




# A blessing in disguise? The socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on urban women in Zimbabwe

Takesure Taringana  
Department of History Heritage and Knowledge Systems  
University of Zimbabwe  
[ttaringana@arts.uz.ac.zw](mailto:ttaringana@arts.uz.ac.zw)

Macloud Sipeyiye  
Academic Associate/Research Fellow  
Research Institute for Theology and Religion (RITR)  
College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa (UNISA)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8748-6570>

 <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.419>

## Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic that broke out in 2019 was one of the largest epidemics in human history after the Spanish flu of 1918-1919 (Trilla, Trilla and Daer, 2008). Its spread across Africa, and Zimbabwe in particular, shook economies and disrupted social structures, severely affecting the mental health of the populace. However, calamities like Covid-19 are hardly gender-neutral. While Covid-19 had negative psychosocial and economic impacts on all gender groups, women suffered disproportionately from the socio-economic and psychological toll of the epidemic. Using qualitative research methods based on interviews and observations in Harare Zimbabwe, this article explores the experiences of urban Zimbabwean women during the Covid-19 pandemic. The outbreak of covid-19 and the consequential lockdowns had a marked disruptive effect on urban formal and informal sources of livelihoods than it had on the largely subsistence rural economy. We, therefore, analyse the urban socio-cultural and economic contexts that shaped women's daily experiences in the context of Covid-19 and how this affected their economic and psychological situation. We aver that while Covid-19 made women 'beasts of burden' who had to provide for the household and family, it also served as a means of social reconstruction and provided opportunities for women's social and economic advancement and long-term psychological well-being. Covid-19 broke down and weakened the manipulative patriarchal socio-cultural norms that excluded women from economic and social advancement. Using the neo-dependency analytical framework, this article contends that while crises worsen conditions for vulnerable groups, there should also be space to celebrate the breaking of exploitative social structures that have kept women in subservient positions for centuries. By exposing the weaknesses of patriarchy, Covid-19 signalled the development of a new social order that recognises and celebrates women's courage, strengths, and resilience in times of crisis.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, economic advancement, neo-dependency theory, pandemics, urban women

## Introduction

The outbreak and subsequent spread of Covid-19 across the globe since the year 2019 upended economies and societies to a degree not anticipated. The fear it exerted, the limits it imposed on economic activity and importantly, the illnesses and deaths it caused all amounted to various degrees of anguish across nations, economies, societies, and gender groups. While



pandemics generally affect everyone, the ripple effects of the Covid-19 pandemic were and are never gender and geographically neutral. The weak in society tend to suffer more during times of disasters than the more powerful groups. Further, in the context of Covid-19 induced lockdowns, the urban economy was more disrupted than the rural economy. In the case of urban Zimbabwe, which is basically a patriarchal society, women tended to suffer the biggest brunt from the pandemic, economically and psychologically. Using qualitative research methodologies, underpinned by interviews and observations this paper goes beyond pontification of the extent to which women suffered, economically or emotionally owing to Covid-19 (it's now truistic they suffered immensely) to analyse specific contexts, established by Covid-19 which in the long run can work in favour of women empowerment.

There are various categories of women and the way Covid-19 affected them differs significantly. In an urban set-up, which is the primary focus of this paper, categories of women include working mothers, (un)employed mothers, married and unmarried women, vendors and maids among others. This article aims at providing a general analysis of the social and economic impacts of Covid-19 on women. It intends to act as a tonic for further research and whet discussion on the impacts of Covid-19 on specific categories of women. The article considers both the short-term and long-term impacts of Covid-19 on women's social and economic status. The paper asks two key questions; in what ways did Covid-19 set the context for the long-term empowerment of women? By upending economies and society, in what ways did the pandemic shake the pillars of patriarchy? This study departs from narratives that project women as idle victims and sufferers of disasters who helplessly cry for help. It deploys evidence of women's economic and social agency in dealing with situations beyond the limits imposed by patriarchy during times of crisis.

