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Does Equal Representation Equal Empowerment?

**A Case Study of Tanzanian Female-Identifying Students
and Their Female President**

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Abstract

In March 2021, the first-ever female president in Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan, was inaugurated. This thesis explores how female-identifying students in Tanzania feel empowered by the representation provided by the female president and how identity influences this. This is assessed through a case study of female-identifying social science university students in Tanzania, answering to two research questions:

1. How does the presence of a female president impact female-identifying students in Tanzania's sense of empowerment?
2. How does identity influence female empowerment through representation?

Catering to the lack of previous qualitative research on the topic of female representation and empowerment, and the attempt at assessing students' feelings and individual experiences, the thesis applies semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis as its methods of data collection and analysis. Feminist theory and Pitkin's (1967) theory on political representation, and in particular descriptive representation, make up the theoretical framework.

The results show that the female president did indeed influence the students' sense of empowerment in some aspects, but not in all. While all students experienced empowerment in terms of improving their perceived opportunities, the evidence for increases in their actual opportunities and their power to choose and meet their prospects and goals was not as strong. Lastly, none of the students showed a change in her power to refuse what she had not chosen herself.

As for identity, the thesis could not conclude on any correlation between demographic markers of identity, or the similarity and differences in the students' and president's identities. Supported by findings in previous literature, the thesis instead suggests that the inability to understand female empowerment by descriptive representation indicated that future studies need to examine another dimension of Pitkin's (1967) framework on political representation - namely symbolic representation.

Key words: female empowerment, political representation, descriptive representation, female head of state, university students, Tanzania

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1. Introduction

A fundamental aspect of democracy is that of political representation. Except for when direct democracy is practised, and all people participate directly in political decisions, democracy builds on the notion that representatives can represent the masses by acting or standing for them (Pitkin, 1967; Weßels, 2009). Representatives should “[be] acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them” (Pitkin, 1967:209). Representation can be in terms of ideas, opinions and needs of the represented, or by possessing attributes that resemble or appeal to the represented (ibid.). In recent decades, more efforts on promoting representation by historically underrepresented groups have been made in different parts of the world, with examples including ethnic minorities and women¹ (Poertner, 2023).

Although female political representation has been increasing lately, there are still major gender gaps globally regarding who is being represented in political positions (Alexander, Bolzendahl, & Jalalzai, 2018). The percentage of female parliamentarians in the world increased from 11 percent in 1995, to 26.5 percent in 2023, but only six nations² currently have 50 percent or more female parliamentarians (IPU, 2023a; 2023b). As of January 2023, 31 countries had female heads of state and/or government but 64 percent of the world’s nations have never had a female head of state and/or government (Encyclopædia

¹ In this thesis, woman/-en are defined in terms of gender identity. This means that everyone who identifies themselves as woman are included in the definition, regardless of biological sex. This is an attempt at making both cis- and transgender women feel included by the topic of the research.

² As of January 1st 2023. These are: Rwanda, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates.

Britannica, Inc, 2023; UN Women, 2023). The Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) of 2022 states that at current progress pace, it will take another 155 years to close the Political Empowerment Gender Gap (World Economic Forum, 2022).

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is no exception from these political gender gaps (Taylor, 2018). According to the Council on Foreign Relations (2021), only 13 out of the 49 SSA nations have had a female head of state and/or government since 1946, and many of the nations at the bottom of the GGGR's Political Empowerment ranking are found in the region (World Economic Forum, 2022). However, there has been an upsurge in both the overall Gender Gap Index, Political Empowerment subindex, and women's political mobilisation and organisation in the region, which might indicate a commencing closure of the political empowerment gender gap (ibid.; Taylor, 2018). In fact, Rwanda and Namibia are now among the top ten nations in Global Gender Gap Index ranking, and several other SSA nations have escaped the bottom ratings (World Economic Forum, 2022).

One of these nations is Tanzania (World Economic Forum, 2022). Following the death of the president John Pombe Magufuli, the former vice president Samia Suluhu Hassan was inaugurated as president of Tanzania on March 19th 2021, making history as the country's first-ever female president (Abubakar & Odula, 2021). Experts, politicians, and scholars celebrated this historical event, emphasising the value and victory for women in Tanzania. In 2022, she was named one of the 100 most influential people in 2022 by Time Magazine (Johnson Sirleaf, 2022). Mama Samia, as the president is commonly referred to, has spoken publicly to encourage Tanzanian girls and women to pursue their dreams. In 2021 she stated that “[some] don't believe that women can be better presidents and we are here to show them” (Al Jazeera, 2021; Kikeke, 2021). The hopes are high that the first-ever female president will make a difference for women in the country, inspiring gender equality and female empowerment.

While having a woman in the highest political position surely was an important step, gender equality is about much more than who is being represented in top positions. Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of all women and men, and girls and boys (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2023). In order to achieve this, the process of female empowerment is required. With over 32 million women and girls living in Tanzania (50.6 % of the total population), there are certainly countless different experiences and levels of gender (in)equality within the nation (World Bank Group, 2023). In order to attain gender equality and female empowerment, it is therefore necessary to recognize these variations between women and girls, and their individual perspectives (Cornwall, Harrison, & Whitehead, 2007). Female empowerment has in this thesis been defined as the process where a disempowered woman or girl improves 1) her actual and perceived opportunities, 2) her power to freely choose and attempt to meet her prospects and goals in the same fashion as her male counterpart already has, and 3) refuse what she has not chosen for herself (Mosedale, 2005; Rowland, 1997). The background of this definition will be presented in chapter 3.

Barnes & Burchard (2012) examined 20 countries in SSA, Tanzania among them, and found that increased female political representation in the legislature did indeed encourage political participation of female citizens, a form of political female empowerment. This can help explain the previously mentioned increases in the Gender Gap Index, Political Empowerment subindex, and women's political mobilisation and organisation in the region, as well as the correlation between them. However, their quantitative study fails to recognize other forms of female empowerment than political empowerment in the form of political participation, and does not allow for the local perspective, dismissing the individual experiences and differences between women. Since the time of their publication, Tanzania has installed its first-ever female president, which may also potentially impact levels of female empowerment. This thesis hence attempts at addressing these gaps, and

allows for a more nuanced depiction of women based on their individual experiences, examining whether the results in Barnes and Burchard's (2012) study still hold true, and if the political representation by a female president inspires female empowerment beyond merely political empowerment.

As many other African nations, Tanzania has experienced a decrease in democracy level in recent years, and the country is now considered an electoral autocracy by the V-Dem Institute (2023). This means that multiparty elections do exist, although other democratic freedoms and institutions such as freedom of expression, free and fair elections, and the equality of all citizens are insufficient. It is therefore key for Tanzania's future development to examine democracy issues, and how to increase democracy levels once again. The human empowerment framework presented by Welzel and Inglehart (2008) motivates the importance of female empowerment for democracy. They argue that empowerment in the form of self-expression values – defined as an empowering culture motivating people to govern their lives – fosters effective democracy and can be used as a predictor of democracy. Increasing self-expression values makes democratic freedoms a more valued goal, eroding the legitimacy of authoritarian rule. Therefore, assessing female empowerment in Tanzania is key not only for gender equality, but also for future democracy-promoting efforts in the region, and in extension sustainable development.

So, is the mere presence of a female president enough to increase the feeling of empowerment by women in the Tanzanian context? And is it as easy as to say that a female president represents all women? This thesis intends to research the impact by a female president on feelings of empowerment, allowing for a more nuanced depiction of both women and empowerment than in previous studies.

1.1. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to explore how female-identifying students in Tanzania feel empowered by the representation provided by the first female president and how identity influences this.

In order to fulfil the aim, the following research questions will be answered:

1. How does the presence of a female president impact female-identifying students in Tanzania's sense of empowerment?
2. How does identity influence female empowerment through representation?

2. Background

In this chapter, a literature review of previous research is presented. Section 2.1 reviews previous literature on female political representation and empowerment, especially political empowerment. The subsection 2.1.1 then elaborates on the explanatory model of the relationship between female representatives and female empowerment called ‘the role model effect’. Subsection 2.1.2 presents existing research - and the lack thereof - on female heads of states or government. Section 2.2 reviews and shows the underrepresentation in research on female political representation and empowerment in a Global South context. The chapter is concluded by a brief discussion of the contribution of this thesis (2.3).

2.1. Female Political Representation and Empowerment

The topic of political representation has for a long time been a common one within political science, and is well-researched (Childs & Levanduski, 2013). Dahl (1989) writes that the issue of political representation dates back to the transition from the Athenian city state assemblies to larger nations, where concerns of democratic participation arose. This led to a plethora of literature trying to explain the components of political representation (Brennan & Hamlin, 1999; Childs & Levanduski, 2013; Rao, 1998). Classical examinations include Hobbes’ (2008) *Leviathan*, where he argued for the need of a representative sovereign power in society, Burke’s (2006) trustee model of representation based on the belief that representatives have superior knowledge and experience, and

Rousseau's (2004) dismissal of representation as incompatible with full democracy. Other more contemporary, yet influential, scholars include Pitkin (1967), differentiating between four types of representation - which constitutes part of the theoretical framework for this thesis and will be further elaborated on in section 3.3 - and Mansbridge (2003), questioning representation as a principal-agent relationship, and formulating a model of four forms of representation in democracies.

Much research that has used Pitkin's (1967) framework has focused on the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. That is, representation that builds on resemblance between the representative and the represented, for example by gender (descriptive), and representation where the representative acts based on the represented's interests and will (substantive). Reingold's (2006), Wängnerud's (2009), and Lowande, Ritchie & Lauterbach's (2019) research describe how descriptive representation can contribute to substantive, as women representatives are more likely to represent other women's interests. Sobolewska, McKee & Campbell (2018) focus on explaining the relationship between the two forms of representation, and suggest that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations makes representatives that are representing descriptively more likely to act in the interests of the represented. Lombardo & Meier (2019) question previous studies' focus on these two dimensions of representation, and argue that it is equally - if not more - important to also study symbolic representation, as this dimension explains power structures and the gendered boundaries of the other dimensions of representation.

More and more scholars have applied a gender perspective on political representation, arguing for the importance of female political representation. Here, the most influential scholar is Phillips (1995), who in her *Politics of Presence* extended Pitkin's previous argument by arguing for the importance of women's presence in politics (Childs & Levanduski, 2013). Phillips (1998) also divided the

arguments for female political representation presented by previous scholars into four groups, arguments that: 1. appeal to principles of justice between the sexes, 2. highlight ‘female interests’ that only women can represent, 3. point to a revitalised democracy that bridges the gap between representation and democracy, and 4. emphasise the role model successful female politicians offer to others.

The fourth group of arguments - which are the ones this thesis will focus on - argues that more female representatives leads to female empowerment through increased self esteem for other women, encourages others to follow their example and also take place in politics, as well as dislodge beliefs about what is appropriate for women versus men (Phillips, 1998). Within this group of arguments, the research mostly focuses on the influence of female representatives on female political empowerment related to political participation (Kishwar, 2014). Female political empowerment is then defined in terms of the process of increasing capacity, capabilities, achievements or assets of women to gain equality to men in influencing and exercising political authority (Alexander et al., 2016; Sundström et al., 2015).

In 1998, High-Pippert & Comer published an article examining female political empowerment and “the influence of women representing women”. The qualitative study concludes that there indeed is an impact of female political representation on female political empowerment, although the effects are uneven between different forms of political engagement. Therefore, they call for more research, both using a larger sample, and taking into account other characteristics of the women of study. Catering to the need for large-N studies, Alexander (2009) reviews data from 25 countries of different developmental levels between 1995 and 2007, and concludes that an increase in the percentage of women in parliament leads to a positive change in the general opinion on women’s ability to rule. This effect is even more pronounced amongst women than men (ibid.). She

later proves that this is also the case for sudden, drastic changes in women's presence in parliament (Alexander, 2015).

More recent studies mostly confirm Alexander's (2009) conclusion that female politicians empower women politically, although there are still some inconsistencies in the results. Liu & Banaszak (2017) show that the presence of female legislators do lead to increased political empowerment. Barnes & Taylor-Robinson (2018) examine female representation in high profile cabinets, and conclude that the presence of women in these cabinets does not contribute to a change in perceptions about women's ability to lead, although it does create political empowerment. However, Karp & Banducci's (2008) study does not find evidence for an increase in female political empowerment through increased female political representation. They do instead find that female representation leads to more positive evaluations of the democratic process. This motivates further, qualitative studies on the topic, and in more specific contexts, rather than the general, quantitative studies that have so far dominated the research on female political empowerment (Daloz, 2016). This way, the research can assess in which contexts female political representation does lead to empowerment, and what other factors influence this.

2.1.1. The Role Model Effect

One explanation for the proposed relationship between female representation and female empowerment presented in the literature is the role model effect. The role model effect describes how women, especially young women, become more politically engaged when female politicians are present and visible, as they act as role models (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006).

Campbell & Wolbrecht (2006) find that when female politicians are made more visible in the media, adolescent girls are more likely to participate in politics. They later perform a cross-national, large-N analysis where they also find support

for the role model effect by female members of parliament. They conclude that the effect on political activity and engagement is much larger on young and adolescent girls, compared to older age groups (Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007). Mariani, Marshall, & Mathews-Schultz (2015) research on female politicians in the United States suggests that the role model effect is present, although the conclusion is only tentative. Similarly to Wolbrecht & Campbell (2007), they find that the role model effect is not always explained by the gender of the representative and the represented (Mariani, Marshall, & Mathews-Shultz, 2015). Adding to this, their results also suggest that ideology, party affiliation, the way representatives present themselves, the issues they focus on, the employed rhetoric, and the environment of political campaigns might influence the role model effect. Stokes-Brown & Dolan (2010) research also presents evidence for the role model effect when another aspect of identity is added - ethnicity. Their research suggests that the presence of female African American representatives bolsters the democratic participation among African American women.

