

Resource Sharing and Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma Town Council in Bushenyi District, Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Women have been recognized to be engines of economic growth and development worldwide. Based on this, many nations in the world have formulated and implemented strategies to spur the economic empowerment of women through gender equality as stipulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Empowering women, through gender equality, has been emphasized by many nations to be a strategic approach to lifting rural women out of poverty by providing them with income-generating opportunities and access to resources (SDG 1), addressing disparities in access to resources (SDG 5) and reducing gender-based inequalities by providing rural women with equal access to resources, and employment opportunities hence contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society (SDG 10). The government of Uganda has initiated and supported various strategies to empower women economically but still most women, especially in rural areas, remain disempowered. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of resource sharing on economic empowerment among rural women in Bushenyi District focusing Kakanju Sub County and Bitooma town council. The study specifically sought to establish the extent to which resource sharing influences economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju subcounty and Bitooma town council in Bushenyi district. A quantitative research approach was used to collect, analyze and interpret data. The study was underpinned by the feminist theory and resource-based theory. The study adopted correlational research designs. A sample of 294 respondents was selected from a target population 1117 using sloven's formula. Data was collected using a self and researcher administered questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 confidence level. Research findings indicate that resource sharing has significant relationship with economic empowerment of rural women ($t=7.658$, $P=.000$, $P < 0.05$). Therefore, it was concluded that resource sharing, are essential for economic empowerment of rural women. The study recommends that the local governments and central government should carry out trainings in areas of participation in decision making by rural women to equip them with negotiation skills and take away the fear in rural women to get engaged in decision making since it was found out that rural women are not trained in negotiation skills. This will make them take part in decision making regarding their economic empowerment.

Keywords: Rural women, Economic empowerment, Gender equality, Poverty

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality in the economic empowerment of rural women is a critical issue with significant implications for both social and economic development. Achieving gender equality in the economic empowerment of rural women requires a multi-dimensional approach that addresses structural barriers, promotes women's rights, and challenges

discriminatory norms and practices. By investing in women's education, skills development, access to resources, and supportive policies, societies can unlock the full potential of rural women as agents of change and drivers of sustainable development [1]. Internationally, global agencies are tirelessly investing large amounts in women's economic

empowerment so that they can have a direct path toward gender equality, poverty eradication, and inclusive economic growth. This is informed by the fact that women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees or by doing unpaid care work at home. Through regional and national interventions, the UN aims to empower millions of women to increase income and build assets, wealth, and business leadership. This is mainly directed at poor women in villages [2]. Rural women across the world play a crucial role in the management of natural resources and the well-being and livelihood of rural households and communities. They account for a significant proportion of the labor force in food systems, working as farmers, harvesters and collectors, seed keepers, fisher folks, wage earners, and entrepreneurs [3]. Despite these, the majority of women in rural areas remain marginalized and continue to languish in poverty [4, 2]. The USA is one of the world's nations committed to increasing women's economic empowerment through investment, financing, and global economic partnerships. It supports women's economic finance with a substantial amount to advance women's entrepreneurship around the globe. The government has consequently initiated and operationalized a new multi-donor facility that supports the Women Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDPI). Through these endeavors, the USA aims to engage private sector finance and catalyze increased lending and investment for women's businesses. This has been boosted by complementary technical assistance, such as skills enhancements and market access, to enable women-owned and women-led small and medium enterprises to thrive [3]. The government's long-term objective is to empower women globally. Based on this the USA is at the forefront of championing economic security to enable women poor to have the ability to consistently meet essential needs for oneself and one's family through quality jobs and dignified, decent work to attain some satisfactory degree of securing means of having a stable income and/or enough resources to uplift their standards of living now, for the foreseeable future, and during times of economic crises. The USA government is doing this on the realization that across the world, women are far less economically secure than men [3]. In China, the government has remained committed to initiatives intended to empower women. The Chinese government has continued to host international forums whose agenda is the enhance gender equality and women empowerment as enshrined in the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [2]. The Chinese Government is committed to women's empowerment in tandem with social and economic development. It has formulated a policy system for this noble goal. The Communist