Although patriarchy tends to bounce back whenever the 'normal' is restored, Covid-19 uncovered an array of long-term lessons that can be learned about the nature of patriarchy – the mendacities that support it, the oppression that it is built on and the pretended philosophy of male superiority over women – which lessons help weaken the system and pave the way for women's ultimate social and economic emancipation. An interrogation of the medium or long-term impact of Covid-19 on women's empowerment in urban Zimbabwe is still open. To deepen the insight into the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on specific groups of women, future research should address this issue. This paper focuses on the impacts of Covid-19 on urban women for one major reason. The urban setting offers clearly defined variables and contexts of analysis e.g. formal employment, incomes and child-care services among related variables. While Zimbabwe's rural areas were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the economic and social effects were less acute than those in urban areas.

The article relied on interviews and personal observation. This was augmented by secondary literature that discusses the impacts of disasters on social transformation and specifically published articles on the impacts of Covid-19 in Zimbabwean society and economy. Interviews were carried out across a representative number of suburbs in Harare focusing specifically on the impacts of Covid-19 on shifting gender roles in the household. This was designed to provide a light touch qualitative overview of the impacts of disasters on family structures and the position of women in the families. The interviews demonstrated the multiple contexts in which Covid-19 upturned gender roles in the household resulting initially in the increased responsibilities of women and the weakening of patriarchy. By digging up specific lived experiences of women during the pandemic, we unravel this understated but crucial process of disaster-induced social transformation. Interviews were corroborated by observations made during our daily interactions with families, friends, and personal experiences during the pandemic.

### **The neo-dependency theory**

This study is informed by the neo-dependency theory, a social extension of the dependency theory (Velasco, 2002). The dependency theory has originally been useful in analysing the relationships between economies, particularly of developed and underdeveloped countries. It



tries to answer the question, why are the developed countries that rich and why are the underdeveloped countries that poor? It posits that the present world economic order is based on domination and inequality. It argues that development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin, with one leading to another. Underdevelopment is understood, not as a natural condition of the poor societies of the global South but links underdevelopment to the exploitative relations between the underdeveloped countries and the developed countries. The history of colonial and modern imperialism evidences this.

The dependency theory can be modelled for social application, (Uchendu, 1980). While the dependency theory strives to understand the economic relations between two asymmetrical groups of countries; the North and the South, it can also be extended to underpin an understanding of the relations among social groups in a given society, particularly men and women. Just as poverty in underdeveloped countries is a product of the exploitative relations between the North and the South, the subservience and powerlessness of women (in a patriarchal society) are a product of the exploitative social relations between men and women. While in a patriarchal setting, men exert authority and dominance, women are predominantly weak and are appendages of and dependent on men.

For the dependency theory, given that the poverty of the underdeveloped world stems from a relationship of exploitation with the West, it also follows that the weaker the ties between these countries, the better the chances for the developing countries to emancipate themselves from the exploitative grip of the West, (Frank, 2018). How can these ties be weakened? The dependency theorists propose delinking as one of the deliberate measures that can be taken by the underdeveloped world to foster their own independent economic self-actualisation and development. In the same vein, crises can create weaker relations between the North and the South, thereby allowing the South to shake off exploitative ties with the West. The First and Second World Wars and the Great Depression have been cited as examples of crises that gave an impetus for economic development in the periphery by stimulating industrial development, at a time when it was impossible to do so in the North, (Byfield et al, 2015). Thus, crises gave an opportunity to destabilise the centre, weaken the exploitative ties and save as an impetus for economic development in the South. Using the same reasoning, if women's subservient positions in a patriarchal society are a product of the exploitative relationship they have with the dominant gender groups, it is logical to argue that the weaker the patriarchal set-up, the better the opportunities for women's advancement. What are the chances for this to happen? Crises like pandemics and other natural disasters can refashion social relations among groups to the advantage of the weaker sections of society, (Bates and Peacock, 1987). Using this analytical framework, this article examines the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on gendered social relations in Zimbabwe's urban patriarchal society.

### **Disasters and society**

This paper builds on and contributes to expanding the body of knowledge on the impacts of natural disasters on economies and societies. Apart from deaths, natural disasters like pandemics cause serious socio-economic damage (De Haen and Hemrich, 2007; Lindell and Prater, 2003; Pelling, Ozerdem, and Barakat, 2002). Generally, natural disasters lead to decreases in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and household incomes, and an increase in poverty and inequality (Cunado and Ferreira, 2014). Specifically, disasters have negative impacts on the economy as they affect the major sectors (especially where emergencies and lockdowns were evoked) including the agricultural industry, domestic and international tourism flows, the manufacturing industry and the banking sector (Blanc and Strobl, 2016).

