

Carol Gauti

**African Women in Politics: An Analysis on the Challenges faced by Women in
Politics in Zimbabwe**

**Master`s thesis in International Education and Development – Power,
Inequality and Change**

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Faculty of Education and International Studies

OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University

Candidate Number:123

DEDICATION.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to myself. The journey was not easy but with my enthusiasm and focus I have managed to reach this far. As a student activist and political science degree holder it is within my power and will that I dedicate this paper to myself. Carol Gauti indeed you did a great job and fulfilled the required of the master class journey. As a young woman as well who will one day in the future want to participate in main stream politics, it is my honour to dedicate this paper to myself.

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ABSTRACT

The rights of women in politics and women's equality in political representation has been a case of struggle in many countries around the world. The study is set in a context in which there are very few women in political positions in Zimbabwe and around the world, which is cause for concern. It aims to understand gender relations in general and in the political sphere in particular by assessing women's status at the local political level. This study focuses on the case of women in politics in Zimbabwe, where women occupy less than 30% of the seats in Parliament. The aim of the study is to analyse challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe, with a special focus on the S124 Clause of the Constitution that was introduced in 2013 and that introduced 30 extra reserved seats for women in Parliament. In Zimbabwe, women constitute 52% of the population but on both levels of politics, they occupy less than 30% of the decision making seats. The aim of the study therefore was to identify the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe and come up with interventions to address these challenges.

The study utilises the document study approach to research where the perceptions, insights and experiences of participants was tabulated. The study therefore utilises secondary sources of data collection which were deemed effective due to the nature of the study which has been widely documented. Through content analysis, the study comprehends on all the information gathered across various journals, articles, social media platforms and other sources to have an informed understanding on the matter under investigation.

From the study, a discussion of the causes and factors that work against women's political representation was held. Also discussed were the reasons why women should be politically represented, as well as the legal and structural policies that promote women's political representation. The thesis was supported by theories.

ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
BDPA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CCPR	Convention on Civil and Political Rights
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
LGBT	Lesbians, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals

SADC	Southern African Development Community
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwean African People's Union
ZESN	Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The 21st century has seen an increased call for women representation in politics. These claims however have not been met with practical solutions especially in politics where women are underrepresented. This phenomenon exists both in North and Global South Countries but the gap is high in the Global South. This means that there are challenges that women face in political representation and this study therefore seeks to analyse on the challenges faced by women in politics with reference to Zimbabwe.

Gender imbalances have existed for thousands of years of time. Gender imbalances in political representation are an outgrowth of deeply ingrained socio-cultural norms that have made it difficult for women to be fully represented in the political arena. The smokescreen agenda of democracy, while perceived to be a redress of women's injustices, has done little to provide women with equal opportunities and positions in mainstream politics. Despite the fact that women were granted the same voting rights as men, they are still struggling to break through the glass ceiling. Rather, they are the cheerleaders in the political arena.

Despite accounting for approximately 52 percent of the world's population, they continue to be under-represented. Men have dominated women in every representative domain, including parliament, executive, and judiciary, as well as local wards for councillor elections. Despite calls from statesmen to offer solutions to correct these imbalances, little has been done to correct the injustice. Various preambles, declarations, conventions, and protocols have been issued, urging a realignment to the framework policy aimed at empowering women through political representation. Zimbabwe is a signatory to a number of conventions, declarations, and protocols, including the Beijing Declarations, the SADC Gender Protocol, the Millennium Development Goals for Gender, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNDP 2010,ZESN 2009, WIDSA,2008).There has been no significant progress in addressing the imbalances in political representation. This gave birth to women's civic groups in politics that agitated for women's rights to be fully represented in politics.

As a result of the signing of these various conventions and declarations, women's emancipation activities began to take centre stage. Various women's organizations, such as Women of Zimbabwe Arise and the Women in Politics Support Unit, were formed to advocate for their political rights. Women have been active in voting but not in campaigning for political office. So the study's goal is to eliminate the factors that discourage women from participating in politics.

1.2 Background of the Study

For a decade now, the rights of women in politics and their equality in political representation has always been a case of struggle (Dube, 2016). Even in cases such as Western Europe and the United States, which have taken a stand as champions of democracy, there has been a history of suppression of women in politics as well as challenges facing women up-to-date on political representation. In Europe and America combined, women representation at all levels of politics constitute to less than 36% (Murray, 2018). This is against the backdrop that women constitute to more than 56% of the world's population, signifying that politics is still male dominated. According to a study by Inter-Parliamentary Union (2011), it was discovered that a total of nine countries had no women in their national parliaments at all. These countries included Palau, Micronesia, Nauru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Oman and Belize. This is confirmed by Paxton and Hughes (2008) who are of the view that the story of women, politics, and power is therefore different than that of women in education or women in the labour force. Although women have made remarkable inroads into both higher education and traditionally male occupations, the political sphere remains an area where, despite the progress they have made, women still have far to go.

Internationally and regionally, there have been efforts to increase on the participation of women in politics. Some of the critical steps include Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA), all platforms that seek to increase on the participation of women in politics. Furthermore, countries that are party to the United Nations (UN) are guided by Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in which the third goal seeks to promote on women representation in politics (Dube, 2016). Badri and Tripp (2017) are of the view that

the diffusion of international norms regarding gender equality, new donor strategies, political liberalisation, and the decline of conflict – created conditions that allowed new women’s movements to emerge and have an impact on policy, practice and public opinion. The notion of women representation in parliament is a global phenomenon.

Zimbabwe is party to the above treaties and also part to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Declaration which stipulates that states must ensure at least 30% women in political decision-making by 2005, and 50% by 2015 (ZESN, 2008). In addition, Zimbabwe is part to the African Women’s Protocol of 2003 (Article 9) where the AU set targets of 50% women representation in decision making bodies by 2012. There have been national policies as well in Zimbabwe to increase on women’s representation in politics such as the 2004 National Gender Policy (Section 6.2.3.2), which advocates a 52% representation of women in decision-making positions.

These principles have been seen to work in countries such as Rwanda, in which the former illustrates African female advancements. Rwanda has the highest number of women representation in parliament as women constitute to 60% of the membership (Nerd, 2019). The importance of women representation in politics has led to outstanding development in other avenues such as education, healthcare and women entrepreneurship. Most African countries have therefore sought to utilise the example of Rwanda and try to come up with methods and interventions to ensure women participation in politics.

There has been an increase in the number of participation and representation of women in politics in Zimbabwe since 2010. However, the representation and participation of women in the government at local to the national level remains critically low. According to Murray (2018), representation of women in politics is so essential for it leads to community development and the achievement of socio-economic development goals. In conformity, HIVOS (2017) is of the view that representation of women in all levels of the government ensures that there is a more equitable distribution of community resources, including more gender-sensitive spending on programmes related to health, nutrition and education. This means that women representation in politics is ideal towards the development of the society.

Zimbabwe is a representative democracy in which elected members represent their constituents in decision-making processes (Dube, 2016). According to the Zimbabwean Electoral Act and the Constitution, presidential, parliamentary, and local government elections should be held every five years using the first past the post electoral system. Parties wishing to run should register with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission. In 2018, 23 candidates ran for president, with three of them being women.

Through Aspiration three on Africa's good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law, Africa's Agenda 2063 commits to improving women's political participation. This goal establishes a culture of gender equality and good governance. Such aspiration and accompanying framework, as needed, highlight the fact that the continent requires on-the-ground evidence to draw attention to gaps and to make visible progress on women's political participation. The Africa We Want is one in which women have equal opportunities to participate in all levels of political decision-making without hindrance, fear, or opposition. To ensure that **#WomenMustLeadAfrica**, special measures to correct historical imbalances must be put in place.

The constitution of Zimbabwe has a provision that sets aside a quota system promoting on the representation of women within the National Assembly. The constitution was amended in 2013. Section 124 postulates that there are 60 seats reserved for women in parliament and these seats are uncontested. The clause stipulates that:

For the life of the first two Parliaments after the effective date, an additional sixty women members, six from each of the provinces into which Zimbabwe is divided, elected under a party-list system of proportional representation based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in a general election for constituency members in the provinces

The rationale of this clause is to ensure that women develop their capacities and skills in parliament and the rationale for policy makers was that this will address the challenges of lack of women representation in politics (Sithole, 2018). In addition, the quota system in parliament was put forward so as to address the socio-economic and cultural barriers that women are facing in politics and these are impacting on

their representation. The immediate results of the quota system were that the 2018 elections saw an increase in women participation either within the political parties in Zimbabwe or as independent candidates.

There has been debate on the effectiveness of the quota system in enhancing women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. From a layman's perspective, the quota system is important as it ensure that there is woman participation in politics (Sithole, 2018). However, a closer look at the statistics after the introduction of the quota system reveals some problematic aspects of this reservation system. One unintended consequence of S 124 is that the number of women directly represented in parliament after its introduction has decreased from 34 members in 2008, to 26 members in 2013 to 25 members in 2018.

There is also a challenge in respect to the quota system as the clause is to end in 2023 and it is difficult to debate on the gains of the clause in enhancing women participation in politics.

According to the literature on women and politics there are a number of factors that are affecting the representation of women. The women who compete for political office are often associated with negative labelling as they are termed immoral or loose. Since Zimbabwe is still experiencing high levels of patriarchy, women are still holding dear the norms and beliefs of society hindering on their chances to become politicians. Capacity gaps also are a challenge towards the participation and representation of women in politics. Murray (2018) is of the view that women face challenges in the education, preparation, contacts and the resources that are needed for them to be effective in politics. Unlike the male counterparts, women also face strategic barriers that deter them from being active in politics. Such barriers include sexual stereotyping, political socialisation as well as balancing their roles of work and family.

1.3 Problem Statement

There are systematic, strategic and traditional barriers deterring women from political participation in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is selected as a case study because there have been cases of abuse of democracy, the rule of law and other infringement of human rights especially during the electoral process. The 2008, 2013, and 2018 elections are examples where such activities took place. Amidst this turmoil, there is

need therefore to comprehend on the role of women within these processes. Despite various conventions, protocols, and declarations encouraging women's political emancipation, no real progress has been made. Women continue to be under-represented in politics when compared to their male counterparts.

Since the Beijing Declaration of 1995 the number of women representation in the National Assembly has hovered between 18%-22%. This number rose to 33% with the coming in of S124 which reserved seats for women. This quota system however comes to an end in 2023, raising questions for what is next for women in politics within the country. Some schools of thought have argued that there is need to extend that quota for women beyond 2023 whereas some other schools of thought believe that the extension of such a clause is discrimination against men. Understandably, given the deep-rooted socio-cultural challenges that women face, affirmative policies need to be strengthened to ensure the participation and representation of women in politics. This same school of thought has also prescribed the need for this clause to extend to local governments as well where women can exhibit their skills since they are very active in voluntary associations within this level of government.

1.4 Objectives and Research Questions

1.4.1 Main Objective

To look at the Challenges faced by Women in Politics in Zimbabwe.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

To look at the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics.

To determine the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe.

To look at what can be done to address challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Main Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research question:

Which challenges do women face in politics in Zimbabwe?

1.5.1 Research Questions

What is the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics?

What are the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe?

What can be done to address challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will be extremely useful to a variety of stakeholders. Gender issues are significant because few people understand and appreciate the concept of gender balance, particularly on political and social levels. Most people have negative perceptions of gender equality, particularly men who are influenced by religion and culture.

The study will assist the community in deconstructing their limiting perceptions of politics as a male domain, which are influenced by limiting cultural and religious understandings of politics as a male domain. The study will help men understand that women are equal to men and have the same capabilities as men in various aspects of life. It is hoped that the study will be transformative by teaching the women that they are just as capable as their male counterparts, as their marginalization may be due to their own perception of power as masculine.

Women are not only members of the community, but they are also a special stakeholder group who stand to benefit from this research. This study will educate women about their rights and instil confidence in those who wish to participate in political issues. It will also assist women in political leadership in remaining strong no matter how difficult the journey may be in a context where people are failing to embrace change and to give women the opportunity to demonstrate their talents. The researcher hopes that the study will increase women's appreciation for women's leadership and encourage women to vote for women in order to increase women's representation for long-term development.

The study will be extremely useful to the government, given its commitment at both the international and national levels to promote gender equality and women's equal participation in economic, social, and political arenas. The study's findings will inform the government and its relevant ministries about what it has done well to promote women in politics. It will assist the government in understanding the barriers that prevent women from fully participating in politics. As a result, the findings of the

study will assist the government in its efforts to develop appropriate mechanisms for women's empowerment.

This study is critical for politicians because it focuses on the status of women in local politics. Politicians would create a level playing field in which both men and women would be groomed to participate on an equal footing. Politicians will also develop policies to accommodate women in the political arena.

In addition, the study may impact towards understanding the enabling factors that ensure the representation of women in politics in Zimbabwe. This section is of importance because it will detail on the importance of women participation in politics which gives rise to the need to conceptualise on the need of representation of women in politics.

Since this will uncover hidden facts and issues relating to unequal representation of women in politics, as well as potential solutions. This research will assist the government in addressing the challenges as well as understanding the real issues affecting women, allowing the government to frame policies and pieces of legislation to address these issues.

The significance of the research is to allude to the facts, causes, and effects of gender imbalances in Zimbabwean political representation, thus demystifying the mystery underpinning the thesis. Since this will allow the researcher to understand and learn, as well as make necessary recommendations, while also taking into account the government's efforts to correct these imbalances in order to promote political gender equity.

The study is also significant because it will detail on the challenges that impact women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. There is need to understand the challenges that women face in politics as these will ensure that there is the coming in with interventions that may lead to addressing these challenges. In this perspective, the study will ensure that there is adding to literature review and scholarly work that impact on the understanding of the research problem.

1.7 Structure of the Study

The study is structured in the following:

Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

This chapter focuses on the introduction of the study and introduces the concepts that the study seeks to address. This is done through the components such as the introduction of the study and the statement of the research. Furthermore, the related research objectives and questions, limitations and delimitations of the study and the significance of the study are part of this chapter

Chapter Two: History and Background

This chapter traced the history and background of women participation in politics from local, regional to international levels.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

This chapter focuses on the literature review underpinning the research. The literature review is significant for it details on the relevant information that is available towards addressing the research problem. Furthermore, the literature fills the gap in knowledge and helps in answering the research questions.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Chapter four of the study focuses on the methodology that will help answer the research questions and achieve on the aim of the study. The research design, research approach, sampling, data collection and data analysis methods utilised in the study will be presented in the chapter

Chapter Five: Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents on the research results and discusses on these results

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

The last chapter of the study focuses on the research conclusions and recommendations discovered from the study. This chapter also presents on the areas for future study as postulated from the study.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the history and background of women participation in politics and also why SI 124 was introduced.

2.1 Background on the political history of Zimbabwe

The modern political history of Zimbabwe starts in the 1890s when white settlers arrived in Matabeleland and later moved to Mashonaland depicting the age of colonialism. By then, Zimbabwe was known as Southern Rhodesia. According to Sithole (1996), the country was initially run by an administrator appointed by the British South Africa Company (BSAC). The first prime ministerial role was created in October 1923 when the country achieved responsible government with Charles Coghlan as the first Premier. The Prime Minister acted as the head of His or Her Majesty's Rhodesian Government, under the largely symbolic supervision of the British Colonial Governor until 11 November 1965 when Rhodesia issued the Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Ian Smith was the mastermind of such declaration and he was responsible for nominating the other members of the cabinet, chairing meetings at the Rhodesian cabinet and deciding when to call a new general House of Assembly election. Sachikonye (2018) notes that Ian Smith retained his role following the first reconstitution of Rhodesia under black majority rule in 1979 then into the following year.

Zimbabwe achieved independence on 18 April 1980 the Zimbabwean government was headed by a Prime Minister from 1980 to 1987, when the post was superseded by an executive presidency. The former Prime Minister Robert Mugabe became President and he was succeeded by Emmerson Mnangagwa in 2017 through a coup d'état. Women's leaders and rights activists are concerned about efforts to improve women's political empowerment in post-Mugabe Zimbabwe due to the paucity of women in Mnangagwa's new administration. Only four ministries are overseen by women in Zimbabwe's cabinet: women and youth affairs, environment, tourism, and the ministry of state for Bulawayo, the country's second-largest city. Despite the fact that gender balance in governmental posts is a constitutional necessity, all six deputy ministers are men. Local advocacy groups such as the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) have expressed displeasure with the line-up, claiming that

women, who make up the majority of the population, have been "deliberately excluded" from key ministries such as health, education, and finance since the country's independence in 1980. Women's organisations persistently lobbied for their socioeconomic rights under ex-president Mugabe, who resigned after a military takeover, often against a tide of male hostility. The executive director of the Women in Politics Support Unit, Sakhile Sifelani-Ngoma (2018), termed the struggle for representation under Mugabe as "tragic." Women are underrepresented at all executive levels in public institutions, including state-owned enterprises and local governments, according to a recent study by the Harare-based Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU). Women were more likely to be appointed "based on patronage and to window dress" within political party structures, according to the RAU, rather than to improve women's capacity. Within the ruling Zanu-PF party, the late Mugabe had bowed to calls to use a quota system in appointing the party's four-member executive, allowing a female vice president to be appointed. Joice Mujuru became Zimbabwe's first female vice president after being appointed as the party's deputy in 2004. Many analysts, though, believe Mujuru was only handed the jobs because she presented no threat to Mugabe's succession plans. She was fired in 2014 after being accused of plotting against Mugabe, while former first lady Grace Mugabe advanced through the ranks of ZANU-League PF's Women's to become its leader. Grace was endorsed as the sole candidate for the job of Zanu-PF second secretary and national vice president by the party structures shortly before Mugabe's retirement, ahead of the party's December congress. This, along with the expulsion of then-vice president Mnangagwa and numerous important party figures, was interpreted as an attempt to assure Grace's succession to her old husband, prompting the army to intervene.

