

**EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS:  
TEACHER EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN  
RWANDA**

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**Abstract:** Education, a multifaceted concept, has been defined and interpreted diversely by various scholars, each influenced by their cultural perspectives. Rooted in Latin etymology, education finds its essence in the juxtaposition of two distinct terms: "educere" and "educare." The former encapsulates notions of "drawing out" and "leading out," while the latter is imbued with the meanings of "nourishing," "bringing up," and "raising." Amidst these linguistic roots, Adesina (1985) underscores the dynamic interplay of education with the learner's purpose, the teacher's objectives, and the societal technological milieu. Adesina's comprehensive perspective defines education as an instrumental force fostering individual integration within a society, nurturing self-realization, cultivating national consciousness, and driving progress across multifarious dimensions including social, economic, political, scientific, cultural, and technological arenas. Further enriching the discourse, Ibanga (2016) presents a paradigm shift in educational philosophy, conceptualizing education as a continual process of experience reconstruction rather than a static transmission of past values. This perspective imbues education with a deeper purpose, infusing it with the capacity to address contemporary challenges effectively. Echoing this, Nyerere (1982) emphasizes education's pivotal role in transmitting the accrued wisdom and knowledge of a society across generations, thereby preparing the youth for their forthcoming roles as societal members. As elucidated in the introduction, the concept of education is intrinsically linked to the School of Education at the College of Education, characterized by enrollment trends. This institution serves as a microcosm reflecting the broader educational landscape. In this context, the process of education emerges as a dynamic mechanism for integrating youth into society, underpinning the growth and prosperity of the larger community. In sum, education, as perceived through the lenses of Adesina, Ibanga, and Nyerere, emerges as a dynamic process embodying the fusion of historical wisdom and contemporary transformation. This abstract seeks to encapsulate the manifold dimensions of education, its intricate relationship with societal progress, and its role in shaping the holistic development of individuals and communities.

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**Keywords:** Education, definition, cultural perspective, Latin etymology, integration, societal progress, wisdom transmission, holistic development.

## Introduction

Education has been defined by various authors in various ways. Each author has seen education from different perspective of cultural background. The concept has been traced to two Latin words. The Latin words are (a) educere and (b) educare. While educere can be interpreted as "to draw out" or "to lead out", Educare on the other hand means "to nourish" "to bring up or "to raise". Adesina (1985) noted that education is always related to variable such as purpose of the learner, the aim of the teacher as well as the technological problems of the society. He, therefore, defines education as: The tool for the integration of the individual effectively into a society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific cultural and technological process.

Ibanga (2016) sees education as the process of constant reconstruction of experience, rather than transmission of past values, in order to make it more meaningful and capable of solving present problems. Education according to Nyerere (1982), is the transmission of accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society from one generation to the next and also to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society in which they find themselves. From the foregoing, education can be said to be the process by which the young ones in the society are integrated into the society for prosperous society.

## Importance of Education

Education is a lamp that bring forth light that shows mankind the right direction to tread. It is a vehicle that brings about a desirable change in one's culture of learning, mindset, and values orientation. Education is a process which develops a person's awareness, by enlargening, deepening, and extending it. Its impact is cognitive, ' but it also transforms and regulates a person's attitudes, emotions, wants, and actions (affective and psychomotor) because all of these presuppose awareness and are impregnated with beliefs. Awareness is to be directed toward the natural world; the interpersonal world; and the world of social, economic, and political institutions (Peters, 1981).

The purpose of education is not just making a student literate but adds rationale thinking, knowledge, ability and self-sufficiency. Education is an engine for the growth and progress of any society. It not only imparts knowledge, skills and inculcates values, but is also responsible for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets technological innovation and economic growth. Education prepares the young for the future so that they can live and succeed in a hostile and a changing society.

## Rwanda Education

The history of education in Rwanda dated back to pre-colonial time to the period after the genocides. Prior to 1900, education in Rwanda was informal and was largely delivered through the family. According to Njoroge and Rubagiza (2003), education in pre-colonial Rwanda was not only provided informally through the family, but was also provided formally in groups like, „Amatorero“ in the case of boys and „Imbohero“ for the girls. Among the skills taught in Rwanda traditional education includes hunting, blacksmithing, military training for the boys, crafts and house chore for the girls. Njoroge and Rubagiza (2003) concluded that traditional education in Rwanda centred on preparing the young for adult life. Formal education was introduced into Rwanda by the Roman

Catholic Church at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the backing of the colonial administration to establish schools. The aim of the Roman Catholic Church was to spread the gospel as indeed in all other colonized countries of Africa. According to Tikly, Lowe, Crossley, Dachi, Garret and Mukabaranga (2003), two types of schools were established by the missionaries during this time: (1) the rural schools in the outer villages offered a two-year literacy education to people in the villages. The local instructors in the village schools were trained by the missionaries. The subjects taught includes reading, writing, elementary arithmetic and hygiene. (2) Central schools built at the mission and managed by a missionary. These schools admitted best candidates from rural schools. They offered a five-year primary education to boys only, since girls were not allowed to go to school at that time.