Party of China (CPC) has vowed to follow the fundamental national policy of gender equality and protect the legitimate rights and interests of women and minors in the country. These policies and arrangements are fully demonstrated in the ruling party's high commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In her Five-Year Plan for the period from 2016 to 2020, the government has endeavored to promote women's empowerment of women stretching to local development plans. China strives to build a harmonious and inclusive social environment, hence eliminating all forms of discrimination and prejudice against women, and enhancing people's awareness of gender equality. Consequently, the government has granted greater support to research projects on gender equality and encouraged the educational sector to scale up inputs in women-related disciplines. Gender equality has been integrated into the country's basic education [4 -10]. Southern African countries strive to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development that would ensure poverty alleviation, enhance the standards of living and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration. This is informed by the fact that women are the backbone of many economies in the region. Evidence has revealed that women constitute more than 50% of the poor population in the southern African region and therefore poverty can only be addressed through programmes that specifically target the poor in the region, where women are the majority. Consequently, countries in this region have protocols that stress gender and development specifically economic empowerment. Countries have therefore undertaken reforms to give men and women equal rights and opportunities to economic resources, and improved access to control and ownership over productive resources, land, and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources. This effort is geared towards empowering women economically in the region [11 – 13].

In Kenya, efforts have been made to invest in and economically empower women as a road map towards Kenya's economic recovery after the COVID-19 Pandemic. The government of Kenya believes strongly that women cannot prosper in the workplace, or succeed as entrepreneurs until there is a breakdown of the legal, policy, and social barriers that inhibit their full economic participation. While 80% of Kenyan women are engaged in smallholder farming, only 1% own land, access less than 10% of available credit, and access less than 1% of agriculture credit. Consequently, the government in collaboration with international organizations has taken huge steps in addressing the barriers to women's full economic participation and is working

to close the gender financing gap [3]. Despite these, in Kenya, Women constitute over 60 percent of the 74 percent of Kenyans living in rural areas, where poverty levels remain high. The prevalence of absolute poverty in rural Kenya remains at 49.1 percent. Rural women are at a bigger disadvantage compared to their urban counterparts in terms of access to political, economic, and social development opportunities. Rural women are disempowered as the majority are disproportionately exposed to poverty, exclusion, and the effects of climate change, compared to rural men and urban men and women. In addition, they often lack access to public services, such as education and health care, and have limited resources. Although women farmers are as productive and enterprising as their male counterparts, the gender pay gap in rural areas is as high as 40%. As a result, rural women are often less able to access land, credit, agricultural inputs, markets, and high-value agri-food chains, and obtain lower prices for their crops. Despite all of their contributions, most rural women's labor, including care and domestic work, remains invisible and unpaid [2, 14]. In Uganda, the government recognizes the need to expand opportunities for men and women, not only as a

Statement of the Problem

Economic empowerment of rural women significantly contributes to the attainment of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on a global scale. The economic empowerment of rural women is a powerful tool for achieving multiple SDGs by addressing the root causes of poverty, inequality, and lack of access to resources and opportunities. It not only improves the lives of rural women but also has far-reaching positive impacts on their families, communities, and societies as a whole [16]. To realize this dream women, require accessibility to resources. However, most women are still not economically empowered in many countries, especially in developing countries due to inadequate resources precipitated by gender inequity [4, 2]. The government of Uganda recognizes the important role gender equality plays in women's empowerment as a fundamental driver of sustainable development and economic growth [17]. The integration of gender equality principles in national development plans has been identified to be a critical strategy in ensuring that the benefits of development are inclusive and reach all segments of the population. Consequently, Uganda's National Development Plans stress on gender equality and women's empowerment as key components to guide

Specific Objectives

To establish the extent to which resource sharing influences economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma town council in Bushenyi District in Uganda.

This study was based on the following null hypothesis:

human right but also as a means for sustainable inclusive development. This is noted from the gender-responsive legal and policy environment aimed at reducing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities across different social, political, and economic spheres. The government fully supports international conventions that promote women's empowerment, especially the Global Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the national level, gender issues are encompassed under the 2006 Uganda National Gender Policy. These policies have seen Uganda register some progress in reducing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities through social protection programs like the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) and the Youth Livelihoods Programme (YLP). While these policies and programs have expanded opportunities to attain gender equity and equality, gender biases remain. The problem of women's disempowerment has been widespread in the rural areas [15]. It is against this background that this study was carried out to establish the effects of gender equality on women's economic empowerment in rural areas of Uganda.

