

**Gender equality and economic
growth in South
Africa: A feminist institutional
analysis**

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Abstract

This dissertation builds upon the work of Kabeer (2016), and seeks to; better understand the pattern, rather than the pace, of economic growth, in order to explore the causal pathways between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality. It seeks to describe the role of gender in social, political and economic life and to determine how gender roles are delineated and defined in South Africa, as well as, how this has affected formal institutions and institutional change. Traditional economic methods tend to overlook the role that gender plays in interacting and constructing various institutions and social contexts (Figart, 2005). Using a Feminist Institutional Framework, this dissertation provides an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post-1994. Essentially, the dissertation makes use of pre-existing studies together with descriptive statistics for insights into the pathways likely to be driving this bidirectional relationship. One of the conclusions in this dissertation agrees with Helmke and Levitsky (2004), who argue that informal institutions can either reinforce or undermine institutional change. The dissertation supports latter. South Africa's formal institutions are excellent, on paper. Holding the country back is the lack of awareness and acknowledgement of the effect of informal institutions (i.e., patriarchal attitudes and ideologies) on policymakers, and in turn policy design, because institutions are inherently gendered (Acker, 1992). Moreover, gender disparities in unpaid reproductive duties are also associated with gender inequalities in labour force participation, this link is often overlooked (OECD, 2014). South African women spend 249.6 minutes on unpaid care work relative to men who spend 102.9 minutes (OECD, 2022). Moreover, South African men spend 294.2 minutes in paid labour relative to women who spend 195.0 in paid work (OECD, 2022).

Keywords: Gender equality, economic growth, South Africa, economic policy, feminist institutional framework

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
CPI	Consumer Price Index
EEA	Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998
FLFPR(s)	Female Labour Force Participation Rate(s)
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment, and Redistribution
GHS	General Household Survey

ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
MLFPR(s)	Male Labour Force Participation Rate(s)
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Plan
PEPUDA	Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination, Act 55 of 2003
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
WEF	World Economic Forum
WNC	Women's National Coalition

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Chapter 1: Introduction, Context and Research Questions

1.1 Introduction

“Gender equality is more than a moral issue; it is a vital economic issue (IMF, 2017:13).” Having said that, it is imperative that we understand the system that keeps women subjugated and subservient, and to uncover its inner workings to ensure that women’s development is enabled in a systematic way (Sultana, 2011). The institutional element in political studies reveals a strong consensus among feminist and mainstream researchers that institutions have a strong influence on political realities (Kenny, 2014). North (1990:3) defines institutions as being the “rules of the game”, or man-made constraints that construct interpersonal relationships. Institutions can be either formal or informal, where informal institutions are often more powerful than formal institutions are (Jakab, 2020). Informal institutions emanate from information that is passed down inter-generationally over time, and form part of what we have accepted as our culture (North, 1990). Informal norms and preconceived notions about gender promote gendered identities that restrict the conduct of men and women in ways that give rise to inequality (Ridgeway, 2011). Formal institutions on the other hand, refer to man-made rules that govern interpersonal relationships (North, 1990). By focusing on institutions, gender researchers are able to explore the ways in which gender influences significant rules of political realities that construct the conduct of both male and female political actors, over a period, often undermining the capacity of certain policies (Lovenduski, 2011).

Gaining an understanding of the function of institutions in political life can aid in ascertaining why gender equality policies tend to be unsuccessful, as well as why the endeavours of gender equality advocates often fail (Lowndes, 2020). Institutions shape social behaviour through the construction of rules, informal norms, and policy (Mackay, Kenny & Chappell, 2010). It is imperative that we not only consider rules, but also take into consideration the fact that human beings are gendered actors who encounter those rules (Erikson, 2019). The link between gender, institutions and economic growth is that institutions are gendered; this means that gender is present in the approaches, behaviours, philosophies, and allocations of power across various levels of interpersonal relationships (Acker, 1992). Institutions also determine the incentive framework of an

economy, and the expansion of this framework affects the direction of structural adjustments (economic transformation), towards economic growth, economic stagnation or economic downturn (North, 1991).

South Africa has a political history that has shaped and engendered its economic system (Adewale 2017). The year 1994 demarcated an era of political freedom; however, the society was characterised by inequalities (Bhorat, Hirsch, Kanbur & Ncube, 2014). Deeply rooted discriminatory practices were the norm, and the dominant value system cultivated an understanding of women as subordinate to males in all spheres of social life (Albertyn, 2011). This understanding resulted in the vulnerability of women regarding social and economic issues, such as poor living standards, unemployment, inadequate healthcare and education facilities (Van Der Byl, 2014) and in some instances, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) (KPMG, 2014). Despite this, South Africa took on a succession of economic growth strategies, such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), the New Growth Path (NGP), and the current National Development Plan (NDP) (Mosala, Venter & Bain, 2017). There is consensus between these economic growth strategies about the most suitable macroeconomic political strategy for South Africa (Bhorat *et al.*, 2014). Over time, South Africa has also put into effect certain measures to prevent gender-related discrimination in the working environment.¹Inasmuch as South African economic policy and legislation seem excellent on paper, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate and the level of gender equality that are being experienced necessitate an exploration of the interconnection between the causal pathways between the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality. Post 1994, democratic South Africa is deeply divided and characterised by inequalities in social well-being, particularly for people of colour (Bhorat, Hirsch, Kanbur & Ncube, 2014). Biased practices are the norm, and the governing value system cultivates a perception of women that renders women inferior to men in all areas of society (Albertyn, 2011). This conception of women leaves

¹ Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998, and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination (PEPUDA), Act 55 of 2003.

females in a precarious state post democratisation, and vulnerable to socio-economic issues² (Van Der Byl, 2014).

Using a Feminist Institutional framework, this dissertation purposes to provide an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post 1994.. As will be further expounded upon in section 2.3, a Feminist institutionalism analysis entails studying the relationship between formal and informal institutions – whether they complement or contradict one another – in the context of political repercussions. A Feminist Institutional analysis can enhance the comprehension of formal and informal institutions, institutional change, constitution, agency, and power relations (Krook & Mackay, 2011). Making use of a Feminist Institutionalism framework approach is particularly useful in understanding how and for what reasons the gendered effects of the transitions to democracy vary across different contexts, as seen in Waylen (2011). As Redmount (1995) points out, the concept of gender represents a complex process of the socialisation of males and females, and to obtain a more nuanced, non-reductionist answer, this kind of a question necessitated using a qualitative approach.

The Feminist Institutionalism framework is recent, apart from Kabeer (2016), there are not many studies investigating this specific research topic. However, the dissertation mentions some studies that make use of the Feminist Institutionalism framework in their various studies below³. Franceschet (2011) who conducted a Feminist Institutionalism relational analysis of the correlation between the formal and informal institutions in Latin America. Kenny and Verge (2012) explored the relation between political decentralisation, political parties, and women’s political representation. Waylen (2011) undertook a Feminist Institutional analysis approach towards understanding democratic transitions. The dissertation aims to employ a reasoning process between theoretical assumptions, derived from feminist literature, and descriptive findings, to establish potential explanations for them.

² (i.e., unsatisfactory living standards, GBV and unemployment, and diminishing health and education levels)-See more in section 5.2.1.2.

³ The studies listed make use of the Feminist Institutionalism framework but do not necessarily investigate the dissertation’s research problem, as this methodology is recent.

1.2 Context of the Dissertation

Studies relating to economic growth and its determinants are vast and varied for both developing and developed countries. This line of inquiry sparked an entire research agenda, encapsulated in the synthesis performed by Sala-i-Martin (1994). The synthesis ascertained that over 50 variables are found to be correlated with economic growth through using regression analyses, which were performed by some of the most influential names in the growth literature: Romer (1986), Barro (1991) and Mankiw, Romer and Weil (1992).

From this foundation, an investigation arose into the direction of the causality of these variables through using sophisticated quantitative methods (Adams, 2003; Ajide, 2014; Alesina & Rodrik, 1994; Al-Jafari, Khalid & Abdulkadhim, 2016). The rising prominence of feminist economics prompted rigorous debate about the direction of causality between economic growth and gender equality (Kabeer & Natali, 2013). To be specific, the debate has revolved around whether an increase in economic growth would result in an increase in gender equality, or whether an increase in gender equality would then result in an increase in economic growth.

Kabeer (2016) has made a vital contribution in this debate by synthesising the empirical literature that shows robust evidence that an increase in gender equality results in an increase in economic growth. The reverse of this relationship is also shown through the work of numerous scholars, most notably that of Elson and Cagatay (2000). While the direction of the latter relationship seems to be weaker, Kabeer (2016) argues that this might be because different studies make use of different measures for gender equality. Furthermore, she argues that further investigation that makes use of different methods might be useful in better understanding these relationships.

Using a Feminist Institutional framework, Kabeer (2016) argues that various causal pathways might be more clearly seen using “lower levels of analysis”, rather than highly aggregated, cross-country regressions. As will be seen throughout this dissertation, this concept involving “lower levels of analysis”, drawn from Kabeer’s (2016) argument, serves as a justification for the importance of the research questions being investigated here.

This would reinforce a key point of departure for this dissertation: that the debate about the direction of causality between economic growth and gender equality is not the focal point of enquiry. This dissertation does not attempt to isolate individual variables in order to determine the direction of cause and effect – which is what causality, seeks to do. Rather, by building upon the work of Kabeer (2016), this dissertation seeks to better-understand the pattern, rather than the pace, of economic growth in order to better investigate the causal pathways between the patterns and types of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality.

Thus, a distinction can be made between causality and causal pathways. For instance, an inquiry into the direction of causality between economic growth and gender equality would entail the use of quantitative methods to settle the debate on the direction of causality between economic growth (Duflo, 2012; IDRC, 2017) and gender equality (World Bank, 2012; Altuzarra, Galvez-Galvez & Gonzalez-Flores, 2021).

Further attempts along this type of inquiry would prove futile, since, as established above, a bidirectional relationship exists between economic growth and the empowerment of women (Duflo, 2012). For instance, in one direction, economic growth solely can play a key role in decreasing gender inequality; in the opposite direction, empowering women can stimulate economic growth (Duflo, 2012). On the other hand, what would allow for new insights into this interconnection is an exploration of the causal pathways between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality (Kabeer, 2016).

For instance, Klasen (1999) identifies certain direct and indirect pathways in which increased gender inequality, through using human resources within an economy, is more inclined to influence economic growth. First, Klasen suggests that one pathway operates directly through labour markets, since it focuses on the productivity of labour and the degree to which economies optimally use their human resources. For instance, a reduction in the employment opportunities for women and a failure to educate women is likely to result in a decrease of the average capacity of the workforce. The inability to educate and employ women's talents and capabilities to the same degree as that for men constitutes as market distortion, as well as a man-made restriction on the available talent supply within the economy (Kabeer & Natali, 2013).

The second pathway is substantially formed by familial relations. It focuses on the positive externalities that can result from increased gender equality in household decision making in relation to human capital factors of economic growth. For instance, if an increase in women's accessibility to education and economic opportunities is recognised to lead to increased investments in the human capital of their children, this is likely to enhance the productive capacity of future generations (Heath & Jayachandran, 2017; Klasen, 1999). Moreover, greater levels of female education are found to be instrumental in decreasing fertility. So too, participation in the labour force, in reducing dependence on the government (i.e. dependence in terms of the need for social support, such as grants), as well as increasing savings. The majority of these implications function through enhanced bargaining power, which is inextricably linked to women's education, employment, and improvements in agency in these matters (Klasen, 1999). This is worth noting, because it underlines the two primary causal pathways through which gender equality can contribute to economic growth, which is one of the objectives of this dissertation.

Policymakers and social researchers have often focused on the first relationship, which is described to imply that gender equality comes about as a result of economic growth. Others have instead focused on the reverse relationship, which posits that economic growth is a consequence of gender equality. The evidence that gender equality promotes economic growth is substantially more consistent than that for the first relationship, which suggests that gender equality arises because of economic growth (Kabeer & Natali, 2013). High levels of gender inequality engender an increase in poverty rates, reduce other welfare measures, and greatly impair a country's capacity to grow sustainably (World Bank, 2012). This, in turn, has a negative effect on future human capital because, as women's literacy rates decrease, this often translates into poor childcare. Women are more prone to investing in the education and well-being of their children than men are (Morrison, Raju & Sinha, 2007; Altuzarra *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, gender inequality, with respect to the inadequate use of female labour, decreases economic growth (Blackden, 1999). Focusing on the reverse relation, from gender equality to economic growth, the World Bank (2001), in its Report titled *Engendering Development*, insist on the need for political strategies that address gender disparities in rights and allocation of resources, as well as voice. The Report advocates that institutions should be revised to ensure the advancement of equality and the inclusion of special measures like scholarships for girls and places for women in legislative bodies. These measures advance equity and facilitate

development. A more nuanced inquiry can be achieved by delving more deeply into the manifold dimensions along which gender equality can be measured (Bericat, 2012) and investigated in relation to economic growth.

By placing a specific focus on South Africa, this study allows for a unique contribution to the literature, which has so far predominantly sought to answer only the question on the direction of causality (Posel, 2015), rather than seeking to understand the causal *pathways* between both the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality. As such, this dissertation seeks a different avenue of enquiry than the debates on the direction of causality between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality. Rather, it specifically acknowledges that both gender equality and economic growth, as broad conceptualisations, are vital components for a well-functioning economy, and that can both be prioritised, regardless of the direction of their relationships. Therefore, the research questions below seek to better understand the interconnections between the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality, for achieving a more holistic understanding of development.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Research objectives

Globally, women face serious constraints⁴ in the labour market, and South Africa is no exception (Department of Women, 2015). The active involvement of women in the South African labour force is imperative if the standards of equality, prosperity and inclusive growth are to be realised (Department of Women, 2015). Engaging in productive employment provides access to resources because of wage remuneration, and the extent to which one has resources affects engagement in other areas of the economy (Department of Women, 2015). Gender norms and disparities in the allocation of tasks can also act as a constraint in female labour force participation (Floro & Komatsu, 2011). For instance, the perception of women as caregivers within the household, whilst men are regarded as breadwinners (Floro & Komatsu, 2011).

⁴ Factors constraining women in the labour market include disparities in educational levels, hindrances to labour force participation because of childbirth, gendered discrimination in employment practices and wage setting, lack of mentorship (fewer female role models) and poor bargaining power (Department of Women, 2015).

Gender is a constitutive element in the customs, beliefs, processes, representations, and dissemination of power in various segments of political institutions (Acker, 1992). Gender is a social institution since it represents the social construction of relations between men and women (Palmer, 2003). This asserts that constructions of masculinity and femininity do not exist in isolation from the ideologies of policy institutions or everyday life, but are inextricably linked within them (Kenney, 1996).

The primary objective of this study is to provide an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality through using a Feminist Institutional framework, in South Africa post-1994. The secondary objectives are as follows. First, to identify and critically analyse the patterns of economic growth in South Africa by using an array of economic growth measures embedded within economic growth theory. Second, to identify and critically analyse the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa by using an array of gender equality measures embedded within feminist economic theory.

1.3.2 Primary research question

a) What are the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality, as may be ascertained through using a Feminist Institutional framework, in South Africa post-1994?

In order to answer this research question more clearly, it is essential to answer the secondary research questions that will inform the primary research question, namely:

- b) What are the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed using economic growth theory?
- c) What are the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed by using feminist economic theory?

1.4 Research layout

This dissertation comprises the following chapters:

1.4.1 Chapter one: Introduction, context and research questions

The first chapter provides some background on the study. It underlines the potential issues obstructing gender equality and in turn economic growth through a Feminist Institutionalism framework. The context of the dissertation follows and aims to bring about an understanding of the key point of departure of the study and its contribution to literature. Finally, the dissertation outlines the research questions that the dissertation seeks to answer, followed by the objectives of the study.

1.4.2 Chapter two: Method

The second chapter underlines the methodology section of the dissertation. It seeks to justify the use of the qualitative approach, a Feminist Institutionalism framework that the dissertation employs to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives.

1.4.3 Chapter three: Overview of economic growth theory

The third chapter presents an overview of economic growth theory. This chapter postulates that to identify and analyse the types and patterns of economic growth, and to analyse if South African growth policies, post 1994, have been set at the expenses of or for the benefit of gender equality, it is necessary to discuss prominent economic growth theory. This chapter highlights the measurement of growth. The chapter further delves into an overview of the nature of macroeconomic policies, in effect the impact of informal institutions on institutional change. In short, this section serves as the foundation for the South African analysis of patterns of economic growth that takes place in chapter five (see sections 5.1.1- 5.1.5).

1.4.4 Chapter four: Overview of gender equality

The fourth chapter displays an overview of gender equality theory. This chapter posits that to identify whether there have been any developments in gender equality, and to establish if gender equality policies have been set at the expense of or to the benefit of, economic growth, it is necessary to discuss influential gender equality theory. This section moves on to underline the traditional and modern measures of gender equality, to identify and analyse the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa. This chapter serves as

the foundation for the South African analyses of the dimensions of gender equality the dissertation conducts in chapter five (see section 5.2.).

1.4.5 Chapter five: South African context: Analysing economic growth from a Feminist Institutionalism framework

This chapter represents the first part of the analysis section of the dissertation and uses chapter three as the foundation. This chapter aims to answer the first of the secondary questions employed to answer the research question. Using the Feminist Institutionalism framework, the aim of this chapter is to answer: “What are the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed using economic growth theory?” Answering this question contributes towards answering the primary research question of the study. The chapter makes use of pre-existing studies together with descriptive statistics for insights into the causal pathways.

1.4.6 Chapter six: South African context: Analysing gender equality from a Feminist Institutionalism framework

This chapter represents the second part of the analysis section of the dissertation and uses chapter four as the foundation. This chapter aims to answer the second of the secondary questions employed to answer the research question. Using the Feminist Institutionalism framework, the aim of this chapter is to answer: “What are the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed by using feminist economic theory?” The chapter makes use of pre-existing studies, in conjunction with descriptive statistics, for insights into the causal pathways. Answering this question contributes towards answering the primary question of the study.

1.4.7 Chapter seven: Conclusions and recommendations

The final chapter summarises the main points of the dissertation, presents main conclusions, possible recommendations emerging from the dissertation as well as areas for further research.

Chapter 2: Method

2.1 Justification of the Qualitative Approach

This sub-section underlines why a qualitative approach is most suitable for the research agenda of this study. The theoretical perspective and framework the dissertation employs is termed a 'Feminist Institutional framework'. A key point to highlight in this framework is the understanding of gender as "a constitutive element of social relations based upon perceived (socially constructed and culturally variable) differences between women and men, and as a primary way of signifying relationships of power and hierarchy (Mackay *et al.*, 2010:580)." In its initial stages, feminist economics acknowledged that it highly regarded diversity in methodologies, which would be instrumental in developing feminist scholarship. The vast majority of feminist literature on economic methodologies is consistent in criticising the prominence of mathematical modelling and statistical techniques as sole sources of knowledge generation in standard economic theory (Tejani, 2019). Qualitative research generally focuses on words as opposed to quantifications in the gathering and analysis of data (Bryman, 2012). Contrary to the observation of a traditional scientific model utilised with quantitative research, qualitative research emphasises understanding the social world through an interrogation (or exploration) of that world by its actors (Bryman, 2012).

Traditional economic methods are prone to overlooking the manner in which gender interacts with and constructs different institutions and social conditions (Figart, 2005). For instance, when economists consider gender in investigations, it is usually done by making use of basic "binary indicator functions", referred to as dummy variables, to adjust, intercept and/or grade coefficients in a regression. Despite their significance as explanatory variables, as well as their methodological propensity to avoid or neglect gender phenomena entirely, they are inadequate methodological substitutes for the comprehensive modelling of the function of gender in market and non-market interactions (Redmount, 1995:158). Feminist literature clarifies the point that gender is neither a basic nor a "binary construct", but rather a consequence of a complicated process of socialising that both males and females undergo (Redmount, 1995:158).