2.1.1 The main political parties in Zimbabwe

There were two main political parties fighting for independence in Zimbabwe and these were Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU). These parties had their own military cadres fighting from different fronts against the white imperialists (Sithole, 1996). ZANU won the first election and constituted more than 60% of the first democratic parliament. In 1987 however, Mugabe and the ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo signed the unity accord at the same time merging ZAPU into ZANU PF with the stated goal of a Marxist-

Leninist one-party state (Nerd, 2020). This initially worked until the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 led by Morgan Tsvangirai. Sachikonye (2018) argues that MDC was the first major party that challenged Mugabe in elections and the party has been relevant in the Zimbabwean political atmosphere up to date.

MDC successfully campaigned against the government-sponsored draft constitution in the national referendum held in February 2000 with the government securing 45% of the votes against 55% for the opposition (Nerd, 2020). The opposition argued that the referendum entrenched executive rule allowing Mugabe to dissolve cabinet and parliament and to rule by decree. Led by MDC, opposition parties won nearly half of the seats in Parliament in June 2000 elections and this saw the genesis of the formidable opposition party challenging ZANU PF.

The major success of the MDC and opposition parties was the creation of the Government of National Unity between 2009 and 2013 where ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC managed to form a unity government. The government however was formed after Mugabe refused to hand in power in 2008 after he had lost the majority vote. Accordingly, Sachikonye (2018) notes that the period between 2009 to 2013 was one of the most successful periods in Zimbabwean politics as the unity government was able to unite Zimbabwean from all walks of life and achieve sustainable socio-economic sustainability. This changed however when MDC lost the 2013 harmonised elections albeit some inconsistencies and further lost the 2018 elections amidst constitutional crisis and calls for electoral fraud. Nerd (2020) notes that the major political parties in Zimbabwe suffer from lack of effective leadership, credibility on the streets, resource base and articulation of position on contentious issues. This has seen the change in the name and structure of MDC to MDC-T now a faction called MDC Alliance which are facing challenges to come up with a stable political base. Furthermore, ZANU PF have also seen challenges in the creation of stable political base characterised by factions and this even led to the coup d'état against Mugabe in 2017.

2.1.2 The role of women and men in traditional governance and politics in Zimbabwe

Formal leadership in Africa, including Zimbabwe, has been a realm for men solely since the dawn of time. Men were seen to be the only ones capable of governing and making choices (Mutunhu, 2011). They were also supposed to be stronger and wiser than women because they were the heads of families. This, however, appears to be changing with the passage of time. As a result, the purpose of this study was to examine Zimbabwe's traditional leadership system, how it has aided development efforts, and how women have been incorporated, as well as their participation in accordance with UN Resolution 1325. Traditional authority has been incorporated into Zimbabwe's government structure, which is based on the Westminster model, and are governed by the Traditional Leaders Act of parliament. The legitimacy of most traditional authorities is drawn from their history and culture, which are frequently backed up by divine allusions (Lutz and Linder, 2004). Leaders who are chosen from within their communities according to established traditions are highly respected, listened to, and even revered in some situations.

Traditional civilizations still recognize the importance of traditional authorities' functions, and they hold them in great regard and regard their word. Leaders' respect has traditionally been based on their wisdom, ability to make popular decisions, and personal appearance and/or etiquette. However, in the vast majority of situations, this was developed and fostered by the ability of one's wife(s) to care for the spouse's social and moral needs. In other occasions, a wife's power over her husband has been demonstrated when she has impacted a decision while in their bedroom. This was one of the few instances in which a woman could co-govern a municipality. What the local government is striving to accomplish now is precisely what traditional leaders have attempted to accomplish throughout the years, although with limited means. The million-dollar question now is why traditional authorities are being pushed out as if they don't have a constituency to serve. Though most governments have put in place measures to protect and/or resurrect traditional leadership structures, it has been emphasized that much more needs to be done in terms of political will without political manipulation. Gender equality must also be embraced so that, over time, women will have assumed conventional leadership posts at various levels. This is set against a backdrop of strong opposition

from their male counterparts, to the point where whenever they try to score goals, they are met with a wall of defense from other male chiefs, in violation of the Beijing Platform of Action (1995), Zanzibar Declaration (1999) (UNESCO 2003), and UN 1325, to name a few.

Women have had their proper duties and positions in society for a long time. These must be maintained if not developed in order to meet the demands of democracy and globalization. This will almost certainly necessitate an integrated approach to African governance that considers the best of traditional and modern institutions while also respecting traditional and modern values, ideas, and cultures. After all, both globalization and African revival are realities. There are just 5 women chiefs in Zimbabwe, out of approximately 450, making it difficult to assess their performance and efficacy.

There has been a gap between the role that women and men play in traditional governance and politics in Zimbabwe. Dube (2016) is of the view that in Zimbabwe, women have been suppressed in politics coming from the traditional role that women are argued to play in the society where politics is seen as the privilege of men. The socialisation process between the girl child and the boy child has also seen men being given the platform to express themselves politically whereas women are kept at the periphery. This structure of society has seen the different roles of men and women in traditional politics and governance thus need for local, national, regional and international policies to promote the equality of both sexes in political participation.

There is a gender gap between men and women participation in governance and politics in Zimbabwe. For example, the highest number of women representation in parliament was 14.1% between 1995-2000 parliamentary representation which is not ideal enough to enhance the agenda for women or increased role of women participation (Murray, 2020). The number of women representation in politics between 2005 and 2008 increased to 16% but this number dropped back to 14% in the 2013 harmonised elections signifying the challenges women are facing to actively participate in politics (Dube, 2016).

To reconcile this gap, Zimbabwe is party to regional and international efforts to enhance the participation of women in politics. Some of the critical steps include

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA), all platforms that seek to increase on the participation of women in politics. Furthermore, countries that are party to the United Nations (UN) are guided by Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in which the third goal seeks to promote on women representation in politics (Dube, 2016). Badri and Tripp (2017) therefore are of the view that the diffusion of international norms regarding gender equality, new donor strategies, political liberalisation, and the decline of conflict – created conditions that allowed new women’s movements to emerge and have an impact on policy, practice and public opinion.

Zimbabwe is also part to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Declaration which stipulates that states must ensure at least 30% women in political decision-making by 2005, and 50% by 2015 (ZESN, 2008). In addition, Zimbabwe is part to the African Women’s Protocol of 2003 (Article 9) where the AU set targets of 50% women representation in decision making bodies by 2012. There have been national policies as well in Zimbabwe to increase on women’s representation in politics such as the 2004 National Gender Policy (Section 6.2.3.2), which advocates a 52% representation of women in decision-making positions.

2.2 History of Gender Inequality

Gender equality is a common phenomenon throughout the world, and it has become very popular in the media today. Women are marginalized and side-lined around the world because they are viewed as inferior and incompetent to play roles that affect people's economic, political, and social well-being. Against this backdrop, men hold all positions of leadership in the economic, social, and political spheres. Though gender relations have improved, power, achievement, and progress are still defined as masculine, and as a result, women are still mistrusted in taking leadership positions in a variety of fields.

Women outnumber men in political positions such as heads of state, governors, and ministers.

Despite the efforts of various nations, the position of women in the political arena remains on the periphery. Given that it is dominated by men; the political arena remains a masculine sphere. The history of women's low status in comparison to men's dominance is universal throughout the world. It can be traced back to the years preceding the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Women were portrayed in society as being unimportant, unable to stand on their own without the support of men.

Women were domesticated and confined to the private sphere of life, i.e. the home, where they performed domestic tasks. Women were also pleased with the status bestowed upon them. They also saw themselves as weak, fragile, and emotional beings who needed men's help to survive. As a result, they were mostly unaware that they were being discriminated against. Women saw men as their protectors and saviours, so they revered them and worshiped them as if they were gods. Gordon (1994) claims that public statements glorifying women's roles as mothers and wives have encouraged women to stay at home and raise children rather than enter the labour force. The patriarchal nature of societies and religious beliefs blindfolded women to the point where their minds were colonized and they themselves believed that they could not stand on their own, but needed men's support to survive, resulting in a dependence syndrome among them. Women were oblivious to the discrimination they faced; their circumstances were satisfactory. According to Salaam (2003), patriarchy justifies women's marginalization in education, the economy, the labour market, politics, domestic matters, and inheritance. European women were first liberated unintentionally as a result of a situation that pushed them into unfamiliar territory when men were diverted away from everything else to deal with war issues beginning during the First World War. As men were engaged in battle, it became clear that women could work just as hard as men. During the First World War, men were preoccupied with the war, and women performed tasks that were previously reserved for men. The same thing happened during the Second World War, which lasted from 1939 to 1945. Even here, however, women's political participation remained subterranean in comparison to men's. The situation for women was even worse in the Third World, particularly in Zimbabwe.

Their low political participation remains a source of contention among gender practitioners and organizations.

Despite the fact that, following the First and Second World Wars, European countries established the United Nations (UN) to prevent the recurrence of war around the world, to encourage international cooperation, to promote peace, and to protect human rights. People's discrimination along sex lines, as well as their discrimination along racial and ethnic lines, and violations of human rights experienced during the world wars resulted in the adoption of international instruments to promote and protect human rights, with women's rights being a subset of such human rights. Even though much has been done to accommodate women in economic, social, and political positions, as well as to advocate for and promote their equality in these spheres with men, women have remained socially, economically, and politically marginalized. While this has remained true globally, women's marginalization is even worse in Third World poor economies such as Zimbabwe.

Women were excluded from political structures in Zimbabwe during the pre-colonial era. The political structure and positions were reserved for men. Men led the leadership structure from the family level all the way up to the highest state position. Zimbabwe's pre-colonial states, such as the Great Zimbabwe, the Rozvi state, the Mutapa state, and the Ndebele state, were patrilineal societies that gave men precedence and respect over their female counterparts. Even when women did hold political power, they did so in the shadows of men. In Zimbabwe's pre-colonial era, only one woman assisted the King in administering the state, namely Nyamhita Nehanda, who assisted his half-brother, Matope, in ruling the Mutapa state. She was involved in state administration because she allegedly had incest with his brother. She did not, however, play a dominant role. According to Ranger (1988), she aided the King, implying that she had limited control over the state. The position could not be easily obtained without making a commitment. However, what Nyamhita Nehanda did was not mentioned or glorified, implying that she was merely a position holder of little or no value, and thus her political status was not equal to that of Matope. The king was at the apex of the political structure of pre-colonial states, followed by the chief, sub-chiefs, and the headman. This structure was only for men, and the hereditary system followed the male line to maintain men's political power. Many of these structures can still be found in many communities today. According to Geisler (2004), in exceptional cases, women in Southern Africa may be appointed as village heads and chiefs.

The political organization was designed in such a way that women had no chance of occupying these political positions. Even the armies of pre-colonial Zimbabwean states were made up entirely of men. Women were marginalized in these communities' social structures. They only became significant at the time of their marriage, when the family received lobola in the form of cattle. In general, women's status remained similar to that of children, who are unable to survive on their own in any environment and have limited mental capacity, making them incapable of making sound or informed decisions on their own. Women were viewed as weak, so they were assigned tasks that were deemed easier than those assigned to men. Women were responsible for nurturing children, agriculture, craftwork, and subsistence gathering, whereas men were responsible for "harder" tasks such as mining, being soldiers, trading, and hunting. It is also worth noting that the tasks completed by men were more rewarding than the tasks completed by women.

It is not an exaggeration to say that women faced numerous injustices and were discriminated against in a variety of ways during the pre-colonial era. To begin with, by stereotyping women as weak and incapable, society justified discrimination against them in important positions such as leadership or religious participation. Women were viewed as useless, and even in cases of death, society assigned emotionally difficult tasks to women, such as living in a house with a corpse, while men were out planning and making decisions for burial procedures and rituals. Women were not asked how they preferred things to be done; instead, they were told what should be done. Worse, in all religious ceremonies, men led the rituals, while women were restricted to brewing beer by society. In any case, not all women had the authority to perform even this function. Only menopausal old women brewed the beer, while all women, virgins or not, who were still going through the menstrual cycle were barred from doing so. Because of their menstrual experience, such women were regarded as unclean by society.

If the pre-colonial social structure and practices marginalized women, the position of women did not improve with colonialism. When Britain colonized Zimbabwe in 1890, the capitalist ideology that accompanied colonialism defined only men as workers on farms and mines. The system discriminated against women by confining them to their rural homesteads and confining them to the private sphere of life. Women were overburdened as a result of having to perform tasks previously performed by men.

The capitalist society widened the gender gap by putting monetary value on male labour while devaluing women's work. Men were separated from their families to work in remote locations. This gave the impression that wage labour was only for men and that women were incapable of doing it. The British-imposed system exacerbated women's exploitation, raising questions about whether European countries truly pioneered the gospel of human rights while causing serious human rights violations and discrimination against women in Africa. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was established in 1948, before Zimbabwe gained independence. Colonialism empowered men by giving them the confidence to make political decisions. It taught women to stay at home and wait for men to bring them food and other necessities. This is the source of the dependency syndrome, which gave men tremendous power over women. During the First Chimurenga, men dominated the fight against the colonizers, with only one female figure, Mbuya Nehanda, playing an important role despite not being physically present on the battleground. According to Ranger (1988), spirit mediums like Nehanda organized Africans for the war, and Nehanda's spirit medium was the most powerful in Mashonaland. Nehanda and other mediums were in charge of war coordination in the Mashonaland and Matabeleland regions. The Shona and Ndebele respected these mediums and thus followed their advice.

They told people that their ancestors were enraged by the presence of white people on their land and that they should fight to drive the whites out. Mbuya Nehanda incited people to fight against the whites based on her spiritual authority. She gave the order to assassinate Mazoe's native commissioner, Pollard. According to Beach (1980), Nehanda was assassinated not for his role in the uprising, but for ordering the assassination of Pollard, a white man in Mazoe. Mbuya Nehanda encouraged people to fight against their enemies, gave Africans orders, and took the lead. Nehanda's role demonstrates unequivocally that, when given the opportunity, women can take on leadership roles in politics just like men. However, Zimbabweans are only familiar with one female figure who played a significant role in the first Chimurenga.

Joyce Mujuru, Fay Chung, Oppah Muchinguri, Margaret Dongo, Mable Chinomona, Sekai Makuvarara, and Sekai Chikwinya were among the female figures who played pivotal roles during the 2nd Chimurenga. These women were present on the

battlefield. Joyce Mujuru shot down an enemy plane, and there was much bloodshed during this encounter. However, it is important to note that the 2nd Chimurenga had fewer female combatants than men. Female ZANLA recruits increased from 100 in 1972/3 to between 7500 and 10,000 in the mid-1970s, according to Mudeka (2014). Prior to this time, the forces were entirely male. In this regard, it is clear that men made up the vast majority of those who fought in the Second Liberation War. According to Mudeka (2014), few women took on leadership roles during the Second Liberation Struggle, but women like Joyce Mujuru rose to commanding positions. However, the majority of women were chimbwidos who supported rather than fought in battle.

In the modern era, the way black men were treated during the Smith regime is the same way Zimbabwean women are treated today. Smith's government provided very few opportunities for blacks. The 1969 constitution had 66 members, 50 of whom were white and 16 of whom were Africans. The Senate had 23 members, 10 of whom were white, three of whom were appointed by the President, two of whom were Europeans, one of whom was coloured, and ten of whom were Africans. This structure reflects what is happening in Zimbabwe, where women make up the majority of the population but hold few cabinet positions and few seats in parliament. The issue with inadequate representation is that women are outnumbered by the males who predominate in the legislative assembly. Not only are there few existing representatives, but they also have little influence over what happens and how policies are developed.

Women's status in postcolonial Zimbabwe improved slightly. Women have made inroads into politics. Women had three representatives in parliament in 1980, but only one in the cabinet, Joyce Mujuru. However, the ministry she was given was not very important; it was a female-related field that was not challenging from a male perspective. The post-colonial era brought women one step closer to emancipation. Women were drafted to join the army. National instruments were created to supplement international instruments and to include women in politics.

Women's leadership in political positions is currently a hotly debated topic around the world. All countries have noted the long-standing injustices and discrimination against women that require immediate attention. Many countries have ratified and

drafted instruments that have resulted in the inclusion of women in positions of leadership in the economic, social, and political spheres. Most countries have ratified international conventions and protocols to ensure gender equality around the world. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted in 1948, and all United Nations member states signed on as signatories. Article 1 of the UDHR states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights...." while Article 21 states that "everyone has the right to participate in the government of his country, directly through freely chosen representatives." These articles promote the idea that men and women are political equals and should participate on an equal footing. The UDHR was the first document to take an emancipatory stance for women, as it condemned all forms of discrimination. Zimbabwe, as a UN member, should also work to achieve the UN's goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, which expired in 2015, and the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5, which aims to achieve gender equality by 2030. However, the challenge remains enormous because women in political leadership are few and far between. This begs the question of whether women are unwilling to participate in politics, given that these various interventions are designed to accommodate and correct the injustices that have pushed women to the margins.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is one of the international conventions addressing gender equality. Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees women equality in political and public life, with a focus on voting, participation in non-governmental organizations, and associations concerned with the country's public and political life. Article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that state parties must ensure that women have an equal opportunity to represent their governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations. This bill was created specifically to improve women's standing in the world. It was intended to promote women's recognition and to provide opportunities for them to participate in their countries' political, social, and economic activities. Zimbabwe has also ratified this document, and little progress has been made in integrating women into the political arena since then. The question that must be addressed is who is preventing women from obtaining these positions. Could it be the women themselves, government

structures, insufficient national instruments, or social structures that are impeding women's empowerment?

Most countries from around the world attended the Beijing Platform for Action, a women's world conference held in China in 1995. According to Mutume (2004), the Beijing Platform for Action called for at least 30% female representation in national governments, and concerned parties were to take strategic action to address gender inequality in decision-making positions at all levels. The Beijing Platform for Action promoted full and equal participation in economic, social, and political decision-making. The platform aimed to promote and protect women's fundamental freedoms and the full enjoyment of all human rights throughout their lives. This conference was beneficial because it promoted women's empowerment and participation in the political arena, which was previously dominated by men. This was a challenge to male-dominated structures and perceptions of political participation as a sphere for men. Due to cultural barriers and other factors, very few women were active in the political space, globally and in Zimbabwe in particular.