Apart from literature that discusses the general impacts of disasters and pandemics on the economy, there also exists a body of literature that makes a gendered assessment of the impacts of disasters on specific groups of people in society. Of note, Kousky (2016) argues that women suffer the biggest brunt of all the disasters and pandemics. Women's acute degree of vulnerability to natural disasters stems from their socially prescribed roles within the domestic sphere mostly as carers. Apart from women, children are also one of the most



vulnerable groups that are seriously affected by natural disasters. Children's education and physical health fall in the wake of natural disasters. The processes of relocation or in cases of lockdowns where schools and day care centres are shut deprive children of time to learn and thereby cause stunted social, mental and physical growth.

This current study departs from literature that solely focuses on the negative impacts of natural disasters and opens a new frontier of investigation into the 'positive shock' to women's empowerment. This 'positive shock' owes to the disruption of the patriarchal centre of power which opens new opportunities for women to take charge in the household and the broader economic set up (Carr, 1932). This new angle of analysis is partly inspired by literature that examine the impact of the First and Second World Wars on women employment. Shatnawi and Fishback (2018) assert that during the First and Second World Wars, millions of women entered the labour force to replace men in factories and other workplaces, disrupting a centuries old social order where men worked in factories and women did unpaid household chores. That's the two World Wars caused a substantial increase in wartime and post-war demand for female workers in manufacturing. Thus, the wars had a big effect on bringing social change and shifting existing cultural norms. From this historical precedent, this study hypothesises that disasters like Covid-19 can provide a stimulus to change gender roles towards gender equality.

### **Social and economic negative shocks of Covid-19 on urban women in Zimbabwe**

Although the impacts of covid-19 differed across gender, various categories of women i.e.; single (un)employed mothers, housewives and maids among others, the short-term challenges foisted by Covid-19 across the generality of urban women were severe. With the accompanying lockdowns following the spread of the pandemic into the country in March 2020, many jobs were lost, savings were eroded, and livelihoods were thrown out of balance, (World Bank, 2021(a); Mhlanga, 2021). Maids lost their jobs, while there was an upsurge of were domestic violence and rape cases and suicides, (Mupepi and Matsa 2023). Whereas the pandemic affected everyone, women were the most vulnerable group and suffered the biggest brunt of the madness that accompanied the spread of the pandemic. This is because women are directly responsible for the home, family, and welfare.

The uncertainties imposed by the pandemic painted an overwhelmingly bleak picture of women's status. For this, women also suffered more trauma and depression than any other group, (World Bank., (2021 (b)). The psychological impacts of this process of dispossession are huge encompassing trauma, stress and depression among other things. Covid-19 worsened the plight of weaker groups of society. In this respect, the Covid-19 pandemic worsened an already fragile status of women in society characterised by gender discrimination against women with respect to sourcing and controlling household income, (Almeida, 2020). When schools shut down, there was a dramatic increase on childcare burden. Mothers were more affected than fathers. The burden was even more besetting on single mothers. Thus, the pandemic generally had an initial disproportionate negative effect on women, (Thibaut et al, 2020). For married, employed women with children, they had to find ways of taking care of both formal employment, children homeschooling and childcare.

### **Social and economic positive shocks of Covid-19 on urban Women in Zimbabwe**

Although natural disasters like pandemics negatively affect societies and economies with the weaker portions of society suffering, the biggest initial brunt of these, natural disasters have a significant and positive impact on urban women's empowerment (Hoang and Thile, 2021). Disasters act as conveyors for social change offering an opportunity for the exposing and eradication of certain cultural and social ills that have for centuries perpetuated the oppression of women (Bates and Peacock, 1987). Worth examining is the relationship between pandemics and shifting gender roles in Zimbabwe's urban settings and the impact thereof on women's emancipation.