Some of the widespread objectives of feminist economics include analysing how gender and power contribute to the construction and justification of knowledge, as well as to expand feminist methodologies to economics (Pujol, 1997). In contrast, traditional models and econometric methods take theoretical assumptions as a given, as opposed to questioning them (Strassmann, 1997). For this very reason, Strassmann argues that the characterisation of economics as an explanatory approach, as opposed to a field of phenomena to be comprehended, has undermined the development of economic judgements that are more representative of the personal experiences of women. The contributions of Pujol (1997) and Strassmann (1997) remain relevant today in terms of the dominance of quantitative approaches taken in feminist economics (Tejani, 2019), emphasising the need for exploring questions that lend themselves to a qualitative approach to provide nuance to this diverse field of enquiry.

Feminist economists have demanded an expansion of the scope of methods employed in economics and of the range of tools pertaining to the question under consideration (Berik, 1997), as well as called for the production of an individual's own key data to address questions that call for nuanced and interpretative narratives (Grapard, 1999; MacDonald, 1995). Qualitative methodology augments and enhances economics by introducing it in a "social and life-historical context", and by rejecting traditional assumptions about economic behaviour (Van Staveren, 1997:132). Likewise, as Berik (1997:122) argues, qualitative methodology aids in producing quantitative data that is more dependable by outlining the implications of concepts being estimated. Moreover, it provides "not-meaningfully-quantifiable" descriptive information about the economic activities fundamental to economic performance, in the absence of which, our understanding would be partial. Another benefit is that qualitative methods make allowances for more creative conceptualising and tracking of economic activities. For instance, mainstream economics is focused on economic *outcomes* (i.e., income, spending, prosperity, employment and profession), which represent the basic function of surveys and national censuses, rather than the economic *activities* that give rise to these economic *outcomes* (i.e. poverty, entry into paid labour and discrimination). These activities and details of how they relate to one another (viz hierarchical structure, dependency and power) are excluded from the scope of economics, as is the methodology most-suited for collecting this information (Berik, 1997).

Thus, in agreement with Strassmann (1997:viii), “While formal modelling and econometric analyses may remain useful to a multifaceted feminist initiative, exposing the limitations of such analyses and developing alternative forms of data must be integral to feminist efforts to construct an economics that is more representative and useful for all humans, and not just for those who have been powerful in the intellectual hierarchy of economics.”

In conclusion, this interplay between institutions, power and social relations allows for the use of a rich and nuanced framework, upon which to analyse the types and patterns of economic growth, as well as the dimensions of gender equality.

2.2 Introducing Feminist Institutionalism

This sub-section will primarily concentrate on Feminist Institutional analysis, what it entails, and how it can be applied, and why it is the most appropriate method to answer the research questions.

Economic activity and social conduct illustrate the complexity of institutions, where human beings are not merely rational individuals who aim to maximise profits or utility, but are also part of society, whose conduct arises as a result of rules defining that society (Parto, 2005). Institutions referred to as the “rules of the game” or socially constructed constraints that govern interpersonal relationships, determine political realities (North, 1990). Institutions construct social conduct through the formation of rules, norms and policy (Mackay *et al.*, 2010). Institutions consist of formal rules and informal norms (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). Formal institutions are defined as, the rules that humans construct to govern interpersonal relationships (North, 1990); likewise, they address political, legislative, and economic structures (e.g., property rights, deals and policies) (Escandon-Barbosa, Hurtado-Ayala, Salas paramo & Dominguez, 2019). Informal institutions refer to customs and codes of conduct that are not necessarily codified (North, 1990). Institutions establish the incentive structure of an economy, and as that structure expands, it would influence the course of structural adjustments (economic reform) towards economic growth, or to economic slowdown, or to economic decline (North, 1991).

Careful attention needs to be paid to both formal and informal institutions because rigorous analyses of formal structures are inadequate for gaining an understanding societal behaviour (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). The study of informal rules is fundamental

to interpreting institutional outcomes (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). Informal norms can either reinforce or obstruct institutional change (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). Efforts towards achieving institutional change are necessary because they not only help catalyse change in the short run, but may also aid in changing informal institutions, in the long run. For instance, female representation on corporate boards is observed to increase corporate performance (Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2012; Ting, Wang, Lu & Chen, 2021). Therefore, the implementation of quotas to ensure representation may contribute towards creating a shift in preconceived notions about femininity and masculinity in leadership positions – as will be seen in Chapter 5.

Feminist economists have found institutional economics to be instrumental for analysing the interconnection between gender and the economy (Dolfsma & Hoppe, 2003). Institutionalists make use of the notion of *power* through multidimensional structures of class and hierarchy (Waller & Jennings, 1990). This underlines the fact that patterns of inequality are reinforced by deeply embedded power structures that manifest in institutionalised norms and philosophies that govern socio-economic livelihoods (Amis *et al.*, 2016). Likewise, feminists employ the notion of power as a means to explain relations of gender within an economy. Allen (1998:36) defines power as, "... the ability or capacity of an actor or set of actors to act". This definition forms an overarching feminist conceptualisation of power, as it, firstly, considers the vested interest of feminists in making sense of dominance, resistance, and solidarity, and it delineates all three senses of power. First, *power-over*, which represents the ability or capacity to behave in a way that restricts the availability of choices to one or more actors. Second, *power-to*, which refers to an individual's ability or capacity to behave in a way that enables them to reach an expected end. Third, *power-with*, which refers to the collaborative ability or capacity to act jointly to accomplish a common goal (Allen, 1998). The concept of power is fundamental and central to almost all economic life. It can be demonstrated in various domains of life, such as the working environment, the household, and social settings (Sultana, 2011). Structures of power are established and maintained by institutions (i.e., existing regulations or norms) (Reardon, Madi & Cato, 2018).

Gender can be considered a social institution since it represents the social construction of relations between men and women (Palmer, 2003). Referring to an institution as 'gendered' implies that gender is a constitutive element in the customs, philosophies,

processes, representations, and allocations of power in various segments of political institutions (Acker, 1992). This means that constructions of masculinity and femininity do not exist in isolation from the philosophies of political institutions or everyday life, but are interrelated within them (Kenney, 1996).

Institutionalism and feminist economics share epistemological foundations that recognise knowledge as being socially constructed (Waller & Jennings, 1990). This, along with the idea of gender as a mechanism of power, reconciles feminist and institutional economics (Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz, 2015).

Against this background, this chapter aims to highlight the various ways in which a Feminist Institutional analysis can be conducted. The structure is as follows. The first section provides a brief background on how the concept of feminist institutionalism came about (see section 2.2). The second section defines Feminist Institutionalism and expounds on how a Feminist Institutional framework can be conducted (see section 2.3). The third section underlines how a Feminist Institutional framework is conducted in this dissertation (see section 2.4).

2.3 Defining Feminist Institutionalism and what a Feminist Institutional Analysis entails

Feminist Institutionalism is a new version of institutionalism that aims to engage evenly with the strengths and shortcomings of ongoing paradigms, while critiquing and addressing the gender blindness in existing knowledge of the field, in order to include women in the political process (Mackay *et al.*, 2010). Feminist institutionalism analysis entails studying the relationship between formal and informal institutions – whether they complement or contradict one another – in the context of political repercussions. Feminist institutionalists explore aspects of the political environment, which shape the decisions and political strategies of the political actors functioning within it, to identify the ideas these aspects convey about men and women, along with femininity and masculinity (Kenney, 1996). Feminist institutionalists assume that changing the way in which men and women relate is significant in generating change within and outside political environments (Lovenduski, 2011). Chapter 5 will present a Feminist Institutional analysis, which will describe the formal legislative institutions, the broader descriptive statistics, and the informal institutional analysis. This analysis aims to enhance an understanding of the

interconnections between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality.

A Feminist Institutional analysis can enhance the comprehension of formal and informal institutions, institutional change, constitution, agency, and power relations (Krook & Mackay, 2011). It is important to underline the point that the way in which a Feminist Institutional analysis is conducted is not always definitive, and the feminist scholars may not always use the same terminology. There are various ways in which one can identify an economic inquiry as being feminist. According to Crasnow (2007), these include 1) feminist inquiries that concentrate on research issues that are of special interest to feminist political views; 2) feminist inquiries that are defined by the use of the concept of gender; and 3) feminist inquiries that seek to expose constructs of power and other constructs especially ranked according to gender. The Feminist Institutionalism framework is recent, and the majority of the studies that employ this method do not necessarily do so for this dissertation's research topic. Despite this, a few case studies that make mention of the Feminist Institutionalism framework are mentioned below. These case studies indicate how interconnections may be potentially analysed rather than using formal econometric analysis trying to ascribe causality in specific direction. Engaging with the relevant literature in this field, serves as a foundation for the analysis conducted in chapter five and chapter six, which is contextualised to suit the research question.

The case studies are as follows:

Franceschet (2011) constructed a feminist institutionalist relational analysis of the correlation between the formal and informal institutions in Latin America. . Her analysis reveals that formal and informal institutions have an impact on male and female politicians, and on political outcomes in general. Moreover, she adds that they also have gender-related consequences that affect men and women in varying ways, since they are entrenched within broader gendered norms and structures. Thus, the ways in which these institutions are set up may either advance or hinder the articulation of views that promote the rights and development policies of women (Franceschet, 2011). Several existing studies concentrate either on the A Feminist Institutionalism framework centres on both the process and outcomes and would be useful for this dissertation's research question, since it is the most suitable method under which a research question that seeks to

understand the interplay between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality can be answered.

Moreover, a Feminist Institutionalism framework is particularly useful for the analysis of power distribution between central and regional tiers, since it provides a far richer and more nuanced analysis than if one had to use a quantitative method, which would require a more reductionist approach to power analysis.

Kenny and Verge (2012) explored the relationship between political decentralisation, political parties, and women's political representation. Kenny and Verge (2012) undertook a qualitative comparative case study of gender quota amendments in Spain and Britain. The study conducted by Kenny and Verge (2012), is evidence that some questions can be thoroughly answered by way of quantitative research methodologies, some research questions necessitate the adoption of qualitative research approaches (Kenny & Verge, 2012). This type of method is particularly useful when dealing with issues of power and gender, and in the case of this dissertation, the impact of informal institutions (e.g., the effect of preconceived notions about masculinity and femininity) on formal institutions (or institutional change).

Waylen (2011) undertook a Feminist Institutional analysis approach towards understanding democratic transitions. Waylen sought to understand and justify how, and for what reason, the gender effects of transitions to democracy varied across various contexts. Using eight transitions, the case study covered transitions from national socialism (Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia) and authoritarianism (South Africa, Chile, Brazil, Argentina and El Salvador) to broadly defined types of democracy. The findings included varied gender outcomes with respect to women's legislative representation, which ranged from nine per cent to 36 per cent, with Hungary and Brazil at the lower end of the spectrum, and South Africa and Argentina at the opposite end. Regarding the various levels of women's organisation, at the brink of transition, Brazil and South Africa displayed higher levels of women's organisation as a result of feminist movements. Finally, in the post-transition period, Brazil and South Africa observed the emergence of newly formed institutions, including gender-friendly institutions that embraced measures of gender equality, owing to the participation of feminists in the constitution drafting processes. However, these constitutions did not completely obliterate the rest of the existing institutions but had to co-exist with them. Making use of a Feminist

Institutional approach in the case study was particularly useful in understanding how and for what reasons the gendered effects of the transitions to democracy varied across different contexts. As Redmount (1995) points out, the concept of gender represents a complex process of the socialisation of males and females, and to obtain a more nuanced, non-reductionist answer, this kind of a question necessitated using a qualitative approach.

As seen in the case studies referred to above, likewise, the Feminist Institutional approach is very effective in answering the questions and providing relevant findings. Similarly, drawing on Feminist Institutional economics allows for a more conscientious explanation of human conduct (Kabeer, 2016). This is attributable to the fact that a Feminist Institutional framework offers valuable insights into the gendered rationale of policy institutions, the functioning and significance of informal institutions, and the mainstream gendered instruments of continuity and development (Kenny, 2014). Moreover, the scholarship on feminist institutionalism offers in-depth information into the study of institutional barriers and the limitations of reforms; likewise, it underlines specific gendered instruments of reproduction that reinforce existing political systems and undermine prospects for growth (Mackay & Murtagh, 2019). This approach is necessary for the South African context, since the institutional barriers are going to be explored in this dissertation to better understand these interconnections.

2.4 Application of the Feminist Institutional Analysis to the Current Study

The primary objective of this study is to analyse the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality, by using a Feminist Institutional framework. As outlined above, a Feminist Institutional analysis entails the study of the relationships between formal and informal institutions, irrespective of whether they complement or contradict one another. Using a Feminist Institutional Framework, this dissertation provides an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post 1994. Essentially, the dissertation makes use of pre-existing studies together with descriptive statistics for insights into the pathways likely to be driving this bidirectional relationship.

The interplay between formal and informal institutions, as well as institutional change, will also be more distinct. This method allows for a clearer understanding of the assumptions underpinning the different representations of gender equality, constituted by economic growth, in South Africa. In turn, these assumptions will be operationalised by specific measures that can be analysed as their growth patterns and gendered dimensions. This dissertation will make use of theory, literature, and descriptive statistics. The table below displays where the secondary descriptive statistics are collected.

Table 2.1 Resources (or data sources) the dissertation employs in variable (or topic) format

Resource/data source	Variable/ topic
<p>Statistics South Africa(Stats SA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Labour force participation: Female. o Labour force participation : Male - General Household Survey (GHS)- 2008 and 2019 - Men, women and children: Findings of the Living Conditions Survey, 2012/15.
<p>Quantec data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Economic Outlook (WEO)- Gross Domestic Product, constant prices (Percent change (%)) - RSA Standardised Industry: Structures, trends & documentation

ASGISA 2008 Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The third annual report of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA).
The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Global Gender Gap report 2006. - The Global Gender Gap report 2020. - The Global Gender Gap report: Insight report (2021).
2018 Overcoming Poverty and Inequality Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This report is an analysis of South Africa's progress in reducing poverty and inequality since 1994, with 2006 to 2015 as a reference period.
2019 Gender Policy Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender equality supports happiness and well-being.
IMF Annual Report of 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IMF Report 2017: Promoting inclusive growth.
2001 World Bank Engendering Development Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engendering development: Through gender equality in rights, resources and voice.
World Bank 2012 Gender Equality and Development Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The primary message of this report is that "patterns of progress and persistence in gender equality matter, both for development

	outcomes and policy making” (World Bank, 2012: xiii).
The Presidency’s 2005 towards a fifteen-tear review report	- This review seeks to assess development post-1994.
Twenty-year Review of South Africa (1994-2014)	- This review is a comprehensive reflection of developments made towards gender equality since democratisation.
NDP 2020 Review	- The review analyses developments made on the NDP since 2012 evaluates gaps and proposes course change to get back on the course envisaged by the NDP. -

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, feminist institutionalism enriches analyses being undertaken and allows for a more persuasive explanation when the research question seeks to understand economic phenomena that do not adhere to the confines of numeric variables that cannot be deployed in certain mathematical forms because of the multi-dimensional nature of the concepts being investigated. Scholars of feminist literature contribute a unique lens to institutional economics, which uncovers inherent, gendered power differentials and the mechanisms that encourage or discourage them (Lovenduski, 2011). More importantly, a Feminist Institutional approach allows for an exploration of the interconnection between the dimensions of gender equality and types and the patterns of economic growth. Chapter two displays the method that the dissertation employs. Chapter three follows below, and provides an overview of economic growth. Chapter three serves as a foundation for the analyses in chapter five.

Chapter 3: Overview of Economic Growth Theory

3.1 Economic Growth Theory

3.1.1 Introduction

In order to clearly identify and analyse the types and patterns of economic growth, and to analyse if South African growth policies, since 1994, are set at the expense of or for the benefit of gender equality, it is necessary to clearly discuss influential economic growth theory. Attempts to measure economic growth are influenced by mainstream economic growth modelling (Strassmann, 1997; Seguino, 2021). Scientists of the feminist school of thought have expressed the intrinsic gender disparities in mainstream concepts of economic growth (Barriteau, 2000). GDP can be defined as the market value of goods and services produced within national borders, including products produced within national borders by citizens as well as immigrants (Callen, 2020). This definition, in and of itself, is biased against women as it primarily focuses on paid labour and does not account for reproductive labour undertaken by women and for how that upholds and sustains the formal productive economy (Kabeer, 2016; WEF, 2016). In other words, the work that is undertaken by women within the household, which contributes towards the reproduction of the workforce daily and generationally, is not considered in the definition of economic participation and economic growth (Kabeer, 2016; WEF, 2016).

Against this background, feminist development critiques argue that a gendered outlook should be integrated into all developmental issues (Elson & Cagatay, 2000; Berik, van der Meulen Rodgers & Seguino 2009). Likewise, feminist scholars insist that the primary criterion for evaluating the gender implications of economic growth strategies be to the extent that it resolves the effects of gender inequalities. In other words, the quantity and quality of economic opportunities connected with various economic growth strategies must be interrogated. Questions regarding the gender breakdown of these opportunities must be raised, as well as the degree to which public policy either promotes or counteracts gender inequalities in its efforts to reap the benefits from additional opportunities (Elson & Cagatay, 2000; Elson, 2009). Strategies for economic growth have varied in countries categorised as *developing*, and this has proved to be true, both

historically and in the recent years (Adewale, 2017; Alexander, 1967; Mayer, 2013; Shafaeddin & Pizarro, 2007; Zahonogo, 2016).

This section serves as a foundation for the secondary research objective of this dissertation, which is carried out in Chapter 5. This secondary objective is to identify and analyse the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa by using an array of economic growth measures. Therefore, by outlining the growth patterns of other developing countries, we would like to see if South Africa has grown in line with mainstream economic growth theories, or whether there are deviations from these theories.

This section adheres to the following outline: firstly, the introduction presents an analysis of the concept of economic growth, through a feminist lens, to demonstrate the gender inequality in mainstream conceptualisations of economic growth (see section 3.1.1). Secondly, an exploration is undertaken of the types and patterns of economic growth in developing countries, through a feminist lens, to expose how institutions shape gender equality and economic growth (see section 3.1.2). This is then followed by an overview of the nature of macroeconomic political strategies, as a means to demonstrate the impact of informal institutions on institutional change (see section 3.1.3).

3.1.2 Types and patterns of economic growth

The majority of developing countries have undertaken import-substitution industrialisation and state-led industrialisation growth strategies, at some point (Adewale, 2017). In Latin America, the import-substitution strategy was pursued by countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina between the 1950s and early 1960s. After independence, African countries (e.g., Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Madagascar) assumed the import-substitution strategy too, but despite following the path of the Latin American economies, were unsuccessful due to structural constraints both in and out of the specific contexts (Mendes, Bertella & Teixeira, 2014).

This dissertation considers the import-substitution industrialisation strategy, since it is one of the developmental strategies undertaken as a type of industrialisation process in the majority of developing countries during the post-war (1939-1945) era (Mendes *et al.*, 2014), and to explore if South Africa has experienced the same type of growth. Countries that engage in this method of development grow by expanding their manufacturing sector

to supply goods that were previously imported (Bussel, 2018). The initial steps of the process of import substitution entail the development of enterprises, ranging from the production of light consumption goods, such as textiles, processed food and light metallurgical commodities, to iron and steel, to highly capital-intensive products (Alexander, 1967). According to Martin (2011), the vast majority of sub-Saharan African countries, excluding South Africa and Zimbabwe, have had difficulty in actualising considerable levels of industrialisation.