Coffé's (2012) research in Rwanda shows that the female politicians themselves emphasise the power of the role model effect over the effect on policy outcomes by gender equal representation. However, the study does not conclude whether the role-model effect indeed is present. Gilardi (2015) examines the importance of the role model effect on municipal elections in Switzerland, and shows that role models are important to increase female political representation, but only at early stages. The effect diminishes over time; it is most prominent during the first election cycle, and has disappeared completely by the end of the fourth.

2.1.2. Female Heads of State or Government

As for female heads of state or government - not only are there few of them, but the research on their influence on empowerment is very limited (Jalalzai, 2018). Jalalzai (ibid.) states that a female executive may impact political empowerment in two ways. First, it strengthens women's political positions in society and

challenges the notion of politics as a man's game. Second, the presence of a female executive has positive effects on women's status in the larger society. Wahman, Frantzeskakis, & Yildirim (2021) research the case of Malawi, and show that female members of parliament become politically empowered, less confined to stereotypical gender patterns, and more inclined to hold speeches under a female president. Further, Alexander & Jalalzai (2020) quantitatively prove the importance of a female head of state or government to the public in eleven Global North and Global South nations. When presented with a female head of state or government, both men and women are more supportive of female leaders and more interested in politics, and women are more likely to vote in elections. They argue that the effects of a female head of state or government could be even larger than those of an increase in female parliamentarians (ibid.).

For the case of Korea's first female president, Lee (2022) first shows that the previously mentioned relationship between a female head of state or government and female political empowerment does not hold true when the female president is not successful or viewed in a positive manner by the public. Second, when the female head of state or government is instead 'failing', it might negatively impact the general opinion towards female leaders. Lee (ibid.) concludes by highlighting the importance of using an intersectional approach when studying representation. Intersectionality should recognize the societal and individual context of the leaders, as this might impact how well the female head of state or government is received and accepted by the public (ibid.).

2.2. The Global South Context

Most research on female political representation and empowerment is limited to a Global North context, and Asia, Latin America and Africa are underrepresented. For example, Alexander's (2009) research includes 25 countries, but the only African country included is South Africa. Furthermore, Karp & Banducci's (2008)

study examines 35 nations - none of them in Africa. Wolbrecht and Campbell (2007) emphasise the cross-national context of their study as the “first attempt to date to examine the impact of female descriptive representation around the world” (ibid.:936). Though - apart from the 26 European countries - the study only includes Australia and the US.

As for research in the African context, Barnes & Burchard’s (2012) quantitative analysis of 20 countries in SSA (Tanzania included) found that increased female political representation in the legislature did encourage political engagement of female citizens when women occupy a sizable portion of the seats. In 2019, Michalko performed a qualitative case study of the role model effect on South African students. The research finds that most students did not consider female politicians to be role models. Although, the researcher argues, the female politicians do still improve female empowerment, as they - in combination with other men and women in the students’ lives - contribute to the construction of an image of a female political elite and ideal self for the female students. Similarly to other previous studies, Michalko (ibid.) emphasise the importance of context sensitivity, and advice that future studies should focus on “in-depth understanding of women’s lives and identifications, as much as the socio-political conditions of the specific time and context” (ibid.:255).

Through ethnographic and documentary research, Burnet (2008; 2011) explores the influence of increased female representation through gender quotas in the non-democratic context of Rwanda. Rwanda being the first country in the world to have a female majority in its parliament, she finds that as female political participation increased, women’s actual opportunity to impact policy making decreased. However, progress in other areas such as increases in respect from their community, social mobility, economic and professional opportunities, capacity to speak and be heard in public forums, autonomy in the family’s decision making, and access to education are observed. She also shows that gender quotas reversed

the colonial and postcolonial gender paradigm of women being dependent on men, and managing the domestic sphere (ibid., 2011). Burnet (2011) concludes by linking her findings to Pitkin's four types of representation, and states that the Rwandan case proves that changes in formal and descriptive representation can create changes in symbolic representation, even when substantive representation is not improved. However, it is just as important to consider each specific context, as the experience of female representation is not universal, she adds.

Lastly, Liu (2018) examines the role model effect on an Asian, cross-national sample and finds no support for the effect in the region. On the contrary, female political leaders create a decrease in female political engagement. As she points out, most research is limited to Europe and North America. Hence, the result indicates that the role model effect does not hold true in an East- and Southeast Asian context (ibid.). This might indicate that the role model effect is not valid in other Global South contexts, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, and indicates a need for research on other Global South-regions.

2.3. Contribution

This thesis will contribute to the existing research in primarily four ways. First, the inconsistent results regarding political empowerment and the influence of the role model effect indicate a need for more research (Alexander, 2009; Barnes & Taylor-Robinson, 2018; High-Pippert & Comer, 1998; Karp & Banducci, 2008; Liu, 2018; Liu & Banaszak, 2017). Several of these studies also call for research that recognises other aspects than gender as determinants of empowerment through the role model effect, and context sensitivity (Burnet, 2011; Lee, 2022; Michalko, 2019; Phillips, 2020; Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007). The discussed previous studies have mostly been quantitative, so instead using a qualitative research method will allow for an analysis that better caters to this need of

recognising variety in the sample, as it gives more space to each individual within the research sample.

Second, previous studies have predominantly focused on female empowerment in terms of political empowerment, especially in terms of political participation (Alexander, 2009; Barnes & Burchard, 2012; Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006; High-Pippert & Comer, 1998; Liu & Banaszak; Kishwar, 2014; Phillips, 1995; 1998). This thesis will apply a broader definition of empowerment and examine female empowerment outside of politics. This way, the importance of female representatives as role models for a broader group of women can be assessed.

Third, most previous studies have focused on numeral female representation (Alexander, 2009; 2015; Barnes & Taylor-Robinson, 2018; Barnes & Burchard, 2012; High-Pippert & Comer, 1998; Karp & Banducci, 2008; Phillips, 1995; 1998; 2020). That is, when the proportion of female representatives increases. Further, few studies have focused on the importance of a female head of state on female empowerment, even though Alexander & Jalalzai's (2020) study suggest that this might have an even greater impact than large increases in numeral female parliamentarians. This thesis will thus add to these research gaps, and assess how the addition of solely one female representative impacts female empowerment. This will contribute to conclude if it is the level of power possessed by female representative(s), rather than the amount of female representatives, that influences female empowerment, in the case of Tanzania.

Fourth, this thesis will add to the research gap on the sub-saharan context, and more specifically the Tanzanian context. Previous studies - and especially the lack thereof - suggest that the results presented by studies in a Global North context may not hold true for other regions (Burnet, 2008; 2011; Liu, 2018; Michalko, 2019). Even the previous study on Rwanda and South Africa underline that their results are not generalisable on other countries, and call for context-specific studies (Burnet, 2008; 2011; Michalko, 2019). This thesis will complement the

previous quantitative studies on Tanzania, as well as contribute with an analysis of the addition of the newly-installed female president, which occurred after the publication of these studies.

3. Theoretical Framework

This thesis relies on a feminist theory. Section 3.1 introduces the Third Wave feminist theory applied in this study. Subsections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 describe the relevant feminist concepts of ‘intersectionality’, ‘context sensitivity’, and ‘female empowerment’. Lastly, section 3.2 presents the theoretical frame of political representation.

3.1. Feminist Theory

Feminist theory can be divided into four waves, formulated around feminist developments in Global North nations, especially the United States (Malinowska, 2020). The First Wave occurred in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, and focused mainly on women’s liberation and suffrage (Rampton, 2008). In the 1960’s and 1970’s, the Second Wave emerged. Taking inspiration from the civil rights movement, Second Wave feminism focused on equality, justice, sexuality and reproductive rights (Brunell & Burkett, 2023; Rampton, 2008). This inspired theoretical discussions regarding the root causes of women’s oppression, the nature of gender, and the role of the family. There was no consensus among the Second Wave feminists, which inspired the development of different feminist branches within the wave, the most prominent ones being liberal, radical and cultural feminism (Brunell & Burkett, 2023; Walters, 2005). The Third Wave emerged in the mid-1990’s to cater to the new cultural, economic, and media landscape for women, and as a reaction to the experienced deficiencies of Second Wave feminism. Third Wave feminists highlighted the personal narrative, action

over theorising, and sought to question and redefine ideas about gender, allowing for a more inclusive gender concept and feminism. Third Wave feminism was also more inclusive of different women, for example women of colour, and emphasised intersectionality, which will be further elaborated upon in section 3.1.1 (Brunell & Burkett, 2023; Snyder, 2008).

Many scholars have now adopted the terminology of a Fourth Wave emerging in the 2010's, revolving around the usage of internet and social media as means to individually question gender inequality and sexism, as well as extending the Third Wave's recognition of intersectionality (Blevins, 2018; Malinowska, 2020). The Fourth Wave combines elements from all previous waves and is in many ways very similar to the Third Wave, which is also why some scholars dismiss the existence of a Fourth Wave (Basmehchi, 2017; Brunell & Burkett, 2023; Mohajan, 2022; Sternadori, 2019). This thesis does recognize the Fourth Wave and agrees with the importance of intersectionality for feminist analysis. However, the focus on the presence of technology and social media, as well as the 'call-out culture' - where feminists use social media to publish and shed light on sexist and/or problematic phenomena, behaviour, and people - on these platforms is not considered relevant or applicable for this study (Anderson, 2018; Malinowska, 2020; Mohajan, 2022). The focus on intersectionality and individual experiences can also be found in the Third Wave. Therefore, this thesis relies on a Third Wave feminist theoretical framework.

Mackay (2015) writes that distinguishing between various branches of feminism was more important during the Second Wave of feminism, and today most activists are content with only labelling themselves as 'feminist', since most of the various forms overlap. Actually, some Third Wave feminists argue that an important element of the new, feminist wave is to not define feminism, and instead emphasise the importance of individual versions of feminism that allow for culture and context sensitivity (Snyder, 2008; Strauss, 2000). This view has

inspired the focus on students' individual experiences in the analysis and discussion of this thesis. The following sections will be dedicated to describing the feminist ideas and theory this particular thesis relies on. With that said, Third Wave feminism also recognises that it was born out of previous feminist waves and branches, and supports, builds upon or develops many of these arguments (Genz, 2006). Therefore, the observant reader will recognise many of the elements from Second Wave radical feminism. However, this thesis rejects the claims made by radical feminism on political lesbianism and male violence as the upholder of patriarchy (Mackay, 2015).

Brennan & Pateman (1998) claim that, despite what some may argue, all types of feminism build on a patriarchal argument. The word 'patriarchy' originally means "the rule of the father" in Greek, and used to denote a male head of the household (Mackay, 2015:5). The meaning of the concept has later broadened with feminist theory, and now usually refers to the system of male dominance over women in society (European Institute of Gender Equality, 2016; Sultana, 2010). The reason behind this domination, the arenas in which the domination occurs, the extent of the domination, and whether and how this domination should be 'corrected' varies between different feminist thinkers and theories (Hill & Allen, 2021; Mackay, 2015; Sultana, 2010). Inspired by radical feminist scholars, this thesis defines patriarchy in terms of the system of structures that consolidates and exercises male social and political control and domination over women (Rowland & Klein, 1996).

Patriarchal structures creates feelings of powerlessness, discrimination, and lack of self esteem and self-confidence amongst women, which contribute to the othering of women - to use de Beauvoir's famous terminology - and women's subordination to men in society (Sultana, 2010; de Beauvoir, 2015). By women being 'the other' in relation to men, the man is the norm and also the superior in society, hindering women from exercising the same kind of power over herself

and society. This includes actions such as freely choosing how to live her life, holding positions of power in society, or freely expressing her opinion (de Beauvoir, 2015). In accordance with Fraser (1993), this thesis builds on the notion that this subordination of women is secured through cultural norms, social practices, and other structural mechanisms.

As Enloe (2017) writes, patriarchy is thus human-made and vulnerable to challenge, and therefore requires constant updating, restyling, and modernising by its beneficiaries in order to survive. She lists a broad selection of feminist successes as examples of when patriarchy has been successfully challenged. These range from when New Zealand women won the right to vote, Chinese women won the right to divorce, and Rwandan women won the right to inherit land after their husband, to when a transnational alliance of labourers made the International Labour Organization declare the rights of paid domestic workers, Liberian women made male warlords to negotiate a peace agreement, and Korean women managed to replace the word ‘comfort women’ with ‘sex slaves’. Following this, relationships between women, men, and the state had to be restructured, and preconceived gender values and norms were challenged, making elites as well as ordinary people rethink their assumptions of how society works. In this study, the inauguration of the female president could potentially be such a feminist success, influencing societal change.

3.1.1. Intersectionality and Context Sensitivity

Third Wave feminism also emphasises the importance of cultural plurality and intersectionality, which has inspired this thesis’ focus on identity and individual experiences (Snyder, 2008). The concept of ‘intersectionality’ was created by Crenshaw (1989), when she, based on the experience of black women, questioned the view of discrimination as a single-axis phenomenon. She argued that the intersectional discriminatory experience was larger than the sum of each

individual discriminatory experience. Instead, one must consider the complex, multidimensional nature of identity and discriminatory experiences, constituent of for example ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and disability (ibid.; Atrey, 2019).