Aside from international interventions to create opportunities and an environment conducive to gender equality, regional instruments have also been drafted. The SADC, of which Zimbabwe is a member, drafted some instruments for domestication by all SADC countries, including documents on gender. The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights was an instrument drafted by a union of African countries, the then Organization of African Unity, and SADC countries. This demonstrates African countries' willingness to respect human rights. Article 18 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights requires states to eliminate gender discrimination and to protect women and children in accordance with international instruments. According to Article 2 of the African Charter, "every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in the present charter without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth, or any other status."

Article 13 states that every citizen has the right to freely participate in his country's government, either directly or through freely chosen representatives in accordance with the law. According to Article 19, all peoples are equal and have the same rights.

Nothing can justify the dominance of one people over another. In this regard, it means that African countries have accepted women's emancipation and the concept of equality. The preceding articles emphasize that Africa was obligated to treat men and women equally, implying that they had equal rights to attain leadership in all spheres, including the political sphere. The most intriguing idea is that men were present when these instruments were drafted, supporting the idea of women's empowerment.

It's worth noting that it's mostly male heads of state who have ratified these gender equality treaties, promising to support women's empowerment. The problem is that it is no longer easy to blame men as stumbling blocks to women's emancipation because they were also involved in the creation of instruments for women's liberation. The African Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have served as the foundation for the development of regional and national instruments to promote gender equality. The African Charter clearly states that women should not be discriminated against, which means that there should be parity between men and women, as well as equitable allocation and distribution of resources and justice in decision-making. According to Geisler (2004), the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development committed its leaders to achieving at least 30% female representation in decision-making by 2015. This demonstrates that SADC members set goals to improve women's positions in their countries.

According to Article H of the Declaration, "the heads of state and government committed themselves and their respective countries to ensuring, inter alia, (ii) equal representation of women and men in decision-making positions of member states and SADC structures at all levels, and the achievement of a 30% target of women in political and decision-making structures by the year 2005." In August 2008, the SADC heads of state and government signed and adopted the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. According to Zungura and Nyemba (2013), Zimbabwe is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which was signed in August 2008. The document calls for women's empowerment, including the inclusion of gender equality and equity in national constitutions, the repeal of discriminatory laws, and countries working toward the continental goal of 50/50 in political and decision-making by 2015. The goal is to assist member states in meeting this target by providing relevant skills to female members of parliament and political aspirants,

as well as to encourage the sharing of experiences and best practices across the region. These instruments have been proposed because gender equality has been a source of concern at all levels of government, from the national to the international.

Since attaining political independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has worked hard to achieve gender equality. The government has referred to various national and international gender declarations and agreements over the years as part of its ongoing commitment to eliminating all forms of sex discrimination in society. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) of 1965 and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 are two of them (National Gender Policy, 2004:1). Many initiatives to promote gender equality were implemented as part of the process. The 1992 gender affirmative action policy, the 1999 Nziramasanga Commission, and the 2004 National Gender Policy are all examples. In 1992, the government of Zimbabwe implemented a gender affirmative action strategy in response to persistent gender disparities in decision-making positions. In response to the affirmative action policy, the Public Service Commission developed particular measures to hasten the promotion of female teachers to leadership positions in both primary and secondary schools. Heads should identify women who could be promoted to headship grade without regard to seniority and recommend them to be given schools to head, according to Public Service Circular No.11 (1991:2). Women teachers were encouraged to apply for school management positions in Public Service Circular No.22 (1996) and Public Service Circular No.1 (1997). All of these steps were intended to hasten the promotion of more female teachers to the position of principal.

2.3 Why was SI 124 Introduced and how it works in Zimbabwe

For an effective understanding and conceptualisation on the importance of SI124 in the Zimbabwean politics, there is the need to first of all identify and understand the importance of women participation in politics. Women participation in politics is a necessary and worthwhile aspect for each and every society or community around the world. To Paxton and Hughes (2016), generally, women are underrepresented in politics for in general terms, when one switches on the television or any media source on politics, United Nations proceedings and other related aspects, there are very few women that can be identified. This is against the backdrop that women

represent more than half the population in each and every country but the worldwide average percentage of women in national parliaments is only 20%. In addition, of the more than 190 countries in the world, a woman is the head of government (president or a prime minister) in only 13. Women are 15% of ambassadors to the United Nations and 17% of the world's cabinet ministers (Paxton and Hughes, 2016).

The challenges or lack of representation of women in politics serves to show the need for women representation in politics. Tsanga (2010) is of the view that women's representation in politics serves as an important avenue for egalitarianism, legitimacy and the proficient use of the human capital resources of a country. In addition, Yoon (2011) is of the view that the challenges faced by women that need to be addressed on a political front require women to be the architects of such an agenda. This is further attributed by Pratt (2015) cited in Badri and Tripp (2017) is of the view that women participation in politics elevates on the status and position of women, prevent gender-based discrimination, and actively participate in national and community peace-building efforts in the patriarchal societies around Africa. This serves as the important role of women participation in politics.

Women representation in politics defines on the true nature of democracy, which is the goal of each and every democratic country in the world. According to IPU (2005:1), "...genuine democracy cannot exist without the equal participation of men and women in politics..."in its true nature, democracy reflects on the role of the political system being a fair reflection on the equal representation in politics and decision making for various segments within the community. This value has been aggressively applied in terms of race and regional pictures but it has not received the requisite attention when it comes to parity between men and women in politics and decision-making. Excluding women from positions in politics and power weakens the development of democratic principles.

In addition, women representation in politics is essential for it ensures the creation of gender neutral laws pertinent towards the progress of society. According to Charrad (2001), without women, the state, being populated only by men, could legislate in the male interest. That is, if women are not around when decisions are made, their interests may not be served. When laws are being made in the legislature, the dominance of males or the underrepresentation of women could lead into the

creation of laws that do not favour women. A classic example is that of Golda Meir who was a cabinet member before she became the Prime Minister of Israel who argued in parliament towards a curfew law that had to restrict women into their homes but not the males. Golda Meir's presence on the cabinet allowed her to point out the unfairness of making women stay home rather than men. If she had not been there, no one would have pointed this out (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). In general, male lawmakers are less likely to initiate and pass laws that serve women's and children's interests (Childs and Withey, 2004). Men less often think about rape, domestic violence, women's health, and child care whereas women, in turn, have demonstrably different policy priorities than men (Gerrity, Osborn, and Mendez, 2007). Women representation in politics therefore serves a purpose towards gender neutral laws.

2.3.1 The Relevance of Section 124 on Women Representation in Politics in Zimbabwe

For one to comprehend to what extent Section 124 has been successful and helped increase women's representation in politics in Zimbabwe there is need to understand on the general nature on how women are elected in office during national elections. According to Dube (2016), before the coming in of the new constitution in 2013, it was difficult for women candidate to win on the ticket to represent the party within general elections.

Section 124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution sets aside 60 seats for women in parliament for two terms that is the 2013 elections and the 2018 elections. According to Butaumocho (2013), the relevance of such a clause is that it gives voice to women in parliament and it inducts them into political processes so that when this expires, women participation would have heard a threshold for success. Of importance to note however is that the clause does not apply for the 210 seats in parliament and these 60 seats are given to women proportionally. This has had a challenge on the participation of these women as they do not vote on substantial matters (Tshuma, 2013).

SI124 and its relevance in Zimbabwean politics can also be understood from an utility point of view. This argument as postulated by Paxton and Hughes (2016) focuses on the usefulness of having women representation in politics. On theoretical

basis, this argument is divided into two types, the first one being arguments that increasing women participation in politics improves the quality of deliberation and arguments that visible women in politics act as a role models for younger women. It is the first argument that is noticeable in the Zimbabwean context in which it is argued that SI124 was implemented to ensure that women have an understanding and representation towards the crafting of laws and what happens within the parliament (Godfrey, 2015). Accordingly, the framers of this clause argued that including women in politics can ensure on the quality of political decision making. As postulated by Norderval (1985), when women are included and are participating in politics, it doubles the pool of talent and ability from which leaders can be drawn. Ideally, this argument was framed from the standpoint that without women's full participation in politics, political decision making will be of lower quality than it could be or should be. The SI124 in the Zimbabwean constitution therefore can be detailed from the utility perspective on women participation in politics.

In addition, the utility perspective shows the relevance of SI124 as it details on the importance of diversity in politics. Godfrey (2015) is of the view that this clause in the constitution was framed with the belief that the quality of political decision making has the potential of increasing due to greater inclusion of women as it leads to diversity of ideas, values, priorities and political styles. Introducing women in politics and giving them a voice leads to the introduction of new ideas since women have different interests to men. As postulated by the liberal John Stuart Mill (1859) in his philosophical work, there is need for a polity to allow diverse and competing views since these ideas act as an avenue in determining what is true and what is not true and what is important from what is not. Mill (1859) further postulated that if certain ideas are not included in the society, one cannot determine what is good from what is wrong thus this philosophy promoted the need to understand on the views, ideas and attitudes of women and what it can lead to in the political field. SI124 therefore can be argued to have been formulated to change policy, prove wrong existing ideas and strengthen decision making in the Zimbabwean political sphere (Gaidzanwa, 2013).

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

The literature review plays a critical role towards understanding the research process as well as towards addressing and understanding the research problem. This is because the literature review ensures that there is a synergy between the sources consulted and ensuring that the pertinent terms, theories and models underpinning the study are comprehended. In addition, the literature review is relevant in filling the gaps of existing literature within the study (Toracco, 2016). This process ensures that from the sources consulted, there is a comprehension on the factors and processes underpinning the research and the possibility of filling the gaps in literature from the current study. Furthermore, the literature review also helps in decision making in the research where all research variables are addressed and the understanding of the research problem. This section therefore is purposefully structured to detail on the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, the enabling factors for participation of women in Zimbabwean politics, the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe and the interventions to address on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. The feminist theory will also be utilised to conceptualise on the theoretical framework relevant within the study.

3.1 The Challenges faced by Women in Politics in Zimbabwe

Women's participation in society has been a source of contention since the time of Mary Wollstonecraft, a proponent of women's rights. Modern political intellectuals such as Karl Marx and John Stuart Mills, who pushed for women's emancipation in his book *The Subjection of Women*, to name a few, spoke of women's inclusion in society.

In as much as there have been policies, principles, practices and even activism towards increasing women participation in politics, there are still a number of challenges that women in politics face. Evidence suggests that in some countries but in some countries, they have remained outside the political divide. There is also evidence of women in some countries achieving 20%, 30% and even 50% in the legislature (MPs) whereas there is the struggle for representation in other countries and to Paxton and Hughes (2016), women barely are visible in political life.

Therefore, there are a variety of potential explanations on the challenges faced by women in politics, especially in Zimbabwe.

The first challenge that women face in Zimbabwe just like in many other states is male domination in all spheres of life including politics, religion and social life (Cool, 2011). This comes from the composition of the socio-economic structure which acts as a sieving mechanism that hinders women from competing for and winning political positions. This is confirmed by the Zimbabwe MDGs Status Report which is of the view that Zimbabwe, just like a host of Sub Saharan African countries is patriarchal in nature. Gahidzanwa (2014) is of the view that this is expressed especially in the allocation of gender roles in which if women are to have time to explore opportunities in politics and other sectors that are traditionally considered 'male', they must actually be relieved of some of the many roles they play in Zimbabwean society. Gender norm change necessitates collaboration across sectors, given their constant intersection with various domains. Norms regarding women's sexuality and mobility, for example, can place women on an unequal footing in public, where they are viewed differently than men. Norms that affect women's health, education, and financial well-being can have an impact on their ability to devote time and resources to political activity and leadership (Burnet, 2011). Gendered beliefs about a (often) masculine political space can influence gendered expectations about people's clothing, speech, and family life – expectations that can lead to unequal voting behaviour, unequal treatment and perceptions of leaders based on their gender, and even stigma and violence.

Several authors argue that traditional gender roles prevent women from participation in politics as women define their role of taking care of the family at home as a principle factor. Gonda (2009) argues that this makes it difficult and close to impossible for women to have time to take on demanding roles such as being a member of parliament, political activist or any other related role. This is the reason why many women in this day and age cannot even think of taking such a role in view of what they are expected to do at home. In a study carried out by Dube and Ncube (2010) in Lupane in Matebeleland North, Zimbabwe, it discovered that many women had an interest in political participation but the amount of domestic work they had to do make this impossible. Ideally, in most countries, women are culturally expected to concentrate on domestic chores and leave politics and other public affairs to men

and this has had wide and diverse impact on women participation in politics. Shvedova (2002:4) argued that:

It is very difficult for a woman to make up her mind to enter politics. Once she makes up her mind, then she has to prepare her husband and her children and her family.

In this perspective, cultural roles and responsibilities have shaped the way in which women think about politics challenging on their participation in politics.

Most researchers globally argue that the barrier to women's participation in politics is caused by the socio-cultural system of beliefs and myths in many societies, Zimbabwe included. Accordingly, Nzomo (2014) is of the view that these beliefs are thoroughly engrained into both boys and girls in their socialisation process so that when they become adults, they fit into traditional gender roles. These continue to be a challenge especially in Africa and the Middle East as the socio-cultural system defines the way of life. Culture refers to the "traditions, foundations, as well as accomplishments of a certain state, individual, or grouping" (South African Concise Oxford Dictionary 2002). According to Klein (1989), "African custom is so strong and it even exceeds the regulations of a country or even religious conviction." African rituals have become increasingly interwoven into religious activities over time, and its practitioners today think that their chosen gods, whoever they may be, deserve them..." Through patriarchy, women have been denied access to leadership positions. Patriarchy is a long-standing social system in which men dominate in all aspects of life while women are excluded and assigned to low-status jobs.

Patriarchy transforms males and females into men and women, establishing a gendered chain of command in which males benefit more than females (Eisenstein 1984). They go on to say that this social system has been able to survive for so long because its main psychological weapon is its universality and durability (Charvet 1982). It implies that men are in charge and women are there to obey them, limiting women's ability to flourish or participate. In Japan, sexism has become so strong that women's participation in state-owned institutions is rarely acknowledged.

In addition to gender roles, a second obstacle for women's political participation, is lack of resources. Within the Zimbabwean context, in the primary elections stage,

candidates have to fund for themselves. According to Tshuma (2013), women candidates running campaigns and shouldering domestic responsibilities are particularly overworked and likely to burn out, in addition to spending large sums of money to fund their campaigns. This poses a challenge on their success within the political arena. This is a determinant factor that has harmed women's political aspirations. Given that many women in Zimbabwe lack economic clout and a number of them do not hold high-paying jobs. Only a few are captains of industry, and political participation requires a lot of money if one wants to clamour for such positions of power. As a result, a lack of financial resources is a factor limiting women's political efficacy. Financial resources to fund elections include the payment of registration and nomination fees, as well as funds to fund the election campaign process, such as mobilizing supporters and purchasing and printing campaign regalia.

However, according to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, poverty primarily affects women in Africa (2009:3). Poverty, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), is associated with the undermining of a variety of key human attributes, including health. Because the poor are directly exposed as a result of their economic situations, which has a negative impact on their health as well as their link or access to information? Because the poor have difficulty accessing medical facilities, the majority of their savings will be spent on keeping themselves healthy due to malnourishment.

According to the World Health Organization, when economic hardships prevail and poverty prevails, they become the recipients because access to education is denied, and access to credit and financial resources becomes a challenge (2003). As a result, women's political participation declines, undermining their representation. More specifically, party financial resources are in the hands of men, thus the treasury, which has a constraining effect on women. However, it is important to note that in order for women to be fairly represented politically, they must first gain access to positions of influence and thus economic power. This is due to the fact that politics and economics are inextricably linked.

Economic power has a direct impact on one's ability to mobilize support. One of the reasons why women do not fully participate in politics is a lack of resources.

According to Oakes and Almquist, women must achieve economic parity before ascending to positions of political power and authority (1993, p. 71). This viewpoint is strongly supported by stratification theorists Blumberg (1984, 1991) and Chafetz (1984, 1990), who conclude that economic power is critical in determining women's economic strength in the form of visibility in the professional world because it is a significant variable in women's status and access to political power.

Capacity gaps are a third obstacle for the participation and representation of women in politics. Murray (2015) is of the view that women face challenges in the education, preparation, contacts and the resources that are needed for them to be effective in politics. Unlike the male counterparts, women also face strategic barriers that deter them from being active in politics. Education is important as it produces informed and confident citizens who can compete at any level of social interaction. Zimbabwe has done fairly well in this area especially in primary school education. The low representation of women at high school and tertiary education levels also affects their ability to access and hold decision-making positions in politics (UNDP & GoZ, 2010; Millennium Development Goals Status Report for Zimbabwe, 2010).

Pratt (2015) cited in Badri and Tripp (2017) is also of the view that the role of donors impact on women participation in politics, active participation that is. This is because donors in Africa are seen dictating the terms of organisational effectiveness and participation tend to be aligned to the priorities of donors. This challenges on women participation as they are challenged as to whether they should address the core issues facing the society or that they should align themselves with donors, who are critical in funding their political activities (Tshuma, 2018). In addition, Pratt (2015) cited in Badri and Tripp (2017) is of the view that in some cases, donors are also reluctant in providing institutional support to organisations and this impact negatively in the functioning of women in their political affairs. Therefore, the role of donors effectively challenges on women participation in politics. Money rules the world, including politics. Money is a crucial factor in any democracy, as it either facilitates or hinders political participation and campaigning. If political funding is not regulated, it can undermine democracy's quality by making political processes and institutions opaque. This is especially difficult when it comes to women's political participation.