An analysis of the patterns of economic growth in Brazil is worth noting, since a part of the patterns of its economic growth, despite country-specific implication, is comparable with that of South Africa. Brazil's economic history is comparable with that of South Africa, from the early 1920s to South Africa's democratisation in the early 1990s. Both countries undertook the import-substitution industrialisation strategy as a trade strategy towards achieving economic growth and economic independence (Adewale, 2012). Adewale (2012) asserts that, when the import-substitution strategy reached its limit, Brazil and South Africa assumed an export-led economic growth strategy to take advantage of the comparative advantages accrued from the import-substitution strategy.

The golden age of Brazil's import-substitution industrialisation policy started in the 1930s. The great depression and the subsequent shock in the balance of payments instigated a major shift in relative prices through the overvaluation of imports, as the foreign exchange rate depreciated significantly (Abreu *et al.*, 2000). In the 1930s, the presiding head of the administration, Getulio Vargas, was intent on establishing domestic capability and took many strides towards achieving that, including the initiation of the government-controlled oil corporation. The rationale behind the import-substitution industrialisation strategy was that, for any country to reach its highest development, it had to improve its domestic capabilities in selected industries, specifically in the heavy manufacturing and chemical industries. In the period between 1962 and 1968, the Brazilian economy was characterised by precariousness and economic instability, resulting from the expansive foreign borrowing involved in the import-substitution strategy, which caused balance of payments pressures, until 1969 when another president was sworn in, Emilio Medici. The administration of President Medici was regarded as the most prosperous administration in the history of Brazil. This prosperity was attributable to their economic policy-making implementation skills and the overall societal well-being. From 1968 to 1973, Medici

restricted the incentives for import substitution and facilitated the exportation of industrial goods by refocusing policy from light-to-medium manufacturing to heavy manufacturing, i.e., heavy machinery and large equipment (Guimaraes, 2004). This shift yielded great returns, as GDP had increased significantly, by 11.2 per cent (Guimaraes, 2004). This significant increase enhanced investor confidence and attracted foreign financial investment. This economic advancement did, however, render Brazil vulnerable to unconventional financial distress, which nearly resulted in economic downturn. The 1970s were characterised by oil and food price spikes, which served as a stimulus to decrease dependence on foreign supplies. Despite this, the economic growth strategy of import substitution took its toll on public revenue, which eventually led to economic irregularities (Brainard & Martinez-Diaz, 2009).

Nevertheless, Brazil survived in the 2000s (2000–2008) by growing by 3.3 per cent, on average, annually (de Freitas & Dweck, 2013). Brazil has surfaced and is among the fast-growing developing economies, reaching a high of 7.53 per cent growth in 2010, a 1.32 per cent GDP growth rate in 2017, and a 1.41 per cent GDP growth rate in 2019 (World Bank, 2021a), because of its institutional structure.

Gaddis and Pieters (2012) examined the implications of the trade liberalisation policy undertaken by Brazil, between 1987 and 1994, on Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR), employment and unemployment. They established that, during this period, FLFPR increased from 46 per cent to 53 per cent, as a result of trade liberalisation. Moreover, they underline the importance of a gender-aware analysis concerning the labour force implications of trade liberalisation (Gaddis & Pieters, 2012). This economic growth pattern can also be seen more generally below.

Transitioning to neoliberal policies has been followed by the feminisation of the workforce, and as the share of females, participating in the workforce increased. Cross-country analysis has alluded to the positive correlation between export-oriented economic growth and female employment, especially in middle- to low-income nations (Kapsos, 2005). Structural adjustment policies are known to lead to increases in the female working population; however, this is accompanied by reductions in employee protection policies in developing countries (Assaad, 2004). Despite this economic growth, this feminisation of the labour force does not guarantee sound working conditions for women, such as in India, where trade liberalisation led to women participating in more distressed

employment (IDRC, 2017). Theories regarding gender equality are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Country-level research also indicates that the feminisation of labour, related to export-led economic growth, is highly dependent on the type of export (Seguino & Braunstein, 2012). For instance, the literature shows that the feminisation of the labour force trend has spread throughout most developing countries, apart from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). These regions have witnessed a decline in the labour share of its women during development (Horton, 1999). The FLFPR in these regions remains the lowest in the world, amounting to only 20 per cent in 2019 (El Ashmawy, Muhab & Osman 2020; World Bank, 2021b).

Arguments are made concerning the possible reasons for this, with one obvious reason being informal institutions, such as culture and norms, which inhibit paid female employment outside of the household. Egypt and Morocco introduced economic liberalisation and structural adjustment policies from the mid-to-late 1970s (Assaad, 2004). Since the international literature associates the feminisation of the labour force with economic liberalisation and structural adjustment, it would make sense for the feminisation trend to penetrate all regions in the developing world. Nevertheless, developments in Egypt did not conform to the predictions made on structural adjustments, and, in contrast, it experienced the defeminisation of the labour force. This is because Egypt is a country that is highly reliant on oil and oil transfers, as well as tourism, for its foreign reserves; thus, this served as a hindrance to diversifying into high-intensity feminised exports. This underlines the fact that the feminisation of the labour force trend is export specific. Morocco, on the other hand, is an oil-deprived country whose integration into international trade was highly reliant on labour-based, manufactured exports, such as clothes and other products of textile industries, which are predominantly known to recruit women (Assaad, 2004). Against this background, it is important to note that it is assumed that transitioning to neoliberal policies would increase female labour force participation. This is not a given for all countries. This was the case with Egypt, which in contrast to Morocco, experienced defeminisation. The feminisation of labour as a result of export-led economic growth is dependent, first, on the type of export, and second, on country dynamics. The dissertation makes use of this type of theorisation on the type of export to see what the case is for South Africa.

Furthermore, several authors have underlined the significance of international trade and trade-related policies, relative to their impacts on technological development, and as a result, economic growth (Dong-Hyeon & Shu-Chin, 2008; Manwa & Wijeweera, 2016). Trade openness can contribute either positively or negatively towards the FLFPR. Li, Li, Tao and Su (2019) show that increases in technological developments, which come about as a result of trade openness, decrease FLFPR. However, this does not nullify the various channels through which trade openness can potentially affect an economy's rate of growth, which includes growth through physical and human capital accumulation, as well as an increase in productivity, which are two sources of GDP per capita growth (Anderson & Babula, 2008).

Trade openness affects capital accumulation through global flows of capital, which may enhance the pace at which physical and human capital are accumulated, domestically (in the short run). Trade openness, as stated by Grossman and Helpman (cited by Harrison, 1996), can also enhance growth in productivity through rapid technological development. Other ways in which international trade can prompt economic growth include granting access to intermediate products, as well as indirect access to technology; broadening the commercial scale for a new line of products; and simplifying the international transfer of shared knowledge (Ades & Glaeser, 1994). It is for this very reason that economic growth strategies must be gender-aware to ensure that they do not operate to the detriment of women. As asserted by Acker (1992), gender is a fundamental principle of social construction and cultural generalisations.

Gender is a symbol of distinction and domination with respect to perceived differences between men and women and transcends across many societies. Legislation, politics, religion, academia, government, and the economy are all fields dominated by men and are consequently interpreted from their perspective (Acker, 1992). These institutions are construed in the absence of women. Li *et al.* (2019) shows that increases in trade openness benefit FLFPR in the short run but hinder it in the long run. This analysis will aid in the dissertation, firstly, in understanding South Africa's types and patterns of economic growth better. Secondly, in interrogating South Africa's economic growth patterns and their effect on gender equality with respect to FLFPR. Finally, it will provide an opportunity for further research on "how much might be too much", with respect to trade openness.

Feminist economics literature reveals that the interconnection between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality tends to be shaped by various institutions (both formal and informal), including liberal policy frameworks, in which economic growth strategies and patriarchal constraints are rooted (Barriteau, 2000). Moreover, when looking at this pattern through a feminist economics lens, one can notice that this shift to neoliberal political strategies is less favourable towards women (Beneria & Sen, 2021). Reasons for this include a reduction in government intervention, which has decreased the provision of social safety nets (i.e., health-care services and subsidies for education, food and shelter) that are accessible to women in developing nations and has likewise seen a decrease in governmental support for women's reproductive rights (Seguino & Grown, 2006).

3.1.3 An overview of the nature of macroeconomic political strategies: the impact of informal institutions on institutional change

In the 1970s, economists established the fact that economic development had predominantly contradictory effects on men and women (Cagatay, 2003). The foundations of macroeconomic modelling, with respect to structural adjustment programmes, are gender-blind (Elson, 1995). The significance of gender as a macroeconomic variable is not universally accepted within the field of economics (Seguino, 2000). Seguino claims that the unexpected repercussions of structural adjustment programmes developed as a result of inadequate macroeconomic theory that overlooked gender and implemented macroeconomic political strategies that were gender-blind and undermined macroeconomic objectives.

Economists generally assume that macroeconomic policies are gender neutral (Cagatay, 2003). In agreement with Elson (1995), I argue in this section that macroeconomic policies are not gender-neutral, based on two arguments adopted from Cagatay (2003). Firstly, macroeconomic political strategies typically have gender-biased consequences. Secondly, gender inequalities experienced at the micro- and meso-levels have had macroeconomic ramifications. This analysis will assist me in assessing the macroeconomic policies of South Africa in Chapter 5.

Understanding the micro-foundations of macroeconomics is integral in comprehending how institutions are gendered. The macro-economy is conceptualised as the aggregate number of individual transactions of all micro-level economic actors. This

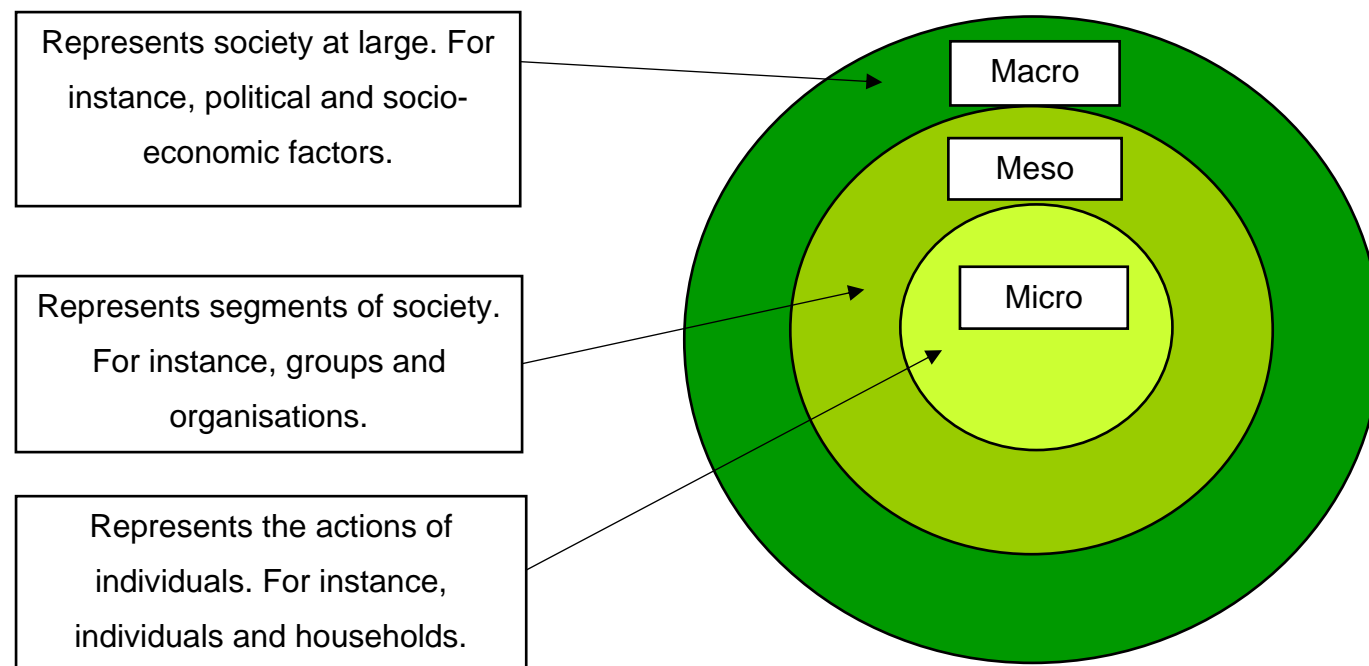
conceptualisation has neoclassical foundations, as macroeconomic modelling is premised upon the neoclassical principles of an “economic man” who demonstrates rational, utility-maximising behaviour (Evers, 2003). The structure of the illustrations, symbols, and ideals that determine institutions is a gendered process (Acker, 1992). Illustrations of hegemonic masculinity inform many institutional spheres, such as the military, politics, businesses, and academia. Individuals in these spheres who hold positions of power, or have successful organisation, are depicted as aggressive, ambitious and productive; seldom are they depicted as empathetic, benevolent and caring (Acker, 1992; Hierro & Marquez, 1994). This demonstrates just how the obscured gendered reality of institutions and how policy designs can simply not be devoid of gender as a macroeconomic variable. Concrete examples will be presented in the following section (3.1.3.1).

3.1.3.1 A conceptualisation of the economy from a gender perspective: macro-, meso- and micro-levels

The transformation of an economy is driven by institutionalisation. To understand institutional change, one must consider the economy from the macro-, meso- and micro-levels. Figure 3.1 below illustrates a conceptualisation of the economy from a gender perspective (Evers, 2003; United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011). The macro-economy concerns itself with aggregates, such as GDP, unemployment levels and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (Bondarenko, 2020). Unlike microeconomics, which is concerned with interpersonal interactions between economic actors, the focus of macroeconomics is not people, and not men and women, as asserted by Bondarenko (2020). Gender inequalities not only affect women, but also have adverse effects on economic growth and development (Evers, 2003; IDRC, 2017). Gender inequalities at the micro-level can be seen in the allocation of labour, time and accessibility to resources. Gender-related constraints have a social and institutional dimension (Evers, 2003). This is evident when analysing the meso-level of the economy, which facilitates the macro- and micro-levels. For instance, the meso-level considers societal norms and collections of micro-economic agents. At the meso-level, gender inequalities in labour and in access to credit facilities and the goods market are shown to have detrimental effects on economic growth (Psacharopoulos & Tzannatos, 1992). For instance, an analysis of societal norms, the social structure of public services,

infrastructure, and property rights, as well as of the functioning of labour and credit markets, indicates that meso-level institutions tend to disfavour women, relative to men (Evers, 2003). Moreover, Morsy and Youssef (2017) show that women tend to face more obstacles to financial services and are more inclined to be credit restricted, relative to men.

Figure 3.1: Overview of macro-, meso- and micro-levels



Sources: Illustration based on Javaid, Javed & Kohda (2019); elaboration based on Evers (2003) and United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (2011)

Simply stated, existing gender inequalities at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels lead to contrasting effects of trade liberalisation on men and on women (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 2009). These effects can best be perceived at the following levels: firstly, the sector level, where trade can either increase or decrease the employment opportunities of women, depending on the type of sector, whether trade liberalisation expands or contracts, and whether it is dominated by women or not, as well as the comparative advantage effects. Secondly, the state level, where economic reform policies, through trade liberalisation, can have adverse effects on government expenditure and the public services that aid women the most. Thirdly, the household level, where spending may increase or decrease because of trade implications on the prices of consumption goods (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 2009; United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011). This analysis forms the theoretical foundation that is used to analyse the institutions that may interconnect with economic growth and gender equality, through using this macro-, meso- and micro-lens, in Chapter 5.

3.2 Measuring Economic Growth

This section outlines a brief overview of GDP as a measure of economic growth and aims to make use of these measures in Chapter 5 to track South Africa's economic growth post-1994. The Feminist Institutional framework requires the identification of the theoretical contributions of this topic to provide a foundation for the descriptive statistics that will be used. This adheres to an overarching qualitative method that allows for answering the research question on the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa.

3.2.1 Tracking economic growth using GDP

Economists and statisticians employ various methods to trace economic growth. A prominent measure of economic growth is GDP. GDP is determined by aggregating the figures for the following categories together: personal consumption, private investment, and government expenditure, as well as net exports (excluding imports) (Bondarenko, 2017). As the most popular instrument for measuring production, GDP is utilised to monitor an economy's well-being (Dyanan & Sheiner, 2018).

Nonetheless, several economists have underlined the limitations that the computation of GDP yield. In an article published by the WEF (2016), Diane Coyle argues that GDP omits two key variables, which are developments in environmental indicators, and unpaid reproductive work within the household and volunteering. Women do the majority of this unpaid reproductive work, and since it is not measured, it is often neglected in economic policy. Overlooking unpaid reproductive work in policy design works against women. Women hold the majority of the burden of unpaid reproductive labour (Department of Women, 2015). However, as GDP is the most popular instrument for measuring economic growth, this dissertation will make use of it to identify and analyse the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa. It is imperative that we not only focus on whether a country is growing, but also seek to establish if this economic growth is for the benefit of, or at the expense of, gender equality. Second, this dissertation will consider the impact of formal and informal institutions on institutional change. It is for this very reason that the dissertation aims to consider the effect of both informal norms (i.e. ideologies about feminine and masculine roles) and formal institutions on institutional change. Chapter three provides an overview of the economic growth theory and serves as the foundation for the analyses of chapter five. Chapter four follows below and it represents an overview of gender equality theory.

Chapter 4: Overview of Gender Equality

4.1 Gender Equality Theory

To identify whether there are any developments in gender equality, and to establish if gender equality policies are set at the expense of, or to the benefit of, economic growth, it is necessary to clearly discuss influential gender equality theory. Gender equality, otherwise known as *gender egalitarianism* or *equality of the sexes*, is described as the state of parity in all aspects across societies, including the use of resources, given opportunities, and economic activities, irrespective of gender (Browne, 2018). Gender equality is not only limited to economic empowerment, but is also a moral responsibility (OECD, 2012). Both feminists and mainstream economists agree that individuals make decisions and exert agency in the context of limitations. These limitations are posed by individual circumstances as well as the structural dissemination of various factors (i.e. power, resources, societal norms and similarities) among distinct groups in line with gender, ethnicity and social status, and these disparities are created along the lines of power and privilege (Folbre, 1994). This chapter aims to outline the theories surrounding gender equality and the measurement thereof. This is done in an endeavour to expose how institutions shape policy and economic growth strategies, which in turn influences gender equality.

4.1.1 Introduction

The study of gender equality and its effects on political and socio-economic factors is a consistent theme in literature. It advocates for the equal participation of women alongside men in decision-making domains (ILO, 2009; OECD, 2012; United Nations, 2010). Both genders experience political arrangements and development programmes differently (United Nations, 2010). The analysis of the dissimilarities and similarities between men and women is oriented towards comprehending the nature and basis of gender inequality. The concept of gender equality is not limited to only fair representation, but also necessitates that both genders have equal rights and access to opportunities to benefit and contribute to their socio-economic and political development (UNICEF, 2017). Thus,

in many instances, greater gender equality requires the making, and implementation, of policies that strive towards achieving gender equality.

Inequalities concerning gender are observable in the interpersonal relationships of a majority of societies and are more prevalent than other forms of socio-economic inequalities are (Sen, Ostlin & George, 2007). Gender inequality intersects other forms of socio-economic inequalities; thus, underlining the dynamics of power as well as the precariousness of living standards (Kabeer, 2003). Globally, actualising gender equality demands the eradication of destructive practices against women, including human trafficking, which affects young women and girls the most, femicide and the gender wage gap (United Nations, 2014). In agreement with the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon (2014), we all have a moral responsibility to prevent and stop violence against women and young girls. Efforts towards this entail challenging informal institutions that enable and sustain this sort of behaviour. It is imperative that negative gender-ascribed stereotypes and ideologies be done away with, and that relevant laws be established and implemented to halt discrimination and exploitative, abusive behaviour of all sorts and to establish equality in both the home and workplace.