Translated into a Third Wave feminist context, this means the rejection of 'women' as a homogenous category that can be generalised over cultures, and instead the recognition of the personal experience where both identity and culture are crucial elements. However, Third Wave feminism takes this aspect one step further than their Second Wave predecessors, and also allows for multiple identities within one person, such as being bisexual, biracial, multicultural and/or transgender (Snyder, 2008). Working from an intersectional perspective offers ontological plurality and allows for each individual's experience of empowerment to be recognized (Atrey, 2019).

Feminist scholars also highlight context sensitivity, recognising the importance of factors such as culture, history, legal- and political context (Walters, 2005). Walters (ibid.:118) writes that, compared to Global North feminists, "women in the 'Third World' [sic] have had to confront additional, and even more intractable, problems. They often have to combat sexism in the form of deep-rooted local beliefs and practices, to do with class, caste, religion, and ethnic biases. In some countries, their battle with these issues has been combined with, and sometimes complicated by, a struggle for the establishment of democratic government and for the most basic freedoms". Therefore, it is of essence to apply a context sensitive perspective when researching feminist issues in a Global South setting. This also goes well in hand with what is called for by previous research (see section 2.3), which further motivates the choice of feminist theory as well as intersectionality and context sensitivity for this thesis.

Although the thesis does agree with the importance for intersectionality, cultural sensitivity and the individual experience, it opposes the complete abolition of the

shared experience of women, and the anti-categorical position that women can not be treated as one category, made by some Third Wave Feminists (McCall, 2005; Snyder, 2008). The position is instead that women over the globe share the lived experience as subordinates by the patriarchy. This justifies both the research on Tanzanian women's experiences being performed by a Swedish-Indian researcher and the potential generalisability of the research.

3.1.2. Female Empowerment

The feminist theoretical framework evidently relates to issues of power. Patriarchy builds on, and recreates power imbalances by patriarchal structures. The way to counteract these power imbalances is through *female empowerment* (Parpart, 2014). There are numerous different definitions of female empowerment applied in the development studies literature (Mosedale, 2005). The research however seems to agree on four common aspects of empowerment. They are: 1) to be empowered, one must come from a disempowered position, 2) empowerment must come from within. That is, those who would become empowered must claim it. Others can only facilitate empowerment, not impose it, 3) empowerment implies that people make decisions on matters important in their lives, and are able to carry them out, and 4) empowerment is a process, rather than a goal (ibid.).

In order to cater to these aspects, as well as apply a definition that is most suitable for this research, the definition of female empowerment has in this thesis been based on a combination of Mosedale's (2005) theoretical framework, and somewhat on Rowland's (1997) work. Female empowerment is thus defined as: the process where a disempowered woman improves 1) her actual and perceived opportunities, 2) her power to freely choose and attempt to meet her prospects and goals in the same fashion as her male counterpart already has, and 3) refuse what she has not chosen for herself. Mosedale's (2005) theory has been chosen since it: a) takes on a multidimensional gender-sensitive, feminist approach and b) defines

empowerment not only in terms of action but also as perceptions of what is possible.

Importantly, female empowerment does not automatically translate into women holding the same positions and roles as men in society, or dominating men. Feminist theory distinguishes between ‘power-over’ and ‘power-to’ (Yoder & Kahn, 1992). Power-over refers to the domination and control of one person or group over another person or group, and the ability to make someone else do something (see: Dahl, 1957; Weber, 1978). Instead, female empowerment is here defined as power-to, which implies power and control over one’s own behaviour (Yoder & Kahn, 1992). Lukes (2005) adds a dimension of capacity to the concept of power-to, and states that “having power is being able to make or to receive any change, or to resist it” (ibid.:69). Thus, “power is a potentiality, not an actuality - indeed a potentiality that may never be actualized” (ibid.:69).

Contesting patriarchal structures is hence not about women rejecting everything traditionally associated with women or femininity in one’s culture - nor is it about embracing it. It is about the ability to choose either, neither or a mixture of the two. Therefore, an important aspect of realising female empowerment is that of agency. Kabeer (1994) writes extensively on ‘choice’, and the importance of women’s agency for gender equality. She emphasises the importance of considering the social and structural context influencing women’s opportunities to choose for themselves when assessing female empowerment and gender equality (ibid.). Therefore, this thesis addresses both the patriarchal structures in the students’ family or close to them, as well as in the society at large.

Applying this kind of perspective on female empowerment and the contestation of patriarchal structures instead of focusing on gender relations and women rejecting or embracing things associated with femininity also helps mitigate the common critique of female research as being Global North-focused. Bergström (2017) problematizes the definition of gender equality as a universal notion based by

researchers from the Global North, as it dismisses local understandings and experiences of gender relations (ibid.). Using definitions of patriarchy and female empowerment based on power-to, instead of focusing on traditional gender roles, is believed to contribute to reducing this Global North-bias.

3.2. Political Representation

This thesis defines political representation based on Pitkin's (1967) work.

In 1967, Pitkin's influential work *The Concept of Representation* was published, where she systematically addresses previous views and definitions of representation, and instead defines it as "making present again" by going back to the word's etymological meaning (ibid.:8). However, she states, this definition is of little use. Instead, there are various applications of representation in different contexts that one must consider. She also defines political representation as "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (ibid.:209). There is tension between the ideal and institutional definitions, making it important to consider context and the relation between the represented and the representative (ibid.).

Further, Pitkin (1967) distinguishes between four dimensions of political representation, namely: formalistic, substantive, descriptive, and symbolic representation. Both formalistic and substantive representation focus on the 'acting for', whereas descriptive and symbolic focus on representation as 'standing for'. Formalistic representation refers to a formal agreement where one human acts on behalf of others. Substantive representation is the activities by representatives acting in accordance with the represented's interests and will. Descriptive representation refers to the making present by objective resemblance or reflection of the represented. Symbolic representation requires no such things, but instead is about the meaning or the feeling invoked in the represented by the representative.

Perhaps one will question why Pitkin's framework has been chosen over Mansbridge's (2003), which offers a more contemporary differentiation between various forms of representation. Mansbridge's theory does have one obvious shortcoming compared to Pitkin's, which makes it irrelevant for this thesis, namely that it revolves around political representation in a democratic context. Tanzania not being considered a democratic state hence makes Mansbridge's theory unsuitable.

3.2.1. Descriptive Representation and Identity

In 1995, Phillips published *The Politics of Presence*, in which she discusses Pitkin's (1967) argument. While Pitkin (ibid.) consistently refers to the representation in terms of 'man' and 'he', Phillips (1995) takes a feminist, gender-sensitive approach to political participation, and includes women into the analysis. She argues that descriptive and substantive representation are interlinked, as the presence of female politicians both will ensure full democratic participation and cater to the needs and interests of women as a group. She goes against Pitkin's dismissal of the importance of descriptive representation as it is the activities rather than the composition of the representatives that she views important, and critiques Pitkin for disregarding questions of inequality (ibid.). As Childs and Lovenduski (2013) puts it: "after Pitkin no one regarded descriptive representation as important, while after Phillips no one regarded it as unimportant" (ibid.:491).

Butler (1998) problematizes the focus on a shared female identity for political representation. She argues that gender is not the only important aspect of identity, and that studies also need to apply a more multifaceted view of identity that allows for individual differences between women. This aligns with Phillips' (2020) argument that one must consider intersectional identities when assessing descriptive representation. In this thesis, identity is viewed as both in terms of

more definite identity markers such as religion, age, and tribe, but also the students' own perceptions of their and the president's identity and identity traits.

This thesis is inspired by Phillips' (1995) argument and development of Pitkin's (1967) theory, and will therefore focus on the descriptive representation provided by the female president. The female president may offer descriptive representation by representing and standing for the female population based on her gender identity. In order for this to occur, the represented needs to perceive herself sharing this identity, or identity traits, with the representative, and hence identify herself and the president as women (Stokke & Selboe, 2009). Descriptive representation is defined as representation based on resemblance to the represented, based on Pitkin's original framework. However, to make the theory contemporary, compatible with the feminist framework, and not assume that women are a homogenous group, Butler's (1998) and Phillips' (2020) arguments about identity and intersectionality are applied. Apart from gender, the thesis thus acknowledges identity traits such as religion, financial situation, and tribe, but also more abstract phenomena such as personality.

4. Methodology

This research builds on a qualitative research methodology built on the case study design, applying interviews as its method of data generation, and thematic analysis as the method of analysis. Qualitative methods have been chosen over quantitative for two main reasons. First, the aim of the study is to research people's individual experiences and perceptions, and the thesis' feminist theoretical framework emphasises the importance of individual narratives. Qualitative methods are more suitable since they give more opportunities for this, and quantitative methods do not allow for the individual perspectives to be assessed in depth (Mason, 2018). Further, the operationalisation of abstract phenomena such as empowerment requires data that would be hard to attain through quantitative methods such as surveys or polls.

Second, previous research on the topic has mostly been based on quantitative research methods, which has resulted in a lack of insights on individual perspectives, which are called for by previous researchers (Burnet, 2011; Lee, 2022; Michalko, 2019; Phillips, 2020; Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007). The quantitative nature of previous research has worked well to measure political representation's impact on empowerment in terms of political participation. However, in order to assess empowerment beyond political representation, methods that give space to explore individual narratives and details are necessary. A qualitative research design will thus allow this thesis to extend previous research by also examining how empowerment may vary between different individuals, and what influences such variation.

Section 4.1 first defines the ontology and epistemology that lay the ground for the chosen methods, which are presented in section 4.2. 4.3 describes the sample of the study. The chapter is concluded by a discussion on research ethics (4.4).

4.1. Ontology and Epistemology

This thesis takes on a constructivist ontological position, meaning that reality is socially constructed by individuals and their perception. Hence, the object most interesting for research is people's experiences (Pernecky, 2016). The thesis intends to research this social reality by exploring people's feelings, thoughts and perceptions.

The epistemological position is a subjectivist one, referring to the belief that knowledge is constructed by the individual, and a meaningful way to generate this kind of data is by talking to people, asking them questions and socially interacting. This research also recognizes knowledge to be situated, meaning that there is no objective truth or reality, but it instead depends on the person experiencing reality, as well as the interpreter - in this case, the researcher. This makes questions of positionality and reflexivity important (Haraway, 1988; Mason, 2018). These two will be defined and discussed in the following subsections.

4.1.1. Positionality

Positionality refers to the researcher's chosen position in the research, and is important since it influences the entire research process and the results. Defining and reflecting on positionality is important both to minimise and navigate potential researcher bias, but also to make the reader aware of when such bias might affect the research (Holmes, 2020; Wilson, Janes, & Williams, 2022). The researcher's position includes both fixed - such as gender and ethnicity - and more fluid positions of the researcher. A researcher's positionality can be based on

locating the researcher in relation to 1) the research topic, 2) the research participants, and 3) the research context and process. The constructivist ontological position emphasises the importance of reflecting on what influences the construction of reality (Holmes, 2020).

The two major things influencing my positionality are my nationality and ethnicity. As this thesis builds on a field study in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, my Swedish nationality automatically places me in the position of an outsider. However, having visited Tanzania four times before, as well as being familiar with the Swahili language and culture removes some of the outsider position and status. This expertise allowed me to understand and interpret language usage, references, and behaviour of the students differently than if no such knowledge was possessed. This knowledge was always revealed to the interviewees before the interview started, for them to be aware of my positionality and how this could affect the way they were being interpreted. My ethnicity as a non-white person was prior to the research believed to decrease the outsider status and the gap between me and the interviewees somewhat. However, it became apparent during the fieldwork process that I was rather viewed in terms of being a non-black person, and hence an outsider, than a non-white person. This was exemplified in one of the interviews, when the student was asked what had influenced societal change:

“What can I say, thanks to you guys! The Western culture. [...] Without you guys interfering I feel like we would still be in the dark ages.” (Interview 20, 31/3 2023).

The excerpt shows how the interviewee perceived me as an outsider. Nonetheless, some of my identity markers were shared with the students, for example being a young woman, studying social sciences. This created a shared identity and something to relate over, and allowed me to share the lived experiences of being a woman in a patriarchal society, which instead made me an insider within the

research topic. Whenever possible during the interviews, I tried to emphasise commonalities between me and the interviewees to enhance the feeling of shared identity, and make the interviewees feel more comfortable with talking to me.

My familiarity with the research context as well as the lived experience as a woman with many identity traits similar to that of the students did indeed help bridge some of the gaps and issues that may arise as being a non-native researcher. Though, it also made me enter the research process with some bias, which required reflexivity.

4.1.2. Reflexivity

Based on the subjectivist epistemological position that knowledge is individually constructed, and is shaped by the person who experiences and interprets it, reflexivity becomes a crucial part of the methodology. Reflexivity refers to the process of “constant awareness, assessment, and reassessment by the researcher of the researcher's own contribution / influence / shaping of inter-subjective research and the consequent research findings” (Patnaik, 2013:100). It thus includes reflecting on one’s own positionality, and managing it in some way (ibid.).

An introspective reflexivity approach was practised throughout the research process. This meant recognising that the researcher’s experiences, emotions, and attitudes will inevitably influence the creation of knowledge as well as the analysis of data, and attempts to unveil them and minimise their influence when possible (Patnaik, 2013). To accomplish this, my position as researcher and the aforementioned biases were constantly reflected upon and discussed with peers. During the interviews, I reminded myself about my own bias, which often made me ask questions in a different way. After each interview, memos were also written in order to reflect on my position and influence. Some examples on this can be found in the fifth interview memo:

“Had been a long time since I did an interview, so I was “out of shape”. Before the break, I felt as if I was getting more and more comfortable with the interview guide, and that I could ask/talk more freely. Now, I had completely forgotten/fallen out of that.”