Political Violence is also another challenge faced by women in politics. Violence, according to Wolf (1969:33), is "the illegitimate and unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desires of others." Political violence, on the other hand, refers to all unsanctioned assaults within a political community directed at the political regime, its actors, including competing political groups, or even civil society. The absence of a vibrant and formidable opposition party, thus the MDC, in 1999 has feared the political landscape, with cases of politically motivated violence on the rise. As a result, viciousness has become a recurring feature. Women have become victims, and they are feeling the heat as a result. This has had a negative impact on the number of women vying for positions of power.

To add on, as a result of the political violence that has marred the political landscape, most women have withdrawn to clamour for positions of power. Political violence has been reported in almost every election, beginning with the primary election and progressing to the election of local party structures' leadership. The ZESN results statistics released in 2011 clearly show women's withdrawal from elections as a result of tainted political violence. According to the ZESN electoral violence report, since independence, elections have been marred by political violence from 1980 to 1985. Parliamentary sessions included 9 percent of women who sat in the August House, with an increase to 14 percent from 1990 to 1995, but the number declined in 2000 as a result of charged political contestation to 9.2% as cases of political violence. As a result, it is clear that violence has a negative impact on women's political participation.

Religion also serves as a barrier to women's growth (Raday 2003). As a result of the scholar's recognition of a confrontation between religion, culture, and gender, equal opportunity has become a key topic on the international agenda. Zimbabwe's social fabric is held together by religion. For example, Christianity has been used to both exploit and oppress women (Kambarami 2006). Although there are other religions such as Islam, Christianity is the most popular, despite the fact that patriarchy still exists (Raday 2003). Christian beliefs, attitudes, and actions that males employ to subjugate women have been enhanced by Christianity. According to Townsend (2008), Kambarami (2006), and Raday (2003), the belief that Eve was produced from Adam's rib implies that women are dependent on men and require regular supervision in case they make a mistake. In addition, Mugabe and Maposa (2013)

use the biblical tale of creation to claim that males and some women accept men's dominance over women. With this mind-set, women find it difficult to rise to positions of leadership, despite the fact that Christians make up the majority of Zimbabwe's population. Suppression of women begins in the church since some women are unable to speak in public, resulting in a lack of confidence in the majority of cases. Women are then afraid of people's reactions if they join in public politics.

Kellow (2010:19) has also put forward a number of attributes that attribute to the challenges women face as a result of political violence, thus women's fear of rejection, disownment, or even violence from husband and family if they strive to enter politics. In addition, researcher Reeler of Research and Advocacy Unity (2011) clearly demonstrates how violence hinders women's political participation in Zimbabwe. Despite the fact that there are a variety of factors that act as barriers to women's participation, such as administrative issues such as failure to register due to economic constraints such as a lack of resources.

The family is the primary source of socialization for children, causing them to recognize gender distinctions. The socialization process in Shona culture begins at a young age, separating the boy from the girl kid. Women are now having problems as a result of this form of socialization since they are perceived as baby-bearing machines rather than human beings who are similar to any guy (Charvet 1982). The situation of India exemplifies patriarchy's dominance, since 68 percent of women in the world's second largest country are victims of domestic violence. Every year, 300-600 thousand pregnancies containing feminine embryos are aborted in an attempt to prevent the birth of female offspring.

Partial Legal Frameworks also affect women in politics. It is also important to recognize that the country's legal system structure has played a significant role in stifling women's political participation. According to Chiware, as cited in Mpavirihwo (2010:23), the country's laws such as the Public Order Security Act (POSA), the Access to Information Privacy Protection Act (AIPPA), and the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) all have a negative impact on the dissemination of information to individuals and infringe on individuals' liberties of free association. This has had a huge impact because citizens are not fully acquainted with relevant information,

which prevents women from fully participating in current politics for fear of being victimized by government machinery.

Another problem that has contributed to the absence of female participation in politics is gender bias. Gender bias is the tendency to favor girls or males based on their gender rather than any other characteristic (Mudeka 2014). Gender bias was highlighted by 41% of African women in a survey by Grant Thornton (2015) who thought that their working environment was disconfirming and was symptomatic of subtle gender bias. The women described the questions they were asked during the hiring process as having subtle gender prejudice connotations. Some of them also stated that their male co-workers often received a better response in meetings after reiterating the same ideas or arguments they would have made or highlighted previously, implying that these societies are macho-dominated and do not value female leadership or opinions.

The weight of reproductive and productive obligations in the home, often known as the double burden syndrome, is a social issue that affects women. Women are responsible for a variety of tasks, including childbirth, housework, and business (McKinsey 2007). Due to the lack of time available to them, ladies find it difficult to take on leadership tasks. As a result of the pressure they are under, they find it difficult to obtain senior positions and instead stay in lower and middle positions that do not consume the majority of their time or energy. When women pursue leadership positions as a career, they face numerous challenges in both their professional and personal lives, as they must first consult their husbands before taking the job, and even if they do take the job, the fear of losing their spouses due to a lack of attention as they have workloads to attend to even at home inhibits their participation (Wellington, Kropg and Gerkovich 2003). Women have begun to doubt the need for leadership and decision-making responsibilities, despite the fact that political intellectuals such as Thokozone Khupe have stated that "women can and will always do it."

Lastly, lack of political will is also another issue to consider. This is also one of the reasons why women are underrepresented in political positions such as the legislature, executive, senatorial, and both rural and urban councils. Most women have a passive attitude toward politics, preferring to vote rather than participate in

political structures and processes. They prefer the role of cheerleader. Women have a negative perception of politics; they see politics as a man's game. They lack the political zeal and will to be at the forefront of decision-making positions. As a result, women are underrepresented in politics.

3.2 Interventions to address challenges faced by women in politics

Societies, communities and institutions have seen the need for women representation and participation in politics and they have also seen on the challenges that women face in this regard. There have therefore been measures, policies and practices to ensure that participation of women in politics. Gender quotas were conceived as an international response to the exclusion of women from politics. Gender quotas have been imposed in countries either voluntarily or through legislation in recent years. This strategy is successful and beneficial in reducing women's exclusion and ensuring their inclusion in the formal political structure. Rai (2005) believes that gender quotas are necessary to overcome the exclusion of women from politics. As a result, the quota system, along with women's participation, provides excellent results.

The quota system is one of the critical measures to address on the challenges facing women in politics in Zimbabwe and other societies. Apart from Section 124 which calls for the representation of women in parliament, there is need to come up with a quota system in party politics as well as national politics. According to Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (2013), quotas compel parties actively to recruit women rather than merely leaving it to the party's women's league. Furthermore, quotas ensure that women constitute a 'critical mass.' In addition, Mhlanga (2013) is of the view that there is need for political will of political parties and the government to move beyond the rhetoric of equal representation in politics. However, the concept of quotas should be backed by total empowerment of these women in terms of education and access to resources so that their participation become meaningful and fruitful. This will ensure that all mechanisms and frameworks are put forward to ensure that women participation in politics is ensured.

Women do not participate in politics since it is a male-dominated field, despite the fact that schools of thought like as Fulton (2012) argue that female candidates are just as qualified as their male counterparts. Women make up less than 19 percent of

the world's lawmakers today, and they are mainly introduced into the picture as husbands or moms. Gender disparity has its roots in a country's power structure. The degree of democratization in a country impacts the fate of women's participation. A government with separation of powers allows citizens to participate in the decision-making process. Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) is a feminist organization in Zimbabwe whose vision is to create a culture where females exercise and benefit from their rights as women and contribute equally in every political process, and their mission is to promote efficient female involvement in every political organization. As a result, measures to increase women's engagement are underway.

According to Chirimuuta (2006), the patriarchal and violent nature of Zimbabwean politics prevents women from running for office. According to Wolf (1969), violence is defined as the employment of hostile tactics, including legal and criminal, to influence people's judgment in a way that is detrimental to their needs. As a result, women who are capable to lead have become onlookers in the current political environment. Almost every time, examples of political violence are reported. The findings issued by ZESN in 2011 demonstrate the impact of violence, as women withdrew from elections owing to political violence. Women have become more involved in politics in Zimbabwe in the twenty-first century, as they compete for leadership positions.

In addition, Pratt (2015) cited in Badri and Tripp (2017) is of the view that there is need to come up with an effective system to ensure capacity building for women so that they effectively participate in politics. In this regard, there is need to ensure that capacity building is focused on team-building, partnership, leadership skills and networking (Murray, 2018). In addition, there is also need to target young women who are now being influential in politics to equip them with the required knowledge, understanding tools and effective skills for interpersonal communication, conflict prevention, management and resolution (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). The importance for this is that women will be able to understand politics as they would be capacitated to do so.

Media inclusivity for women is also part and parcel of methods and practices that can be utilised to increase the participation of women in politics. Gonda (2009) is of the view that the media has a role to play towards raising public awareness on the need

for gender equality, emancipation of women, political representation as well as increasing the plight of women in all spheres of life. In conformity, Hayes (2015) argues that the media has a role to play in the society until gender equality and participation of women becomes a norm in the society. The role of the media in this stead is that it would help in the creation of a balanced society where both men and women enjoy the same opportunities. Badri and Tripp (2017) further points out that the media should start a comprehensive discussion in their opinion columns and current affairs programmes on the unsuitability of traditional gender roles today that society uses to either discriminate or have negative perceptions about women in politics. Media therefore has an increasing role to play towards the improvement of awareness on the role of women in politics.

3.3 Measures which promotes favourable conditions for women representation

3.3.1 Quota System

To address a long history of gender imbalances in political representation of women in the legislative chamber, world leaders adopted a form of affirmative action known as quotas in order to achieve gender parity. According to the Election Resource Centre (2013), a gender quota is a policy in which a certain percentage of seats in parliament or candidacies are reserved for women in order to increase their representation or chances of election. Quotas are intended to combat discrimination in order to secure women's positions of power, allowing them to achieve the critical mass required to formulate policies and make decisions.

In support of the quota system, the Zimbabwean government enshrined these principles in Chapter 2 section 17 subsections (a) and (b), which read:

- The state must promote full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwe society on the basis of equality with men;
- The state must take all measures, including legislative measures, to ensure that- I both genders are equally represented in all institutions and agencies of government at all levels;
- The state must take all measures, including legislative measures.

According to the Election Resource Centre Report, there are three types of gender quotas: political party quotas, legislative quotas, and reserved seats (2013):

Party quotas – refer to specific measures or policies that a party implements in order to increase the number or percentage of women so that female candidates are represented proportionally from the ward, district, provincial, and national levels.

Legislative quotas – a national policy instrument enshrined in a country's constitution requiring all political parties to nominate a certain percentage or proportion of women candidates.

Reserved quotas- Reserved quotas are a policy that allocates a specific number of seats in parliament to women.

3.3.2 The SADC Gender Protocol on Gender and Development

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development examines the integration and major channelling of gender issues into the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building programs, both of which are critical to the region's long-term development. By supporting and harmonizing the development and implementation of gender responsive laws, policies, programs, and initiatives, the Protocol strives to empower women, eliminate discrimination, and achieve gender equality. This protocol is a tool for policymakers, researchers, and students to define realistic, measurable targets, time periods, and indicators for achieving gender equality and equity, as well as monitor and assess progress.

This requires all member states to ensure parity in decision-making positions between men and women by 2015. So, according to ZESN, Zimbabwe, as a signatory, is required to implement approximately 30% female representation in parliament by 2005, and 50% by 2015. (2009). According to Mhlanga (2014), Zimbabwe ranks thirty-first in terms of female political representation in the National Assembly. However, the government has failed to live up to its commitments as a result of hostile legislation, such as the electoral system, which discourages more women from serving in the legislative assembly.

3.4 Theories for the Study

A theoretical framework is an important aspect in research studies. This is because having a theory ensures that there is the identification of the limits to generalisations underpinning the study (Creswell, 2014). In addition, a theoretical framework specifies on which key variables influence a phenomenon of interest and highlights the need to examine how those key variables might differ and under what circumstances. The feminism theory is utilised in this study

3.4.1 Economic Modernity

The literature on women's participation in economic and political development, as well as the impact of development policies on women, sheds light on the modernization process as well as the nature of male-female relationships. Considering an increase that supports democratic values of equal participation and human choice as a direct result of economic flexibility, as attributed by Lipset (1959) and Rostow (1960) et al. In terms of gender equality, this theory contends that economic development is critical in increasing the pool of women eligible for positions of social power, and that if women are to gain power, they must first acquire political muscle. Women must have relevant skills and knowledge to contribute to economic development. Education is very important in providing options when looking for occupational resources.

The classical modernization perspective, which focuses on economic growth, sees gains in democracy and human choice as a direct result of economic development (Lipset 2019; Rostow 1960; Deutsch 2014; Bell 2019 Inkeles & Smith 2014). In terms of gender equality, this viewpoint contends that economic development is critical to expanding the pool of women qualified for positions of social authority. Increased economic development is linked to a more diverse distribution of educational and professional resources, according to these researchers. Greater access to educational and occupational resources increases women's chances of professional advancement, resulting in a larger pool of women qualified for positions of power such as politics.

According to this theory, economic development begins with education, which increases women's chances of professional advancement, resulting in a larger pool of women eligible for power positions such as political office. According to these researchers, increased economic development is associated with a more broad-based distribution of educational and occupational resources. Economics and politics are intertwined. The ability to compete in an election or clamour for a position of power is determined by one's economic power. The economic principles of politics require one to have a pool of resources in order to exert influence or make a decision. Women must be economically empowered if they are to demand positions of power.

So it is necessary to provide women with economic tools, such as education and high-paying jobs, in order for them to finance their desire for political positions, as they will be earning a lot of money, giving them political clout. Because many women find it difficult to obtain financial assistance when applying for such positions, they are outnumbered by their male counterparts. In order to survive or compete in politics, women must have economic power. As a result, many women in Zimbabwe are disenfranchised from the political arena due to a lack of economic stamina, which explains the gender gap in parliamentary seats and ward councillors, as highlighted in the Gweru urban constituency. According to research, most women, despite having the political will and support, are outnumbered by their male opponents during primary elections due to a lack of resources to mobilize supporters and the entire election campaign process.

In conclusion, modernization takes numerous forms. While all of the indicators examined here are related to women's empowerment in some way, the most conclusive findings suggest that gains in gender equality are greatest in nations with high levels of development and strong emancipative values. As a result, economic development indicators should be closely linked to indicators of women's empowerment. Thus modernization theory is important when looking at challenges faced by women in politics.

3.4.2 Historical Legacies theory

The influence of history on one's attitude or perception of something cannot be overstated. In this case, most women regard politics as not their field. Within this context, a state's historical legacy can have a negative impact on the levels of women's political representation, despite the benefits that modernization can bring to women's political and social status. According to Krasner (1984), history tends to influence the manner in which political institutions are to be administered, and thus these legacies affect society's ability to improve women's lives because they deny women access to political or public life. Social modernization tendencies may be hampered by the legacy of path-dependent cultural and institutional structures that limit civilizations' ability to enhance women's lives (Krasner 2014; Skocpol 2012). Researchers have discovered that the creation of institutions, whether cultural or policy-driven, can include patterns of social organization that have a long-term and determining influence on phenomena pertinent to such institutions (Peters 2019).

This influence might manifest as an inertial tendency, in which institutions influence significant phenomena that would otherwise change owing to other social pressures, such as modernisation.

It has also been discovered that the emergence of institutions, whether cultural or the result of policy changes, can sometimes pave and breed types of social organization that have a continuing and somewhat determinant influence on the subject, as attributed by Peters (1999). As a result of long-standing historical traditions such as religion and a long tradition of female suffrage, women are excluded from the political arena. Essentially, historical legacies have a negative impact on women's participation in political processes. Some of the issues afflicting gender imbalances in political representation, for example, are a by-product of the colonial legal system. The pieces of legislation used by the settler regime hampered women's political participation. These pieces of legislation deprived women of their rights. They were denied the right to vote and were treated as second-class citizens. In clamouring for positions of political power, this has created a regressive benchmark toward women's emancipation. Women in Gweru's urban constituency have also faced challenges due to historical legacies. As a result, most women see politics as a man's game.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the literature review underpinning the study. The literature review is an important aspect within research studies as it focuses on the theories, models, and principles underpinning the study. The literature review also ensure that there is evidence based decision making in the research study making it ideal in understanding the research problem. This chapter therefore focused on the fundamentals towards the role of women in politics and the relevance of the SI124 in the Zimbabwean context, challenges women face in politics and interventions towards addressing these challenges. The Historical Legacies theory and Economic Modernity theories are also utilised as it is relevant towards the study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research methodology plays an important role in any research. The rationale of the research methodology is to present the blueprint of the study depicting on research techniques that were utilized to collect, analyses and interpret findings in relation to the research. Pertinent within this study is the focus on the nature of the research design utilized in the study, the research approach, data collection methods and methods of data analysis. This chapter also focuses on the ethical considerations that were observed in the study.

Accordingly, Taylor, Bogdan and De Vault (2015) are of the view that the overall term methodology in research entails how researchers approach the research and seek answers in relation to the problem. The general underpinning of methodology in research is that it helps collect data within the research setting and helps authenticate the findings for generalizations on the entire population. As stipulated by Beng (2004) research methodology entails “systematic steps used in a form of collaborative approach to solve specific problems” and, to achieve this, this approach “should apply consensual, democratic, and participatory methods to encourage people to share their problems or particular issues that affect them or their community.” This chapter therefore details on the understanding of research methods utilized within the study.

4.2 Research Design

According to Van Wyk (2011), research design entails “the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent (and achievable) empirical research.” Generally, the whole concept of research design brings about the nature and type of information that needs to be collected, how that information will be collected: all in a bid to answer the research question. Babbie (2010) argues that the research design “is the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information.” A research design, according to Makoni-Rukuni (2001), is a plan or structure for an investigation. A research design, according to McMillan and Schumacher (1989), is a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection and analysis procedures to answer the research questions. A research design is similar to a road map that specifies how data is

gathered and organized. The research design is rather a “framework that stimulates the choosing of research approach in the research, how the sample was selected, data analyzed and the piloting” according to Flick (2014, p. 12). Accordingly, a research design is an intentionally organized proposition for the conditions of the data collection and data analysis in a way that ensures importance to the research objectives. Different design logics are used for different types of study. Following is a brief discussion on various research designs.

