ( for cleaning boards), sets of scoopers and gouges that were often damaged, printing visual research, purchasing sketch and resource books. This increased cost of production. The project required a lot of time yet it was limited, for instance it took a bit longer for a single impression to dry in order to register another. There was also a challenge of limited space to lay works for drying (in racks). This made me put some of the work outside studios.



**fig 1**



**fig 2**



fig 3



## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.1 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents and discusses findings of the study on portraying women empowerment using the woodcut printmaking technique.

The study was done under the main themes that were derived from the study variables. These include; the Personalities involved in the use of woodcut printing in the field of art today and their opinion on how gender equality can be achieved today.

Explanations were made by use of illustration tables and plates. Below is the background information of the respondents.

#### 4.2 Personalities involved in the survey

A total number of 24 respondents were chosen. These included; thirty-seven point five percent (37.5%) from the General Public (vendors, married people, single mothers, foreigners, ), twenty point eight percent (20.8%) Practicing artists (lecturers, printmakers, professional and non-professionals), twenty point eight percent (20.8%) students, twelve point five percent (12.5%) women activists and eight point three percent (8.3%) girls. (see Table 1 below).

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
General public	9	37.5%
Practicing artists	5	20.8%
Students	5	20.8%
girls	2	8.3%
Women activities	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

### **4.3 The respondents involved in the survey**

The General public took the largest percentage of thirty-seven point five percent among other respondents with a bigger number of sub personalities in their opinion on how gender equality can be achieved today.

Practicing artists such as educators (lecturers), professional artists in the field and non-professional (street) artists, covered twenty point eight percent (20.8%). Visual artists like illustrators, sculptors and painters call for gender equality. Such art works made using this a strong theme appear unique hence high demand for them.

Students were few because they had not been introduced to such a technique and how to apply the different themes.

Women activists were got from Kampala and surrounding suburbs. These were located within the researcher's geographical scope of the study (Kampala). Gallery Attendants come across a number of oppressed women. They had some writings and records about these oppressed women. This was so significant to the research study as there was accessibility to reason for championing women emancipation thus acquiring firsthand information.

Girls between 15- 19 years were limited as shown in Table 1. As they grew up, they were not sensitized enough about gender equality because they has no idea of what gender quality means.

**4.4 Images of the final work(s) executed from the project:**









## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the above data gathered during my field study, this report tends to explain how portraying women empowerment can be achieved using the woodcut printmaking technique. In my findings, I have drawn conclusion from the objective of my study. First of all, students involving in research are expected to critically select the themes they intend to undertake in a certain project that can be of both aesthetic and functional purpose to the community where they are placed. Therefore Art being looked at as a means and not an end. More so, research reports should be sequential in order to give students more time to stipulate the real purpose for which such a project is necessary and of value to a finalizing student. Also its student's pleasure to undertake research since it gives space that exhibits creative expressive ability, research potential and exploring mastery skill in any given area/field. Respondents with the negative attitude towards gender equality lacked enough sensitization about it. At the end of the day fields listed above served as communicating agents in sensitizing the public about the significance of gender equality. Most of the sensitized personalities involved in the research had knowledge, skills and experience about the women empowerment. There was accessibility to both local and foreign markets for woodcut prints on women empowerment.

## APPENDICES

### Questionnaire

MAKERERE

UNIVERSITY

#### THE MARGARET TROWELL SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL AND FINE ART

#### Dear Respondent

I am Muganzi Ausi a third year student at the above mentioned school. This self-administered questionnaire is intended to help me carry out the research about portraying women empowerment using the woodcut printmaking technique

The research is majorly for academic purposes, thus all the information is confidentially and highly regarded.

**(PLEASE TICK WHERE APPLICABLE AND FILL IN THE BLANK SPACES)**

1. Sex

Male.....      Female.....

2. Occupation

Professional.....      Nonprofessional

3. Level of the profession

O Level.....      Degree.....

A Level.....      Masters.....

Diploma.....      Beyond.....

4. Do you have a job alongside producing this artwork?

Yes.....      No.....

5. How long have you dealt with woodcut printing as a means for your artwork?

Half a year.....      A year.....      More than five years.....

6. What inspired you to use woodcut printing as a technique in your artwork?

.....



7. How different is woodcut printing technique different from other printing techniques?

.....

8. Which other techniques do you accompany woodcut printing with?

.....

Give reason(s)

.....

.....

9. How is a woodcut print durable and how best can one handle a woodcut artwork?

.....

10. Which is the best quality of wood used?

.....

Give reason (s)

.....

.....

11. Who are your target audience?

.....

12. Where are your market avenues (local and international)?

.....

13. How are customers' attitude towards your artwork?

.....

## REFERENCES

LITERATURE REVIEW: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

[https://www.worlded.org/WEInternet/inc/common/\\_download\\_pub.cfm?id=15182&lid=3](https://www.worlded.org/WEInternet/inc/common/_download_pub.cfm?id=15182&lid=3)

<https://www.officeholidays.com/holidays/uganda/international-womens-day>

<https://ramonapintea.com/the-art-of-empowering-women/>