“Similar to interview [X] – maybe an occurring theme is that for some women, they don’t really care/it doesn’t effect [sic] them? Can keep this in mind and make sure I don’t ask questions that suppose this. Also noticed that asking questions like “how was it before?” instead of “has it always been like that?” (the latter = yes/no question) is much better.” (Interview Memo 5, 28/2 2023).

The feeling of being “out of shape” is an example of influence that was hard to mitigate, but instead required acknowledgment and me being aware of it, as it might have influenced the knowledge creation process. The second excerpt instead shows how the results and questions were being reflected upon, tested, and adjusted.

Another approach to apply reflexivity was by consulting “advisors” throughout the research process. These advisors included Tanzanian women and men of various positions and who knew me and my personality to various degrees. The advisors were consulted about the interview guide, the recruitment technique, the interview method, and the cultural context, and helped me reflect on the context of the study, the answers, and my position from a local perspective.

4.2. Methods

This study builds on a case study research design, inspired by Yin’s (2014) work on case studies. Yin (ibid.) defines the case study design as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context” (ibid.:16). The case study design is an appropriate choice when the research builds on ‘how-’ or ‘why-’ questions, the researcher cannot control behavioural events, and the study focuses on contemporary events or

phenomena. This study fulfils all three criteria, making the case study design suitable.

Yin (2014) describes how the case study design builds on a linear yet iterative research process based on six steps, with certain methods being approved as case study methods. The steps are defined as: planning, designing, preparing, collecting data, analysing and reporting of the case. The planning step includes conducting a thorough literature review. The designing step means identifying the case, establishing the logic of the study, and choosing the theory. In the preparing step, the researcher should both prepare for the collection of data, but also acquire the required skills to carry out the study. The collecting data step includes practising the acquired knowledge and skills and collecting the material which will be analysed in the next step. Here, one of the methods which are appropriate for case studies is interviewing, which is explained further in section 4.2.1. The analysing step consists of examining, categorising, tabulating, testing, or recombining the material. Section 4.2.2 describes the thematic analysis method applied in this thesis. Lastly, the reporting step means sharing the findings in a way that is suitable considering the audience (ibid.). The research process of this thesis has taken inspiration from these steps.

In this thesis, the case, also called the unit of analysis, is female social science, undergraduate students at University of Dar es Salaam and Ardhi University in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

4.2.1. Interviews

Interviews are one of the most commonly used methods within qualitative research, and it has a long history as a research method within social sciences, for example being used by Thysidides and Socrates in ancient Greece (Kvale, 2007; Mason, 2018). Qualitative interviews exist on a continuum, ranging from completely free-ranging and exploratory unstructured interviews, to fully

structured, standardised interviews where all interviewees answer the very same questions. The interviews for this thesis have been semi-structured interviews, which is an interview style in-between the two extremes (Magaldi & Berler, 2020). The semi-structured interviews followed a predetermined outline with questions and topics in an interview guide (Appendix 1), but also allowed for adaptation and fluidity to best cater each specific situation and allow for other themes to be explored when they occur in the conversation (ibid.; Mason, 2018). The interview style allowed for a more informal tone and setting, which can dismantle some of the power imbalance in the relation researcher-interviewee, and navigate positionality concerns (Mason, 2018).

Kvale (2007) states that interviewing as a data generation method is particularly good for understanding and obtaining data concerning how people experience and understand the world, and provides the researcher with a unique opportunity to access people's lived experiences. This aligns with the thesis' ontological and epistemological position, and motivates the choice of interviews as the method for data generation. Considering my position as an outsider, which might make it hard to perform for example ethnographic research as this would require more cultural knowledge to be able to interpret behaviour, it is believed that the best way to access the required data is to meet and talk to people who are native within the cultural context. Hence, the data generation was performed through a field study in Tanzania.

Before the recording started, the interviewees were asked to fill out a short hand-written sheet with personal information (Appendix 2). During the first three interviews, this was not practised, and this information was instead asked for during the interview. Asking for the information verbally was believed to contribute to building trust by being more informal than the sheet, but was then deemed an unnecessary and tedious precaution, which is why it was abandoned.

The interviews were recorded using two voice recorders (one for back-up) and was later transcribed using the automatic transcription software Descript. During two of the interviews, an interpreter was used to help translate the questions and the students' answers whenever the students' did not feel as if they could understand or express themselves in English. All other interviews were conducted in English, sometimes using Kiswahili for certain words or shorter sentences, with only me and the interviewee being present. After each interview was conducted, a brief memo was written, summarising background information about the interview and interviewee, setting of the interview and thoughts or ideas that came up during the interview. Memos do not only help with memorising, but also to reveal and explore the researcher's personal bias (Magaldi & Berler, 2020).

4.2.2. Thematic Analysis and Operationalisation

The transcripts generated by Descript were first proofread and corrected manually, and then thematically analysed manually using the software NVivo. The codes were generated inductively during the coding process, and later organised by using head- and subcodes. The inductive coding process was favoured over deductive coding as it goes well with the constructivist approach and allows to detect the unexpected (Chandra & Shang, 2019). Aligning with this thesis focus on individual experiences, the deductive coding also allowed for coding interesting findings in individual interviews, even though they were not frequently occurring. Boddy (2016) discusses sample sizes in qualitative research, and argues that findings in very small samples are worth presenting - despite their size - if they contribute with new perspectives, especially in non-positivist research. This thesis extends this argument to significant findings that do not occur for the majority of the sample since the individual perspectives, whose importance is argued for by feminist theory, might otherwise get lost. This is why the results and analysis at times focus on findings for a small portion of the full sample.

Apart from the codes, case classifications were used for the interviewees personal information. The classifications used were: age, religion, tribe, university programme, school or faculty, started studies in (year), and financial situation. During the analysis process, crosstab queries based on the classifications and codes were used to detect patterns in the codes based on the students' identity. The coding was done backwards, beginning with the last conducted interview, in order to reverse the order in which data was presented to minimise the researcher bias and allow more themes to be discovered. See Appendix 3 for the full codebook.

The definition of female empowerment presented in section 3.1.3 was operationalised in order to be assessed. The first part of the definition: improvement in her actual and perceived opportunities, was assessed by examining whether the students thought that their dreams and were attainable, and if there had been any difference in this since the inauguration of the president (*codes: Dream begun (including child codes), Dream fortified by female president, Dreams changing (including child codes), Limitations to reach dreams (including child codes), PoP, Reason behind dream, What is required to reach dream (including child codes)*).

The second part, improvement regarding her power to freely choose and attempt to meet her prospects and goals in the same fashion as her male counterpart already has, has been researched by examining what patriarchal structures are present in the student's life, and whether she perceives that these are being changed or challenged by the presence of the female president (*codes: Patriarchal structures being challenged or changed, Patriarchal structures currently, Patriarchal structures in family*). Further, the students' power to herself create and choose their own future plans, and their choice of university and programme was also examined (*codes: Creating and choosing future plans (including child codes), Choice of programme (including child codes), Why University (including child codes)*).

Lastly, improvement in the students' ability to refuse what she has not chosen for herself was examined by looking at the students' who expressed a limitation in their ability to choose and create their own plans (*code: Creating and choosing future plans (including child codes)*). It was assessed whether any change had taken place regarding the students' power to choose for themselves, and whether this change was influenced by the female president.

4.3. Sample and Recruitment Strategy

The sample consists of Tanzanian, female-identifying university students studying bachelor programmes in social sciences in Dar es Salaam at the time of the conducted research. The students have all begun their university studies after the inauguration of the female president in March of 2021, so that the study could assess whether the presence of a female president influenced their choice of education. Students were recruited from the Urban and Regional Planning Department at Ardhi University, and Business School and the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), which are two of the most renowned universities in Tanzania. Using existing contacts at both universities to recruit the first students from each programme allowed me to later use snowball sampling to recruit additional students. This helped in accessing the sample and minimising the influence on the sample selection process by the mediators (Naderifar, Goli & Ghaljaei, 2017).

Interviews were conducted until saturation was ensured, as recommended by Guest, Bunce & Johnson (2006), which resulted in 24 students being recruited and interviewed, although two were removed from the final thesis. The first one was removed because she studied a programme which did not qualify as social science, and the second one since she did not allow me to record the interview. Since all other interviewees allowed me to record, her interview was removed to not compromise the reliability by using different kinds of material (transcripts and notes). Hence, the final sample size came to 22 students. The students' came from

bachelor programmes within: Regional Development Planning, Community Development Studies, Housing and Infrastructure Planning, Accounting, Marketing, Tourism Management, Business Administration, Political Science and Public Administration in Public Administration and Political Science and Public Administration in International Relations.

The universities and programmes were chosen based on the logic that students of these universities and programmes are more likely to feel empowered by the female president. Students at the Urban and Regional Planning Department at Ardhi University should be well-informed in development issues and politics, and they are also likely to work with things, or within sectors, that are closely connected to the work of the president in the future. The Department of Political Science and Public Administration has been chosen since these students are likely to want to hold political positions, or positions within public administration. Lastly, UDSM Business School was chosen since the female Tanzanian president, Samia Suluhu, has her postgraduate degree in Economics which makes these students more likely to be inspired due to their similar majors (McKenna, 2023).

4.4. Ethical Considerations

All students were presented with a simplified version of the interview guide (Appendix 4), a study information sheet with information about the study as well as how their data would be handled (Appendix 5), and a research permit document provided by my University (Appendix 6) prior to the interviews. I also informed all students that they could withdraw their participation at any time, choose not to answer questions, as well as remove or change their answers. None of the interviewees withdrew their participation, but one student exercised the opportunity to remove a statement she had made during the interview. Before the interview started, I described why I wished to record the interview and how the recording would be stored, and asked for their consent to do so. Recorded verbal

consent to participate in the interview was practised. All students have been anonymised in this thesis.

Performing research in a non-democratic context requires carefulness and an understanding of how the research process might put oneself or the interviewees at danger, or making them feel as if they are (Koch, 2013). Here, I put extra emphasis on confidentiality and always made sure that the interviewees themselves were comfortable, for example by letting them choose the interview venue and not exploring topics which I sensed that they were uncomfortable with as they occurred in the interview. I also made sure to not ask any political questions, but instead focus on their feelings, experiences, and thoughts about having a female president, and made sure to disclose to all students that the research would not deal with their political views. Despite the efforts taken, some students expressed a fear of participating in the research based on confidentiality and fear of talking about the president at the recruitment stage, which resulted in them not volunteering to participate. This might have skewed the sample and the perspectives included in the research. Another issue arising from performing research in a non-democratic context concerns how the restrictions imposed by the researcher on the research topics may also negatively influence the validity and relevance of the research (ibid.).

Further one ethical issue concerns the focus on students who identify as female. Although this thesis applies an inclusive definition of women as anyone who identifies themselves as a woman, the small sample in combination with the discrimination towards LGBTQ+ people in Tanzania makes it unlikely that the final sample includes transgender women. This is a clear deficiency of this thesis, especially considering the feminist theoretical framework and the thesis' attempt at recognising different female perspectives. However, taking efforts to include transgender women would have been an even greater ethical problem as it would have jeopardised these women's (feeling of) safety by potentially disclosing their

identity to all people, including me, involved in the research and recruitment process.

Similar to the students not being asked whether they are transgender or cis women, other potentially sensitive identity traits such as sexuality, political opinions or party affiliation, and able-bodiedness have not been asked about. Again, this is a deficiency concerning what identities have been covered by the thesis, but by practising reflexivity, it was decided that the potential harm by asking about such traits was too great. However, in some of the interviews, the students themselves brought up these topics, and in such instances they were included in the material. Mason (2018) writes that an important part of qualitative research ethics includes not letting the participants tell you more than you think they should. Here, reflexivity was once again practised, where I came to the conclusion that none of the revealed information was potentially damaging for the interviewees, and it could thus be included in the material.

5. Results

In this chapter, the results and analysis will be presented. Section 5.1 presents the results and analysis related to research question one, and section 5.2 presents the results and analysis for research question number two.

5.1. How Does the Presence of a Female President Impact Female-Identifying Students in Tanzania's Sense of Empowerment?

Female empowerment will be assessed based on the three parts of the definition of female empowerment provided in section 3.1.3, as the process where a disempowered woman improves 1) her actual and perceived opportunities, 2) her power to freely choose and attempt to meet her prospects and goals in the same fashion as her male counterpart already has, and 3) refuse what she has not chosen for herself. Subsections 5.1.1-5.1.3 each treat one of these three parts.

5.1.1. Actual and Perceived Opportunities

There is no doubt that the students feel that there is indeed an influence by a female president on their perceived opportunities. All twenty-two interviewees bring up that the female president has empowered women by acting as an inspiration and role model for women, showing that more things are possible for girls and women than what was previously perceived, and creating hopes for the future. Some quotes that exemplify this are:

“Many, many people think that the women can’t do changes, can’t do anything, can’t do a regular thing, but after her becoming the president in Tanzania, she show many, many, many young sisters and many women that us as the women, we can do more and more and more.” (Interview 12, 27/3 2023).

“It created like this hope, like oh, kumbe [English: wow], everything is possible. Like everything you want to do, you can. [...] Because she is a president. So it was like that aha-moment, like, we can really do this. I can really be someone that I really, really want to be.” (Interview 13 27/3 2023).

The second quote is a good example of how the president did not primarily inspire the students to think that it was possible for them to be the president, but rather prove to them that it is possible for them to achieve their own dreams. In fact, only four of the students expressed that they had a wish to become the president. These four all agreed that Mama Samia inspired this dream. When all interviewees were asked if it would be possible for them to become the president of Tanzania if they would have wanted to, fourteen of them believed so, although some of them did not think that they had the character, knowledge, connections, or qualifications required. Most of the students also agreed that it was possible for other girls and women to become the president of Tanzania, and that Mama Samia had either proved that this was possible, or opened the door for other women to follow. None of the students expressed that it would not be possible for other girls or women to become the president, although four students expressed that it is easier for men than for women to become the president, or that they believed future presidents would be male. This way, Mama Samia can be said to have improved the students’ perceived opportunities in terms of women becoming president.