its development efforts. Vision 2040 acknowledges the need to increase the representation of women in all sectors. The vision supports social protection programs that benefit women [17]. Despite these efforts, inequality is evident among the Uganda's rural women population. Women-headed households in rural Uganda are economically disempowered and face food insecurity relative to urban women. Among the rural women, 31% are economically disempowered and almost 20% are chronically poor [18]. These include rural women living in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma town council in Bushenyi District in Uganda [19]. This situation is presumably caused by unequal sharing of resources. If this continues, many women will be rendered economically disadvantaged and this will negate the government's effort to promote the economic status of women in the economy. Such conditions would expose women to more poverty and hunger hence lowering their economic status. It is against this background that this study was carried out to establish the extent to which resource sharing influences the economic empowerment of rural women in the aforementioned research site.

H₀, There is no significant relationship between resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma Town Council in Bushenyi District in Uganda

Underpinning Theory

The study was based on a resource-based theory. This theory was propounded by Wernerfelt around 1984. The theory explains that resources, whether tangible or intangible, are crucial to an organization. The theory explains the need for a business enterprise to assess the organization's resources regarding the competitive advantage of an organization [20]. Proponents of this theory argue that an organization's competitive advantage entirely depends on the resources a firm possesses. [21], observes that organizations differ in abilities depending on the number of resources they possess and therefore resources become a priority in determining the competitiveness of a firm. Efficient Proper utilization of resources would make an organization perform better than others in the market [22]. Lending institutions must always make assessments of their resources before lending financial credit to the customers. Good planning and control of resources is done to enhance the implementation of organizational strategies.

Influence of Resource Sharing on Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

[26], conducted a study to figure out factors affecting rural women economic empowerment endeavors in Wolaita Ethiopia. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample size of 100 rural households. Data were collected using cross-sectional semi-structured questionnaire, which were analyzed by descriptive and binary logit model. Rural women economic empowerment index was calculated to measure dependent variables. The index result showed that 69% of the households scored less than 0.5, and thus were considered economically not empowered. The binary logit model result revealed that age of women, marital status, educational level, perception toward economic empowerment, motivation, income, participation in decision-making and participation in leadership positively and significantly affected rural women economic empowerment. The study recommended that existing programs and strategies should be reviewed and new ones designed to effectively improve the situation of rural women's economic empowerment. [27], conducted a study with the aim to increase the understanding of the existing cultural barriers to women's empowerment, to provide a better understanding of the social norms that limit women's access to economic opportunities and to identify the social norms that support or facilitate women's economic empowerment in Burundi. Data collection comprised of a mixed-method approach over three months during which large-scale surveys of the population, qualitative interviews of local actors, and focus group discussions were conducted with women and men of different age groups from rural and urban communes of Burundi. This study highlighted that

Resources are accorded a key role in enabling firms to achieve high performance and attain competitive advantage over others. This is because resources give a firm a strategic direction [23]. [24], went on to identify three categories of resources: intangible, tangible, and personnel. Tangible resources comprise the items that can be physically touched in terms of machines, equipment's and buildings while intangible resources include skills, competencies, knowledge and technologies that are significant in the performance of an organization. The personnel resources are merely the human resources, organizational capabilities needed to operate an organization both efficiently, and effectively [25]. Based on this theory the study intended to establish how resource sharing has been utilized to empower rural women in economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma Town Council in Bushenyi District in Uganda.

patriarchy remains the norm in the Burundian society and does leave little room, for the moment, for both men and women to consider women as autonomous individuals who can make decisions on their own or for their own development. It was established that women's agency and aspirations are still constrained and determined by their social environment which determines their value. The study found out that patriarchy also limits men who try to tread the untrodden path and aid their wives in household tasks. Thus, patriarchy seems to limit men's development as much as it does women's. The study recommended development of individual supporting activities for women, monitoring improvement of their situation and mitigating the barriers and threats, can make the difference at an individual level. [28], examined the effectiveness of a Rural Enterprise Programme (REP) in improving the livelihood of rural women in Ghana, using ex-anti and ex-post income determinants of the programme. Some 217 beneficiary women drawn from farm-based, agro-processing, traditional craft, agro industrial and petty trading economic sub-sectors were selected to participate in the survey using snow-ball sampling method. Using cross-sectional design, questionnaire with open and closed ended items were used to collect data. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze data and the results were presented in tables and charts. The study found that the various inputs and strategies used in the Rural Enterprise Programme to empower women included education and training that equipped beneficiary with literacy skills to enhance their entrepreneurial roles and labour market. The result showed that the women empowerment strategies

employed by the programme produced intermediate and long-term outcomes increasing the nominal income of the participants, indicating improvement in the well-being of the rural women. However, the study identified a gap in accessing affordable finance (credit) and high cost of inputs which presented challenge to the responsiveness of the REP to the beneficiary rural women economic well-being. The study confirmed that rural women empowerment has a high degree of vulnerabilities of access to economic resources which are predominantly owned by men.