## Purging patriarchy?

One of the major characteristics of the patriarchal society is the unequal division of labour in the household and the subservient position women occupy within the broader social and economic setting in terms of ownership and control of resources and the means of survival (Waters, 1989). The differences these exert between the rural and the urban setting are in degree and not in nature. The initial shockwave of Covid-19 worsened this inequality, with women having more to do; childcare, cooking, cleaning and sometimes to go an extra mile to close the income gap when their male counterparts were thrown out of work owing to lockdown regulations (Johnson, 2005). Generally, men ring fenced their patriarchal authority by taking the responsibility to earning incomes and supporting families (giving them greater ownership and control of household resources use) while women are restricted to domestic unpaid tasks – child rearing, cleaning and cooking. This scenario increased the bargaining power of men in the household more than it did for women.

A social revolution, particularly a change in patriarchal social norms and expectations is desirable to create a more equitable division of labour in the household and relieve women from being beasts of burden. As Prince (1925) suggests ‘major catastrophic events furnish an impetus for rapid social change.’ Building on this ‘Prince Hypothesis’ Covid-19 can catalyse the changing of social norms and expectations. In what sense did the Covid-19 pandemic act as a catalyst for social change in a patriarchal urban Zimbabwe?

Covid-19 upended and weakened patriarchal principles – dominance and chauvinism among other things. It exposed the foundations of patriarchy as an *ignus fatuus*. The lockdown imposed in Zimbabwe in March 2020 significantly impacted on formal employment resulting in worsening unemployment, reduced work time and (temporary) closures of businesses like the construction, manufacturing and transport among others which were deemed to be “non-essential.” In the public transportation sector the Zimbabwe government took advantage of the pandemic to ban private commuter omnibuses (commonly referred to as *combies*) paving way for a full-fledged Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) monopoly of public transportation, (*Newsday*, 2020). These formal jobs were absolutely dominated by men. Within this setting, the Covid-19 pandemic centred women’s side hustles as the major pillar of sustenance in families. Owing to the lockdown, most urban women assumed the position of breadwinners in their respective families. Economic spaces that were conventionally reserved for women’s side-hustling like vending, market gardening, and green market trade became the major sources of income and family support during the lockdown periods when most male-dominated formal and informal jobs were shut down, (Simango, 2023). Thus, when most of the masculine businesses were shut down, women’s side hustles; vending, *mikando* (community microfinance) took centre stage in supporting families (Munemwani, 2023). A recognition of the extent to which this weakened the conventional patriarchal social relations is captured in the novel Nda adage “*shiri yabvuka ndande*” (the bird has taken over the catapult). This heralded an intrinsic admission by women, who were now at the fore of supporting families, that they were now in charge and had more authority in families than ever before when men held on to the articles of power (the catapult - based on their control of incomes) and women (the birds) were just victims. Generally, the financial effects of Covid-19 were less severe in families with a second earner, especially women hustlers.

To be specific, vending emerged as a dominant economic activity for survival during the covid-19 induced lockdowns. Yet it was restricted owing to the prohibition of “unnecessary movement” into shopping centres, towns and marketplaces. Under these difficult conditions, womanhood became a key agency for navigating vending spaces (Mborera, 2023). Although both men and women participate in vending, women generally constitute the biggest percentage of the business. Vending is a women’s business, (Mitullah, 2003). Men who stopped going to work during the lockdowns found it difficult to switch to vending and had to stay at home, caring and cooking for children while women generated income at the markets.



A case in point is that of Mwaningiseni<sup>1</sup> highlighted by Mtisi (2023) and his venture into the doughnut industry. Before the Covid-19 outbreak, he was a barber. But owing to the lockdown restrictions he had to be innovative and dig deep into his skills base and switched to doughnut manufacturing. The doughnut value chain and division of labour entailed that Mwaningiseni focused on the production bit of the business while his wife marketed the doughnuts around a shopping centre. While this transition was difficult for the family for the initial three weeks of the lockdown, it proved to be empowering to the wife in the long term. As the wife narrated:

Yes, with the lockdown, my husband could not do his work as a barber. We were stuck at home for three weeks hoping that at some point the lockdown would be lifted. When we realised that the lockdown would stay for longer, we switched to doughnut production and marketing. My husband did the production while I did the marketing. I knew the hideouts where people worked and that's where I sold the doughnuts. When my husband worked as a barber in town, I literally didn't have any control of the cash he brought. Sometimes we would go without food when the money would have been used to buy beer. Now I am at the touchline[sic] (*Zvinezvi ndaapanyanga*). I collect the money myself and have greater control than ever before. Although the lockdowns are now lifted and people can go back and work in town, I am good with the doughnut business (Mtisi, 2023).