Nine of the students also express that they themselves did not believe that Mama Samia would manage, and that it would be too hard for a woman to be president.

However, these students all state that Mama Samia has changed this perception by proving them wrong, and that they now think that women do belong in politics.

Only two of the students testify that their dreams began after the female president was installed, and that the dreams were directly inspired by the president. These two were also among the students who dreamt of becoming the president. Other reasons behind their dreams vary between the students, but the most common reasons behind the dreams are the wish to help people, experiences during their upbringing, inspiring people in their close surroundings, and monetary incentives. However, the female president has inspired a change in the dreams for the future (six students). Nine of the students state that the president acted to enhance or fortify their dreams, making them perceive it as more attainable than they previously did. Four students occur in both themes, resulting in a total of eleven students with an impact on their future dreams by the female president.

Though, almost all students expressed a dream to hold different positions of power in society, including for example being CEO, manager, officer, minister, or member of parliament (19 students). Simultaneously, nine out of these also state that the female president has positively impacted women's opportunities to hold these positions which might indicate that the female president has made their dream more attainable for them, and influenced their actual opportunities to hold these positions. Apart from this, no support for an increase in the students' actual opportunities have been found.

Regarding increases in the perceived opportunities for women generally, there are some variations in regards to who this increase in perception of what is possible regards. Many of the interviewees bring up the influence of Mama Samia on other women, this includes younger sisters and female relatives, their headmistress, and especially female leaders. Thirteen out of the twenty-two bring up the female president's influence on female leaders and politicians. This is brought up both in terms of symbolic influence, but also through the actual measures to promote

female leaders and politicians, for example through appointing more female ministers. Some of the students describe how these female leaders have in turn inspired them, so their empowerment is not directly caused by the female president, but instead mediated through the female leader.

Some of the students also speak in general terms of the president inspiring 'women', rather than her inspiring themselves. This can for example be seen in the following quotes:

"I think before, most women were, I mean, they had fear. Maybe they had fear of being leaders. But after her, I think people, they are just okay, and they don't have fear anymore." (Interview 15, 28/3 2023).

"Even female [sic] themselves have become more confident. Yeah, like when she was in power, like females were like "yeah mama" and stuff. So it, it gave them more confidence because they knew that one of their own was there." (Interview 19, 31/3 2023).

This indicates a detachment of the influence by the female president on female empowerment from one's own empowerment. Whereas all students agree that there is an influence by the female president on *women's* empowerment, these students do not connect this to their own empowerment.

18 of the students mention that Mama Samia has taken measures to increase women's actual opportunities, and they themselves term this as a form of empowerment. This includes measures such as giving priorities to women at university programmes, organising events for women, providing women with loans and increasing the number of seats for women in the parliament. This is however not termed as a form of empowerment by default by the definition applied by this thesis, as it states that empowerment cannot be imposed by others, but rather is the process where the woman herself improves her opportunities and power. Interestingly, only a third of the students list these measures as something

that has empowered themselves. All other references treat the measures as something that benefit ‘women’, talked about in third person, even when the student clearly belong to the mentioned group, as in the example of female students:

“Even in education, like here. They, like, now they favour girls. Yeah, even if they have low credit.” (Interview 5, 28/2 2023).

“There have been a lot of projects just to uplifting women. [...] So I think for women, this is the time, like, they feel more empowered.” (Interview 19, 31/3 2023).

“[...] but from the empowerment of women, there are some situations that’s made them to improve. Cause by this time, women can employ themselves, can be entrepreneurs themselves in different activities. So from that, they can be empowered.” (Interview 7, 14/3 2023).

Since the students once again disconnect these measures from their own feeling of empowerment, and do not describe that the measures have inspired their own process of empowerment, they fall outside of the definition of empowerment applied in this thesis. These measures can therefore not be considered as inspiring empowerment within the sample population.

5.1.2. Power to Freely Choose and Attempt to Meet Prospects and Goals in the Same Fashion as Her Male Counterpart

When actually applied to real life choices of the students, it appears as if very few of the interviewed students have actually made different choices, created their plans or their dreams based on the presence of a female president. None of the students expressed that their choice to attend university, or their choice of programme was inspired or influenced by the female president. A wide array of

motivations for why one was attending university was presented, with the most common ones being: to become qualified for future studies and/or employment (eight students), that it is the norm and what is expected (six students), and in order to reach their dreams (six students). As for choice of programme, eight students stated that someone else partly chose for them.

When considering the students' perceived capabilities and opportunities on a broader scale, there are large variations in the students' answers. The students state that men have more opportunities than women (seven students), men have more opportunities than women in some situations, and women have more than men in others (two students), both genders have equal opportunities (seven students), men and women have equal opportunities in some situations, but women have more than men in others (two students). Most of the students who perceive the opportunities to be equal also say that this is something that has changed with Mama Samia, and that it was not like that before. The same goes for the students that perceive women to have more opportunities than men - this is largely attributed to aforementioned efforts taken by the female president. A recurring theme is the students' perception that one can achieve whatever one wishes if one only works hard. Most of the students who perceive opportunities to be equal also describe that Mama Samia has removed other barriers, so that the only thing required for them to succeed is now whether they work hard or not.

As for women's opportunities compared to men's, all but one student bring up patriarchal structures in their interviews. Ten of the students give examples of patriarchal structures currently being present that restrict women's opportunities. Examples include women having less leadership position opportunities, women being restricted from going to school, women being told they cannot do things that men do, and a view in society that men are more capable than women. Some interviewees also express an internalised view of women as inferior, from being raised or told that women cannot and should not do certain things (six students).

Although they all state that they understand on an intellectual level that this is not the case, they describe how they have come to feel or believe that women are less capable. This mindset in turn impacts their perceived capabilities and opportunities, hindering their empowerment. One of the students describes it as:

“I’m trained to: “you’re not the same”, you know? I know I should - like right now - I know I should not be thinking about it. You know, I’m aware of all these things I’ve been hearing, so I know I have to be equal to them. [...] But there’s just something clinging in my mind from this. You know, it’s the thing you’ve been through every day: “You’re not equal to them. No, you cannot do this. You don’t do this.”” (Interview 2, 14/2 2023).

The students also describe how patriarchal structures are being maintained in their families (eight students). They also compare how they are disadvantaged in comparison to, or treated differently, than men close to them, for example brothers or boyfriends. However, 19 out of 22 students also describe how patriarchal structures are being changed or challenged. All 19 mention how Mama Samia becoming the president (or the vice president) has inspired such change. Many of the students also describe this challenge of patriarchal structures in terms of how they before did not think they were able to, or were not given opportunities to, do certain things, but that this has changed. As this is a sign of the perceived opportunities and capabilities, as well as their power to attempt to meet prospects and goals similarly to men, it indicates female empowerment in accordance with both the first and second parts of the definition for these 19 students.

5.1.3. Refuse What She Has Not Herself Chosen

Regarding the last part of the female empowerment definition, when asked whether they can freely choose and create their own future plans, most students stated that they could freely choose for themselves, sometimes with the advice of others (15 students). The rest of the students stated that they cannot decide for themselves entirely (seven students). Four of these stated that others completely

chose or planned for them, while three stated that others dictated certain decisions, and other decisions they could make themselves. Only three students stated that others used to dictate their decisions, but that this has changed. However, the reasons behind this change according to the respondents were their increased age and knowledge, and not the female president. Therefore, no change in power to refuse decisions in this matter can be ascribed to the influence of the female president.

For the choice of university programme, the lack of power to choose and refuse what one has not chosen is evident among eight students that indicated that someone else partly chose their programme. Since all students applied to their programmes after the inauguration of the female president, this indicates that these eight students were not empowered to refuse what they had not chosen for themselves at that time.

Hence, no support for the third part of the definition of female empowerment as influenced by the female president has been found in the material.

5.2. How Does Identity Influence Female Empowerment Through Representation?

This section analyses the differences in female empowerment among the students based on their identity and individual perspectives. Subsection 5.2.1 begins by analysing the results based on demographic markers within the group of students to assess whether any generalisations regarding who feels empowered based on demographic markers can be made. Subsection 5.2.2 connects the students' identities to the president's by analysing similarities and differences between the students and the president.

5.2.1. Religion, Age, Tribe, Financial Situation, and Field of Study

Examining the demographic markers of religion, age, tribe, financial situation, and what year they started university, on the full sample, there seems to be no clear correlation between what students feel more and less empowered by the female president. However, in the group of eleven students who all stated that Mama Samia influenced their dreams, there is one constant - none of them study economics or business. They instead study either Regional Development Planning, Community Development Studies, or Political Science and Public Administration.

Further, the two students whose dreams were directly inspired by the female president show great variety in their identities - they are of different ages, tribes, they study different programmes in different schools, and they started their programme in two different years. The only two constants are that they are both Christian, and both class themselves as intermediate financial-wise. However, so do most of the students, so this does not allow for any generalizability.

5.2.2. Similarities and Differences

Both students who had aspirations to become political leaders due to Mama Samia were already holding leadership positions by the time of the interviews, one as the class representative and the other as a political leader within the ruling CCM political party. This is also the political party of Mama Samia. Both students also brought up the leadership skill as a similarity between themselves and the president. Compared to the other students, these two brought up many other similarities between themselves and the president too, for example their gender, having the same perceptions, being confident, being intellectual, and having big ambitions.

Among the rest of the students, no relationship between the number of perceived similarities or differences can be seen. Some students who have been influenced by the president list many similarities, whereas others do not see themselves as similar to the president at all. The same applies for the number of perceived differences.

16 of the students describe that they either felt pride or happiness when they heard that a woman would become the president. All students speak about Mama Samia in very positive terms, and the personal qualities they mention about her are all positive. She is strong, courageous, a hustler, confident, majestic, determined, down to earth, et cetera. On the contrary, the personality traits that the students mention about themselves are mostly brought up in a negative, or sometimes neutral, context. For example, lazy, a quitter, stubborn, easily discouraged, and not being a leader. However, the two students whose dreams were directly inspired by the president only talk about their own positive qualities, these being that they are responsible, persistent, determined, focused on their goal, and a person who grabs opportunities. That these two students both think about themselves and Mama Samia in positive terms is another similarity between them and her.

When asked about the similarities between themselves and the female president there are two perceived similarities that occur most frequently. These are that they are both women, and that they both come from similar backgrounds, or as interviewee 16 puts it:

“[Mama Samia] was from ordinary life and she worked hard.” (Interview 16, 29/3 2023).

However, when asked about differences, the majority of the students focus on her role as the president, that she has power, and that she is strong.

“She is in another level, and I’m like, just down here, I’m like in the bottom.”

(Interview 20, 31/3 2023)

“She’s now the highest one, she’s the leader, she’s the president. Now I’m just a citizen.”

(Interview 8, 14/3 2023).

The excerpts above illustrate the perception that there is a big gap in power and hierarchy between themselves and the president, which ten of the interviewees express. Out of these ten students, only four state that Mama Samia has influenced their dreams.

Further, the way interviewee number 2 describes the power gap stands out.

“I can feel she has this power, you know, a woman who has power. She’s more powerful.

[...] Myself, I have this idea, that I feel like at this point I’m oppressed. I feel, oh, I’m oppressed. I just feel. So I think, she is cutting off that thing on her side, she doesn’t feel oppressed, I think. Like she feels the level she is, is at the man’s level. She’s equal to men.” (Interview 2, 14/2 2023).

By equalising the female president to men, she is removing the shared identity of being a woman, between herself and the president. This can also be seen in the similarities she mentions, where she does not mention gender as a common trait. The only similarity she mentions is that she is from a “normal” background, with “normal schools” and a “normal family”. This is despite the fact that the interviewee both studies economics, is a muslim, and was the only one of the interviewed students who - like Mama Samia - were of Zanzibarian origin. She is thus the student who shares the *most* of the measured demographic traits with the female president, although she does not seem to identify herself with the president.

The interviewee does not feel as powerful and as she is being equal to men, as she perceives Mama Samia to be, instead she describes how she is oppressed in

comparison to them, and that men have more opportunities, in her interview. As for empowerment influenced by the female president, the student did not state that Mama Samia influenced or changed her dreams, nor did she influence her empowerment in other ways. It therefore appears as if the inability to identify herself with Mama Samia based on the premises of gender and power, might have negatively impacted the student's sense of empowerment created by the female president.

6. Discussion

This chapter discusses the results presented in chapter 5. First, the evidence for female empowerment are critically reviewed in section 6.1, based on the context of the study, previous research, and feminist theory. Section 6.2 then discusses the lack of evidence for influence by identity. These results are contrasted against previous research and the theoretical framework of descriptive representation, and used to suggest how symbolic representation might help in understanding the relationship between a female president and women's sense of empowerment.

6.1. Increase in Female Empowerment and Critical Review of Results

The results presented in the previous chapter suggest that the female president has in some aspects influenced the Tanzanian female students' empowerment. All students describe that the female president has empowered them by showing that more things are possible for women and girls, which has also fortified their dreams. This aligns with this thesis' focus on power-to, in accordance with Lukes' (2005) and Yoder & Kahn's (1992) work. Most students do not wish to become president, but the female president has instead made them feel like their other dreams are more attainable, and many dream of holding leadership positions, which can potentially also be influenced by the female president. This way, the presence of the female president has resulted in the students improving their perceived opportunities, in accordance with the first part of the definition of female empowerment. As for actual opportunities, the influence of the female president is not as evident, with the only influence found being how some of the

students express that she has influenced women's opportunities to hold positions of power.