The main aim of this chapter is to provide an outline of gender equality theory. The structure of the section is as follows. Firstly, I look at gender in relation to institutions, and identify the types of constraints that can result as consequence of preconceived notions about masculinity and femininity. Secondly, as a means to underline the established theoretical tools that could most likely be useful in gender-aware policymaking, we outline efforts towards this type of policymaking. The final section is the conclusion and it briefly underlines the main points.

4.1.2 Gender frameworks

“Gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. (Scott, 1986:1067)” In other words, as Kenney (1996) asserts, gender, as a source of identification and social constructs, not only functions at the personal or interpersonal levels, but is also a constituent of institutions and social construction. Institutions are inherently gendered in nature, meaning that individuals within institutions have a particular gender. Males and females are not perceived in isolation from their occupational roles. Kenney (1996) analyses women’s integration in four distinct policy

institutions where no gender-neutral classification is stated to exist between members, in the following professions: legislators, law practitioners, and foreign policymakers. However, in these professions, it is noted that women are undoubtedly perceived and treated as *female* holders of a designated role. Work is an integral part of the constitution of masculinity for several workers. Jobs, like institutions, are gendered, and institutions are more inclined to mount significant efforts to restrain prospects that endanger the gendered identity of the institution (Kenney, 1996).

Kabeer (2016) underlines the differences in the gender-disaggregated division of labour within productive and reproductive tasks that are perceived in various regions across the globe, and which partially reflect disparities in these gender-attributed constraints. Kabeer (2016) asserts that the prevailing assignment of the man as the breadwinner justifies the higher male labour force participation rates (MLFPRs), worldwide. Kabeer (2016) highlights the point that, although most economies attribute the direct responsibility of non-paid reproductive work to the woman, there is considerable contrast in socially attributed assumptions concerning their activity rate, and consequently in their FLFPRs. Since the 1990s, developments in literature assert that gender inequalities are associated with decreases in economic growth (Klasen, 2018). Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2019) analysed the unadjusted gender gap in hourly earnings, on average, by sampling both developed (e.g., South Korea, Russia, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Uruguay, France, Poland and Belgium) and developing (e.g. Brazil, Colombia, Vietnam, Pakistan) countries, and established that men are more likely to receive higher remuneration than women are.

Other constraints with regard to gender include macroeconomic policies that are traditionally assumed gender-neutral (Sequino, 2021). In disagreement, Sequino (2021) contends that a more detailed analysis demonstrates indoctrinated male bias. Policymaking institutions are shaped by gendered, preconceived notions and biases, which produce policies and laws that are based on assumptions about masculinity and femininity (Annesley & Gains, 2010). For instance, in exploring gender, power and change in the UK core executive, Annesley and Gains (2010) revealed the gendered predisposition of the recruitment process, resource allocation, interpersonal relationships, and of laws of the UK core executive, and underline one inequitable power disparity in political opportunities. Exploring the gendered nature of political institutions demands a closer look into their formal and informal dimensions, and into how they interact (Mackay

et al., 2010). This also provides the opportunity to assess whether formal institutions, as found in legislation, do in fact shape, or influence social conduct on the micro-level (Kenny, 2014).

Informal institutions such as the patriarchal ideology magnify biological differences between men and women to emphasise the dominance of men and rationalise the subordination of women (Sultana, 2011). An understanding of the social construction of patriarchy is necessary not only for policy but also for gender egalitarianism (Sultana, 2011). Definitions of patriarchy include that by Walby (1989:214), who defines patriarchy as “... a system of social structures, and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. This definition defies the traditional patriarchal notion of biological determinism – which demonstrates the belief that men are genetically stronger than women are and, in turn, rationalises their intellectual capacity as superior to that of women (Singh, 2018). Lack of awareness will result in impractical, gender-blind policies that do nothing for gender equality.

Gender-blind policies refer to policies that have a male-bias, make use of gender-neutral language, and tend to promote male interests, demands and preferences in resource and opportunity allocation. Awareness of this gives rise to gender-aware policy designs, which observe economic agents as both male and female individuals, with varying constraints, who experience economic conditions asymmetrically, and thus may have contradictory interests, demands and preferences (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). For instance, equality in education and access to employment opportunities are associated with a country’s long-term growth, and this growth can be undermined by an export-led economic growth strategy concentrated on the production of labour-intensive goods, primarily produced by low-pay female employment (Seguino, Berik & Rodgers, 2009). Inasmuch as such a strategy can prompt exportation, revenue, and investment in the short run, it is ineffectual in the long run (Seguino *et al.*, 2009).

4.1.3 Efforts toward more gender-aware policymaking

The economy on a macro-level serves as a framework of constraint on gender equality in several domains, notably education, occupation, income, and prosperity. Moreover, mainstream economics does not consider power, unlike heterodox feminist economics that positions relations of power at the core of its inquiry. The feminist critique of power is derived from Marxist political economy and institutional economics, while concurrently

applying a feminist outlook to these schools of thought (Hartmann, 1979). Inasmuch as this was the case in applying a feminist outlook, if one draws from Hartmann (1979), this is still relevant today, as seen in the work of Berik and Kongar (2021). Political feminist economists argue that power relations regulate economic outcomes, and feminist analysis reveals this economic system that perpetuates inequalities (Berik & Kongar, 2021). Power relations demonstrate themselves through disproportionate earnings (gender wage gap) or the double burden of paid labour and unpaid reproductive labour that mostly fall upon women (Urban & Purckhauer, 2016). Patriarchy and capitalism go hand in hand, since the patriarchal system subordinates' women, while the capitalist system exploits them (Urban & Purckhauer, 2016; Giddings, 2021).

Macroeconomic political strategies can fortify or alleviate gender inequality, and this shift can either boost or hinder the realisation of other development goals (Ding *et al.*, 2009). For instance, gendered barriers to political power are more likely to adversely affect females who are marginalised with regard to their social class, sexual orientation, racial group, religious beliefs, and age (O'Neil & Domingo, 2015). Moreover, countries have varying socio-economic as well as political environments that coincide in different ways to either empower or disempower females' agency and influence. Macroeconomic political strategies can either restrict or enable provisioning through markets and social policymaking, which aids households in harmonising paid and unpaid employment, as well as providing insurance in the face of unemployment and other shortcomings in provisioning (Berik & Kongar, 2021). Macroeconomic policies are traditionally assumed gender-neutral. In disagreement, Seguino (2021) contends that a more-detailed analysis demonstrates indoctrinated male bias. Elson (1995) claims that an indoctrinated male bias places woman in a disadvantaged position, relative to their male counterparts, in gaining access to credit facilities, property rights, distribution of modern technologies, access to health-care facilities, and skills acquisition. Moreover, an indoctrinated male bias marginalises women from decision- and policy-making processes in which government expenditure allocations are determined (Elson, 1995). Therefore, it is for this very reason that the impact of macroeconomic political strategies on gender equality is of much importance. Unsatisfactory gender norms have an impact on all females, and this impact is dependent on other structural elements.

A report of the published conference proceedings of the Institute of Development Studies' Subordination of Women Workshop, authored by Ann Whitehead (2006), underlines

some assumptions, shared by feminists, which were set up to be used as tools for people actively involved in policymaking and affiliated with the IDS. Whitehead (2006) underlines three assumptions in an endeavour to develop theoretical tools that could potentially be instrumental in facilitating the advanced analyses of the impact of social development, deliberate or coincidental, on the conditions of women. The first assumption underlines the point that research concerning women and development, particularly research closely related to the impact of education, fertility decline and changing production, should not point to women as being the issue, but more accurately to the socially constructed relations between men and women. The second assumption underlines the point that relations concerning the equality of men and women are socially constructed, and not constructed on biological differences. The third assumption challenges the notion that the way in which men and women are socialised to relate to on another is not fundamentally non-adversarial. The policy stance that the gains of development can be expected to benefit both genders equitably, despite being specifically targeted to men, is misleading. For instance, Whitehead submits that evaluations of the impact of socio-economic change and integration of women into development reveal that the predominantly female sectors were losing out.

4.1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, feminist literature maintains that the interconnection between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality is expected to be reconciled by diverse circumstantial factors, which include regulatory frameworks wherein economic growth strategies are set, as well as the dynamics of domestic patriarchy. Gender plays a significant role in the macro-economy. Macroeconomic political strategies must be gender-sensitive to ensure that the objective of simultaneously improving gender while targeting economic growth is realised.

4.2 Measuring Gender Equality

Section 3.1.3 (sub-section 3.1.3.1) detailed the conceptualisation around gender. The dissertation now focuses on the measurements. The dimensions of gender are multifaceted, while recognising this measurement divide, the dissertation illustrates below some of the different ways in which this concept is measured. This study accepts that there is a bidirectional relationship between gender equality and economic growth. The possible reason for this asymmetrical relation between these two variables is that studies

rarely employ exact measures of gender equality. Attempts to measure economic growth are determined by mainstream economic growth models that restrict themselves to certain measures of gender equality; namely, education, employment and, in a few cases, wages. This is in contrast to attempts to model gender equality that are fairly novel and make use of a broader set of gender equality measures, such as happiness, agency, and political participation (Kabeer, 2016).

This section sets out to underline the traditional and modern measures of gender equality, respectively, as a tool for use in Chapter 5, which aims to identify and analyse the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa by using an array of gender-equality measures embedded within feminist economic theory.

4.2.1 Traditional measures of gender equality

4.2.1.1 Education

The Global Gender Gap Report (WEF, 2021) indicates that the gender disparities in educational attainment, health and survival have narrowed, and that gender parity in this regard will soon be reached. It reports that the global educational attainment gender disparity has narrowed by 95 per cent, worldwide. The estimated time period for achieving absolute gender parity in educational attainment and health and survival is approximately 14.2 years, globally. Education is a fundamental tool that shapes the human capital framework, preparing and equipping the labour force for enhanced productivity levels (Mankiw *et al.*, 1992). Likewise, education develops an economy's innovative capability and generates modern technologies, products, and approaches, which, in turn, prompt effective production activities that advance economic growth (Ngepah, Saba & Mabindisa, 2021). Gender equality in education has favourable effects on economic growth through its impact on fertility and human capital (Lagerlof, 2003). Lagerlof suggests that, as economies gravitate towards an equality of men and women, the human capital of women increases, making their time more valuable. This ultimately leads to an increased supply of human capital (see Becker & Lewis, 1973). Since there is a strong correlation between human capital and economic growth, increases in human capital consequently led to economic growth (Pelinescu, 2015). Disparities in physical and human capital facilities seem to form another significant factor, following the observed gender inequalities in the labour force.

4.2.1.2 Labour force participation rate

The global FLFPR is 47.29 per cent, relative to the global MLFPR, which is 74.335 per cent (World Bank 2021c, d). This displays a disparity of 27.04 (own calculation using World Bank, 2021c, d). Gender inequality is an inescapable fact in a majority of countries, especially in the developing world. Significant gaps persist in the equality of men and women within the spheres of labour, politics, and bargaining power (Cuberes & Teignier, 2014). Offenberger (2014:1) shows that, “women’s productive and reproductive roles” are often in conflict, since increases in women’s labour force participation do not necessarily translate in significant changes in their care and household responsibilities, as a result of gender stereotypes and the male-breadwinner bias. Focusing a country’s increases in income on the labour force participation gender gap can be achieved through various pathways. These include income elasticity, technological progress, developments in women’s property rights (see Becker & Lewis, 1973; Greenwood, Seshadri & Yorukoglu, 2005; Doepke & Tertilt, 2009), and increases in female upper-management representation (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019).

4.2.1.3 Employment disparities

The difference between the global MLFPR and the global FLFPR is 27.04 (own calculation, using World Bank, 2021c, d). Employment disparities in relation to gender in the labour force can take various forms. Firstly, women are more inclined to work for less remuneration than men do, due to time constraints resulting from engaging in unproductive reproductive work (Hyde, Greene & Darmstadt, 2020). Secondly, disparities may exist regarding wages, and finally, through occupational segregation (Hyde *et al.*, 2020). History shows that, for decades, women are classified as being more prone to settle for low-pay employment (Blau & Kahn, 2007). Polachek (2004) defines occupational segregation as the tendency of females to be employed in low-pay professions. Occupational segregation results in the undervaluation of predominantly female jobs for the purposes of setting wages, which are often lower than in those in male-dominated industrial sectors (ILO, 2020).

Segregation can be either *horizontal* or *vertical*, where horizontal segregation is indicative of the concentration of men and women in professions of economic affairs. An example of this could be where females are employed in less-remunerated occupations. Despite the increase in the labour force participation rate of women, this has not translated into

equitable employment opportunities (Blau & Khan, 2013), nor equitable remuneration (Blau & Kahn, 2007). Women are more inclined to be segregated in a limited sector of production, which explains the gaps in their productivity, relative to men (Anker *et al.*, 2003; World Bank, 2012). Vertical segregation, on the other hand, refers to the over- or under-representation of a classification of employees in professions, at the top of the hierarchy, based on attributes that are not related to the activities of the sector. For instance, where males are employed in more senior positions within the same occupation than women are (Meulders *et al.*, 2010). A more explicit example of vertical segregation in the labour force includes the role of women in business activities. Globally, estimates are that a female representative (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019) leads only 19 per cent of firms. Firms, worldwide, are more inclined to be led by men. The proportion of women in senior and middle management positions in South Africa is approximately 33 per cent (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019). There tends to be a variation between female-led, relative to male-led, firms. For instance, female-led firms are more inclined to have more female employees (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019). Therefore, it can be argued that lack of representation contributes to low female labour force participation.

Below, I discuss the neoclassical approach and then contrast this with the feminist approach to better contextualise the richer understanding obtained by using a feminist economics approach. Neoclassical economics posits that economic agents are rational beings who act alone and seek to make decisions that maximise their utility. The assumption is that these economic agents function in a perfectly competitive market, and thus the consequence of the sum of all their decisions is most efficient. Observed gender disparities are inferred to arise as a consequence of the economic agent's utility maximisation choices. For instance, a woman spending more time at home doing reproductive work may be perceived to benefit from the family's overall well-being, since this allows the man to spend more time in the marketplace to earn an income that maximises family's utility (Hartmann & Milli, 2021). Other aspects that add to employment disparities include preconceived notions about potential employees' productivity, for instance, imperfect information about the prospective employees' productivity may cause the employer to make biased decisions about prospective employees. For instance, if an employer assumes that women are less productive than men are, due to certain reproductive responsibilities that may arise along their employment life, they are more likely to prefer hiring men as opposed to women and pay women less – which Phelps (1972) refers to as statistical discrimination. Thus, inasmuch as mainstream economics

postulates that earnings accrue in accordance with a worker's marginal productivity, if any discrimination arises, against any group, it would be mitigated by market competition.

Feminist economics argues that women's decisions are not always characterised by their preferences, but by the way in which institutions are organised (Walby, 1989). As Walby asserts, the majority of institutions are set up in favour of men's interests, demands, preferences and work. For instance, with regard to political strategies, men in policymaking positions are more likely to subsidise sporting arenas for rich teams, as opposed to women who are more inclined to subsidise childcare (Folbre, 1994). Moreover, husbands usually have more bargaining power than their wives do, since men tend to have higher earnings relative to women. Despite the economic risks attached to being a housewife, an unhappy marriage and experiencing gender inequality, some women often choose to stay married than to not be married at all (Folbre, 1994; Francis, 2019). Biased gender norms and assumptions are rooted in political, legislative, cultural and economic spheres. Since these spheres function with the aim of framing access to and control over resources, they consequently generate, reinforce and legitimise the gender system premised on inequality (Seguino, 2007).

Macro-structural theories concerning gender stratification consider the level of gender inequality as one of the factors that influence women's bargaining power (Blumberg, 1984). Macro-structural theory claims that there is an inverse relation between gender stratification and the level of economic power a woman has, together with the control over resources that this power engenders. As Blumberg (1984) asserts, this implies that women's ability to participate economically and have control over the allocation of their production contributes to their agency and decreases physical, political, and ideological subjugation. This analysis shows us the impacts of informal institutions (i.e., preconceived notions about feminine and masculine roles) and their effect on happiness, agency and the economic participation of women.

4.2.1.4 Wages

The global gender wage gap is approximately 20 per cent (Bosch & Barit, 2020). Cavalcanti and Tavares (2008) have proposed a model to quantify the overall impact of gender inequality in wages that introduces aspects of discrimination against women into an economic growth model with endogenous saving, fertility, and labour force participation, using US data. Although Cavalcanti and Tavares (2008) utilised US data,

wage inequality is generally not measured on a global scale, but at country level. They establish that a significant portion of the actual disparities in GDP per capita between the US and other economies is, in actuality, led by gender inequality in wages. Moreover, they underline the point that the increase in fertility, as a consequence of gender discrimination, is accountable for the decline in GDP per capita, as well as in GDP, as a result of the low female participation rate.

A cross-country analysis of gender wage disparities by Oostendorp (2009) indicates that advances in GDP per capita, international trade and Foreign Direct Investment are linked to decreases in the gender wage gap. Despite this, history has taught us to exercise caution in making such generalisations (ILO, 2007; Saure & Zoabi, 2014). For instance, Saure and Zoabi (2014) argue that, as trade widens the female dominated sectors, the gender wage gap is more inclined to widen, in turn causing female labour force participation to decrease. The ILO (2007) underlines the complexities of this generalisation by highlighting the point that, although there are reductions in the gender wage gap in the manufacturing sectors for selected countries like Costa Rica and the United Kingdom, the opposite has happened in other countries such as Egypt and Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is imperative that the impact of gender discrimination, with regard to employment and wages, be a primary concern in macroeconomic policy that is geared toward increasing GDP per capita in the long run.

Wage transparency is pertinent, and the use of reporting, as a transparency mechanism, is advantageous in ensuring that gender pay practices are maintained. A variety of indicators or measures are employed in various countries and knowing what specifically is reported on is integral in understanding the nature of the gender wage gap of a certain country. The gender gap may only exist in some professional levels or industrial sectors or may be inherent in various components of the overall remuneration. The source of the gap must first be identified to ensure that a response is formulated and geared towards its reduction. A general measure that is often coupled with analysis, and reported on, is the gender pay equity objectives and policies set out by an employer. Some countries have to report explicitly on the net remuneration and incentives provided to both male and female employees, as these fluctuations in remuneration and incentives may exacerbate the gender wage gap. One more indicator represents the numbers of men and women who occupy each professional level, which illustrate the dissemination of men and women among the respective jobs in an organisation or across various industrial sectors

domestically, thereby underlining any presence of occupational segregation by gender (Bosch & Barit, 2020). Over the past six decades, the ILO has held conventions on equal pay and anti-discrimination labour practices. However, a gender pay still persists in industrialised economies, and more so in developing economies ILO (2007).

4.2.2 Modern measures of gender equality

4.2.2.1 Happiness and agency

The macroeconomic literature review by Kabeer and Natali (2013) was not successful in finding consistent evidence that economic growth has any systematic impact on gender equality measures; namely, happiness and agency. In spite of this, a discovery was made within this literature, which demonstrated that FLFPR had a positive impact on economic growth.