- ***Explanatory Research Design***

Creswell (2014) is of the view that “explanatory research design seeks to explain the occurrence of certain phenomena and predict future happenings.” Within this perspective, explanatory research designs seek to understand and characterize the relationship between the dependent and independent variables within a research problem. For example, explanatory research designs seek to understand the impact of cyber stalking on victims of gender based violence committed online. Babbie (2010) argues that this design is normally ascertained under probability means to allow generalization of the results from where the sample or subset is selected. Explanatory research design was used to look at the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe.

- ***Exploratory Research Design***

Flick (2014) is of the view that exploratory research designs are useful studies that seeks to confirm to a hypothesis through hypothesis testing. Generally, exploratory designs intend to formulate a research problem, elucidate concepts and create hypothesis. Derived from the name of this design, exploratory research designs are utilized in studies which are relative new and where there are no studies that can be referred to. From this understanding, exploratory research designs are normally products of qualitative research approach.

- ***Case Study Research Design***

Creswell (2014) argues that a case study research design is utilized in studies that seek to understand a particular case study, the objective being the need to understand present circumstances and realities. Babbie (2010, p. 29) defines a case study research design as “an instrument that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries

between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” A case study is built around an in-depth analysis. A case study, according to Rakotsoane (2012), is an in-depth examination of a single organization, institution, program, event, decision, policy, or group that serves as the case being investigated. According to Rakotsoane (2012), Bless and HigsonSmith (1995) define a case study as "an in-depth study of a specific situation rather than a broad statistical survey." It is a technique for narrowing down a very broad field of research into a single easily researched topic. Because the focus is solely on one entity, a thorough investigation is possible. The general idea is to gain a deeper understanding of phenomena, so you must go deep rather than horizontal. The advantage of this research design is that the researcher has the ability of understanding the research problem within the context or setting, where information is raw. Creswell (2014)) argues that case study research designs utilize a geographical area in which the sample has the actual understanding of the research problem. Therefore, purposive sampling is often used in case studies. Therefore, case studies, in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships.

4.2.1 Descriptive Research Design

The general notion underpinning research a design therefore is that both data and methods, and the way in which these will be configured in the research project, need to be the most effective in producing the answers to the research question (taking into account practical and other constraints of the study) according to Van Wyk (2011). This research therefore utilizes the descriptive research design.

The nature of the research question is best suited to be understood through following the precepts of the descriptive research design. Van Wyk (2010) argues that the descriptive research design is where the researcher observes or goes through related information/research participants without intervening. Creswell (2014) argues that the simplest type of descriptive research design is that one which seeks to understand a single phenomenon, in this challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. According to Van Wyk (2011), “the main aim of descriptive research is to provide an accurate and valid representation of (encapsulate) the factors or variables that pertain / are relevant to the research question.” The rationale of a descriptive

design is that it is structured making it easier to comprehend than other research designs.

The rationale for utilising a descriptive research design is that it tells what it within a research problem, thus useful in both qualitative and quantitative studies. Furthermore, Babbie (2010) argues that descriptive research designs give an accurate detail pertaining to a certain individual or research setting. Descriptive studies therefore discover new meanings, describe what exists, describes the frequency of why something exists and categorises meanings. The research design that will be undertaken will be a descriptive design as it will describe and define the phenomena as accurately as possible; documenting the different challenges women in politics in Zimbabwe faces, the nature of these challenges and how best can these challenges be mitigated.

4.3 Data Collection

Data collection instruments are essential in trying to create a framework that helps the researcher to gather data. There are basically two types of data collection in research. These are primary sources and secondary sources of data. According to Creswell (2014), primary sources include the information gathered directly from the research participants whereas secondary sources include that information gathered from published text. The nature of the study led the study to utilise secondary sources of data collection

4.3.1 Secondary sources of data collection

This study utilises secondary sources of data collection. Secondary sources of data collection entails gathering informed and relevant data from published texts, journals books and other relevant sources. The study therefore will utilise a plethora of secondary sources to collect data such as:

In any subject of study, textbooks and journals are instructional manuals or standard volumes and codes. Textbooks are only published in print, while some are available online as electronic books, or e-books. The researcher was expected to reference a variety of textbooks and e-journals on women in politics in Zimbabwe. In addition, to complete the investigation, the researcher would reference other professional periodicals. Using journals and textbooks benefits the researcher since they provide new problem areas to the research, which helps to minimize repetition of research.

This benefited the researcher in acquiring a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the subject.

Journals and textbooks, on the other hand, have their own drawbacks, such as the time-consuming and exhausting process of searching for relevant information about the subject matter under study.

The Internet was discovered to be more important since it provides convenience by combining a variety of services and data into one location, transforming it into a "one-stop shop" for all information. The researcher used the internet to access e-journals, e-books, and the websites of organizations, as well as PDFs that covered women in politics in Africa and in Zimbabwe. All online databases in relation to the data material required for the analysis. Online databases that will be searched include Ebscohost, Google Scholar and Governmental websites.

The media coverage will be assessed on the related topic on women participation in politics and the challenges women face in political participation.

The study utilised secondary sources for data collection as they provide the already utilised background information that would have been carried out such as literature reviews and case studies. Furthermore, secondary sources ensure that there is building on existing research which leads to better results and saving related research costs.

Secondary data have various advantages; the researcher used it due to the fact that it is data that has already been gathered, that is information that already exist. Access time is also relatively short, especially if the information is available on the internet (Wegner, 2007). It provides comparative data which makes it more helpful on interpretation of primary data and it can be more accurate than primary data, since information on the past events can be obtained accurately from secondary Sources”.

Secondary data has its own drawbacks, in most cases it does not apply on a specific problem being investigated, as it was collected for other purposes and also accuracy of secondary data accuracy is questionable, as research errors are possible in data collection and analysis.

4.4 Data Analysis

After data has been collected or gathered within any research, data analysis follows. Generally, data analysis entails making sense of the collected data. In line with the qualitative research approach, the collected data needs to be reviewed to generate initial codes for catching features of the entire data set (Maree, 2010). The idea of data analysis therefore is to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of secondary data.

There are various types of secondary data analysis. However, this study utilizes content data analysis. Maree (2010) defines content analysis as the process of categorizing verbal or behavioral data to classify, summarize and tabulate the data. This research utilizes the descriptive content analysis which seeks to make sense of the data that is there. Within this regard, content analysis will be conducted on existing literature, media coverage, Newspaper articles, Television shows; online media education from cyber security portals and specific YouTube channels will be researched

Secondary data content analysis is categorised under the descriptive design that this study intends to follow. The analysis of contextual data will be conducted. According to Vaismoradi, et al., (2016), the ability of the researcher to generate ideas and themes depends on the immersion of data. This is obtained through careful reading, recurring items or ideas and key issues (Maree, 2010). The researcher collected information from secondary data and generated themes from the data in relation to the research objectives. The researcher read relevant information to the study, grouped relevant literature, drew themes and sub themes and then began to write the report.

The study adopted the following steps in the analysis of data as identified by Terre Blanche, et al. (2006)

Step 1: Data collection and Organisation.

Step 2: Study the collected data.

Step 3: Inducing categories and themes.

Step 4: Data is interpreted.

Step 5: Interpretation and checking.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

Babbie (2010) argues that limitations of the study are those characteristics of the research design or methodology that have an impact on the interpretation of the findings within the research. The basic limitation of this study includes the use of secondary sources of data collection as the only collection method. Furthermore, another limitation of the study includes the tabulating and making sense of vast data collected through secondary sources. This process is time consuming and has the ability of leaving some information.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

These are the values and principles that should guide the conduct of research. Research ethics is important in our daily lives because it requires researchers to protect the dignity of their subjects and publish the information that is researched well. It is important to note that according to Riza & Nuțoaica (2018), ethics draw a line between tolerable and intolerable behaviour. The researcher acknowledged all the sources used since the research used secondary data mainly. The researcher ensured that ethical considerations were followed. There is a need to ensure the protection of the respondent. Ethical considerations or ethical issues play a significant part in any research. This is because these issues give credibility and dependability of the information gathered. Due to the study being a content analysis of existing data in the public domain, general ethical considerations of informed consent, confidentiality, non-maleficence and beneficence do not apply. This is because there are no participants that the researcher will interview. However, as this is a secondary data study, the researcher need to be aware of bringing the researchers own frame of reference into the study, and the interpretation of the data. The researcher acknowledged all the sources to avoid plagiarism.

4.8 Conclusion

The methodology is a critical part of any research study. This chapter focused on the research methodology underpinning the study where the research design, approach, data collection and data analysis techniques used in the study were presented. The study adopts a descriptive research design as this design ensures the effective description of the research problem at hand. Furthermore, the secondary data approach is utilised in the study for this approach ensures that effective content analysis is conducted on the challenges facing women in politics in Zimbabwe thus

no use of interviews in any format or focus group discussions. This means that content analysis was utilised as a method of data analysis. Limitations of the study were also presented in this chapter as well as ethical considerations. The following chapter therefore presents on the findings and analysis pertaining to the research problem.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the detailed research methodology utilised in the research. The study utilises secondary sources of data collection are utilised as the data collection instrument. This chapter therefore builds from the previous research and the entirety of the research and focuses on the presentation of findings and discussion and analysis. The findings are in turn related to the objectives of the study to empirically achieve the aim of the study. The study is premised on an analysis on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe; therefore, content analysis will be used as the data collection tool. Content analysis is the process of categorizing verbal or behavioural data to classify, summarize and tabulate the data, thus this will be used in relation to the research objectives of the study. The study therefore collected, sorted and compared relevant information in order to come up with a summary relating to the study.

Since the study utilised content analysis, the following stages were utilised to understand the research problem:

- **Identifying data sources**

The study identified relevant and up-to-date data sources in relation to the research problem. The data sources were identified through a comprehensive and systematic way. According to Creswell (2014), data within a content analysis need to be transformed into written text before analysis can start. In doing a content analysis, the data reviewed was in reference to the research questions. The researcher identified sources in relation to the challenges faced by women in Zimbabwean politics. It is from these sources that the researcher then arranged themes from.

- **Categorising the information**

After data sources were identified, the study therefore categorised the information gathered. The researcher categorised the data by identifying themes that answer objectives and grouped them according to the hierarchy of their importance to the study. As stipulated by Babbie (2010), categories scheme can be derived from three sources: the data, previous related studies, and theories. Within this regard, the categories and codes were derived from the relevant literature visited as the secondary sources of data. Since the study utilised secondary data research methods, the categorised themes were developed inductively. This is because the

study develops a theory. In ensuring the consistency of coding, the study developed a coding manual, which consists of category names, definitions and rules for assigning codes, and examples

- **Assess reliability**

Reliability is of paramount importance and the study ensured that where there was disagreement in information, reliability was put into effect. This was done after the coding of the entire data set. This was done because it is not safe within any research to assume thus there was need to ensure that the whole corpus of text was also consistent. Furthermore, the study assessed reliability for the study understood that the categories and coding rules may change subtly over the time, which may lead to greater inconsistency

- **Analyse results**

Based on the coding process, the study therefore analysed the results gathered and their relevance to the research study, determined. This process was enhanced through making sense of the collected themes and categories identified within the research. The study therefore presented inferences and presented reconstructions of meanings derived from the data. In analysing the results, the study ensured that there was the identification and discussion of the relationship between variables within the study as presented by the categories and the testing of categories against the full range of data.

5.2 Themes

The following is a presentation of the content analysis on the findings of the research. This will be presented in relation to the research objectives for easy comprehension. The steps used in data analysis in this study included data reduction during which data were selected and focused, and clarified to develop coding categories. Coding categories were refined and defined as the researcher interacted with the data. As presented above, the study followed a critical content analysis path in which sources of data were identified, data was coded and categorised into themes, reliability was ensured and an analysis on the data was conducted.

This section focuses on the findings from journals, books and articles in relation to African women in politics: an analysis on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. This section is purposefully structured to present findings in

correspondence to the themes as highlighted from these secondary sources of data collection.

5.2.1 The challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe

The third objective sought to analyse the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. This objective was derived from the importance of S124 in Zimbabwe and the importance of women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. Be that as it may, women in politics in Zimbabwe are facing a number of challenges that is impacting on women representation. In developing countries, women representation in politics ranges between 30% to 60% and this is not the case in Zimbabwe where women representation for instance is less than 25%. The following paragraphs detail on these challenges

5.2.1.1 Patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society

Increased female representation in government will not only empower women, but it will also be vital to attain gender parity. Political empowerment for women and equal access to leadership roles at all levels are also critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a more equitable world. Gender equality and the fulfilment of the SDGs are compromised with insufficient growth in women's representation. Increased female political participation leads to a fairer distribution of community resources, including more gender-sensitive investment on health, nutrition, and education programs.

Zimbabwe has a strong root in tradition in which part of this tradition conforms to the patriarchal nature of the society. As observed by Cool (2011), there is a clear distinction between the roles of men and women in Zimbabwe and there are certain expectations that are considered the privy of males and that of females. This is confirmed from the analyses of the general trends on social media platforms in which Zimbabwean women are held to a certain degree or standard and if one is not living by these norms, and then they are labelled. If an individual is seen over stepping on that role, ridicule often follows and this is the case with women in politics who are still facing a challenge of the patriarchal and uncompromising nature of the society. In an interview on her role and development in politics, Defence and War Veterans Minister Oppah Muchinguri-Kashiri opined that in over 40 years in politics, she is still facing challenges based on her gender and either she is appointed to a certain post

or given a portfolio to manage, her gender is always questioned and this is the nature of society that she lives in.

In Zimbabwe, a patriarchal culture, particularly within local power structures, makes it difficult for women to compete for political power. Women who run for public office often attract unwanted attention and are perceived as immoral and loose. Their personal lives are being scrutinized. Female politicians experience gender discrimination from male colleagues and are frequently assigned to minor roles. There is currently no framework in place in Zimbabwe for political parties to adhere to gender equality. The electorate's opinion of women in politics is also skewed: most people believe that women belong in the private sphere, where they raise children and handle household tasks. Women are viewed as less intelligent and powerful than men.

Politics in Zimbabwe is classified as a masculine job that requires men and not females. This has seen a lot of women not participating in politics from the family, community and local levels. Msipa (2019) noted that Zimbabwe is still living in the traditional days where men would make all decisions at the male gatherings and would come home to their wives and delegate on what was being said. This is still the nature of the society where females who enter into politics apart from societal ridicule, do not have the support that male candidates have. When a female candidate be at primary elections or at national elections are matched against a male candidate, the male candidate receives votes from female candidates and these female voters would believe that their keen cannot handle politics.

Societal roles have therefor left women to cater for children, the household and other minor tasks since women cannot handle the power and activism required in politics (Gonda, 2009). In addition, Gahidzanwa (2014) is of the view that this is expressed especially in the allocation of gender roles in which if women are to have time to explore opportunities in politics and other sectors that are traditionally considered 'male', they must actually be relieved of some of the many roles thy play in Zimbabwean society. In this perspective, the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society is a challenge on women representation in politics.

5.2.1.2 Zimbabwean socialisation and cultural process

The Zimbabwean socialisation and cultural process also serves as a challenge to women participation and representation in politics. The global south has seen the distinction in the development and socialisation of both boy and girl child classified by gender roles and specific socio-cultural beliefs (Nzomo, 2014). The boy child is raised to be the man of the house and is taught on the importance of power and making decisions. On the other hand, the girl child is being taught to be the mother and caretaker of the family, taking care of children and being submissive to the husband. This translates into politics as the girl child is taught that politics is for men and the female has no role in politics. The history of society has seen women marching for universal suffrage and then marching for equal representation and they are still marching for gender equality. This is because the history of women has been that of struggle and this is clearly seen in women representation in politics where women are underrepresented based on social and cultural norms (Tembo, 2019).

In Zimbabwe, the socialisation process between males and females is different and this is contributing towards the challenges faced by women in politics. In most households, the girl child is taught to stay away from politics and there are still cases of males who believe in this system even those who are at the echelons of power. For instance, as cited by Gonda (2009), in Zimbabwe, in 2009 a Mabvuku Member of Parliament, Timothy Mubhawu contributing to debate on the Domestic Violence Bill ignited a serious stand-off with women's groups in Zimbabwe after claiming in a Parliamentary Session that:

...it is against God's principles for men and women to be equal. I stand here representing God Almighty. Women are not equal to men. It is a dangerous Bill and let it be known in Zimbabwe that the right, privilege and status of men is gone. I stand here alone and say this bill should not be passed in this House. It is a diabolic Bill. Our powers are being usurped in daylight in this House.

In this case, the comments by Mabhawu indicated that there are still men who do not believe in the cultural legitimacy, let alone the ability of women to take on political leadership positions. These beliefs stem from the classic Rousseau philosophy that women are weak, indecisive and cannot contribute positively towards the progress of

society (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). Therefore, the socialisation and cultural processes in Zimbabwe is a barrier towards women representation in politics.

An entrenched patriarchal system, in which men have family authority and decision-making power, lies at the root of the limits that women experience. Traditional views and cultural attitudes, notably regarding women's responsibilities and standing in society, are still prevalent, especially in rural areas. Traditional gender roles and labour divisions are still obviously gendered. Women find it more difficult to leave their conventional household duties for more public roles outside the home due to social constraints. Women's gender identity is still primarily conceived as domestic, which continues to obstruct women's participation in formal politics.

Being a person who visit in different countries in Africa I have come to a conclusion that, traditions are holding women back. Ethiopia is a patriarchal society with significant religious and cultural influences. In Ethiopia, a woman's worth is determined by her ability to be a wife and mother. Many proverbs exist in culture to prevent women from making decisions based on their public appearance;

"Set wode majet wond wode segenet" means "let women be in their kitchens, but men to the offices"; *"set btawk bewond yalk"* means "No matter what a woman understands, it is by a man that a thing is finished"; and *"ye set eras wond"* means "A man is the head of a woman."