Regarding the second part of the female empowerment definition, almost all students state that patriarchy is being challenged or changed due to the female president. However, many also describe that patriarchal structures are still present in many ways, both in society and in their families, and that their power is limited by this. About a third of the students also state that men have more opportunities than women. In terms of empowerment by choices and actions, the students have not been directly influenced by the female president's presence. de Beauvoir's (2015) theory offers explanatory value for these results, as it explains how patriarchal structures 'other' women, and hinder them from exercising power in her own life and society. The students' experiences point towards a continuous othering of women, which can also be seen in how women are restricted from, or being told that they cannot do, things that men can. Some students have also internalised the notion that men are superior to women. This framing of women in comparison to men is an example of othering, and it is perhaps most visible when one of the students describes Mama Samia as being equal to men to describe her superiority and power. These examples of othering, and in extension the upholding of patriarchy, corresponds to Fraser's (1993) description of cultural norms, social practices, and other structural mechanisms as reproducing patriarchy.

Therefore, regarding the second part of the definition, it can be said that the female president has somewhat influenced female empowerment. This is because some patriarchal structures are being challenged, whereas others are still very much present and stagnant. The inauguration of the female president can therefore not be seen as the kind of "feminist success" as described by Enloe's (2017) theory, as it has not fully influenced societal change by challenging patriarchy.

For the last part of the definition, no change in the student's ability to choose for herself and refuse what others have chosen connected to the female president has been found within the sample. The female president can hence not be said to have contributed to this aspect of female empowerment among the students.

The results align with what has been found in most previous literature: that increased female political representation does empower women politically (Alexander, 2009, 2015; Barnes & Taylor-Robinson, 2018; High-Pippert & Comer, 1998; Liu & Banaszak, 2017). The results of this thesis also contribute by showing that this is true for the case of Tanzania, as most previous research has been quantitative and failed to examine in what cases female representation leads to empowerment. Closer examination of specific cases have been called for by Karp & Banducci (2008) and Daloz (2016), and this thesis' focus on Tanzania adds to the underrepresentation of studies in a Global South context. Further, this thesis has contributed to the low amount of research on female heads of state and/or government. The support for empowerment by the female president aligns with the findings of Alexander & Jalalzai (2020), Jalalzai (2018), and Wahman, Frantzeskakis, & Yildirim (2021). Lee (2022) presented how a female head of state did not lead to empowerment in the case when she was failing or viewed in negative terms. However, since all students perceived Mama Samia in positive terms, the support for empowerment by a female head of state does not contradict Lee's (ibid.) findings. Instead, it adds to it by examining another case, as called for by her, and by proving the inverse relationship: that when a female head of state is viewed in positive terms, it can positively impact female empowerment.

All students describe that the female president has acted as an inspiration and role model for women, and that it has empowered them in terms of what they believe is possible. This fortifies the arguments for the role model effect as a driver of empowerment - as previously argued for by Alexander et al. (2016), Campbell & Wolbrecht (2006), Gilardi (2015), Kishwar (2014), Mariani, Marshall, &

Mathews-Schultz (2015), Phillips (1998), Stokes-Brown & Dolan (2010), Sundström et al. (2015), and Wolbrecht & Campbell (2007). The role model effect can be seen in how the students perceive the female president to influence female political leaders, how some of them have begun dreaming about engaging themselves in politics, and also how the students' perceptions of women's leadership capabilities have increased. This also strengthens the findings of the previous, quantitative study on Tanzania (among other nations) by Barnes & Burchard's (2012). Their study found that increased female political representation increases political empowerment among women, which was found to hold true even after the addition of a female president, as well as when qualitative, individual-focused research methods were applied. However, this somewhat contradicts the findings of studies performed on other Global South contexts. Burnet's (2008, 2011), Liu's (2018), and Michalko's (2019) studies on the role model effect have not found strong evidence for the effect in other Global South contexts. This indicates that one cannot generalise the influence of the role model effect on all Global South nations, and that further (case) studies are required.

The thesis also aimed at contributing to Barnes & Burchard's (2012) findings by examining more aspects of empowerment than solely political empowerment. For other forms of empowerment, it appears as if the female president has inspired female empowerment in theory, or the students' minds, but not in practice. The students all perceive that more things are available to them, and that they have more power, but for some reason this does not translate into actions. One explanation could of course be that they were already empowered in practice, and therefore do not have any wish to plan differently. However, with so many students bringing up patriarchal structures and men having more opportunities than women, this seems unlikely.

Instead, the context of the study might hold explanatory value. Burnet's (2011) study on female representation in the non-democratic context of Rwanda gives valuable insight on how limited democratic space might influence responses. About the standardised answers, and the respondent's lack of differentiating between various kinds of policy changes she writes that: "[t]he prevalence of generalized responses to specific questions about women and politics in my data, however, signals an important reality of Rwandan life: criticism of the government, the RPF, or President Kagame and of policy or legislation is risky. By citing the broader benefits of a set of policies and laws that improved the status of women in Rwandan society, respondents avoided making specific, and possibly critical, statements about those in power." (ibid.:329).

Burnet's (2011) argument is that the general responses unveil how the undemocratic context influences the respondent's situation and their fear of raising concerns in an undemocratic context, and therefore influences the results of the research. Like Rwanda, Tanzania is not considered a democratic nation. This was also brought up by some of the students during the interviews, in terms of corruption, nepotism, unfair representation and restricted opposition, and even more so by the "advisors". The advisors informed me about the general reluctance of speaking badly about whoever was the current president, and the fear of the government finding out what one was saying. The hesitancy to participate by some students further proves this. Even though information about the study and that I was an independent student from a Swedish university was distributed, and it was always stated at the beginning of the interview that no one except me would have access to their personal information and recordings, one can not assume that all interviewees felt comfortable and safe enough to answer without censoring themselves.

All students do mention that having a female president has empowered them, but just like in Burnet's (2011) study, this is explained in rather general terms. The

students say that they are ‘inspired’ by Mama Samia, or that she has proven that ‘everything is possible’. When actually translated into practice, few students have made different choices or acted differently due to the presence of the female president. It is also noteworthy that many of the students brought up the female president as a driver of empowerment even before I had begun to ask about this. The students were all informed about the topic of the study in advance, and there is a risk of bias due to them feeling as certain answers were expected, or a fear that others would find out if they did not depict the president as promoting gender equality, as this is one of the president’s key questions. The strong evidence for a change in perceived opportunities, and their ‘power to’, should hence be interpreted with caution, and the potentiality that the answers might reflect the undemocratic context or the general narrative about the president presented by media and/or the government rather than the actual experiences should be acknowledged. The less clear evidence for empowerment in actual opportunities, resulting in change in practice, further points toward such bias.

Further considering this context, one of the student’s shared party affiliation with Mama Samia requires closer attention. This shared identity might very likely be a true driver behind the very high level of influence by the president on this student’s empowerment since she has proven it possible that a woman can be the highest leader within her political party, in accordance with the role model effect. However, once again, one has to consider the influence with caution. The student shows the strongest evidence for the role model effect, and appears to be the one in the sample that feels the most empowered by the female president. She is also the one who speaks most highly about the president. During the interview, she also brought up several other politicians, praising their work. Early in the interview - before I had begun asking about anything related to Mama Samia - she stated that she would talk about the female president, and then held a long monologue about her in a very flattering manner. Further considering the fact that she herself was very eager and adamant to participate in the study might indicate

that the student herself also had a motive and agenda to portray her party and president in a positive light - perhaps more positive than what was actually the case. Therefore, one has to consider the possibility that the results regarding her empowerment were exaggerated.

Another interesting result is the influence by the female president on empowerment in terms of making it more attainable to reach their dreams. Several students describe how they now only need to work hard or hustle in order to reach their dreams, and talk about this as a sign of empowerment. One of the students describes how Mama Samia has impacted her dreams for the future by showing that hard work is what is required for reaching one's dreams:

“All that counts is hard work - my credits and stuff. So to me, I think she's proved that it does not matter about the gender.” (Interview 19, 31/3 2023).

The perspective of hard work as the only thing required to reach their dreams, as described in interview number 19, can also be found in several other students' responses. The students mention how Mama Samia has either proven that all that is required is hard work, or has created this situation, and frame this as a process of empowerment taking place. This view of empowerment can be contrasted against feminist theory. Mackay (2015) claims that young women of today belong to: “a generation that has grown up being taught that they can be whoever and whatever they wish to be and that the only thing standing in their way is themselves and their own will and ambition. This myth of meritocracy and equal opportunities encourages individualism over collective action, because when people believe this myth, they obviously see no need for protest movements around particular classes or identities, such as the Women's Movement or the Civil Rights Movement. If things do not go well for people in the workplace, education or in their personal lives, they are more likely to blame themselves, rather than sexism, racism, class oppression or homophobia” (ibid.:8).

Mackay's (2015) argument is that the narrative of hard work or "hustling" as the only predictors of success blinds people of structural inequalities that limits their actual power, and this way benefits and recreates patriarchy. Such a narrative thus interferes with intersectionality and female empowerment. The students' perception of the president empowering them by making hard work the only thing that is important to reach their dreams, while they describe how patriarchal structures are still very much present, is thus not only a false sense of empowerment according to the feminist theory applied by this thesis - it could even hinder empowerment as it can cover up the patriarchal structures and othering of women. This might also stand in the way for the female president's presence acting as the kind of feminist success as described by Enloe (2017).

6.2. Identity and Representation

Having a female president offers descriptive representation to women according to Pitkin's (1967) research, as they share resemblance by the same gender identity. However, the uneven results in the sense of empowerment indicate that it is not as simple as to equate shared gender identity between the president and the students with their feeling of empowerment. Here, Butler's (1998) and Phillips' (2020) arguments and development of Pitkin's (1967) definition of descriptive representation were applied, to recognise how various aspects of identity may influence representation and empowerment. Wolbrecht & Campbell's (2007) and Stokes-Brown & Dolan's (2010) work suggest that other aspects of identity than gender can influence the role model effect. Additionally, previous studies indicate a need to assess other determinants of empowerment and apply a research method which allows for individual experiences and other identities than that of gender (Daloz, 2016; Karp & Banducci, 2008). This thesis has attempted to accommodate these needs by examining other aspects of the female students' identity than their gender. The student's demographic markers and identity offer two insights on female empowerment by the female president.

First, none of the Business School Students have experienced empowerment by influence on their dreams. Several students mentioned what Mama Samia had studied, so this result cannot be explained by the Business School students being unaware of their similar field of study to that of the president. What is more important is that while the students whose dreams were in fact influenced by the president dreamt about working with development, as ministers, as public officials, et cetera, the Business School students instead dreamt about for example becoming accountants, becoming marketers, and having their own businesses. None of these students' dreams were related to politics, development, or public administration, which is what Mama Samia is currently pursuing in her role as president. It thus appears as if the similar field of study did not contribute to the role model effect.

Second, Mama Samia enhanced several students' previous dreams and made them appear more attainable, but the only dreams that began due to the presence of Mama Samia were two students' dreams of becoming president in the future. These results further indicate that the influence of the Tanzanian female president is greater on political empowerment than empowerment in other arenas, as the empowered students' dreams relate to politics. These two students showed big differences in their identities when compared to each other, but when comparing themselves to the president, they both mentioned many similarities. This suggests that it is perhaps not the students' identity in isolation that is relevant for empowerment, but the perceived similarities with the president. Mariani, Marshall, & Mathew-Shultz (2015), Stokes-Brown & Dolan (2010), and Wolbrecht & Campbell (2007) all suggest that the role model effect must be understood based on more premises than solely gender. The results of this study would hence contribute to understanding what other premises are relevant. This research's focus on, and theoretical framework highlighting, individual experiences allowed these two students to be focused on and explored in-depth, and this might contribute with new interesting perspectives, as inspired by

Boddy's (2016) work. However, the small number makes it hard to generalise these findings, and their validity harder to prove. Therefore more studies can be dedicated to further explore the suggested relationships between shared identity, empowerment, and the role model effect.

No other significant correlation between the students' demographic details and their perceived empowerment could be found. The examined demographic markers offer no generalisability or explanation within the sample. Though, that does not mean that this may not be of significance, but rather that the applied research method and the lack of variation in the sample do not allow for such conclusions. The students who express that their dreams have changed due to the president both include students that express they share many similarities with the president, and also students who do not.

One common theme in the students' interview is that they perceive that there is a big gap between themselves and the president in terms of power and hierarchy, which possibly contributes to their feeling of being different. The female president is talked about as having such a high rank, so much power, and being so ideal in comparison to their own personality traits, thus both having power-over and power-to (Yoder & Kahn, 1992). Pitkin (1967) explains that: "[descriptive] representation seems to require a certain distance or difference as well as resemblance or correspondence" (ibid.:68). Just like exact pictures are not said to represent what they are depicting, descriptive representation does not build on exact resemblance, she argues. Therefore, the perceived differences between themselves and the president brought up by the students do not mean that the president cannot be representing them descriptively. In fact, it would suggest the opposite according to Pitkin's (ibid.) theory. However, many students talk about the president empowering 'women', rather than empowering themselves, which indicates an impediment in descriptive representation and the role model effect. Therefore, the differences do not seem to contribute to the feeling of descriptive

representation for these students. For one of the students this gap has even resulted in the absence of a feeling of shared gender identity.