[29], evaluated the impact of women's traditional economic activities by assessing the factors that influence their performance. About 480 women responded out of 600, which were selected using a snowball sampling technique from the entire research sites. The data was collected by conducting face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Demographic analysis showed that about 68.33% respondents were illiterate, 47.71% were 31-40 years old, and 47.92% lived in a joint family system. Due to the strict Purdah (veil) culture, about 71.88% of the women's economic activities were confined indoors. It was reported that the major decisions in the household are made by the male members due to the strong patriarchal norms and values. The study showed that development projects by the NGOs and the government have played a significant role in providing credit, training, and awareness to women. Through the study, it was clear that all women were aware of the positive effects of economic independence. However, some revealed the negative effects on their physical and psychological health as well social ties within the households and communities due to the extensive workload and time issues. The study concluded that many demographic social, cultural, religious, and economic factors negatively influence the women's productive potential. [30], carried out a study whose purpose was to investigate the effects of agricultural land tenure policies on women's economic empowerment in Arua District. The study adopted human development perspective theory and correlation research designs because the designs permitted hypothesis testing. The study targeted district

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative research approach to collect and analyze data statistically. The approach was useful in expressing responses of the study figuratively. The researcher used a descriptive research design to collect data from respondents concerning their opinion on gender equality and economic empowerment of rural women. The opinions, attitudes and perceptions of the respondents concerning the influence of resource sharing on economic empowerment of rural women were henceforth described and displayed statistically. To ascertain whether there was any significant

agricultural officers, community development officers, district environmental officers, farmers, opinion leaders from the community, members of civil society organizations, and extension officers from which a total sample size of 120 participants was selected. Reliability analysis was achieved by use of tests retest technique and the results were subjected to factor analysis with all the items registering above 0.80. The expert assessment was used to realize content validity with the minimum principal component analysis factor loading value of all the items in the research tools above 0.80 indicating that the tools were valid. Data collected were cleaned by weeding out inconsistent and irrelevant responses. The study found land tenure policies to be positive ($\beta=.904$) and significant ($p=0.000$) to women's economic empowerment. The study recommended that the government of Uganda, specifically the ministries of agriculture and lands, spearhead an awareness campaign on women's land rights; initiate policy review targeting agricultural land tenure system and women economic empowerment. [31], examined the impact of microfinance on women's economic empowerment. Data were derived from a questionnaire on a sample of 346 women clients of microfinance. Multiple regression and paired sampled t -test data analysis techniques were used in the study. Multiple linear regression result revealed that age, marital status, education level, credit amount, and number of trainings have significant effects on women's economic empowerment. However, previous business experience did not have a significant impact on women's economic empowerment. Paired sampled t -test results revealed that there is a significant mean difference before and after microfinance service in terms of income, assets, and savings. Microfinance has a significant positive effect on women's economic empowerment by improving women's independent income, increasing asset possession levels, and improving monthly saving amounts. Moreover, the study proved that microfinance has a positive impact on women's entrepreneurship development and business exposure.

relationship between resource sharing and women economic empowerment, a correlational research design was utilized to measure and verify the null hypothesis. In this study, a target population of 1117 was considered. These included rural women (beneficiaries) from Kakanju and Bitooma County Council and sub county officials, town council officials and district officials as shown in Table 1. These participants were chosen purposively because they are directly involved in implementing strategies meant to empower women economically. As such they were assumed to be in a better position to

respond to the research questions by virtue of their positions.