Women's ability to be in politics and make key judgments is questioned by such deeply held beliefs. There is a cultural assumption that women are meant to follow but not to lead. Women's advancement in politics is influenced by traditional beliefs regarding gender equality. Women's capacity to enjoy the same possibilities and advantages of citizenship as males on an equal footing in the political realm is also limited by the load of domestic responsibilities and inequitable access to higher education.

One of my visits in Botswana also enlightened me on how culture marginalize women in politics. Politics is still seen as a male realm in Botswana. There is a popular culture phrase in Botswana which goes like;

'ga di nke ke etelelwa ke manamagadi pele, di ka wela selomo - Banna ke baetedipele ka tholego' essentially translates to "A team of oxen is never led

by females, else the oxen will fall into a ditch - men are believed to be born leaders."

Women become submissive as a result of proverbs like these. Their self-esteem and confidence are harmed as a result of this. The belief that women are incapable of leading has resulted in their exclusion from positions of leadership.

In Burundi, a woman must be supported by her husband or partner in order to join a political party while still caring for her family. In a patriarchal country like Burundi, women are responsible for the majority of domestic tasks and responsibilities. Getting involved in politics entails planning meetings, meeting people, and trying to persuade other women to join the party. Candidates in Burundi spend weeks away from their families campaigning throughout the election season. A woman will not enter politics without her husband's support and backing, and if she does, the campaign may be a source of enormous stress for her. This explains why some women who want to engage into politics refuse to do so in order to keep the peace at home and protect their families. Despite the fact that political parties encourage women to participate in politics and the Constitution has established a minimum quota for women in Parliament, social pressures remain a significant barrier.

5.2.1.3 Lack of resources

Given the costs associated with elections, a lack of financial means may limit participation. Women may be able to overcome political barriers with the help of independent finance and campaign expenditure constraints.

Women in politics in Zimbabwe are also facing the challenge of lack of resources. The government of Zimbabwe disperse political grants to political parties but these parties have outstanding bills and other fees they have to settle thus challenges in dispersing funds for campaigns. In addition, there are constant battles and fights over resources between political parties especially opposition parties in Zimbabwe and these funds are seen as a life line to the survival of these entities (Nerd, 2020). This means that there are lack of resources to those that seek political representation and those that need to campaign, have to use their own resources. This is a challenge to women especially who are comprehensively the poorer of the classes in society. As postulated by Tshuma (2013) campaigning is a privy for the rich and established in society and the demographic composition of Zimbabwe has

seen male candidates being able to win primary tickets to national elections because they have more resources than women (Afrobarometer, 2017). This challenges on the representation of women into politics because they are facing resource challenges to manage and sustain their campaigns, Afrobarometer (2017) discovered that candidates for the 2018 elections within the ruling ZANU PF were wives, relatives or close associates of big wigs in the party and this serve to explain that general women lack the financial support required for them to be effective in politics.

5.2.1.4 Capacity gaps

Another challenge towards the participation and representation of women in politics are the capacity gaps. There is a clear distinction between males and females in education for example in Zimbabwe where the majority of students are males despite women comprising more than half of the population. Murray (2015) notes that females are not afforded equal opportunities to access education in Zimbabwe and this translate to challenges towards women representation in politics. This comes from the fact that women especially in rural areas are not educated and are illiterate thus they vote for male candidates because they believe that politics is for males not females. This assertion was confirmed in Twitter Spaces concerning the challenges that women face in politics in which it was noted by one key note speaker that society in Zimbabwe has since birth marked with distinction the roles and responsibilities of the male child and female child. Whilst the male child is taught how to lead, the female child is taught how to be submissive. This distinction of character and responsibilities has the aftermath of leaving gaps between males and females as the latter has no capacity to lead.

This general lack of support and understanding the impact a female candidate can bring to the constituency is widely affected by this capacity gap in education (Badri and Tripp, 2017). This is confirmed by Millennium Development Goals Status Report for Zimbabwe (2010) which notes that the low representation of women at high school and tertiary education levels also affects their ability to access and hold decision-making positions in politics. In this perspective, capacity gaps are a challenge towards women representation and participation in politics in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a signatory to various declarations aiming at strengthening women's leadership and decision-making, in addition to having a legal framework that prioritizes gender equality and equity in politics. Zimbabwe's new Constitution, which went into force in 2013, has a 60-seat quota for women in Parliament for proportional representation, bringing the total number of women in Parliament from 16 percent to 34 percent. This is a beneficial development that counterbalances the constituency-based electoral system, which some see as overly competitive and unwelcoming to women who want to be legislators. The quota system, on the other hand, lacks explicit provisions for including young women, does not apply to local government, and is set to expire in 2023. As a result, it is obvious that the adoption of this quota system does not necessarily signify a shift in the country's political elite's attitude toward gender equality and women's empowerment. There is yet hope that proportional representation can be retrieved if it is reconsidered in order to extend its life and make it a permanent provision before the 2023 elections.

Despite the fact that the Constitution requires all political parties to comply with the constitutional provisions on gender parity and equal political opportunities, patriarchy persists, and political parties appear to be unwilling to recognize the need for affirmative measures to achieve gender parity. Political parties appear to have favoured male candidates over female candidates for constituency seats, as seen by the low number of women successfully nominated or directly elected. Furthermore, Zimbabwe's political environment remains a man's world, as a slew of barriers continue to obstruct women's participation in public institutions and politics. Women's private lives were scrutinized and degraded in public this election season alone, as misogyny and sexism took centre stage. Young unmarried women, for example, such as independent candidate Fadzayi Mahere and MDC-T aspiring MP Linda Masarira, have faced sexist criticism (mainly from men) concerning their fitness to be politicians due to their lack of husbands.

5.2.2 The relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe

The first objective of the study sought to determine the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. In trying to achieve this objective, consistent information reflected on the need to understand the historical background of women representation in politics in Zimbabwe and the trend leading to the adoption and

importance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. Following is a content analysis in reference to information gathered pertaining this objective.

5.2.2.1 Historical Overview of women representation in politics in Zimbabwe

Currently, Zimbabwe is estimated to be inhabited by around 14 million people in whom around 8 million people are women (Zimstat, 2021). This means that women outnumber men with more or less one million. Yet despite all this, women participation in formal political structures and programme, where decisions that are made regarding their lives and use of societal resources remain at the periphery. As of 2012, women held 14% of parliamentary seats in the country and that number was down from 16% from the previous parliament. Dube (2016) also noted that

Before the introduction of S124 and even after its introduction, the representation of women in the main political parties in Zimbabwe mirrors this pattern, as the leadership and decision making bodies of these parties (ZANU PF, MDC Alliance, MDC T) all are male dominated.

Thus women are excluded from the spheres of politics with only few who took part in the liberation struggling having political seats. Yet theories of development states that women are more developmental oriented and there is one African proverb which says that, 'if you educate one woman, you have educated the whole village'. Meaning to say women are not selfish and self-centred like men who can forget their roots in political positions and end up looting forgetting the social contract of the people who voted for them. This grime numbers of lack of women representation in politics in Zimbabwe are presented in the figure below and explained in the following paragraphs:

Figure 5.2: Women Participation in the National Assembly between 1980 and 2005

	1980-84	1985-90	1990-95	1995-00	2000-05
House of Assembly: Total	100	100	150	150	150
Men	91	92	129	128	136
Women	9	8	21	22	14
% Women	9	8	14	14.1	9.3

(Source: Gaidzanwa, 2003)

As presented from the figure above, there are alarming numbers on the lack of women representation in parliament in Zimbabwe over the years. This is because the highest number of women representation in parliament was 14.1% between 1995-2000 parliamentary representation which is not ideal enough to enhance the agenda for women or increased role of women participation (Murray, 2020). The number of women representation in politics between 2005 and 2008 increased to 16% but this number dropped back to 14% in the 2013 harmonised elections signifying the challenges women are facing to actively participate in politics (Dube, 2016). From the above analysis one can conclude on the involvement of women in politics that women have always been marginalized thus taking part in lower politics and their counterparts take the control of higher politics. This goes back to the issue of creation where the man has always been superior with the females being part of the man's rib thus their place is at home while the man is the provider.

5.2.2.2 Methods to enhance women representation in politics

The decrease and inconsistent numbers of women representation in parliament coupled with the rising voice of women activists calling for political parties to enhance the channels for women representation saw efforts from political parties, civil societies and other various stakeholders to promote women representation in politics (Murray, 2020). In 2005, political parties for instance came up with systems

designed to ensure that women candidate will be supported to participate in primary elections and would be matched against each other to achieve women representation (Dube, 2016). This was a noble gesture especially within political parties but the challenge however was that of national elections where male candidates dominated. This is because the national and parliamentary elections between 2005 and 2013 saw women representation in politics not even reaching 30%.

There is need to enhance women participation through promulgating laws and other relevant pieces of legislation. This is confirmed by Madhuku (2012) who argued that, there was need for a comprehensive way to enhance women representation in politics and this method had to be backed up by law. This was the genesis of the discussion towards coming up with a constitutional amendment to enhance women representation in parliament. These sentiments were echoed by Butaumocho (2013) who noted that participatory democracy cannot be achieved if more than half of the population remains voiceless with no full access to decision-making and to the activities that influence the course of their future. There was therefore need to come up with an intervention, an instrument and a mechanism to enhance women representation in politics as genuine democracy cannot exist without the full participation of both men and women in politics.

It was also noted that the pace at which women representation in politics in Zimbabwe has gathered pace. This is because women are perceived to play a critical role towards the development of society and their voice should be heard in politics, especially in parliament where decisions to govern are made. After all, women constitute more than half of the population in Zimbabwe thus the views, perceptions and values of this considerable number of the populace has to be tabulated and considered in governance.

5.2.2.3 Section 124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution

Section 124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution sets aside 60 seats for women in parliament for two terms that is the 2013 elections and the 2018 elections. Section 124 (b) reads:

...for the life of the first two Parliaments after the effective date, an additional sixty women members, six from each of the provinces into which Zimbabwe is

divided, elected through a system of proportional representation based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in a general election for constituency members in the provinces...

The adoption of this instrument to promote the representation of women through a quota system is in line with relevant international instruments that relate to the full political rights for women (Butaumocho, 2013). Amongst these instruments are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women to mention just but a few. The International Community has been advocating for women representation in politics however the irony of it is that; if one looks at the composition of the United Nations, International Criminal Court and the World Trade Organization, women are outnumbered by men and positions of higher authority are taken by man instead thus the irony part of gender representation.

From a female representation of 16% in the 2008 parliamentary elections, women representation jumped to 32% in 2013 since 83 women made up the total figure of 350 parliamentarians from both the National Assembly and the Senate when the government implemented the proportional women representation quota that was stipulated in the Constitution (Dube, 2016). It is important to note however that the provision is only valid for the first two terms of Parliament since its promulgation in 2013, thus it comes to end in 2023. This is a development however that has been met with apprehension by the majority of women who believe that it is too early to terminate this provision as the gains of women representation are only beginning to be achieved.

From the primary data gathered in reference to the study, it was observed that most women and feminists saw this development as a positive measure towards the promotion of women participation in politics. As noted by one Jessie Majome on her Facebook page, she noted that:

Section 124 albeit in its short life span offers women the opportunity to be accustomed with parliamentary business in which they can be part of ad-hoc committees tasked with development of rules and laws that can enhance the development of society. This law however has to be extended to ensure effective representation of women in politics

The above finding from Jessie Majome clearly shows how the representation of women is still a journey of thousand miles. It is there on paper but in reality it's a different story which critics would describe it as ideal. In 21st century political discourse there is the wave of feminism yet women are less represented in politics and the international Community has nothing to do about it as the issues of lower politics like gender are not the concerns of states in the International system. Realism theory picture the International System as an anarchical environment where states struggle to survive and the main purpose of state craft is survival with military acquisition being inevitable thus nobody really checks on gender issues.

There has been a wide and diverse debate around the extension of this clause that enhances women representation. Defenders of this claim argue that terminating this clause will only take back society back to 15 years where women representation in politics stood at only 10% (Murray, 2020). This thinking is confirmed by Dube (2016) who noted that with no legal basis to hinge their gender equality campaign on, majority of female political aspirants could find them in political Siberia. It was against this background that in a keynote address in 2018, the Speaker of Parliament, Advocate Jacob Mudenda encouraged women to call for the amendment of S124 so as to ensure the extension of this provision. However, there are other political activists who have concern with the extension of this provision since it is argued that women who have acquired a ticket into parliament based on this provision have not achieved anything in nearly ten years of being in parliament. This therefore is the crisis against this provision.

5.2.2.4 Relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe

There has been a widespread debate on the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. According to Butaumocho (2013), the relevance of such a clause is that it gives voice to women in parliament and it inducts them into political processes so that when this expires, women participation would have heard a threshold for success. This is confirmed by the information gathered from the primary data in which there was a discussion on the importance of such a section on Facebook where women activists called for people to vote YES to the 2013 constitutional referendum because it had this clause in it. In addition, there were campaigns on all other social media platforms, advertisements in newspapers,

radio presentations and televisions sets all calling for the need and importance of such a clause in the promotion of women development in politics.

This clause at first had an idea of making women and men participation in politics a reality but in practice, it has not achieved any desired goals. Of importance to note however is that the clause does not apply for the 210 seats in parliament and these 60 seats are given to women proportionally. This has had a challenge on the participation of these women as they do not vote on substantial matters (Tshuma, 2013). One could see that out of 210 seats women only occupying 60 seats is still problematic given the nature of decision making thus there is need to revise the clause and also educate women on their political rights that they can also venture into politics. The same can be noticed in Local authorities where Councillors are the first ladder in politics. There is few representation of women even at Councillor level for example in 2018 Harare City Council out of 56 had only 5 female Councillors whom cannot have a voice in Council Meetings in as much they are inferior when it comes to numbers.

The relevance of S124 on women representation in politics is that it ensures that women are given a platform to express their political rights and freedoms which is part of the promotion and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. In a polity, participatory democracy is enhanced when both males and females have equal access to political participation and representation. This is what S124 seeks to achieve where women are promoted to be at the same standing as males especially in decision-making. This is the reason why Gaidzanwa (2013) opines that S124 can be viewed from the justice principle where equal representation is framed from the basic and earliest and basic form of representation in formal representation, meaning that women have the legal right to participate in politics on an equal basis with men. The relevance of S124 on women representation is that it is framed within the principles of ensuring that women participate in decision-making. However, the challenge within participation of women from the frameworks of S124 is that women who acquire the ticket to parliament on this quota system do not have the right to vote on substantive issues thus a brick wall towards women representation. Thus in other words the right is given by the right hand and taken by the left.

S124 is also relevant towards women representation based on the utility point of view that seeks to explain the importance of giving women voice in political deliberations as decisions made affect their day-to-day lives (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). It is only fair that women participate in making decisions that affect their lives and this was the fundamental element in reference to the promulgation of S124. Furthermore, S124 from the frameworks of the principle of utility explains the need for women representation since increasing women participation in politics improves the quality of deliberation and those visible women in politics act as a role models for younger women. An analysis of S124 and women representation has seen women being more and more involved in politics from grassroots levels and this general interest in politics has seen the creation of a society conscious of politics (Godfrey, 2015). Furthermore, including women in political deliberations means that there is progress as decisions can be made after both male and female perspectives are taken into context. This means that S124 has been effective and relevant in increasing women representation in politics and enhancing the general quality of political deliberations within the country. Be that as it may, the challenge with S124 is that women who qualify based on the quota system can only deliberate on formal issues and cannot vote for a bill or play any role in legislation.

Diversity in politics also helps explain the importance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. As postulated by Godfrey (2015), the framing of S124 was based on the belief that the quality of political decision making has the potential of increasing due to greater inclusion of women as it leads to diversity of ideas, values, priorities and political styles. This means that introducing women in politics and giving them a voice leads to the introduction of new ideas since women have different interests to men. S124 therefore can be argued to have been formulated to change policy, prove wrong existing ideas and strengthen decision making in the Zimbabwean political sphere (Gaidzanwa, 2013). Be that as it may, there are structural issues that are affecting the full realisation of the relevance of S124 towards the representation of women in politics in Zimbabwe such as not allowing women selected in the quota system the platform to vote in substantive issues.

The relevance of S124 in the Zimbabwean political arena has had different views and perceptions now that the country is getting ready for the much anticipated 2023

harmonised elections. Scholars, activists and parliamentarians have all had their say towards the section which is to expire before the elections. To some activists, there is need to renew the term of office as there is the environment which is enhancing women participation in politics. This was echoed in Twitter Spaces where there was the discussion on the success of S124 in enhancing women representation in which it was observed that there has been an increase in the number of women participating or being active in politics such as the youth and those in rural areas. It can also be noted that most women are no longer parochial in politics but are actively participating and making their opinions known. This can be attributed to the effects of such a section in Zimbabwean politics. Activists therefore assume that if the section has had such an impact in less than 10 years, imagine the impact it can have in the next ten years. Therefore, there have been calls to enhance the life span of such section in Zimbabwe.

5.2.3 The enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe

The second objective of the study sought to determine on the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. The enabling factors referred herein can be understood simply as the factors that explains the importance of women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. The following paragraphs therefore discusses on some of these enabling factors.