Some students also bring up Mama Samia's influence on female politicians and other leaders and how these women have in turn worked as role models for the students. These women appear to be easier to relate to for the students, and there is a smaller perceived gap between the students and them. The students bring up that they are of similar age, have studied the same programmes, come from the same village, and also that they are more approachable - some of them have even met with or seen these role models. It seems as if the students find it easier to identify themselves with these women than with the president for these reasons, which further contradicts Pitkin's (1967) statement about differences and descriptive representation. The influence by female leaders instead seems to indicate a mediated role model effect by the president. The president empowers and inspires female leaders, who in turn empowers and inspires female students, that may in some cases bridge the aforementioned gap in terms of descriptive representation. This adds to the previous research on how women can be empowered by female political leaders, and goes in line with the results of Wahman, Frantzeskakis & Yildirim (2021) on how Malawi's female president empowered female members of parliament.

However, since not all female students experience the same level of empowerment, and since there is no correspondence between the amount of perceived differences and the level of empowerment expressed, it is not as simple as to equate descriptive representation with female empowerment for all women. Although the students emphasise the value and importance for them of descriptive representation by having a female leader, by showing that politics is not only "a man's game", and that more things are possible for women, it appears as if descriptive representation does not alone suffice to explain the different levels of empowerment experienced by representation by the female president. This

indicates that one has to consider other forms of representation to understand the relation between representation by a female president and female empowerment.

Contrary to Phillips' (1995) argument for female political representation, and the recent studies by Lowande, Ritchie & Lauterbach (2019), Reingold (2006), Sobolewska, McKee & Campbell (2018), and Wängnerud (2009), who focus on the correlation between descriptive and substantive representation, the invoked feeling of more things being possible for them rather seems to be based on symbolic representation. Symbolic representation is about what feelings and what meaning the students themselves ascribe to the event of having a female president. The female president has made these students feel and believe that certain things are possible for them, rather than only appealing to their similarities and shared identity. Considering that descriptive and symbolic representation are the two forms of representation as 'standing for', according to Pitkin's (1967) definition, it makes sense to also examine symbolic representation to explain what descriptive representation by the female president does not explain for. This also aligns with Burnet's (2011) research in Rwanda, where she finds that descriptive representation can create changes in symbolic representation, even without substantive representation being impacted.

Barnes & Burchard's (2012) research motivates the relationship between descriptive and symbolic representation. They state that female descriptive representation "actuates symbolic representation by sending a signal to the so-called 'described' that the political arena represents them and is receptive to their part. [...] [T]he inclusion of women in politics at an elite level sends messages to women that politics is a woman's game too." (ibid.:770). This way, the explanation behind the various levels of empowerment between the students could instead be whether the descriptive representation also actuates the feeling of symbolic representation in the student. Lombardo & Meier's (2019) work can be used to further justify the relevance of symbolic representation. They argue that

there is a strong connection between symbolic representation and descriptive representation, and that symbolic representation is essential in analyses of representation, as it explains power structures and the gendered boundaries of representation. Studying symbolic representation would thus help explain the perceived power discrepancies between the students and the president, and explain how these influence their empowerment. Therefore, the findings of this thesis suggest that previous research's focus on primarily descriptive and substantive representation does not sufficiently explain representation by a female head of state, as in the case of Tanzania, but that a perspective of symbolic representation is also necessary. More research focusing on the symbolic aspect of representation is required to completely understand the relationship between the female head of state and empowerment.

7. Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis two research questions were posed:

1. How does the presence of a female president impact female-identifying students in Tanzania's sense of empowerment?
2. How does identity influence female empowerment through representation?

Through thematic analysis, interviews with female students were analysed in order to answer these research questions. The main findings of this thesis will be presented and concluded in this section. Some remarks for future researchers as well as reflections on limitations are also presented.

The results for the first research question were divided into three parts, based on the three parts of the definition of female empowerment applied in this thesis. Female empowerment was defined as: the process where a disempowered woman improves 1) her actual and perceived opportunities, 2) her power to freely choose and attempt to meet her prospects and goals in the same fashion as her male counterpart already has, and 3) refuse what she has not chosen for herself.

For the first part of the definition, the results strongly suggested an improvement in the perceived opportunities of the students, although the evidence for improvement in actual opportunities were slightly less clear. However, a critical assessment considering the influence of the undemocratic context of the study, suggested that these strong results might be exaggerated. Further, the evidence for improvement in the second part of the definition were a bit uneven, with few students actually acting differently, or making different choices due to the

presence of the female president. The students brought up patriarchal structures being present in their life, and inhibiting their power, but many students also mentioned how patriarchy was being changed or challenged due to the female president, which suggests empowerment. No support for improvement in the last part of the empowerment definition could be observed within the sample.

Hence, it can be concluded that the female president impacted certain aspects of the students' sense of empowerment, which was explained by the role model effect. Further, the results suggested that the female president mainly influenced political empowerment - in accordance with previous studies' results - and that the impact by her presence on empowerment in other parts of the students' lives was not as strong. The results also suggested that the female president might influence the students' sense of empowerment by a "mediated role model effect", where the president influences female political leaders who in turn inspires the students.

The observed empowerment, and lack thereof, was then examined through the lens of identity, applying a perspective focused on individual experiences and variations, to answer the second research question. The students demographic markers were first examined, to assess if any correlation between sense of empowerment and their identity markers could be found. Then, a review of the perceived similarities and differences between the students and the president followed. However, no generalisable correlation between either demographic markers or similarities and differences and sense of empowerment could be found, indicating that identity did not influence the sense of empowerment within the sample. These results were interpreted as an indicator that descriptive representation - as defined by Pitkin (1967) and Phillips (1995) - by the female president did not explain her influence on the students' empowerment. Instead, it was suggested that the symbolic aspect of the representation might be the explanatory factor, but that the descriptive representation offered by a woman could trigger symbolic representation.

This thesis' focus on descriptive representation is a clear limitation here, which is why the material does not allow for further examination of what might explain the symbolic representation. Therefore, future studies will need to closer investigate this proposed relationship between a female head of state, symbolic representation, and female empowerment. The call for context sensitivity and an identity-based approach by previous research motivates that these future studies continue applying such a research approach.

Another limitation correlating to these results is the thesis' design and methods. Although the thesis has taken a position where individual perspectives and narratives have been emphasised, the interview method in combination with the sample size have most likely resulted in important voices getting lost. Attempts to present interesting findings within a small portion of the sample have been made in the results and discussion sections, based on the argument that minority findings may also offer new and interesting perspectives. This includes for example the perspectives of the two students who were inspired by Mama Samia to want to become president and the student who framed Mama Samia as equal to men. However, since the occurrence of these themes and results are small, and the chosen interview method did not allow to go back and explore these themes with previous interviewees, these findings can only be used as guidance for future research, and not to draw general conclusions. Future research can thus take inspiration from these findings and apply methods that allow for closer examination of individual perspectives, such as ethnography or life story methods.

The last big limitation of this study is linked to the non-democratic context the research has been conducted in. As brought up in previous chapters, the non-democratic situation can have negatively impacted the validity of the results, and the reliability of the methods, as it restricted what topics could be explored during the interviews (Koch, 2013). Future research will need to triangulate the results of this thesis for the conclusions to be deemed truly valid.

Further considering future research, Gilardi's (2015) research suggests that the influence of the role model effect is the most prominent shortly after the entrance of female political leaders, and thereafter diminishes over time. Studies in the future will therefore have to assess if this is also the case with the Tanzanian female president, as this thesis has attempted to assess the immediate results of a female president's presence. Also, the Tanzanian constitution only allows the president to rule for two election periods, so in such cases where Mama Samia is succeeded by a male, future studies could also assess if the role model effect by a female president remains when a female president is no longer in office.

Lastly, the evidence for an influence on female empowerment was not found for all aspects of female empowerment, but it was yet found. Campbell & Wolbrecht (2006) and Wolbrecht & Campbell (2007) state that the role model effect is most prominent among young women - like the students in this study. Therefore, future studies can be dedicated to examine samples including older women, to assess in what ways the role model effect is present in that age group.

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Appendix 1 - Interview guide

Interview guide – FOR ME

Icebreakers

- How are you today?
- How is your family?
- How did the exams go?

Information

- **Thank you**
- **Introduce myself**
- **Introduce study**
- **What the interview will be about, how long**
 - o Appr. 1 h.
 - o Interested in your **experience** as a young female-identifier in Tanzania and how you **perceive** empowerment and female role models. Questions relating to: your choice of education, the potential importance of having a female president, and future plans and goals. Not about: political belief/view or opinion about the president.
 - o Don't have to answer all questions, will just skip it.
 - o Ask questions!
- **Confidentiality**
 - o If okay – record.
 - o Anonymization.
 - o Delete data once done.
 - o No one (teachers, friends, family, the government etc) will know what they say in the interviews.
 - o Will send the study to them.

- Withdrawal of participation – until May 2023. Also say during/after the interviews if things should be removed.
- Ask for consent
- *Start recording*
- I told you about the purpose of the study and this interview, and also that you will be anonymous. Do you agree to participate in this study?

Interview

Personal details

- Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?
 - o Age
 - o Study
 - o Free time
 - o How they live? Live with someone?
 - o Where from originally

Household

- Could you tell me about your household?
 - o What does household look like? Who you lived with when grew up?
 - o How: lived? Where: primary/secondary school?
 - o What do your parents/caregivers work as?
 - o After school? Help out at home?
 - o You and your household could always buy the things you needed?
 - o Do you have a partner?

University

- Why did you want to go to university?
- How did you decide what to study?
- Was it always certain that you would go to university?
- Was it difficult getting into university?

Future

- If you could do whatever you wanted, what do you dream of doing in the future?

- Change over time?
- If so, when and how?
- Plans for the future?
 - Change over time?
 - If so, when and how?
- Can freely choose and create your own plans for the future?
 - Has it always been this way for you?
- Have the same opportunities in the future as men in the same age?
 - Has it always been this way for you?

First female president

- *Think* when Tanzania got ... ?
 - Make any difference in your/others' lives?
 - Important for women?
 - What do you think about it now?
- *Feel* when Tanzania got ... ?
 - How do you feel about it now?
- Impacted hopes for future?
- Impacted what you think is possible to accomplish?
- Similarities?
 - Differences?
- If you wanted to, think that you could also become president in the future?
 - Why/why not?
 - Would you like to?

Positions of Power (PoP)

- Would you like to have any other PoP? E.g. politician, manager, CEO.
 - Do you think that is possible?
- Female president impacted women's opportunities to hold PoP?

End of interview

- Anything else you would want to add/ask?
- THANK YOU!
- Happens next: write the thesis, able to withdraw until May, send it to them.

Contact info.

Appendix 2 - Personal Information Sheet

No

Name _____

Age _____

Religion _____

Tribe _____

University Programme _____

Started studies in: YEAR: _____ MONTH: _____

I identify as: Female Male Other

Financial situation (indicate on scale):

POOR RICH

Contact info:

Maja

WhatsApp [REDACTED]

Appendix 3 - Codebook

Name	Description	Files	References
Capabilities and opportunities	Theme encompassing all codes related to perceived and actual capabilities and opportunities of the students.	22	87
Capabilities	Parent code for all child codes related to the students' perceptions of their own and others' capabilities.	12	19
Internalised view of women as inferior	The interviewee expresses that she has an internalised view of women as inferior to men, which has been created or inspired by her society, culture, or other social influences.	6	7
Men and women have equal capabilities	Interviewee expressing that men and women have equal capabilities.	3	3
Men superior to women	Interviewee expressing that men are superior to women in terms of capabilities.	2	3
Women superior to men	Interviewee expressing that women are superior to men in terms of capabilities.	4	6
Opportunities	Parent code for all child codes relating to the students' perceptions of their own and others' opportunities.	21	68
Becoming president	Interviewee talking about men and/or women's opportunities to become president.	17	24

Name	Description	Files	References
Men and women have equal	Interviewee expressing that men and women have equal opportunities.	9	11
Men have more than women	Interviewee expressing that men have more opportunities than women.	10	18
Opportunities to hold PoP	Interviewee talking about men and/or women's opportunities to hold positions of power.	8	9
Women have more than men	Interviewee expressing that women have more opportunities than men.	4	6
Dreams for the future	Theme encompassing all codes related to the students' dreams for their future.	22	138
Dream begun	Parent code for all child codes describing when the student's dream begun.	17	29
After president	Parent code for all codes where the student's dream begun after the inauguration of the female president.	8	9
Because of president	The student's dream was directly influenced by the president, and began because of her.	2	2
Not because of president	The student's dream was not influenced by the female	6	7