From this experience, Covid-19 created a scenario where when the wife went to sell doughnuts, Mwaningiseni would be home taking care of the children and performing other household chores usually performed by his wife. Thus, many fathers had to take the major responsibility for childcare, leading to the erosion of patriarchal social norms supported by the lopsided distribution of the division of labour in housework and childcare between men and women.

Yet apart from women's informal side hustles, women constituted the biggest percentage in formal jobs that continued to operate during the Covid-19-induced lockdowns. The few jobs that were considered essential; cleaning and care work are traditionally women's work. Women who were employed in care work and cleaning services had incomes at a time their husbands and/or male counterparts had nothing. Other critical sectors that continued to operate during the lockdown are grocery stores, pharmacies, clinics, hospitals, and cleaning services which normally feature a higher women proportion than men, (van Zoonen and Ter Hoeven, 2022). A significant fraction of women working in these sectors are married or stayed with men who lost their jobs during the lockdowns, or men who were forced to work from home for example accountants, actuarial scientists and many such office workers (Mashapure et al, 2021). This scenario set the context for positive social transformation in two ways. First, is that women closed the income gaps by continuing to work in situations where their male counterparts were out of work. This gave women leverage in decision-making and control of the allocation of resources at the household level, (Bjonlund et al, 2019). Second, it normalised a situation where men were left home (either working from home or because they lost their jobs) while women went to work. Or in some cases, the adoption of flexible working arrangements by many employers also provided women with the opportunity to balance both work and family administration, (Bick et al 2020.) Whereas this has been understood as overburdening women, it was also to some degree, empowering them by giving them the flexibility to maintain streams of income in households (Maviza and Thebe, 2023).

Not only did these developments have a large and recurrent effect on women's power and the social status obtained therefrom, but also children who grow up in families with a working mothers or women are likely to take it as normal in their future families (Alon et al 2020). Also, beyond the fact that children were impacted by seeing their mothers working and being in authority in the household, some women in the same communities as working women were inspired and replicated the same in their own families, thereby accelerating the transition to

---

<sup>1</sup> This name is a pseudonym.



higher levels of female authority in families hence the “positive social conditioning effect” of Covid-19. Thus, Covid-19 brought about some changes that provided an impetus for the reduction of gender inequality in the household and the labour market. Employing the ‘Prince Hypothesis,’ the negative shocks to an economic and social status quo dominated and controlled by men’s systems of patriarchy provide an opportunity for women’s advancement.

The Covid-19 pandemic also created a scenario where men assumed duties traditionally considered to be those of women thereby weakening the foundations of patriarchy (Carli, 2020.) For instance, in families where men were forced to work from home or stayed home because they lost their jobs, they turned to be the primary providers of childcare, since schools and day-care centres were closed (Munodawafa and Zengeni, 2022). The mere fact of being at home rather than at a workplace not only increased men’s childcare responsibilities and other household duties like cooking and cleaning but also inculcated an enduring sense of the possibility of men doing domestic work and reconfigured the uneven gender division of labour to a point where men increasingly participated in domestic work (Alon et al, 2020). This effect was significant and is recurrent beyond the Covid-19 crisis. This is because given that schools and day-care centres were closed, the overall need for childcare was much higher. Hence, even if (as it happened) on average, women shouldered much of the, many fathers still experienced a large increase in their childcare and other domestic duties hours. Arguably, this higher exposure had at least some persistent effect on future contributions to the household division of labour and child care through increased attachment to children. Thus, generally, these dynamics have persistent effects on household gender roles and division of labour in the household and gender equitability on the labour market.

Accordingly, Covid-19 exposed the folly of the patriarchally constructed gender roles between women and men as something without any justification than bigotry and the quest for dominance. When care work, cleaning and cooking etc. proved to be lucrative, men who looked at it as women’s work thronged to get employment as cleaners and care workers. Thus, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the traditional gender roles between men and women, with women entering spaces normally considered male spaces while males were forced to enter spaces traditionally considered to be female spaces. As Alon et al. (2020) note, the Covid-19-induced economic downturn disrupted traditional gender roles.