Rwanda gained independence in 1962. After independence, the government concentrated effort in expanding access to primary education, which was declared free and obligatory from age 6. Quite a number of secondary schools were also established during this period. The National University of Rwanda was set up a year after independence in 1963. Students' enrolment greatly increased between 1962 to 1975 particularly at the primary school level, enrolment increased from 250, 000 to 386,000. There were 64 secondary schools with a student population of 11,227, (Tikly et al, 2003). After the tragic events of 1994, efforts were made during the emergency period to revive the education system as well as other sectors of the economy that had broken down. To set the country onto the path of greatness after the tragic events, a new orientation of education was defined in the 1998 Education Sector Policy (Njoroge & Rubagiza, 2003). „The policy declared the urgency of improving access to primary school for all children and in the end universalising primary education, improving the quality of teaching, learning and training at all levels, improving the quality of teachers and diversifying and modernising higher education“, (MINEDUC, 1998).

Another effort towards moving the education sector after the 1994 genocide is the creation of some agencies from the former Bureau Pédagogique that existed prior to 1994. This office was charged with the responsibility of curriculum development centre, assessment and examination and teacher training. Among agencies created out of this office are the National Examinations Council (NEC), the Inspectorate of Education and the National Curriculum Development Council (NCDC), (Njoroge & Rubagiza, 2003).

According to Obura (2003), „the year 1994 to 1998 were characterised by reconstruction and rehabilitation, with heavy emphasis on reconciliation as refugees were reintegrated into the system, an issue of both practical and political importance“.

Rwanda currently operates a 6-3-3-4 education system that is, 6 years of primary education (P1-P6), 3 years of lower secondary or ordinary level (S1-S3), 3 years of upper secondary or advanced level (S4-S6) and 4 years of university education. In 2010 according to Pearson (2014), 9 Years Basic Education (9YBE) was implemented, allowing an added three years of free schooling for students. This action led to the consolidation of both primary and the lower secondary education in order to reduce dropout and repetition rates (Assan & Lawrence, 2018). In 2011, 12 Years Basic Education (12YBE) was further declared, allowing for the full cycle schooling to be available, free-of-charge, (Pearson, 2014). Three official languages of instruction are used in the Rwanda education system; Kinyarwanda is used at the lower primary P1-P3 and English is used from P4 through university. French is taught as well but as a supplement subject in public primary and secondary schools own or

supported by the government. It is to be noted that, as from the 2017/2018 session, university education in the government owned University of Rwanda is now three years of three semesters each.

The University of Rwanda was formed in 2013 as a result of a merger of all the former public institutions of higher learning in Rwanda (The New Times) and these institutions became colleges of the University of Rwanda. The colleges are, College of Business and Economics\ (former Institute of Finance and Banking), College of Arts and Humanities (former National University of Rwanda, Butare), College of Science and Technology (former Kigali Institute of Science and Technology), College of Agriculture, Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (former Higher Institute of Agriculture and Livestock, Musanze), College of Medicine and Health Sciences (former Kigali Health Institute) and the College of Education ( former Kigali Institute of Education).

### **Teacher Education in Rwanda**

According to the Rwanda Ministry of Education (Mineduc, 2003), „the development of human resources is one of the principal factors in achieving sustainable economic and social development. Education and training have been considered as a critical lynchpin to achieve development and poverty reduction in Rwanda“. According to Simpson and Muvunyi, (2012), teachers are the most important educational resource, as quality education cannot happen without them. The Federal Government of Nigeria

(2004) in it National Policy on Education (NPE) says „no nation education system can rise above the quality of it teachers“. The first attempt for the training of teachers in Rwanda was in 1950 with the establishment of some secondary schools, by the colonial administration to train mainly primary school teachers. It was also during this time that some few girls were admitted into secondary schools to train as teachers and to Nursing schools attached to Mission hospitals to train as nurses midwives (Njoroge & Rubagiza, 2003). These secondary schools at that time were known as the “Ecoles Normales”, with equal status and mandates as the Teachers Training Colleges of present day.