For instance, Seguino (2007) analysed subsequent waves of the World Values Survey, covering a period of 15 years, across more than 70 countries. Seguino (2007) wanted to explore the effects of economic growth and women's labour participation on viewpoints concerning gender equality for both men and women. She established that economic growth renders men less resistant to women's economic empowerment, even when the economic gains are more beneficial to women. Likewise, she established that, during periods of economic distress, patriarchal attitudes are more rampant. Studies on the implications of the empowerment of women relating to their access to productive resources has indicated some of its positive implications on women's self-esteem, decision-making authority, adaptability in the public domain, and respectability within society, among others (Hanmer & Klugman, 2016). The patriarchal system keeps women subordinate in several ways, and, in day-to-day living, this subordination can manifest itself in the following constructs. Women can be subordinated by being discriminated against, overlooked, and exploited, and by being subjected to domestic violence (Sultana, 2011).

Some research on gender and happiness has showed that political efforts made towards the inclusion of women have adverse effects. The claim is made that women who participate in the economic and political sphere are more inclined to be worse-off, and consequently unhappy, because of the intensified work and familial life responsibilities (Audette, 2019). It is imperative that the participation of women in the labour force be

coupled with the division of unpaid reproductive duties within the household to ensure that the positive effects of economic growth are translated to women's happiness and agency (Elborgh-Woytek *et al.*, 2013). Other factors, such as gender-based violence (GBV), not only affect women's happiness and agency, but are also a cost to economic growth.

4.2.2.2 Political participation

Gender is a governing principle of political and social institutions and has a significant impact on political strategies. Gender-related disparities in attitudes (or conduct) lead to differences in macroeconomic behaviour, which in turn affects the formulation of policies, particularly fiscal policies (Stotsky, 2006).

The Global Gender Gap Report by the WEF (2021) shows that the gender gap in political empowerment persists and is, in fact, the largest of the four gaps measured. The Global Gender Gap Report is premised upon the most recent data from international organisations, along with a survey of executives. The Global Gender Gap Index analyses the gap between women and men over four primary sub-indexes, namely "economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment (WEF, 2021:72)". Three fundamental concepts form the underlying framework of the Global Gender Gap Index. Firstly, the index concentrates on measuring gaps as opposed to levels, meaning that the index ranks countries on their gender gaps and not their developmental levels. Secondly, the index considers gaps in outcome variables, as opposed to input variables. For instance, the index will make use of an indicator to compare the gap between men and women in high-skilled professions such as management positions, which signifies an outcome indicator, but does not consider the duration of maternity leave, which signifies a policy indicator. Thirdly, the index ranks countries according to gender equality, as opposed to their empowerment.

This means that the index concentrates on whether the gap between women and men has decreased, rather than on which sex is conquering the other (WEF, 2021). The report reveals that the gap has widened by 2.4 per cent since the 2020 edition (WEF, 2020; WEF, 2021). The index covers 156 countries and exposes that woman only account for 26.1 per cent of parliamentary positions, worldwide. Moreover, it reveals that there are only 22.6 per cent female executive ministers, worldwide. Finally, gender equality in the political sphere is estimated to take approximately 146 years to achieve, as reported by

the Global Gender Gap Index (WEF, 2021). For instance, Lott and Kenny (1999) conducted a study on the growth of government over the period 1870–1940, drawing on details of state fiscal decision-making in the US. They established that the right to vote corresponded with rapid increases in government expenditure, revenues and more progressive voting patterns, and that the expansion of these effects were observed, over time, as women began voting. Disparities with regard to gender and income, as well as legislative gender-related constraints, hinder economic growth, and more so in developing countries (IMF, 2016). Mitra *et al.* (2015) demonstrate that the more women there are in policymaking bodies, the better the chances are of alterations of government expenditure in the interest of health and education, which can potentially result in economic growth in the medium and long terms.

In conclusion, numerous studies point out that gender equality in the sphere of education and labour force participation prompts economic growth (Kocourek & Nedomlelova, 2018; Wannachai, 2019). Policies that limit women’s unpaid domestic responsibilities can be favourable not only to women, but also to the broader society. Hence, the feminist economics inquiry puts emphasis on the importance of viewing macroeconomic policies from a gender perspective in order to make political strategies consistent with the sustainable development goal of achieving gender equality in capabilities and securing the ability to ensure a sustainable way of living (Seguino, 2021). Chapter three and chapter four lay the foundation for economic growth theory and gender equality theory. The dissertation now moves on to chapter five and six. Chapter five and chapter six represent the analysis of the dissertation and together answer the primary research question.

Chapter 5: South African Context: Analysing growth from a Feminist Institutionalism framework

5.1 Introduction

Using the Feminist Institutionalism framework, this dissertation provides an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post 1994. In essence, the dissertation makes use of pre-existing studies together with descriptive statistics for insights into the pathways likely to be driving this bidirectional relationship. The theoretical foundation of this analysis is based on Figure 3.1 (p. 33). Figure 3.1 (p. 33) demonstrates the macro-, meso- and micro-conceptualisations of the economy from a gendered perspective (Evers, 2003; United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011).

The dissertation makes use of the following secondary data, together with reports and augments it with theoretical and applied-work in the field of economic growth and feminist economics to answer the research questions.

Table 5.1 : Resources (or data sources) the dissertation makes use of in variable (or topic) format

Resource/data source	Variable/ topic
Statistics South Africa(Stats SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Labour force participation: Female. o Labour force participation : Male - General Household Survey (GHS)- 2008 and 2019

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Men, women and children: Findings of the Living Conditions Survey, 2012/15.
Quantec data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Economic Outlook (WEO) - Gross Domestic Product, constant prices (Percent change (%)) - RSA Standardised Industry: Structures, trends & documentation
ASGISA 2008 Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The third annual report of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA).
The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Global Gender Gap report 2006. - The Global Gender Gap report 2020. - The Global Gender Gap report: Insight report (2021).
2018 Overcoming Poverty and Inequality Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This report is an analysis of South Africa's progress in reducing poverty and inequality since 1994, with 2006 to 2015 as a reference period.
2019 Gender Policy Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender equality supports happiness and well-being.

IMF Annual Report of 2017	- IMF Report 2017: Promoting inclusive growth.
2001 World Bank Engendering Development Report	- Engendering development: Through gender equality in rights, resources and voice.
World Bank 2012 Gender Equality and Development Report	- The primary message of this report is that “patterns of progress and persistence in gender equality matter, both for development outcomes and policy making” (World Bank, 2012: xiii).
The Presidency’s 2005 towards a fifteen-year review report	- This review seeks to assess development post-1994.
Twenty-year Review of South Africa (1994-2014)	- This review is a comprehensive reflection of developments made towards gender equality since democratisation.
NDP 2020 Review	- The review analyses developments made on the NDP since 2012 evaluates gaps and proposes course change to get back on the course envisaged by the NDP. -

This analysis forms the theoretical foundation that the dissertation employs in Chapter 5 to analyse institutions that may interconnect with economic growth and gender equality using this macro-, meso- and micro-lens.

The main aim of this section is to identify and analyse the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa by using an array of economic growth measures embedded within economic theory. The dissertation makes use of descriptive quantitative data, together with theoretical contributions underpinning that data, to better understand the interconnections between the patterns of economic growth, along with the dimensions of gender equality. I start by underlining the patterns of growth experienced by South Africa, which, in essence, are trends of economic growth. Secondly, I look at the type of growth that South Africa has experienced, which, in essence, are the characteristics of this growth. Thirdly, I track South Africa's economic growth, by using GDP growth rates as a prominent measure of economic growth, in an endeavour to gain a clearer understanding of the pattern of economic growth in South Africa. Fourthly, I present a feminist outlook of South Africa's economic transformation, particularly the macroeconomic political strategies, to check if the strategies that are implemented are gender-aware or gender-blind. Finally, I look into the dimensions of gender equality.

5.1.1 South African analysis of patterns of economic growth

As determined in the literature outlined in Chapter 3, there is assumption that realising economic growth necessitates a fundamental focus on industrialisation. This section aims to explore if South Africa has done this. In essence, has South Africa undertaken either the import substitution strategy, or the export-led growth strategy, or both? Moreover, if not, why not? South Africa's economic growth types and patterns reveal that the South African economy is characterised by a political history that affected its economic system. As a result of the country's history, and the enforcement of the apartheid regime, an understanding of the political history of the country is pertinent to understand the country's macroeconomic policy structure (Adewale, 2017).

The administration of Prime Minister Vorster, between 1966 and 1978, reinforced the import substitution strategy (Terreblanche & Nattrass, 1990). This was in an attempt to reduce the country's dependence on foreign goods. The import substitution industrialisation strategy included the following measures: a significant subsidisation of import substitution, the expansion and development of strategic industries such as SASOL and Armscor, and the granting of subsidies for industrial advancement domestically (Adewale, 2017). Nonetheless, these interventions proved inadequate to thwart the imminent economic demise, intensifying the economic downturn, because of

capital flight by multinationals and the persistent political struggles (Adewale, 2017). This collapse, among other things, spearheaded the transition to a non-segregated democratic governance in 1994 (Terreblanche & Nattrass, 1990). This shows that South Africa followed an import-substitution strategy to achieve higher economic growth as reported by Mendes *et al.* (2014) and Martin (2011) in Chapter 3. This analysis confirms the theoretical foundation set up in Chapter 3 of Martin (2011) and Mendes *et al.* (2014), indicating the importance of such a strategy for encouraging economic growth.

In 1994, the democratic government bequeathed a profoundly divided society that was characterised by inequalities in societal well-being for people of colour (Bhorat, Hirsch, Kanbur & Ncube, 2014). Firmly embedded, biased practices were the norm, and the presiding value system fostered an understanding of women that depicted females as inferior to males in all areas of society (Albertyn, 2011). This understanding left females in a precarious position after democratisation. Discrimination concerning gender resulted in the vulnerability of women to socio-economic issues, such as unsatisfactory living standards and unemployment, as well as declining health and educational levels (Van Der Byl, 2014).

Nonetheless, because of the political liberation of the country, the political and economic arena took a different turn. South Africa assumed a succession of economic policy reforms that enabled access to international markets and investment as prescribed by the organisations (i.e., IMF and WTO) of the Washington consensus (Magubane, 2002). The macroeconomic political strategies that were instituted were geared towards economic liberalisation of the country to international competition, contractive monetary and fiscal policies, and labour market liberalisation (Adewale, 2017). Democratic South Africa is characterised by free trade and the adoption of export-oriented industrialisation. As claimed by Adewale (2012), the analysis confirms that both South Africa and Brazil (as was described in Chapter 3, Section 3.1.2) faced comparable economic constraints at various points in time and assumed similar economic growth strategies that yielded similar outcomes. This confirms again the theoretical analysis shown in Chapter 3, that Brazil and South Africa as developing countries, were facing similar difficulties, which allows for a better contextualisation of the challenges that exist for achieving economic growth.

5.1.2 The types (characteristics) of economic growth experienced in South Africa, and what this has meant for women

The underlying assumption maintained in Chapter 3 (section 3.1.2) of this dissertation is that actualising economic growth demands a radical focus on industrialisation. The advancement of production capacity in the manufacturing sector is central to the industrialisation process (Roberts, 2014). In this section, I look at the types (characteristics) of the patterns of growth experienced in South Africa, to draw better conclusions about how this has affected women. As is evident in Section 5.1.1, I looked at the patterns of growth that South Africa has experienced. South Africa started with an import-substitution industrialisation strategy under the presidency of Vorster (1966–1978) to reduce South Africa's dependence on external supplies of strategic goods (Terreblanche & Natrass, 1990). The import-substitution industrialisation strategy resulted in investment opportunities for “English-dominated companies”, as a consequence of the development of strategic industries, and this strengthened the relationship between the state and business community (Terreblanche & Natrass, 1990:16). Nonetheless, this relationship deteriorated in the 1980s, resulting in economic stagflation, leaving both the state and the business community (English-dominated enterprises) looking to protect their own interests (Terreblanche & Natrass, 1990).

This dissertation primarily focuses on post-1994 patterns of economic growth, therefore this section will not go into depth on what the import-substitution strategy meant for South African women, since it was implemented pre-1994. However, the following is noted about economic growth during the implementation of the import-substitution industrialisation strategy. The apartheid system handicapped economic growth through the underutilisation of black labour potential, since it dissuaded and prevented black people from advancing themselves, both intellectually and professionally (Moll, 1993).

In 1994, when the ANC came into power, South Africa adopted a macroeconomic political strategy that promoted economic liberalisation (export-led industrialisation strategy) (Mosala *et al.*, 2017). A gendered outlook on trade policy suggests that men and women experience the effects of trade liberalisation in varying ways (United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011). Trade liberalisation can lead to the defeminisation of labour in female-dominated sectors, thus leading to the concentration of women in the informal sector (IDRC, 2017). In South Africa, for instance, trade

liberalisation benefited women and men in highly skilled positions, and it led to increases in capital, thus increasing productive capacity. This, in turn, led to the defeminisation of labour, forcing low-skilled women to settle for employment in the primary sector, which usually offers low pay, under adverse conditions, as established in the analysis. Another troubling factor with regard to the structure of the South African economy is the secondary sector, which is predominantly centred on manufacturing, but is on a constant decline (see Table 5.1 below regarding the structure of South Africa's economy (in %) post-1997). South Africa's structural transformation is stagnant and inconsistent. Furthermore, the persistent, untimely deindustrialisation has adversely influenced the country's capacity and long-term productivity (Adreoni, Mondliwa, Roberts & Tregenna, 2021). Despite improvements in certain sectors, the industrial sector has experienced minimal changes between 1994 and 2019 (Adreoni *et al.*, 2021).

This analysis reinforces the need to include a gender outlook on trade policy design and implementation in order to determine the impact of trade policies on gender relations (United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011). The impact of trade liberalisation on women can be twofold (UNCTAD, 2016). Trade liberalisation can drive positive change through the provision of opportunities for women, or it can worsen pre-existing gender disparities (UNCTAD, 2016).

5.1.3 Measuring South Africa's economic growth

Before I proceed into this section, it is important to note that a lagged effect can be experienced regarding economic policies that are adopted, but then only start to show results years later regarding economic growth or improvement in gender equality. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to make any absolute claims about causality relating to the impacts of certain economic policies within specific time frames. Rather, this dissertation seeks to analyse general trends to better understand the interconnections between economic growth and gender inequality. This actively acknowledges the very complex nature of these phenomena and does not seek to isolate them in order to ascertain an empirically quantifiable cause and effect.

5.1.3.1 Tracking economic growth by using GDP

As established above, economic liberalisation is a focal point of South Africa's economic growth strategy in the post-apartheid era. In a study assessing how trade liberalisation had affected economic growth, employment, and poverty in South Africa, and most

importantly its impact on men and women, Thurlow (2006) underscored the following. For the most part, South Africa's economic performance prior to liberalisation was very unsatisfactory. Upon the dawn of liberalisation, when the new government was sworn in, the country's economic performance changed significantly. For instance, as depicted in Figure 5.1 below, South Africa has documented an average of 3.3 per cent of GDP per annum since 1994. To be precise, between 1994 and 1997, South Africa recorded positive economic growth rates, until 1998, when it plummeted to about 0.52 per cent due to the East Asian financial crisis (Van Der Byl, 2014), which brought about an economic downturn in the global economic environment. It steadily increased until 2008/9 when there was little to no economic growth at all, and GDP actually decreased by roughly 1.54 per cent, due to the global financial crisis. South Africa had relatively high economic growth rates from 1994 until just before the financial crises. Thereafter, we experienced a period of relative recovery, but with lower economic growth rates than in the period preceding the financial crises. However, this was followed by a dramatic decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

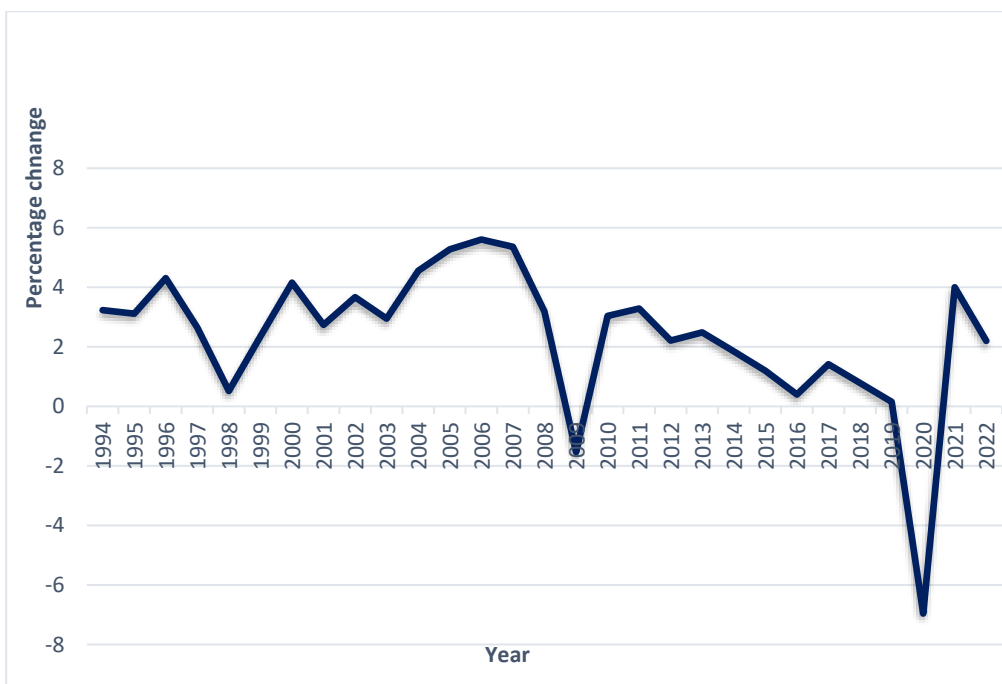


Figure 5.1: Gross Domestic Product, constant prices percentage (%) change in South Africa

Source: Quantec (2021)

Thurlow (2006) asserts that, although amendments in trade policy were instrumental in decreasing the gender wage gap, this is as a result of the increase in employment levels of high-skilled female workers. In doing so, it has not improved the standard of living of

female-headed households, particularly the low-skilled female labour force who experienced the defeminisation of the labour due to developments in the productivity of capital and skills. Likewise, it is apparent that, while subsequent liberalisation may increase economic growth and alleviate poverty, it is more inclined to benefit men and male-headed households the most. Thus, despite this economic growth, it is important that we recognise the significant gender disparities that liberalisation has brought. The prompt feminisation of the labour force is for high-skilled occupations and has led to the concentration of low-skilled female labour in the informal sector, which usually offers adverse working conditions and low pay. This has contributed to the gender wage gap, undermined the increase in FLFPR, and rendered female-headed households most vulnerable to poverty (Thurlow, 2006, IDRC, 2017).

When considering how liberalisation has affected both genders, it is important that we also consider the economic make-up of the country. National reviews, over time, have shown that the structure of the economy is going through massive transformation as a consequence of economic policy reform and global developments (The Presidency, 2001; The Presidency, 2005). Table 5.1 below (the structure of South Africa's economy (in %) post-1994) displays a decline in the primary sector, which includes agriculture, forestry, and fishing; and mining and quarrying, and this is followed by increases in the contribution of the primary sector to GDP for the years 2005, 2010 and 2020 (Quantec, 2020). The secondary sector, which centers on manufacturing; electricity, gas and water; and construction, is on a constant decline from 1995 (Quantec, 2020). The tertiary sector continued to show an increase from 1995 to 2020 (Quantec, 2020). The possible reason for this is that the tertiary sector predominantly constitute the financial services sector⁵, trade⁶, transport⁷ and community, social and personal services (Quantec, 2020). It is important to note that employment that is mainly concentrated in trade industry is informal, and that more women than men are employed in this sector (approximately 48 per cent of women and roughly 31 per cent of men) (Stats SA, 2018). More women than men are concentrated in the informal sector, and informal employment is usually offered at low pay, coupled with adverse working conditions (IDRC, 2017). This low pay received by women contributes to the gender wage gap.