Name	Description	Files	References
	president, and began because of other reasons.		
Before president	The student's dream began before the female president was inaugurated and was hence not inspired by the female president.	14	20
Dream fortified by female president	The student's pre-existing dream was influenced by the female president by being fortified, or perceived as more attainable due to the presence of the female president.	9	10
Dreams changing	Parent code for all child codes related to reasons behind changes in the students' dreams.	13	17
Due to education	Change in the student's dream(s) due to her becoming more educated.	2	2
Due to experiences and realisations	Change in the student's dream(s) due to experiences and/or realisations.	1	1
Due to financial opportunities	Change in the student's dream(s) due to increased financial opportunities for her.	1	1
Due to financial restrictions	Change in the student's dream(s) due to financial restrictions and/or limitations.	1	1
Due to increased capability	Change in the student's dream(s) due to her increasing her (perceived) capabilities.	1	1
Due to increased opportunities	Change in the student's dream(s) due to increase in her (perceived) opportunities	1	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Due to Mama Samia	Change in the student's dream(s) due to Mama Samia becoming the president.	6	6
Due to restricted capabilities	Change in the student's dream(s) due to restrictions in her perceived capabilities.	2	2
No reason	Change in the student's dream(s) without the student being able to name any specific reason.	1	1
Dreams given up	Interviewee describing dream(s) she previously had, but that were given up on and/or the reason for why she gave up on the dream(s).	6	7
Haven't thought about dreams	Interviewee have not thought about dreams for the future, and cannot name any dreams that she has.	1	1
Limitations to reach dreams	Parent code for child codes describing limitations to reach their dreams expressed by the students.	6	9
Academic	Academic issues limiting the student's opportunities to reach her dream(s).	1	1
Financial	Financial issues limiting the student's opportunities to reach her dream(s).	6	6
Lack of experience or qualifications	Lack of experience or qualifications limiting the student's opportunities to reach her dream(s).	1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
Personal issues	Personal issues limiting the student's opportunities to reach her dream(s).	1	1
PoP	The student expressing a dream to hold positions of power.	18	25
Reason behind dream	The student explaining the reason behind her dream.	14	24
What is required to reach dreams and plans	Parent code for child codes describing what the student thinks is required for her to reach her dreams and/or plans.	8	16
Be independent	The student expressing that she must be independent in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	1	1
Commitment	The student expressing that she must be committed in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	2	2
Confidence	The student expressing that she must be confident in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	1	1
Connections	The student expressing that she must have connections in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	1	1
Trustworthiness, sincerity	The student expressing that she must be trustworthy and/or sincere in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	1	1
Work hard	The student expressing that she must work hard and/or hustle in order to reach her dreams and/or plans.	5	10

Name	Description	Files	References
Female President	Theme encompassing all codes related to the female president of Tanzania.	22	308
Comparison	Parent code for child codes of when the student compared herself to the female president.	21	60
Differences	Differences between the interviewee and the female president.	19	27
Similarities	Similarities between the interviewee and the female president.	19	33
Empowering women symbolically	Interviewee expressing that having a woman as president has empowered other women by her mere presence.	22	78
Impacting women's opportunities to hold PoP	Interviewee describing how the female president has impacted women's opportunities to hold positions of power.	11	14
Influencing women in politics	Interviewee describing that the female president has positively influenced other women in politics.	13	15
Interviewee's thoughts and feelings	Parent code for child codes describing the interviewee's initial thoughts and feelings about having a woman as president.	22	57
A woman cannot lead	Interviewee thinking or feeling that a woman is not fit for, or should not, lead.	2	4

Name	Description	Files	References
Happiness, pride	Interviewee thinking or feeling happiness and/or pride to have a woman as president.	16	18
How it would impact men	Interviewee thinking about how having a woman as president would influence and impact men.	2	2
Inspired	Interviewee feeling inspired by having a woman as president.	2	2
It would be hard, or she wouldn't manage	Interviewee thinking or feeling that it would be hard for Mama Samia to be the president, or that she would not manage it.	9	10
More things possible for women	Interviewee thinking or feeling that more things would be possible for other women by having a woman as president.	5	8
Questioned that it would happen	Interviewee questioning that Mama Samia would actually become the president.	5	6
Shock	Interviewee feeling shock when she learnt that a woman would become president.	4	4
Thought about her religion	Interviewee thinking about Mama Samia being a Muslim as something that would make it harder for her.	3	3
Not being elected	Interviewee bringing up that Mama Samia was not elected as president, but became the president after the death of the former president.	4	6

Name	Description	Files	References
Personal qualities	Interviewee describing personal qualities she perceives that Mama Samia possesses.	11	16
Society's perceptions of female president	Interview talking about perceptions and/or opinions about the female president in the society.	14	17
Taking measures to increase women's opportunities	Actual measures (e.g. legal changes, initiatives, events) taken by Mama Samia to increase the opportunities of women.	18	45
Inspiring people	Theme encompassing all codes related to people who inspire others.	17	43
Interviewee inspiring others	Interviewee wanting to inspire others, or actually inspiring others.	5	7
Mama Samia	Interviewee being inspired by Mama Samia.	8	13
Other female political leaders	Interviewee being inspired by female politicians, member of parliaments, ministers and/or political leaders (except Mama Samia).	6	9
Others	Other people that do not fit under any other code, that are inspiring to the interviewee.	4	4
Parent(s) or caregiver(s)	Interviewee being inspired by her parent(s) and/or caregiver(s).	4	5
Relative(s)	Interviewee being inspired by her relative(s) (except her parent(s) and/or caregiver(s))	3	3

Name	Description	Files	References
Teacher(s)	Interviewee being inspired by her teacher(s).	2	2
Patriarchy	Theme encompassing all codes that are directly linked to patriarchy or patriarchal structures.	21	115
Men threatened by female president	Interviewee expressing that men are feeling threatened by the female president as she is challenging their superior position in society.	4	5
Patriarchal structures being changed or challenged	Interviewee describing that patriarchal structures in society are being changed or challenged currently.	19	65
Patriarchal structures currently	Interviewee describing currently existent patriarchal structures.	10	30
Patriarchal structures in family	Interviewee describing patriarchal structures in her family.	8	15
Personal information	Theme with codes about the students' personal information.	21	72
Caregivers' occupation	Information about the student's caregiver(s) occupation(s).	21	32
Information about siblings	Information about the student's sibling(s)	12	17
Personality traits	Interviewee describing her own personality traits.	10	21
Raised without father	Interviewee growing up without a present father.	2	2
Plans for the future	Theme encompassing codes about the students' plans for their future.	20	63

Name	Description	Files	References
Back-up plans	Interviewee describing back-up plans in case her original plans do not succeed.	2	5
Creating and choosing future plans	Parent code with child codes relating to the student's ability to create and choose her own plans for the future.	18	51
Change due to	Reason behind change in the student's ability to create and choose her own plans for the future.	3	3
Age	Change in the student's ability to create and choose her own plans for the future due to her age increasing.	2	2
Education	Change in the student's ability to create and choose her own plans for the future due to her becoming more educated.	1	1
Herself	The interviewee can currently and/or could before choose and create her own plans for the future.	15	26
Before	The interviewee were choosing and creating her plans for the future before.	9	10
Currently	The interviewee is currently choosing and creating her own plans for the future.	15	16
Others	Others were before/are currently influencing the interviewee's plans for the future.	11	22

Name	Description	Files	References
Dictating	Others are currently and/or were before dictating the plans for the interviewee's future.	8	14
Before	Others were dictating the plans for the interviewee's future before.	6	9
Currently	Others are currently dictating the plans for the interviewee's future.	4	5
Helping, advising	Others are currently and/or were before helping and advising the interviewee in terms of formulating her plans for the future.	6	8
Before	Others were advising and helping the interviewee with her plans before.	2	2
Currently	Others are advising and helping the interviewee with her plans currently.	5	6
Hard to plan	Interviewee expressing that she thinks it is hard to plan for her future.	2	2
Plans to fulfil dreams	The interviewee states that her plan is to fulfil her dreams.	5	5
Questions and comments from interviewees	Theme with codes about interesting questions and/or comments from interviewees after the interview.	3	6
About Mama Samia	The interviewee making a statement about Mama Samia that was not covered by the interview questions.	1	3

Name	Description	Files	References
Dreams and opportunities	The interviewee commenting on her dreams and opportunities.	1	1
Interview encouraging or empowering them	The interviewee expressing that participating in the interview has encouraged or empowered them.	2	2
Undemocratic context	Theme with codes where the interviewees were commenting on or describing the undemocratic situation in Tanzania.	6	9
Corruption	Interviewee describing corruption being present in Tanzania.	3	3
Nepotism	Interviewee describing nepotism being present in Tanzania.	2	4
Restricted opposition	Interviewee describing that the opposition is being restricted in Tanzania.	1	1
Unfair representation	Interviewee describing unfairness in representation in Tanzania.	1	1
University	Theme with codes related to questions and statements about the interviewee attending university.	21	53
Choice of programme	Parent code with child codes relating to the student's choice of university programme.	14	20
Based on her interests	The student chose university programme based on her interests.	4	4
Family member studied the same	The student chose university programme because a family member of her studied the same programme.	2	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Prestige	The student chose university programme based on it being a prestigious programme.	1	1
Someone else partly chose for her	The student did not completely choose her university programme herself.	8	10
Was not accepted or eligible to her choice	The student was not accepted or eligible to her choice of university programme.	3	3
Why University	Parent code with child codes describing why the interviewee wanted to attend and/or is attending university.	21	33
Change patriarchal structures	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to change the patriarchal structures.	1	1
Create a better life	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to create a better life for herself.	1	1
Did not actively choose	The interviewee did not actively choose herself that she would attend university.	1	1
Inspiring person attended uni	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university since someone else who inspired her attended university.	1	1
It is the protocol	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university since it is the norm and what is expected.	6	6
Meeting people	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to meet people.	1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
Pride	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to feel pride that she has attended university.	2	2
To be a role model	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to be a role model to others.	2	2
To be financially independent	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to become financially independent.	1	1
To become knowledgeable	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to become knowledgeable.	1	1
To become qualified	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to become qualified for future work and/or studies.	8	8
To make caregivers or parents proud	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to make her parent(s) and/or caregiver(s) proud.	2	2
To reach dreams	The interviewee wanting to attend/is attending university to be able to reach her dreams for the future.	6	6

Appendix 4 – Interview Guide for Participants

- Could you tell me about yourself?
- Could you tell me a little bit about your family?
- Why did you want to go to university?
- How did you decide what to study?
- Was it always certain that you would go to university?
- Was it hard getting into university?
- What do you dream of doing in the future?
 - o Have your dreams changed over time?
- What are your plans for the future?
 - o Have your plans changed over time?
- Do you think you can freely choose and create your own future life plans?
- Do you think you have the same opportunities in the future as your male peers?
- What did you think when Tanzania got its first woman as the president?
 - o Did it make any difference in your/others' lives?
 - o Was it important for women?
 - o What do you think about it now?
- What did you feel when Tanzania got its first female president?
 - o How do you feel about it now?
- Do you feel that having a female president has in any way impacted your hopes for the future?
- Do you feel that having a female president has in any way impacted what you think will be possible for you to accomplish in the future?
- In what ways do you think you and the president are similar and different?

- If you wanted to, do you think that you could also become president in the future?
- Would you like to have any other position of power? For example a politician, manager or CEO.
 - o Do you think that it is possible for you to become one?
- Has having a female president impacted women's opportunities to hold leadership positions?

Appendix 5 – Study Information Sheet

Study Information Sheet

Study title: *Does Equal Representation Equal Empowerment?* – a qualitative intersectional study of the impact of a female president on the empowerment of Tanzanian female-identifying students

Researcher: Maja Gunnarsson, MSc Development Studies, Lund University (Sweden)

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Phone/WhatsApp: [REDACTED]

Supervisor: Martina Angela Caretta [REDACTED] Senior Lecturer at the Department of Human Geography, Lund University

Coordinator: Katherine Anderson Ahlstedt [REDACTED] Lund University

About the study and interviews

This study is part of a MSc thesis in Development Studies and aims at researching how female-identifying university students in Tanzania perceive the role of a female head of state on female empowerment. The study applies an intersectional perspective, recognizing different female identities. It aims to do so by interviewing Tanzanian university students identifying as female who have begun their university studies after March 2021.

You are invited to participate in an interview lasting for about one hour in English (let me know if you prefer using a Kiswahili interpreter) in a location that you may chose. The interview will be recorded using a voice recorder and later transcribed. If you strongly object to this, I can instead take notes.

I am interested in your experience as a young female-identifier in Tanzania and how you perceive empowerment and female role models. Questions relating to your choice of education, the potential importance of having a female president, and future plans and goals will be asked. You will be given a list of interview questions prior to the interview. Since the interview format is semi-structured, follow-up questions that are not on the list may be asked. However, the study and the interviews do not aim to research your opinion of the president, nor your political beliefs. Hence, you will not have to leave out any such information.

You will be guaranteed full anonymity during the entire process and in the published thesis. No one except me will have access to your files, and they will be deleted once the thesis is done. The interview content will be used solely for the master thesis and will not be shared or reported to any other party. You have the right to withdraw your participation until the time of publication and can choose not to answer certain questions or leave certain information. You will also be able to change or remove information up until publishing. No payment for participating in the interviews can be offered.

The thesis is planned to be submitted to Lund University in May 2023, and will thereafter be published on the Lund University Publications webpage (<https://lup.lub.lu.se/search/>).

Please let me know if you know anyone who would be willing to participate in an interview. Also, feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Appendix 6 – Research Permit Document



Graduate School
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

January 20, 2023

1

Katherine Anderson Ahlstedt
Programme Coordinator
Graduate School

To whom it may concern,

With this letter we confirm that Maja Gunnarsson, born November 8, 1997, is a student enrolled in the *Master of Science Programme in Development Studies* majoring in Development Studies at Lund University, Sweden. The programme runs full-time for two years, from August 30, 2021 to June 4, 2023 and is 120 credits. Maja Gunnarsson has so far completed 90-credits of the programme with very good results.

Maja Gunnarsson is currently register for the master's thesis course *SIMZ31: Master's (Two Years) Thesis in Development Studies, 30 credits* with a major in Development Studies this spring term 2023. As a component of the master's thesis course, Maja Gunnarsson intends to do fieldwork in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from February 5, 2023 - April 3, 2023, to conduct a qualitative intersectional study of the influence of the female Tanzanian president on the empowerment of female-identifying students. Maja Gunnarsson has received a Minor Field Studies Scholarship to help fund this project. The student's thesis work is being supervised by Assistant Professor Martina Angela Caretta at the Department of Human Geography.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Katherine Ahlstedt".



LUND UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences

Katherine Anderson Ahlstedt
Programme Coordinator
Graduate School
Lund University