The quest to meet the demand of adequately qualified primary and secondary school teachers in post-war Rwanda prompted the government to establish the Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) in 1999. KIE was conceived to serve as a major instrument for dealing with the problem of the country's lack of sufficient numbers of professionally qualified primary and secondary school teachers, (www.winne.com). KIE general objectives were: (1) To train teachers for primary and secondary schools through inservice and pre-service, respectively; (2) To train other education personnel through inservice programme; (3) To initiate research and other related activities which will contribute to growth and development of education in the country; (4) To promote knowledge of peaceful co-existence, reconciliation and humanity in general (www.winne.com).

KIE started by enrolling a modest number of students depending on its capacity, until it achieved a sizeable number of students. For KIE to continuously and effectively delivers on its objectives, two affiliated colleges were created in 2007, but started operations in 2008. The colleges were Rukara College of Education and Kavumu College of Education, both offering academic programme at Diploma level. Their mission was to train and produce qualified teachers for the effective implementation of the Nine Years Basic education, later on upgraded to Twelve Years Basic education. The College of Education Rukara offered courses in Social Sciences and Humanities with Education, while Kavumu was Science based. The two colleges were merged in 2010 to form “Rwanda Teachers College”, still affiliated to KIE, (www.ce.ur.ac.rw).

With the merger of public higher institutions in Rwanda in 2013, the Kigali Institute of Education became a college of the University of Rwanda. UR-CE is the apex institution in teacher education with academic, assessment and certification of all teachers at all levels from primary to secondary school level. UR-CE was established with the intention of positively changing the landscape of human resource development especially in the education profession. It is also the apex institution in teacher education with academic quality responsibility over Teacher Training Colleges (TTC), ([www.ce.ur.ac.rw](http://www.ce.ur.ac.rw)).

There are two schools in the College of Education (CoE) of the University of Rwanda (UR); School of Education (SoE) and the School of Inclusive and Special Needs Education (SISNE). Under the SoE, which is the focus of this study, are three departments, they are department of Mathematics, Science and Physical Education and Sports (MSPSE), department of Language and Humanities (LH) and the department of Early Childhood Education (ECE).

### **Statement of the problem**

Teachers' education is bedevilled with students' apartheid towards enrolling in educational studies. This may be due to the perceived low prestige accorded teachers by the society. This situation has led to students' low enrolment in education courses compare to other courses. The objective of this study is to find out the trend of students' enrolment in the University of Rwanda, College of Education. The role of teachers in the development of any nation cannot be over emphasized. This study becomes imperative due to the society perception of teachers and also the nonchalant attitude of students towards the study of educational courses. This study will assist in contributing to the literature on the trends of student enrolment/state of teacher education in the University of Rwanda and Rwanda in general. Most study in Rwanda has focused on the increasing trend of students' enrolment in the country without adequate comparison. This study will benefit government, policy makers, teacher trainers and the general public on the role teachers in any society.

### **Purpose of Study**

The study aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the trend of students enrolment into the SoE, CoE of the UR
2. To determine the trend of students enrolment into the departments of MSPSE based on students gender
3. To determine the trend of students enrolment into the departments of LH based on students gender
4. To determine the trend of students enrolment into the departments of ECE based on students gender

### **Research Questions**

The following questions will be answer in this study;

- (1) What is the trend of students' enrolment in the SoE, CoE UR?
- (2) What is the trend of enrolment into the department of MSPSE based on students' gender?
- (3) What is the trend of enrolment into the department of LH based on students' gender?
- (4) What is the trend of enrolment into the department of ECE based on students' gender?

### **Methodology**

The instrument used for data collection was a proforma for collecting students' final admission lists from the College Registry through the College Principal. The final admission lists collected was enumerated with the corresponding departments and range of sessions. The research design for the study was descriptive in nature. All the relevant data used for the study were collected as the final admission list of students that seek admission into

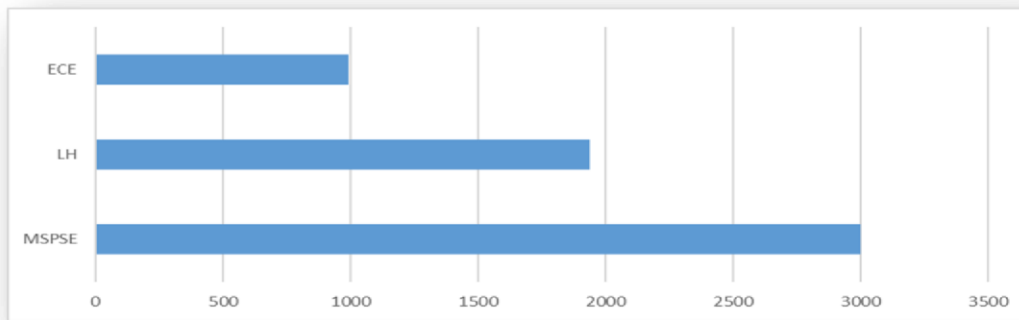
the SoE, CoE UR. The population for the study consisted of all students that applied into the SoE, CoE, UR, from the 2014/2015 session to 2018/2019 session. The sample for the study was made up of registered students in the SoE, at the CoE, of the UR. The data or information for the study was collected directly from the registry unit on the authority of the college principal by the researchers using the proforma. The collected data was analysed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and simple percentage which were used to answer the four research questions raised for the study.