### **Covid-19 and psychological shocks on women**

As much as Covid-19 in some sense set conditions for the weakening of patriarchy, it is noble to acknowledge the psychological toll the whole process had on women. Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns imposed to arrest the spread of the disease have been linked to a sharp rise in domestic violence, most of which was directed at women (WHO, 2020). What could be the link between lockdowns and violence? As men saw their powers and influence eroding away owing to the realities uncovered by the pandemic, there was some form of resistance that emerged as a major psychological war between the two gender groups. When women assumed the role of providers in the family, men felt undermined, and their self-esteem dwindled. They tended to turn to violence to regain their lost ground and remind their female counterparts that they were still in charge. This is captured by statements like *karakadza kuti ndini munumuzana pambhatso panapa* (remember I am the father at this home). Or *kunyazwi iwewe unoshanda inini andishandi, ziya kuti ndakakubvisire maxlomo!* (Even if you earn and I don’t, remember, I married you!), (Bingepinge, 2023) These statements capture a significant part of the drivers of violence during the covid-19 induced lockdowns, (Kourti et al 2021). Thus, the resistance men put to the erosion of their centres of power manifested in violent provocations, insults and fights which made a big toll on women’s mental health. Statements like *ndini munumuzana pambhatso panapa* even further compromised women’s control of their earning, such that although they could be the earners, they didn’t have full authority over their earnings.

Furthermore, when women assumed the role of providers through vending for instance, in a context where vending was prohibited it worsened women’s vulnerability to all forms of abuse;



physical, emotional, and sexual. In most cases, women had to penetrate vending spaces by providing sexual favours to law enforcers, or they had to endure serious beatings (Simango, 2023). These experiences left enduring psychological and emotional scars. Yet, empowerment and advancement of women should be holistic and sustainable, including the entire combo of emotional, physical and financial well-being. Thus, whereas Covid-19 provided conditions for the weakening of the patriarchy, there was a price tag to this social revolution, manifested through the incidences of violent provocations instigated on women and their resultant fractured egos.

### Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic is one of the most unfortunate disasters to happen in human history. It had serious initial short-term negative implications for women. However, using the neo-dependency lenses, this paper posits that this pandemic, although loathed to the last degree, acted as a tonic for a social revolution with anticipated long-term positive impacts on women's advancement. It is reasonable to celebrate the positives, although few, that the pandemic caused, and this paper does exactly that. Covid-19 exposed and weakened the foundations of patriarchy and the folly embedded within it. It exalted women's agency in dealing with situations beyond the limits imposed by patriarchy during times of crisis and exposed the philosophy of male superiority over women as a sham. Women closed the income gaps in families where fathers were out of work while men increasingly took a bigger share than ever before of household duties, child care, cleaning and cooking. These developments revolutionised the patriarchal set-up paving the way for women's eventual liberation in the long run.

### References

- Almeida, M., Shrestha, A. D., Stojanac, D., & Miller, L. J. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's mental health. *Archives of women's mental health*, 23, 741-748.
- Alon, T., Doepke, M., Olmstead-Rumsey, J., & Tertilt, M. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on gender equality, (No. 26947). *National Bureau of Economic Research*.
- Bates, F. L., & Peacock, W. G. (1987). *Disaster and social change*. Franco Angeli: Milan.
- Bick, A., Blandin, A., & Mertens, K. (2020). Work from home after the COVID-19 outbreak. *Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Working Papers*, 1-22.
- Bjornlund, H., Zuo, A., Wheeler, S. A., Parry, K., Pittock, J., Mdemu, M., & Moyo, M. (2019). The dynamics of the relationship between household decision-making and farm household income in small-scale irrigation schemes in southern Africa. *Agricultural Water Management*, 213, 135-145.
- Blanc, E., & Strobl, E. (2016). Assessing the impact of typhoons on rice production in the Philippines. *Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology*, 55(4), 993-1007.
- Byfield, J. A., Brown, C. A., Parsons, T., & Sikainga, A. A. (Eds.). (2015). *Africa and World War II*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Carli, L. L. (2020). Women, gender equality and COVID-19. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 35(7/8), 647-655.
- Carr, L. J. (1932). Disaster and the sequence-pattern concept of social change. *American Journal of Sociology*, 38(2), 207-218.