Table 1: Target Population

Location	Category	Target Population
Kakanju	Rural women	396
	Subcounty officials	3
Bitooma Town council	Rural women	710
	Town council officials	3
	District officials	5
Grand total		1117

Source: Bushenyi District Community development Office Report (2021)

In this study, a sample size of 295 respondents was selected from a target population of 1117 using Slovene’s formula of 1960 as shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Target Population

e =Standard Error

$$n = \frac{1117}{1 + 1117(0.05)^2} = 295 \text{ respondents}$$

Table 1: Sample Size

	Category	Target Population	Sample
Kakanju	Rural women	396	105
	Sub county officials	3	1
BitoomaTown council	Rural women	710	188
	Town council officials	3	1
	District officials	5	1
Grand Total		1117	295

Source: Researcher Computation (2024)

From each category of the target population, a proportionate sample was obtained using stratified random sampling. Thereafter, individual respondents were selected randomly by use of simple random

sampling with the aid of computer-generated random numbers. These became the unit of analysis in this study. This study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected by use of

self and researcher administered structured questionnaires. This was necessitated by different levels of literacy exhibited by the respondents. The researcher constructed a questionnaire for collecting data based on a likert scale. The questions were closed ended to facilitate collection of quantitative data. All questions were based on the research objectives. The questionnaires were divided into sections according to the research objectives. Content validity index (CVI) was used to test the validity of the questionnaires. The construct validity index (CVI) was established to be 0.9 and was consequently accepted since it was more than the recommended value of 0.7. Cronbach alpha was also used to test the reliability of the questionnaire and it was found

reliable since all items were found to be above 0.7. Quantitative data analysis involved calculation of descriptive statistics. The responses were presented by use of percentages and measures of central tendency. For inferential statistics, regression analysis was used in the testing of hypothesis and establishing the relationship between the gender equality and economic empowerment of rural women. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level. The results were displayed using appropriate tables and figures based on APA edition 6. A linear regression model was used to describe the percentage of independent variables that explained the dependent variable. This utilized the following equation:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where:

α = constant

y = Economic empowerment of rural women

X_1 = Resource sharing

β = Coefficient

e = Term error (0.05)

Response Rate

Complete data from the questionnaires were collected from 288 respondents out of the 295 targeted study population. This translated to 98% response rate. This rate was sufficient in carrying out the study

because [32] indicate that a response rate of 50% and above is adequate enough in conducting humanity studies.

Descriptive Analysis of Resource Sharing on Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

The respondents were asked various questions to establish their opinions on the effect of resource sharing on the economic empowerment of rural women. The results on the same were as presented

in Table 3 below. Where; 1. SD- Strongly Disagree 2. DA- Disagree, 3. N- Neutral, 4. A-Agree and 5. SA- Strongly Agree

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on Resource Sharing on Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

Item	f/%	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
It is necessary for women to share resources with men	F	132	69	-	54	30	3.83
	%	46.3	24.2	-	18.8	10.5	
There are clear guidelines on implementation of resource sharing	F	21	33	-	93	138	2.12
	%	7.4	11.6	-	32.6	48.4	
There is a comprehensible plan in place for resource sharing	F	24	36	12	114	99	1.87
	%	8.4	12.6	4.2	40	34.7	
The actors concerned/responsible for the implementation of resource sharing are easily identifiable	F	96	129	-	27	33	3.67
	%	33.7	45.3	-	9.5	11.5	
There is financial fairness between women and man on resource sharing	F	27	21	-	159	78	2.26
	%	9.2	7.7	-	55.4	27.7	
Am willing to listen to the problems related to resource-sharing	F	147	78	9	21	30	3.59
	%	51.6	27.4	3.1	7.4	10.5	
Am treated with respect when sharing resources	F	33	45	12	120	75	2.14
	%	11.6	15.8	4.2	42.1	26.3	
All resources in our community are controlled by men	F	147	69	12	27	30	3.85
	%	52	24	4.2	9.5	10.3	
Overall Mean							2.92

Source Primary Data (2024)

On the question of whether it is necessary for women to share resources with men the results in Table 3 showed 46.3% of respondents strongly agreed, 24.2 % agreed. On the other hand, 18.8% disagreed while 10.5% strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.83 implies that most of the respondents agreed to the statement that

it's necessary for women to share resources with men. On the question on whether there are clear guidelines on implementation of resource sharing 7.5% strongly agreed, 11.6% agreed. On the other hand, 32.6% % disagreed while 48.4% % strongly disagreed. A mean of 2.12 suggests that most of the respondents