5.2.3.1 Participatory democracy

One critical enabling factor towards the participation of women in politics in Zimbabwe is that of participatory democracy. Gender equality and good governance have become two of the most prominent concerns in recent development debates. In the rising collection of literature and thought on gender, democracy, and good governance, they come together. Women and men are assigned varied and unequal roles in society due to socialization rather than nature. Women are assigned to the domestic realm, caring for their homes and families, while men are assigned to the public sphere, managing society's concerns. Murray (2020) defines participatory democracy as the form of democracy where citizens are provided power so as to make political decisions. From the discussion forums surrounding topics on women participation in politics, it can be noted that ideally, participatory democracy cannot be achieved if more than half of the population remains voiceless with no full access to decision-making and to the activities that influence the course of their future. It is

the goal for each and every democracy around the globe, including Zimbabwe to ensure that both women and men are taking part in all democratic forms and processes that have an impact on their livelihoods. This is confirmed by IPU (2005) which opine that for genuine democracy to prevail in a society there is need to ensure that both genders are equally represented. This is the thinking around promoting women participation in politics for in Zimbabwe, women constitute more than half of the population but only less than 30% of political positions, thus not ideal towards achieving participatory democracy. In a parliamentary discussion on the importance of S124 in the Zimbabwean context, it was noted that there is need therefore to achieve participatory democracy which is critical towards enhancing women participation in politics as the voice and contribution of women will be included in all political processes. The goal is to enhance participatory democracy in which the views and perceptions of all people are tabulated and comprehended. Some scholars suggest that the word should be refocused on community-based activities within the civil society domain, based on the notion that the establishment of a robust non-governmental public sphere is a precondition for the emergence of a strong liberal democracy. These academics emphasize the importance of keeping the realms of civil society and official politics separate.

Participatory democracy has also been the goal of the African Union. Through Aspiration three on Africa's good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law, Africa's Agenda 2063 commits to increasing women's political engagement. This goal establishes a culture of gender equality and sound governance. As required, such an aspiration and supporting framework highlights the fact that the continent requires on-the-ground evidence to highlight gaps and demonstrate progress on women's political involvement. Women have equal opportunity to engage in all levels of political decision-making without difficulty, fear, or opposition in the Africa we envision. To ensure that; special measures to redress past imbalances must be put in place thus *#womenmustleadAfrica*. The Maputo Protocol, which includes explicit measures on women's political involvement, demonstrates the continent's long-standing commitment to improving gender equality in political decision-making. On a worldwide level, the Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality calls for women to have a greater and more meaningful role in political decision-making. If Africa does not modify its structures, practices, and

policies to ensure that more women participate in political decision-making, the 2030 global agenda will remain a pipe dream. While several of our African countries have exceeded the 50% mark for women in political decision-making at the parliament level, there is still a need to develop enabling ground for women to participate in politics from the local government level to the cabinet level. The same applies home in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe has to revise its structures to accommodate women and respect constitutionalism on the political rights of women.

5.2.3.2 Improved Decision-making

One of the enabling factors for women participation in politics is that of a polity coming up with informed decisions. From the primary data collected, it was noted from Facebook for instance that when each and every member of society is represented in coming up with decisions, informed decisions are the results. In developing countries such as Zimbabwe, central to politics is the allocation of scarce resources and women have to be included in the process to reach sustainable development (Paxton and Hughes, 2016).

The great philosophers such as Aristotle believed that politics is ubiquitous meaning that politics is seen from the family level, community level, educational level, health level and all walks of life. In conventional traditional societies such as Zimbabwe where societal roles are still at the privy of women, there is need to enhance the participation of women in politics since women have an informed understanding on the fundamental elements that define how the society ought to operate (Tembo, 2018). Since politicians hold power over other social institutions, such as the family or education, and are able to codify particular practices into law, when women are included in politics, there is a possibility that informed decisions will be made and society will be a step closer towards achieving societal goals and objectives. In other words, women participation in politics ensures the equal distribution of resources as informed decisions will be made in the process.

The equity arguments argue that, in proportion to their numbers as a distinct group in society, women have a right to participate in decision-making. The fair representation of all interest groups in society is the essence of democracy. This concept is violated when women are underrepresented in their demographic. In summary, whether or

whether they make a difference, women have a right to equal participation in political decision-making.

In conclusion however, in practice the women have been left behind as second class citizens. This goes hand in hand with the great philosopher Aristotle who said that, 'Male the ruler, female the subject, man superior and female inferior and this must apply to all mankind'. The woman has been subjected to patriarchy and excluded from the decision making process. Women have been reduced to second-class citizens across Africa due to patriarchy, social, cultural, and religious forces. A woman's worth is determined by the role she plays as a wife and mother. There are numerous proverbs that discourage women from making decisions based on their public looks. There is a cultural assumption that women are meant to follow but not to lead. Women's advancement in politics is influenced by traditional beliefs regarding gender equality. Women's capacity to enjoy the same possibilities and advantages of citizenship as males on an equal footing in the political realm is also limited by the load of domestic responsibilities and inequitable access to higher education. One of the most significant barriers to women's political engagement is a lack of financial means. Political parties are highly patriarchal, male-dominated organizations that have taken a long time to change.

5.2.3.3 Egalitarian Society

The inclusion of women in politics also leads to the creation of an egalitarian, open, equal and democratic society. Through gathering data from relevant sources, it was noted that there is a classic case study of women in a village in Manicaland in Zimbabwe who would walk 5 kilometres to and fro the borehole each and every day. Policy makers therefore decided to drill a borehole nearer to the village of women without consultation with these women. However, it was observed that despite a nearer borehole, women would still walk to and from 5 kilometres to the previous borehole. Policy makers therefore asked women why there were still travelling long distances yet there was a nearer borehole. These women replied that they believed in early morning walks where they would connect and gossip towards what was happening in the village not that they preferred a nearby source of water. This example shows that consulting people who will be directly affected by the decisions being made is a critical part of politics (Keohane and Nye, 2013). Including women in politics therefore ensure the creation of an egalitarian society where decisions made

are open, transparent, creation of gender neutral laws and achieving societal development. Therefore, creation of an egalitarian society serves as one of the enabling factors for women representation in politics in Zimbabwe.

In conclusion it is important to note that, when women go out in public, they are expected to play roles that are comparable to those they play at home, namely, caring roles. A difference in power relations is also grafted onto the gendered "partition of labour." Men are the decision-makers in the household, in the community, and in society as a whole. Patriarchy is the system that establishes these power imbalances between men and women by assigning males a dominant role and women a submissive position. Politics and governance encompass all aspects of power, including who has power, what power relations exist, how power is exercised, the institutions of power, how they operate, and what policies and laws are churned out of these institutions, as well as the impact these policies and laws have on people. Men become the "directors" of nearly all public life - the "face" of politics and governance, thanks to the patriarchal powers bestowed upon them by society.

5.2.2.4 Crafting gender neutral law

Another enabling factor towards representation of women in politics in Zimbabwe is the need to create gender neutral and specific laws. All over discussion forums, conferences, parliamentary debate sessions and even in schools and classrooms in Zimbabwe, there have been debates around laws such as the ages of maturity law that gives males preference to property after the death of their parents, marital laws and other laws that are seen to be in favour of men in general. When women are not included in politics, laws and policies that are being legislated have wide and diverse effects on the creation of an equal society. However, when women are part of the law making process, societal issues such as education, marriage, domestic violence, rape and other issues are given priority which in turn positively impact on the society (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). The role of women participation in politics is not only limited to societal issues but also economic issues such as women empowerment that is important towards the economic development of society (Gerrity et al., 2007). The representation of women in politics therefore is important as it ensures the creation of gender neutral and specific laws that are essential towards the progress of the society.

This is the case in Rwanda and Ghana where there is a tendency of creating gender neutral laws in which women have a say in such laws. This comes from more than 50% representation of women in parliament in which laws debated and legislation that is put forward is concerned with the development of women and creating an egalitarian society. In Ghana and Rwanda, there are few cases of gender based violence and suppression of women because women are considered an effective force in society and are able to chart their own course through the voice they have in parliament. This was the argument that was put forward by the MDC Alliance spokesperson Fadzai Mahere who argued that if only Zimbabwe can follow the gender balance in parliament as practised in Ghana and Rwanda, there is a possibility that gender neutral laws will be effected thus the society will achieve its goals and objectives.

5.2.4 Interventions to address on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe

The fourth objective of the study sought to come up with interventions that can be put forward so as to address the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. This objective was derived from the perceived challenges that women in politics face in Zimbabwe. These interventions therefore are framed on the need to ensure the development of women participation and representation in politics in Zimbabwe through addressing challenges that women in politics face.

5.2.4.1 Quota system for women representation

S124 stipulate for the quota system of seats reserved for women in parliament but this is not enough as this system has its own fair share of challenges. There is need to come up with a quota system starting from political parties and in all levels of representation (local and national elections). A quota system means that the party is reserving certain constituencies for women to campaign against each other so as to ensure representation of women. This is confirmed by the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN) (2013) which noted that political parties have to ensure that within candidates that will compete for national elections, a substantial number of these have to be females. The parties therefore have to make sure that adequate resources and all support is afforded to ensure that this is achieved. The quota system however cannot be effective without the support from women in general. Therefore, political parties have to also ensure that there is the massive conscription

of women into political spheres and that there are developmental goals and objectives to be set aside to ensure that women are taught on their role and importance in politics (Mhlanga, 2013). If political parties come up with a comprehensive mechanism to achieve this, women representation in politics in Zimbabwe can be enhanced.

5.2.4.2 Capacity building for women

Another effective way to ensure the role and development of women in politics in Zimbabwe is capacity building for women. Advocate Mahere, the spokesperson of MDC Alliance argued that for long, society has taught women to be emancipated but have not taught men on how to live with emancipated women. This means that in as much as women are taught to be independent, taught on how to develop themselves, without the support of males, this is short-lived and can only create a sort of revolution between both genders. There is therefore need for capacity building for women in which capacity building for women participation in politics is understood as the process of coming up with mechanisms and instruments that seek to protect and promote the development of women in politics (Badri and Tripp, 2017). Capacity building means that women are given the support and instruments that ensure that they are effective in all political processes. In this regard, there is need to ensure that capacity building is focused on team-building, partnership, leadership skills and networking (Murray, 2020).

In addition, there is also need to target young women who are now being influential in politics to equip them with the required knowledge, understanding tools and effective skills for interpersonal communication, conflict prevention, management and resolution (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). The importance for this is that women will be able to understand politics as they would be capacitated to do so. This is one of the avenues that have been leveraged in Rwanda and Ghana where role-modelling has been perceived as a major way to ensure capacity building for women. In trying to discuss on the importance and relevance of capacity building, Advocate Mahere noted that in Ghana, women in the echelons of power take under their wing other young and aspiring women and seek to nurture them into political figures. This method therefore should be utilised in Zimbabwe where those women who have been successful in politics have to ensure that other women are taught and emancipated to act in that role as well.

5.2.4.3 Media inclusivity

Another intervention to address the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe is that of media inclusivity. Media inclusivity means that women are given access to media the same as male candidates. The campaign methods and mechanisms in elections in Zimbabwe often see male candidates only appearing on television or radio campaigns whereas women are only designated to appear on posters (Floyd, 2020). This has limited access of women to politics as they are not afforded equal opportunities to reach to a wide and diverse population that otherwise would not have voted for women. Gonda (2009) is of the view that the media has a role to play towards raising public awareness on the need for gender equality, emancipation of women, political representation as well as increasing the plight of women in all spheres of life. In conformity, Hayes (2015) argues that the media has a role to play in the society until gender equality and participation of women becomes a norm in the society. The role of the media in this stead is that it would help in the creation of a balanced society where both men and women enjoy the same opportunities. Media therefore has an increasing role to play towards the improvement of awareness on the role of women in politics.

5.3 Findings from Social Media and other forms of media Pertaining the Research Problem

Since the study leveraged secondary sources of data collection as the data collection instruments, social media and other forms of media were also reviewed to have an informed understanding on the matter under investigation. Social media tools utilised include Facebook and Twitter which is the most common tools utilised in Zimbabwe. Other forms of media utilised include Television interviews and radio interviews. In a Tweet on 21 October 2021 on the UN Women Zimbabwe page, it was posted that:

S124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution ensures that there is an increase in women participation in politics and this enhances accountability and transparency as women are actively being involved in politics.

In a thread within the remarks to this tweet and discussion, it was further noted that:

Law makers need to revisit the clause that set this provision to only two parliamentary terms as there have been visible improvements towards women participation in politics based on this clause

This was confirmed by the Radio discussion at Capitek FM where panellists from the University of Zimbabwe Political Science Faculty debated on the importance and relevance of S124. From this discussion, it was noted that the clause ensure that transparency and accountability is enhanced and women participation is increasing. From this perspective, the discussion around the relevance of S124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution has increased the understanding of transparency and accountability which is key to good governance and increase in women participation.

5.3.1 The relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe

There have been discussions based on the importance of S124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution and its importance towards the representation of women in politics. This discussion has been held around forms of media, conferences, radio shows, TV presentations and the likes. This has even increased towards the 2023 harmonised elections in Zimbabwe as the provision is set to expire as its 10 years of existence will lapse. Following is the presentation, discussion and analyses of the findings gathered in this stead.

5.3.1.1 End of the parochial state of politics in Zimbabwean Communities

From the information gathered from these secondary sources of information, it was noted that S124 of the constitution enhances women representation in politics as it plays a critical role towards ending parochial politics in the country. This is because this provision ensures that women are proportionally represented in parliament and amongst their duties, they teach women in their communities on the importance of political participation thus creating a state where each and every citizen is politically engaged. Examples can be attached to both Twitter and Facebook Pages of the Zimbabwe Gender Commission in which with the help of women representative in constituencies have undertaken awareness campaigns and training to ensure that women understand their role and influence in politics. Through pictures and comments pertaining the issue under discussion, a wider population also can be reached where there is a continued discussion on the importance of S124 towards women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. In this perspective, it can be noted

that social media is taking an active role towards the discussion of the relevance of S124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution in enhancing the representation of women in politics.

5.3.1.2 Understanding of Accountability and Transparency

Social media and other forms of media have also played an increasing role towards the discussion of S124 of the Zimbabwean Constitution and its relevance in enhancing women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. Platforms on Twitter and Facebook such as the UN Women Zimbabwe, WRIP2021, Musasa, Zimbabwe Gender Commission and the Ministry of Information and Communication to mention just but a few have ensured that information regarding this clause in the Constitution, the impact that women parliamentarians have and the need for continuance of this clause after 2023 elections have all been discussed and interesting comments have all been tabulated.

5.3.1.3 Creation of an Egalitarian Society

Another key aspect discovered from social media in respect to the relevance of S124 of the Constitution is that it leads to the creation of an egalitarian society as women become active participants in governance. Some sections of the media have enhanced the agenda that seek to promote the participation of women through S124 whereas others are arguing that the section has played its part and now it's time for political parties to take lessons from this provision and improve women participation. Albeit the difference in opinions, one panellist from Twitter Spaces on women participation argued that despite difference in opinions, what matters is that there is a discussion revolving around women participation in politics based on S124.

This is also observed from radio and television interviews in Zimbabwe in which panellists often argue that women should have the same opportunities as men to contest fairly and not given a hand in political ambitions. In an interview on Star FM, one panellist Ephraim Chida argued that S124 had achieved its gain of introducing women into politics but the agenda now is for political parties to take it from there not a constitutional obligation. This was referred to in the case of Rwanda in which political parties were giving women opportunities of fair contests, nominating them into cabinet positions and other positions of authority and going against patriarchal nature and beliefs of society. The goal is to enhance women development from party

structures not constitutional structures. Therefore, the debate around the relevance and continued importance of S124 is still going albeit different views and perceptions from activists, feminists and scholars.

5.3.2 The enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe

From various sources of media, the study also sought to understand the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. Following is a discussion of some of these factors as discovered from these secondary sources of data collection.

5.3.2.1 Good Governance

One of the most common aspects underpinning the enabling factors for women participation in politics is that of good governance. Good governance means that those in the echelons of power are being held accountable for their actions, they are transparent, they apply the rule of law and other aspects such as checks and balances. Good governance also means that each and every citizen has access to their leaders and is able to play an increasing part in the democratic process. This was the argument put forward by Musasa on Facebook on a post on 5 March 2021 in which the argument was that:

When women are included in political dialogue and discussions and are even part and parcel of those that make policies, good governance is as a result. When women are policy makers, they have the obligation to make policies that favour their gender and close the gap that has existed in policy making that favours male policies and agenda. In addition, when women are actively involved in politics, decisions made and policies crafted are for the good of the community.

This understanding was shared by the Zimbabwe Gender Commission which in its annual forums and conferences, it is now including women representatives so that they are being taught on the importance of women political participation. In a Twitter Post on 2 November 2021, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission posted pictures on a forum where women delegates from the main political parties in Zimbabwe were participating in a discussion on political processes. The pool even comprised of women with disabilities, those living with HIV/AIDS and the youth. From the comments from this post, it was also noted that Zimbabweans generally believe in

the equality of both males and females and agreed that it is high time women are included in political process for good governance. From this perspective, good governance is one of the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe.

5.3.2.2 Improved Decision-making

Another enabling factor for women participation in politics is that it improves decision-making processes. This was argued in a conference held by Dr Ibbo Mandaza who chairs a Political Forum in Zimbabwe where it was noted by one Guest Speaker that:

When women play an equal role just as males in politics, there is improved decision-making in which laws are crafted with the input of both genders. In other words, gender neutral laws are the order of the day and women are perceived as equal partners rather than subjects of males, which has been the norm and tradition in the African culture.

This is also confirmed by findings from visited Twitter and Facebook pages in which Musasa and Ruvheneko Facebook posts are often trying to ensure that communities understand the increasing role and influence of women in making decisions. In one Facebook Post by Musasa, it was noted that even in Ancient days, Kings would consult their wives on how to make laws and decrees but this has evolved in the modern day to women not acting as consultants but part and parcel of making laws. This ensures that decisions being made are informed. The comments from that post also attracted wide and diverse views from people who often agreed that women should be active in politics as they view social norms from men and this perception has to be taken into consideration always. From this perspective, women should be active in politics as this improves decisions.

5.3.3 The challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe

There are numerous challenges being faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe that is impacting on their participation. From social media and other forms of media visited, the following discussion presents, discusses and analyses these challenges.