⁵ Financial intermediation, insurance, real-estate and business services (Quantec, 2020).

⁶ Wholesale and retail trade, catering and accommodation (Quantec, 2020).

⁷ Transport, storage and communication (Quantec, 2020).

Feminist literature revealed that the interconnection between the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality is more inclined to be shaped by diverse institutions and liberal political frameworks, in which economic growth strategies and patriarchal restrictions are, embedded (Barriteau, 2000). This is also evident in the South Africa context, where trade liberalisation has affected men and women unequally and has undercut the country's efforts towards achieving equality. Trade liberalisation has resulted in favouring South Africa's primary exports of gold, diamonds, platinum, and other metals and minerals, as well as machines and equipment (ITC, 2021).

Although labourers have profited from the rapid economic growth, liberalisation has increased the capital and skills magnitude of production and has benefited both male and females in high-skilled positions. Despite this enhanced efficiency that has benefited women, particularly employed in the textile and delicate food sectors, the trade policy amendments have ultimately decreased female employment, and led to unskilled female workforce resorting to low-pay agricultural and service sector employment (Thurlow, 2006).

Women employed in export agriculture account for 53 per cent of the fruit sector's temporary labour force, and 65 to 75 per cent of this employment is typically non-permanent and seasonal (United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, 2011). This renders women more vulnerable to having to accept adverse working conditions, low pay, and poverty.

Finally, the secondary sector is dominated by the manufacturing sector (Quantec, 2020). The manufacturing sector is on a decline since 1995, as seen in Table 5.1 (Quantec, 2020). Perhaps what South Africa should look into is reskilling the female labour force in order to tap into the more-skilled labour force and elevate their standard of living. This dissertation reinforces the work done by Beneria and Sen (2021), which shows that the shift to neoliberal policies was less advantageous towards women. Thus, echoing the words of Elson and Cagatay (2000), it is therefore crucial that the gender implications of economic growth strategies be considered so that they resolve the impact of these disparities.

Table 5.1: The structure of South Africa's economy (in %) post-1994

	1995	2005	2010	2020
Primary sector	9.27	8.31	9.63	11.41
Secondary sector	45.58	38.54	34.83	29.26
Tertiary sector	45.15	53.15	55.52	59.31

Source: Quantec (2020)

5.1.4 A feminist framework of South Africa's economic policies

The ANC, pursued economic liberalisation and implemented various macroeconomic policies, as seen in section 5.1.1. titled *South African analysis of patterns of economic growth*. A cross-country analysis by Kapsos (2005) referred to the positive relationship between export-oriented economic growth and female employment, particularly in middle to low-income countries. Assaad (2004) underlines that although structural adjustment policies have led to increases in the FLFPR they also reduce employee protection policies in developing countries. For instance, an increase in overall economic growth accompanied by the feminization of the labour force does not translate into decent working conditions for women, i.e., in India trade liberalization led to distress employment for women (IDRC, 2017). Below we see that South Africa has had relatively utopian macroeconomic policies, with one of the country's major problems being implementation. Other problems include an inability to consider the impact of informal institutions on formal institutions or institutional change. As Palmer (2003) puts it, "The success of macro-economic policy depends on a good assessment of the capacity and willingness of micro-level units to adapt and respond to that policy". Among the problems of policy because of structural adjustment policies, Palmer (2003), underlines that the success of trade liberalization policies is determined by the division of labour among men and women, accessibility of resources, the management of production and the allocation of power. He argues that for design of monetary and fiscal policies to be effective and facilitate productive capacity, decrease inflation, and attract Foreign Direct Investment, the

gendered outcomes of these policies need to be considered from the onset (Palmer, 2003). Against this background, I have analysed South Africa's macroeconomic political strategies. Below is a demonstration of the five macroeconomic political strategies launched from just before 1994 to 2012 in South Africa.

Firstly, just before the 1994 national elections, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), was introduced (Brits, 2014). The RDP focused on maintaining macroeconomic stability, restructuring the previously distorted welfare system, and the enforcement of a trade liberalization macroeconomic strategy. The RDP was active from 1994 to 1996 (Dotto, 2019). According to the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (1994: 7), the primary objective of RDP was to establish a "democratic, non-racial and non-sexist" South Africa. The Reconstruction and Development White Paper (2004) acknowledged that the informal sector in South Africa is female dominated and tends to underpay workers and be exploitative. The Reconstruction and Development White Paper (2004) also emphasised the importance of training in industry and the household for the development of human resources. Through its industrial policy the government, at the time, aimed to increase employment, facilitate investment, enhance the efficiency of trade and boost productivity (Reconstruction and Development White Paper, 2004). It also underlined the emergence of a manufacturing sector, which would facilitate productivity, and high-income employment opportunities coupled with relevant training. Corder (1997), described a benchmark through the success of the RDP can be measured, and established the following, particularly concerning women's rights. Using the results from a study conducted by WNC (1994) on women's rights, Corder(1997) underlines that 93 percent of people agreed to women receiving the same remuneration as men for similar work, likewise, 90 per cent of people agreed that women should also receive the same promotions as men. Despite this, 76 percent were reluctant to giving a woman "the right to say no to sex even to her husband", and there was much lesser support for the modification of conventional norms to allow women to be equal to men in all aspects (Corder, 1997: 188). Moreover, one in every ten people accepted violence against women (Corder, 1997). Terreblanche (1999) underlines that the RDP was a relatively good macroeconomic policy, its problem was the maybe its ambition and the short time it had set to achieve its objectives. Another major problem that the RDP faced was implementation (Terreblanche, 1999).

The second macroeconomic policy that South Africa followed was Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, launched in 1996, replaced in 2006. GEAR set very hopeful economic goals for the period between 1996 and 2000 (Makgetla, 2004). The primary focus of GEAR was economic growth and it assumed that it would trickle down (Mosala, *et al.*, 2017). GEAR advanced neoliberal objectives as it upheld a reduction in tariff deductions, denationalisation, adaptable labour force, austerity measures and relaxing exchange control measures (Brits, 2014). In accordance with the objectives outlined in the RDP, the GEAR emphasized the importance of an export-led growth strategy in sustaining growth, as well as the role of employment and industrial training policies, which foster the industrial sector's growth potential (Department of Finance, 1996). Efforts towards the development of more labour-intensive features of industry were also important (Department of Finance, 1996), since the pre-democracy South African version of capitalism was capital intensive and often at the expense of employment opportunities and human development (Terreblanche, 1999). Rapid investment was key in realizing the GEAR strategy objectives (Department of Finance, 1996). The GEAR objectives included efforts towards export-oriented manufacturing, and agriculture-based projects (Department of Finance, 1996). Other GEAR objectives included expanding the tourism sector as well as the development of telecommunication infrastructure (Department of Finance, 1996). The GEAR strategy purposed to increase economic growth, from 3.5 per cent to 6.1 per cent from 1996 to 2000, as well as employment opportunities "from 1.3 per cent to 4.3 per cent" by the year 2000 (Department of Finance, 1996). The GEAR strategy also considered infrastructural development, provision of services and the use of labour-intensive strategies (Department of Finance, 1996). The GEAR strategy policy is the macroeconomic policy that focused on industrialisation the most. However, the GEAR strategy had conflicting economic implications, despite strengthening South Africa's fiscal position, including lowering interest rates, and controlling inflation (SAHO, 2019). GEAR was unsuccessful in other areas and its fiscal benefits had adversarial effects on social spending. GEAR led to a contraction in government spending (SAHO, 2019).

The third macroeconomic political strategy that South Africa followed was the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative-South Africa (ASGISA). ASGISA was prepared in 2005, launched in 2006, and replaced by the New Growth Path (NGP) in 2010. The primary mandate of ASGISA was to decrease unemployment and poverty, whilst expanding GDP growth between 2004 and 2014 (ASGISA Annual Report, 2008). ASGISA was also in

favour of strong government intervention. During the period of ASGISA unemployment reasonably decreased from 31 per cent to 22 per cent, between 2003 and late 2008. Poverty level also went down as result of social support, and average economic growth increased to over five percent, from 2004 to 2007, as compared to an average economic growth rate of three per cent in the period 1994 to 2003 (Mbola, 2009).

The fourth macroeconomic policy is NGP; it was introduced in 2010 and replaced by the NDP in 2012. The NGP aimed to advance economic growth, create decent employment, and reduce inequality (South African Government, 2021). The NGP was export-oriented and aimed to expand the market for South African products with increased focus on exports to region and other emerging economies (South African Government, 2021). The NGP framework prioritised investment in infrastructure as a key driver of employment generation across the economy and relied on partnerships between the state and the private sector on five central areas, namely, green technology, agricultural value chain, mining, manufacturing and tourism, along with high-skilled services (South African Government, 2021). Concerning manufacturing, the NGP framework called for a re-industrialisation in the South Africa's economy founded on enhancing productivity through innovation, further training and lower input cost in the economy (South African Government, 2021). Despite this, Natrass (2011), highlights that the NDP was only "a vision rather than a plan or a project". Moreover, its primary shortcomings include its inability to confront the ambiguous effects of increasing labour productivity for the working class (Natrass, 2011). She underlines that since labour productivity is fundamental for continuous growth of real incomes for working people, it becomes a problem when its price includes the loss of employment for others. For instance, aggregate productivity can increase in three various ways: through increasing the efficiency of pre-existing production operations; through laying off low-skilled workers, because of skills-and-capital developments in the production process; or structural adjustments towards to skill-and-capital intensive productive activities, which may undermine the objective of a more inclusive growth strategy necessitating employment creation for the poor (Natrass, 2011). Nonetheless, the NGP had a very short time span and thus monitoring its impact remains difficult (Mosala *et al.*, 2017).

The most recent macroeconomic political strategy is the National Development Plan (NDP), it details what South Africa plans to have achieved by 2030. The NDP's objectives include eradicating poverty and decreasing inequality by 2030 (NDP, 2012). The NDP

prioritises economic growth as a primary means of dealing with the obstacles facing South Africa, namely, high unemployment and poverty levels, inequality, and redistribution (NDP 2012). The NDP review (2020) states that whilst there are some developments in majority of the NDP's goals, it has not yet succeeded in alleviating poverty and reducing inequality (NDP Review, 2020). The adverse effects of patriarchy, gender inequality, gendered discrimination and GBV persist. Moreover, 2015 statistics show that approximately 41.7 per cent of females live below the Lower Bound Poverty Line relative to males at 38.2 per cent (NDP Review, 2020).

Upon analysis of the macroeconomic political strategies that South Africa has implemented over the years, namely RDP, GEAR, ASGISA, NGP and NDP do not consider the impact of gender relations on institutional change. As Lowndes (2020), states, understanding the role of institutions in political reality, helps in understanding the failure of gender equality policies. Aspiring for gender equality, without tackling the informal institutions that perpetuate the pre-conceived notions about gender roles is futile. Since, institutions influence the incentive structure of an economy, the development of this structure has implications on the direction of structural adjustments, which can either be towards economic growth or economic downturn (North, 1991). Macroeconomic policies post 1994 encouraged an outward-oriented economy; they also placed emphasis on export-manufacturing and agro-industrial projects (Department of Finance, 1996; The Reconstruction and Development White Paper, 1994; NDP, 2012). Likewise, they underlined the importance of relevant training to ensure access to well-paying employment opportunities. A closer look at each of the macroeconomic policies revealed the following. The fact that the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (1994) identifies gender equality as a significant objective of economic policy, for the country to reach gender parity, does not negate the fact that the participation of all South Africans is voluntary. Thus, in this regard, a lack of awareness in the power of informal institutions of culture, customs and ingrained ideologies of a specific context may undermine institutional change. RDP was introduced just before 1994 and was replaced in 1996 by Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy.

From the GEAR strategy the importance of the type of strategies a country, sets are evident. Despite reversing the negative growth of the early nineties, GEAR also increased poverty and inequality levels (SAHO, 2019). The adoption of the GEAR strategy was successful in counteracting the negative economic growth of the early nineties, but also

led to significant increases in inequality and poverty levels (SAHO, 2019). Concerning the NGP, we saw that its failure to address the trade-offs between earnings, work, productivity and profitability (Nattrass, 2011). As seen in section 5.1 trade liberalization affected men and women differently in South Africa. Inasmuch as it increased FLFPR, it resulted in the concentration of female labour in the informal sector. This is despite, the plans of expanding the manufacturing sector and skills development. What can be observed above is that post 1994; South Africa still has male-dominance issues that have undermined all these macroeconomic policies, as seen in the case of RDP, the reluctance of people towards gender equality (Corder, 1997). Moreover, South Africa has an implementation problem. ASGISA supported government intervention, which to an extent is good for women; it lagged in implementation and was not intentional in improving gender equality whilst stimulating growth. I cannot say much about the NGP due to its short lifespan. When we assess the NDP, of which we are yet to see the full consequences of this policy. However, The NDP review (2020) states that the NDP is still as relevant today as it was in 2012.

5.1.5 Conclusion

It is imperative, not only from a theoretical viewpoint, but also from an equality stance, that the dominant economic growth paradigms consider instances where inequalities develop and remain. Reinforcing public policies that target development, while simultaneously changing norms, demands the treatment of institutions as endogenous factors of political and economic struggle (Braunstein, 2007). This consequently brings attention to the significance and efficiency of interactive action in addressing inequalities (Braunstein, 2007). Chapter five represents the first part of the South African context analysis needed to answer the primary question. Chapter five analyses the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa post-1994 using a Feminist Institutionalism framework. Chapter six follows below and represents the second part of the secondary questions established to answer the primary research question. Chapter six considers the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa, post -1994, from a Feminist Institutionalism framework.

Chapter 6: South African Context: Analysing gender equality from a Feminist Institutionalism framework

6.1 South African Analysis of the Dimensions of Gender Equality

Numerous authors have claimed that post-apartheid economic policies might not be effective in rectifying gender disparities, especially relating to poverty (Posel & Rogan, 2012; Phalane, 2002; Thurlow, 2006). Preceding the transition to democracy, the South African economy was characterised by considerable gender inequalities (Posel, 2014). By 1994, the democratic government was significantly divided, with distinct socio-economic inequalities among the racial groups. Beyond race, several groups within society experienced enhanced exclusion and marginalisation. This included discrimination concerning gender, which consequently resulted in the vulnerability of women to socio-economic issues such as unsatisfactory living standards, unemployment, and declining health and educational levels (Van Der Byl, 2014). Beyond the years of colonialism followed by the apartheid regime, society inherited a broken familial life, which had amplified the responsibilities of “care givers” and child-rearing (Budlender & Lund, 2011).

The primary objective of this study is to identify and analyse the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa through using an array of gender equality measures. I start by briefly outlining the strategies that South Africa has introduced over the years in an attempt to boost gender equality. Second, I look into what the traditional and more recent measures of gender equality reveal about economic growth and efforts towards gender equality.

6.1.1 Measuring gender equality in South Africa

6.1.1.1 Traditional measures of gender equality

6.1.1.1.1 Labour force participation rate

We start by looking at labour force participation rate first, as it is a prominent measure in the literature I have analysed so far (Kabeer, 2016; Seguino, 2007, Seguino & Grown, 2006). As established in the analysis conducted by this study, South Africa experienced export-led growth post-1994. When focusing on the impact of this export-led growth on the FLFPR, South Africa experienced positive economic growth, on average, between

1994 until the financial crises, when we experienced negative growth (Figure 5.1 above). Then, we experienced economic growth (despite the economic growth rates being lower than before the crises) until we faced negative growth when the Covid-19 pandemic hit (Figure 5.1). The analysis does not make any causal claims, although the FLFPR was also seen to be positive between 1994 and 2008, and then began a slow decline after the crises (Figures 5.2 and 5.3 below).

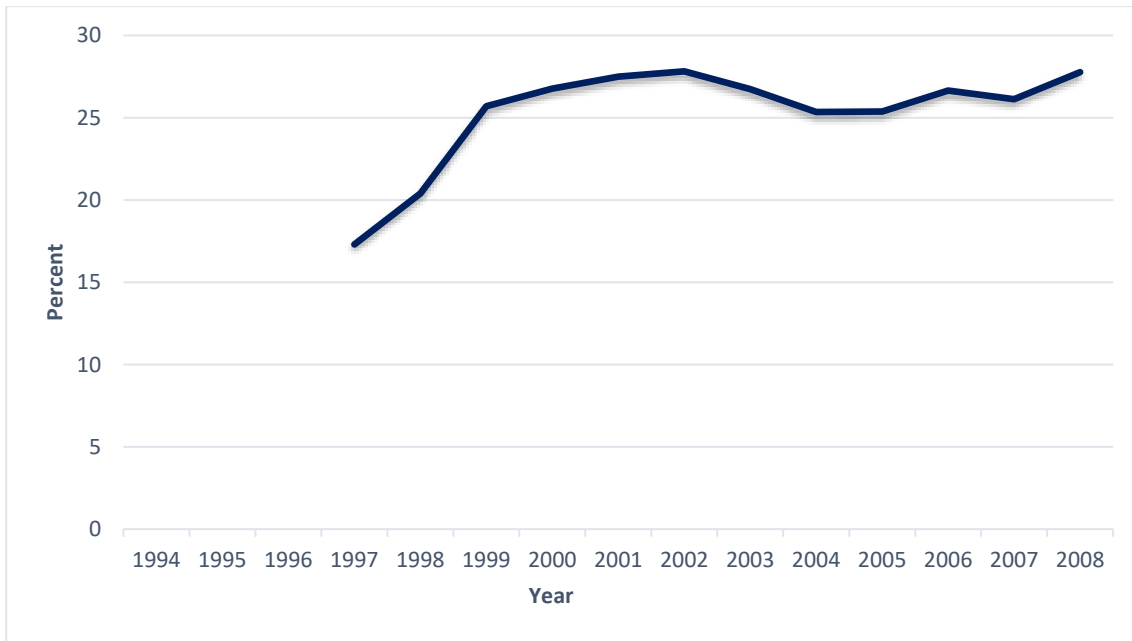


Figure 6.1: The FLFPR trend from 1994 to 2008

Source: World Bank (2021e)

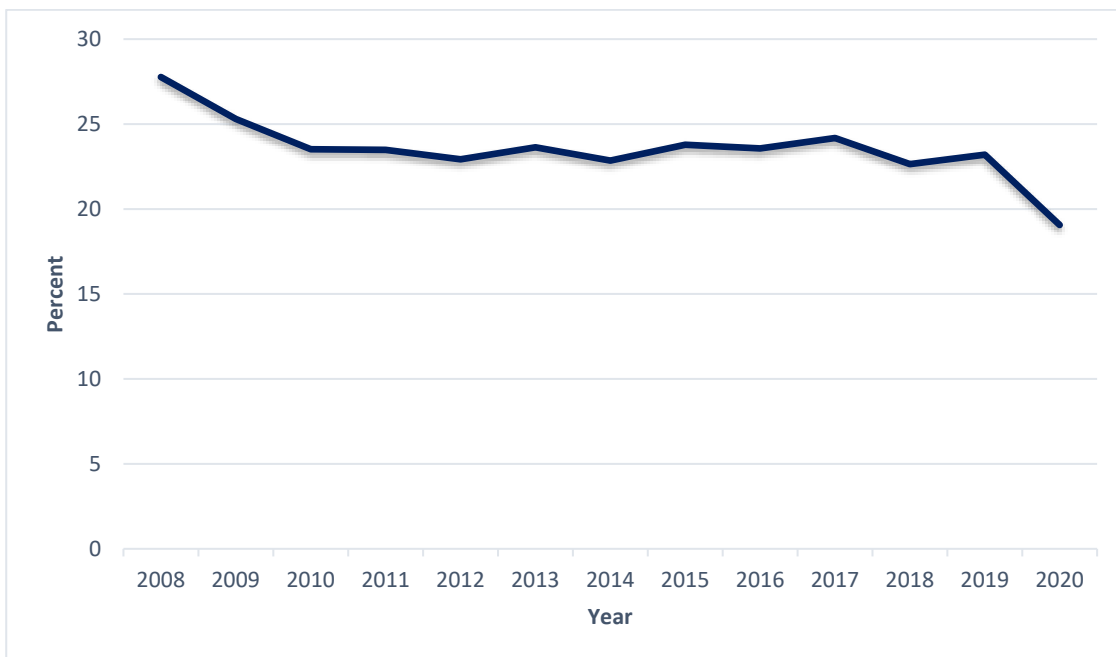


Figure 6.2: The FLFPR trend from 2008 to 2020

Source: World Bank (2021e)

When analysing the labour force participation rate between males and females, the following trends can be perceived. As of 2019, the FLFPR was at approximately 53.43 per cent, with the MLFPR at approximately 65.8 per cent (Stats SA, 2021a, b). When comparing the labour force participation rate of females to that of males from 2008 to 2020, figure 5.4 (p. 61), below displays that, in line with the feminist analysis Chapter 4 has highlighted; it is evident that South Africa has displayed a higher MLFPR, relative to the FLFPR. A higher MLFPR is often associated with the predominant allotment of the male breadwinner bias. The Global Gender Gap report reveals that South Africa ranks 92nd out of 156 countries about parity in economic participation and opportunity and ranks 80th concerning labour force participation rate, with more males than females employed (WEF, 2021).