**Results**

**Research question 1:** What is the trend of students’ enrolment into the departments in the school of education?

**Table 1: Trend of students’ enrolment in the school of education**

Departments	Frequency	Percentage
MSPSE	2,999	50.6
LH	1,936	32.7
ECE	990	16.7
Total	5,925	100.0



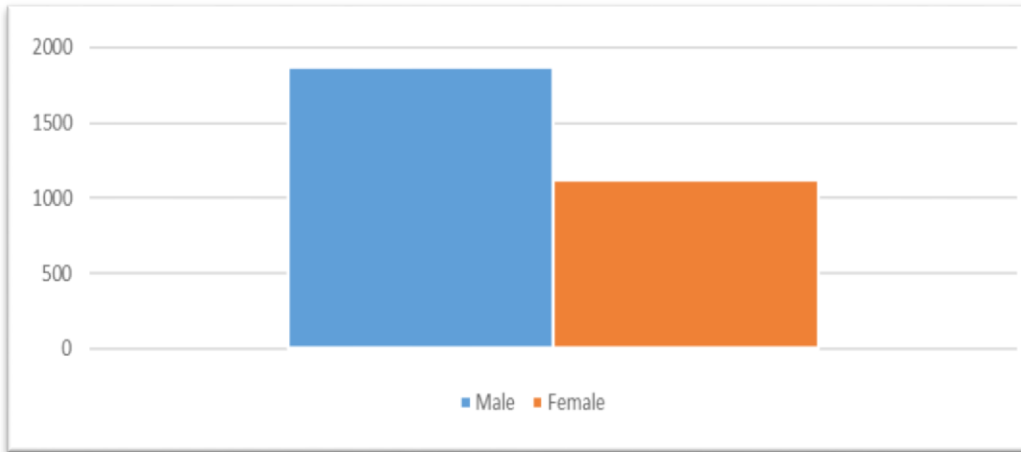
**Figure 1: Chart showing trend of students’ enrolment in the school of education**

Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate that 2,999 (50.6%) of the students in the school of education were enrolled in the department of Mathematics, Science and Physical Sports Education (MSPSE). 1,936 (32.7%) of the students were enrolled in the department of Language and Humanities (LH). While 990 (16.7%) of the students were enrolled in the department of Early Childhood Education (ECE). This indicates that the department of MSPSE has the average enrolment in the school of education.

**Research question 2:** What is the trend of students’ enrolment into the department of MSPE by gender?

**Table 2: Trend of students’ enrolment in department of MSPE by gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	1,873	62.5
Female	1,126	37.5
Total	2,999	100.0



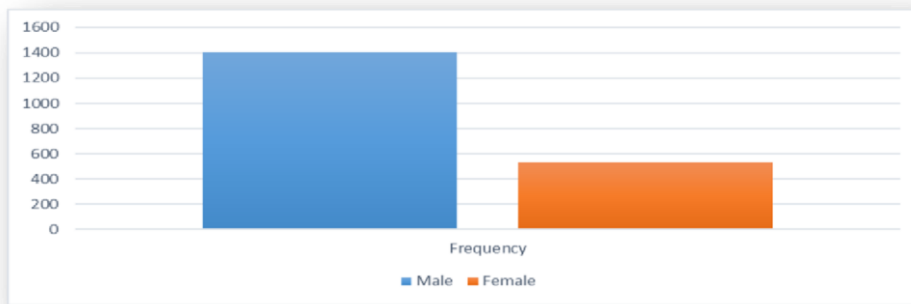
**Figure 2: Chart showing trend of students’ enrolment in the department of MSPE by gender**

Table 2 and Figure 2 show that 1,873 (62.5%) of the enrolled students in the department of Mathematics, Science and Physical Sports Education (MSPSE) were males. While 1,126 (37.5%) of the enrolled students were females. This means that the majority of enrolled students in the department of MSPSE were males.

**Research question 3:** What is the trend of students’ enrolment into the department of Language and Humanities (LH) by gender?