5.3.3.1 Labelling

One of the most common challenges being faced by Women in politics in Zimbabwe is that of labelling. Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society where women who rise to positions of power and authority are often labelled and perceived negatively. As noted by the Twitter Post by UN Women Zimbabwe after the alleged abductions of three MDC Alliance Activists, it was posted that:

Women who actively participate in politics are being labelled and negatively treated by communities

What followed was mixed reactions to this post which ensured that indeed women are being still labelled thus impacting on their political participation. To some people, it was commented that these women were looking for attention and that it was not their place to be involved in politics and that these women are not fit to be political. This is still a challenge in Zimbabwe as women face the barrier of negative connotations based on their political participation. This is also a challenge even to established women in politics for in an interview with Star FM in 2018, the Minister of Defence and War Veterans, Oppah Muchinguri-Kashiri noted that one of the constant challenges she is facing is the need to get validated by men. She argued that she has to do more than other men for her to be recognised and this may hinder women who want to take a political path as they are required to do more than males. From this perspective, labelling is impacting on women political participation as the Zimbabwean environment is still not warm to female politicians. More so, societies do not accept the potential of women to be in positions of power. They are labelled prostitutes who made their way onto the political ladder by sleeping with those on higher authority.

5.3.3.2 Lack of will by political parties

Another challenge faced by women in politics is the lack of will by political parties to come up with instruments and policies that ensure that women are actively engaged in politics. This comes from the fact that women candidates are asked to compete with men and at times, no instruments are put to enhance their candidacy. As noted by former MDC member and now ZANU PF diplomat, Priscilla Mushonga in an interview by ZBC TV in her road to political development and shift from serving as an MDC candidate to ZANU PF member, she argued that:

Within the MDC structures, women were not given any special treatment even if the history of the party and that of the country subjected women especially in politics. It was not a favour to promote women candidacy but an obligation as there was a history of imbalance between males and females in politics. This is the reason why I left the party and joined ZANU PF which has clear structures, a Women's League and the Youth League that seek to promote women participation.

In as much as these sentiments painted a negative picture on the opposition party, it can also be noted that even within ZANU PF structures, there are still challenges and lack of political will to promote women participation in politics. The party agreed that one Vice-President will be a woman but these changed in 2014 when former Vice-President Joyce Mujuru was fired and two male Vice-Presidents were appointed. This has become even the norm within the party and when top structures are not promoting women representation in politics, what of the smaller structures which are in touch with people. The UN Women Zimbabwe page also notes that political parties are not doing all they can to promote women participation because the 2018 political party list of candidates within each party had 75% of candidates being males. From this perspective, it can be noted that lack of party will is a challenge affecting women political representation and participation.

5.3.3.3 Capacity Gaps

One can notice on Twitter Pages, Facebook Pages, discussion forums, conferences and the likes that one challenge facing women is that of capacity gaps. Musasa Project posted that:

The capacity gap between the male child and the girl child is seen from birth where females are taught to be housewives whereas males are taught to be the men of the family and make all decisions.

This was echoed by the Gender Commission of Zimbabwe that:

There is a large gap in capacities between males and females and this is challenging on the representation and participation of women in politics.

In addition, in an interview at Star FM on the challenges women face in political participation, MDC T spokesperson mentioned that:

There is a clear gap in capacities as women do not have the necessary training and development that they require to be active in politics. This is against men who have at their disposal all tools and mechanisms

From these assertions, it can be noted that capacity gaps are amongst the challenges being faced by women in politics. This can even be explained from review of various comments and observations on social media where males are afforded from family structures with all privileges against the girl child who is being taught to be docile in the household. This even has an impact on women support by other women in which there is a perception that women will make weak political candidates as compared to men. Therefore, capacity gap is a challenge being faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe.

5.3.4 Interventions to address on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe

The study also sought to review various sources of media to come up with interventions so as to address the challenges faced by women in politics. The following is a presentation, discussion and analysis of these findings.

5.3.4.1 Active role of political parties in supporting women

The study noted that there is need for an active role by political parties so as to increase the role and plight of women in politics in Zimbabwe. It can be noted that political parties are at the centre of women participation and if these organisations put in place mechanisms and structures to support women participation, then the role of women in politics can increase. This can be noted on the Facebook, Twitter and Website of Musasa which often argues that it is the role of political parties to increase women participation. In a Facebook Post, Musasa noted that:

Political parties in Zimbabwe have to ensure that women candidates are given the opportunity and platform to actively participate in politics. This can be done through giving women required resources, moral support and ensuring that proportional representation is a factor.

This post saw comments from other accredited sources in Zimbabwe such as 263 Chat and Kubatana.com which argued respectively that:

It is the role of political parties to ensure that women participation in politics is enhanced and this can be through increased capacity development, training and giving women resources.

For Kubatana.com, the argument centred on the notion that:

There is need for proportional representation where women candidates are put against each other and compete in national elections especially in the strongholds of these political parties. This means that there is a near-possibility that a women representative will be elected into office.

From this discussion, it can be noted that political parties have an active role to play towards women participation in politics as they are the ones mandated with ensuring that the base for women participation is maintained. This can either be through giving women the resources that they require, moral support and other forms of support.

5.3.4.2 Active role of interest groups

Another intervention to address challenges faced by women is the need for active roles by interests groups. Interest groups play a critical role in ensuring that political parties are lobbied so that they ensure the development and participation of women in politics and also interest groups ensure that women have an informed understanding on their roles in politics and what they bring to the table. This was an argument posted by UN Women Zimbabwe that it is the role of interested groups, religious organisations and all other organisations to ensure that women are taught on the importance of their participation in politics. Organisations such as Musasa, Kubatana.com, 263 Chat and the Gender Commission of Zimbabwe have all conducted workshops, conferences and seminars tasked with making women understand their importance and the role they play in politics. On all social media handles of these organisations, they are pictures, comments and posts on their active role in this argument and how they seek to ensure that women are being actively involved in politics. An example is that of the Gender Commission of Zimbabwe that often post pictures on programmes and awareness campaigns that it holds aimed at teaching women on their role and importance in political participation. From this perspective, it can be noted that interest groups have a role to play towards addressing the challenges that women in politics face.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study gathered from relevant secondary sources of information. The study is premised on African women in politics: An analysis on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe; therefore, a content analysis on relevant sources of information was conducted to detail on the research problem. The chapter detailed on the on the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe, the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe and the interventions to address on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. The following chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the conclusions and recommendations pertaining the study on African women in politics: An analysis of the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. The aim of the study was to identify the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe and come up with interventions to address these challenges and this was supported by four objectives which sought to determine on the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, to determine on the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe, to analyse on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe and to come up with interventions to address on the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. The study utilised secondary sources of data collection where published texts, sources, parliamentary communication and all other forms of information were reviewed. The study also utilised social media as an important part of data collection. Through content analysis as the data analysis method, all relevant important information pertaining to the study were analysed and presented in a coherent manner so as to understand the research problem.

6.2 Conclusions from the Study

This section focuses on the conclusions from the study

6.2.1 Challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe

The first objective sought to analyse the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. The patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society is one of the major challenges facing women in politics as the society stereotypes women who seek political ambition. Politics in Zimbabwe is classified as a masculine job that requires men and not females. This has seen a lot of women not participating in politics from the family, community and local levels. In addition, the Zimbabwean socialisation and cultural process also serves as a challenge to women participation and representation in politics. The boy child is raised to be the man of the house and is taught on the importance of power and making decisions. On the other hand, the girl child is being taught to be the mother and caretaker of the family, taking care of children and being submissive to the husband. This translates into politics as the girl child is taught that politics is for men and the female has no role in politics.

Another challenge facing women in politics in Zimbabwe is the lack of resources. Furthermore, time is another resource that prevents women from holding high-ranking positions. The stress of having a mother while both working and engaging in society has resulted in a lack of female participation in high-level corporate positions. Women have adopted the belief that they will never have enough time because their jobs will require them to travel or attend exhausting meetings, which will interfere with their parenting or wife roles, leaving them as spectators. There is constant battle for fighting for scarce resources and in the aftermath, women are neglected and are not able to effectively fund their campaigns. Campaigning is a privy for the rich and established in society and the demographic composition of Zimbabwe has seen male candidates being able to win primary tickets to national elections because they have more resources than women. Another challenge towards the participation and representation of women in politics are the capacity gaps. There is a clear distinction between males and females in education for example in Zimbabwe where the majority of students are males despite women comprising more than half of the population. This means that females are not afforded equal opportunities to access education in Zimbabwe and this translate to challenges towards women representation in politics.

Furthermore, time is another resource that prevents women from holding high-ranking positions. The stress of having a mother while both working and engaging in society has resulted in a lack of female participation in high-level corporate positions. Women have adopted the belief that they will never have enough time because their jobs will require them to travel or attend exhausting meetings, which will interfere with their parenting or wife roles, leaving them as spectators.

Women also experience an inferiority complex; in which they believe they will never be good enough. Women have historically lacked confidence and self-esteem, believing that women must work twice as hard as males to be recognized or acknowledged, and some never attempt because they believe they will never be enough. This lack of confidence has resulted in a greater number of males in higher positions than women, where they are acknowledged and recognized in middle management as opposed to top management.

Aside from men, research has revealed that women are their own worst adversaries, with the majority of them blaming other women for their failure to reach the top. Women admitted to being jealous of one another, and as they reach higher positions, they tend to forget their gender, whereas males help one another climb the ladder. Women were of the opinion that they do not support and dislike one another for no cause. Women in lower-level leadership receive little assistance from women in higher-ranking positions in society, while top leadership also thought that grassroots women did not provide enough support. The root of this hatred and aggression must be investigated further, as this study was unable to do so. As a result, instead of lifting one other up, women end up dragging each other down in order to get as many women to the top as possible.

This study also revealed that the number of women in positions of leadership is not necessarily a reliable indication of female engagement. Network on Gender and Development (2015). As a result, assessing female involvement should go beyond numbers, as having a seat at the table does not always imply having the opportunity to speak out and be heard. Measuring the influence of female leaders in decision-making processes should also be prioritized. In order to deal with the issues, the complex and changing realities of women's life must be measured qualitatively as well as numerically.

6.2.2 Conclusions from Objective Two

The second objective of the study sought to determine on the enabling factors for women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. The enabling factors referred herein can be understood simply as the factors that explains the importance of women participation in politics in Zimbabwe. One critical enabling factor towards the participation of women in politics in Zimbabwe is that of participatory democracy. For genuine democracy to prevail in a society there is need to ensure that both genders are equally represented thus the need to ensure that women are actively participating in politics. Another enabling factor for women participation in politics is that of a polity coming up with informed decisions. In developing countries such as Zimbabwe, central to politics is the allocation of scarce resources and women have to be included in the process to reach sustainable development. The inclusion of women in politics also leads to the creation of an egalitarian, open, equal and

democratic society. Another enabling factor towards representation of women in politics in Zimbabwe is the need to create gender neutral and specific laws.

6.2.3 Conclusions from Objective Three

The third objective of the study sought to determine the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. It was discovered that generally, women have been underrepresented in politics in Zimbabwe and the 2013 Constitution sought to address this challenge through coming up with reserved seats for women representation in parliament. The adoption of this instrument to promote the representation of women through a quota system is in line with relevant international instruments that relate to the full political rights for women (Butaumocho, 2013). From a female representation of 16% in the 2008 parliamentary elections, women representation jumped to 32% in 2013 since 83 women made up the total figure of 350 parliamentarians from both the National Assembly and the Senate when the government implemented the proportional women representation quota that was stipulated in the Constitution (Dube, 2016).

S124 is relevant on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe because it gives voice to women in parliament and it inducts them into political processes so that when this expires, women participation would have heard a threshold for success. Furthermore, the relevance of S124 on women representation in politics is that it ensures that women are given a platform to express their political rights and freedoms which is part of the promotion and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. Diversity in politics also helps explain the importance of S124 on women representation in politics in Zimbabwe. As postulated by Godfrey (2015), the framing of S124 was based on the belief that the quality of political decision making has the potential of increasing due to greater inclusion of women as it leads to diversity of ideas, values, priorities and political styles.

6.2.4 Conclusions from Objective Four

The fourth objective of the study sought to come up with interventions that can be put forward so as to address the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe. There is need for the quota system for women representation in which there are seats reserved for women in parliament for the current quota is not enough. There is need to come up with a quota system starting from political parties and in all levels of

representation (local and national elections). A quota system means that the party is reserving certain constituencies for women to campaign against each other so as to ensure representation of women. Another effective way to ensure the role and development of women in politics in Zimbabwe is capacity building for women. There is therefore need for capacity building for women in which capacity building for women participation in politics is understood as the process of coming up with mechanisms and instruments that seek to protect and promote the development of women in politics.

Another intervention to address the challenges faced by women in politics in Zimbabwe is that of media inclusivity. Media inclusivity means that women are given access to media the same as male candidates. The campaign methods and mechanisms in elections in Zimbabwe often see male candidates only appearing on television or radio campaigns whereas women are only designated to appear on posters.

6.3 Recommendations from the Study

The following are recommendations from the Study

6.3.1 Increased role of Political Parties in Supporting Women

To address the issues facing women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, there is need for an increased role of political parties in supporting women in politics. It can be noted that political parties are at the centre of women participation and if these organisations put in place mechanisms and structures to support women participation, then the role of women in politics can increase. These organisations however are facing systematic challenges that are impacting on the need to embrace women candidates in their structures. The main political parties in Zimbabwe have men in their echelons of power and this is challenging on the role of women in politics. There is therefore need to come up with methods, practices and quota systems that allow for a proportion of women to be active and to be represented in politics.

6.3.2 Socialisation of the Society

To increase women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, there is need to initiate a discourse of socialisation from all spheres of the community. This comes from the gender roles, patriarchy and labelling that is privy in the Zimbabwean community

where politics is perceived to be masculine thus males are regarded as an effective voice in the discourse. This needs to change if women representation in politics has to be enhanced. Challenges come from the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean community where males dominate in all spheres of decision making and women, who are actively participating in politics, are labelled and stereotypes. There is therefore need to come up with a socialisation process that aims to dismantle the capacity gaps that exist between males and females and ensure that each and every individual understand from their tender ages the role they play in politics.

It is also recommended that Women in politics, such as Members of Parliament and, Ministers should organise workshops for women, educating and encouraging women to be involved in politics, grooming them and teaching them from experience. These workshops should aim to erase the stigmatisation of women that are in politics because they are labelled prostitutes and women without ubuntu. Rural women need that support for them to see the importance of participating in local politics from women who have the experience in the political field. These workshops should include rigorous training on the importance of women's participation in local politics, as well as exposure of the methods used by men to oppress women, and women should be encouraged to support and vote for another woman because the best person to solve women's problems is another woman. The workshops should be designed in such a way that they remove the stigma and stereotypes associated with women in politics.

The study also discovered that another issue is that women lack confidence and are afraid to hold political positions. As a result, it is recommended that the government, in collaboration with its partners, engage in activities that help women develop confidence, such as leadership skills. These skills can be imparted to women through the design of projects for women in which they will be their own leaders, as well as rigorous education through workshops on good leadership skills, which will help to instil confidence in women and enable them to be politically active.

The study also suggests motivating girls from adolescence to participate in political activities and giving them roles to play, such as in drama and poetry. Girls should be exposed to political education through youth programs such as government-funded projects in order to develop leadership skills that will help them as they grow into

positions of leadership. These abilities will help them to be more confident, and as a result, their actions will catch them young. This will assist the girls in understanding the changes that are occurring in their societies, as well as in transforming the political structure, resulting in long-term development.

In secondary schools, equal participation of men and women, girls and boys, should be emphasized. Gender equality should be covered in guidance and counselling sessions. These sessions will demonstrate to both boys and girls that they are equal partners in their communities, bringing them one step closer to emancipating girls and women from social oppression. Girls will also grow up believing that they are capable of performing all of the tasks that boys are capable of performing.

6.3.3 Creating positions for women

During the election, there should be positions specifically reserved for women in politics. Wards with only female representatives (women versus women) should be equal to wards with male representatives. This strategy is critical in increasing the number of women in politics. Another system that can help increase the number of women in politics is a five-term limit for women only. After the women's term expires, men will serve their terms, giving both men and women a chance to participate in politics. This has the potential to challenge the male dominated societies of leadership and male dominance in politics.

The study also recommends the formation of women's political parties in which women will be their own leaders, allowing women to gain political positions such as councillors and members of parliament. Women should have their own space where they can compete with men without fear of being judged. Women would occupy political positions if they formed their own parties and received all of the necessary government support.

6.3.4 Financial Support for women in politics

The study also advises the government and civil society organizations to financially support women during election campaigns, citing the fact that women do not have the resources to run campaigns. Financial support would enable many women to participate in local politics, as some women in Chiwundura have shied away from political participation due to a lack of financial resources. Women should form pressure groups to educate women on the methods used by men to oppress them

and to find ways to resist male dominance. Women should challenge and compete with men for local political office.

Women's ministries should be fully funded so that they can carry out their initiatives, which include monitoring and analysing women's political growth as well as emancipating and sensitizing them about their worth in society.

The deconstruction of women's representations or literature is required. Women's literature's absence has influenced how the next generation is socialized, restricting the number of women who participate. For example, Patrick Chakaipa supported patriarchy and gender imbalance in his book *Karikoga*, influencing the opinions of those who read the literature. More writing about women heroes, such as Winnie Mandela, Mbuya Nehanda, and Queen Lozikayi Lobengula's wife, should be written.

6.3.5 Education of Women

There should also be a desire to educate the girl kid, as they will be the future leaders. Campaign for Female Education is a non-governmental organization based in Zimbabwe (CAMFED). Female education must also be promoted by the government, as they are mostly influenced by child marriages, and some are not even permitted to attend school. Girls' education will impact their engagement as they explore their potential as junior members of parliament or presidents, and later female representation in politics.

"We cannot declare Africa is independent while women are still subservient," as Samora Machel and Thomas Sankara once said. It is therefore necessary to deconstruct the mind in order to transform how women are regarded in society. Prior to the colonization of Africa, women played an important role in society and there was a division of labour, but with the arrival of the west, the Africans' way of life altered dramatically. As a result, Africa will remain colonial unless women are recognized as leaders and given the opportunity to make decisions.

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