

**Gender Inequality in Cotton Production and Marketing Co-operative Societies  
The Case of Selected Co-operatives in Misungwi and Kahama Districts**

**By**

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**Abstract**

Gender inequality in cotton production and marketing cooperative societies is an action oriented research aiming at examining gender issues in cotton production and marketing so that to propose possible solutions for addressing gender inequality. Generally, the research findings indicate that the societal structures and the existing cooperative institutions in the study areas are patriarchy based and male dominated, resulting into gender inequality between men and women. This situation has social and economic implications as it leads to underutilization of human resources and widens segregation and discrimination of women. The phenomenon has been ascribed to a variety of legal, cultural, social and historical constraints. In the study areas respondents admitted that, the main cause of this situation is the socialization and upbringing of children, and the customs, culture and traditions of this particular society as the main agents for social construction of gender identity. Cooperative legal framework and lack of cooperative institutional commitment were also mentioned as one of the impeding factors towards women involvement in these traditional cooperatives. The study therefore proposes strategies for gender integration in AMCOs. These include among others; the need for further field research to ascertain women's constraints and needs, gender sensitization for men and women, special education and training for women, and the need for revision of cooperative policy and legislation