disagreed on this statement. On the question on whether there is a comprehensible plan in place for resource sharing 8.4% % strongly agreed, 12.6% agreed but 4.2 were non-committal. On the other hand, 40% % disagreed while 32.7% strongly disagreed. A mean of 1.87 suggests that most respondents strongly disagreed on this statement. On the question on whether the actors concerned/responsible for the implementation of resource sharing are easily identifiable 33.7% strongly agreed, while 45.3 % agreed. On the other hand, 9.5% disagreed while 11.5 % strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.67 suggests that most of the respondents agreed on this statement. On the question on whether there is financial fairness between women and man on resource sharing 9.2% strongly agreed, while 7.7% agreed. On the other hand, 55.4% % disagreed while 27.7 % strongly disagreed. A mean of 2.26 suggests while most of the respondents disagreed on this statement. On the

question on whether am willing to listen to the problems related to resource sharing 51.6% strongly agreed, while 27.4 % agreed while 3.1% were non-committal. On the other hand, 7.4% disagreed while 10.5 % strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.59 suggests that most of the respondents agreed on this statement. On the question on whether am treated with respect when sharing resources 51.6% strongly agreed, while 15.8 % agreed while 4.2% were non-committal. On the other hand, 42.1% disagreed while 26.3 % strongly disagreed. A mean of 2.14 while most of the respondents disagreed on this statement. On the question on whether all resources in our community are controlled by men 52% strongly agreed, while 24 % agreed while 4.2% were non-committal. On the other hand, 9.5% disagreed while 10.3 % strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.95 implies that most of the respondents agreed on this statement.

Linear Regression Analysis

Linera regression was conducted so as to determine the correlation between the resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.465(a)	.217	.214	.49903

a. Predictors: (Constant) Resource Sharing

Source: Field Data (2024)

From Table 4, R value of 0.465 represents the simple correlation and, therefore, indicates a moderate degree of correlation between resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women. The R Square value .217 indicates how much of the dependent variable- economic empowerment of rural

women, can be explained by the independent variable i.e. resource sharing. The Adjusted R square value of 0.214 shows the amount by which resource sharing predicts economic empowerment of rural women; it indicates that economic empowerment of rural women is dependent on resource sharing by 21.4%.

Table 5: ANOVA^a

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	197.546	2	98.773	166.0	0.000b
Residual	170.164	286	0.595		
Total	367.710	288			

a. Dependent variable

b. Predictors (Constant): Resource sharing

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The results from Table 5, indicate that F statistic of 166.0 was statistically significant. Analysis of variance tests whether the overall regression model is good fit for the data. The above analysis shows that the independent variable: resources sharing,

statistically and significantly predicts the dependent variable i.e. economic empowerment of rural women. Therefore, the regression model was good fit of the data.

Table 6: Coefficient^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard error	Standardized coefficients Beta	T	Sig
SI (Constant)	.413	.118	.000	5.854	.0000
Resource sharing	.465	.043	0.415	7.658	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Economic empowerment of rural Women

Source: Field Data (2024)

The study further established the regression model coefficients to be used in the regression equation as shown in Table 6. The findings of this analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between

resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women in the aforementioned research sites ($p=0.000<0.05$).

Hypothesis Testing

The null hypothesis was tested using the inferential statistics above. This was done to verify if resource

sharing influences economic empowerment of rural women.

Decision Rule

The null hypothesis is rejected if the calculated p value is less than the critical value of 0.05 and vice versa

H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju Sub-County and Bitooma Town Council in Bushenyi District in Uganda.

The findings in Table 6 show that there is a significant relationship between resource sharing and

economic empowerment of rural women ($t=7.658$, $P=.000$, $P<0.05$). This is because the calculated P value of 0.000 is less than the critical value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and instead, the alternative hypothesis is adopted which states that: There is a significant relationship between resource sharing and economic empowerment of rural women in Kakanju Subcounty and Bitooma Town Council in Bushenyi District in Uganda.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The linear regression analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between advisory services and the growth of women's entrepreneurship since the p-value obtained is 0.00, which is less than the critical value of 0.05 as shown in Table 6. The null hypothesis of this objective was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was adopted. The study's analysis established a significant relationship between resource sharing and the economic empowerment of rural women. The findings of this study concur with [33, 34] whose findings noted that women make significant contributions to the rural economy in all regions of the world. The women's roles range from being wage laborers to self-employed. They observed further that when rural women have equal access as men to resources, assets, services, and economic opportunities, they become a key driving force against rural poverty. These studies note that closing the gender gap in access to assets, resources, services, and opportunities has been identified as one of the most effective approaches to combat rural poverty and promote agriculture and rural development. The study's results are also in line with [35] who found out that resource sharing enables rural women to leverage collective action, enhance productivity, and