**Table 3: Trend of students’ enrolment in department of LH by gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	1,406	72.6
Female	530	27.4
Total	1,936	100.0



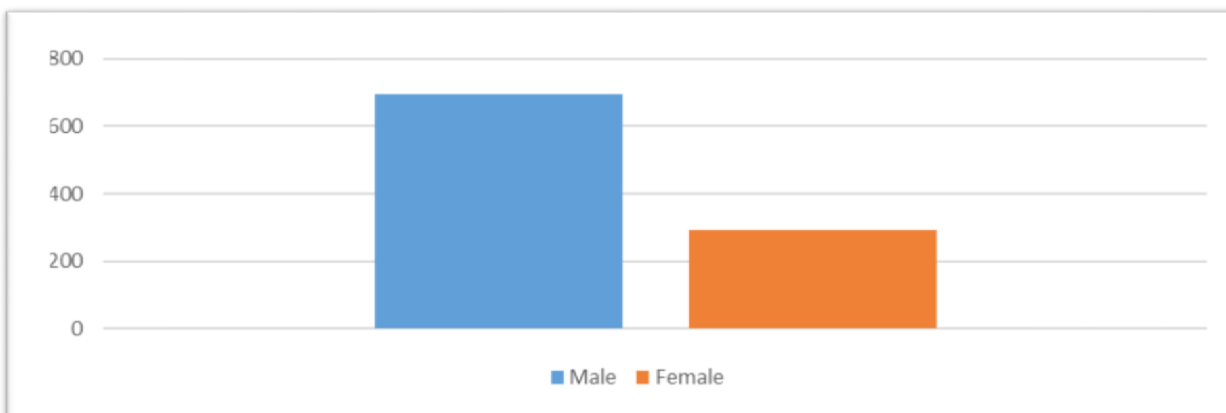
**Figure 3: Chart showing trend of students’ enrolment in the department of LH by gender**

Table 3 and Figure 3 show that 1,406 (72.6%) of the students enrolled in the department of Language and Humanities (LH) were males. While the remaining 530 (27.4%) were females. This means that the majority of the students enrolled in the department of LH were males.

**Research question 4:** What is the trend of students’ enrolment into the department of Early Childhood Education (ECE) by gender

**Table 4: Trend of students’ enrolment in department of ECE by gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	697	70.4
Female	293	29.6
Total	990	100.0



**Figure 4: Chart showing trend of students’ enrolment in the department of ECE by gender**

Table 4 and Figure 4 reveal that 697 (70.4%) of the enrolled students in the department of Early Childhood Education (ECE) were males. While the remaining 293 (29.6%) were females. This indicates that the majority of the students enrolled in the department of ECE were males.

**Summary**

Findings from this study revealed the trend of students’ enrolment into the School of Education, College of Education University of Rwanda. From the results of the findings, it was noted, that students’ enrolment into the departments in the SoE, CoE UR were on the increase in the sessions under review. It was also noted that the number of enrolled male students outstripped the number of enrolled female students in all the courses in the school.

**Discussion**

The result of table one and figure one shows that the trend of students’ enrolment in the SoE, CoE of the UR in the years under review was on the increase. More students enrolled into the department of MSPES compare to the other departments (LH and ECE) under the same schools. This is a very good development for a country aspiring to advance in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. This is against the observation of Aina and Ayodele (2018) on the reason for the decline in the enrolment of students in science education in colleges of education Nigeria. Some of the reasons adduced for the low enrolment includes



but not limited to students waning interests in science courses, lack of science equipment and poor governance among other reasons

The result of table 2, 3 and 4 and figure 2, 3 and 4 respectively show that the males students enrolment is more than the number of female students enrolment. It shows that there are more male enrolment in the college compare to female enrolment. This supported the view of Anyinkwa (2002) who states as follows

1. Females enrolment reduces as you move up the educational hierarchy
2. There are more males than females in educational institutions beyond the primary level.

### Recommendation

In the light of the findings and discussions above, the following recommendations were made

1. The government should provide incentives to attract more and best students to study educational courses especially in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education.
2. More females should be encouraged to apply and study educational courses also in the area of STEM education.
3. The welfare of teachers should be improved upon in order to attract students to study educational courses.
4. The stakeholders cum policy makers in the educational sector should not in the guise of attracting more students to study educational courses lower the standard of admissions into these courses
5. In order to attain the desired advancement in STEM, the government should adequately fund the production of STEM teachers by creating special salary, inservice training with very attractive allowances, if possible overseas scholarship for the STEM teachers to improve their quality.
6. The government should also fund the college with adequate grant for the smooth running of the college in the areas of personnel and capital projects in order to meet with the demand of training and retraining of teachers in the country.

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