Moreover, Figure 5.5 (p. 61 below) shows the proportion of women in senior- and middle-management positions in South Africa. The estimations are based on employment by profession, and senior- and middle-management positions refer to those who are employed as legal practitioners, as senior officials, and those in management. The estimations reveal that women tend to be underrepresented in high-profile professions, which tend to be highly remunerated. Similarly, only 29.4 per cent of executive heads are women, with top management comprising just 11.8 per cent of women (Businesswomen's Association of South Africa, 2017). Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2019) demonstrate that, worldwide, most establishments are managed by men, with women only making up 18.01 per cent of top managers, globally. Women's representation in senior managerial positions has fluctuated over time, but seems to be increasing, overall. In 2000, women occupied 22.58 per cent of senior managerial positions in South Africa, and by 2010, this representation was equal to about 32.05 per cent of senior managerial positions. In 2016, this representation reached its all-time high of 35.73 per cent, although this steadily declined until 2019, when women occupying senior managerial positions stood at about 33.26 per cent (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019). Women make up approximately 51.2 per cent of the South African population, with 45 per cent of those participating in economic activity (Stats SA, 2019b). Despite this, only 20.7 per cent of the directors of companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) are female (Bosch, van der Linde & Barit, 2020).

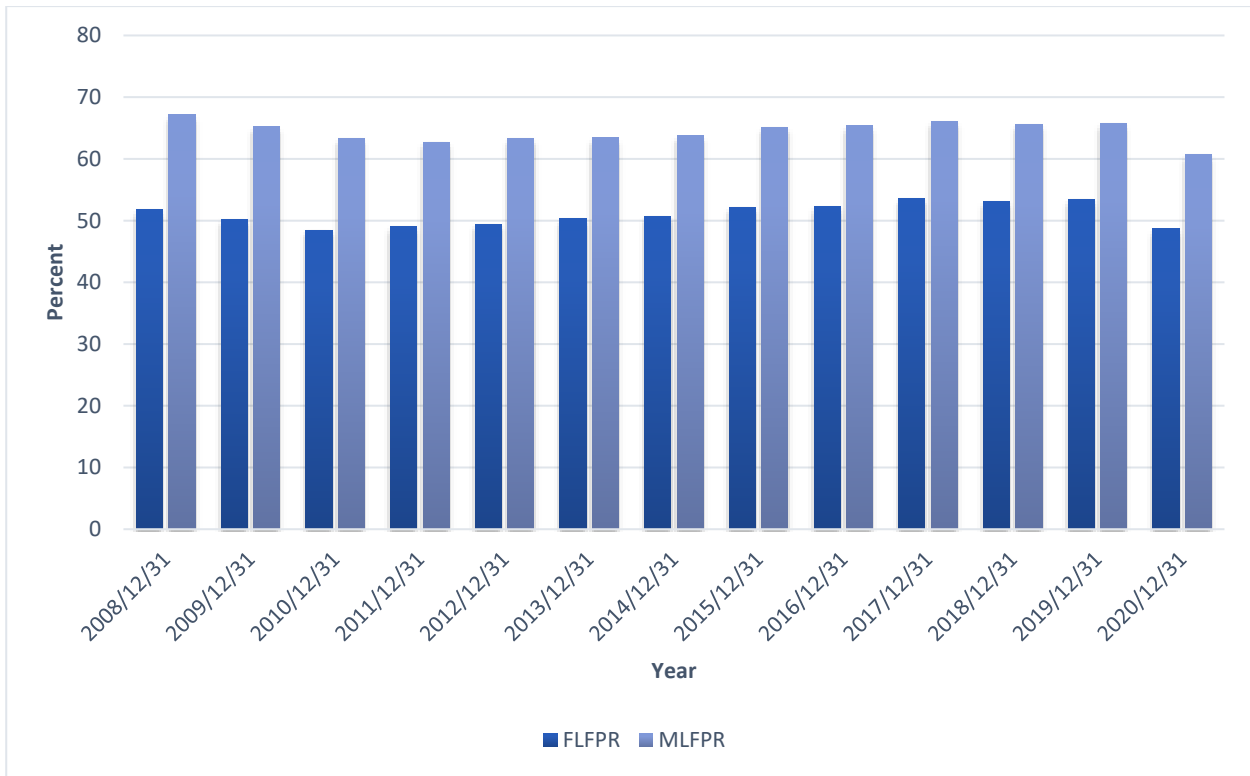


Figure 6.3: Comparing the labour participation rate of females and males from 2008 to 2020 in South Africa

Source: Stats SA (2021a, b)

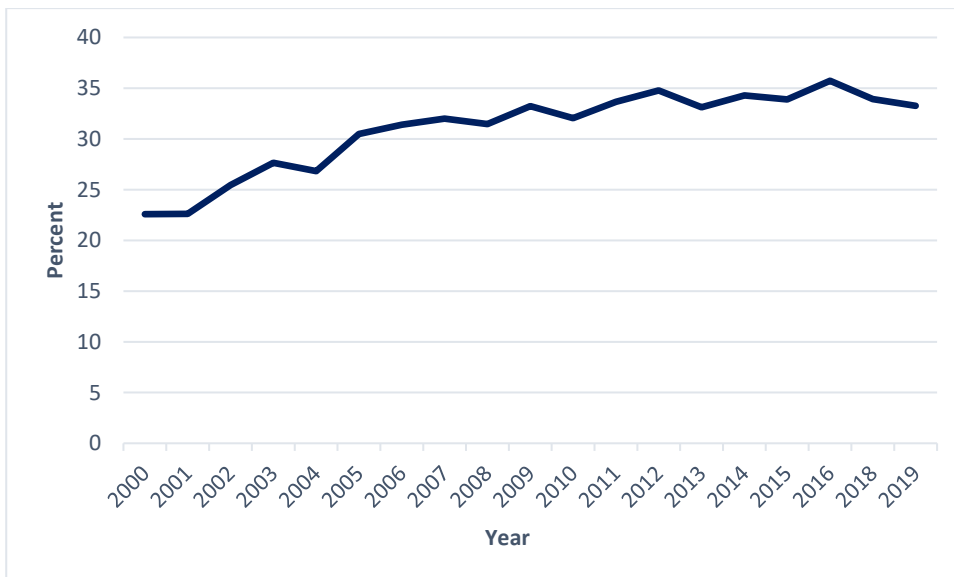


Figure 6.4: Proportion of women in senior managerial positions between 2000 and 2019 in South Africa

Source: Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2019)

In conclusion, South Africa's economic growth has stagnated over the years (from 1995 to 2003 and from 2011 to 2020) (see Figure 5.1, p.55 above), and from a feminist framework, two arguments can be made as to what the possible reasons might be. Part of the reason could be that, inasmuch as export-led growth is associated with an increase in FLFPR, the analysis in Chapter 5 (Section 5.1) shows that trade liberalisation had asymmetrical effects on men and women in South Africa, and undermined efforts towards achieving equality. Despite increasing the FLFPR, trade liberalisation has led to the concentration of women in the informal sector, as seen in South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Mexico (Seguino & Grown, 2006). Moreover, trade liberalisation has benefited mostly men and women in high-skilled occupations (Thurlow, 2006). The feminisation of labour as a result of trade liberalisation is typically short-lived, as, in the long run, capital and skills productivity tend to lead to the defeminisation of low-skilled female labour (Seguino & Grown, 2006; Thurlow, 2006).

Another reason for this could be that we are not optimally using female labour in South Africa. Studies show that female representation on boards boosts corporate performance (Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2012; Ting *et al.*, 2019), and that affluent countries display greater levels of gender equality than low-income countries do (Jayachandran, 2015). In 2017, there were 867 female professors, followed by 1040 female associate professors, at South African public higher learning institutions (Bosch *et al.*, 2020). In 2010, 22 288 women enrolled for a master's degree, relative to 24 309 men (Council on Higher Education, 2015) and 4944 women enrolled for a PhD, relative to 6751 men. Moreover, in 2015, more women (28 077) than men (27 467) enrolled for a Master's degree (Council on Higher Education, 2015). Despite the large headcount of postgraduate enrolments of men, the pool of competent and able women to fill leadership positions is not optimally tapped into, and this is despite the headcount of female postgraduate enrolments having increased between 2010 and 2015 (Council on Higher Education, 2015). It is imperative that we ask ourselves why women's representation remains so low and consider the implications of this low representation on policy. In agreement with the analysis, it is quite evident that gender governs political and social institutions, and has a substantial influence on policy (Stotsky, 2006).

Additionally, gender disparities in unpaid care work are also linked to gender inequalities in labour force participation (OECD, 2014). Gender norms and the unequal allocation of labour can hinder women's participation in the labour force (Department of Women,

2015). This is as a result of the perception of women as caregivers, while men are perceived as breadwinners (Floro & Komatsu, 2011). Women in South Africa spend 249.6 minutes on unpaid care work relative to men who spend 102.9 minutes (OECD, 2022). Moreover, men in South Africa spend 294.2 minutes in paid labour relative to women who spend 195.0 in paid work (OECD, 2022).

Furthermore, we cannot deny that there is unequal access to employment opportunities, despite the presumed access by women to a wider range of employment opportunities within the labour force (Department of Women, 2015). These opportunities are only truly accessible to women who are fortunate enough to be able to further develop their skills, attend an educational institution, and further their training. Access to educational facilities, shelter, and social security are influenced by disparities in gender, race, and class, and the inequitable power relations between the sexes has consequently led to the unequal allocation of resources such as time and earnings (The Office on the Status of Women, 2001; Department of Women, 2020).

6.1.1.1.2 Gender Equality Gap

Over the years, South Africa has put certain measures into place to prevent gendered discrimination within the workplace. On the African continent, South Africa is ranked first on the Africa Gender Equality Index, and South Africa was ranked 17 among 153 countries in 2020 (WEF, 2019), but dropped to 18 in 2021 (WEF, 2021). The measures that South Africa has put in place to mitigate gendered discrimination in the working environment include those in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), specifically in Chapter Two, Bill of Rights⁸, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination (PEPUDA) Act, 55 of 2003⁹, and the section on Labour and Employment¹⁰.

The Global Gender Gap Index measures country gender disparities on economic, administrative, educational, and health-related standards, by allocating a score out of one for these countries. A score closer to one signifies a country with a more equal gender environment. In 2021, South Africa has one of the best scores concerning a gender-equal

⁸ "...which declares that neither the state nor any individual is authorised to unfairly discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against any individual on the basis of gender or sexual orientation."

⁹ Section 28 of PEPUDA determines that it is the duty and responsibility of every individual to end gendered discrimination and uphold equality.

¹⁰ "... that stipulates that an unjust practice is committed by failing to honour the law of equal remuneration for similar work, thus underlining the unfairness of unequal pay for women, relative to men for similar work".

environment, and scores 0.78 out of one (Statista, 2021). Despite this, closer examination reveals that South Africa's economic empowerment is alarming; with the Global Gender Gap report ranking South Africa 92nd out of 156 countries in relation to economic participation and opportunity (WEF, 2021). In South Africa, there are several laws geared towards the prevention of gender-based discrimination at workplaces. Casale (2004) show that, in the period between 1995 and 2001, African and white females earned less than their male counterparts did. Casale (2004) further shows that, although earnings were indicated to have increased by 25 per cent for both men and women between 1995 and 2001, a closer look reveals that there was rather a 16.5 decline in women's average incomes, contrary to men's average incomes, which increased by 19.3 per cent during the period. South Africa has a static average gender pay gap, that is, between 23 and 35 per cent (Bosch & Barit, 2020).

An analysis of the way in which households are organised indicates why the gender wage gap requires much attention as a component in gender equality concerns. The General Household Survey revealed that approximately 42 per cent of households were female-headed (Stats SA, 2019a). The statistics also indicate the presence of power imbalances, favourable towards men; for instance, the Living Conditions Survey 2014/15 revealed that the poverty gap and intensity of poverty measures were largest for female-headed households, relative to male-headed households. The percentage of female-headed households living below the upper-bound poverty line is approximately 17 per cent more than those headed by males (Stats SA, 2018). The gender pay is an obstruction to gender parity in the country and appears to predominantly impact upon women in the middle and top wage brackets (Bosch & Barit, 2020). Therefore, it is extremely important that policies and indicators that narrow gender pay gaps be tracked and reported on to ensure transparency, accountability, and progress (Bosch and Barit, 2020).

6.1.1.1.3 Education

Schooling and skills development are instrumental to gender equality, since they enhance the access to the labour force and the employability in more advanced, high-paying professions (Department of Women, 2020). According to the Global Gender Gap report, South Africa ranks 69 out of 156 countries with regard to parity in educational attainment (WEF, 2021). When analysing the proportion of the population by gender, aged 20 years or older, and without formal training, the following can be noted. From 2002 to 2008, more

females than males pursued formal training (Stats SA, 2008). Regarding the reasons given by individuals, aged 7 to 18 years, for not attending an educational institution, the General Household Survey (GHS) underlines the fact that 14.4 per cent of females did not attend because of family commitments. Other reasons included a lack of funds for paying required fees, which was a constraint for 26.4 per cent of females, relative to 21.6 per cent of males. About 3.9 per cent of females found pursuing education to be useless, relative to 11.8 per cent of males (Stats SA, 2018). This mentality of education being perceived as useless among the reasons of some females for not pursuing formal education may be the result of the way in which they are conditioned about feminine and masculine roles. An important aspect that a Feminist Institutional Framework reveals is that, on average, women in South Africa spend 4.2 hours per day on household chores, relative to men, who spend 1.7 hours (OECD, 2021b). Thus, females might be limited in their ability to pursue education because of familial obligations and financial constraints.

Moreover, South Africa is declared to be a dual economy in the *Overcoming Poverty and Inequality* report by Paul Nomba Um (2018). He shows that, at one end of the spectrum, the country is highly productive and relatively high skilled, and at the other end of the spectrum, it is characterised by low-productivity levels and substantially lower skills. This duality has led to high wage inequalities, which demonstrate a largely divided labour market (Nomba Um, 2018). This economic climate necessitates education, re-training and employment creation to ensure that South narrows its racial and gender wage gap (Whiting, 2019). According to the literature mentioned in Chapter 4, gender equality in education is assumed to have a positive impact on economic growth through its effect on fertility and the human capital represented by children (Lagerlof, 2003). Moreover, Kabeer and Natali (2013) have found that an inability to educate women and utilise their talents and capabilities in the labour market, in similar ways to men, creates market distortion.

Thus, against this background, it must be pointed out that education also plays a major role in uplifting living standards through tackling poverty. This is relevant, since women are more inclined to be affected by poverty than men are (Department of Women, 2020). Moreover, the percentage of female-headed households living below the poverty line is roughly 17 per cent more than the percentage for male-headed households (Stats SA, 2018). The Living Conditions Survey (2014/15) shows that individuals with no educational background are more inclined to be poor. In South Africa, approximately 81 per cent of females with no schooling live in poverty, relative to 77 per cent of males. Evidence shows

that the poverty headcount decreased as educational attainment expanded, for both males and females. The completion of matric displayed a major difference in poverty reduction, particularly in comparison with those with lower levels of secondary schooling. Individuals who had pursued higher education displayed significantly low poverty headcounts, with females accounting for approximately 10 per cent, and males at about 8 per cent (Stats SA, 2018).

6.1.1.2 Modern measures of gender equality

6.1.1.2.1 Happiness and agency

In this section, I consider the happiness and agency of South African women post-1994, particularly with respect to GBV and its impact on GDP. Nobel Prize winning economist, Amartya Sen (1999), perceives happiness (well-being) and agency as being distinct qualities of a human being, which are closely linked and tend to intersect. Societal norms can influence political features, such as gender equality, the quality of child rearing, the number of children a family decides to have, and the environment (Sen, 1999).

Numerous international instruments contribute to South Africa's gender justice environment, such as the United Nation's Women's Conferences, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the renowned Sustainable Development Goals (Rustin, 2018). According to Rustin's study on gender equality and happiness among South African women, she hypothesises that, *ceteris paribus*, efforts towards achieving the liberation of women from the patriarchal system and towards achieving gender equality were more inclined to lead to an increase in women's happiness (well-being), and this was indeed the outcome. For instance, women who were most educated were happier than those who were not, and women (both African and white) in the upper class were happy (Rustin, 2018). After 1994, South Africa introduced numerous legislative measures geared towards gender equality, and this is observed in the rankings of the country over several gender indices (Bosch & Barit, 2020).

Despite this, South African women are still confronted by numerous obstacles, including poverty (Stats SA, 2018). South African men, across all races, are brought up to see themselves as being superior to women, and they are conditioned to perceive themselves as tough, fearless, and worthy of respect (Jewkes *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, such men see women as a category that needs to be controlled by men; consequently, physical and

sexual violence are employed to demonstrate masculine power, and to put women in their “place”, through force (Seedat *et al.*, 2009). Thus, these informal institutions (norms) obstruct any formal institutional development and perpetuate the subordination and violation of women and children’s rights. This is, once more, another reason why a Feminist Institutional Framework is useful in analysing the success of dimensions of gender equality. The struggle for gender equality persists in the country; for instance, it is well established that South Africa has one of the highest levels of GBV, globally (KPMG, 2014), and this is despite the existence of the Domestic Violence Act, 116 of 1998. A number of the most insightful studies, in both the developed and developing world, measure the cost of GBV on economic growth, and find that GBV costs approximately one to two per cent of GDP (KPMG, 2014). Some studies make it evident that it is essential to understand the interconnection between this informal institution (which, based on the high levels of GBV in South Africa, seems to indicate that it has become a norm) and economic growth.