- Cunado, J., & Ferreira, S. (2014). The macroeconomic impacts of natural disasters: The case of floods. *Land economics*, 90(1), 149-168.
- De Haen, H., & Hemrich, G. (2007). The economics of natural disasters: Implications and challenges for food security. *Agricultural Economics*, 37, 31-45.
- Frank, A. G. (2018). The development of underdevelopment. In *Promise of Development* (pp. 111-123). Routledge.
- Hoang, T. X., & Van Thi Le, N. (2021). The Impact of Natural Disasters on Women's Empowerment in Rural Vietnam. *Hitotsubashi Journal of Economics*, 62(2), 101-123.
- Johnson, A. G. (2005). *The gender knot: Unraveling our patriarchal legacy*. Temple University Press: Philadelphia.
- Kourti, A., Stavridou, A., Panagouli, E., Psaltopoulou, T., Spiliopoulou, C., Tsolia, M., & Tsitsika, A. (2021). Domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic: a systematic review. *Trauma, violence, & abuse*, 24(2), 719-745.
- Kousky, C. (2016). Impacts of natural disasters on children. *The Future of children*, 73-92.
- Lindell, M. K., & Prater, C. S. (2003). Assessing community impacts of natural disasters. *Natural hazards review*, 4(4), 176-185.
- Mashapure, R., Hamunakwadi, P., Chavunduka, D., & Chikazhe, L. (2021). Socio-economic implications of Covid19 pandemic to women entrepreneurs: a case of the informal sector in Zimbabwe. *Business Management and Strategy*, 12(1), 1-15.
- Maviza, G., & Thebe, P. (2023). Working from home and the triple role of women in the context of COVID-19-induced lockdowns in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096231154240>
- Mhlanga, F., (2021). Half a Million Zimbabweans lose jobs. *The Standard*, 13 June.
- Mitullah, W. V. (2003). Street vending in African cities: A synthesis of empirical finding from Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda and South Africa.
- Munodawafa, M., & Zengeni, F. (2022). Working from home, care work and shifting gender roles for dual-career couples during the COVID-19 pandemic: An exploratory study of urban Zimbabwe. *Agenda*, 36(2), 5-15.
- Mupepi, O. & Matsa, M., 2023. COVID-19 induced DV in Zimbabwe's Southlea Park residential area in Harare. *Journal of Policy and Society*, 1(1), 290-290.
- Newsday*, (2020). Blow for Kombi Operators as Government Imposes Total Ban. 7<sup>th</sup> November.
- Pelling, M., Özerdem, A., & Barakat, S. (2002). The macro-economic impact of disasters. *Progress in Development Studies*, 2(4), 283-305.
- Shatnawi, D., & Fishback, P. (2018). The impact of World War II on the demand for female workers in manufacturing. *The Journal of Economic History*, 78(2), 539-574.
- Thibaut, F., & van Wijngaarden-Cremers, P. J. (2020). Women's mental health in the time of Covid-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in Global Women's Health*, 1, 588372.



Trilla, A., Trilla, G., & Daer, C., (2008). The 1918 “Spanish flu” in Spain. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 47(5), 668-673. <https://doi.org/10.1086/590567>

Uchendu, V. C. (1980). Dependency Theory: Problems of Cultural Autonomy and Cultural Convergence. In *Dependency and Underdevelopment in West Africa*, Brill: Leiden, 78-96.

van Zoonen, W., & Ter Hoeven, C. L. (2022). Disruptions and general distress for essential and nonessential employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 37(2), 443-458.

Velasco, A. (2002). Dependency theory. *Foreign Policy*, (133), 44.

Waters, M. (1989). Patriarchy and viriarchy: An exploration and reconstruction of concepts of masculine domination. *Sociology*, 23(2), 193-211.

WHO. 2020. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Violence against women, 15 April.

World Bank. (2021a). *Monitoring COVID-19 Impacts on Zimbabwean Households*.

World Bank., (2021b). *COVID-19 casts different shadows over the lives of men and women*, June 24.

**Conflict of Interest Statement:** *The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.*



*This article is open-access and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence CC BY: credit must be given to the creator, the title and the license the work is under. This license enables reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon material in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator.*