overcome barriers to economic empowerment. By pooling resources, knowledge, and efforts, women can achieve greater economic self-sufficiency, improve livelihoods, and contribute to sustainable rural development. These findings are consistent with the findings of [36] who examined the relationship of gender differences in preferences to economic development and gender equality. This study shows that increased availability and equal share of material and social resources for both genders enhance the emergence of gender-diverse preferences across countries. The findings are further in line with [37] which observed that women in rural areas often face severe economic empowerment, and despite their significant role in agriculture, food production, and food security, as well as rural women's economic empowerment alleviation, rural women have less sharing to key productive resources such as land, labour, water, financial services, and infrastructure than men.

Furthermore, the findings are in agreement with [38] whose findings indicate that women have equal property ownership rights in 115 countries and equal inheritance rights in 93 countries, although [39], reported gender disparities in land holdings are

discernible in all regions, showing important gaps in implementing these laws. The findings of this study are in agreement with [26] who revealed that although organizations have assisted women in gaining access to credit facilities and in making decisions at the family and community levels, women continue to face barriers that prevent them from accessing credit. These barriers included poor stringent loan application regulations imposed by financial institutions, inadequate group leadership, indifference and laxity from government officials, particularly when it came to allocating funds, low

This research has successfully demonstrated a significant and positive relationship between resource sharing and the economic empowerment of rural women. The findings underscore the crucial role that collective resource sharing plays in enhancing the economic well-being of women in rural communities. The identified relationship suggests that interventions promoting and facilitating resource-sharing mechanisms among rural women have the potential to contribute significantly to their economic empowerment. Policymakers, non-governmental organizations, and community leaders should

Based on the findings of a research study that establishes a significant relationship between resource sharing and the economic empowerment of rural women, the recommendations should provide practical guidance for various stakeholders which include to;

- Encourage the development of community-based resource-sharing initiatives that facilitate the pooling of skills, knowledge, and tangible resources among rural women.
- Establish platforms or networks where women can collaborate on economic activities, share resources, and collectively address challenges.
- Implement capacity-building programs that focus on enhancing the skills and knowledge of rural women, particularly in areas relevant to economic empowerment.
- Provide training on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and sustainable agricultural practices to empower women to make informed economic decisions.
- Advocate for improved access to financial services, including microfinance and credit facilities, to enable rural women to invest in income-generating activities.
- Collaborate with financial institutions to tailor services to the specific needs and circumstances of rural women.
- Explore the integration of technology to facilitate resource-sharing networks among rural women. This may include the use of mobile apps, online platforms,

group members' educational levels, and a lack of leadership development for group leaders. This leads to low economic empowerment of women. This study agrees with [31] who argued that through raising women's levels of asset ownership, improving their independent income, and increasing their monthly savings, resources have a major positive impact on women's economic empowerment. The study also demonstrated the beneficial effects of microfinance on women's exposure to and growth in entrepreneurship.

CONCLUSION

consider implementing programs that foster collaboration, resource pooling, and knowledge exchange among women in rural settings. This study reinforces the importance of recognizing and supporting the agency of rural women. By understanding the link between resource sharing and economic empowerment, stakeholders can design targeted initiatives that not only address immediate economic challenges but also contribute to the broader goal of sustainable development in rural areas.

Recommendations

or other digital tools to enhance communication and collaboration.

- Advocate for the development and implementation of policies that recognize and support the role of resource sharing in the economic empowerment of rural women.
- Collaborate with policymakers to create an enabling environment that promotes gender equality and the inclusion of rural women in economic development initiatives.
- Encourage the promotion of female leadership within rural communities. Empower women to take on leadership roles in decision-making processes related to resource allocation and economic activities.
- Facilitate collaboration between governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to create comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategies for the economic empowerment of rural women.
- Pool resources and expertise to implement sustainable development projects that address the unique needs of rural women.
- Establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of resource-sharing initiatives on the economic empowerment of rural women. Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of programs and interventions to make data-driven adjustments and improvements.
- Recognize and respect cultural nuances and traditions within rural communities. Design interventions that are culturally sensitive and

inclusive, ensuring that they align with the values and practices of the community.

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