It should be pointed out that gender inequality legitimises the abuse of women at the hands of their male counterparts (Jewkes *et al.*, 2009). The latest reports of the prevalence of GBV estimate it to affect between 20 and 30 per cent of all women in South Africa, annually. The economic costs of this were estimated to be between R28.4 billion and R42.4 billion for 2012 and 2013, respectively, which constituted 0.9 and 1.3 per cent of GDP for each year (KPMG, 2014). Beyond just the impact this has on GDP, GBV fundamentally infringes on the rights of women in South Africa. Accordingly, the state needs to deal with GBV because it decreases women’s happiness and agency and prolongs gender inequality. GBV worsens the status of women and girls as a consequence of gendered discrimination and worsens the limited options that they have to break out of the toxic environment and to demand justice (UNFPA, 2008). It is imperative that we all understand that gender equality is not a “zero-sum game”, meaning that it does not benefit one gender to the detriment of the other (Audette, 2019). We need to strive towards implementing what is already on paper, knowing that gender equality engenders happiness (Audette, 2019). Efforts towards achieving gender equality are inextricably linked to women’s agency and happiness, and the more these gender reforms are not only documented but also implemented, the better for women, their well-being, the future human capital (children), and society as a whole (Klasen, 1999).

In summation, it is clear that, as Helmke and Levitsky (2004) and the analysis presented in Chapter 2 have shown, there are informal and informal institutions, and much attention needs to be allotted to identify how each of these shapes social conduct. As Helmke and Levitsky (2004) indicate, informal institutions can either prompt or undermine institutional change. Despite South Africa's formal institutions being evidently up to par (Rustin, 2018). One might justifiably ask whether what is holding us back as a country is a lack of awareness and acknowledgement of the informal norms (patriarchal attitudes and ideologies)(Department of Women, 2020).

6.1.1.2.2 Political participation

Gender equality in agency and empowerment can be tracked in several ways, i.e. by political participation (or representation), management and supervisory positions occupied, and corporate and board management (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). The Global Gender Gap report reveals that South Africa ranks 14th out of 156 countries with regard to gender parity in political empowerment, which makes it one of the best performers. This is in comparison with 2006, when South Africa ranked 8th out of 115 countries with regard to gender equality in political empowerment (WEF, 2006). For the current percentage of women in parliament, South Africa ranks 10th, and for the percentage of women in ministerial positions, the country ranks 12th out of 156 countries (WEF, 2021). For women in parliament and ministerial positions, South Africa ranked 11th and 6th, respectively, out of 115 countries (WEF, 2006). This shows a degradation in the political empowerment of women and that there is still room for improvement. This liberal diversity has to filter into the representation on executive boards in public and private institutions.

Some studies suggest that women in political positions tend to give priority to public-sector investment, which decreases women's unpaid reproductive responsibilities and promotes policies that foster economic security (Chattopadhyay & Duflo, 2004; Chen, 2013). Thus, it can be argued that developments in political representation can be instrumental in advancing gender equality in other domains (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). With the extension of investigations into the various dimensions of gender equality, there are potentially useful economic policy approaches that could target and simultaneously improve gender equality, while facilitating economic growth. This is because disparities with respect to gender, income, and gendered-related legislation

restricts can impede economic growth, especially in the developing world (IMF, 2016). Chapter five and six make use of descriptive statistics together with theoretical contributions underpinning that data, to better understand the interconnections between the patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality. Chapter seven highlights the main points of the dissertation, draws conclusions from the whole analysis, and presents possible recommendations as well as potential areas for further research.

Chapter 7: Conclusions, and recommendations

7.1 Concluding Remarks

This dissertation has applied a Feminist Institutional framework in the endeavour to better understand the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and the dimensions of gender equality.

The intention was not to employ more quantitative methods in an attempt to settle the debate on the direction of causality between economic growth and gender equality, which would have proved unfruitful, since the relationship is bidirectional (Duflo, 2012). This dissertation postulates that continuing to conduct research that aims to have the final word on the causality debate, is not likely to address the pressing concern of ensuring increased economic growth and improved gender equality specifically in South Africa. Informal institutions (norms) and biased views about gender foster gendered identities that restrain the behaviour of men and women in ways that advance inequality (Ridgeway, 2011). The relationship between gender, institutions and economic growth is that institutions are gendered in nature, meaning that gender influences the approaches, behaviours, ideologies and dissemination of power across the distinctive levels of interpersonal relationships (Acker, 1992).

By making use of a Feminist Institutionalism Framework, this dissertation provides an analysis of the interconnections between the causal pathways of the types and patterns of economic growth and dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post 1994. Practically, the dissertation makes use of pre-existing studies together with descriptive statistics for insights into the pathways likely to be driving this bidirectional relationship. A Feminist Institutional approach was valuable in this case, since it allowed me to ask better questions, and through a non-reductionist qualitative stance, to obtain rich and nuanced findings.

To achieve the primary objective of the dissertation, the dissertation supplements the primary question of the dissertation with two secondary questions. First, the dissertation sought to answer: “What are the types and patterns of economic growth in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed using economic theory?” Second, the dissertation looked at: “What are the dimensions of gender equality in South Africa post-1994 that can be identified and analysed using feminist economic theory?”

The findings are set out in what follows.

An exploration of the patterns of economic growth experienced by South Africa reveals the following. The South African economy is characterised by a political history that engendered its economic structure (Adewale, 2017). The year 1994 marked the era of political freedom for all, economic prosperity, and inclusion (Bhorat *et al.*, 2014). Regarding this reporting period, there are many debates about economic strategy, where many programmes have emerged, such as the RDP, GEAR, ASGISA, NGP and the current NDP. There is no consistency between these macroeconomic political strategy programmes as to what exactly is the most appropriate strategy for the South African economy (Bhorat *et al.*, 2014).

South Africa followed an export-led pattern of economic growth by assuming economic policy reforms that permitted access to international markets and investments (Magubane, 2002). For the past two decades, economic growth has fluctuated. When looking at the structure of the economy post-1994, we see a decline in the primary sector, which was followed by slight increases in 2010 and 2020, respectively, (see Table 5.1 above). The secondary sector has displayed a constant decline from 1995 to the present, and the tertiary sector is characterised by a constant increase. The tertiary sector is comprised of financial services sectors, trade, and transport. This is worth noting because employment that is concentrated in trade is typically informal and comprises more women (48%) than men (31%) (Stats SA, 2018). Inasmuch as workers have benefited from trade liberalisation, particularly men and women in high-skilled positions, its effect on women and men is somewhat unbalanced. Although the enhanced efficiency is advantageous towards women employed in the textile and delicate food industries, trade structural adjustment policies led to the defeminisation of labour. This is attributable to increases in capital and skills capacity in production and this has led to the unskilled female labour force having to resort to low-paying agricultural and service sector employment (Thurlow,

2006). Considering the fact that the primary sector contributes the least in the structure of the South African economy, this is a problem. It demonstrates, firstly, the gendered nature of poverty and its adverse effects on women, and secondly, the importance of education or upskilling opportunities, particularly for women.

The introduction of new formal institutions does not always result in the anticipated change, in different contexts (Waylen, 2011). As determined above, the introduction of the diverse legislative measures in South Africa, post-1994, which were aimed at gender equality, did not completely obliterate gender inequality (Bosch & Barit, 2020). South African women still face numerous constraints (Stats SA, 2018; KPMG, 2014; Rustin, 2018).

Theory has shown that education and skills development are very instrumental to gender equality and economic growth (OECD, 2012). The Global Gender Gap report shows that South Africa ranks 69 out of 156 countries with regard to equality in education, which is in the bottom half (WEF, 2021). The GHS also showed that 14.4 per cent of females attributed their lack of educational training to family commitments, while 26.4 per cent stated that the amounts of fees payable were a problem (Stats SA, 2018).

Although women are advancing by merit in democratic South Africa, they still face patriarchal constraints that inhibit them from going further. The FLFPR remains lower than the corresponding figure for males in South Africa (Stats SA, 2021). The allocation of reproductive responsibilities within the household remains skewed, where advances in women's paid work have not resulted in changes in, or the sharing of, unpaid domestic responsibilities (Charmes, 2019). For instance, in South Africa, women are responsible for 64 per cent of unpaid reproductive work relative to men whose share of unpaid reproductive work amounts to 31.4 per cent (Charmes, 2019). Likewise, the use of formal child rearing fails to meet the demands that women face in the workforce, thus subjecting women to gendered discrimination and limiting their work opportunities (Offenberger, 2014). Furthermore, descriptive statistics show us that women are underrepresented in high-profile professions, which tend to be highly remunerated (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2019). We have more women than men in South Africa and that necessitates comparable representation (50.7 per cent women relative to 49.3 per cent men). Moreover, despite the country's attractive legislation towards achieving gender equality (see Section 5.2), some women still have no agency. For instance, a report by KPMG (2014) documented

the pervasiveness of GBV in South Africa to be between 20 and 30 per cent, per annum, which is detrimental to GDP.

Nonetheless, this analysis also taught us to not just take information at face value, but rather to interrogate it. For instance, the Global Gender Gap Index has favourably ranked South Africa 0.78 out of one for a gender-equal environment (Statista, 2021). Despite this, the Global Gender Gap report revealed that South Africa is ranked 92nd out of 156 countries for economic participation and opportunity (WEF, 2021). Moreover, statistics have revealed power imbalances, favouring men as opposed to women, where the Living Conditions Survey registered the poverty gap and intensity of severity of poverty measures as being larger for female-headed households than for male-headed households (Stats SA, 2018).

As stipulated by Stotsky (2006), gender is an integral part of political and social institutions and has significant implications for political strategies. Thus, gender-related imbalances in behaviour or value judgements may result in inequitable macroeconomic conduct, which, in turn, can affect policy formulation. The Global Gender Gap report has indicated that South Africa is one of the best performers with regard to gender parity in political empowerment. Although the political arena is diverse, South Africa still needs to address its deeply rooted bias against women on corporate boards (Bosch *et al.*, 2020), and this calls for radical gender-aware policymaking.

Through undertaking a Feminist Institutionalism stance in this dissertation, I was able to better understand the gendered rationale of political institutions, how informal institutions either reinforce or undermine institutional change (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004), and prospects for economic growth (Mackay & Murtagh, 2019). In essence, the application of a feminist lens to institutionalism brought to light gendered power relations and mechanisms that may reinforce or hinder specific structures. This shows how gender relations are institutionalised and deeply embedded in some political systems that frame and constrain interpersonal relationships (i.e., patriarchal ideologies) (Mackay, *et al.*, 2010).

From this background, the question emerges of how macroeconomic policy could be made more gender sensitive.

A primary rule of economic policymaking is premised upon the principle that policies should focus on the root cause of issues, as opposed to focusing on their manifestations (Cagatay, 2003). The macroeconomic issues identified in this dissertation (section 5.1 and section 5.2) originate from gender inequalities at the micro- and meso-levels. Long-lasting problems can only be eradicated if these problems are eradicated at their source. Macroeconomic political strategies will be more efficient if they are premised on the proper identification of contexts and motivations of specified economic actors. The contexts and motivations of economic actors are framed by gender relations, inequalities, and familial responsibilities (Palmer, 2003). Macroeconomists need to let go of the assumption that anything could be gender neutral. A starting point for bringing about gender-aware macroeconomic analysis, as suggested by Cagatay (2003), can be summarised in three main points, as set out below.

1. It is imperative that policymakers be cognisant of the fact that social institutions carry and thus transfer gender bias. For instance, as free markets are socially constructed, this implies that they, too, demonstrate and reproduce gender inequalities.
2. Gender-awareness in macroeconomic analysis demands that the economic models be perceived from a women's point of view (Elson, 1995). As Sen (cited by Elson, 1995) puts it, a gender perspective requires that we recognise that women's productive and reproductive work intersect. Unpaid reproductive work needs to be acknowledged, and the meaning of what constitutes work should be redefined to include unpaid reproductive labour.
3. Gender relations play a key role in the division of labour and the allocation of earnings, affluence, and factors of production, and have a significant impact on the macro-economy. Economic behaviour is gendered and needs to be acknowledged in policy design.

Finally, in considering all of these aspects, the dissertation answers the primary question of: "What are the interconnections between the causal pathways of types and patterns of economic growth, and the dimensions of gender equality using a Feminist Institutional framework, in South Africa post-1994?" The conclusion is that institutions (formal and informal) are an integral part of all economic systems. Moreover, both formal and informal

institutions shape and establish gender relations, hierarchical structures, and ideologies (Acker, 1992).

South Africa is a patriarchal society (SAHO, 2021). A patriarchal social system is “male-identified, male-controlled, male-cantered”, and consequently valorises masculine attributes over feminine attributes (Becker, 1999: 24). Although the sole aim of patriarchy is not to overpower women, it is deeply misogynistic, as argued by Becker (1999), and indirectly contributes to the subordination of women. Gender inequality affects not only individuals, but also on an economy as a whole. Gender inequality is a global challenge that impedes economic growth and inhibits development (Silver & Klasen, 2021). As stated in United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number five (United Nations, 2021), gender equality is in the best interest of all.

7.2 Recommendations

As Ding *et al.* (2009) assert macroeconomic political approaches can either reinforce or reduce gender inequality; likewise, efforts towards gender equality can either prompt or impede the accomplishment of other development objectives. Improving gender equality, while simultaneously encouraging growth, necessitates the existence of gender-aware economic policies. The country’s economic growth-oriented policy agenda must be accompanied by interventions that are deliberate about how the benefits of economic growth are disseminated. This demands that we be aware of the effect of informal norms on formal institutions, and also that we understand that policymakers have a gender, as well as preconceived notions about political life, and these can also shape both the political environment and policy designs. An awareness of all this begets gender-aware policy designs, which take into consideration the fact that economic agents are both male and female, and as a result, they have different constraints, experience economic conditions differently, and thus may have competing interests, needs and preferences (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996).

South Africa has made significant progress, on paper, towards addressing gender inequality. However, in some instances, institutional norms are still inhibiting development. As specified in this dissertation, there is a bidirectional relationship between gender equality and economic growth. Thus, from a stance of better understanding the causal pathways between economic growth and gender equality, along the various measures of gender equality, the dissertation proposes the following recommendations.

1. As a consequence of the patriarchal constraints and cultural norms, there remains an urgent need for gender equality training to not only adapt policies, but to also change mentalities. Therefore, the dissertation proposes the enforcement of gender equality training programs in educational institutions, as well as in communities (Kollmayer *et al.*, 2020).
2. Occupational segregation is also a problem, and it is important that we increase female participation in the formal sector, which demands that we encourage women to venture into STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) (Department of Women, 2015). This would equip them for entering sectors that are overly populated by men, and thus tear down gender stereotypes and provide role models for future generations.
3. To ensure that labourers, particularly women, fully benefit from trade liberalisation, it is important to equip them with the training or types of skill set required by the developing sectors (UNCTAD, 2016). For example, this may be done by developing workers' skill sets in modern technologies to enable them to participate in the manufacturing and services sectors (UNCTAD, 2016). Research has shown how employment in the information technology sector is associated with reductions in gender wage gaps (World Bank, 2016).
4. Gender disparities in unpaid reproductive duties are also associated with gender inequalities in labour force participation, and this link is often overlooked (OECD, 2014). Labour policies do not always lead to societal development, and improvements in policies are needed concerning childrearing and domestic responsibilities, as well as a shared recognition and appreciation of the work. The South African government could spearhead this by providing wide-ranging and well-suited childcare facilities for working mothers, as well as valuing the invisible role of some women in the care economy (Offenberger, 2014). Electrification (Dinkelman, 2011) and technological developments in relation to home production, which free up time dedicated to unpaid household work (e.g., inventions that decrease time spent in fetching water) could also assist in increasing the FLFPR (Greenwood *et al.*, 2005), which is good for economic growth.
5. Another policy recommendation, which has to do with addressing ingrained societal norms and gender-related stereotypes and which could encourage equal participation in reproductive duties and reconstruct gender norms, would be to

implement projects that seek to challenge and change the ways of doing things. An example of this is the Zimbabwean “Africare’s Male Empowerment Project”, which aims to challenge and change preconceived notions on care responsibilities by increasing male participation in home-based care services to people who have AIDS (OECD, 2014:10). Although this might not influence economic growth, it is a start for changing gendered institutional norms.

6. GBV remains a constraint to the happiness and agency of women in South Africa (Rustin, 2018) and has proved to be costly regarding economic growth (KPMG, 2014). Reaching gender parity, while boosting economic growth, cannot be realised without a radical shift in informal institutions (preconceived notions about femininity and masculinity) that undermine formal institutions (institutional change). It is imperative that society and policymakers understand the root causes of this behaviour, in order to come up with solid and effective solutions, and not just ‘Band-Aid’ solutions. Dartnall and Gevers (2015) assert that violence against women is intrinsically about gender inequality and is linked to gender norms. Thus, solutions towards this include the integration of gender equality training in educational institutions (Kollmayer *et al.*, 2020). The establishment of public parenting programmes that facilitate constructive discipline approaches with children, as well as the prevention of violence, is also needed (see Phyfer & Wakefield, 2015).
7. For the benefit of gender equality and, in turn, economic growth, women’s access to education should be prioritised. Similarly, the pool of formal employment opportunities, and access to microfinance, should be prioritised for those interested in the establishment of business ventures (Kabeer & Natali, 2013).
8. With regard to representation in high-ranking positions, we propose the implementation of gender quotas, particularly in the business world. As seen in the theory, female representation on boards increases corporate performance (Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2012; Ting *et al.*, 2021). Likewise, Taliento and Madgavkar (2016) put forth that, if women were to be as economically active as men are, this would increase global GDP by 26 per cent. This emphasises the importance not only of female labour participation, but also of their representation in leadership positions. For instance, the Norwegian “legislated gender quota” is one example of countries that aim to increase female representation on company

boards. A 40 per cent gender quota for publicly owned and inter-municipality companies was enacted in December 2003, with a deadline of 2008 set for meeting the goal. Until then, female representation accounted for only 15.9 per cent, and this moved up to 37.0 per cent in 2007 (Hills, 2015). African countries with the highest female representation on boards include Kenya at 19.8 per cent, Botswana at 16.9 per cent and South Africa at 17.4 per cent (United Nations Africa Renewal, 2018). Although quotas are still regarded as unconstitutional in South Africa, government and businesses should find legal ways to make use of targets to foster gender equality. Moreover, not all businesses have complied with their board diversity targets. Quotas are necessary, and reporting, monitoring and transparency are as equally important, to keep enterprises accountable, and instil awareness.

The analysis of the patterns and types of growth, as well as of the dimensions of gender equality, is important for women's economic empowerment. Premised upon Kabeer (2016), this dissertation sought to explore the interconnections between the causal pathways of gender equality and economic growth. Institutions have a significant effect on political life (Kenny, 2014). By using the Feminist Institutional framework, the dissertation has underlined the importance of understanding institutional change from the macro-, meso- and micro-levels. The analysis of various macroeconomic problems shows that these problems stem from gender inequalities at the micro- and meso-levels (Cagatay, 2003). A lack of awareness of the informal institutions at play at the micro- and meso-levels will not only lead to inappropriate, gender-blind policies, but will also undermine any efforts made towards achieving development at the macro-level.

This dissertation does imply that the only impediment towards economic growth is gender inequality, but rather posits that gender inequality is one of the primary obstacles that should not be looked at from only a macro-level, but also from the micro-and meso-level. Ideologies about femininity and masculinity are at play at micro- and meso-levels, and overlooking this will result in misdiagnoses of problems, and undermine institutional change. As Cagatay (2003:32) states: "A cardinal rule of economic policy-making involves the principle that policies should target problems at their source, rather than dealing with their manifestations".

Areas for further research include, first, an empirical investigation of the point at which trade openness became detrimental to FLFPR, since this dissertation has only explored

the relationship between trade liberalisation and FLFPR. A second area for further research would be to explore the concentration of women in the South African economy, as this will aid to understand the impact of this on gender equality and in turn economic growth.

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